

A Study of Economic Land Use Pattern Development with Special Context in Manipur

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Abstract

Economic Land Use Pattern Developed Manipur is a small but picturesque State lying between latitudes 23°50' N to 25°41'N and longitude 92° 58' E to 94° 45' E with an area of 22,327 Km². Almost 90 percent of the geographical area is hills and the rest is the Manipur valley with sizeable water bodies. There are 9 districts - five in the hills and four in the valley. Tribes and communities of the State live in 2391 rural villages. The area is mainly inhabited by majority Community, the Meiteis, who today constitutes 59 percent of the total population and the uplands or hill areas are inhabited by 33 tribes belonging to Naga subtribes and the Kuki-Chins-Mizo groups along with some other tribes not strictly falling in the said groups- all summing up to 41 percent out of the total State's population of 27,21,756. The land is rich in biodiversity and have adequate rainfall with rich and age old colorful culture.

Keywords: Land, Groups, Culture, Pattern, Development

The Central and State Governments have launched a number of schemes and enacted laws and framed rules from time to time. Shifting Cultivation Control Scheme was started during the 1st Five Year Plan (1951-56). Manipur Forest Rules (1971) was framed to contain Economic Land use practice apart from other activities. A number of projects have also been implemented to control Jhum practice and better land use system by the State government. However, following pressing challenges are still confronting the State, which mandate a Special Project which is being put forth in the form of the present proposed (Briassoulis, 2000).

- (i) Much of the land of the State of Manipur is fertile, rain sufficient during summer, agriculture potential is high and have rich biodiversity. Many farmers have indigenous skills and are willing to learn , and yet

the State's farmers and rural people has not attained the desired level of economic development. The pace of per capita income growth has been low, below the national average. Common people continue to live in poverty and indebtedness. Majority of the population are still living on the border of subsistence level. Farmer is reluctant to invest for land improvements because of insecure titles and government should step in.

- (ii) Tardy economic pace has been one of the major reasons for rapid rise of insurgency with many groups and factions actively operating in the State, resulting in a grim

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law and order situation. Improved economic opportunities may not solve all insurgency problems but will surely play a good moderation influence in nudging the society towards a more congenial law and order situation, as insurgency groups are mostly fuelled by unemployed youths.

- (iii) Manipur being situated at a strategic location in the North East India, market competition for farm produces and natural resources with neighboring South East Asian countries is a reality. Illegal smuggling of sizable quantities medicinal plants from Eastern Indian region including orchids and animal products, red sanders, etc. continues through Moreh, the gateway to Myanmar. There is need for effective control and upscaling technologies of higher productivity, production, aggregation, branding, packaging and processing especially in the field of spices, aromatic and medicinal plants and other agroproducts.
- (iv) State Government has initiated a New Land Use Policy for Manipur. A State Level Steering Committee has been constituted. The Committee has been entrusted to initiate the process of preparation and eventually implementation. The committee will also co-ordinate activities such as:
 - (v) Assess Land Resources (soil, water, & vegetation) of the state and coordinate activities of line Department.
 - (vi) Plan and coordinate on issues connected with health and scientific management of land resources
 - (vii) Collect, compile and make available statistical and other data/map etc. on land use & status of natural resources.
 - (viii) Provide support in preparing perspective plan, studies, investigation, etc. for conservation, development and management of the natural resources and,
 - (ix) Continuously review implementation of schemes/programme of govt. department and other agencies which affect land resources.

DISCUSSION

The objective of inclusive development is through effective land resource development and improving livelihood of the people by adopting both on-farm and off-farm economic activities. Availing opportunities and meeting challenges of free trade agreement with ASEAN is another pressing needs to avoid any damage to The Manipur economy. Most parts of the State is fertile, sufficient rain for most part of the year, biodiversity is rich, farmers are relatively better informed with remarkable indigenous skill utilization but the people by and large remain poor. Overall biological potentials are very high, government intervention therefore, becomes necessary through many land resource development and related activities.

1. The primary objective of the study of land-use in the Manipur valley is to record the existing land-use in the Manipur valley is to record the existing land-use and also to carry out a general survey of the area to sort out manifold problems of land-use. Each problem will be guided for tentative land-use planning. It is the desire of the author to find out the cause and effect of poverty in a fertile. It is also the desire of the author to analyse the existing land-use pattern and find out the inherent cause which has rendered the area less productive. Among the various causes of the low yield of agricultural products, the most potent one is our faulty and haphazard land utilization. Unless we tackle the problem of misuse of land with determined efforts and evolve a healthy and balanced land-use policy to form the basis of all our plans for food, the problem will remain difficult. There is a need to increase the agricultural production to keep pace with the increase of population. It is only through the scientific and balanced use of land, that we can hope to increase and maintain the yields from the land. This balance can be achieved only from a thorough land-use survey.
2. The physical factors affecting land-use, i.e. relief, slope, drainage, climate, and soil, would be carefully studied and on the basis

of these factors the area will be sub-divided as far as possible into homogenous sub-regions.

3. Once the quantitative and qualitative picture of the area is made available, the users of land can transform their idle land into productive and dynamic uses of land with the least effort. So the great need of the moment is to carry out a land utilization survey to ascertain the present use and misuse of land. It would be necessary to look into the causes as to why a particular piece of land is not cultivated, and also to determine what facilities would be needed to bring it under cultivation. Without such survey it is not possible to indicate the exact extent of land that can be reclaimed. The study will imply that we have to bring additional marginal land under cultivation, to save the land from the menace of soil erosion, to increase the yield/hectare, and to maintain a balanced development of land-use pattern in the valley and its adjoining areas.

The methodology adopted in this work may be grouped under the following heads:

1. Pre-field method,
2. Field method, and
3. Post-field method.

1. **Pre-field Method** : At the beginning of this study the author engaged himself in reading relevant books, journals, research papers and unpublished theses related to agricultural geography, land-use problem and land-use planning, revenue reports and administrative reports of Manipur. Secondly, the author studied the top sheets, village revenue maps and cadastral maps of the area concerned.

2. **Field Method** : Although aerial photo-interpretation and remote sensing techniques have proved more useful in the systematic studies of land-use and land potential classification, yet the author cannot put these techniques to use. Therefore, the technique for land-use development study and land classification has to depend upon the data obtained from traditionally available materials.

3. **Post-field Methods** : After the analysis of the data collected, the percentage of the total area under the role of land-use dominance have been produced according to ranking order. In general, orientation has been classified according to the method which determines the nature and role of land-use pattern. Area contributing less than 20 per cent are not considered. A symbolic nomenclature is given to each land-use orientation using the first letter of land-use category i.e. A=Arable, F=Forest, P=Pasture, B=Barren land, S=Settlement, V=Vacant land and F=Fallow etc. They have been grouped in to a formula where the letters represent the land-use and the figures represent their ranks.

CONCLUSION

The present work includes a number of field studies and intensive surveying at various micro-levels. To investigate the dynamism of land-use orientation, a micro-level study, mainly, based on a technique of systematic purposive cluster sampling based on stratified randomization in the area (Manipur), has been adopted for analytical purposes. The stratification has been done after a detailed study of physiographic features of the valley. On the basis of these factors, the area is again sub-divided as far as possible into homogenous sub-divided as far as possible into homogenous sub-regions. From each sub-region, representative villages are selected and these include a cluster of fields.

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