Chapter Five

THE SIGNIFICANCE AND IMPACT OF MANIPURI LANGUAGE MOVEMENT
Chapter Five

THE SIGNIFICANCE AND IMPACT OF MANIPURI LANGUAGE MOVEMENT

As it has been already mentioned in the previous chapters that Manipuri language movement especially took place in Manipur and Assam and generally in other North Eastern States during the period from 1924-1992 were of two kinds. One was the language movement for recognition of Manipuri as a vernacular subject in Manipur and introduction as a Medium of instruction in Manipur and Assam. The other was the language movement for inclusion of Manipuri language in ES of the Constitution of India that took place in Manipur and Assam. The first kind of movement for recognition of Manipuri as a vernacular subject in Manipur and introduction as a Medium of instruction in Manipur was started in Manipur during 1907 but the movement unable to get its momentum during the days. It was only in the year 1924 that the movement was able to get its momentum and Manipuri language was recognized as a vernacular subject in Matric (H.S.L.C) Stage by the Calcutta University, Calcutta. Again in the year 1928 Manipuri language was recognized as a vernacular subject in H.S.S.L.C Stage by the same University. Gradually in the year 1948 it was recognized as a vernacular subject up to B.A level by the same University. The movement for introduction of Manipuri as a Medium of Instruction in Manipur and Assam were started during the 1950s and continued up to 1976 in Manipur and the same was continued up to 1984 in Assam. As a result of the movement in the year 1976 Manipuri language was introduced as a Medium of instruction up to H.S.L.C stage in Manipur and in the year 1984 in Assam.

The movement for inclusion of Manipuri language in ES of the Constitution of India was started from 1953 and continued up to 1992 in Manipur and Assam and other parts of the North East India. The movement was first started in the year 1953 by political parties of Manipur and then by MSP, Imphal, MLDCC, N.E and other Student’s organizations and Non-governmental organizations. The movement was first started in the year 1961 in Assam by MSP, Assam and other Student’s organizations and Non-governmental organizations. In both states the movements with same motives were continued up to 1992.
The significant aim of Manipuri language movement is to develop the status of Manipuri language like with other languages of India in various fields like recognition and introduction of Manipuri language in the education system and to became one among the Scheduled languages. The result of the movement also become significant by introducing Manipuri language in the Education system in Manipur and Assam, Manipuri language become one among 22 Eighth Schedule languages of India. The leaders of the movement have played a significant role in the movement under the banners of different nongovernmental organizations and associations. The significance of Manipuri language movement in Manipur and Assam can be seen here.

The issue of language education in Manipur was posed by a section of the Manipuris intelligentsia belonging to Manipur and beyond Manipur. In the beginning of the British Period in India as well as Manipur, no provision was made for teaching or use Modern Indian Languages as Medium of instruction and administration. With the introduction of Dyarchy in India in year 1921 some major Modern Indian literary languages were included among the school subjects, but even then they were not given the proper place in school education, in spite of the Official recognition accorded to them in 1854 in Sir Charles Wood's Dispatch. The Dispatch very clearly laid down that the study of the spoken languages of India was to be encouraged and that they were to be regarded as media of instruction along with English.

Since the inception of Modern/Western Education in Manipur, the Medium of instruction was through Bengali, Sanskrit and English language. For the introduction of Manipuri language in the Schools, the outsider Manipuri, Englishmen and Bengali educationist form Syllet, Cachar, Dhaka and others parts of the world has played a great role and their contributions in the field of writing books is remarkable. Though, Maharaj Churachand Singh started the effort for the introduction of Manipuri language in the Modern Education system in Manipur, the process for its used in the education system was very slow. Seeing this slow progress, Hijam Irabot Singh along with a group of educationist people try their level best for the development of their mother tongue and literature started language movement during first quarter of the 20th century. Their speedy action was to introduce Manipuri language in the all stage of Education System in Manipur.

Gradually a large fraction of the Manipuris particularly in Manipur and Assam started participating in the language movement (i.e. Movement for recognition of Manipuri language as

As a result of Manipuri language movement, Manipuri language was recognized as a vernacular language in the Matric (H.S.L.C) Examination by Calcutta University in the year 1924. Again in the year 1928 Manipuri language was recognized as a vernacular language in H.S.S.L.C Examination by Calcutta University. Till 1974 Manipuri language was not introduce as a Medium of instruction up to Class VIII by the Board of Secondary Education, Manipur. So
in order to introduce it up to H.S.L.C level as Medium of instruction in Manipur, the effort of MSP, Imphal were significant. As a result of the Parishad’s effort at last, according to the Notification No-CS/7dt, Imphal 26th October, 1976, Manipuri language was introduced as a Medium of instruction in the H.S.L.C level in Manipur. Again the work for the recognition of Manipuri language as a vernacular up to B.A was started by MSP, Imphal. Thus as a result of the effort of more than one decade struggle with the Manipur State Durbar, Manipur, Calcutta University, Calcutta by the MSP, Imphal for the recognition of Manipuri language as a vernacular subject in the B. A Examination, at last on 1948 according to the Orders by the Vice-Chancellor and Syndicate of the Calcutta University Notification No T. 797, 25th August, 1948, Manipuri language was recognized as a vernacular subject in the B. A. Examination.

A number of educationist, writers, politicians and social workers from Assam have taken active part in the movement for introduction of Manipuri language as a Medium of instruction in Assam. Among them most significant leaders were Naoria Phulo, Writer and Social Reformer, Shri Oinam Baldev Singh, President, Nikhil Hindu Manipuri Mahashabha (NHMM), Cachar Branch, Ngariyambam Priyodhojo Singh, Secretary, NHMM, Cachar Branch, Haubam Gaurahari Singh, President, Naha Marup (NM), Cachar, Oinam Narendra Singh, General Secretary, NM, Cachar, Laishram Joykumar Singh, Joint Secretary, NM, Cachar, Phuritshabam Brajamamohan Singh, Cultural Secretary, NM, Cachar, Ingudam Lokeshore Singh, Member, NM, Lakhipur, Khangenbam Bagishandan Singh, NM, Cachar, Laishram Rajkishore Singh, NM, Cachar, Shri Joykumar Singh, Joint Secretary, NM, Cachar, K. Punshi Singh, Member, NM, Lakhipur, Yumnam Nandakumar, Member, NM, Lakhipur, Soibam Moirang, Founder President, Thaugan Marup (TM), Jaffirbond, Moirangthem Deva Singh, Founder General Secretary, TM, Jaffirbond, Sri K. Akendro Singh, G. Secy, TM, Jaffirbond, Sri Sajau Tombi Singh, Member, TM, Jaffirbond, Sushil Singh, Member, TM, Jaffirbond, Sri R. K Gopalsana, Head Master, Dulobshora High School, Dulopshora, Konsam Binado Singh, Nangom Amujau Singh, , W. Subhankar Singh, MLA, Sri Ranjit Singh, G. Secy, Udharbond Manipuri Marup, Sri Gaurakishore Roy, M.L.A, Shri Tenba Singh, President, MSP, Nagaon Branch, Sri Kamal Singh (Convener), MSP, Nagaon Branch, Shri Nitai Sharma, Member, MSP, Nagaon Branch Shri Churamani Singh, Member, MSP, Nagaon Branch, Shri Man Singh, Member, MSP, Nagaon Branch, Shri Niladhaja Singh, Founder President, MSP, Cachar Branch, Shri Hamid Ali Chaudhury Founder, Vice-President, MSP, Cachar Branch, Shri N. Kunjamohan Singh,
The language movement for introduction of Manipuri language as a medium of Instruction in Assam was first started by Nikhil Hindu Manipuri Mahashaba, Cachar Branch in the year 1935. The incomplete work and movement for the introduction of Manipuri as a Medium in Assam started by NHMM, Cachar Branch was restarted by Naha Marup (NM), Cachar in the year 1953. As a result of movement, Manipuri language was introduced as a medium of instruction up to Lower Primary level in the year 1956. According to office of the Deputy Inspector of Schools, Sichar under Memo No. 10626 Dated Silchar, 23rd October, 1956 letter no. EMI 211/53/10, P.F. Shillong, the 7th June 1956 from Under Secretary to the Govt. of Assam to the Director of Public Instruction and received in this office with Assistant, Inspector of schools, Cachar’s Memo No. 9544-46, dated 8.10.56. The movement for introduction of Manipuri medium at Middle English Schools was started in the year 1959 by NM, Cachar along with other Manipuri organizations like Thaugan Marup, Jaffirbond, Manipuri Sahitya Parishad, Cachar Branch, All Assam Manipuri Society, Cachar, Assam Bengal Manipuri Association, Cachar Manipuri Sangrakhini Samiti, Cachar Manipuri College students’ Union and Cachar Students Union etc. use their best effort to introduce Manipuri Medium at the M.E School level in the...
existing those M.E Schools of Bengali and English Medium situated nearby the Manipuri inhabited areas of Cachar District. But unable to success the movement, at last, the Manipuris of Assam unitedly under the various leading organization like Naha Marup (NM), Cachar, Thaugan Marup (TM), Jaffirbond and Manipuri Sahitya Parishad (MSP), Cachar Branch started to establish M.E Schools in the year 1963 in different areas of Assam by their own cost for the education of those students who passed LP level in their own mother tongue. As a result of the movement, accordingly in the year 1965, the Govt. of Assam recognized those Manipuri Medium M.E Schools who were established during 1963. Thus as a result of the movement in the year 1965, Manipuri Medium was recognized as a Medium of instruction at the M. E Level in Assam.

Language Movement for introduction of Manipuri language as Medium of instruction at the H.S.L.C Stage in Assam was started in 1963 by the Manipuri Sahitya Parishad, Cachar Branch, Naha Marup, Cachar and Thaugan Marup, Jaffirbond. But it cannot get any positive results from the Govt. of Assam up to 1972. Then form the year 1972 Manipuri Sahitya Parishad, Cachar Branch along with other different Manipuri Organizations of like Assam Manipuri Sahitya Parishad, Jaffirbond, All Assam Manipuri Society, Cachar, Assam Bengal Manipuri Association, The Manipuri Literary Forum, Cachar, Assam Manipuri Education forum, Cachar, Cachar Manipuri College students' Union, Cachar Students Union and Assam Manipuri Education Forum, Cachar etc. unitedly came out and participated in the movement and continued up to 1984. As a result of the movement Manipuri Medium was introduced up to H.S.L.C in Assam in the year 1978 on temporary basis and finally in the year 1984 according to order No. EMI.150/79/112.

THE POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF MANIPURI LANGUAGE MOVEMENT:

The Language Movement for inclusion of Manipuri language in Eighth Schedule has embarked under the Political arena during 1980s. During the political regime of late Smti Indira Gandhi, the question of inclusion of the Manipuri language in ES was made suspending on the verge of her political stratagem. Smti Gandhi had accepted in principle for inclusion of Manipuri in the Eighth Schedule.¹ The case of political evading in relation to the inclusion of Manipuri in Eighth Schedule has fairly come to light during the political regime of Ex Prime Minister, Shri

¹ S. Manik Chand Singh, *op.cit.*, p.19
Rajiv Gandhi. It was stated that Mr. Rajiv Gandhi also had conceded in principle for inclusion of Manipuri in ES to the Constitution of India on the basis of his predecessor (Smti. Indira Gandhi) did concede previously in this regard. It may be stated Shri R. K Joychandra Singh (Ex Union Minister of State for Petro-chemical & who was later become as C. M of Manipur) along with Mr. N. Tombi Singh M.P and some other delegates from Manipur, Assam & Tripura called on Shri Rajiv Gandhi on 26th November, 1987 and he was urged with the submission of a memorandum for inclusion of Manipuri in ES. But the result was meted out with frustration virtually. Thus the case of inclusion of Manipuri language, a branch of Sino- Tibetan family in the ES has been edged out for the last 4 decades and as a result, the developed Manipuri language being a political jargon remains in the recess of darkness with mutilated stage.  

Since the Manipuri language movement is a genuine enterprise, it has drawn some favourable supports from the end of the authorities of some States. By that time, the movement had drawn support from some eminent political personalities some of them were leftists. In this context the support given by Nripen Chakravarty (Ex C. M of Tripura) and Nar Bahadur, CM of Sikkim can be mentioned. They made on appeal to the Central Govt. to include Nepali, Manipuri and Konkani in the Eighth Schedule to the Constitution of India. And recently Shri Nar Bahadhur, the Chief Minister of Sikkim has also made an abiding appeal to the Central Govt. to include Nepali, Manipuri and Konkani in ES to the Constitution of India.

On 2nd May, 1990 under the leadership of Shri R. K Ranbir Singh, the Chief Minister of Manipur and 16 representatives from various political parties of Manipur like the Manipur People's Party, Janata Dal, Congress(S), Bharatiya Janata Party, National Peoples Party, Communist Party of India, Communist Party of India (Marxist), Congress(I) and Kuki National Assembly etc. met Shri Viswanath Pratap Singh, the Hon’ble Prime Minister of India, who has responded with positive outlook, when he has been appraised of with a detailed memorandum where in the Manipuri language has been proved with its self-sufficiently for inclusion in Eighth Schedule. It is pertinent to be mentioned that the Political parties of Manipur have taken the pivotal roles on the basis of their commitment made in the election manifesto and in pursuance

---

2 Ibid., p.20
3 Ibid., 21
4 Ibid
of the commitment of extension of ES by the National Front during last Lok Sabha Election-1989.\(^5\)

With the emergence of the National Front Government at the Centre, it is highly hoped that under the spirit of commitment on Language Policy during the Lok Sabha Election-1989, the Central Govt. would take effective steps for inclusion of Manipuri, a Tibeto-Burman family along with other counterpart languages in the ES to the Constitution of India. Shri Devi Lal, the Deputy PM has ensured that the National Front Government would implement all promises made during the last Lok Sabha Election (1989). It is also stated that Hon’ble Prime Minister Shri V. P Singh as also assured to Shri Nar Bahadur Bhandari, Chief Minister of Sikkim that positive steps would be taken by the Centre for inclusion of Nepali, Manipuri and Konkani in the ES to the Constitution of India.\(^6\)

The inclusion of Manipuri along with other counterpart languages will not only safeguard the interests of Minorities as enshrined in article 29 of the Constitution of India but it will also be symbolized as a communion of –Unity, Solidarity and Integrity of India which may re-echo the following:

Tibeto-Burman is one of the language families of India. The family wise groupings of languages in India are given below in **Table- 5.1**.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language Families</th>
<th>Number of Speakers in totals</th>
<th>Number of Languages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indo-Aryan</td>
<td>491,086,116</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dravidian</td>
<td>157,836,723</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austro- Asiatic</td>
<td>7,705,011</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tibeto- Burman</td>
<td>4,071,701</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: P. Padmanabha, Register General & Census Commissioner, Census of India 1981, p-4)

The political demand for inclusion of Manipuri language in the ES gained momentum in the late 1980s when all the political parities of Manipur highlighted this demand in their election manifestoe for the Lok Shabha elections of 1989 and also for the mid-term State election 1991. The delegations of all the political parties called on three successive Honourable Prime Ministers

\(^6\) *Ibid.*, p.23
of India, namely Shri V.P. Singh, Shri Chandra Shekhar and P.V. Narasimha Rao, and all the Honourable Prime Ministers conceded the reasonableness of the demand and gave some sort of an assurance for introducing an appropriate Bill for the same.

In the mid-term State election, 1991, Manipur People's Party and Janata Dal promised that they would exert pressure on the Central Government to include Manipuri in the Eighth Schedule. As a result United Legislature Front Government was formed in Manipur. And this new government was comprised six political parties of which the Janata Dal and Manipur People's Party were two major partners. The response of the present Manipur Government which came to power on an election manifesto that promised for inclusion of the language in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution was like that of any other government-ordering the paramilitary forces to suppress it. Thus during the last one year several persons were injured in the police firing and lathi Charge. In January last, AMSU also gave a call for boycott of Republic Day function which was successful.¹

The motives of the language movement turned into aggressive form the month of May, 1991. In the May, panicked by the aggressive motive of the movement the then Chief Minister Ranbir Singh rushed to New Delhi with an all party delegation minus Congress(I), which has been opposing the move for Manipuri's inclusion in the ES. The delegation met with then the Prime Minister V. P Singh, who was reported to have assured the delegation that he favoured the inclusion of not only Manipuri but also some more languages in ES. V. P Singh was also reported to have asked the delegation to mobilize the support of the opposition parties particularly that of the Congress (I) party, so that bill on the issue as and when introduced does not fall through in the Parliament.

Though, Manipuri language movement got a number of assurances for inclusion of it in ES by successive Prime Ministers of India, still they were unable to introduce a Bill for inclusion of it in the Parliament. The matter was taken up by M.Ps of Manipur in different occasions in the Parliament. To mention for this matter on 25th November, 1991, W. Kulabidhu Singh, M.P, Manipur placed a demand question to the Deputy Speaker in the Parliament House. He focused on the richness of this language by referring to Suniti Kumar Chatterjee, the famous linguist who said that Manipuri is a very advanced language. Manipuri was not included in the Schedule of

the Constitution when it was drafted because the State of Manipur was integrated into Indian Union only on 15th October, 1949 and by this time the Constitution was already drafted. There were also doubts raised from certain quarters that if Manipur was included in ES there would be about another 14 to 15 languages which would also have to be included. In this connection, I would like to submit that Manipuri has been recognized as the official language of that State. Manipur was conquered by the Britishers only in 1891 and since then the Manipuri language has been recognized as the official language of that State. Hence the question of considering the demand of another 14-15 languages which would want to be included in the Eighth Schedule does not arise. I earnestly feel that the Government of India should introduce a Bill for amending the Constitution so that the Manipuri language is included in ES. The Government should come forward immediately so that the students and youth of the State do not resort to violent demonstration. There is an enormous sense of nationalism in the State. In fact, Dr. Lohia in the early '50s had said that in this Eastern part of India, there is an enormous sense of nationalism and that Manipur is the bastion of Indian nationalism. I humbly submit that Manipuri should be included in ES of the Constitution."

Again on 30th March, 1992, W. Kulabidhu Singh, M.P, Manipur raised a question to the Shri Bhaskar Annaji Masodkar, Vice Chairman in the Parliament about the 8th Schedule matter that "I would like to urge upon the Government, through you, Sir, is about inclusion of Manipuri in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution of India. I have been crying hoarse like anything in the last two years for the inclusion of Manipuri in ES of the Constitution. The previous Government of the National Front led by Mr V. P Singh, Hon. Prime Minister then, gave some verbal assurances. But he could not execute the same. There was a visit by him to Imphal to inaugurate the Manipur University convocation. He promised us that he would declare it and the Government was ready to introduce a Bill in the next Winter Session of the Parliament and Manipuri would be included in ES of the Constitution. This announcement was to be made on 10th November 1991. But, unfortunately his Ministry fell on 7th November, three days ahead. So was not announced. The next Government of Shri Chandra shekhar also gave some promise to include Manipuri in ES of the Constitution. Similarly, the present Hon. Prime Minister Narasimha Rao also made some assurance. An all-party delegation met the Hon. Prime Minister

---

and he gave some assurance saying, “Yes, this is reasonable demand. We will take the necessary steps for that.” But it is going very slow. Now, regarding richness of Manipuri, I am a Manipuri myself. I need not speak very much about it. The late Prof. Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterjee, a very famous linguist, gave a very nice certificate about the richness of the language of Manipuri. It is very refined and rich language. I submit, in context, Sir, that the small State having a tiny population of only 18 or 19 lakhs, has so far produced 17 or 18 features films. Out of these, six features films have got awards. In these six awards, two international awards are included..............” Manipuri is a very rich language. Economically and industrially, we are very poor. But culturally in the field of art and culture, in the field of sports, the Manipuris are quite up to the mark and we feel very proud of ourselves. It is a language of one of the States of India. Manipur is one of the 26 States of India. Manipuri is a State language of the State of Manipur. So, the Government should pay immediate attention for inclusion of Manipuri language in ES of the Constitution.

Gradually in the year 1992, the movement for inclusion of Manipuri language in ES began to get sympathy from a number of M.Ps from different States of India. Among them to mention a few are Shrimati Dil Kumari Bhandari, M.P, Sikkim, L.K Advani, M.P, Delhi(Gandhi Nagar), Shri Mohan Singh, M.P, Uttar Prdesh (Deoria), Shri Moreshwar Save, M.P, Maharashtra(Aurangabad), Shri Harish Narish Narayan Prabhu Zantye, M.P, Goa (Panji), Shri Saifuddin Choudhury, West Benagal (Katwa), Shri A. Charles, M.P, Kerala (Trivandum), Shri Syed Shahabuddin, M.P, Bihar (Kishanganj), Shri Citta Basu, M.P, West Bengal (Barasat), Shri Peter G, M.P, Shillong, Dr. Laxminarayan Pandeya, M.P, Madhya Pradesh (Mandsaur), Shri Swarup Upadhayaya, M.P, Assam (Tezpur), Shri Jitendra Nath Das, M.P, West Bengal, (Jalpaiguri), Shri P.C Thomas, M.P, Kerala (Muvattupuzha). Finally on 10th April, 1992 in the Parliament (Lok Shabha), Shrimati Dil Kumari Bhandari, M.P, Sikkim put A Private Bill to the Mr Chairman for the Amendment of Eighth Schedule in the Constitution. And later days of the month of April were discussed in Lok Shabha by M. Ps come from different States of India mentioned above and their willingness to amend the Eighth Schedule Bill. Mr. L.K Advani was the first opposition M.P leader to support the Private Bill raced by Smti Dil Kumari Bhandari. In support for the Amendment of the Eighth Schedule Bill, he states in the Lok Shabha was, “Mr.

9 Ibid., p.22.
10 Ibid.
Chairman, Sir, I think it would be better if the Government takes a decision soon on the Bill introduced by Smti Dil Kumari Bhandari on which she had expressed her views earlier and, I had also spoken on it. Mr. Chairman, Sir, their non-inclusion in the Eighth Schedule is an irony when Nepali and Manipuri and the languages which have been recognized in the States where they are spoken by the majority of the people. Sikkim was not one of our States earlier. But today Nepali is the recognized language of Sikkim. West Bengal has also recognized Nepali language because it is spoken in one of its parts especially in Darjeeling. In the same way Manipuri is the official language of Manipur. It is the language of courts also. It has its long history and literature. So I do not think it proper that by including these two languages in ES, an injustice would be done to those language which stake their claim for inclusion in this schedule. I feel that it should be delinked from separate decision their claims which should be decided on their individual merits.

I am not going to give their names. There are at least four-five languages in my mind, for which there are continuous demands for their inclusion in ES. But those four-five languages are not recognized even in their respective States, though they should have been recognized in the respective States too. As far as Manipuri is concerned, even the State unit has not recommended for it but in case of Nepali four different legislative Assemblies of States have unanimously demanded its inclusion. At this time Inder Jeet Ji is not present here. In this context, I would like to mention his name also, since last time when Inder Jeet Ji had raised objection then I had humbly said that if there is agreement on language and there is any dispute over the probable name of the language only, then you give recognition to this language as "Nepali-Gorkhali". But later on when a number of Nepali people met me, then I realized the reason of the objection on the word "Nepali". After I came to know about the objection, I felt that I am hot in a position in favour "Nepali- Gorkhali". However, as per the manifesto of my party, only Nepali and Manipuri languages are said to be recognized and therefore I understand that the Bill moved by Dil Kumari Bhandari Ji should be supported as it is. This dispute arises by including the word 'Gorkhali'. I would like to mention about those persons also who have raised this dispute that since Nepali is a foreign language; it should not be given recognition. I do not accept this logic and I am of the opinion that the Nepali speaking people have been living here for years and it would be totally wrong to term these people as foreigners and in view of these circumstances, I support and favour the word "Nepali", in the same form as it has been used in the Bill. I will conclude by saying one thing in support of this Bill that our country is a democratic country and the
democratic norms adopted to force the Government to accept the demands should be respected...”\(^{11}\)

Shri Harish Narish Narayan Prabhu Zantye, M.P, Goa (Panji) in his speech in the Lok Sabha House, he supported to include Manipuri language along with other two languages i.e. Nepali and Konkani language. In his speech, “Sir, I fully support the amendment Bill moved by the hon. Member Shrimati Dil Kumari Bhandari to include Manipuri and Nepali languages in the Eighth Schedule of the constitution. This will give these languages their due recognition and also fulfill the aspirations of the millions of people who speak these languages to further enrich them. Yet another language which is long overdue for including in ES is the Konkani language, Which is spoken by over 50 lakhs people in the States of Goa, Karnataka, Kerala and Maharashtra, Goa being the focal Centre. Konkani is a modern is a modern Indo-Aryan language with Devnagari as its script. As is the case with most Indian languages, Konkani is also derived from Sanskrit language and has close affinity with Marathi, Hindi and Gujarati. It is the official language of Goa and is the medium of Instruction at the primary level. At present, it is also subject of study at the secondary, graduate and post-graduate levels...\(^{12}\)

Thus all the mention M.Ps from different States of India in their speeches supported to pass the Bill for Amendment of Eighth Schedule. At last on effort of all the Non Governmental Organisations and Associations of Manipur and outside Manipur and all the political parties of Manipur and some other National Political Parties on the last day of the summer session held on 20\(^{th}\) August, 1992 both the houses unanimously accepted to amend ES of the Constitution of India by inclusion of Manipuri, Konkani and Nepali in ES. And according to Bill No.142 of 1992, a Bill further to amend the Constitution of India passed by S. B Chauhan, Home Minister of India on 20\(^{th}\) August, 1992 Konkani, Manipuri and Nepali languages are included in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution of India by the 71\(^{st}\) Amendment of the Constitution of India. (See in the Appendix-IX).

THE IMPACT OF MANIPURI LANGUAGE MOVEMENT:

The first kind of Manipuri language movement in Manipur and Assam aimed at recognizing Manipuri as a vernacular up to B.A level in Manipur and introduction as a medium

\(^{12}\) Ibid.
of instruction up to High School levels in Manipur and Assam. As a result of the movement Manipuri language was recognized as a vernacular up to B.A level in Manipur in the year 1948. And it was introduced as a Medium of instruction up to H.S.L.C in Manipur in the year 1976 and subsequently in Assam in the year 1978 on temporary basis and finally in the year 1984. The second kind of Manipuri language movement in Manipur and Assam intended for inclusion of Manipuri language in Eighth Schedule of the Constitution of India. As result of the movement Manipuri language was included in ES of the Constitution of India. The impact of the Manipuri Language Movement can be discussed in the following impacts.

THE IMPACT ON POLITICAL IDENTITY:

Manipuri language is one of the most ancient and developed literatures of India. She is the most developed language of the Tibeto-Burman speech family of India: Dr Suniti Kumar Chatterje in his Kirata-Jana Kriti (1974, p. 157) says: “Among the various Tibeto-Burman languages, the most important, and in literature certainly of much greater importance than Newari, is the Meithei or Manipuri language” and further “Manipuri literature is most emphatically an advanced modern Indian literature, and cannot be described as the backward literature of a so-called Adivasi and primitive people- the Manipuri writers are already in front line of modern Indian writing and translation”(p.166). This language is spoken outside Manipur by lakhs of people in India, Bangladesh and Burma.

The existing list of languages in the Eighth Schedule to the Constitution of India is restricted to the Indo-Aryan and Dravidian languages only, and excludes the Tibeto-Burman languages of India altogether. It does not, therefore, properly represent the composite culture of India. Recognition of Manipuri, the most developed language of the Tibeto-Burman speech family of India, will thus serve the purpose of removing this deficiency, and strengthening the national policy for the promotion of national integration and the composite culture of India.

In 1977 the Manipur Legislative Assembly passed a Resolution to the effect that since Manipuri had always been the lingua-franca and de-facto official language of Manipur, the Government of Manipur should take action for legislation to make Manipuri the official language in addition to English. The said Resolution further requested the Government of India expedite the inclusion of Manipuri in ES to the Constitution of India. In pursuance of this Resolution the Manipur Legislative Assembly subsequently enacted the Manipur Official
Language Act 1979. The said Assembly passed another Resolution urging the Government of India to take action for immediate inclusion of the Manipuri Language in ES to the Constitution.

The Britishers left Manipur in 1947 and Manipur merged with India two years later in 1949, thereby creating a sort of administrative vacuum which was to be filled up by officers from outside the State. And ironically those were more anglicized than the real English. They alienated themselves from the people and gradually the linguistic freedom of Manipur, which Britishers preserved so cautiously, was snatched away by them. In other words, we lost our political freedom without losing the linguistic freedom. But when we attained the political freedom, we lost our linguistic freedom. Our demand is very legitimate and it cannot be compared with the case of any other languages in India. Thus as a result of the Manipuri language movement by the Manipuris in India, Manipuri language also able to maintained her political identity along with the other sisters’ languages of India.

**IMPACT ON LANGUAGE IDENTITY:**

As mentioned in earlier that the Hindu religion was adopted by the Manipuris in the 18th Century, then the Manipuris in Manipur began to use Bengali Language in their day to day life activities and given an important place for this language. Then instead of Manipuri language, Bengali language now began to use in the Schools and also given much important to this language by those Manipuri people, who adopted Hindu religion. Western Education was gradually developed in Manipur during 1885, since then British introduced Bengali, Sanskrit and English language were as Medium of Instructions in Manipur. Again due to the annexation of Manipur by Britishers in the year 27th April 1891 also lead to the introduction and expansion of Bengali Script instead of Manipuri Script. After annexation of Manipur by British India, they completely neglected Manipuri language and now Manipuri language could not became State language and thus it became only a Court Scholar’s language in the State. All the religious books, which were written in Bengali language, were interestingly begun to learn by the Manipuris. And at that time, it wasn’t comfortable and possible for making of blocks in Manipuri Script by printing press also given opportunity to the Bengali language for expansion of it in the Education.

Though the introduction of Western Education in Manipur affected to the identity of Manipuri language in the State, but on the other hand it also able to give benefit to the Manipuris. Apart from acting as an agent to change the society in its outlook, beliefs, customs,
mobility, to its birth of an elite group etc., this also stirred the minds of the people and led to social awakening. And gradually a new revolution was emerged in the fields of language, literature and cultures in the Manipuri Society. And also with emergence of the Manipuri language movement in 1920s started by different group of intellectual peoples, writers and social workers under the banner of Nikhil Manipuri Mahashbha and Manpuri Sahitya Parishad, Imphal etc. As a result of the movement, Manipuri language was recognized as a vernacular subject up to H.S.L.C level by Calcutta University in the year 1924, then up to H.S.S.L.C in the year 1928 and up to B.A in the year 1948, and in the year 1976 as a medium of instruction up to H.S.L.C in Manipur. But the movement for introduction or recognition of Manipuri language as a medium of instruction in Assam was started in the 1950s by intellectuals and social workers under the banner of Naha Marup, Cachar, Thaugan Marup, Jaffirbond and Manpuri Sahitya Parishad, Assam, Assam Manipuri Sahitya Parishad, Jaffirbond, All Assam Manipuri Society, Cachar, Assam Bengal Manipuri Association, The Manipuri Literary Forum, Cachar, Assam Manipuri Education forum, Cachar, Cachar Manipuri College students' Union, Cachar Students Union and Assam Manipuri Education Forum, Cachar etc. As a result of the movement, Manipuri language was introduced as Medium of Instruction up to Primary School level in the year 1956, up to M.E School level in the year 1965 and finally up to H.S.L.C level in the year 1984. Thus as the result of the Manipuri language movement in Manipur and Assam, the Manipuris in India able to protect their language identity, where the very notion of egalitarian society which they have been enjoying is maintained through such implementations in the line of the other languages like Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Kashmiri, Konkani, Malayalam, Marathi, Nepali, Oriya, Punjabi, Sanskrit, Sindhi, Tamil, Telugu, and Urdu etc.

IMPACT ON CULTURAL IDENTITY:

Manipuri language is culturally flourished language. It has been flourishing with worldwide famed Manipuri culture, which is very rich and ancient. The Manipuri dance form, a class-by-themselves is one of the noted Indian schools of dances. Outside Manipur, the Manipuri dance was taken up by Rabindranath Tagore at Santiniketan in 1919. Shree Budhimanta Singh was the first Guru of Manipuri dance and the second Guru was Thakur Nabakumar Singh. Later from Santiniketan, Manipuri dance got spread to far Western India and occidental world.

In film screens too, Manipuri is now playing with distinguishing features and often exhibited in the International Films Festivals and have scored worldwide reputation. It is obvious
to note that Manipuri culture with its substantial and limelight merits highly contributes to the Indian culture and heritage and thus leads to National Unity and Integrity.

The movement for inclusion of Manipuri language in ES was first started in the year 1953 by Manipur Constituency, Manipur. In that year they have taken a resolution for the recognition or inclusion of Manipuri language into the Eighth Schedule of the Indian constitution. And then it was started by Manipuri Sahitya Parishad, Imphal and Assam since 1960s, All Manipur Students’ Union (AMSU) and All Assam Manipuri Students Union (AAMSU) from 1970s and Manipuri Language Demand Co-ordinating Committee (MLDCC), N.E and (MLDCC), Assam from 1980s and it remained as a cultural demand of these organizations. In their movement they started campaign for using Meetei archaic characters on the posters, sign-boards in Imphal; later the campaign was extended to other areas of the State (especially in valley areas region). Thus as a result of more than 4 decades language movement struggle by the MSP, Imphal, MSP, Assam, AMSU, Manipur, AAMSU, Assam, MLDCC, NE, MLDCC, Assam and other organisations of the NER, Manipuri Language was included in the Eighth Schedule on 20th August, 1992. Therefore, As a result of the Manipuri language movement the Manipuris able to maintained the cultural identity of their language amongst the galaxy of her sister languages of India. In the fundamental rights of the constitution of India has guaranteed the equal treatment to every citizen of India. When viewed from this background the importance of being a schedule language is that it commands a place of extra constitutional authority and overriding position over other languages or groups of language. And also in the language Policy of India mentioned several measures for the promotion of scheduled languages, for the development of non-scheduled languages and for the recognition of deserving non-scheduled languages as schedule languages. Thus, Manipuri language became one of the schedule languages among the ES languages of India and able to avail the facilities given by ES of the Constitution of India.