PREFACE

Poverty in India is widespread, with the nation estimated to have a third of the world’s poor. In 2010, the World Bank reported that 32.7 per cent of the total Indian people fall below the international poverty line of US $ 1.25 per day, while 68.7 per cent live on less than US $ 2 per day. According to the 2010 data from the United Nations Development programme, an estimated 29.8 per cent of Indian live below the national poverty line\(^1\).

According to a 2010 World Bank report, India is on track to meet its poverty reduction goals. However, by 2015 an estimated 53 million people will still live in extreme poverty and 23.6 per cent of the population will still live under US$ 1.25 per day. This number is expected to reduce to 20.3 per cent or 268 million people by 2020. However, at the same time, the effects of the world-wide recession in 2009 have plunged 100 million more Indians into poverty than there were in 2004, increasing the effective poverty rate from 27.5 per cent to 57.2 per cent.

Poverty status in Mizoram is much the same. According to the Government of India figure of BPL in Mizoram is at 25.6 per cent\(^2\). The Planning Commission has reported an increase in poverty level in the north east between 2004-05 and 2009-10 in which Mizoram is included among the five states of the north east (5.7 per cent). The Government of India has introduced an effective Self Employment programme called Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana which is an important component of the antipoverty programme implemented through government initiatives in the rural areas of India. This programme was launched in April 1999 covering all aspects of self-employment such as organisation of the poor into self-help groups, training, credit, technology, infrastructure and marketing. SGSY is funded by the Centre and State in the ratio of 75:25, but in case of the North eastern states it is 90:10.

---


\(^2\) Census of India 2011
The first chapter is an introduction which highlights the main concepts and ideas, reflects on the statement of the problem, reviews of literature including books, articles, reports, and journals etc., scope of the study, research questions, methodology, and a brief summary of all the chapters.

The second chapter covers a profile of Mizoram from the oldest period till the present time with a focus on the socio-economic life of the people. It deals with the history, physical features, social life, festivals, clothing’s, religion, and population.

The third chapter focuses on the meaning, nature, dimensions, elements, issues and objectives of rural development both from the theoretical perspective and from the point of view of the Indian situation. Different models of rural development have been presented keeping in view the ground realities of rural India.

The fourth chapter deals with the institutional arrangement for rural development in India. The working and functions of the Ministry of Rural Development, Directorate, Specialised agencies and other institutions as present in Mizoram are highlighted in relation to their origin, structure, functions, processes and role expectations.

The fifth chapter highlighted the role of voluntary organization in the post-Independence period. The chapter also discussed the voluntary organizations present in Mizoram with a special focus on the role and functions of Young Mizo Association, Mizo Hmeichhe Insuihkham Pawl and the Mizo Zirlai Pawl.

The sixth chapter is based on the empirical study. The data collected from the field study in relation to the working of the self-employment programme, SGSY is codified, compiled and analysed according to the basic statistical principles. The working and functioning of the programme are discussed.
The concluding chapter contains the concluding observations and remarks about rural development in Mizoram. The findings and suggestions arising out of the study have been incorporated in this chapter.