

**IMPACT OF DEVELOPMENT ON THE HMARS OF TIPAIMUKH
IN CHURACHANDPUR DISTRICT, MANIPUR**

By



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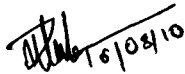
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DECLARATION

I, Immanuel Zarzosang Varte hereby declare that the subject matter of this thesis entitled "Impact of Development on the Hmars of Tipaimukh in Churachandpur District, Manipur" is a bonafide study of my work and that the contents of this thesis or a part thereof has not been submitted to any University/ Institute for any other degree or award of any prize.

This is been submitted to North- Eastern Hill University, Shillong, for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Anthropology.



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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The concept of development has been defined variously by economists, planners, administrators, development professionals and anthropologists (Cochrane 1976, Dube 1988, Mathur and Cernea 1995). During the colonial period, development was closely related to the policy of the western countries regarding their various actions such as the raising of the standard of the colonies or the covert exploitation of the colonies in the form of aid, renovations, missionary works, etc. Therefore, during the colonial period, development was, for the colonies, synonymous to 'regency', 'guardian', 'patrons', etc. After World War II and the resultant de-colonialisation process, development was viewed as a straightforward economic issue: identifying and quantifying the composition of economic growth packages reducing development to mere economic growth. Lewis' dictum "First it should be noted that our subject matter is growth and not distribution" (Lewis 1955) reflects the mainstream emphasis on economic growth which permeated the whole field of development thinking. The Marshall Plan aid programs to reconstruct Europe, along with the Bretton Woods institutions (IMF, IBRD) created to guide international economic policy, reflected that view (Jenkins *et al* 1997: 157-220). Paul Baran, by far the most influential development economist among the leftists, wrote in 1957 on the political economy of growth and defined *growth* or *development* as the increase in the per capita production of material goods (Baran 1957). Development is thus associated with economic growth where its approaches are characterized with primarily logistic issues rather than with ultimate

ends and such questions as what may foster 'the good of man' or 'how one should live.' The ends are taken as fairly straightforwardly given, and the object of the exercise is to find the appropriate means to serve them (Goulet 1997: 1160-71). The idea is to make calculated input to ensure capital formation as well as rising of the output. Growth is taken as the key to progress. It is assumed that, once the growth process gained momentum, an *invisible hand* would take care of the distributional dimension. The *trickle-down* effect of growth would increasingly, though slowly, lead to a more equitable distribution.

Governments, planning agencies, development professionals and others also have the tendency of believing more in quantity rather than in quality of development input largely as a result of the influence of economists. At the level of state and center, statistical indices such as growth rate, per capita income, gross national product and gross domestic product are regarded as true indicators of development and are actually part of the modern state's view that more often than not is often diametrically opposed to the people's views and perceptions. Of course, there have been ritualistic concessions to history and tradition. However, as these concessions were largely emulative with endogenous creativity held in check, they were therefore, in many instances, misdirected.

The coming of the 1970s saw a gradual shift from this predominantly economic conscious development to a more humanized form of development. The new shift in development paradigm also paved the way for the involvement of social scientists,

especially anthropologists. Social anthropologists started critiquing governments' preoccupation with such quantitative indicators (Cochrane 1971, Dube 1973, Belshaw 1976). They argued that development should not be judged solely on the basis of these indicators but should also take into account such qualitative parameters as quality of life, standard of living, levels of aspiration, happiness, etc (Kottak 1984, Dube 1988). Though these indices sounded quite abstract and difficult to measure, they felt that these will truly reflect the distribution of fruits of development. Social anthropologists like Dube, Cochrane and Kottak also believed in sustainability of development and unless it is ensured, there is no point in carrying out any development programme for any community.

A true anthropological notion of development therefore takes into account the cultural dimensions of the people into development thinking and formation. Claude Levi-Strauss was the first to draw attention to this aspect in *The Savage Mind* (1966), *Structural Anthropology* (1976), *The View from Afar* (1985) and *Myth and Meaning* (1989) where he drew attention to local thinking and formation and cleared the views and perceptions of those who do not live in modern situations and whose lives are guided by traditional rather than modern thinking. There is however limitations faced even by anthropologists. This limitation mainly lies in the fact that although sensitive to non-modern situations and paying more attention to traditional views and perceptions prevalent in any culture, the concepts social anthropologists use in development thinking are still part

of the conceptual apparatus of modernity and the modern state thus in many ways often committing the mistake of denying culture its own dynamics.

Nevertheless, as a result of the involvement of social anthropologists and other social scientists into development planning and thinking, development is now no longer defined merely as raising the GNP and per capita income. Both are necessary, but without a purposive orientation they can defeat the objectives of development (Dube 1988). As most development programmes are formulated in the absence of the cultural factors, it has often led to total rejections by the people (Bhandari 1988, Chaudhury 1993). While economic growth is necessary, *per se* it does not constitute true and sustainable development. Rather, it has to be linked to a set of well- defined socio-cultural objectives that puts culture and people first. Development concerns such as prevention of the degradation of the environment, preservation of scarce natural resources or finding alternatives to them, population control and so forth- have wide ramifications in the domain of culture. Any consideration of the quality of life will be meaningless if it does not take into account deeply held cultural values. Similarly, human resource development has vast cultural underpinnings. The notion of basic or minimum needs- nutrition, education, health, housing, employment, and leisure- again is organically linked to culture (Dube 1991: 25). In this perspective, development programmes can be meaningful and successful if it is formulated in accordance with the cultural parameters and felt needs of the people. Development should neither be imposed from outside nor should it be exteriorly designed. It should be people and

culture oriented which is actually possible only when the cultural values of the community are taken into account during the entire process of planning, implementation and evaluation.

Thus, after more than five decades of development, there are some signs of change in development thinking. Planners have begun focusing on who development is for and started looking beyond GNP growth.

Statement of the Problem

As a preamble to the statement of the problem, I wish to mention, at a more personal level, several advantages and disadvantages I faced as a male researcher.

One of the limitations of being a male researcher doing fieldwork in a remote, insurgency afflicted and politically sensitive area was that all movements were continuously watched by the local people and even by some gun-toting elements sometimes present in the villages. My movements were also closely watched by government officials, members/workers of political parties owing allegiance to certain local politicians and also by the Indian army.

Another problem faced during the study was data collection, especially from government agencies. As the topic of the study is on impact of development, data on development programmes implemented in the area- both from the grassroots and government were needed and therefore collected. However, whenever collection of development data were attempted from government agencies like the Block Development Office, District Rural Development Agencies etc, officials from these

offices eyed me with suspicion and fear and therefore most reluctant to give out any information that might 'rattle the skeletons in the closet'. No matter how much or how hard I tried to gain their trust, collection of reliable data from these offices and officials is always the biggest challenge.

At the village level, people in Parbung seems to be the most conservative as far as giving out information on development in the area is concerned while people from Thingkal village seemed to be the most forthcoming and shelved out information with ease. In all cases, it was the men, who answered queries easily while most of the women are withdrawn and guarded when questioned. Except for the few who are well-known to me, the general atmosphere was of guarded response and suspicion regarding my queries and took much time to believe that I am just a researcher and that the result of my research will not expose those guilty of something but rather to just study the impact of development on their life and that the outcome of the study will not have any unwanted repercussions on individual or groups. Once they understood my actual role and intention, they were quite frank and friendly with me and would willingly share all information quite freely. I was friendlier with the men, especially with those who do not hold any position of authority in the village, than to the women in the villages who took time to speak up. As a result, the bulk of my data were obtained from ordinary people of the village and actually, these section of the people do give out the most original data and often speak the truth as they have nothing to guard against and also enjoy mobility

as they usually have no sides as far as political allegiance or church allegiance is concerned.

Again, another problem I had to struggle with is the significance and potency of 'official' discourses of development, both the theoretical and practical, as compared to the strategies and language games of local people. This poses the following questions:

Whether development processes envisioned by central government are genuinely translated into village level realities;

Whether the values people place on changes in their lives are, or should be, congruent with those in terms of which the architects of planned change assess their success or failure;

Whether the costs to social change that planners characteristically do not or cannot see can be reduced; whether some of the obstacles to the success of planning can be transcended, and whether the perspectives of the planners and the villagers can be brought together, to their collective benefit (Keesing 1990) and,

How can this be done in such a way that political decision-makers and practitioners of planning and policy implementation will take serious cognizance of the researcher's narrative and its implicit or explicit policy recommendations?

The above queries frequently came up during the study which present themselves incessantly and disturbingly in the beguiling faces of modernity, especially when ideas of modernity are internalized by local actors and appear in the assumptions that local practices, expectations and even conversations with researchers. This state of

affair has de-centered the once-assumed homogenous western modernization path to development and has increased our awareness of the multiplicity of forms of modernity. It is important to re-analyze the issue of development and modernity, but this time through the lens of its counter-tendencies. While development anthropologists can play and also play various roles and occupy various positions, they perform three overlapping functions: collecting and analyzing information; helping to design plans and policies; and carrying out these plans through action. This anthropological engagement is based on the strong belief that the selective use of anthropological knowledge, both empirical and cognitive, can make a difference for the better although there is considerable divergence of opinion on how this knowledge can be most effectively utilized (Mathur 1995).

Lastly, another very important problem is on how development is being perceived, practised and measured both by the people and planners. Development in post-independent India, especially in tribal areas, has been defined as socio-economic development of the tribal people through planned development programmes like integrated area development and other programmes that appears to suit the socio-cultural and economic condition of the tribal people. In pursuance of this policy, the government has also been implementing several development programmes in Tipaimukh on education, medical, social welfare, road, agriculture, banking, co-operative societies, poverty alleviation and employment generation programmes, etc for more than five decades. Coupled with these development programmes initiated by the

government, there have also been initiatives and involvement from non-government organizations in the development process. However, in spite of all these (quantitative and qualitative) approaches and initiatives, it is yet to be assessed to what extent development has affected the socio-cultural life of the Hmars. Further, most development programmes appear to have failed for a combination of empirical and cognitive reasons. Tongues have rarely, if ever, been taken out of cheek where it concerns the empirical reasons like incompetence, corruption, class bias, clan/caste bias, urban middle class arrogance. Equally rare attention has been given to the cognitive dimension of development. The present study is also an attempt to fill this gap.

Review of Literature

In any development study, one of the most important aspects that need to be tightly grasped is the changing nature of the debates on the concepts and practices of development, especially immediately after the end of World War-II till the present. In this regard, a set of several titles on development were reviewed in order to clearly understand the changing concepts of development from its purely economic engagements to the more holistic understanding of development as a process and movement towards improved 'quality of life and social well-being'; towards 'empowerment', restoration of human dignity, resource management, sustainability and fulfillment of basic needs.

Initially, development essentially meant economic development and economists focused their attention exclusively to economic growth. The idea was to make

calculated input to ensure capital formation as well as rising of the output (Lewis 1955, Baran 1957). Theories like Rostow's (1960) '*Stages of Economic Growth: A Communist Manifesto*' lured many Third World opinions. The rhetoric was that of egalitarianism and socialism, often with a radical flourish, but the practice of planning rest largely on the western capitalist paradigm. Later on, the relationship between economic development and socio- cultural change was more keenly realized and, in consequence, the cultural dimension of development was emphasized. Social anthropologists argued that development should not be judged solely on the basis of quantitative indicators but should also take into account such qualitative parameters as quality of life, standard of living, levels of aspiration, happiness etc (Cochrane 1971, Dube 1973, Belshaw 1976, Kottak 1984).

Modifications in the institutional framework of society and alterations in the attitudes and values were contemplated to facilitate and accelerate the process of economic development but while maintaining the autonomy of economic approach to development from disciplines like anthropology, sociology and other behavioural sciences. C. P. Kottak wrote "One of the most significant findings of my comparative study of development projects was that the average economic rates of return for culturally compatible projects were much higher than those for incompatible ones. In other words, attention to the cultural dimension pays off in financial terms and in rates of return twice as high as those for culturally insensitive projects" (ibid 1984: 38). This revolution gave birth to the modernization paradigm and development as 'directed

change'. This stage was an improvement upon the conventional growth model by raising some significant questions on development. Critical assessment of results and fresh endogenous reflection, have led to serious doubts and questions, which in turn have thrown up insights and have led towards the emergence of an alternative paradigm. The broad configurations of the new model is clear, although there is no unanimity in respect of the means by which to achieve it. A consensus about the new paradigm is emerging (Dube 1988, 1989). In being criticized as a discourse of power (Sachs 1992, Escobar 1991, 1995), as opposed to democracy (Lummis 1991) or as the 'religion of the west' (Rist 1997) or as the 'myth of development' (Tucker 1992), development is being given more coherence and consistency. This apparently postmodern era is commonly characterized as transcending the so-called 'impasse' in development theory which was identified by Booth (1985) and others in the mid 1980s. The impasse is said to have arisen as a result of widespread disillusionment with conventional development and development failure; the crisis and eventual eclipse of the various strands of socialism as alternative paths; the growing economic diversity of countries within the Third World; increasing concern with the need for environmental sustainability; the increasing assertiveness of voices 'from below'; the rise of the postmodern challenge to universalizing theories and conventional practice of development (Schuurman 1993).

This new paradigm to development repudiated the modernization theory and helped remove the emphasis on economic indicators by successfully introducing social and cultural aspects and a greater concern with poverty arguing that an active process of

underdevelopment had taken place as peripheral economies were integrated into the capitalist system on unequal terms, primarily as providers of cheap raw materials for export to rich industrialized countries (Lewis 2005). The new approach asserts that it is not only the terminology of development that is fraught with ambivalence but its practice as well. A bewildering assortment of policy prescriptions parade under the single banner of development (Goulet 1997, 2000). Most development policy – mainly through development interventions and donors – primarily functions to mobilize and maintain political support that is to legitimize rather than to orientate practice (Mosse 2005). Phrased differently, many development policies are an inherently upward-focused tool for maintaining the legitimacy of interventions rather than laying the groundwork for ‘grassroots’ or ‘on-the-ground’ implementations. Many development projects work to maintain themselves as coherent policy ideas or systems of representations but are many times driven rather by the exigencies of organizations and the need to maintain relationships. Mosse argues that discourses become the end, rather than the means, of development because coherent and attractive development discussions create a far better framework for ‘maintaining relationships’ than contradictory development realities. Projects ‘do not fail’ but ‘are failed by wider networks of support and validation’, which makes success and failure ‘policy oriented judgements that obscure project effects’. This is not to say that development is relative and without impact. Development projects are renowned for their unintended side

effects, and that even if desired project effects are achieved, these are only positively acknowledged if they (still) fit into the dominant policy model (ibid 2005).

In India, planned development was projected as a self fulfilling prophecy but has failed to produce the desired result even after more than five decades of planning in India. While it cannot be denied that development in India is varied in result and not without some success, the fact that development in India is still beset with many problems ranging from the methodology, stage of formulation and implementation of the planned development remains. As a result, the experiences of India's planned development, spanning a period of more than five decades, is varied and filled with a story of disappointment and failures that more often than not outweighed the few successes it may have (Varma 1995). This dismal performance of most development initiatives, especially among tribal communities in India, prompted questions and debates on what the tribals gain in terms of life and whether planned development has also actually marginalized them instead of having empowered them that many times leads to insurgency, conflicts centered on territory, identity and resource (Padhey 2000).

As the objectives of all rural development programmes were more about meeting targets and creating physical infrastructures, it is felt that developmental objectives have been achieved once the stated targets are achieved. The emphasis was on physical targets or objects and not on people who are the real subjects for whom development was supposed to take place. As a result, the benefits of such development policies and programmes have worked in favour of the rich and powerful (Sahu 2004:

294- 295). Urbanization and industrialization, which were supposed to bring about all-round improvements in the life of the people have brought an increase in the problems of extravagancy, liquor consumption, and expenditure on fashion, prostitution, begging, diseases, ill health, displacement, exploitation and oppression. Studies on impact of industrialization on tribal societies have also highlighted the differential consequences of such processes. Vidyarthi's study of social consequences of installation of BHEL and other industries in the tribal belt of Chotanagpur and Singhbhum areas of undivided Bihar is one of those works that has highlighted the detrimental consequence of industrialization. He feels that such processes have not only opened up the relatively insulated tribal territory but also served as one of the important factors for attracting anti-social elements into the area. Spread of consumerism and cash economy, rise of alcoholism and even prostitution are all leading to disruption of the traditional cultural fabric of the tribal (Vidyarthi 1970).

Now, as a result of such regressive results, tribals are opposing various programmes related to development projects, industrialization and urbanization (Upadhyay and Pandhey 2003). Tribals' opposition stem from the government's insensitive approach towards the upliftment of the weaker sections that really needed the development input. Development measures were mainly directed at the betterment of few who became richer and richer, whereas these programmes left out a substantial chunk of the needy and the downtrodden (Mahapatra 1991, 1994). Therefore, one of the central issues of tribal development in India is whether the

Investment has helped to improve the life of the people or has helped to deepen the crisis of illiteracy, poverty and other forms of deprivations thereby making them more vulnerable (Sharma 1978). Tripathy remarked; “The central issue to our mind is: has the investment on tribal development really led to tribal development or has the money dried up in the pipeline, thanks to the political, bureaucratic and private intermediaries all along the line?, the illiteracy rate, the isolation of the tribals, their poverty and simplicity combine to make them more vulnerable than other communities” (ibid 2000: xiv).

Many development programmes being implemented in the country are irrelevant coupled with poor implementation. Furthermore, there is hardly any participation of people in the grassroots in the formulation and other processes of development planning and implementation. Moreover, programmes formulated at central government level, many a times, did not take into account the diversity in socio-economic and environmental conditions through the length and breadth of the country (Bezbaruah and Sharma 2004: 48-49). Development programmes in India, especially in tribal areas also do not adequately acknowledge and respect the peoples’ rights to lands, culture and traditions but instead, tribals are being deprived of what little they have for the sake of development. The disintegration of tribal system of democracy and administration for the sake of ‘better governance’ in the line of ‘advanced’ democratic form of government led to their gradual marginalization and in the process, the destruction of their other socio-cultural fabrics. Therefore the validity of democracy and development



cannot but be questioned as the poor and the marginalized or, what the constitution of India call 'weaker sections', do not seem to be beneficiaries of development and democracy (Chaudhury 1993, Louis 2005: 155-156).

Coming nearer home, the states of Northeast India like Manipur is peopled by different ethnic groups, each with their own distinct culture, views, perceptions and issues (Zehol 1998) that makes the region's development susceptible to regional inequalities and imbalances. In order to tackle this problem, special emphasis has been laid on removal of equalities and imbalances through regional planning from the Fifth Five Year Plan (GoI 1973). In the context of Manipur in particular and Northeast India in general, regionalisation involves integration as well as differentiation. As all schemes of regionalisation must be based on the criterion of homogeneity, identification of the components of this homogeneity becomes a primary task of the planner (Chaube *et al* 1975). Traditionally three different approaches have been used in defining regions. The first stresses homogeneity with respect to someone or combination of physical, economic, social or other characteristics; the second emphasizes so-called nodality or polarization, usually around some central urban place; and the third is programming or policy-oriented, concerned mainly with administrative coherence or identity between the area being studied and available political institutions for effectuating political decisions. Naturally enough regional definitions, as established in practice, often represent a compromise between these different pure types (ibid 1975: 40-66).

However, the prevalent theories and practices of regional development are not so all-inclusive, comprehensive, and social goal-oriented so as to meet, adequately, the aims of regional development as they are disaggregated versions of economic growth models that makes human beings to become factors of production and not the benefactors of production (Misra 1985: 139- 140) leading to increased inequalities between groups that eventually result in the failure of planning in the region. The neglect of existing inequalities, which Stewart calls 'horizontal inequalities', in matters of access to resources between culturally defined groups has been one of the main sources for the various political disturbances in many regions (Stewart 2001: 2, 31). Such disturbances often take place in two forms. The first is usually ethnic clash between groups over political power, territory and resource control, etc. The second includes tribal uprisings and movements highlighting the demand of tribal self-rule with different dimensions and magnitude (Xaxa 2002). On one extreme, there is the articulation of the demand for sovereign state and, on the other, for greater power to tribes over their lands, forest and other resources at the level of village or locality. In between, there has been a demand for greater powers in the form of separate state or autonomous regional/ district council within the existing sovereign state. They all stem from the idea of self-rule, the genesis of which invariably lay in the horizontal inequalities or structure of relationship of domination-subjugation that affects the relationship between those living in the valleys and the tribes living in the hills of Manipur. This has been so as many tribes have the feeling that they are situated in a

state of domination either by non-tribal domination or by a state considered as alien and an intruder. The domination according to them has been economic, political, social and cultural. Accordingly, these people feel that development is nothing but a development of control and not of progress. Hence the idea of self-rule in the form of demand for autonomy is very strong among them therefore leading to insurgency (ibid 2002: iii). Sen (2000) argues that expansion of freedom should be both the primary end and also the principle means of development. Development consists of the removal of various types of unfreedoms that leave people with very little choice and little opportunities of exercising their reasoned agency. Development should be evaluated in terms of the expansion of the capabilities of people to lead the kind of lives they value—and have reason to value. Unlike increases in income, the expansion of people's capabilities depends both on the elimination of oppression and on the provision of facilities like basic education, health care, and social safety nets. Basic education, health care, and women's rights are themselves constitutive of development (ibid 2000: xii, 4-5).

While there cannot be any denial of the fact that economic development, as part of the rural reconstruction programme is a must and should be taken up seriously, economic development alone, without well-specified social directions instead of solving problems may further intensify them. It seems necessary that while evaluating programme, the economic and socio-cultural goals are thoroughly understood and distinctly reviewed for an objective assessment of the overall situation (Majumdar 1989). Occasional hitches surfacing in recent times may be simmering indications for a

revolt against the errant system. The problems of development and the weeding out of the flaws, if not done quickly, will lead to a nation-wide internecine struggle for socio-political domination (Goswami 1989: 118).

Given the above, development in India should be viewed in the context of multi-cultural societies which are composed of both dominant culture and minorities or “sandwich” groups and therefore need to be dealt with utmost care and understanding (Atal 1991). Emphasis on the importance of culture as the key variable in development rather than as a negative factor to explain the failure of ill-conceived development plans is the need of the hour; that cultural dimension should never be overlooked in tribal development. Any development model that does not take its cue from culture is bound to fail (ibid 1991). The basic requirement for development is a strong desire in a large section of the society for an improved level of living, improvement in diet, improvement in physical well-being, improvement in housing and environmental sanitation, freedom from diseases (Alexander and Kumaran 1992). In all these, culture is the base that provides the motivation for achieving one’s well-being, motivation to use one’s knowledge and motivation to make the best use of the resources provided by one’s environment (ibid 1992). Yet, inspite of such crucial role culture played in development; experts have shown considerable reluctance in appreciating the vast storehouse of local knowledge that can be found in culture as it is often assumed that tradition was a barrier to change (Dube 1990).

Reflecting on the use and importance of local knowledge in development thinking and planning or what the Rudolphs called 'the modernity of tradition' (Rudolph & Rudolph 1967), Brouwer points out that the international movement on local knowledge and development has gradually gained ground since the past fifteen years as can be seen in the many issues of the local Knowledge and Development Monitor. He argues that sustainability of development projects can be achieved if the local concepts behind practices are taken into consideration in research and project designs (Brouwer 2000a, 2000b). Taking the views and perceptions of the people into development thinking has helped to provide a bridge between culture and the functioning of the mind; helped reveal some of the inner workings of the human mind, and gives a greater understanding of how people order and perceive the world around them (D'Andrade 1995) thus in many ways ensuring a greater possibility for success and sustainability of development projects. This is an aspect often absent in most thinking on development in India where an outside view of the situation, rather than an inside view of the situation, is often the main approach towards the formulation of development thinking.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the present study are:

1. To describe the various development programmes implemented in Churachandpur district since its inception in 1983 till 2002 when the Ninth Five Year Plan came to an end.

2. To assess the impact of these programmes on the Hmars of Tipaimukh, Churachandpur district of Manipur, especially on aspects like income and occupation, education, health, socio-political institutions like marriage and village administration, social relationship, value system and women.

3. To identify the various socio-cultural factors responsible for success/failure of the development programmes.

Methodology

Well established anthropological methods of data collection were employed during the course of the present study.

Pilot Study:

Before starting the intensive fieldwork, a pilot study was first carried out during February 2005 in the area selected for study to gather baseline data for the formulation of the research plan. In view of this, tentative formulation and standardization of various research tools like village census, interview guides, etc to be used in the study were prepared before leaving for the field. Accessibility of the area from towns like Churachandpur, Churachandpur District, Manipur and Lakhimpur, Cachar District, Assam, security situation in the area, fooding, lodging, etc were also ascertained. While a major part of the pilot study carried out during February 2005 was done at Parbung village, the sub- divisional headquarters of Tipaimukh sub- division, Churachandpur, the district headquarters of Churachandpur District was also visited during the pilot

study where useful information on Tipaimukh sub- division were collected from the BDO's office located there.

Selection of Villages:

Based on the preliminary data gathered during the pilot study, identification and selection of villages for the present study were made and finalized. Three villages were selected for indepth study out of 37 villages presently in Tipaimukh (Manipur Gazette, No. 227, Imphal, 4th October 2008). The three selected villages are:

1. Parbung village
2. Patpuihmun village
3. Thingkal village

The justification for selecting Parbung village for indepth study was based on several factors that make it ideal for conducting an indepth study. Being the divisional headquarters, the village boasts of the presence of several government infrastructures like block offices, primary health center, water supply system, public distributions systems, high school, anganwadi, National Highway No. 150, etc. Apart from these government infrastructures, there are also non-government infrastructures like schools, brick fields, mission offices, etc. It is also located not very far from Tipaimukh market which is the commercial hub and main point of departure from Tipaimukh to other places. These infrastructures could be taken as agencies and sources for/ of changes. The village also saw the implementation of most development programmes implemented in Tipaimukh. These factors therefore combine to make the people of this

village to be directly and indirectly exposed to the forces of changes especially on aspects like education, income and occupation, health, marriages, social relationships, etc generated by such development programmes implemented in the area. As a result, educational status, income and occupational status, rate of migration and intermixing, drugs and alcohol abuses, health status, etc seem to be the highest. All these factors combined makes an indepth study of Parbung village indispensable and a must as the village offers a very high potential for a rich source of crucial data for the present study.

The justification for selecting Patpuihmun village was also based on several factors. It is the biggest village among all other villages located on the other side of the Barak River¹ called '*Vangai*' and also one of the few villages in Tipaimukh with a chief still living in the village. Patpuihmun village is about 60 km away from the divisional headquarters and about 35 km away from Tipaimukh market. It has no means of transportation and communication connecting it with the divisional headquarters except for narrow hill paths. It is also one of the few villages in Tipaimukh that have experienced the implementation of several development programmes and also a village where both government and non- government infrastructures like dispensary, sub-primary health center, Anganwadi, schools, etc are also present. Like in Parbung, these factors combine to make the people of this village to be directly and indirectly exposed to the forces of changes especially on aspects like education, income and occupation, health, marriages, social relationships, etc as a result of such development programmes

¹ Parbung and Patpuihmun villages are located on either side of the Barak River. The side where Parbung village is located is called '*Hmarbiel*'.

implemented in the area. In spite of the absence of National Highway No. 150 on the Vangai side of Tipaimukh sub-division and the village's relative isolation from both the divisional headquarters and Tipaimukh market- the commercial hubs of Tipaimukh sub-division, the impact of development on Patpuihmun village appears to be almost at par, if not higher, with Parbung village. This makes Patpuihmun village an ideal subject for further indepth study as it is believed that many interesting data crucial for the present study could be obtained here.

Like the other two villages, the justification for selecting Thingkal village was also based on several factors that make it ideal for conducting an indepth study. Thingkal village is also located on the Vangai side of Tipaimukh. It is about 70 km away from the Block headquarter and about 80 km from Tipaimukh market. It has no proper means of transportation connecting it with the divisional headquarters except for narrow hill path. However, it is well connected with Patpuihmun village via inter-village roads. The village is, by far, the most remote village due to its distance from the divisional headquarter, Tipaimukh market and other development infrastructures. The village is devoid of any government infrastructures with only one lower primary school in the village. The village is also untouched by most development programmes with respect to education, health and others development aspects. This position of the village makes it ideal for conducting indepth study on how far and how much development has actually impacted the life of the people of Tipaimukh and the role of culture and tradition in determining the outcome of development programmes in Tipaimukh.

After the pilot study and selection of villages, further relevant secondary materials were read to strengthen my understanding on the concept of development and on the anthropological methods of fieldwork. Census schedules and interview guides for the intensive fieldwork were also prepared and finalized in consultation with my supervisor and also with those who have been working on development. Being a Hmar, I have no problem with communication. But given the current political situation like insurgency, I was nonetheless wary and also prepared myself for any contingencies and the need for any flexibility that might come up during the course of my fieldwork.

Duration of Fieldwork:

Intensive fieldwork was conducted in the three selected villages of Tipaimukh during which most of the primary data for the present study was collected.

The first phase of fieldwork was done during February– May, 2006 at Parbung village, the sub- divisional headquarters. The second phase of fieldwork took place during November– December, 2007 at Patpuihmun village. The third phase of fieldwork was carried out during January– April, 2008 at both Parbung and Patpuihmun village. The main reasons for this second visit to both Parbung and Patpuihmun was to crosscheck the consistency of some of the data collected in these villages during the earlier fieldworks while at the same time to also collect more data that were found to be inadequate. The fourth and last phase of fieldwork was carried out during January– February, 2009 at Thingkal village.

The reason for conducting fieldwork in four phases was mainly due to the distance of the villages from each other and the lack of proper means of transportation that limits my mobility. Secondly, the fieldworks were mainly carried during the dry seasons as accessing the area during the raining season is difficult. Thirdly, the period towards the end and beginning of the year is most suitable as people are relatively free from their works before and after the jhuming season. Moreover, these periods are the time when people who went outside Tipaimukh to study or work usually come to their village for vacation.

Methods of Primary Data Collection:

On arriving in the field, the first and foremost task I need to do was to establish a rapport with the people as many of the villagers were at first apprehensive of me and my intention. At the same time, identification of key informants was also done.

After successfully establishing a rapport with the people, village census was collected from the selected villages with the help of my key informants and some villagers whose help I was able to obtain. Special emphasis were made on the type of the household or family, the size of the family, the different type of clans present in the village, age-wise distribution of the population, education, income and occupational distribution, etc. This exercise provided crucial information on the demographic profile of the villages and the people studied. It also gave me a general picture of the status of development of the villages and the people studied.

Apart from village census, interviews- both formal and non-formal were also conducted with several individuals based on the interview guides prepared for this purpose. I was greatly assisted by my key informants in all these interviews either directly or indirectly. During the interviews, special emphasis were kept in mind pertaining to development programmes implementation in the villages and the impacts of such programmes on aspects like family, kinship, marriage, religion, village administration, social relationship, value system, education, health, income and occupation, etc and of how the people felt and view them. This helped to give me deeper insights into the status of development in the area and also in identifying the issues of development which normally, a villager would not like to speak about for some reason or the other. Investigation of these issues was pursued in the course of fieldwork.

Case study of the people's experiences on development programmes in the area was also very helpful in giving me deeper insight into issues pertaining to development programmes implementation in the area.

Participant observation was also an important part of data collection during my fieldwork. Directly getting involved with the people and their activities such as going to the jhums, attending village authority or youth meetings, church activities, marriages, sport meets, household activities, etc helped me to win the trust of the people resulting in them opening up to me. It also enabled me to describe the daily life of the people in the villages, the various activities they performed with more detail and accuracy as such

participation gave me the chance for a deeper insight and understanding of these activities.

Field notes, diary and mechanical devices like still camera, voice recorder were also used to improve the quality of data collected as many important additional data like names of informers, date, time and place of data collection, topic and course of interview, pictures, etc during fieldwork could be recorded for later references and crosschecking.

Cross-checking was also regularly done after each fieldwork in consultation with my supervisor and reviewing further relevant works on development, etc so as to check the consistency, shortcomings or limitations on theories and methods of data collection as each fieldwork has the potentiality of changing theories, revising and improvising the methods of data collection depending on the unfolding situations. This enabled me to understand the phenomena more scientifically with as much objectivity as possible.

Apart from the primary data collected through intensive fieldwork, secondary data was also collected for the present study. For the collection of such secondary data, relevant official sources like census report, economic and statistic reports, annual plans, district information registers, block registers, North-Eastern Council (NEC) reports, etc were consulted. The libraries of North-Eastern Hill University, Manipur University, Jawaharlal Nehru University, Indian Council of Social Science Research and the internet were also frequently visited and consulted to obtain secondary data from

relevant non-official sources like books, journals, magazines, newspapers, seminar papers, etc.

CHAPTER II

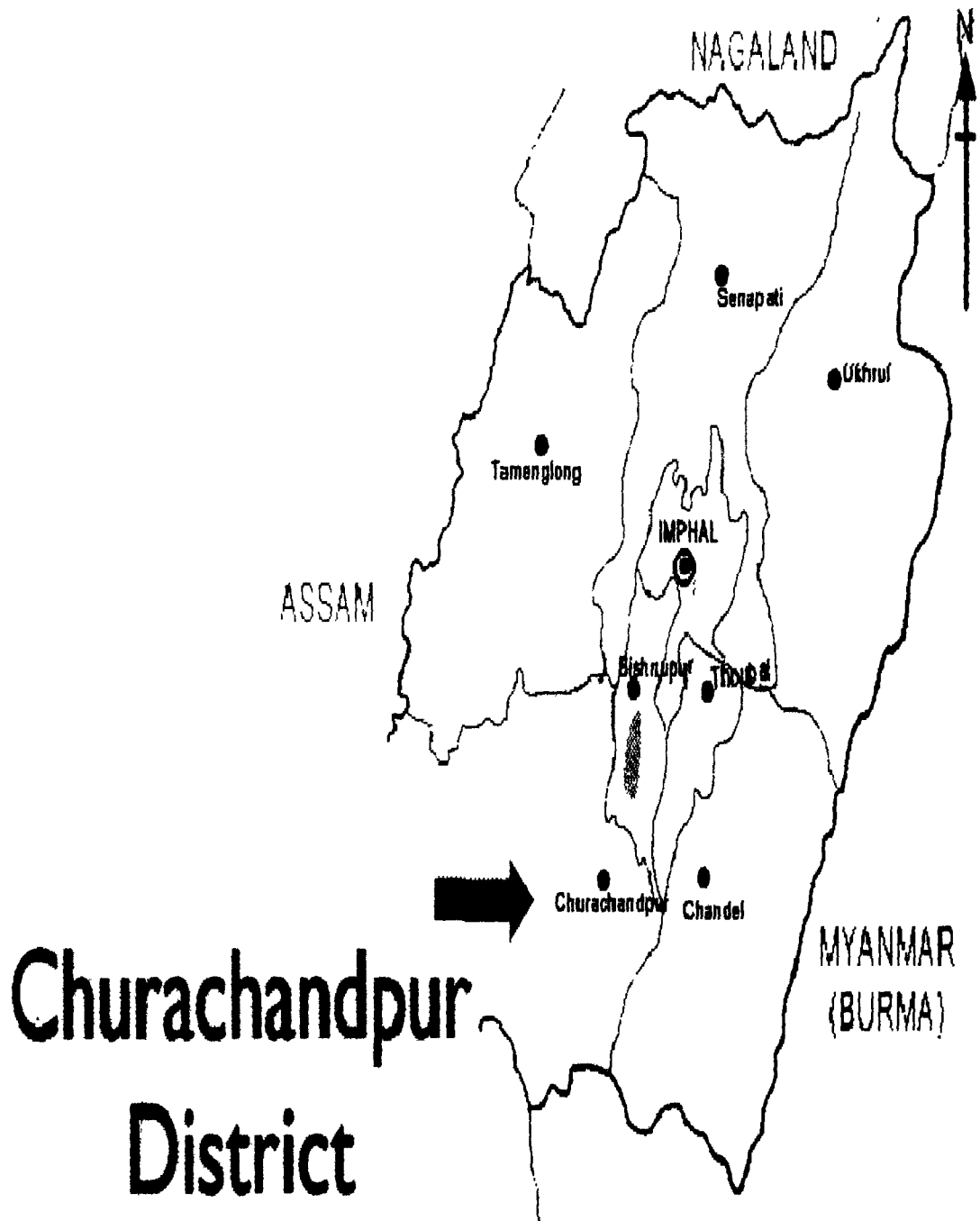
LAND AND PEOPLE

Churachandpur District

The present study has been conducted in Tipaimukh sub- division which falls under Churachandpur District in the southwestern corner of Manipur with North latitudes $23^{\circ} 56' 20.4''$ and $24^{\circ} 36' 46.8''$ and East longitudes $92^{\circ} 58' 12''$ & $93^{\circ} 52' 58.8''$. It is a hilly district with a very small percentage of plain area. It is bounded by Burma in the South, Mizoram in the West & South West, Bishenpur district in the North, Tamenglong district in the West and Thoubal district in the East. Churachandpur is the biggest of the nine districts in Manipur and was formerly known as 'Manipur South District' before the district re-organisation of Manipur. However, as a consequence of the district re-organisation of Manipur at the end of 1969, Manipur South District became Churachandpur District vide Government of Manipur Secretariat Revenue Department Order No. 43/2/81-R (Pt), dated 15th July 1983 (Manipur Extraordinary- Gazette no. 174, dated 15th August 1983).

According to 2001 census, the total population of the district is 2, 23866. The literacy rate in the district is 64.38% (72.6% male and 56.4% female). The district is divided into 5 sub- divisions, namely Churachandpur, Singngat, Thanlon, Parbung (Tipaimukh) and Henglep. There are 6 Tribal Development Blocks. The sub-divisions are contiguous with the Tribal Development Blocks except for Churachandpur sub-division where there are two blocks namely Churachandpur and Samulamlan. The district headquarters is Churachandpur.

Figure 1: Rough Map of Churachandpur District.



Source: www.mapsonindia.com

The district is connected by two major roads, one trending North- South passing through Churachandpur by connecting Imphal and Burma and the other trending East-West connecting Churachandpur with Tipaimukh in the West. The road network covers an area of 3,581 hectares located in and around the district headquarters.

The District has an area of 4570 sq. km. It is a hilly district with a very small percentage of the area being plain. As per the study of 1994-95 satellite imagery, the total built up area is 6, 726 hectares (Urban - 585 hectares and Rural - 6, 141 hectares) and the cropland area is 9, 928 hectares. A large portion of the area is either under current 'jhum' or abandoned 'jhum' i.e. 29, 323 hectares and 190, 447 hectares respectively. The area under wasteland is 98, 424 hectares and the total area of the water bodies is 2, 144 hectares (2, 072 hectares of river/streams and 72 hectares of lakes/tanks/ponds).

Flora:

There is no primary forest in the district. Secondary forest including mixed bamboo forest, covers an area of 1, 18, 092 hectares. Common vegetation in the area includes teak, sandalwood, sal, bamboos, orchids, herbs, mangoes, jackfruit, pineapple, litchi, cane, etc that grows either wild or domesticated.

Fauna:

The forest of Churachandpur district is rich in fauna with many of them endemic. These includes the hoolock gibbon (*saha*), slow loris (*mittungkak*), pig-tailed macaque (*zawngrengte*), clouded leopard (*keiarasi*), golden cat (*keisen*), Bengal tiger (*keipui*),

wild elephant (*ramsai*), Himalayan black bear (*savawm*), Malayan sun bear (*vawmmeikin*), mithun (*siet*), barking deer (*sakhi*), wild goat (*sakel*), hog badger (*saphivawk*), pangolin (*saphu*), Himalayan yellow throated marten (*sahmaitha*), gangetic river dolphin (*zawngdul*), turtle (*telte*), Indian rock python (*rulpui*), king cobra (*chawngkawr*), viper (*sairul*), russel viper (*rulngan*), Indian crocodile (*awle*) or gharial, hornbill (*rangkek*), capped hornbill (*vapuol*), etc. The table below shows some of the more important fauna found in the district.

Table 1: List of some important fauna of Tipaimukh sub- division.

Local Name	English Name
Samak leisei	Anteater
Zawngkhat	Ape
Sazaw	Civet
Vawmmeikin	Malayan black bear
Loi	Buffalo
Sakhi	Barking deer
Sakel	Wild goat
Keisen	Golden Cat
Sihal	Fox
Rulngan	Russel viper
Sairul	Viper
Keipui	Royal bengal tiger
Tangkawng	Monitor lizard
Keite	Clouded leopard
Mittungkak	Slow loris
Saruol	Wild boar
Zawngdul	Gangetic dolphin
Benglam	Chipmunk
Rulral	Mongoose
Kel sakhi	Antelope
Zawnghmaisen	Rhesus macaque
Sazuk	Barasingha
Satui	Otter

Ngau	Capped langur
Sazuk	Lambar
Ramsai	Wild elephant
Siel	Mithun
Rulpui	Indian rock python
Keiarasi	Leopard
Zawng	Monkey
Zawngrengte	Pig- Tailed Macaque
Thienhlei	Squirrel
Ramui	Wild Dog
Satel/ Telte	Turtle
Saphu	Pangolin
Dawithiempa archal	Humming bird
Sakel	Wild goat
Saphivawk	Hog badger
Savawm	Himalayan black bear
Keivom	Black panther
Saha	Hoolock gibbon
Thienhlei vuongthei/ Bieng/U ngau	Flying squirrel
Sawkkhe	Gecko
Satene	Hyena
Sanghar	Leopard cat
Awle	Gharial
Saku	Porcupine
Leitangsen	Squirrel
Sahmaitha	Himalayan yellow throated marten
Khomuol satel	Tortoise
Vapuol	Capped hornbill
Rangkek	Hornbill

Source: Fieldwork

Climate:

The maximum temperature of the district is 37°C while the minimum is 10°C. Rainfall is between 597 and 3080 mm. The maximum humidity is 100% and the minimum 61%. The beauty of the landscape is supplemented by the climate which is temperate and salubrious. The winter extending from November to February is cold but days are bright

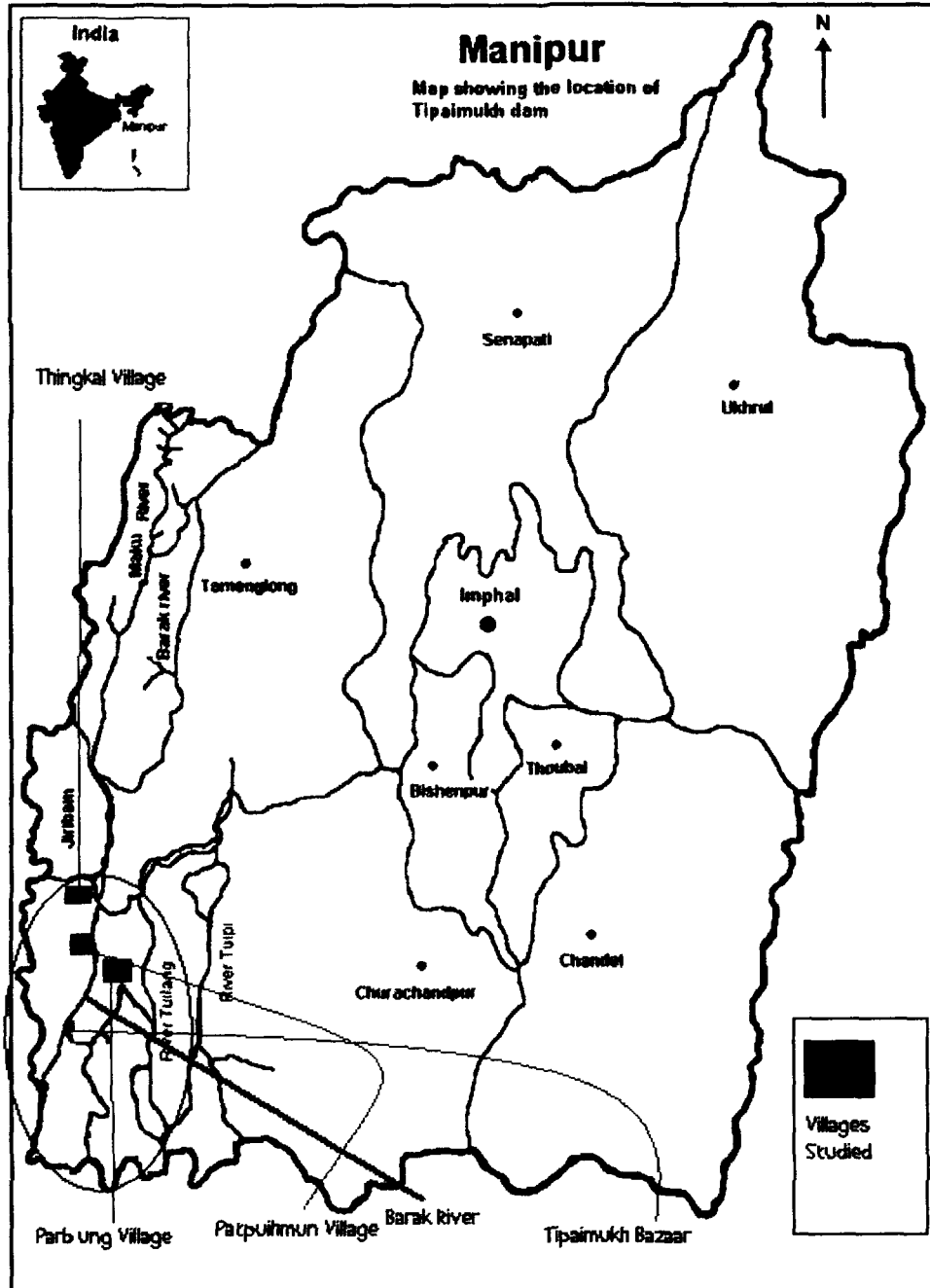
and sunny. The monsoon months stretch from May- June to September with heavy showers almost throughout the period. The spring and summer months are mildly pleasant despite high humidity. This impart to the people considerable stamina and hardiness.

Tipaimukh Sub- Division

Tipaimukh sub- division with North latitudes 24° 26' 50.31" and East longitudes 93° 01' 59.79" is one of the five sub- divisions of Churachandpur District. It is composed of one Block- Tipaimukh (Parbung) Tribal Development Block. The sub- division is divided into two viz., *Hmarbiel* and *Vangai*, by the Barak River. The Vangai area of Tipaimukh is almost completely encircled by the Barak River. In fact, the Vangai area almost resembles an island. The whole of Tipaimukh exhibits a series of rugged hills, valleys, thick forests, rivers and streams. Parts of the rugged hills and vegetations are periodically cleared for jhums while the small valleys located in between the rugged hills are cleared and terraced for permanent agriculture. Paddy is mostly found in these terraced fields.

The sub- division has one major river- the Barak. It also has numerous perennial rivers (*vadung*) and streams (*vadung*) big enough for 'casting fishing nets' as the locals say. Such rivers and streams include Tuivai vadung that confluence with the Barak River at Tipaimukh bazaar, Tolnong vadung and Tuibum vadung which are a tributary of Tuivai, Har vadung which is a tributary of Tuibum vadung and Ruongnau vadung which is a tributary of the Barak. On the Vangai side, mention may be made of Zai

Figure 2: Location of Villages Studied in Tipaimukh Sub- Division of Churachandpur District.



Source: www.mapsofindia.com

vadung, Khangbor vadung, Maha vadung on the west, Muolkhang vadung and Hmarchadeng vadung on the east. All the rivers on the vangai side flows directly into the Barak. These rivers, apart from the Barak and Tuivai are a source of income for a number of people as the fish and crabs from these streams are highly prized and in high demand at the local market.

According to 2001 census conducted by the government, Tipaimukh sub-division has a total population of about 1, 5000. There were thirty (30) villages under the sub- division as per the Extraordinary Manipur Gazette No. 196-E-64, dated November 12, 1969. This number has now increased to thirty seven (37) villages as per the Manipur Gazette (Extraordinary Published by Authority), No. 227, Imphal, 4th October 2008. Out of these thirty seven (37) villages, nineteen (19) villages are still under nominal chieftainship with traditional chiefs still living in six (6) of the nineteen (19) villages. These six (6) villages are Pherzawl, Patpuihmun, Phulpui, Kh. Zeikhan, Kangreng and Kangrengdawr. The sub- division is also inhabited by tribes like Hmar, Paite, Kuki, Vaiphei, Gangte, Lushais, etc where the Hmar tribe is the biggest and dominant group in the area to be studied.

The Three Villages

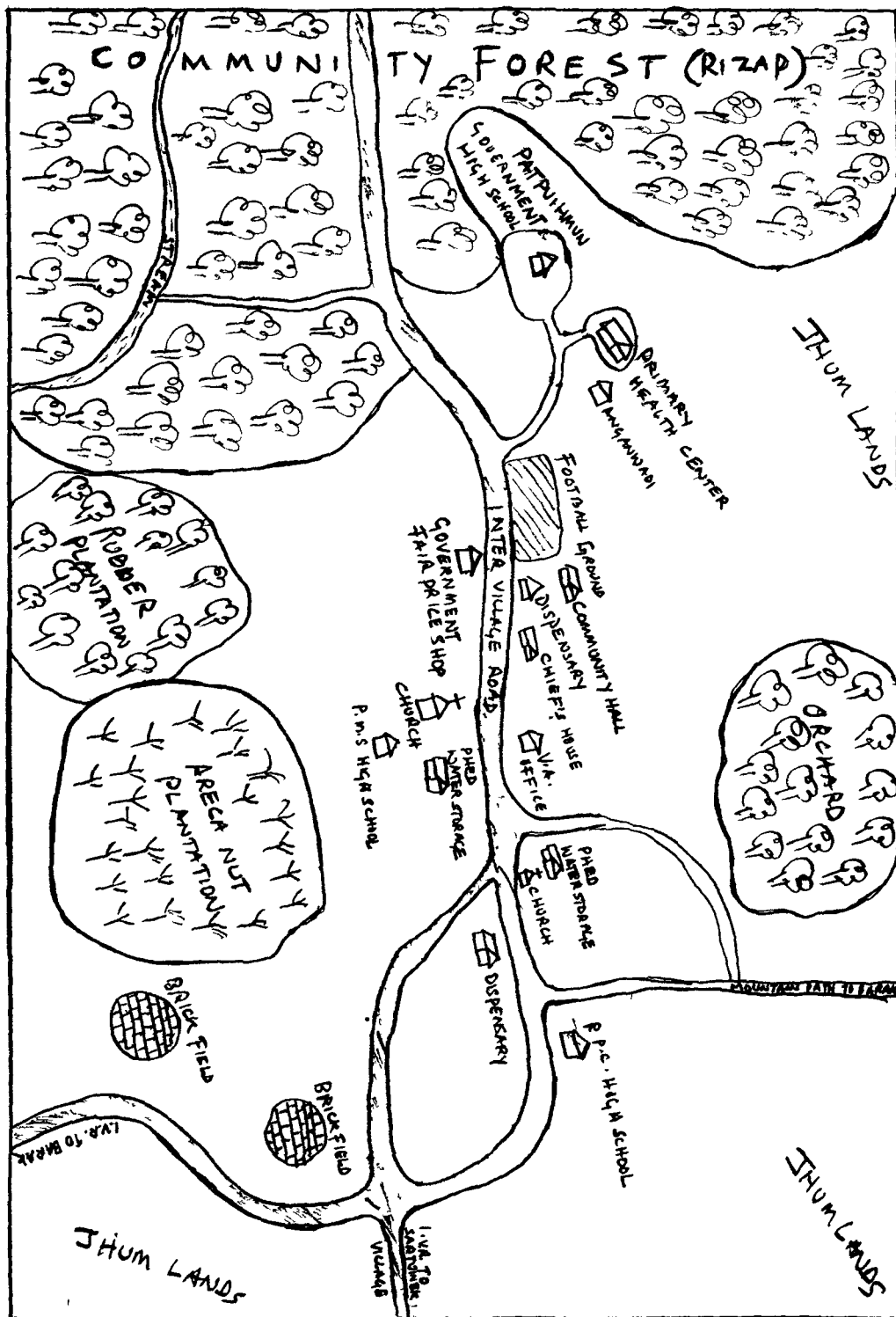
As already mentioned, out of 37 villages in Tipaimukh sub- division, three villages were selected for the purpose of intensive study. They were Parbung, Patpuihmun and Thingkal villages.

(a) Parbung village

Parbung was established in 1896. It has 388 houses and a population of 2142 (see table 2) with an average of 5.5 member per household. The village is divided into 13 sections (*veng*) based on clan. It is the sub- divisional and Block headquarters of Tipaimukh sub-division. It is also well connected with other villages by inter- village roads and to other places outside Tipaimukh by National Highway No. 150. The village also has 1 Community Health Center (CHC), 1 dispensary, 3 high schools (1 government and 2 non- government), 5 block offices, 1 police station, 1 electric power house, 1 post office, 1 civil supply godown, 1 fair price shops, 1 ring well, 1 anganwadi office and 3 brick fields (non- government owned). However, most of the government infrastructures are now defunct for the past 10- 15 years. As a result, people of the village depend heavily on the two non- government schools in the village run by the Partnership Mission Society and Reformed Presbyterian Church for basic education and to schools in towns like Churachandpur, Jiribam in Manipur and Fulertal or Silchar in Assam for higher education. For medical facilities also, the people of the village mostly go to town like Churachandpur, Jiribam or Imphal in Manipur and Fulertal or Silchar in Assam.

The main occupation of the people is shifting agriculture. For selling their agricultural products, people usually goes to Tipaimukh bazaar or to Fulertal in Assam via the Barak River.

Figure 4: Bird's Eye View of Important Landmarks in Patpuihmun Village (not according to scale).



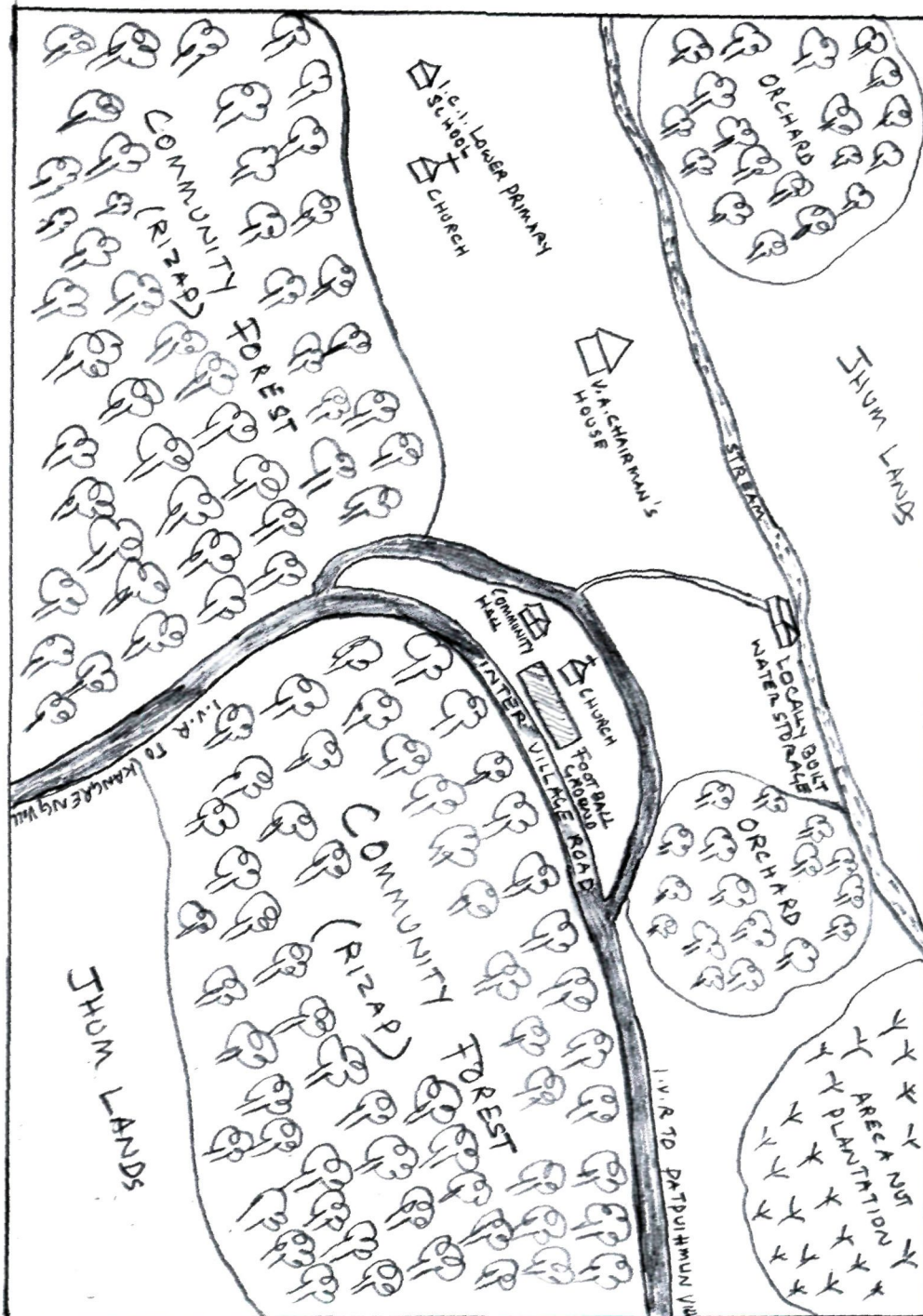
Source: Fieldwork

(b) Patpuihmun village

Patpuihmun was established around 1890. It has 150 houses and a population of 834 (see table 2) with an average of 5.5 member per household. The village is also divided into 8 sections but, unlike Parbung village, is not based on clan. It is well connected with other villages of the *Vangai* area by inter- village roads. It however has no road that connects it with other places outside the *Vangai* area of Tipaimukh. There are 3 high schools (1 government and 2 non- government), 1 Primary Health Center, 1 dispensary, 1 anganwadi office, 1 fair price shop, 2 brick fields (non- government owned) in the village. However, except for those owned and run by non- government agencies, most of the infrastructures are now defunct. Like in Parbung, people of the village depend heavily on the two non-government schools in the village run by Partnership Mission Society and Reformed Presbyterian Church for basic education and then to schools in towns like Churachandpur or Jiribam in Manipur and Fulertal or Silchar in Assam for higher education. For medical facilities also, the people of the village mostly go to town like Churachandpur, Jiribam or Imphal in Manipur and Fulertal or Silchar in Assam.

The main occupation is shifting agriculture. For selling their agricultural products, people mainly goes to Tipaimukh bazaar or to Fulertal in Assam via the Barak River.

Figure 5: Bird's Eye View of Important Landmarks in Thingkal Village (not according to scale).



Source: Fieldwork

(c) Thingkal village

Although the people of the village have no record of the year of its establishment, Thingkal village is believed to be established around the late 1930s. It has 37 houses and a population of 238 (see table 2) with an average of 6.4 members per household. The village is not divided into sections like the other two villages of Parbung and Patpuihmun. It is devoid of any government infrastructure except for an inter- village road that connects it with other villages in the *Vangai* area. Like in the other two villages, people of the village also depend heavily on one non- government school in the village run by the Independent Church of India for basic education and schools in towns like Churachandpur or Jiribam in Manipur and Fulertal or Silchar in Assam for higher education. For medical facilities also, the people of the village mostly go to town like Churachandpur, Jiribam or Imphal in Manipur and Fulertal or Silchar in Assam.

Shifting agriculture is the main occupation. For selling their agricultural products, the people also goes to Tipaimukh bazaar or to Fulertal in Assam via the Barak River.

Table 2: Number of houses and population distribution in Parbung, Patpuihmun and Thingkal

S I. No.	Name of the village	Total House	Male	Female	Total
1	Parbung	388	1063	1079	2142
2	Patpuihmun	150	439	395	834
3	Thingkal	37	103	205	238
Grand Total		575	1605	1679	3214

Source: Fieldwork

The People and their culture

The Hmars are one of the tribes of North East India belonging to the Chin- Kuki- Mizo ethnic group. They are found today in Cachar and North Cachar Hills of Assam and the adjoining states of Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Tripura in India and Bangladesh and Myanmar (Dena 2008). The Hmar tribe became a recognized Scheduled Tribe of the Government of India in 1956.

Origin:

The Hmar tradition maintains that the original home of the Hmars is called "Sinlung". Numerous poems, songs and tales about this place have been handed down orally from generation to generation. However, the exact location of Sinlung is still open to debate. Several theories and views regarding the origin and location have been forwarded by Hmar and Lushai scholars like Songate (1956), Pudaite (1963), Keivom (1982, 1990), Darliensung (1988), Dena (2008), Liangkhaia (1976), etc. Some of these theories are:

- a) Sinlung must be somewhere in South West China, possibly in the present Tailing or Silung of Yunan Province of today's China.
- b) It might have been Sining in central China.
- c) It might have been derived from the Chin Dynasty of 221-207 B.C.
- d) It might have been a derivative of the Chinese king Chieulung who ruled during 1711 A.D.
- e) From its name (*sin-* seal, close; *lung* stone, rock), it might have been a cave that was sealed with a huge stone.

f) Sinlung was located at Aopatong in the border of Burma and China. The town was named after the chief Silung during the erection of the Great Wall of China.

g) It might be the present Sinlung, located near the Yulung River in Szechuan Province of China.

Theories abound regarding why the Hmars left Sinlung. One view is that the Hmars left Sinlung in search of greener pastures, while another ascribes it to the oppressive rule of the Chinese rulers and the Hmars' inability to repulse their enemies in Sinlung (Keivom 1990, Dena 2008). One of their folk song is highly suggestive:

Khaw Sinlung ah

Kawt siel ang ka zuongsuok a;

Mi le nel lo tam a e,

Hriemi hrai a.

English Translation:

From Sinlung

I jumped out like a Mithun from its captivity (Bison);

Innumerable were the encounters,

With the children of men.

When the Hmars left Sinlung, they were probably one of the successive waves of humanity from China towards the south some thousand years ago. Many historians mention mass movements of humanity in waves from China towards the south, into the Mediterranean basin, into India and into other parts of Southeast Asia during the last

few thousand years. These people were probably forced out of China by the Ch'in Dynasty. It is believed that the Hmars might have been moving along with one of these waves towards the south, and eventually into India (Keivom 1990).

Hmar folk tales and folk songs tell us that the second settlement of the Hmars was in a place called *Shan*, which was marked by a time of prosperity and peace. Songate, a Hmar historian believe that in Shan, the Hmar civilisation advanced much farther than Sinlung; and the people showed greater intelligence. They knew how to celebrate agricultural prosperity, learned better art of war, and made festival of the victory over the enemy. Furthermore, they learned the use of iron implements and moulding of pipe. Many of the Hmar festivals such as *Butukhuonglawm* (Spring festival), *Lunglák* (Autumn festival) and *Sesun* (Solemn celebration) have their origin here in Shan (ibid 1956). The practice of headhunting also probably started during this time as can be seen from one of their folk song:

Ka pa lamtlák an tha'n dang,

Sinlung lamtlák a tha'n dang;

Shan khuoah tha povin vang,

Tuoichawngin hranlu an tlunna;

Thlomu sieka kem in hril,

Za inhawngah hranlu bah kan sâl.

English translation:

My father's steps were distinctively good,

*Sinlung's steps were, indeed, distinctively good;
Few are the good men in Shan State,
Where Tuoichawng brought the enemy's head;
You talked of tips with eagle's claws, (meaning war)
And we hang the heads high with ropes.*

Hmar- Mizo writers and historians like Songate (1956), Pudaite (1963), Keivom (1982, 1990), Sangkima (1992), etc believe that this period of prosperity and peace in Shan was interrupted by a calamitous famine. As a result, the Hmars had to move further. And from Shan they were believed to have moved towards Kachin land, believed to be in the present Northern Burma (Myanmar), probably in and around Hukwang Valley at the foot of the Eastern Himalayas. This belief is substantiated by the similarity of language between the people of this region and the Hmar dialect till date.

Of Kachin land they sang:

*Tiena Kachin lei,
Ka pu leilung Himalawi.*

English translation:

*Ancient land of Kachin,
Himalawi, the land of my forefathers.*

As Songate (1956) suggested, the name Himalaya was originally given by this people. He wrote that, as they came to the foot of the great mountains they decided, "*Hi ei hma a tlang hi lawi el ei tih*" (Let us circumvent this mountain before us). They

named this mountain '*Hihmalawi tlang*'. Here they met another tribe known to them as the Misimis or Mishmis. According to oral traditions, Sura, one of the forefathers and a well-known character fell in love with a Mishmi girl named Thairanchawng and married her during those days. While here, they also came across a river, which they named *Airawdung* (Ai- crab, raw- burn, dung- valley). This river is believed to be the present Irawaddy River of Burma (Myanmar).

From Kachin the Hmars are believed to have moved to *Kawlphai Khampat* in the Kabaw Valley of Burma (Myanmar), probably by moving along the foot of the Patkai Hill Range. Here, they had three Rengs (big chiefs) - Luopui, Lersi and Zingthlo- under whom they greatly prospered. Luopui ruled over the central part of the land while Lersi and Zingthlo ruled over the northern and southern parts respectively. While they were in Khampat, Luopui planted the now-famous Banyan tree that still remains traceable. This is mentioned in one of their folk song:

Simah Lersi, Hmarah Zingthlo,

Khawmalaiah Luopui;

Luoipui in lenbung a phun,

Khawthlang puolrangin tlan e.

English translation:

On the south is Chief Lersi,

On the north, Chief Zingthlo;

At the center, Chief Luopui;

Luopui planted a banyan tree,

The hornbills feed on its fruits.

From Khampat, it is believed that the Hmars followed the Rûn River (Imphal River) and made settlements on its banks. As they moved southwards, following the Rûn River, they moved along with the Raltes. This is clear from one of their folk song:

Rûntui kawi e,

Raltenu le Raltepa leh kan inkawia,

Rûntui kawi e.

English translation:

Meandering Rûn,

We moved along with the Raltes,

Meandering Rûn.

From their settlements along the Rûn valley, the Hmars crossed the *Lentlâng* (a mountain range running from north to south. They are the eastern offshoots of the Himalayas) and settled in Champhai of today's Mizoram. It is believed that this was how the Hmars came to settle in Mizoram. The Hmars were probably one of the first to inhabit Mizoram, much before the Lushais or the Pawis (Hutchinson 1909, Grierson 1967, Reid 1976, Liangkhaia 1976). While they were in Mizoram, the names of the villages they inhabited were known by the name of the clans inhabiting them, such as Chawnsiem, Ngurte, Sungte, Zote, etc. The Hmars came to occupy not only Mizoram but also parts of Manipur, Assam and Tripura as well. According to Hmar folk tales and

folk songs, they were under Chawnhmang, a *rêngpui* (great chief). There were six *rêngtes* (minor chiefs) - Neilal Thiek, Demlukim Hrangkhawl, Tanhril Saivate, Fiengpuilal Biete, Lawipa Hrangchal and Tusing Faihriem under him to help him in administration during this period.

Nomenclature:

Colonial writers were confused about the real identity of the Hmars and commonly clubbed them as *Kukis*. The term 'Kuki' was first used by the Bengalis and later on by British officials to identify the hill tribes other than Nagas. Kuki was later on classified into two groups: *Old Kuki* and *New Kuki* in terms of the period of their migration to India (Dena 2008). J. Shakespeare included Hmar in the Old Kuki clans and also used the term *Khawtlang* (people who lived in the west) and *Khawsak* (people who lived in the east) interchangeably to mean Hmars (ibid 1912). J. W. Edgar, a civil officer who accompanied the British column to Tipaimukh on April 3, 1872 reported about the Hmars thus: "The name *Kuki* has been given to the tribe by the Bengalis and is not recognised by the hill men themselves and I have never found any trace of a common name for the tribe among them, although they too consider different families belonging to a single group, which is certainly coexistent with what we call Kuki tribe" (Mackenzie 1979). It was in 1904 that the term 'Hmar' was first formally used by G. A. Gierson in his *Linguistic Survey of India* but spelt it as 'Mhar' (Gierson 1904).

On the origin of the term 'Hmar', there are two theories. The first theory suggests that the term might have originated from the word 'hmar' which happens to

mean “north” in English (Hutchinson 1909, Gierson 1967, Reid 1976). Accordingly, it has been mentioned that the Hmars came from the north to Lushai Hills just before the Lushais (Liangkhaia 1976). This implies that the term came into use only after the Hmars settled down in Mizoram. The second theory, which is based on Hmar oral traditions, contends that the term “hmarh” which means “to tie one’s hair in a knot on the nape of one’s head”. According to Hmar tradition, there were once two brothers- Hrumsawm and Tuktumsawm. Hrumsawm, the elder one, use to tie his hair in a knot on his forehead because of a sore on the nape of his neck. After his death, all his descendents continued the same hair style and the Pawis who live in South Mizoram are believed to be the progenies of Hrumsawm. Tuktumsawm, the younger one, however, tied his hair in a knot on the back of his head. The Hmars who continued Tuktumsawm’s hairstyle are believed to be the progenies of Tuktumsawm and therefore, their nomenclature also must have originated from “hmarh” (Songate 1956, Darliensung 1988). However, the Lushais and other kindred tribes who used the same hairstyle were not called *Hmar*. Therefore, the first theory is much more convincing than the second theory. Whatever may be the truth, it is clear that the term ‘Hmar’ as a common nomenclature gained popularity and wider acceptance among the Hmar ethnic group living in different part of North East India only with the dawn of the 20th century (Liangkhaia 1976, Dena 2008).

Linguistic Affinities:

The Hmars have their own dialect, which has close affinity with Lushai- Duhlian, Chin- Paite and Kuki- Thado dialects. Among these, the Hmar dialect is closest to the Duhlian dialect. Linguistically the Hmar dialect can be placed in the Indo- Tibetan group of the Mizo- Chin- Kuki speech category. The Hmars do not have any written script of their own before the introduction of the Roman script by Christian missionaries after 1910. Any available literatures on the Hmars prior to this were mostly ethnographic works written by British administrators like T. H. Lewin, John Shakespear, A. S. Reid and a few others. It was therefore only after the introduction of the Roman script to the Hmar dialect that the Hmars started to have literature in their own dialect (Sangkima 1992, Dena 2008). The Hmar dialect has seen many levels of development since the introduction of the Roman script with increasing literature in Hmar. At present the Hmar dialect has been introduced till the university level in Manipur and Assam. In Mizoram, it is taught till the high school level.

Economy

The economy of the Hmars is mainly based on shifting agriculture. The agricultural practice of the Hmars is affected very little by their education or their conversion to Christianity. They commonly practice what is known as 'jhuming cultivation'.² The chief and his ministers open large regions of land for the year's cultivation. The

² *Jhuming cultivation* is a type of slash and burn cultivation commonly followed by people living in the hills. In this, a certain tract of land is opened up for cultivation by a village where the vegetation is cut down and then burned before sowing and planting. The land is then left untouched after the next year for 3-20 years depending on the availability of Jhum lands.

Jhuming season usually begins from January. A man selects a tract of land he would jhum. He fell all the bamboos and trees within the tract of land. When the bamboos are completely dried he sets fire to it. The ground is thus not only cleared but manured by the ashes at the same time. Timbers which were not burnt are gathered, burned or carried to the side of the land for rough fences to keep wild beasts out. At the first sign of rain, the cultivator goes to the jhum with his wife, sons and daughter. The wife mostly carried the seeds on a basket called *paikawng*. All those who went to the jhum carry a small hoe along with other implements like daos, knives, etc. On reaching the jhum, they start planting/ sowing the seeds from the lower end of the jhum by digging little holes with their hoes and dropping the seeds in each hole. This sowing of seeds is done in great speed. Very often the whole village would also join together, sowing from five to six fields a day. This corporate labour is called *Butu- khuonglawm*. There are times when as many as five hundred persons would group together. They would start from the farthest fields and move gradually towards the village. They sing as they sow in a festival like mode. In such a crowd often the weak ones cannot keep pace with the strong and drop seeds without digging holes. While doing this, they sing a folk song called *Butu- khuonglawm hla*. The song goes thus:

Thing ka tuk thinga ka thlak,

Lung ka tuk lunga ka thlak;

Ka chungu khuongruo a sur pha leh,

Ama'n khurbi zawng de nih!

English translation:

I hit a stump (of a tree) I sow on the stump

I hit a rock; I sow on the rock;

When the rain falls from above,

It will seek a hole for itself!

The main crop is rice. Weeding is done three to four times a year, and the average Hmar family cannot cultivate more than two acres of land. The jhum is good only for one year, and the next year the farmer starts all over again in another region. Apart from cultivating rice, the Hmars also cultivate other crops and vegetables like maize, castor, cucumber, watermelon, sweet gourd, watermelon, beans, etc in the jhums. Thus they raise mixed crop in the jhums. If the rain comes in time, they can reap a good harvest. In case of failure of the rain, the crops also fail and the people remain half-starved. The Hmars are also good horticulturists. They cultivate fruit plants like pineapple, orange, lemon, etc by terracing or by simply clearing the gentle hill slopes. In the past, the average earning per family out of such agricultural products was less than four hundred rupees per year. This earning has now increased due to the changing value and increased circulation of money coupled with increased commercialization of their products. They sell their articles in the market, but the price they get for their products is, however, not reasonable at all by any standard.

Children learn early the art of jhuming and also on how to use the agricultural implements as per the pattern and techniques that has been handed down from generation to generation.

Weaving is also an important cottage industry in every Hmar family. Every Hmar women is an expert weaver and most of the domestic requirements of clothes were met from the family looms. They weave attractively designed *puon* (cloth). Formerly they grew *patchawn* (cotton) from which yarns were spun. But nowadays, in most cases yarns are purchased from the market.

Besides weaving, manufacturing of cane and bamboo goods required for domestic use is also another important cottage industry of the Hmars. Carpentry (*mitiri*) and blacksmithy (*thirsut*) are the two other trades followed by some people in the village.

Food habits

Rice is the staple food while maize and millet are the substantial cereals which can be prepared for consumption in various ways. Large quantities of rice, meat and vegetables are cooked in various ways. Two heavy meals of almost identical preparation a day are consumed. Since jhums and kitchen gardens cannot supply all the food requirements, they constantly go to the forest for wild vegetables. They also hunt and trap deer, fowls, squirrels, birds, etc for food. In preparation, almost no part of the animal is discarded. The Hmars eat lots of *hmarcha* (chilli). Some of the popular traditional dishes are *chartang* (mixture of meat, vegetable, spices and hot pepper), *hmepawk* (stew), and

changalhme (vegetable or meat cooked with hot pepper and soda from the ashes). With a meal, occasionally, he sips the *hmetui* (soup). Rice beer or *zu* was openly served before they became Christians, in celebration of arrival of successful hunting expeditions, harvest festivals, and return of a good friend from a long journey. Among the Christians, tea is served in place of rice beer. They smoke local *meiziel* (cigarette manufactured from locally grown tobacco) and also factory made cigarettes. They also use traditional pipe for smoking local tobacco. They sip tobacco water or *tuibur* frequently and chew betel leaves and areca nut.

House

In general, most Hmar houses are built with bamboos and stood on stilts with thatched roofs. Such houses usually consist of four parts: the open porch, the enclosed veranda, the main room and the *namthlak* (it is the downhill side of the house, raised about one foot above the main floor). Very often there will be a back porch. The open porch is called *sawngka*, and is used for drying clothes, for entertaining friends when weather permits, and for relaxation in the evening. The enclosed veranda is called *sumphuk* from the name *sum* or mortar in which paddy is husked. It is also used for carpentry and as menial workshop. Usually a stack of firewood is on the near side of the house. Baskets in which the fowl lay eggs for hatching would hang over the enclosed porch's wall. On the downhill side of the wall hangs a chicken coop supported by wooden posts and connected from the ground or *sawngka* by a ladder for the fowl to climb. The presence of chickens in the veranda and the pigs and cows under the floor gives the house an

unwholesome smell. Usually there are two doors, one in the front and another at the back. There are few windows but the house is well lighted and ventilated throughout the day. The woven bamboo walls afford small but sufficient openings through which light and air can come in.

Immediately inside the main room, on the downhill side of the floor are bamboo tubes in which water for the family is carried and stored. The water is usually drunk right from the mouth of the tubes. Opposite to the water tubes is a bed called *khumtuol* (outer bed) made of wood and bamboo mat. Children, guests and other visitors may sleep on this bed. Next to *khumtuol* is a large hearth called *tap* (hearth), made of earth, solidly kneaded like brick within a wooden frame. In the centre of the hearth three stones are fixed called *lungthu* on which the cooking pot rests. Along the wall lie earthen shelves for the pots to rest and which also keep the fire from spreading to the wall. A few feet from the hearth is a bed called *khumpui* (master bed). This is the bed of the head of the family. Visitors may not even walk between *khumpui* and *tap*. Beyond *khumpui* are beds used by married sons of the family. Right in the middle of the house hangs a platform of bamboo construction called *suor*. All baskets and tools are kept on this. On the downhill side of the wall called *panthlang*, opposite to the hearth, a shelf for vegetables, pots and pans is erected. There is hardly any exception to this pattern among the Hmar people anywhere. They hold fast to these practices and Christianity and education has changed them very little.

Since the houses in the village are usually built in a row, each home has a small garden of its own at the back. These gardens supply vegetables, fruits, sugarcane and bamboo. A Hmar considered this garden essential and his selection of a house is greatly determined by it.

Every Hmar village has a big house called *buonzawl* or *sier*, (bachelor's dormitory). It is built and operated by the whole village community. It is similar to other houses in materials, but different in shape and size. Access to the building is obtained by a single entrance by a platform of rough wood at the uphill end. A large fireplace is constructed in which a fire is kept burning day and night. Right by the fire is an open space used for recreation such as wrestling matches and folk dances. On three sides of the wall, except the front part, a sleeping platform is erected. All unmarried young man above fifteen years of age must sleep here.

Pottery

Pottery is the work of the women among the Hmars. When a village site is selected, great importance is attached to the availability of *bepil khur* (potter's pit). The variety of pots that the potter designed is not too many and the same pattern is followed year by year. Within this limited variety are the *bubel* (rice-cooking-pot), *hmebel* (curry-cooking-pot), *thlengbel* (covering and eating plates), *nganbel* (distillation for fermenting rice beer), and *zubel* (rice beer pot). The largest varieties are the *zubel* and *nganbel* which runs anywhere from five to eighteen litres. A smaller variety called *dumbel*

(smoking pipe) of different shapes and sizes are also made and these are mainly for women.

All pottery work is done by hand. A woman goes to the clay pit and digs out a basketful of clay. She pours water and pounds it until it becomes thoroughly soft and plasticized. Then she molds it by hand. When the shape is roughly made, she holds a small mallet in her right hand and a smooth stone, the size of an apple in her left. Placing the stone against the uneven spots from beneath, she hits lightly over and over until it gets smooth and sun for a month or more and then she burns them in an open furnace until they are burned red-hot. In contrast to the smoking pipes which have designs of the head of animals or birds, very few designs are made on the pots.

Small girls watch women in the village work on their pottery work every day from the first day to the final hour and then make small pots with the crumbs by following the techniques the mother used. When they reach marriageable age, the girls have acquired a full knowledge of pottery.

Dress

At the turn of the century when contact with the rest of the world was on a limited scale, the Hmar man's dress was simple. It consists of a single piece of cloth about six feet long and four feet wide. One corner was grasped with the left hand and the cloth was passed over the left shoulder behind the back. Then it was brought under the arm across the chest and the end thrown over the shoulder. Since it was loosely worn, it looked as

though it would continually fall off, and yet accidents of that sort seldom happened. He wore a tunic-like shirt and *hrenpereng* (loin cloth of five by two feet around his waist).

The Hmar girl wore an unseamed petticoat, fastened with a string at the waist. Over it she wears a tunic type of blouse either plain or with a design. On the top of these is another piece of cloth about six by four feet. The top cloth is usually fine and very colourful.

In general, the Hmars grow their own cotton. They have two types of cotton, pure white and light brown. The white cotton is dyed with various colours for decoration and design. However after more contact with the outside world, more varieties of dye and cotton yarns have been imported and colourful clothes are woven with magnificent designs and patterns on the small handlooms. The Hmar girl takes great pride on her weaving skill and supplies sufficient clothes for family consumption. A girl of fifteen is capable of making all kinds of designs and is expected to produce the family requirement in her spare time. Marriage is often postponed because of the girl's inability to fill her two personal baskets called *rel* prior to the wedding.

A girl learns the trade by observing and by participating in weaving (*puonkhawng*). She starts with a small loom (*tatebem*) and gradually learns to handle the bigger ones. Though the woman weaves the cloth, the man is responsible for making the loom.

In general, the economic conditions of an average Hmar with his traditional tools and implements and age-old methods of cultivation are far from satisfactory with regard to the changing agricultural scenario coupled with advancement in technology.

Music

The Hmars have a number of musical instruments. Among these, *darkhuong* (gong) and *khuongpui* (big drum), *khuongte* (small drum) are the most common. As the gongs were believed to be brought in from Shan State in Burma by their forefathers during their migration, the Hmars value them very highly. The most prized ones are sets of three or four with separate notes. Skilled players can produce beautiful tunes, and people can sit all day to listen. Other instruments are called *perkhuong* (guitar) and *tingtang* (an instrument resembling a violin), *theihle* (flute), *rosem* (an instrument resembling a bagpipe), *leaf*. *Tingtang* is somewhat like a violin made out of a large bamboo of 20-25 inches in diameter. Little strips are cut on the side in which three slender threads about the size of guitar strings are curved out on each side. The threads are tightened by inserting bamboo splints to produce different notes. Beautiful tunes can be played and it is still a very popular instrument today apart from flute and guitar. The people produce their own flutes and guitars and cherish them very much.

Traps and Game

A Hmar man delights to pass time in the jungle. He is clever at trapping all kinds of beasts and birds. Most mountain sides are filled with traps (*chang*). He has snares for the smallest to the biggest bird by bird traps such as *pheikei*, *changkawl*, etc and the

smallest squirrel to the largest elephant by traps such as *mankhawng*, *delchim chang*, *vawmthlak*, *sakhi chang*, etc. Elephants are captured by digging pitfalls on narrow ridges between precipices. Tigers are trapped under a platform of heavy logs (*mankhawng*), and monkeys are tricked by putting beans or ears of corn at the end of a bamboo pole which is partially severed (*delchim chang*). Underneath are scores of sharp bamboo spikes on which the monkeys finds itself impaled. Children learn all these traps and tricks not only to catch animals, but also to protect themselves from wild animals.

However, a Hmar man is happier with big games and guns. Almost every man owns a locally manufactured flint-lock gun called *hmarkhangjep*. Factory made flint-lock guns were are owned by some men- mostly the rich or the *Thangsuo*³. Great preparations are made for hunting expeditions. The hunters camp on a certain spot for weeks, until they are satisfied with the number of animals they have killed. A small number of youths are allowed to participate in these expeditions, and the youth selected not only considers himself fortunate, but accepts it as a mark of distinction. His conduct in the jungle is closely observed and his worth would soon be proved by his grown-up associates. The return of hunting expeditions is well publicized and the whole village turns out to welcome them with a plentiful supply of rice beer or tea. The return of a successful hunting expedition is especially publicized if a hunter kills dangerous animal like tigers, bears, wild hogs, etc. On such occasions, the hunter would stand on the highest point nearest to the village and then he would sing at the top of his voice a song

³ *Thangsuo* can be achieved either by killing a hundred wild beasts, taken a number of enemy heads, able to get the tail of a certain bird called *vakul* before it reaches the ground after being shot dead or harvesting a thousand bushel of rice in one single year.

called *hlado*⁴ while at the same time firing his gun. This is done in order to notify the whole village of his success and of the type of animals being killed. The head of each animal which the hunter shot would adorn his house, and none would be thrown away until the collection reaches one hundred. Apart from other feats such as war, if the collection of animals being killed also includes a bear, a boar, a bison, an elephant, a tiger and other animals considered wild and dangerous, he would be publicly known as *Thangsuo*. He, among the non-Christians, is believed to earn the merit to directly enter Paradise. The occasion would be celebrated by killing a *siel* or *siels*. He would be publicly honoured with *tawnlairang* (special head-gear) and *puondum* (thangsuo cloth). A child is challenged in the inmost heart to attain such a position of respect and fame.

Social Structure

The Hmar social structure can be grouped under different heads such as kinship, marriage, family and political organisation and religious beliefs.

Kinship, Marriage and Family:

The Hmars have a strong social interactions based on the basis of clans. Each of these clans resides in a particular area or village and many of the villages are named after the name of the clan occupying it. Many Hmar villages are divided into sections (*vengs*) based on clans. It is obligatory for the clan members to help each other during agricultural operations, house construction, and birth and death ceremonies. In times of need and danger, the clansmen helped one another and if an individual of a certain clan

⁴ A *hlado* differ according to the animal (s) being killed. A *hlado* for a tiger, bear, etc are slightly different from each other in words eventhough the tunes are all the same.

incurred the wrath of another clansman rightly or wrongly, he would be protected or taken to task by his own clansmen. Thus this sort of collective responsibility of the clan members makes it a strong force for social order.

As many as 16 different clans are found among the Hmar. Each of these clans is further sub- divided into 180 sub-clans. The *Zote* clan has the largest sub-clan numbering as many as fourteen (14) and *Sakum* clan is without any sub-clan. Many Hmar writers and historians like Hranglien Songate, H. B. Hrangchhuana and Darliensung have included *Kom*, *Sakechek*, *Hrangkhawl*, *Darlong* and *Chongthu* among the Hmar clans. The rest of the Hmar clans are as follows:

1. BIETE (Nampui, Ngamlai, Darnei, Hmunhring, Puiloh, Thienglai, Chungngol, Betlu, Tlungurh, Tamlo, Fatlei, Sawnlén)
2. CHANGSAN (Zilchung, Zilhmang, Ngulthuom, Hrawte, Hranhnieng, Chaileng, Thangngeu, Kellu, Armei)
3. DARNGAWN (Ruolngul, Faiheng, Sanate, Tlau, Banzang – Sinate, Famhoite, Chonghmunte, Lamchangte)
4. FAIHRIEM (Saivate, Khawral, Khakhieng, Tuollai, Tuimuol, Bapui, Tusing, Khawlum, Sekong, Thlangnung, Seiling)
5. HMAR LUSEI (Neichirh, Luophul, Hnechong, Lamthik, Chonzik - Huolngo, Huolhang)
6. KHAWBUNG (Fente, Pangamte, Pazamte, Riangsete, Laising, Muolphei, Bunglung, Phunte – Siertlang, Siersak)

7. KHAWLHRING (Lungen, Thlaute, Midang, Leidir, Suokling, Chunthang, Lozun, Pieltel, Milai, Rawlsim, Khintung)
8. LUNGTAU (Mihriemate, Songate, Thlawngate, Infimate/Fimate, Keivom, Sunate, Intoate, Tamhrang, Inbuon/Lungchuong, Theisekate, Nungate, Sielhnam)
9. LAWITLANG (Hrangchal – Laiasung, Sielasung, Darasung, Tlungte, Hangtal, Tlawmte; Sungte – Chonsim, Pautu, Pieltu, Khiengte; Varte – Khuptong-Valte, Rawite, Suomte)
10. LEIRI (Neingate, Pudaite, Puruolte, Pulamte, Puhnuongte, Thlandar)
11. NGENTE (Dosak, Dothlang, Kongte, Zuote, Lailo, Laitui, Laihring, Bawlte, Chonghoih, Cholngong)
12. NGURTE (Sanate, Saingur, Zawllien, Bangran, Chiluo, Parate)
13. PAKHUONG (Khuongpui, Hrangngul, Buongpui, Khelte, Sakum)
14. THIEK (Athu, Amaw, Buhril, Tuolor, Thluchung, Kungate, Selate, Ralsun, Chonghekte, Tuolte, Thlihran, Zate, Kangbur, Killaite, Tamlo, Taite/Tryte, Hnamte, Khawzawl, Chonnel, Vankal – Pangulte, Pangote, Khawbuol; Pakhumate – Khumthur, Khumsen)
15. VANGSIE (Zapte, Theidu, Dosil, Invang, Vanghoih, Tlukte)
16. ZOTE (Saihmag/Saiate, Hrangate, Neitham, Chonkhup, Ngaite, Buonsuongtu, Chongtuoltu, Darkhawlai, Parate, Tlangte, Hriler, Chawngsiekim, Chonghau, Chongvawr)

The Hmars have a complex system of kinship terminologies that are used to identify or address a kin or types of relation. Table 3 shows some important terminologies commonly used by the Hmars.

Table 3: Kinship Terminologies

Sl. No.	Hmar terms	English translation
1	Zuo-pa, Pa	Father
2	Chun-nu	Mother
3	Pa-hrawn	Step-father
4	Nu-hrawn	Step-mother
5	Û	Elder
6	Û-pa	Elder brother
7	Û-nu	Elder sister
8	Sang-pa	Younger brother
9	Sang-nu	Younger sister
10	Pu	Grand father
11	Pi	Grand mother
12	Mâk-pa	Female relative's husband
13	Mo (Mou)	Daughter-in-law
14	Pa-te	Father's younger brother
15	Ni-te	Father's younger sister
16	Pa-pui	Father's elder brother
17	Ni-pui	Father's elder sister
18	Pu-pui	Mother's elder brother
19	Nu-pui	Mother's elder sister or father's elder brother's wife
20	Pu-te	Mother's brother

21	Pi-te	Mother's brother's wife
22	Unau-pa	Brother
23	Unau-nu	Sister
24	Far-nu	Female relative from the same clan
25	Ṭa	Female clan member to male clan members
26	Zuorpui	Female relatives from the same clan
26	Laibung	Male relatives from the same clan
27	La-va	Sister's younger brother
28	Nu-lam	Two mâk-pa marrying girls from the same clan
29	Tu-pa	Grandson or Father's sister's son
30	Tu-nu	Granddaughter or Father's sister's daughter
31	Rang	Father's sister's husband

Source: Fieldwork

The Hmars are monogamous. Clanship among them does not regulate marriage rules and there is no specific rule prohibiting clan endogamy or exogamy. An individual can select his spouse from any clan including his own. However marriage among same clan members is often not desired as the two are regarded as blood relatives. The incidence of preferential marriage is also not rare as reflected from some of the kinship terminology (e.g., Mother-Brother-Daughter). Traditionally, marriage with the mother's brother's daughter was preferred. Further, a chief also desired to marry another chief's daughter in olden days.

Marriage is either by mutual consent or elopement though the latter is less respectable. At first, the boy and girl go through a period of courtship, usually at the girl's residence. When the boy wishes to marry, he sends messengers to the girl's

parents to settle the marriage. The clan members of the boy and girl then go through a period of negotiation and work out the details of the marriage. After a certain day is agreed upon, the marriage takes place in the church in front of a pastor. The amount of bride price ranges from Rs. 500 to Rs. 700. The amount is divided among the kin of the bride's family. The major share goes to the bride's father and smaller amounts are given to the paternal and maternal relatives. The rule of residence after marriage is patrilocal. In case the girl seeks a divorce, she has to persuade her parents to agree to refund the bride price, which they have received, called *sum insuo*. In case of the boy, he simply gives a sum of Rs. 40 to the girl, called *mákman*. The bride price of the boy is forfeited if the divorce is initiated by the boy. Widows can remarry and this is practiced by quite a good number of divorcees.

The Hmar family is patriarchal. The father is the head of the house. He represents the family in all public meetings, directs the family affairs and provides food for the householder. The mother's chief duty is to raise children and look after the home. She prepares meals for the family, tends the chickens and pigs, and occasionally brings firewood from the jungle. Children look upon parents with great respect. Sons or daughters, even after they have grown up and established their own home, will consider it disrespectful to call or utter their parent's name.

The Hmars practice a certain type of joint family system. When the son marries, he brings his bride into his father's house. The bride is thoroughly educated into the family traditions and practices. The couple stays there until they have several children

of their own and help establish the family. Customarily, they move out of the house to establish a new home only when their children are of marriageable age. They are then properly sent off by the entire family, and their new home would be jointly built by the entire family. This type of family system is considered healthy for the family and for the whole society. The child learns to live in the society. Opportunity is given to him each day to observe family administration through a trained and experienced head of the family. He is surrounded by educational activities and processes, educated in the religion, culture and traditions of his family, taught to share, to play, to cooperate and to conduct himself before he is called upon to shoulder public responsibilities. He is taught not to be selfish and self-centered so as to cultivate in him the spirit of sharing and caring within and outside the family. It is only after completion of this training that he is allowed to leave and start his own family.

The Hmars are patrilineal. General rule of inheritance is ultimogeniture, i.e. the youngest son inherits all property. The other sons can expect at least a portion of the property. In olden days, when a Chief's son marries, he receives a certain number of houses and becomes an independent chief. At the same time a share of his father's guns, necklaces, and other valuables are handed over to him. The youngest son remains with his father till his death and become chief after the latter's death. Much the same rule of inheritance prevails among the people even today, though the material form of the inheritance has changed.

Succession of family office is patripotestal, i.e. the eldest son becomes the head of the family after the death of the father.

Political Organisation:

The political organisation of the Hmar society can be divided into the following:

1. *Lal* (chief):

The Hmars were once a nomadic tribe and their frequent movements and migrations were solely motivated by economic forces; that is, the search for a better cultivable land. In their struggle for existence and their constant war with other tribes, they must have felt a need for a strong leader who could maintain the cohesiveness of the society and also protect it from external aggressions at that stage of their evolution. Thus, a person with charisma; has the capacity to lead the people and the readiness on the part of his followers to conform to the institution or models laid down by him, emerges as *lal* (chief) and as such is recognized by the people.

The chief was entitled to a certain portion of paddy harvested by his subjects and also the foreleg of each four legged wild animals shot or trapped by the villagers. If a villager decided to migrate to another village regardless of the chief's order, the chief could confiscate his property. If a villager sold a *siet* (mithun) or any other cattle to someone from another village, some specified portion of the price was to be given to the chief. The rights of the chief to these services were in fact the foundation of his political power and his accumulated wealth, which enabled him to command respect and loyalty of his own clan or tribe and other clans or tribes. This practice actually amounted to

virtual recognition of the chief as the supreme authority and the sole owner of the land. In theory, therefore, the chief is a despot. But in practice, as the love for freedom among the people is so strong that any chief whose rule was unduly authoritarian soon found his subjects deserting him. Thus, he must restrict himself to ruling according to custom and respect the autonomy of every individual.

2. *Muolkil mitha* (chief councilor) and *Khawnbawl* (councilors):

A chief is helped by a council of ministers called *muolkil mitha* and *Khawnbawl*. The specific character, composition and methods of function of the council varied from clan to clan or from village to village. The chief was the supreme head of the council. Below the chief were the *muolkil mitha* (chief counselor) and ordinary *khawnbawls* (counselors). In the absence of the chief, the chief counselor took the place of the chief and presided over the meetings. The counselors who were selected by the chief himself were normally wealthy and influential group of persons, kinsmen or close friends of the chief. They were rewarded with the most fertile 'jhum lands' and also exempted from forced labour. Thus, the chief and the counselors in a sense, constituted a privileged group in a traditional Hmar society and the council through which they operated, tended to serve their own personal interest many a times.

A traditional Hmar village council combined in itself both the judiciary and the criminal court. Before it hears any dispute, the plaintiff was under obligation to offer *zu* (rice beer) to the councilors and, if he won the case, the other party not only reimbursed his expenditure but also fined Pigs or other livestock as the case maybe. The most

serious offence committed by a person if found guilty by this council would be fined with a term called *siel le salam*. The chief was armed with extra-judicial powers, which nobody questioned. For instance, if a criminal or adulterer managed to touch the *Lal sutpui* (Middle post of the chief's house) before being caught, the pursuer would be considered guilty, or enemy of the chief, if he continued to make attempts at vengeance. The wrongdoer becomes the slaves of the chief for life unless the chief agreed to free him it.

In Manipur, with the enactment of the Manipur Village Council Act of 1956, the office of the chief was diminished to a great extent though its total abolishment could not be brought about due to opposition from various quarters, especially the Thadou-Kuki community. In the bordering state of Mizoram, the institution of the chief was already abolished in 1946 with the onset of the Mizo union movement spearheaded by the Mizo National Union, the first political organization of the Mizos. In Manipur, under the Village Council Act of 1956, the chief was made the Chairman of the Village Authority without any other discretionary powers. Even the benefits he usually gets in the past, such as *busung-sadar* and free voluntary services from his subjects are also no longer given to him.

3. *Thiempu* (priest):

Another important official next to the chief and his council of ministers is the *thiempu*. Administering an oath or subjecting the party concerned to ordeal to test innocence or guiltiness normally settled such cases that are referred to the *thiempu* by the village

council. One of the methods performed by the *thiempu* is called *thingkung deng*. Under this system, a pot of rice beer is kept and filled with water up to the brim. The *thiempu* then chanted, “*God of heaven, god of the universe reveal his sin and may his picture appear on the water of the rice-beer. Give him fear and let him live only for one lunar month*”. After this, the real culprit used to disclose their hidden crimes fearing that the *thiempu* will be really able to carry out the threat. It is also said that the face of the culprit sometimes appears on the rice- beer pot.

The final method of bringing justice employed by the *thiempu* in order to find out the offender is *tui lilut* (water immersion). For this trial or final judgment, the two persons who have the dispute are taken to a nearby river after performing a certain rite at the chief’s house before they moved out along with the chief and his ministers. On the bank of the river, the *thiempu* sprinkles the blood of a fowl on the top of their head and if the blood flows down the nose line of either of them, the onlookers just believed that he is the innocent of the two. The *thiempu* than chants, “*Ye God of above and God of under, Who ever tell truth among these two; Let him immerse in the water and who ever tell lies, Let him float like an empty can*”. As the *thiempu* chants these lines, the innocent person was embolden and strengthen and so dived deep into the water and come out with a handful of sand from the floor. On the other hand, the guilty person, being in fear and guilt is hardly able to survive in the water for long no matter how good a diver he may be. The responsibility of the *thiempu* is today transferred to the church

Pastors and church elders after the Hmars embraced Christianity in the beginning of the twentieth century.

4. *Val- upa* (youth commander):

Another official of the traditional Hmar village government is the *val- upa*. The *val- upa* operated through the organization of *buonzawl* by imparting strict discipline and vigorous training in the art of tribal warfare, defense, etc to youngsters (except women). In times of peace, the youth commanders mobilized the youths and rendered free but compulsory service to the society. Their influence was so great that even the chief and his councilors could at times be subject to the will of the youths.

5. *Thirsu* (blacksmith) & *tlangsam* (village crier):

The main function of the *thirsu* in a Hmar village was to make weapons and agricultural implements and, he received a certain specified quantity of paddy annually from the farmers who utilizes his services. The *tlangsam* proclaimed the orders of the chief and the counsellors; and he was exempted from force- labour or any other community labour. With the advancement of modern systems of governance and equipments in the present days, the functions of the village *thirsu* and, Messenger have lessened considerably. With the benefits of exemption from compulsory social services no more, and the donation of paddy for them no longer enforced, blacksmithy is taken up by whoever has the talent and a *tlangsam* is now employed by the village with certain honorarium.

Traditional Religious Beliefs and Practices:

The Hmar's belief in supernatural beings is manifested in all their activities. Their traditional belief system is animistic. They do not worship any celestial bodies such as the moon, sun or stars. Instead they worship the mountains, rocks, trees or rivers. They believe that each of these objects is inhabited by innumerable spirits - both malevolent and benevolent. The Hmars worship two main deities - both male and female. The male deity is called *Khuopa* and is believed to be the supreme God. The female deity or goddess is called *Khuonu* and is more loved and worshipped than *Khuopa* as he is considered to have little interest or influence in the ordinary give and take of human life (Songate 1956).

1. Spirits (*Thlarau*):

The Hmars believe in numerous spirits inhabiting objects like trees, mountains, rock, rivers, etc. These spirits are attributed to every illnesses and misfortunes. The village priest is supposed to know which spirit is causing the trouble and what form of sacrifice would appease the spirit. The Hmars, therefore, spend a great part of their time and properties to propitiate these spirits. Many of the spirits are called singularly or collectively such as *Khawchawm* (spirit that comes to the village at dusk and is considered a bad one), *Khuovang* (numerous group and considered playful), *Zasam* (mostly in the forest and one of the most feared), *Phung* (daytime spirit and is believed to cause sudden dizziness and sickness), *Lasi* (good feminine spirit who blesses the hunters and is even believed to often associate with men).

2. Life after Death:

The Hmars has a belief in life after death. These spirit worlds are called *Mithikhuo* (village of the dead), *Pielral* (Beyond the river of death. *Piel* is the name of a river where all the dead goes to while *ral* is 'beyond' or 'the other side') and *Vanram* (heaven). The place where the dead goes after death differed according to his virtue and achievement while on earth. Except for the *thangsuos*, *Mithikhuo* is the place where the dead, regardless of their deeds, would go. They are expected to work for their living. All the slaves they have captured in their earthly life are expected to become their servants in this spirit world. This *Mithikhuo* is believed to be underground. However, this is not the final abode of some of the dead.

Pielral is believed to be somewhere beyond *Mithikhuo*. It is considered to be a land of plenty and happiness. Direct entrance to *Pielral* is achieved only by a *Thang suo*. In this place, a *Thang suo* is believed to be fed with rice and meat by fair maidens. The privilege is also extended to a *Thang suo*'s wife. The spirits of the departed *Thang suo* is believed to have the power to bless, and a constant *Sakhuo* or ritual is observed to invoke his blessing, especially for his sons.

Vanram is the last spirit world. Today the Christians use this as a synonym for the Biblical heaven. This is the ultimate spirit home where all the good and holy ones are expected to go and live forever. Every soul spends a considerable length of time in *Mithikhuo* and *Pielral* before entrance to *Vanram* is given. Those who are given entrance will enjoy equal rights and status, and there will be no distinction as on earth,

Mithikhuo or *Pielral*. Wicked souls are believed to simply hover over the firmament restlessly for eternity. All good spirits live in enjoyment together in *Vanram*.

3. Ancestor worship:

There is a belief among the Hmars that all departed souls, especially those in *Mithikhuo* have difficulty in adapting to the place and often come or try to come back to the land of the living to haunt, torment or even kill people. Due to this fear, the Hmars used to conduct sacrifices or offerings within one year after their death in order to propitiate the restless souls at *Hringlang tlang*, a mountain which lies between the living world and the world of the dead and where the dead used to come. The souls of dead children, it is believed, find it especially hard to settle in *Mithikhuo* and therefore parents prepare special meals and offerings and placed on the graves of these children regularly. This is called *Sakhuo* and is now the common word for 'religion' among the Hmars. A priest is called upon to perform a certain rite called *Thitin* (sending off of the dead). Colourful clothes and skirts and feathers of birds are hung over the grave as the final rite for the dead. The soul finally departs from earth. Then some friendly spirits in *Mithikhuo* will give water called *Lunlotui* (lonesome – no more water) to the soul. Following this, pretty little girls will welcome the dead with beautiful flowers called *Hawilopar* (Look-back-no-more flower) that will finally remove all the ties and feelings about the living.

The arrival of the Christian missionary Mr. Watkin Roberts from Aizawl at Tipaimukh in 1910 has led the Hmars to forsake their traditional religious beliefs and embrace Christianity. At present, the Hmars are 100% Christians. As a result, the

traditional beliefs and practices of the Hmars are now almost completely gone with only few traces of it remaining in folksongs, folktales and other oral sources.

Youth Dormitory (*Buonzawl*)

One of the important social institutions of the Hmars was called *buonzawl*, a dormitory for the youth. In bordering Mizoram, this dormitory is known as *zawlbuk*. This institution can be regarded as the most effective agency of education among the Hmars as well as their kindred tribes before the introduction of modern system of education in their areas and, in the absence of any formal educational system. The *Pawi* (Lai) and the *Lakher/ Mara* tribes who are now mostly concentrated in the southern part of present Mizoram state do not have this type of institution. The *Pawis* claimed that they, being a dominant tribe or clan do not find any reason to have such an institution.

Buonzawl was built and operated by the whole village community. It is similar to other houses in materials but different in shape and size. A single entrance obtains access to the building by a platform of rough wood at the uphill end. A large fireplace was constructed in which a fire was kept burning day and night. Close to the fire was an open space used for recreation including wrestling and dances. This particular place, according to some writers is what was known's as the *buonzawl*. The Hmar term of '*buon*' means 'wrestling' and '*zawl*' means "a flat surface" or "an open space". There are sleeping platforms on all side of the wall except the front part. All the male youth of the village who had attained puberty are supposed to sleep here at night. Each young

boy in the village is under obligation to supply fire wood for the Buonzawl and failure of which will be reprimanded or punish by the *val-upa* or youth commander.

The institution of *buonzawl* played several roles in traditional Hmar society. Let us briefly highlight some of these.

1. Security:

In earlier tribal societies, it was common to attack another tribe for power and control of territory, etc leading to inter-tribal wars. Another common incident was inter-clan feud that commonly occurred among the tribes for want of being dominant over the other. For this reason, it became a necessity for all the young man to sleep together in one place in order to protect the village from the enemy, or to prepare them for any emergency. To meet such a possible attack, prompt and immediate action and reaction was more desirable. The *buonzawl* served as a control room in times of such an emergency. As such, the security factor can be attributed as one of the most important reason for the origin of 'dormitory house' in Hmar society. War strategy or hunting expedition are discussed and planned here under the leadership of the *val-upa*.

2. Education:

Buonzawl, at the beginning was just like any other hall meant for discussing matters concerning the public, but it was later developed into a kind of institution where youngsters were given rigorous training in the art of tribal war, discipline, wrestling and village administration. Besides, the *buonzawl* played a very significant role in imparting the tribal philosophy of life, *tlawmngaina* (altruism), an untranslatable term binding all

to be hospitable, kind, unselfish and helpful to others- a moral force which finds expressions in the Hmars' culture of self sacrifice for the service of others. *Buonzawl* also gives an important opportunity for the boys to socialize by mixing and sleeping with others. The boys also learnt how to respect the elders, one very important moral duty of every human being and prepared them to be a better man.

3. Recreation & Guest House:

As the name implies, the Hmars' *buonzawl* is a wrestling (*inbuon*) place. Wrestling is one of the most popular forms of recreation among the Hmars. All male visitors to the village and guests who are younger than forty are required to sleep in the *Buonzawl* and wrestle the youths in the village. Wrestling here is different from others in that the wrestler's sole intention is not to hurt but to cultivate friendly feeling. Even the Reverend Edwin Roland, one of the English pioneer missionaries among the Mizo tribes, along with his teammates *Vanchhunga*, *Savawma* and *Taitea* were not spared from this type of challenge and had to agree to it in one small village called *sihfa* in the then Lushai Hills. When a wrestling match is over, the *val-upa* will send the boys to collect cloths enough to keep their guest warm throughout the night even though the *buonzawl* is not that cold even in winters as the 'fire' is always kept burning to give warmth to the inmates.

From what have been discussed in the foregone paragraphs, it can be seen that all the elements of the Hmar society are directly or indirectly dependent on each other with each part having specific functions and roles to play for the continued survival of

the society through age and time. The Hmar society, tradition, culture and environment is a complex network of relationship and structured accordingly to suit the needs of the people. Development programmes implemented in the past few decades have been instrumental in bringing about both direct and indirect changes in the people's way of life. The following chapter will attempt to highlight the development programmes responsible for such changes.

CHAPTER III

DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES IMPLEMENTED IN TIPAIMUKH

(1983- 2002)

Planned Development in Manipur

Planned development has been going on in Manipur and all the Districts for more than five decades with specific policy for tribal development throughout India's planned development strategies popularly known as the Five- Year Plans (1st Five Year Plan till date, i.e., the ongoing 11th Five Year Plan) to implement Community Development Programmes introduced in the country and to accelerate the pace of development in rural areas involving people's participation. As a result, Rural Development has been also functioning in the State of Manipur since 1952. State Level Monitoring Cell was established in the year 1981 to accelerate the implementation of 20 Point Economic Programme and other central sponsored scheme introduced from time to time. The Cell is directly responsible for implementation and supervision of Rural Development Schemes sponsored by government of India and also co-ordinate the implementing agencies i.e. DRDAs at the District as well as the State Departments.

At the District level, a five year perspective plan is prepared. Ideally it involves many steps. It starts at the household level and finally its formulation at the District level Department of Social Welfare at the State level. A number of functionaries- both official (bureaucracy) and non- officials such as people's representatives and agencies formulate the plan. The perspective plan of the District is formulated in the following process (see Table 4).

Table 4: Plan Process of District.

District plan (Perspective)		
District Level	Sectoral Plans Aggregation of Comprehensive Block plans	DRDA Aggregation of Block plans
Block Level	Comprehensive Area Development plan for Block (Aggregation of cluster plans)	Block plans Aggregation of Beneficiary Oriented programmes Clusterwise
Cluster Level	Clusterwise Assessment of Resource potential and Infrastructure and Planning for them	Cluster plan Preparation of household plans for Beneficiaries matching with local resources and infrastructure
Village Level	Collection, Compilation and Processing Data Village-wise	Identification of Beneficiaries and Avocation/ Activities for them
Household Level		Base- line Survey/ Household Survey

Source: Chaudhury, 1993.

In fact, the plan is formulated keeping in mind two broad categories and the input for the plan also accrues from them: Community- Oriented Programmes and Beneficiary- Oriented programmes. However, both these categories are integrated at the District level. Community- oriented programme starts at the village level. In this stage, village- wise data are collected, compiled and processed after which the cluster-wise assessment of resources potential and infrastructure is made. Here infrastructure means roads, drinking water facilities, electricity, health and sanitation facilities, communication, post and telegraphs and all those which come under the head “basic amenities”. Then the Block plan is made which is known as Comprehensive Area Development Plan for the Block. It is an aggregation of the cluster plans of the Block.

At the District level the aggregation of Comprehensive Block Plan of all Blocks of the District is made which is known as 'sectoral plan'. Then the District plan is made which is the perspective plan of the District. Both these plans are integrated at the District level and the DRDA is the main agency which decides it finally.

The beneficiary oriented planning starts with a base-line survey or household survey. The survey includes the demographic profile, income from all sources, movable and immovable properties, educational level etc. This is basically done to extract information regarding the need of the people. In the second step a tentative list of proposed beneficiaries is prepared, that is, the beneficiaries are identified from the household survey and avocations/ activities are also worked out for them at this stage. Then planning is formulated at the cluster level. The cluster usually includes a number of villages with geographical contiguity. In this cluster plan, the beneficiaries belonging to different households of the particular cluster are taken together and specific programmes are thought for them. These programmes are checked out after matching with the locally available resources and infrastructure. In the fourth stage the cluster-wise beneficiary- oriented programmes are brought together, that is of a particular Block, the aggregation of these programmes is made. Thus the Block plan for the beneficiary oriented programme is made. Finally the plans of all the Blocks of the entire District are brought together and the aggregate of these plans are brought to the District Rural Development Agency (DRDA).

Alongside this tentative distinction, the development programmes can be classified into three broad categories. The first category is on income generation programmes like Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP), Integrated Tribal Development Programme (ITDP), Programmes for small and Marginal Farmers, etc. The second category is on employment generation programmes like National Rural Employment Programme (NREP), Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEGP), Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY), Jawahar Rojgar Yojana (JRY), Employment Guarantee Scheme (EAS), and Training of Rural Youth for Self Employment (TRYSEM), etc. The third category is on social welfare programmes like Integrated Child Development Service (ICDS), Old Age and Widow Pension Schemes, Disabled Pension Scheme, Family Planning Programmes, Public Distribution Schemes, etc.

Development Programmes implemented in Manipur (1983- 2002)

As per records available both at the government and on the ground, there has been scores of development programmes- both Central and State government being implemented in the state between 1983- 2002⁵. Let us list out some of these development programmes.

A. Some Centrally sponsored development Programmes in Manipur:

⁵ All development programmes given here are found to be implemented in the Districts of the plains with evidences of their implementation available at both the ground and government agencies like Department of Social Welfare, etc while their actual implementation in the hill Districts is very doubtful.

(i) Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS)

Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) scheme is a cent per cent Centrally Sponsored Scheme. It was introduced in Manipur on 2nd October 1975 with a pilot project at Ukhrul T.D. Block. The scheme has been successfully being implemented by the Department of Social Welfare as the nodal department. Now, the scheme is expanding throughout the State with 34 projects covering 9 C.D. Blocks, 24 T.D. Blocks and 1 Urban. 4501 Anganwadi Centres are also actively functioning under these projects. It is one of the most ambitious and comprehensive survival and child development schemes for enhancing the health, nutrition and learning opportunities for pre-school children and their mothers by simultaneously providing all the requisite services at the village level. The significant factor is that the deprived and underprivileged children are the target groups of this scheme. ICDS care for children below six years of age. It also takes care of essential needs of pregnant women and nursing mothers residing in socially backward villages and urban slums.

The focal point for the delivery of ICDS services is an Anganwadi or child-care center located within the village or slum area itself. Each Anganwadi is run by an Anganwadi Worker (AWW) and a helper appointed from amongst the locality. In order to achieve the above mentioned aims and objectives, the following package of services are implemented:

Health: At the Anganwadi, children, adolescent girl and pregnant women and nursing mothers are examined at regular intervals by the Lady health Visitor (LHV) and

Auxilliary Nurse (ANM) who also administer diagnose minor ailments and distribute simple medicines. They provide a link between the village and the Primary Health Care sub-centre

Immunisation: All children in the project area are immunized against diphtheria, whooping cough, tetanus, poliomyelitis, tuberculosis and measles. All pregnant women are immunized against tetanus.

Supplementary Nutrition: All families in the community are surveyed to identify the poorest and deprived children below the age of six and expectant and nursing mothers for three hundred days a year, food is given to them at the Anganwadi.

Growth Monitoring: A children below the age of six are weighed of their mid upper arm circumference measured periodically, weight for • age growth charts are maintained to identify malnourished cases. Those suffering from severe malnutrition (Grade III and IV) are given special supplementary nutrition and acute cases are referred to the medical services.

Non-formal opportunities for Pre-school learning: Pre-school education in a non-formal setting forms the backbone of the ICDS programme as all services coverage at the Angawandi and pre-school centers. Children between the ages of three and six attended the Anganwadi for about three hours a day. The main objective of pre-school education component is to stimulate and satisfy the curiosity of the child, rather than follow any rigid lea5rning curriculum. Children are taught songs and games. Toys are indigenous

and imaginatively produced from inexpensive, locally available materials. There is no formally structured curriculum, and flexibility is encouraged.

Nutrition and Health Education: Non-formal education in nutrition and health is organized at the Anganwadi for mothers and pregnant women. All women between 15 and 45 are invited and special care is taken to ensure attendance of pregnant and nursing mothers and mothers of children who suffer from repeated illness of malnutrition.

Adolescent Girls Scheme (AG Scheme) renamed as Kishori Shakti Yojana (KSY): The schemes for adolescent girls focus on school drop-out girls in the age group of 11-18 years and attempt to meet the nutrition, health, education, literacy, recreational and skill development needs of the adolescent girls. It attempts to make the adolescent girl a better future mother and tap her potential as a social animator. The scheme relies on center-based instructions, training camps and hands-on training.

Pradhan Mantri Gramodaya Yojana/Gramin Awaas (PMGY): The Pradhan Mantri Gramodaya Yojana (PMGY) is a new initiative which aims at achieving the objectives of sustainable human development at the village level. Nutrition is also one of the major component/services under the scheme. The scheme is providing nutrition to the beneficiaries under the ICDS through their respective projects. Details of beneficiaries under the scheme at the end of August, 2002 are shown in table-5.

Table 5: Statement showing projects and Angawadi functioning in Manipur as on 30.11.1992.

Sl. No.	District	Name of Project functioning	Year of sanction	Date of operation	No. of AWC	Population
1	Bishnupur	1.Bishnupur	1988-89	06.02.1991	198	105886
		2. Moirang	1991-92	31.03.1992	186	84695
Sub total					384	190581
2	Imphal West	1.Imphal W(I)	1985-86	24.02.1986	293	152585
		2.Imphal W(II)	1983-84	15.10.1988	244	133541
Sub-Total					537	286126
3	Imphal East	1.Jiribam	1980-81	02.11.1980	130	36991
		2.ImphalE(I)	1979-80	22.11.1980	261	135663
		3.-do- E(II)	1995-96	20.10.1995	225	132482
		4.-do- City	1989-90	25.03.1991	266	196937
Sub total					882	502073
4	Thoubal	1.Thoubal	1982-83	01.04.1983	383	239623
		2.Kakching	1985-86	06.10.1986	254	130950
Sub Total					637	370573
5	Churachandpur	1.Churachandpur	1988-89	08.02.1992	207	88203
		2.Singhat	1981-82	04.04.1982	81	19452
		3.Thanlon	1989-90	30.04.1991	92	27327
		4.Henglep	1990-91.	05.06.1993	66	19892
		5.Parpung	1995-96	02.09.1996	62	23826
		6.Samulamlan	1995-96	02.09.1996	28	9658
Sub Total					536	188352

6	Chandel	1.Tengnoupal	1978-79	02.02.79	68	22,670
		2.Chandel	1986-87	03.01.87	73	18,139
		3.Chakpikarong	1992-93	02.10.95	64	17,743
		4.Machi	1996-97	20.03.97	58	16,161
Sub Total					263	74,713
7.	Senapati	1.Kangpokpi	1986-87	16.01.86	184	79,653
		2.Mao-Maram	1986-87	02.05.87	138	52,082
		3.Paomata	1983-84	12.01.83	57	35,174
		4. Saikul	1992-93	02.10.95	112	33,001
		5. Purul	1996-97	20.03.97	86	35,916
Sub Total					577	2,35,826
8.	Tamenglong	1.Nungba	1982-83	01.01.83	96	30,163
		2.Tamenglong	1986-87	25.01.86	80	36,855
		3.Tousem	1989-90	24.04.91	61	23,156
		4.Tamei	1994-95	25.11.95	49	25,072
Sub Total					286	1,15,246
9.	Ukhrul	1.Ukhrul	1975-76	02.10.75	151	60,987
		2.Phungyar	1983-84	02.09.83	56	17,687
		3.Chingai	1988-89	06.03.81	86	30,531
		4.Kanjong	1993-94	02.10.95	51	21,827
		5.Kasom Khullen	1989-90	10.01.92	55	12,056
Sub-Total					399	1,43,088
Total: Manipur State					4501	21,06,578

Source: Department of Social Welfare, Government of Manipur.

(ii) Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP)

The motive of this programme is to uplift the people living below poverty line by providing economical assistance as well as loans to the rural poor so that they can cross

the poverty line. The beneficiaries of this programme can start their own business or any other means so that they can be self-employed. The government provides a subsidy amount of Rs. 7500/- or 50% of the loan amount whichever is less.

Under the programme, there are many income generating schemes in sectors like agriculture, animal husbandry, fisheries, craft and cottage industries, services and small business etc. There is also provision for assisting the families with more than one scheme and this is known as 'Basket Scheme' or 'Multiple Asset Scheme'. It has a twofold objective: first, it would contribute to the enhancement of family income and second it would account for fuller utilization of the family labour. Under IRDP, the concept of second dose of assistance was also introduced in the Seventh Five Year Plan. Under this scheme, the beneficiaries who could not cross the poverty line by the assistance given to them during the Sixth Five Year Plan were given another dose of assistance during the Seventh Five Year Plan. The Government provides a subsidy amount of Rs. 7500 or 50% of the loan amount whichever is less.

(iii) Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY)

This programme is concerned with construction of houses and repairing. It is a housing scheme and comes with an overhead projection of: Construction- 35 tin sheets + Rs. 8000, repairing- 21 tin sheets + Rs. 1700. The houses are constructed in such villages where there are at least twenty beneficiaries who have no houses or whose houses are in a bad condition, so that at one time twenty such houses are constructed.

The objective of IAY was to provide dwelling units, free of cost to the members of Scheduled Caste / Scheduled Tribes and freed Bonded Labourers living below the poverty line. From 1993-94, the scheme has been extended to non-S.C. /S.T. rural poor also. Indira Awas Yojana is a centrally sponsored scheme funded on cost sharing basis between the Government of India and the state government in the ratio of 75:25. The cost of IAY houses have been enhanced from Rs.14, 000/- to Rs.20, 000/- in hilly and difficult areas.

(iv) Jawahar Rojgar Yojana (JRY)

During the first four years of the Seventh Five Year Plan, two Wage-employment Programmes viz., NREP (National Rural Employment Programme) and Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEGP.) were in operation in the country. From 1989 i.e. the last year of the Seventh Five Year Plan, these programmes were merged in to a single wage employment programme known as Jawahar Rojgar Yojana (JRY). The primary objectives of JRY are generation of additional gainful employment for the un-employed and under-employed men and women in rural areas.

The secondary objectives of this programme are creation of sustainable employment by strengthening the rural economic infrastructure. The expenditures for the implementation of this programme are to be shared on 80:20 basis between the State and Central Government including the value of foodgrains.

(v) Jawahar Gram Samridhi Yojana (JGSY)

The objectives of JGSY are to generate additional gainful employment for the unemployed and under-employed of men and women in rural areas. To increase sustained employment by strengthening the rural economic infrastructure for creating assets in favour of the rural poor for their direct and continuing benefits for positive impact on wage levels. People below the poverty line is the target group-specially scheduled castes/scheduled tribes. The expenditure, under the programme is shared between the centre and State on 75:25 ratios. Allocation earmarked is 100% to village level authorities. At least 60% of the resources have to be spent on wages component.

(vi) Employment Guarantee Scheme (EAS)

The Employment Assurance Scheme aims at providing wage employment in unskilled manual works to the rural poor who are in need of employment and seeking it. The secondary objective is to create economic infrastructure and community assets for sustained employment and development. The Employment Assurance Scheme for generating employment opportunities to the rural poor on an assured basis has been launched from 2nd. October, 1993. The scheme is a single wage employment programme implemented at the district/block level throughout the country. A maximum of two adults per family that need and seek wage employment during the lean agriculture season are provided 100 days employment on an assured basis. The resources under the scheme would be shared between the Centre and the State in the

ratio of 75:25 respectively. Men and women over 18 years of age and below 60 years of age normally residing in the village are covered.

(vii) Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY)

The Government of India launched the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana on 25th December, 2000 to provide all-weather access to unconnected habitations. It is a 100% Centrally Sponsored Scheme. The primary objective of the PMGSY is to provide Connectivity, by way of an All-weather Road (with necessary culverts and cross-drainage structures, which is operable throughout the year), to the eligible unconnected habitations in the rural areas, in such a way that all unconnected habitations with a population of 1000 persons and above are covered in three years (2000-2003) and all Unconnected Habitations with a population of 500 persons and above by the end of the Tenth Plan Period (2007). In respect of hill states like Manipur, the objective would be to connect habitations with a population of 250 persons and above

(viii) Training of Rural Youth for Self Employment (TRYSEM)

Under this programme, unemployed youth ranging between 18 to 35 years would be given training for self employment. The asset for employment generation is to be given under some other programmes. To utilise the asset the beneficiary may be lacking, therefore the training course is organised by the DRDA.

B. Some State sponsored development programmes in Manipur⁶:

(i) Local Area Development Programme (LADP): This development programme is implemented mainly through the Local Member of Legislative Assembly (MLA) and includes several development initiatives on education and other welfare programmes.

(ii) Women Welfare: Department of Social Welfare, Government of Manipur implemented many schemes for the welfare and upliftment of Women of Manipur especially destitute, divorced, widows etc. Some of the schemes currently implemented are as follows:

(a) Support to Training and Employment Programme (STEP): Department of Women and Child Development, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Sashtri Bhavan- New Delhi has given financial support to impart training under this programme. The programme aims to increase the self-reliance and autonomy of women by enhancing their productivity and enabling them to take up income generation activities. It provides training for skill up gradation to poor and asset less women in the traditional sectors viz., agriculture, animal husbandry, dairying, fisheries, handlooms, handicrafts, Khadi and village Industries, sericulture, social forestry and wasteland development.

(b) Setting up of Employment-cum-Income Generating units (NORAD): This programme, partially assisted by NORAD, aims to improve the lives of poor women by training them in traditional and non-traditional trades viz.- electronics, watch assembly,

⁶ Also includes centrally aided state development programmes.

basic and advanced computer training, garment making, secretariat practice, embroidery etc. and to ensure their employment in these areas given training.

(c) Construction/Expansion of Hostel Building for working Women with a Day Care Center: Under this scheme financial assistance is extended to voluntary organizations, public sector undertakings, state government and Educational Institutions for construction of hostels for working women in order to enhance enrolment of women in unemployment and in technical training. The objective is to provide cheap and safe hostel accommodation to employed women living out of their homes.

(d) Short stay homes for Women and girls (SSH): The SSH scheme for Women and girls who have no local support systems due to family problems, mental strains, social ostracism, exploitation and other causes. The services extended in these homes include medical care, psychiatric therapy, educational cum vocational training, recreational facilities etc.

(e) Swadhar: A scheme for women in difficult circumstances with the objectives as follows:

1. To provide primary need of shelter, food, clothing and care to the marginalized women, girls living in difficult circumstances who are without any social and economic support.

2. To provide emotional support and counseling to such women.

3. To rehabilitate them socially and economically through education, awareness, skill up gradation and personality development through behavioral training etc.

4. To arrange for specific clinical, legal and other support for women/girls in need of those interventions by linking and net working with other organizations in both Government and Non-Government sector on case to case basis.

5. To provide such other services and will be required for the support and rehabilitation to such women in distress.

(iii) **Child Welfare:** Department of Social Welfare, Government of Manipur has implemented Welfare programmes for Children, destitute children and orphans of Hills and plain of Manipur. Following schemes are implemented for child welfare:

(a) Children Homes: Under the scheme for the welfare of the Children in need of care and protection • the department has been extending 90% of grant in aid to 8 (eight) Destitute Children Homes run by Voluntary Organisations. At present a sum of Rs.270/- per child per month is provided for care, maintenance, education, food, etc. There are altogether 320- children are put us in these homes.

(b) Financial Assistance to Destitute Children: Financial assistance @ Rs. 60/- per child per month in the age of 6-14 years was extended to 288 school going destitute children living below poverty line.

(iv) **Welfare for Disabled persons:** Social Welfare Department implement many schemes for disabled persons to assist them to secure education , academic, technical or professional training on the shop/floor of the industrial establishment as would enable them to earn a living and to become useful members of the society. Under this schemes, 2 (two) Specials Schools one for Visual Impaired and one for Hearing Impaired with

hostel facilities are running at the Government level. Besides these two Government schools, 4 NGOS have established another 5 (five) Special Schools (4 for Mentally Retarded and one for Hearing Impaired).

Diet allowances @ Rs. 500/- p.m. are provided to every hosteller of the two Government schools. Scholarships ranging from Rs. 40 to Rs. 120 p.m. are awarded to the disabled students. Blind students are also provided Reader allowance and Brailled text books free of cost. Mentally Retarded students are given maintenance allowance @ Rs.300/- per annum. The Social Welfare Department in co-ordination with local NGOs and Anganwadi Workers also conducted a survey in the year 1995 and identified 24,690 disabled people in the State. For these disable persons, special employment exchange window is open at the employment exchange, Langol, Imphal for job application. The Scheme is continuing since 1982. 3% of jobs in the direct recruitment of Class - III and IV posts are reserved at Public Work Departments in the following rosters.

- a) 1% for Visual Impaired in the 34th roster.
- b) 1% for Hearing Impaired in the 67th roster.
- c) 1% for Locomotors Disability in the 100th roster.

The Upper age limit for applying Government jobs is relaxed by 10th years for PWDs of all categories. Furthermore, departments like PWDs, Town Planning, HUDCO, PDA etc. have been requested to provide non discrimination facilities on the roads, transport, in built environments etc.

(v) **Welfare for the Aged & Infirm:** Under this scheme, Department of Social Welfare, Government of Manipur is providing financial assistance to the old aged & infirmed persons / destitute under Manipur Old Age Pension Rules continuously. A sum of Rs. 100/- p.m has been given to these old and aged persons as pension. It is preferably given to low income group and handicaps (both male and female).

Table 6: District wise beneficiaries under Manipur Old Age Pension Scheme

Name of District	Old Age (Male)	Old Age (Female)	Total
Imphal East	391	586	977
Imphal west	541	811	1352
Thoubal	198	298	496
Bishnupur	122	184	306
Churachandpur	156	234	390
Chandel	41	61	102
Senapati	108	161	269
Tamenglong	56	85	141
Ukhrul	56	84	140
Manipur	1669	2504	4173

Source: Department of Social Welfare, Government of Manipur.

To take care of the old and aged person both male and female, Government of Manipur is also giving grant-in-aid to registered NGOS to run the homes.

(vi) **Manipur State Border Area Welfare Extension Projects:** Extension projects are taken up at Ukhrul, Churachandpur & Chandel districts of Manipur under the control of Manipur State welfare Board. These projects were running at the following centres:

Table 7: Manipur State Border Area Welfare Extension Projects.

Sl. No.	Name of the Centre	No. of Centres
1	Balwadi/ Pre-Primary education centres (25-30 children capacity)	15
2	Crèche (Day care centre of the ailing mothers)	15
3	Maternity service	15
4	Craft training programme	15

Source: Department of Social Welfare, Government of Manipur.

(vii) **Kutira Jyoti Yojana:** This is a State Government programme under which free electricity is provided to people in rural areas. One bulb point is provided free of cost to the beneficiary household. Electricity is provided free of cost for a limited time period in a day.

(viii) **Other Welfare Schemes:** The State Social Welfare Advisory Board has taken up the following Schemes/Programmes since the last few years as continuing schemes with the financial assistance of the Central Social Welfare Board, New Delhi.

Crèche Programme	For Providing Day care Service to the children in the age group of 6-5 years of the working & ailing mother being left married/unhealthy and un-
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hygienic condition, 219 Crèche units are running by 217 Registered Voluntary Organisation with the financial assistance @ Rs.18,490/- per centre and 2 ayah are detailed for 25 children in each unit as reported.

Awareness Generation
Project

35 Awareness Generation Camps have been organised by 33 registered Voluntary Organisation. Each camp is scheduled for 5 days and attended by 25-30 women. The camps are organised with the financial assistance of Rs. 10,000/- per camp from the Central Welfare Board, New Delhi. Such awareness camps are conducted to promote women active participation programme. By attending these programmes, women can strengthen themselves in participation of decision making of family and society to deal with social issues like alcoholism and atrocities on women and children.

Condensed Course of
Education for Adult
Women

The scheme is implemented through the registered Voluntary Organisation in 3 (three) level course viz., Primary, Middle and one year level courses

specially for socially handicapped Women in the age group of 18-35 years for preparing Secondary education certificate examination within a period of 1 year thereby enable them to qualify themselves and become eligible for remunerative works of opportunities and employment. 16 institutions (12- Primary Level, 2 Middle Level, 2 Matric level) were sanctioned by the central Social Welfare Board during 2000-02 @ Rs. 94,500/- for Primary & Middle Level and Rs. 1,31,100/ for Matric level as reported.

Vocational Training
Programme

The training Programme was conducted with the financial Assistance of Central Social Welfare Board through the Registered Voluntary Organisation for a period of 6-12 month with 25-50 Women capacity in the age group of 18-30 years for self employment in different trades like Weaving, Tailoring, Embroidery, Computer etc. 76 institution were given grant during 2001-02 for different trades like Weaving - 13, Tailoring - 9,

Embroidery - 48, Computer - 2, Handicraft - 2, Jewellery - 1 & Cane & Bamboo -1 but no positive action has so been received as reported.

Socio- economic
Programme

The scheme is an economic rehabilitation of physically handicapped women specially for widow, destitute and deserted women for taking up economic upliftment programme/ units through Production Unit i.e., Small Industries Handloom/ Handicraft, Ancillary, training-cum-Production on Agro-based unit (Diary, Piggery, Goat, rearing etc. No fund has so far been released by the Central Board since 1997-98 as reported.

Working Women Hostel

6 (six) Voluntary organisation with the financial assistance of the Central Social Welfare Board, New Delhi are running working women Hostel in order to provide safe accommodation of law paid working women .

Development Programmes implemented in Tipaimukh sub- division, Churachandpur district, Manipur (1983- 2002)

Located southwest of Manipur, Churachandpur District is divided into five Sub-divisions namely Churachandpur, Singngat, Thanlon, Tipaimukh and Henglep. Further,

the administrative set-up of this district includes six Tribal Development Blocks. The sub-divisions are adjoining with the Tribal Development Blocks except for Churachandpur Sub-Division where there are two Blocks namely Churachandpur and Samulamlan. The Sub-Divisional Officer also functions as the Block Development Officer. The six Tribal Development Blocks are given in Table 8.

Table 8: Tribal Development Blocks in Churachandpur District.

Sl. No.	Name of District	Name of Block
1.	Churachandpur	1. Churachandpur T. D. Block 2. Thanlon T. D. Block 3. Henglep T. D. Block 4. Tipaimukh (Parbung) T. D. Block 5. Singhat T. D. Block 6. Samulamlan T. D. Block

Source: Fieldwork

While both ground and government records shows the presence and implementation of all the development programmes in Manipur⁷ being implemented in its valley Districts, their actual presence and implementation in hill Districts like Churachandpur District, considered the largest and one of the most 'developed',⁸ is very low eventhough government records may show otherwise⁹. On closer scrutiny, only a

⁷ See list of development programmes given in 'Development Programmes Implemented in Manipur'.

⁸ While Churachandpur District may appear to be very developed in terms of income, health, employment, education and literacy of the people, present and functional status of government and non-government infrastructures etc, it is also an area where levels of aspirations, peace, security, happiness, etc are very low.

⁹ Many tribals view this existing disparity between the valley and hill Districts of Manipur as a discrimination towards the hill tribes and therefore often the source of conflicts and tensions between people from the valleys and the hills and also between the tribals and the Manipur government.

few development programmes are found to be actually implemented or functioning in the area. As a consequence, the number of development programmes actually implemented in Tipaimukh sub- division is also abysmally low especially when data that are actually available at the ground are taken into account¹⁰. Thus taking only those development data actually available at the ground level from the villages studied, the development programmes implemented in Tipaimukh from 1983- 2002 includes–

1. Integrated Child Development Service (ICDS):

Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme is a cent per cent Centrally sponsored Scheme. It was introduced in Manipur on 2nd October 1975. The focal point for the delivery of ICDS services is an Anganwadi or child-care center, located within the village area itself. Each Anganwadi is run by an Anganwadi worker (AWW) and a helper appointed from amongst the locality.

The only available record of ICDS in Tipaimukh between 1983- 2002 is an immunisation programme that was carried in 2002 at Parbung and Patpuihmun village. Under this, children are immunised against diptheria, whooping cough, tetanus, poliomyelitis, tuberculosis and measles. Some pregnant women are also immunised against tetanus. Table 9 shows the number of children and pregnant women being immunised under this programme.

¹⁰ Data at the ground level are obtained from the people through interviews and from records maintained by grassroot agencies/ organizations like the Village Authorities, Youth Clubs, etc.

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Table 9: Immunisation programme under ICDS in Tipaimukh during 2002.

Name of Village	Number of Children Immunised	Number of Pregnant Women Immunised
Parbung	200	25
Patpuihmun	100	15
Total	300	40

Source: Fieldwork

2. Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP):

In Tipaimukh sub- division, the total number of IRDP beneficiaries during 1980- 1985 (first dose) is 81 household @ Rs. 3, 500 per household from the three village of Parbung, Patpuihmun and Thingkal, (i.e., Rs. 2, 83, 500/- disbursed for 81 Households from three villages). Table 10 show the list of IRDP implementation in the three sample villages during 1980- 1985:

Table 10: Implementation of IRDP in Parbung, Patpuihmun and Thingkal village from 1980-1985.

Name of villages	Name of Scheme	Year	Particular of the schemes	No. of beneficiaries (In Household)
Parbung	IRDP	1980-1985	Coffee	08
			Pitsaw	02
			Provision store	01
			Tea stall	01
			Furniture store	01
			Parkia	05
			Orange	10
			Sugarcane	10
			Soya bean	07
Sub- Total				45



Patpuihmun	IRDP	1980-1985	Coffee	10
			Pitsaw	02
			Provision store	02
			Tea stall	01
			Furniture store	01
			Parkia	03
			Orange	04
			Sugarcane	02
			Soya bean	05
Sub- Total				30
Thingkal	IRDP	1980-1985	Coffee	--
			Pitsaw	--
			Provision store	--
			Tea stall	--
			Furniture store	--
			Parkia	02
			Orange	03
			Sugarcane	01
			Soya bean	--
Sub- Total				6
Grand Total				81

Source: Fieldwork

Table 11 shows the allocation of village- wise beneficiaries for re-selection under Agricultural Scheme, IRDP (1985- 86). The fund available for this scheme is Rs. 1, 80, 000/- being Central share and Rs. 2, 72, 180, 00/- as State share.

Table 11: Allocation of village- wise beneficiaries for re-selection under IRDP during 1985- 1986.

Sl. No.	Particulars	Parbung	Patpuihmun	Thingkal	Total
1.	Coffee	8 household	5 household	Data not available	13
2.	Pitsaw	21 household	2 household	Data not available	4
3.	Provision Store	1 household	2 household	Data not available	3
4.	Tea Stall	1 household	1 household	Data not available	2
5.	Furniture Shop	1 household	1 household	Data not available	2
6.	Parkia	8 household	8 household	4 household	20
7.	Orange	15 household	10 household	6 household	31
8.	Sugar-cane	10 household	10 household	7 household	27
9.	Soyabean	7 household	7 household	3 household	17
Total		53 household	46 household	20 household	119

Source: Fieldwork

The total No. of beneficiaries from Parbung, Patpuihmun and Thingkal village is 119 Households @ Rs. 3, 500 per household.

This programme has been modified as Swarna Jayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY) from 1.4.1999. Unfortunately, there is no record of any SGSY being carried out at Parbung village and other villages from the records maintained by the VA or any other bodies. Moreover, the people are completely ignorant or do not have any idea

about any SGSY schemes carried out in their village. Some of them even think that SGSY schemes are IRDP's.

3. Indira Awas Yojana (IAY):

This programme has been implemented in Tipaimukh from 1986. However, in Parbung the beneficiaries hardly get the money if they got the tin sheets and vice-versa. Moreover, if a beneficiary is to get tin sheet, his/her share is divided in half and shared with another and low quality sheets are given. In most cases, the money is hardly included in the distribution and if by exception, the money is included, the beneficiary is not likely to get the tin sheets and the money too, when given, is only half of what is originally to be given. Table 12 shows IAY implementation in Parbung, Patpuihmun and Thingkal villages during 1986-1990.

Table 12: IAY implementation in Parbung, Patpuihmun and Thingkal villages between 1986- 1990.

Name of scheme	Year	Particulars of scheme	Village	Number of beneficiaries (in Households)	
I.A.Y.	1986-90	Tin sheets + money for building & Repairing houses	Parbung	Building	10
				Repairing	15
			Sub- Total	25	
			Patpuihmun	Building	10
				Repairing	14
			Sub- Total	24	
			Thingkal	Building	06
				Repairing	03
			Sub- Total	09	
			Grand Total		

Source: Fieldwork

4. Jawahar Rojgar Yojana (JRY):

This programme has been in effect in Tipaimukh sub- division from 1991. The most important aspect of the programme was that the funds were given directly to the Village Authorities and to be spent under certain guidelines. The amount given to the Village Authorities has to be utilised in the following way: 35% grants for economically productive assets, 15% grants for social forestry works, 15% grants for individual beneficiary schemes and 25% grants for other works including roads and buildings. In this programme, the Village Authorities shall decide the works to be undertaken under the programme each year and this decision cannot be changed at the Block or District levels. In Tipaimukh, most of the works so undertaken involves construction of inter-village roads and repair of existing infrastructures. Table 13 shows some of the works done under JRY:

Table 13: JRY implementation in Tipaimukh during 1990-1991, 1991-1992 & 2000-2002

Year	Type of Work
1990-1991	Funds used for constructing motorable Inter- Village Roads that connect villages in Tipaimukh.
1991-1992	(a) Allocation of rice under JRY on instalment basis. Quantity: 20 quintals of superfine rice. Every instalment for Parbung village. (b) Improvement of Inter- Village Roads.
2000-2002	Construction and improvement of Parbung village road from BRTF road to Hmawngkawn lane, from Patpuihmun to Ngampabung village.

Source: Fieldwork

5. Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS):

Below are some of the works done in Tipaimukh sub- division under EAS during 1996-1999:

- (i) Construction of Anganwadi buildings at Parbung and Patpuihmun villages.
- (ii) Construction of cemetery shed with store rooms at several villages of Tipaimukh.
- (iii) Widening of road with drainage from Hmawngkawn road up to public ground at Parbung village.
- (iv) Construction/ improvement of water collection at Parbung village, Patpuihmun villages.
- (v) Improvement from Jeep motorable (Sartex) road, drainage widening and extension, etc. to water collection point (12 ft), Parbung village.
- (vi) Additional sanction for construction of jeep-able road from Parbung to Barak.
- (vii) Widening/construction of road from Parbung to Barak.
- (viii) Construction of Platform at Public ground, Parbung.
- (ix) Construction of social forestry at Parbung.

2000- 2002:

Improvement of Parbung and Patpuihmun village roads with drainage

6. Jawahar Gram Samridhi Yojana (JGSY):

In Tipaimukh, the only available record of a development project being done under JGSY is Improvement of Sengvai lane approach road to Sengvai cemetery including repairing of 2 wooden bridges during 2000-2002.

7. Training of Rural Youth for Self Employment (TRYSEM):

In order to carry out this training in Tipaimukh, a training centre for cane and bamboo works was set up in 1990. At present, it is extinct and has been so for the past 15 years.

8. Local Area Development Programme (LADP):

This is a State Government programme under which community welfare programmes are undertaken through the local M. L. A. in Tipaimukh. Some of the more noteworthy works taken up under this programme between 1990- 2002 are:

Construction of football grounds in Parbung and Patpuihmun villages

Construction and repair of cemetery waiting sheds in Parbung, Patpuihmun and Thingkal villages

(i) Widening of an inter- village road from Mon- Bahadur road to Thingkal- Patpuihmun via Lower Kharkhuplien village

(ii) Construction of public toilets

(iii) Construction and repair of village community halls in Parbung, Patpuihmun and Thingkal villages.

9. Pension schemes:

The old age pension scheme was started in 1975 and continued in Tipaimukh. Under this scheme, person above the age of 65 years and person suffering from diseases like leprosy are included. Another pension scheme introduced in Tipaimukh is the widow pension scheme. Under this, a widow of 50 years or above will be taken as beneficiary. In both the schemes, the beneficiary should not have any other source of income, should

be a permanent resident of Tipaimukh, should not be a criminal offender and should not have received any other grants. However, identification of beneficiaries for these schemes is filled with controversies in Tipaimukh as it has been alleged by the people that most beneficiaries so selected are not eligible for the schemes as none of the above criteria are being fulfilled or met.

10. Kutir Jyoti Yojana:

In order to carry out this programme, a diesel electric generator was installed in Parbung village that provided electric power to the village till 1980. However, after 1980, the power generator broke down and was never repaired or replaced. Only the building that housed the generator now stands.

Other development initiatives:

Apart from the programmes mentioned, there are also some other development schemes and projects undertaken in Tipaimukh sub- division between 1983-2002. They are as follows:

1. Fish Farmers' Development Agency:

Under this agency, a scheme for reclamation/renovation of ponds and tanks was implemented during 1986- 1990 with grants from the State Government. Table 14 show the level and status of this scheme.

Table 14: Implementation of FFDA in Parbung, Patpuihmun and Thingkal villages during 1986-1990.

Name of scheme	Year	Particulars of scheme	Village	Number of beneficiaries (in Households)
FFDA	1986-1990	Reclamation and renovation of ponds and tanks	Parbung	05
			Patpuihmun	05
			Thingkal	Data not available
Grand Total				10

Source: Fieldwork

2. Establishment of schools and implementation of education programmes:

Pherzawl High School was established in the year 1951. It was incidentally, the first High School ever established in the entire hill district of Manipur. The formal government recognition with a grant-in-aid of rupees ten thousand however, came later in the year 1954, the same year the school produced its first matriculate. Parbung High School, established in the year 1961 was recognised as a government high school in 1964. In Senvon village, the birthplace of modern education in Churachandpur district, a high school that was given the status of grant-in-aid from its establishment in 1970 was upgraded to a full-fledged high school in 1979.

At present, there are now 39 Government Schools in the area starting from Lower Primary to High Schools with 147 staffs. These government schools have been the mainstay for quality and higher education among the Hmars in Tipaimukh. However, most of the schools are now defunct due to the absence of teachers and proper facilities after the middle of the 1980s due to several reasons such as corruption, fake appointment, deteriorating transport and communication condition, lack of basis

facilities like books, government apathy, teachers' reluctance to come and stay in their posts, rise in insurgency, etc.

Schools apart, there are also some recent educational programmes like Sarva Sikhsa Abhiyan (SSA) that also employs some staffs and use existing infrastructures that may or may not necessarily be government infrastructure. In some villages, staffs of SSA co-ordinate their works with Church missions and also use Church infrastructure to carry on classes and teach. This programme has been having a very important contribution to education in Tipaimukh due to its ability to fill in the gaps or vacuums in staffs (both government and non-government) and other needs.

3. Road development project:

Tipaimukh area has been virtually devoid of any modern transport infrastructure till the early 70s except for small narrow and often treacherous hill- paths. However, with the district re-organisation of Manipur and the birth of Churachandpur district with its subdivisions, construction of state highway (Tipaimukh road) was started in full- swing in 1976 and became fully operational around late 1978 and early 1979 till the early 1990s. This road connects Churachandpur with Mizoram via Tipaimukh. Simultaneously, several tribal/ rural development programmes aimed at giving employment to the tribals along with building and developing transport and communication infrastructures, building and construction of Inter-Village Roads were also done in real earnest.

The Central Government of India declared Tipaimukh Road a national highway (National Highway No. 150) on January 6, 1999. The total length of this highway is 700

km, and is the third national highway passing through the state of Manipur, together with National Highway No. 53 and National Highway No. 39. These highways connect three Northeastern states viz. Mizoram (141 km), Manipur (523 km) and Nagaland (36 km). The highway stretch starts from Seling (National Highway No. 54) in Mizoram through Tipaimukh-Imphal- Ukhrul- Jessami in Manipur and terminates at a junction with National Highway No. 53 in Nagaland (km 0 at Kohima).

The development of this national highways had been projected to be under the “Prime Minister’s agenda for socio-economic development of North Eastern Region” which was announced on January, 2000. The PM’s agenda envisages a total investment of Rs. 9094 crores. It comprises 27 projects ranging from rural infrastructure development projects, irrigation and educational infrastructure development to strengthening of internal security, besides horticulture and IT development etc. It has also been reported that the entire stretch of National Highway No. 150 will be a double lane highway and included in the approved 10th plan programme of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways. In August 2004, Union Minister for Shipping, Road Transport and Highways Shri. T. R. Baalu met the Northeast states respective ministers-in-charge, ministry and BRO officials and approved fresh proposals worth Rs. 6,500 crores for fast track development of nearly 2,000 km National Highways and Roads in the Northeast. During the meeting, it was also decided to provide medians on National Highway No. 150 for increasing safety. The Border Roads Organisation (BRO) has been entrusted for taking up improvement and construction work of the 262 km long

stretch from Tipaimukh to Churachandpur and 175 km from Yaingangpokpi (488 km) to Jessami (63 km). The stretch from Churachandpur to Yaingangpokpi, a total of 86 km is entrusted to the Manipur state Public Work Department (PWD).

On the Vangai side of Tipaimukh, the only highway available is a State highway called the Mon Bahadur road which runs along the periphery of the Vangai range and not actually inside the Vangai range. This road connects to Jiribam, Imphal East district, Manipur. However, even this road has been unrepaired for the last 13-14 years or so and is therefore almost out of service except for some vehicles that run during election time. This is also made possible only because of the reason that the road is being repaired partially for election campaign purpose. Inter-village roads are however more or less the same as those in Hmarbiel area and the main transportation route has always been the Barak waterway as transportation by road is not viable for the people living in the Vangai area as the Mon Bahadur road does not go in into the Vangai area but touch only the periphery. Highway apart, inter-village roads or IVR are much better. All of the villages in Tipaimukh are properly and well connected by Inter- Village Roads done mostly under JRY schemes and now under NREGS.

4. Health programmes:

The state government has undertaken several health programmes in Tipaimukh between 1983 till date. Under the health programmes, several health care facilities were constructed through which national health programmes like sanitation, malaria eradication, cholera eradication, typhoid eradication, chicken pox eradication, small pox

eradication, maternity benefit scheme etc were carried out apart from providing other basic health care to the people. The existing health care facilities include:

(i) Community Health Centre (CHC) in Parbung village with doctors nurses and equipped with facilities like beds, instruments, etc.

(ii) Two Primary Health Centres (PHC) - one in Kangreng village and one in Patpuihmun village with one doctor, two nurses and equipped with the bare minimum medical facilities.

(iii) Eleven Sub- Primary Health Centres and,

(iv) Five dispensaries.

As have been mentioned earlier in this chapter, inspite of government records showing almost all development programmes ever initiated by the Indian government being implemented in Manipur and all its districts, it can be seen that the number of development programmes actually implemented in the hills districts and their sub-divisions like Tipaimukh is very low. There are hardly any development programmes that have been fully or properly carried out apart from the total absence of many development schemes in the hills districts whereas records and evidences of such programmes being implemented in the valley districts could be found¹¹. Another glaring disparity between the hill districts and the valley districts is on the presence and functionality of many development infrastructures necessary for successful implementation of many development programmes such as welfare schemes, JRY, etc.

¹¹ For example, see the implementation of welfare schemes in both the hills and the valley districts.

The following chapter will make an attempt to discuss at length how far and how much the life of the Hmars have been directly and indirectly impacted, affected and changed as a result of such development programmes implemented in Tipaimukh sub- division of Churachandpur District.

CHAPTER IV

IMPACT OF DEVELOPMENT ON THE LIFE OF THE PEOPLE

The term 'impact' is used when one speaks in the context of a particular event or chain of events that affect a current or ongoing system/ condition leading to changes either in the element or structure or sometimes both, to the said system/condition. According to Oxford Dictionary, 'impact' is the effect, influence, repercussion or change in a system as a result of external or internal factors. Webster New World Dictionary also defines it as "The power of an event, idea, etc. to produce changes, move the feelings, etc. Taking both the definitions of the word 'impact' as a clue, particularly in the context of the impacts of development from an anthropological perspective, we will attempt to study and analyse the changes brought about in the Hmars' way of life as a result of both the direct and indirect impacts of development and other correlating factors. It is an attempt to study the effect, influence, repercussion or changes resulting out of such chain of events and whether such impacts and changes has brought upon the Hmars of Tipaimukh better opportunity, better quality of life, better standard of living, higher levels of aspiration, happiness etc.

Before the arrival of the British and the handing over of their lands to Gambir Singh, the Rajah of Manipur on July 23, 1832 by the British government and later on by the last and final annexation of the Hmar area after the Lushai expedition of 1871-72, the Hmars had very little contact with the Western world. As the area came under the full control of the British after these annexations, a new administration was set up to administer the people. Consequently, the present Hmars of Tipaimukh found themselves

under a strange administrative set- up. The arrival and introduction of Christianity among the Hmars by a Welsh missionary Watkin R. Roberts at Senvawn village in Tipaimukh in 1910 further accelerated the wind of change that swept over the Hmar community of Tipaimukh (Songate 1956, Pudaite 1963, Keivom 1990, Sangkima 1992, Dena 2008).

However, even after the introduction of modern system of administration and Christianity among the Hmars of Tipaimukh, planned development was not undertaken in Tipaimukh. T. H. Lewin, the Political Officer during the Lushai Expedition of 1871-72 observed that the British Government only wanted to keep the volatile tribal out of their holdings in Cachar by brute force and afterward by means of trade and commerce, and also send a message to the tribals the message that the British Raj and its properties is to be respected (Lewin 1912). Planned development in the area therefore took place after India's independence.

Some of the important impacts of the planned development are discussed as follows:

1. Income and Occupation

2. Education

3. Health

4. Socio- Cultural Institutions:

(a) Marriage

(b) Village Administration

5. Social Relationship

6. Traditional Values:

(a) Honour

(b) Wealth and happiness

(c) Self- Reliance

7. Women

1. Income and Occupation

Agriculture was and still is the main occupation of the Hmars. Being primarily agriculturists, the main activity of the Hmars was on food-production and almost all their socio- cultural life was connected with it. Before the introduction of money economy, production and appropriation involved little profit motives. As indicated, a certain specified quantity of paddy was given to the chief, the priest, the blacksmith and the village messenger. Thus, the process of distribution or appropriation of products involved channelling upward of products to socially determined allocating centres such as the chief and the priest. In fact, the traditional Hmar society was marked by a constant 'give and take' and the wealth, given and taken, was one of the main instruments of social organization; of the power of the chief; of the bonds of kinship and of relationship in law.

The introduction of money as a medium of exchange had a tremendous impact on the subsistence economy of the Hmars. The British maintained peace and undertook road-construction and as result, coinage was introduced and tax (hill house tax) was

demanded in that medium. To get cash, they had to grow cash crops such as chilly, cotton, orange, etc and sell these to merchants in Cachar and East Pakistan (now Bangladesh). Many Hmar villages, particularly in Tipaimukh area, are situated on both sides of the Barak (Tuiruong) river through which the commodity products were exported. The farmers were entirely at the mercy of the merchants from Cachar and sold their products according to a rate fixed by the latter. Unfortunately, no serious thought is given till today as to how this production can be best utilized to the maximum benefit of the people. Thus, with the introduction of money, four major changes can be observed:

- (a) Trade generally increased,
- (b) The degree and differentiation by wealth also tremendously increased,
- (c) Indebtedness which was almost unknown in traditional Hmar society became rampant and this made the helpless debtors easy victims to exploitation in the hands of money-lenders; and
- (d) Lastly, the traditional subsistence economy of the Hmars was gradually integrated with the market economy.

In recent times, especially after the advent of development programmes like IRDP, JRY and EAS in Tipaimukh coupled with the strengthening of rural infrastructure like roads leading to the introduction of new agricultural and other occupational practices, there have also been additions in the occupation of the Hmar. The occupation of the Hmar population in Tipaimukh have seen increased

diversification as a direct and indirect result of development in education, transport and communications that enable better education and exposure to the outside world. In many cases, these changes have been instrumental in bringing about an economically better and higher standard of life to the people. People, who earlier never had any idea of the importance or felt the needs for employment in both private and public sectors; of following other occupations like business, trade, etc apart from agro-based occupations; of exporting their products outside with a better price and larger potential for expansion; etc are now made aware of all these. Moreover, the thirst for more knowledge and better education also led many youths to go to cities like Delhi, Mumbai, Bangalore, etc and towns like Churachandpur, Silchar, Aizawl, etc to pursue higher education which contribute further to this awareness and the subsequent diversification in occupation. In villages where not even a single government servant or employees from the private sectors were found, government employees, private sector employees, sometimes even up to the level of a high ranking officers like District Education Officer, District Agricultural Officer, District Medical Superintendent, Divisional Forest Officer, Inspector General of Police, Professors, Bank Managers, etc can be seen although percentages may differ from village to village depending on MLA politics, geographical location and proximity to necessary infrastructure. Table 15 shows how occupations have changed over time.

Table 15: Occupational distribution and Per Capita Income of Parbung, Patpuihmun and Thingkal from 1983- 2002.

Name of villages	Types of Occupation	Year	%	Per Capita Income (Rs)*
Parbung	Agriculture	1983-1990	93%	Rs. 10,000
		1991-2002	80%	Rs. 30,000
		Present	75%	Rs. 40, 000
	Employed	1983-1990	4%	Rs. 18,000- Rs. 35,000
		1991-2002	15%	Rs. 30,000- Rs. 60,000
		Present	18%	Rs. 60,000- Rs. 100,000
	Others (business, trade, etc)	1983-1990	3%	Rs. 15,000- Rs. 20,000
		1991-2002	5%	Rs. 40,000- Rs. 50,000
		Present	7%	Rs. 50,000- Rs. 60,000
Patpuihmun	Agriculture	1983-1990	95%	Rs. 10,000
		1991-2002	83%	Rs. 30,000
		Present	78%	Rs. 40, 000
	Employed	1983-1990	2%	Rs. 18,000- Rs. 35,000
		1991-2002	10%	Rs. 30,000- Rs. 60,000
		Present	13%	Rs. 60,000- Rs. 100,000
	Others (business, trade, etc)	1983-1990	3%	Rs. 15,000- Rs. 20,000
		1991-2002	7%	Rs. 40,000- Rs. 50,000
		Present	9%	Rs. 50,000- Rs. 60,000
Thingkal	Agriculture	1983-1990	99%	Rs. 10,000
		1991-2002	94%	Rs. 40,000
		Present	92%	Rs. 60, 000
	Employed	1983-1990	--	Rs. --
		1991-2002	3%	Rs. 30,000- 60,000
		Present	4%	Rs. 60, 000
	Others (business, trade, etc)	1983-1990	1%	Rs. 15,000- Rs. 20,000
		1991-2002	3%	Rs. 40,000- Rs. 50,000
		Present	4%	Rs. 50, 000- 60, 000

Source: Fieldwork * All figures are in average.

Apart from the increased diversification in occupation, there is also an increase in the income level of many households, both as a direct and indirect result of development programmes. The income of many households tends to be quite high and sometimes even crosses the one lakh mark especially during seasons when the price of ginger, arum, oranges, chillies, etc are quite high. During 2004-05, the price of ginger was very high and at its peak, it was sold at Rs. 25-30 per kilogram in Tipaimukh market on the bank of the Barak. During that time, many households in Parbung and Patpuihmun have more than 500 Quintals of harvested ginger and were thus able to earn lakhs of rupees. One man by the name of Thuoia from Parbung village even sold his 1000 quintals of ginger and was able to get a profit of about 4 lakhs. Taken at an average, the annual income level of the Hmars in Tipaimukh is now Rs. 15, 000- 30, 000. But, agriculture and economics scenario is subjected to fluctuations due to lack of proper market, climatic and environmental factors that can affect productivity, political scenario and other factors leading to dramatic fluctuations in annual earning. The average annual income is thus subjected to dramatic fluctuations.

Nevertheless, inspite of the increase in income and flow of money as a direct and indirect result of development programmes in the three villages studies, there is however a small percentage of people still living in poverty who are regarded as families below the poverty line. The table below show the percentage of Below Poverty Line families in the three villages as per the earnings of the people.

Table 16: Number of Below Poverty Line (BPL) Families in Parbung, Patpuihmun and Thingkal village.

Name of Village	Total Number of Families	Number of BPL Families	Per Capita Income of BPL Families	Percentage of BPL Families
Parbung	388	10	Rs. 1000- 3000	2.5
Patpuihmun	150	5	Rs. 1000- 3000	3.3
Thingkal	37	-	Rs. 1000- 3000	-

Source: Fieldwork

Another interesting aspect is shown in both table 15 and 16 with regard to differences in earnings out of agricultural products and percentage of families below poverty line. In table 15, it can be seen that among all villages in Tipaimukh, Parbung and Patpuihmun village are the biggest and regarded by the people and others as the most equipped and advance while Thingkal is regarded as one of the smallest and remotest parts of Tipaimukh with minimum implementation of any development programme in the area. However, the earnings out of agricultural product are the highest. Again in table 16, it can also be seen that Thingkal village actually recorded a nill in the number of families below poverty line whereas the other two villages, supposed to be the most advanced in terms of the presence of development schemes, inflow of money, connectivity, etc recorded the presence of families that still lives below the poverty line. On enquiring further why Thingkal village can achieve such feats, it was found that the villagers from Thingkal, being more or less neglected have been fending for their own development most of the time. As a result, it appears that they are relatively self-sufficient in matter of food and other resources among all

villages in Tipaimukh. Although it is regarded as the most backward and remotest, the villagers have ample food resources. For instance, during the recent famine related to bamboo flowering called '*mautam*'¹² in Tipaimukh, many people from other villages like Patpuihmun, Ngampabung, etc came to Thingkal village to buy food. When asked how this is possible, the villagers simply answered that they prepared in advance. Another reason given by the villagers was that they have always been taking good care of their land and forest as the option of depending on other sources for livelihood was limited unlike other villages that have these options. On personally verifying, it was found that the forest and jhum lands were well-preserved and richer than the jhum lands of other villages thus still having the capability of providing the villagers with more than what they actually need. The factor of population pressure on land also plays a role here as Thingkal have a relatively lower population than other villages of Tipaimukh. Whatever may be the case, the fact cannot be denied that the relative self-sufficiency of Thingkal depends heavily on the traditional self-reliance attitude still retained by the people in the absence of fewer options for depending on other sources.

While it cannot be denied that development programmes in Tipaimukh has led to diversification of occupation and rise in income, higher standard of living, better opportunities, higher aspirations which in turn affects aspects like health, labour division etc, the changes in occupation and rise in income as a result of development in

¹² '*Mautam*' literally translated means 'gregarious bamboo flowering'. This is a phenomenon occurring at an interval of about 40 -50 years in Tipaimukh when the bamboos there started to flower and bear seeds. The seeds are eaten by rats leading to a phenomenal increase in rats that in turn ate up all the cops in the jhum resulting in a famine-like situation.

Tipaimukh has also indirectly led to the decline of traditional occupations, albeit agriculture, due to the presence of cheaper and more readily available goods and services; more opportunities for occupations with higher remunerations and conveniences. Development programmes of the government like IRDP, JRY and EAS are pivotal in bringing about this decline. Better transport and communication, introduction of new ways or types of agriculture and cultivation, better education, diversification of occupation and rise in income, etc are all direct or indirect contributions made by development programmes implemented in the area such as IRDP, JRY and EAS. Through these programmes and a few others, the government has been, in all intensity, carrying out various development schemes one after the other, some of which apparently appears to be the best occupational option or income source. While the fact that many of these development schemes undertaken under such programmes have changed the life of the Hmar for the better cannot be denied, traditional-based occupations have been groaning under them that, in other words, threaten their very survival.

As an attempt to see how far or how much these traditional occupations, especially art and craft, have declined, a survey was done in six villages namely Parbung village, Taithu village, Lungthulien village, Senvon village, Patpuihmun village and Thingkal village. It was found that many people, especially the younger generation (30 years and below) have almost totally forgotten the traditional knowledge and technology or pay little attention to it. Mr. Vura, an unemployed graduate from

Parbung village said *“What is the use of spending all that time and energy in learning or preserving all these. If I need a basket, I can buy one in the shop and likewise, for many of the other things too”*. Ms. J. Brown¹³ from Taithu village said *“instead of spending time to learn the art of weaving cloth and trying to earn money, why not buy it and in the meanwhile, spend the surplus time in going to schools or go outside and learn modern things or take up some other works that are more rewarding instead. Staying at home and spending the whole day weaving is very ‘thring’ (a word that implies ‘uncivilized’, ‘backwardness’ or ‘unfashionable’) and is not a good option as an occupation”* (Source: Fieldwork). During the same survey, a search for somebody who could make a traditional musical instrument called ‘*rosem*’ was also conducted. *Rosem* is made of a hollow gourd with bamboo shafts having specific holes in them to act as the key to produce different notes fitted in the main body. A musician will be able to produce beautiful music by playing this instrument. This instrument plays a very important part in the Hmar traditional music system. It resembles a bagpipe. It was found that in all the six villages where the search was conducted, there were only 5 persons (all of them already above 70 years old) who still remember how to make the instrument. Only old specimens of the instrument can now be found and that too rarely.

Although not every youth agrees with the attitude of Mr. Vura and Ms. J. Brown, many of these youths lack the traditional skills and techniques of the arts and crafts. This lack and decline of the traditional skills and knowledge among the youths

¹³ The name ‘*Brown*’ given to a Hmar individual born and brought up in the hills is also another indication of the impact of western thoughts and education brought in by development programmes. Many people in the hills now have western or English names instead of names in local dialect.

has many negative impacts and repercussions on the Hmar self-reliant capabilities and abilities. It also deprives the people of a very important alternative source of income, especially when other occupations followed by the people do not meet expectations or faces temporary stagnation. It also deprives the people their saving capabilities. Locally manufactured goods are being sidelined and substituted by factory made goods and services. For instance, while there is easy availability of bamboos for making bamboo baskets or the availability of locally grown raw cotton to make cloths, people like to buy factory-made baskets and cloths. Here, the reason for opting for factory made baskets or cloth procured from the towns or cities is mainly a result of the peoples' exposure to these items through development. Another reason for this tendency is that procuring items from outside is often a matter of status. People tend to follow wealthy, powerful or influential individuals who live in the same village or area. Once the people start using plastic or steel vessels, they want to use only plastic or steel vessels and no longer brass or clay. For the sake of argument, one good example that can be cited in connection to the above is about an incident that took place in Taithu village some 60 years ago. A man named Tawnga went to Lakhipur, Assam and bought a bicycle which he brought back home by carrying it on his shoulder through the mountain paths from Lakhipur. He was known to be one of the wealthiest men in Tipaimukh in those days. When people saw the bicycle¹⁴, others also went to Lakhipur to buy a bicycle for themselves! Thus, now-a-days, using items procured from the towns and cities are

¹⁴ Bicycle was known to the people in those days as '*thir sakor*' or 'iron horse'.

regarded as *Changkang* (modern); as an indicator of status, wealth and civilized whereas using traditional items in the house or elsewhere, dressing in a homemade cloth made from home-grown cotton is seen as an indicator of poverty and regarded unfashionable. Such persons or families adhering to or preferring the traditional items or dresses are usually mocked upon or tagged as very 'un-modern'. This general perception on traditional arts and crafts and their application in everyday life acts as a very big factor for encouraging their decline. One popular modern song that succinctly illustrates this situation goes like this:

"Ei veng a mi ka dit nawh. Aizawl a mi ngei ka dit

English translation:

I don't like what is from our village area but I prefer only what comes from Aizawl (the capital of Mizoram)

This song is a very good example that shows the preferences of something from outside, no matter what it costs to have it instead of something locally and readily available with no cost. This new trend has greatly affected the traditional occupations in more ways than one. The earning capacity of many traditional artists and craftsmen has been reduced to such an extent that many have been compelled to shift/change occupations. It will not be wrong to say that development programmes and their implementation in the area have been instrumental in encouraging the people of Tipaimukh to give more and more attention to their new-found taste over the old ones. Nevertheless, inspite of this trend or preference for something more 'modern' at the cost

of traditional items that might have otherwise encouraged traditional occupations and the accompanying earning capacity, in recent times, there has been a slow revival of these traditional arts and crafts stressing on the values and importance of preserving and practising this knowledge. This revival has been brought about first, by initial educational programmes implemented by the government in the area (government educational programmes however have failed to achieve the desired targets in later years) that produced educated young individuals having enough learning and exposures to encourage the forming and growth of civil society bodies like the Hmar Students' Association, Hmar Youth Association, Hmar Inpui, etc which have been relentlessly campaigning for the preservation and renewal of this knowledge and practice with the slogan "Our traditional knowledge and culture are our tribe's treasure" (*Hieng pi pu thiemna le varna hai hi ei hnam rohlu annih*).

2. Education

Development of modern education among the Hmar people of Churachandpur district practically begins from the year 1910 as that was the year the first English missionary, the Reverend Watkin R. Roberts came to Senvon village to begin his evangelization as well as the modern system of education. The onus of introducing modern education to these people as such lies with the missionaries who fulfilled their responsibilities with distinction. They began this task not only by starting the formal system of education, but began it from the very bottom by first of all reducing the language to writing in such

a way that the system they introduced could be readily adopted by the people themselves.

Even if formal schools could not be opened in some villages, the basic elements of education, reading and writing were informally taught at homes and at the churches. The foremost important aim of education in those days was, however, 'to enable people to read the Bible and sing the church hymns' only. This is elementary to make the people interested in the new theology and adapt to the Christian way of life. The people were taught the three Rs in preparation for Bible reading and understanding of writing and simple arithmetic for their daily religious exercises. The teacher at once assumed a fourfold leadership: an educator, an administrator, an advocate and a spiritual leader. In fact, the pioneer native missionaries are often called, 'a teacher-evangelist'.

The first written literature in Hmar dialect was the translation of St. Mark of the New Testament done by Rev. F.J. Sandy with the help of Thangkhup and Thanga (Rasi) only in the year 1917. Again, in 1919 a Hmar vernacular text book called *Buhmasa* (Primer) prepared by Rev. Edwin Rolands came into being, and by 1922 the Hmars had their own book of Hymns compiled and printed under the initiative of H. K. Dohnuna. R. Sankey's Hymns were also translated into Hmar dialect and made in the form of a book in 1926. Dr. Peter Fraser, the medical-missionary of the Welsh Calvinistic Presbyterian Mission and the man who brought Watkin Roberts to this hitherto unknown land also made his personal contribution to the Hmars by translating and printing the gospel of St. Mathew in the year 1929. In such a way, the Hmar language

and literature made a slow but steady progress in spite of the objection from different quarters.

A noteworthy development in the field of education among the Hmar people as well as the whole district of Churachandpur after Indian independence was the establishment of Pherzawl High School in the year 1951. It was incidentally, the first High School ever established in the entire hill district of Manipur. The formal government recognition with a grant-in-aid of rupees ten thousand came later in the year 1954, the same year the school produced its first matriculate.

Pherzawl High School, with the ever willing support of the then village chief Dolur and his subjects and, under the guidance of its headmaster Mr. H. Thanglora, made a rapid progress and gained popularity not only among the people of the district within a short period. Students came to this school from as far as Mizoram and Assam. As stated above, Pherzawl High School produced its first batch of matriculates in the year 1954 and created a history of its own by producing a record 100% pass percentage in the year 1956. The High School continued to make a good impression for some more years. However, to the misfortune of the people of the whole district, Mr. Thanglora, the founding father of the school and the first headmaster was appointed as Block Development Officer by the Government of Manipur. New headmasters came and went after Thanglora, but it was difficult to fill the vacuum created by his absence. The school was finally absorbed by the Government of Manipur on November 1, 1969 along with eight other high schools of the district. However, in a certain way this absorption

unexpectedly contributed to the downfall and deterioration of the school. Lalmangpui Fimate, the incumbent Headmaster, as well as the chief of Pherzawl village laments, *“After the school was absorbed by the Govt. of Manipur in 1969, recruitment of teaching staff and appointment of headmasters and transfers were all under the will of politicians and the state government. While it was expected to be for the betterment of the school and the people, because of its remoteness the state government tends to neglect it in many ways. It seems that it is backtracking from thereon. Before they served for 2/3 months Headmasters got changed and transferred. There are also times when the government sent rather unqualified teachers to the school. There are then some teachers who instead of sincerely working for the betterment of the school and the society are interested only in drawing their salary”* (Source: Fieldwork). While Pherzawl High School had a very successful HSLC record for the first two decades from its inception and was proudly claiming to have produced a number of distinguished men and women who have come to occupy very high profile jobs, and leading successful careers for themselves. Some of them are:

Politicians (Ministers in the state government):

R. Thangliana, Zosiana Pachuau (Both Mizoram), Ngurdinglien Sanate, Selkai Hrangchal, Songchinkhup

Central Service:

Lalthanzau Pudaite & L. Keivom (Both IFS), Rothanglien, J.K. Sanglura, Lalthlamuana, Lalrosem Songate (all IAS), H. C. Hrangate, P.K. Singson, Suothang, Lalhmingthang Ruolngul (all Central Services)

Professor, Lecturers and Doctors:

Prof. Lal Dena, L. Kiemlo Pulamte, H.T. Keivom, Dr. C.L. Bieksang, Dr. H.L. Liensang,

Church Leaders:

Rev. Ruolneikhum Pakhuongte, Rev. H. L. Bana, Rev. C.C. Rema, Rev. V.L. Bela, Dr. Lalkhawlien Pulamte, Lalrimawi Pudaite

As a matter of fact, not only Pherzawl High School, but the whole Hmar tribe in Manipur had their best period educationally, socially and politically during the period Pherzawl High School was at its peak. Mr. Rama, a villager from Parbung recall that *“for a period of about five years, not a single marriage took place in a village of 1000 people as the youth were so caught up in their studies that they were unwilling to marry. However, that good period soon was over and if the result of Pherzawl High School in High School Leaving Certificate (HSLC) examination in recent years is to be used as one of the measuring rods of development and progress of the villager in particular and the tribe in general, there is little to be proud of. In fact the result of Pherzawl High School for the last decade is not only discouraging but also very sad and pitiful”* (Source: Fieldwork).

The construction of National Highway No. 150 and inter- village roads through development programmes like JRY, EAS enabled the people to freely and easily move from one place to another to attend good or better educational institutions within and outside Tipaimukh. These have been instrumental in furthering the development of modern education among the people of Tipaimukh leading to further changes in the educational status of the people. Although most of the schools are now defunct mainly as a result of the absence of teachers and infrastructures, there are now 39 Government Schools in the area starting from Lower Primary to High Schools with 147 staff. Tipaimukh also boast of almost the same number of schools run by Church organisations like the Evangelical Free Church of India (EFCI) in collaboration with Partnership Mission Society (PMS), Independent Church of India (ICI), Evangelical Assembly Church (EAC), Assembly of God (AG) and Reformed Presbyterian Church (RPC) and unlike the schools run by government, they have been the mainstay of quality education in Tipaimukh with adequate infrastructure and manpower to keep the schools running smoothly and properly.

Apart from development programmes like JRY, EAS and construction of National Highways No. 150 having had major contributions by assisting further the development of modern education among the people during the period 1983- 2002, later educational programmes like Sarva Sikhsa Abhiyan (SSA) implemented in the area in 2007 also help to further facilitate the process of educational development in the area. SSA employs some staffs and use existing infrastructures that may or may not

necessarily be government infrastructure. In some villages, staff of SSA co-ordinate their works with Church missions and also use Church infrastructure to carry on classes and teach. This programme has been having a very important contribution to education in Tipaimukh due to its mobility and ability to fill up the shortage of teaching staffs (both government and non-government) and other needs. At the initiative of the Hmar education elites through the Hmar Literature Society (HLS), the Hmar language has been included as one of the Modern Indian Language (MIL) for degree courses in Manipur University since 2002. Rate of literacy among the Hmars in Tipaimukh is now approximately 79.8% (Male: 84.3% and Female: 75.2%) and is the highest among all the other tribal groups of Manipur (2001 Census). Many Hmars are now well-educated and work in different service sectors. Table 17, 18, 19 shows the educational status of Parbung, Patpuihmun and Thingkal villages:

Table 17: Educational Status of Parbung Village

Sl. No.	Education level	Male	Female	Total	Literacy rate (%)
1.	Class 1-10	210	240	450	76.2 %
2.	Matriculate	31	14	45	
3.	Under- Graduate	26	09	35	
4.	Graduate	38	15	53	
5.	Post- Graduate	04	01	05	
6.	Research Scholar		01	01	
7.	Barely literate	632	412	1044	
	Illiterate			37	
Total		941 (88.5%)	692 (64.1%)	1633	
Total village population		1063	1079	2142	

Source: Fieldwork

Table 18: Educational Status of Patpuihmun village

Sl. No.	Education level	Male	Female	Total	Literacy rate (%)
1.	Class 1-10	157	135	292	71.8 %
2.	Class 1-10	27	19	50	
3.	Matriculate	15	09	24	
4.	Under- Graduate	28	10	57	
5.	Graduate	06	03	09	
6.	Post- Graduate		-	-	
7.	Research Scholar	120	70	190	
	Barely literate			27	
Total		353 (80.4%)	246 (62.2%)	599	
Total village population		439	395	834	

Source: Fieldwork

Table 19: Educational Status of Thingkal Village

Sl. No.	Education level	Male	Female	Total	Literacy rate (%)
1.	Class 1-10	37	30	67	64.9 %
2.	Matriculate	2	3	5	
3.	Under- Graduate	04	-	04	
4.	Graduate	-	-	-	
5.	Post- Graduate	-	-	-	
6.	Research Scholar		-	-	
7.	Barely literate	40	38	50	
	Illiterate			20	
Total	Class 1-10	83 (80.5%)	71 (34.6%)	154	
Total village population		103	205	238	

Sources: Fieldwork

From the above tables, the rate of literacy for the three villages is 91.3% with quite a number of graduates and post-graduates - all of them from Parbung and

Patpuihmun while Thingkal village register has no graduates and post-graduates. Therefore, one of the most obvious impacts of development, as have been mentioned, is on literacy, increase in employment opportunities affecting both income and occupation of the Hmars (See table: 15). Educated villagers participate in village and state level educational, economic, political activities and are now the mainstay for the continued development process in Tipaimukh.

Apart from better quality of life, standard of living and increased participation of the people in the development process as a result of increased literacy, awareness, capacities, employment, income, etc the advent of modern education and its development in Tipaimukh has also indirectly triggered two very important socio-political changes that have major ramification on the linguistic, identity, political and territorial status of the people.

Education to linguistic and identity consciousness:

One of the important contributions of development on modern education is to facilitate further the emergence of Hmar leadership and the birth of Hmar modern literature which was hitherto controlled and run by Church missions. Due to the stress on Lushai-Duhlian dialect as the only form for any literature by the dominant Lushai- Duhlian speaking leaders coming from Mizoram during the middle and late 1930s, the educated Hmars of that time began to fear assimilation and advocated the popularisation of the Hmar dialect in place of Lushai- Duhlian dialect for identity preservation resulting in a leadership conflict based on language. Thus, there occurred a gradual paradigm shift on

literature and hence education from a Lushai- Duhlian centric to a Hmar education and mission system. One such instance is the translation of the Bible in Hmar and publications of the Independent Church Hymn book called *Independent Hlabu* in 1921 and 1923 respectively, publications of *Buhmasa* (Beginner's Book), a newspaper called *Hmasawnathar* (New development) 1941, *Sierkawpbu* (Mathematic textbook), *Thuthlungthar* (New Testament Bible) 1946, a monthly magazine called *Sikhawvar* (Morning Star) and *Inchuklainun* (Students' life), a monthly magazine for Hmar students in 1952 inspite of stiff opposition from Lushai speaking leaders. Further, the founding of the Hmar Students' Association in 1939 at Imphal, Manipur to cater and promote the tribe's culture, tradition and encourage education among the youths followed by the establishment of the Hmar Literature Society at Lungthulien village, Tipaimukh in 1945 to promote and develop the Hmar dialect and literature is also another outcome of this new development. Commenting on this incident, Lalthlamuong Keivom, a retired Indian Foreign Service from Tipaimukh said "*Had the leadership continued without any conflict, the Hmars would definitely be heading for cultural and linguistic extinction. By then, everything including the Bible and hymns were written in Lushai language only. Had the mission continued without a leadership conflict, there would not be any single book written in Hmar and as a result, the Hmars would not have a literature of their own, and therefore consequently lost their language and culture. Therefore, the survival and development of Hmars language is the paradoxical outcome of the conflict over the leadership in the mission*" (Source: Fieldwork).

Education to political and territorial consciousness:

Another aspect of the development of Hmar education in the area came with the dawn of political and territorial consciousness among the Hmars when some educated Hmar poets began to compose poems and patriotic songs both in English and Hmar. T. Khuma, a noted poet, sang thus:

Sak le thlang, sim le hmar, ramtinah,

Phung le chang chile hmang chu tam sienkhawm;

Eichh-em-a-ar HMAR hhi a lo nih

Pi le pu chen khawm an ll sak sa.

Cachar, halflong, Aizawl, Manipur

Inphumkhata girin,

Ei ram lungmawl indar hi,

Eini khawm varna tha zawngin

Hmatieng ka pen ei tiu

English translation:

In the north and the west, the south and north everywhere,

Kin and kindred, class and clan may abound;

It's Eichh-em-a-ar HMAR and nothing else

Which even the forefathers did already sang about.

Cachar, Halflong, Aizawl, maniur

Let us stand united;

Striving to seek good wisdom,

To bring together our scattered tribe;

Onwards marching we go.

Of many patriotic poets, mention may be made of the following persons like T. Khuma, Lalthlamuong Keivom, Lalkhum Keivom, Dr. Thanglung, H. L. Sela, Rev. Hrilrokhum, etc. One of Lalkhum's verses may be quote here:

Aw kan Hmar ram inthim tlang dum duoi,

I sunga Hmar kan leng;

I hming hung mawina dingin,

Nughak tlangval kan theitawp kan suo

I p armawi min suorawh.

English translation:

Oh, our Hmar land dark and verdant hills,

In thee, we the Hmars live,

For thy good name and glory,

We all tirelessly strive and struggle, reward us with the bloom.

All these poets were concerned with protection of the Hmars' identity and of integrating all the Hmars who have scattered all over North-East India. The spread of this new consciousness is facilitated to a great extent by the development programmes implemented and is also the cause for many incidents of strained relations and conflicts with the Lushais and other tribes.

Thus, the development of education among the Hmars of Tipaimukh not only brought about higher literacy rate, increased participation in the development process, economically better quality of life by providing more employment opportunities, higher aspirations, etc but also contributed in building up their capacities and creativities to have a new perspective and understanding of their culture and traditions, broader outlook, thoughts, perceptions and worldview on issues like linguistics, identity, polity and territory both within and without. However, this new consciousness and awareness is also often the cause for fission (strained relations and conflicts) with others and sometimes even within the community itself. The Mizo issue and the resultant insurgency movement among the Hmars are good example of such fissions. On the other hand, such awareness and consciousness also sometimes act as the catalyst for fusion (cohesion and solidarity) among the people of Tipaimukh. The Hmar National Union movement, which was in opposition to the Mizo Union movement, is one of such examples.¹⁵

3. Health

Development programmes like JRY, EAS, construction of health care facilities like Community Health Centres, Primary Health Centres, Sub- Primary Health Centres, dispensaries have both direct and indirect impacts. In many ways, development in

¹⁵ The Hmars were one of the staunchest supporter of the Mizo Union movement that started during the 1950s but oppose it later on as it was alleged that the Mizo National Front (MNF) has turned it back on the Hmars of Tipaimukh, who incidentally were the main supporter of the MNF independence movement in both manpower, finance, refuge, etc. The Hmars till today has not forgiven the Lushai speaking people for that betrayal.

Tipaimukh has been the cause for the changing concepts on illness and diseases, increased health awareness such as dental care, cleanliness, etc.

The perception on illness and disease namely malaria, epilepsies, smallpox and chickenpox by the Hmars in the past was mostly related to or based on the supernatural. The *thiempu* or priest was both the religious head and also the medicine-man. Most illness and diseases were considered the work of spirits while only a few like stomach ache, cold, cholera, diarrhoea and dysentery along with cuts, broken bone or fractures, burns, etc were not considered the works of spirits and for which traditional medicines (*tlangpa damdawi*) or herbs were used. For these, local medicines like herbs were used. But, for other illness and diseases like malaria, epilepsies, smallpox and chickenpox the priest was called in to diagnose and then perform necessary rituals to ward/ drive off or propitiate the spirit responsible for causing such illness with appropriate sacrifices or offerings. In most cases, the patients died. For example, *khawhring man*, a kind of epilepsies with heightened sense of imagination due to low haemoglobin was considered the work of a malevolent spirit called *Khawhring* who possessed the person. In such cases, the priest performs a rite where either a cock or pig was sacrificed accompanied with some magical chants in order to drive out the evil spirit from the victim.

The traditional understanding on such illness and disease mentioned above first witnessed change after the advent of Christianity in 1910. One of the first casualties of the rise of Christianity was the traditional *Sakhuo* (religion) and *thiempu thil*

(Priesthood) that became history. Christianity brought a new interpretation to the concept of the supernatural world as according to the Hmars; new deities and God; of life after death and lastly of the causal forces behind sicknesses and illnesses. However, inspite of the apparently changing views of the Hmars towards the supernatural and their relation to the natural world, Christianity has actually just reinterpreted the meanings of illness and sickness and left the structure of the relation between the supernatural and the natural world more or less intact. The end result is that the old belief systems- of diseases and illness being the works of evil spirits and the healing techniques- of sacrifices or rites performed by the priest has been substituted with the new Christian concept of God as the supreme authority over evil spirits, diseases and illnesses and faith as the answer. Faith healings- both either through the use of modern medicines blessed with prayers or just prayers by pastors, evangelists, etc for the patients therefore became common among the people. The new Christian priests or Pastors became the substitute for the old traditional priests and they were fully accepted and believed by the new converts.

Albeit the stopping of traditional sacrifices and other rites to cure or heal and also the total extinction of traditional priests as the healer and medicine man, the new faith is just a substitute- an old wine in a new bottle, that still retain to some extent the belief in the role of the supernatural in illness and disease. Nevertheless, inspite of the Christian concept of illness and disease being just a substitute for the traditional concept of illness and disease, the health status of the Hmars witnessed marked improvements

with modern medicines like quinine, paracetamol, enteroquinol, vaccines, etc first introduced by the early missionaries and later on by the new educated Hmars and visiting doctors or other medical practitioners- mostly from outside Tipaimukh, becoming known and common in treating various illnesses. Apart from medicines, the early Christian missionaries, newly educated Hmars, visiting doctors and other medical practitioners also sometimes tried to educate the people on the importance of practicing personal hygiene and maintaining cleanliness. Because of this, some people in Tipaimukh were known to even use toothpaste for brushing teeth, soaps for washing and bathing even before the advent of planned development in the area. However, such practices were very rare and done only by the educated elites of that time.

Till the early 1990s or before many development infrastructures cease to function in the area for a variety of reasons, modern educational institutions, health care facilities and services, roads- both national highway and inter- village roads, etc has directly and indirectly contributed to the changes in the concept of illness, disease and health practices of the people of Tipaimukh- a process that was started by the early missionaries, new educated Hmars, visiting doctors and health practitioners, while at the same time affecting the role of the Christian pastors and of the Christian faith itself in curing illnesses. The advent of development in the area has brought about a health scenario where more and more people have more faith on modern medical knowledge, medical doctors and medicines rather than on faith based healings or diagnosis of an

illness based on religious beliefs¹⁶. When interviewed, it can be found that majority of the people are actually practising modern health practices. However, traditional medicines like herbs are known and also still widely used side by side with modern medicines. Almost everyone in the three villages studied, including even children, have good knowledge of traditional medicines and use them very frequently especially in the absence of modern medicines or doctors.

Among the new health awareness that can be seen as a result of development, the changing dental practice and gradually increasing dental awareness of the Hmars of Tipaimukh deserves mention. As mentioned earlier, due to the changing concepts and practices on illness and disease accelerated by better transport and communication, increased mobility and exposure, easier availability and accessibility to modern accessories, increased education, availability of modern health care facilities till the late 1980s etc as a result of development in the area, there has been increased dental awareness among the people leading to improvements in dental health of the people. It is to be noted that such dental practices like brushing teeth with toothpaste instead of charcoal or areca nut skins can hardly be said to be a direct result of any health programmes undertaken in Tipaimukh but rather an indirect result of other development programmes such as education, transport and communication, etc. The tables below

¹⁶ However, inspite of the fast- changing concept of illness and disease and of the practices associated with the healing techniques, there are some illness like *khawhring man* which people still believe is caused by an evil spirit called *khawhring*. Christian priests are employed to chase out the spirit. Faith healing is also still practiced.

shows the number of people from the three villages studied who use toothpaste to clean teeth.

Table 20: Toothpaste users in Parbung village

Age Group	Number of responders	Number of toothpaste users	Number of people who clean teeth without toothpaste*	Number of people who never clean or brush teeth
4-15 yrs	100	45	-	55
16-25 yrs	100	78	20	2
26-35 yrs	100	78	15	7
36-45 yrs	100	70	20	10
46-55 yrs	100	55	33	12
56-65 yrs	100	55	27	18
		381 (63.5%)	115 (19.1%)	104 (17.3%)
		Total Number of Responders		600

Source: Fieldwork. * These people generally use charcoal to clean teeth

Table 21: Toothpaste users in Patpuihmun village

Age Group	Number of responders	Number of toothpaste users	Number of people who clean teeth without toothpaste*	Number of people who never clean or brush teeth
4-15 yrs	50	25	-	25
16-25 yrs	50	38	3	9
26-35 yrs	50	41	3	6
36-45 yrs	50	30	5	15
46-55 yrs	50	28	6	16
56-65 yrs	50	25	10	15
		187 (62.3%)	27 (9%)	86 (28%)
		Total Number of Responders		300

Source: Fieldwork. * These people generally use charcoal to clean teeth

Table 22: Toothpaste users in Thingkal village

Age Group	No. of responders	No. of toothpaste users	No. of people who clean teeth without toothpaste*	No. of people who never clean teeth
4-15	30	7	-	23
16-25	30	20	3	7
26-35	30	18	4	8
36-45	30	15	10	5
46-55	30	10	15	5
56-65	30	10	15	5
		80 (44.4%)	47 (26.1%)	53 (29.4%)
		Total Number of Responders		180

Source: Fieldwork. * These people generally use charcoal to clean teeth

The above tables show the level of dental awareness. This practice of brushing teeth with toothpaste among the youths and also among the children has greatly minimized the possibility of many dental problems like toothache, dental decay, gum disease, bad breath, etc among 63.5% of responders in Parbung village, 62.3% of responders in Patpuihmun village and 44.4% of responders in Thingkal village. This was not so before the advent of development in the area as hardly any people are aware of such dental practices. Cleaning teeth with charcoal was the main method of cleaning teeth and this also was done only by adults. Among the children, any form of dental care was completely absent. The above tables also show the level of differences of the impact of development programmes- whether direct or indirect, on the three villages studied. Even though Thingkal may have more food resources; may have the highest agricultural earnings or least affected by drugs and alcohol, it is most prone to health problems associated or related to dental issues. As a result, the quality and standard of

life can be taken as relatively low in as far as dental health is concerned and that development has been of little help as compared to the other two villages namely Parbung and Patpuihmun.

Inspite of improvements in dental awareness, it was also found during the same study that many people still do not associate dental health with adequate oral care but associate dental problems with lifestyle related reasons like 'improper eating habits' and 'being born with bad teeth'. Furthermore, due to the absence of doctors and proper health care facilities for the last 10 years or more, a staggering 97% of responders from Parbung village, 98% of responders from Patpuihmun village and 99.9% of responders from Thingkal village have never visited a dentist. This made the people (even those who brush their teeth with toothpaste) still very susceptible to many other dental problems as not all dental problems are solved by just brushing one's teeth with toothpaste every day.

Another development in health area that deserve mention is cleanliness in the house and the village, existence of good drainage in the villages, making of pits for depositing garbage, using of soaps for washing and taking baths, etc of the people of Tipaimukh especially in Parbung and Patpuihmun village as a result of a new understanding on the cause of illness and disease among the people. For instance, when people from the three villages were interviewed on personal cleanliness like bathing, use of soaps during baths and clean clothes, a growing awareness on hygiene can be witnessed. Tables 23, 24, 25 below show this change.

Table 23: Frequency of baths and the use of soaps among people in Parbung.

Age group	No. of responders	No. of baths taken in a week	Use soap during baths	Put clean clothes after bath
4-15	500	1 time: 40% 2 times: 28% 3 times: 23% 4 times: 9% 5 times: None Every day: None	Yes: 80% Occasionally: 20% Never*: None	Yes: 70% Occasionally: 27% Never: 3%
16 above	500	1 time: 40.5% 2 times: 47% 3 times: 10% 4 times: 2.5% 5 times: None Every day: None	Yes: 85% Occasionally: 13.5% Never*: 1.5%	Yes: 80% Occasionally: 19% Never: 1%
Total	1000			

Source: Fieldwork

Table 24: Frequency of baths and the use of soaps among people in Patpuihmun.

Age group	No. of responders	No. of baths taken in a week	Use soap during baths	Put clean clothes after bath
4-15	200	1 time: 48 % 2 times: 35 % 3 times: 17% 4 times: None 5 times: None Every day: None	Yes: 85% Occasionally: 15% Never*: None	Yes: 70% Occasionally: 27% Never: 3%
16 above	200	1 time: 35% 2 times: 35% 3 times: 27% 4 times: 3% 5 times: None Every day: None	Yes: 90% Occasionally: 7% Never*: 3%	Yes: 85% Occasionally: 14% Never: 1%
Total	400			

Source: Fieldwork

Table 25: Frequency of baths and the use of soaps among people in Thingkal

Age group	No. of responders	No. of baths taken in a week	Use soap during baths	Put clean clothes after bath
4-15	50	1 time: 60% 2 times: 24% 3 times: 6% 4 times: None 5 times: None Every day: None	Yes: 90% Occasionally: 8% Never*: 2%	Yes: 60% Occasionally: 30% Never: 10%
16 above	50	1 time: 40% 2 times: 40% 3 times: 20% 4 times: None 5 times: None Every day: None	Yes: 96% Occasionally: 2% Never*: 2%	Yes: 50% Occasionally: 46% Never: 4%
Total	100			

Source: Fieldwork; * Refers to those who use liquid cooking soda called '*changal*' made from ashes instead of soaps.

Contrary to 40-50 years back when people hardly took baths, the above tables clearly shows the growing awareness of the Hmars on personal cleanliness eventhough the percentage may be low compared to those living in cities with good supply of water. One of the reasons supplied by the people for this low number of regular baths was unavailability of proper and adequate water supply. Villagers, especially from Thingkal have very poor water supply system and have to depend on a small waterhole that can barely supply their household needs especially during winter. Even though some PHED infrastructure can be seen in Parbung and Patpuihmun village, the villagers also still depend on waterholes as all PHED water storage tanks, water pipes, etc have been more or less defunct for more than a decade. Therefore, taking baths even for just three times

in a week is also almost a big problem for the villagers especially during the winter season. In the rainy season, the people have fewer problems with taking baths, washing clothes as they can depend on rain water collected by them and that the waterholes remain filled. During such time, the people take baths and wash more frequently. In spite of such fluctuations in water availability, most people make it a practice to clean themselves, clothes, utensils, etc with soaps and detergents abundantly available in all the villages especially after the existence of better means of transportation making it possible for villagers to go to towns in Assam, Mizoram or Churachandpur to procure them. These new habits have been instrumental in diminishing many hazards of skin disease in the forms of rash, boils, infection, ringworm, itches, etc often very common in the past.

Another important health issue where development has both direct and indirect impact is on sanitation in Tipaimukh. Development in the area has brought about an improvement, though still low, on this sector. In the past, the absence of hygienic toilets has been the cause of many diseases like cholera, diarrhoea, malaria, dysentery, etc every year, especially among children aged between 5- 13. Deaths due to these diseases, even though still common, are however not as high as it used to be. This slight decline in death rate due to diseases could be accorded to some extent to the increasing health awareness like sanitation. Table 26 and 27 shows the level of awareness on sanitation in the three villages of Parbung, Patpuihmun and Thingkal.

Table 26: Level of sanitation awareness in Parbung, Patpuihmun and Thingkal village during 2000.

Name of the village	No. of houses	Houses with toilets	Houses with sanitary toilets	Houses with non- sanitary toilets	Total (in %)
Parbung	388	202	7	195	52.06
Patpuihmun	150	80	3	77	53.3
Thingkal	37	2	-	2	5.04

Source: Fieldwork

Table 27: Level of sanitation awareness in Parbung, Patpuihmun and Thingkal village during 2002.

Name of the village	No. of houses	Houses with toilets	Houses with sanitary toilets	Houses with non- sanitary toilets	Total (in %)
Parbung	388	314	16	298	80
Patpuihmun	150	120	5	115	80
Thingkal	37	5	-	5	13

Source: Fieldwork

The above tables not only show the increased awareness of sanitation but also disparities existing between villages. However, inspite of marked increase visible in all the three villages between 2000-2002, as the level of health awareness with regard to sanitation is still very low coupled with the absence of proper health care facilities and proper health programmes, the health status of the people, especially children have seen only very little improvements with deaths due to malaria, cholera, diarrhoea, dysentery, etc still frequently taking place.

Furthermore, despite growing health awareness in matter of dental, cleanliness, sanitation, etc as a direct or indirect result of development in the area, there are also areas where development has been most ineffective or have rather contributed negatively. Among these, mention may be made of the increase in drugs and alcohol abuses and their repercussive effects on the health status of the people. Traditionally, the Hmar society of Tipaimukh was free from drug abuse while consumption of alcohol, especially the local rice-beer called *zu* was common. Nevertheless, inspite of *zu* being common, there are little accounts of this drink being considered a social evil as the consumption of *zu* was usually restricted to use in special occasions like the *Sikpui* festival, post-war and hunt celebrations, weddings and deaths. However, with the coming of development in the area leading to the subsequent opening up of the area to the outside world, better means of transport and communication which made easier and faster movement of people to and from Tipaimukh¹⁷ possible, it was found that there has been an increase in drugs and alcohol abuses. Table 28 show the level of drugs and alcohol abuses in the three villages studied.

¹⁷ Drugs in the form of narcotics, pills, syrups and alcohols (both local and branded) are easily procured from Lamka town in Churachandpur via Singzawl road; from Fulertal, Assam via the Barak River and from Aizawl via NH-150.

Table 28: Level of drugs and alcohol abuses in the three villages studied.¹⁸

Name of the village	No. of youths (males) investigated	No. of youths taking alcohol	No. of youths taking drugs in the form of pills	No. of youths taking drugs through injections	Total (in %)
Parbung	500	38	8	4	10
Patpuihmun	200	7	4	3	7
Thingkal	40	1	-	-	2.5

Source: Fieldwork

As can be seen from the above table, even though the number of drugs and alcohol addicts is not that high, they nevertheless pose a threat to the security of properties in the villages. This also has an indirect impact even on the mentality of the people who are always in constant fear of being robbed thereby increasing the feeling of insecurity. Some addicts have been known to steal not only from their own house but even from others. Mr. Buonga of Parbung village remarked during a casual interview that *“The most annoying and one of the most unwanted incidents that are now frequently happening is the thefts committed by drugs and alcohol addicts in order to get money to buy drinks and drugs. Before, there were hardly any thefts. We leave our houses unlocked as there was no reason to fear thefts but now we cannot leave our houses without being locked. These thieves are mostly drugs and alcohol addicts and they do not even spare things from their own houses. Actually, some of them even sold*

¹⁸ The above figures include only those who were actually in the villages during the study.

of almost everything from their own houses and only after nothing is left in their homes to sell then they start to go for things in other people's house” (Source: Fieldwork).

The second concern is on the possibility of the existence of a hidden population inflicted with HIV-AIDS. This fear is not unfounded as there is actually a high possibility for people - both addicts and non-addicts, contracting diseases like HIV-AIDS unknowingly due to unsafe sharing of needles and also sex with their partners or spouses. There have been rumours of some drug addict allegedly dying of HIV- AIDS from Parbung and Patpuihmun villages. As there has been no study done by either government or non-government agencies on this issue, an attempt was made during this study to see how high the risk actually is with respect to drug addicts who took drugs via injections. Interviews were conducted with some drug addicts on sharing of needles with friends and about their sex life. Tables 29, 30 and 31 show the practice among these youths.

Table 29: Needle sharing¹⁹

Name of the village	No. of drug addicts investigated	No. of youths who admitted to sharing needles with friends	Total (in %)
Parbung	4	3	75
Patpuihmun	3	3	100
Thingkal	-	-	-

Source: Fieldwork

¹⁹ The above figures include only those who were actually in the villages during the study.

Table 30: Sex awareness- A²⁰

Name of the village	No. of youths investigated	No. of youths who admitted never using contraceptive	Total (in %)
Parbung	4	4	100
Patpuihmun	3	3	100
Thingkal	-	-	-

Source: Fieldwork

Drugs addicts apart, a study on sex awareness was also conducted during the study among the people from the three villages who do not take drugs or alcohol but frequently associating or having relationships with the latter. Table 30 shows the level of sex awareness among these people.

Table 31: Sex awareness-B

Name of the village	No. of people investigated	No. of people who admitted never using contraceptive	Total (in %)
Parbung	50	45	90
Patpuihmun	40	37	92.5
Thingkal	20	19	99

Source: Fieldwork

From the above tables coupled with occasional cases of addicts allegedly infected with STDs, there is actually a high possibility for the existence of a hidden population inflicted with the dreaded disease and if not dealt with utmost urgency, could be of very serious consequences for the whole population who are not aware of this danger.

²⁰ The above figures include only those who were actually in the villages during the study.

On how development contributed to the rise in drugs and alcohol abuses and their repercussive effects, Ms. Rami, an Anganwadi worker from Parbung village remarked *“The source of these social evils are directly a result of better means of transport and communication, education, change in income and employment, etc. This factors have led many people from to migrate from their villages to the cities but often coming to Tipaimukh, youths from Tipaimukh studying in the cities, addicted youths whose families have migrated from Tipaimukh and even traders both from Tipaimukh and outside Tipaimukh. For instance, there are people from Tipaimukh but now living in cities who have children addicted to drugs and other intoxicants. They send them to rehabilitation centres, jails, etc in order to reform them but to no avail. When all their efforts fails, they turn to remote village here in Tipaimukh to send their children as they feel that these remote villages with little or no access to drugs and other intoxicants along with the simple life of the people are the best rehabilitation centres. As a result, they send their children to villages in Tipaimukh to work as school teachers, etc or to stay with relatives in the hills. However, it is impossible to make fencings for humans. Somehow, these people still find ways and means to continue their habits even in remote hill village where they stay and thus introduce the evils of urban places to our villages”* (Source: Fieldwork). Drugs and alcohol abuses are therefore one of the main reason behind the low life expectancy among many youths. It was found that life expectancy among the youths taking drugs and alcohol is between 30-40 years only whereas youths

free from drugs and alcohol abuses along with the rest of the population within the age group of 15 and above is between 60-70 years.

The third concern is on health care facilities in the area. Villages in Tipaimukh are supposed to be equipped with fully functioning health centers and doctors according to government records. At present, there are officially one Community Health Centre (CHC) in Parbung village, two Primary Health Centres (PHC) - one in Kangreng village and one in Patpuihmun village and, 11 Sub- Primary Health Centres, 5 dispensaries. However, these health centres have been defunct from the start with absent medical staffs. The buildings are now being occupied either by poor families without a house or by goats even though there are nurses, doctors, pharmacists and other medical staffs officially posted in these places. Village authorities at Parbung and Patpuihmun villages do not even know who their community doctors are. Doctors and nurses for these health centres have been officially recruited and posted. They are not to be found in any of their posted stations. Defunct health facilities apart, the study also revealed that most national health programmes on sanitation, malaria eradication, cholera eradication, typhoid eradication, chicken pox eradication, maternity benefit schemes, etc that have been carried out in Tipaimukh are done only in name and therefore have very little impact on the people. The epidemic in Tipaimukh during 2007- 2008 where 40 children from several villages died of a mysterious disease was probably a result of this lack properly functioning health care facilities, improper implementation of health care programmes and low level of health awareness.

On the seriousness of the epidemic, Mr. Vawmkapthuum from Parbung said: *“The mysterious disease that has already tolled many lives. Many children have died in Lungthulien alone. I am afraid it might be my children’s turn next time when the slow church bell rings to announce about another departed soul”* (Source: Fieldwork). While the losses are mourned, there is widespread apprehension and confusion as there are no doctors and medicines to tame the unknown disease. In Leisen village alone, there are more than 70 children who are severely afflicted by the unknown diseases. In the absence of doctors, Pastor Rolawm has been acting as the doctor for the entire village. Pastors Rolawm said *“Many a time, I did not even get time to sleep as the epidemic mercilessly multiplies its victims and I get too many sick people to attend to. It is a desperate situation as there is nothing in the entire village to relieve their woes. I could not help much so I end up praying for them”* (Source: Fieldwork). A village authority member from Leisen village remarked after reports of these death were given to the government of Manipur *“To our relief they told us that they would be sending a medical team to our village. But when the medical team arrived on the evening of September 28, 2007, we found that the medical team comprised only one pharmacist and a nurse. The next day they collected blood from all the sick people. After collecting blood and without any other proper medical examinations, the medical team distributed one strip of chloroquine and primaquine to all the sick people and they left the next day. Irrespective of the diverse complaints different people have, all that the medical team*

did was to distribute the same medicine to all. Later we came to know that the free medicine distributed by the medical team was to treat malaria” (Source: Fieldwork).

On the possible cause of the epidemic, one person from Patpuihmun when interviewed about the epidemic said *“as there are no proper toilets, the faeces of people were eaten by the pigs who were, as done traditionally, roaming free about the village. These pigs that have eaten the faeces were again killed and eaten. Somehow, it could be that the pigs acted as a host for the disease and then passed on to humans when the pork was consumed. Now, because of this suspicion, people around Tipaimukh are directed by the Village Authorities to build pig-sty for their pigs and to keep them there and that any pigs seen roaming about the village can be shot and killed without any consequences to the person who killed it” (Source: Fieldwork).* However, inspite of this awareness, there is sadly no improvement in the toilet system therefore making the people still vulnerable to other diseases like cholera, diarrhoea, malaria, dysentery, etc. Meanwhile, the above narration supports the fact that there is little or no medical care available in Tipaimukh. Tipaimukh villagers are dissatisfied with the practice of the visiting doctors who tend to negate, rather than mitigate their plights even when they are at great loss. Mr. Vawmkapthuom complained that *“even if the doctors come, they visited three or four villages that are only accessible by vehicle. The rest of the villages are left to fend for themselves. Authorities as well as doctors pay scant attention and they come only when the situation is really critical and cannot be ignored anymore. When these doctors finally arrived, they prescribe long lists of medicines which are*

never available anywhere near. We have to travel for two days to buy their prescribed medicines. Where on earth will poor farmers like us have the money to travel far and wide to buy medicines when we don't even have the money to feed our hungry bowels? They always try to downplay our serious plights. How then do they explain the sudden loss of many lives? They come and merely felt our pulse without conducting any examinations to diagnose our problems. When visiting doctors who came like tourists did not even spend five hours in the affected villages, how could they understand the severity of the diseases we are living with?" (Source: Fieldwork).

Thus, the presence of defunct health care facilities, increased but still low presence of proper sanitation, improper implementation of national health programmes etc in Tipaimukh is the cause of many distressing situations. In Parbung village, parents have resorted to extreme by giving their children buttons in the guise of medicine to relieve their children of pain and suffering. In another case, children suffering from diarrhea were pushed on a cart along the rough National Highway No. 150. In large part, these deplorable situations are due to the absence of health care facilities, proper health programme implementation, surveillance and monitoring efforts leading to insufficient awareness and knowledge about the impending threat that people are exposed to.

4. Socio- Cultural Institutions

While development programmes may have very little or no direct impact on socio-political institutions, they indirectly contribute to the changes that are taking place within such socio-political institutions like marriage and village administration.

(a) Marriage

Marriage among the Hmars of Tipaimukh is either by mutual consent or elopement with the latter considered less respectable by the Church though. For a marriage by mutual consent, the boy and girl usually go through a period of courtship, usually at the girl's residence. The clan and family do not have much influence in determining the choice of a partner in marriage, because a Hmar man can marry almost any girl. The preferred marriage, however, is matrilineal cross-cousin marriage and some people hold a prejudice against patrilineal cross-cousin marriage. In a traditional Hmar society, the choice of a partner rested on the parents and family. However, there were also exceptions where marriages were initiated by the boys and girls themselves in the face of opposition from relatives and this type of marriage was called '*Pathien samsui*' or 'divine arrangement'. When the boy or the boy's parents made their choice, this choice was first made known to the girl's parents. When the boy wishes to marry, he sends messengers to the girl's parents to settle the marriage. The clan members of the boy and girl then go through a period of negotiation and work out the details of the marriage. This pre-negotiation state was a very important period because decision as to whether marriage was possible or not had to be taken. The negotiation is said to be settled when

the boy's representatives can leave behind a token called *thir-dam* as a symbol of the said understanding. After three months to anytime after the leaving of *thir-dam*, the boy's parents would call their kinsmen and here affinal kinsmen played a crucial role in working out the details of the marriage. Some selected kinsmen (*laibung*) and the boy's sister husbands (*makpas*) would act as the go-between (*palai*) and go the girl's parents with a white cloth (*inhawn*), which was regarded as instrument of peace and rice beer (*zu*). After the *makpas* served rice-beer to the girl's parents and their kinsmen, formal negotiations followed and the bride-price (*nuhmei-man*) was decided.

When asked what could be the main changes in marriage negotiations, most people in Tipaimukh agree that the substitution of rice-beer or *zu* by tea in *zudam* (*zu*-rice beer, *dam*- to forgive)²¹ could perhaps be the most noteworthy change in marriage negotiations of today. This change can be attributed to both planned development brought about by Christianity that opposes the use of any intoxicants among the people on religious grounds. *Zu* is regarded unclean and un-Christian by the general population and therefore strictly prohibited.

With regard to the bride-price and activities related to it, it was also found that development has been instrumental in bringing about new ideas and practices through increased contacts with others' cultures, lifestyles, etc that indirectly influenced the types or kinds of bride-price of the Hmars. In olden days, a bride-price included mithun, gongs, some ember and bead necklaces, several pieces of cloth and shawls, a complete

²¹ *Zudam* is a drink served by the boy's family to the girl's family during marriage negotiation in traditional elope marriage as a sign of apology. Until and unless the girl's family agrees to drink the *zudam*, any marriage negotiations cannot proceed.

set of weaving tools and other accessories were given whereas, at present, monetisation of the economy saw the substitution of mithuns and all the other accessories which were hitherto part of the bride-price by money amounting to about Rs. 1000²². As done in the past, the amount or the kinds are still divided among the kin of the bride's family. The major share goes to the bride's father while the rest are shared equally by the paternal and maternal relatives. A strict ritualized system is followed when the bride's price is to be handed over to the bride's father by the head son-in-law called *mākpa bul*. The amount of the bride-price differed from clan to clan and it appears that the practice of bride-price is based on relations rather than on economic concerns. However, careful study reveals that it is not only on relation between clans, but also had its economic aspects even more so, after the advent of development among the Hmars of Tipaimukh.

In the past, the bride-price was normally classified into various shares : (1) *man-pui* (if given in kinds, it consisted of mithun, gong etc) and this went to the bride's parents; (2) *panghak* (some portion of the bride-price given to the bride's parent's kinsmen); (3) *pusum* (a portion given to the bride's maternal uncle (*pu*)); (4) *nisum* (a portion given to the bride's father's sister); and (5) *zuorman* (a small portion given to the bride's friends and cousins). This classification and distribution of the bride-price to different clansmen appears to be a very unique system of gifts and counter gifts. If an individual is offered a portion of a bride-price, say, *panghak*, the person is required to

²² The rules and procedures marriage followed today are based on the rule book called '*Hmar Hnam Dan Bu*' or 'Hmar Tribe Law Book' prepared by the Hmar Youth Association (HYA), a social organisation that is responsible and the sole authority in matters of customary laws and their practices.

accept it and failing to do will result in condemnation and strained relationship sometimes even amounting to a situation being outcaste from the clan. Not only accepting, the person is also expected to reciprocate the gift with a counter gift failing which the person will be considered ungrateful and is likely to be left out from any other clan activities. The shares of a bride-price cannot be given to people outside the clan. However at present, this is not the case anymore. It is now common practice to give a share of the bride-price to somebody outside the clan or even outside the tribe and usually given with a conscious thought on the economic position of that person and his ability to reciprocate. Even though there is no definite norms on the type of reciprocity, reciprocity is always expected to be of higher value or cost than the actual share of the bride-price received. Say, a Rs. 30 share of the bride-price will need to be reciprocated with a gift which is worth not less than Rs. 200 which is therefore economically beneficial for the bride's family. Furthermore, today the distribution of bride-price has another dimension too. In the past, the bride-price was distributed only among clan members and served to foster/sustain relationships, obligations and counter-obligations, rights and responsibilities among clan members. There are now several instances where carefully selected individuals from another clan or even another community are often recipients of the bride-price thus implying that bride-price have moved beyond relations, obligations, rights and responsibilities within a specific clan to the establishment and creation of new relations, obligations, rights and responsibilities between individuals, clans or communities which usually involves economic (For

example: economic gains involving a particular development scheme where the recipient is able to influence beneficiary selections for a particular development scheme, etc) and sometimes political gains where the relation between the giver (For example: A village authority chairman) and recipient (For example: the leader of a local political party) is strengthened.

Thus, it can also be said that today the bride-price has new meanings such as the establishment of new inter socio-economic and political alliances not necessarily within the same families or communities. The bride and the bride-price have become more of a commodity rather than being done for the sake of strengthening existing traditional clan relationships. In short, the practice of the sharing of bride-price now has an additional dimension of exploitation of women for economic and political gains.

Bride-price apart, development in the area also led to a very interesting case of tradition having the upper hand over modernity. As mentioned earlier, the Hmars have two forms of marriage- the traditional elope marriage known in the local dialect as '*inruk*' meaning 'to steal' opposed by the Church and the modern Church marriage known as '*dan ang*' meaning 'according to the rule'. The traditional elope marriage *inruk* does not have the backing and support of the Church. However, inspite of the attitude of the Church towards elope marriage, it is still very much in practise even though the couples risk the penalty of temporary excommunication by the Church from 6 months to 1 year during which they are prohibited from any active involvement in any

Church-related activities. Table 32 shows the popularity of the traditional *inruk* marriage over the modern Church marriage *dan ang*.

Table 32: Types of marriages in Parbung, Patpuihmun and Thingkal villages.

Name of the village	No. of approximate marriages in a year	No. of <i>inruk</i> marriages	No. of <i>dan ang</i> marriages
Parbung	10	8	2
Patpuihmun	10	8	2
Thingkal	5	4	1

Source: Fieldwork

As mentioned, inspite of not being welcomed by the Church, *inruk* marriage is more popular than Church marriage based on modern Christian practices. Except for the sons and daughters of few pastors, evangelists, missionaries, government employees, wealthy individuals, etc, Church marriages are commonly avoided. The reason for this mostly rest on the issue of finance where most Church marriages, it is alleged, involves high financial expenditures apart from many complications before and after the marriage while *inruk* marriage involves little financial expenditure, planning, executing and bearing with the formalities and costs of marriage. Therefore, *inruk* marriage is often opted for especially by the majority who can barely eke out a living and cannot afford to spare any. In spite of the Church's opposition to traditional *inruk* marriage, another factor contributing to the continued popularity and survival of *inruk* marriage is that the state's concept and practice of development does not interfere or tries to discourage the traditional *inruk* marriage.

Furthermore, apart from the continued popularity of traditional *inruk* marriage, even the so-called Church marriage is also not independent of tradition. A 76 year old Church elder from Phulpui village²³ Mr. Hrangzakhum succinctly remarked *“Traditional practices (Hnam dan) especially in marriage negotiations, bride-price, etc are still followed even for Church marriage. Though there are undeniable changes or additions like western wedding gowns, wedding rings, best man, bride’s maid, solemnisation of the ceremony and rituals of marriage in the Church by a Christian Pastor, etc. for modern Christian marriage, there is very little change on the traditional formalities and requirements that needs to followed and fulfilled by both the Groom’s and the Bride’s parties thus forming a juxtaposition of tradition and modernity on the same plane”* (Source: Fieldwork). However, it is should be noted that this overlapping tradition and modernity is not always smooth but only that they uneasily tolerate each other’s existence. Many times, there has been a flare-up of tensions between the two, especially when either one feels that its existence and authority is threatened by the other either as a direct or indirect outcome of development in the area. One such instance is the ongoing struggle between civil society groups like who stress on the preservation of culture and tradition. Very often, the Church felt threatened by the cultural preservation and revitalisation movements of civil society groups like the Hmar Students’ Association, Hmar Youth Association, Hmar Inpui, etc leading it to oppose many such moves. Thus, for tradition and modernity to operate side by side and

²³ Phulpui village is a dependency of Patpuihmun village and is only 3 kilometers from Patpuihmun village.

smoothly overlap with each other, there must exist an understanding that both can be complimentary to each other and that both should not feel threatened by the other by respecting each other's space.

The impact of development on Church and elope marriage apart, there is also, at present, a hot debate going on among the Hmars of Tipaimukh regarding the traditional practice of *mosawm* (*mo- bride, sawm- to carry along*. Thus, *mosawm* is 'a gift carried along by the bride to the groom's house') which is an indispensable part of all Mizo-Chin-Kuki marriages either by so-called modern Church marriages or the more traditional marriages by elope. In Church marriages, *mosawm* are arranged and gifted to the bride and taken to the groom's house on the day of the wedding itself while, on the other hand, in elope marriages (*a ruk-a innei*) this very *sawm* is given to the bride and taken to the groom's house only after a ceremony called *farnu ranthat* is being carried out by the bride's family. In olden days, this *mosawm*, while very important and considered indispensable part of any weddings, consisted of:

1. *Rel* (a long shaped bamboo or cane casket where only costly or things of values were kept),
2. *Thingrem* (a wooden chest for putting cloths, etc),
3. *Puonkawl* (a set traditional weaving accessories),
4. *Kawngvar* (a long vertical bamboo or cane basket with woven with small holes),
5. *Fe-em* (a variant of the *kawngvar* but with tightly woven bamboo or cane twines with almost no holes on the sides or below and meant only for women),

6. *hmui* (loom),
7. *puonri* (a traditionally woven cloth from home-grown cotton),
8. *hreipui* (axe),
9. *Mo-fam* (gifts for female relatives and friends),
10. *sut-hlam* (spindle),
11. *her-awt* (a cotton seed separator),
12. *sa hrap* (It is a fair portion of the animal killed for either the wedding or '*farnu ranthat*' where the animal is to be strictly a mature cow or a pig that has given birth at least one time and should not be less than *fun li*, i.e. the main body should measure roughly a diameter of about 16-18 inches or above).

Traditionally, the 12 items of *mosawm* are based mainly on necessities and none of them costing lot of money, except maybe the *sa-hrap*. However, at present, the list/items under *mosawm* has been increased to such an extent that people find it very hard to procure. Today - be it marriages or *farnu ranthat*, the people of Tipaimukh have a kind of feeling and perception that a wedding or a *farnu ranthat* ceremony that involves the costliest, biggest or most varied *sawm* items is regarded as successful, respectful and *chang kang*. Mr. Lalawikung, a 45 year old government employee from Patpuihmun village observed to this practice of giving costly gifts to married sisters or daughters "*Tradition is taken as an excuse to continue with the practice of mosawm. But think carefully whether culture or tradition is really the reason why we retain mosawm. Rather, is it not our hanker for fame, popularity, status and a civilized, modern tag that*

we made an addition to the items apart from those we have listed above?” (Source: Fieldwork). In reiteration to what Mr. Lalawikung said, a man named J. Rallien, the Headmaster of Partnership Mission Society (PMS), Lungthulien village asked “Why do we pick up this habit or practice? Is it because of our increase in wealth? None of them are. In the remote hills where our people are still living in abject poverty, there may not be any refrigerators or televisions or steel almirahs, etc but yet, the gifts are so very different and costly when compared with the traditional items that they are enough to put the bride’s family and other families related to it in big financial trouble” He feels that this new practice in the name of tradition is “an injustice to the Hmar’s culture and society. It is a stereotype; a variant of the Hindu Meitei Dowry system.” He further argued “People who adhere to this new practice may argue with me on this point saying that tradition and culture are dynamic and therefore subjected to changes and modifications according to time and space. Well, I am inclined to agree with those on the dynamism of culture and tradition but not sure on whether I will agree on the point where you need to modify culture and tradition to such an extent that the original settings have been changed almost out of its context” (Source: Fieldwork). Mr. Ebenezar, Secretary of Parbung Village Authority is of the opinion that “All cultural practices have values attached to them and must not or cannot be swiped away as something irrational or unimportant if looked at from the insider’s lens. So, the same goes for the practice of mosawm” (Source: Fieldwork). The traditional items contained in sawm have values and meanings attached to them. The question with regards to the

practice of *mosawm* as directly related to development therefore is whether development planners and the government have really tried to understand these meanings and values instead of just taking it for granted that this is just a practice; a cultural tradition that can be changed or modified according to conveniences. Due consideration must be given to the Hmar's culture for an understanding into this. Someone may be tempted to ask why? In reply, it would be arguable that "*the new items and modifications made to the Hmar's cultural practices in the name of development is nothing sort of corruption with tradition used as a scapegoat*" as pointed out by Dr. John Pulamte, the President of the Hmar Students' Association during a programme in Parbung village in February, 2008. Mr. Thankhum, a 70 year old man from Sartuinek village, who is also a retired revenue officer in Tipaimukh sub-division said in January, 2008 during the study had to say "*Our present way of doing/practicing mosawm is nothing but a hybrid form of the Hindu dowry system. Otherwise, what exactly is the use of including all these costly gifts in the name of mosawm? This, according to me is simply absurd! Why not give these gifts simply as voluntary wedding/marriage gifts instead of making it all a mandatory part of mosawm. I say mosawm and gifts are different*" (Source: Fieldwork). It is perhaps because of this practice that among the Hmars today in Tipaimukh and elsewhere, very few women are ready to be married and sent-off to the husband's house without costly gifts. Many people who were interviewed in this connection feel that there is no more the need to practice '*mosawm*' as far as the values behind the traditional practice of *mosawm* is concerned. The

traditional gift system of modern Hmar marriages has become associated with money and material assets that are very close to the Hindu Meitei concept of dowry.

According to the accounts of a number of old people (informants), the values attached behind items in *mosawm*, say a loom, is directly related and also implies solely the woman's role in the family and the means of how that role can be effectively played. Thus a loom somehow implies the woman's economic productivity in matters of cloths and other necessary fabrics for the family. Likewise, all the other traditional items have corresponding implications and values that strongly reiterate the woman's role, importance and productivity potentials in her new home. However, the present practice of *mosawm*, like the bride price has become a manipulative instrument where the groom's families benefits economically from the marriage and where a woman is more of an economic commodity that drastically lowers the status of the woman in Hmar society.

(b) Village Administration

The advent of development in Tipaimukh has had a very huge impact on village administration among the Hmars. Traditionally, village administration was the sole responsibility of the chief (*lal*) and his councillors (*khawnbawls*) who were in turn actively assisted by the priests (*thiempu*) in many ways. However, with the enactment of the Manipur Village Council Act of 1956, the office of the chief in Tipaimukh was diminished to a great extent though its total abolishment could not be completed due to opposition from various quarters especially the Singson clan of Thadou-Kuki

community in particular who were the chiefs in almost all villages of Tipaimukh. Under the Act of 1956, the chief was made the Chairman of the village authority without any other discretionary powers. The benefits he usually received in the past, such as *busung-sadar* and free voluntary services from his subjects are no longer given to him. Further, the Thadou-Hmar war of 1960²⁴, Tipaimukh resulting in the exile of all the Singson chiefs followed closely by the re-organisation policy²⁵ of the Manipur Government in 1969 resulting in the formation of several districts²⁶ and the subsequent upgradation of Manipur south district to Churachandpur district in 1983, Tipaimukh also came to be a sub-division with its headquarter at Parbung. The office of the chief was further diminished and administration of majority of villages in Tipaimukh became democratised under the rule of the village authorities.

At present, out of 37 villages in Tipaimukh, there are 19 villages under nominal chieftainship with six villages still having a chief living in the village²⁷. These are

²⁴ While the Thadou- Hmar war was a fight for territory, autonomy and power, it was also a kind of clash between traditional governance and modern democratic governance. It was a turning point in the history and evolution of Hmar administrative system- whether under direct chieftainship or nominal chieftainship.

²⁵ Manipur was a single district up to October, 1969. As a consequence of the district re-organisation of Manipur at the end of 1969, Manipur south district came into existence which in course of time became Churachandpur district vide Government of Manipur Secretariat Revenue Department order no. 43/2/81-R(Pt) dated 15th July, 1983 (Manipur Extra-ordinary- Gazette No. 174 dated 15th August 1983).

²⁶ Also, as a result of this re-organisation, there are now 9 (nine) districts. Out of these nine districts, there are five hill districts namely, viz. Chandel, Churachandpur, Senapati, Tamenglong and Ukhrul. And four valley districts namely, viz. Bishnupur, Imphal East, Imphal West and Thoubal with 3(three) Autonomous District Councils namely Jiribam, Kangpokpi and Moreh.

²⁷ After the Thadou-Hmar war of 1960, all the Kuki chiefs were exiled and relieved of their active function as chiefs. However, as these exiled chiefs still have with them all their government Patta papers and documents pertaining to their chieftainship, the villages in Tipaimukh, eventhough administered by the Village Authorities are also still under nominal chieftainship. Villages still having a recognized chiefs are also administered jointly by the chiefs and the Village Authorities and therefore also under nominal chieftainship.

Pherzawl, Patpuihmun, Phulpui, Kh. Zeikhan, Kangreng and Kangrengdawr. These six villages still have a recognised chief living in the village, but some changes has been made in the general administration of these villages by the chiefs. For instance, all these chiefs are now assisted by village authority members acting as replacement for the traditional *khawnbawl*. With regard to the land tenure system, though the Hmar chiefs or the village authorities still wield immense power, the land tenure system is still communal ownership and that the chief and the councillors are merely trustees with the power to see to the rightful use and distribution of land to each homestead for, as a matter of fact, the land still belongs to the people of the village as a whole.

Since the institution of chieftainship is deeply rooted in Hmar society, the traditional authorities, particularly the chiefs, are still accepted as legitimate in the eyes of the people and in fact continue to function as ex- officio chairman in the village authority councils, interpreting and administering traditional laws and customs. Hence, complete abolition of chieftainship is so far not possible because of the value of adjudication in matters such as local dispute over land, marriage, divorce, cattle, inheritance, rights regarding property, etc. So there is no doubt that the traditional leaders still have considerable influence over the masses.

Another change brought about by development on village administration is the substitution of the traditional priests (*thiempu*) by Christian Church leaders (*sakhuo thuoitu*). In traditional Hmar society of Tipaimukh, the *thiempu* occupy a very important

place and in most cases, more important than even the chief. This importance is still retained even in the present Hmar society by the Church leaders who substitute the *thiempu*. However with the onset of new ideas and development, the type, position and role of religion and religious leaders have seen some basic structural changes.

The introduction of western education by the missionaries²⁸ with backings from the colonial authorities provides the material base for the emergences of educated religious leaders. The colonizer and their collaborators told the people that they were ‘backward’ and should accept the colonial rule as beneficial. The missionaries thus taught the people that they were ‘savages’ and should accept new concepts from Christian ethics and values without even examining whether there was anything of permanent value in the culture and traditions of Hmar society. One of the main objectives of the missionaries was to train native workers and operate through them. Even a new convert was under obligation to abandon his old habits, to give up his tribal hair-cut and to adopt the European hair style. The western-educated Church leaders looked at Europeans as models and tended to become pro-western in outlook and attitude. They also began to look with disgust at their own culture through the glasses of their new masters who framed the symbol and content of their education. The profound but devastating psychological effect the colonial rule and mission education had on these young men educated in their schools cannot be ignored. What was most crucial here was the change in the mental outlook of the new religious leaders. These young

²⁸ At present, the term ‘missionary’ has become more associated with and more or less limited to Catholic workers preaching the Gospel among non-Christians while ‘Evangelist’ has substituted Protestant workers engaged in the same mission who hitherto were also called missionaries.

men believed and preached that their ancestors were 'savages' and made other young men ashamed of their past, their way of living, their tradition and culture. They also felt that the western people and their 'civilizing mission' had brought them into the 'light' of salvation.

Colonial influence apart, even after the post-independence period and the advent of planned development in Tipaimukh, the attitudes and approaches of development planners and implementers of development programmes have not changed much. The only difference was that the new faces were no more western administrators or missionaries but known and common faces, sometimes even from the same community. It was only 'old wine put in a new bottle'. Thus, the prevailing situation brought about a state of confusion and stagnancy among the people, especially among the new educated religious leaders. Their main problem is, therefore, the simultaneous adaptation of two seemingly 'contradicting' elements: one traditional and the other western. In the process, they are neither western nor traditional but an incorporation of both. The significance of this is that the missionaries educated the people and trained native workers who began to regard themselves as belonging to a more or less different category and assumed new leadership as educators and spiritual leaders thereby disturbing the traditional social organisational structure. In fact, at the initial stage, there arose a conflict between the two leaderships: the traditional leaders upholding the existing institutions and practices and the Christian Church leaders tending to condemn traditional values and customs. Both of them, however, played more or less the same

roles. Like the traditional priest, the Christian Church leaders acted as a bridge between the newly established administration and people. In the post-colonial period, the Christian Church leaders with their theology oriented education were deeply engrossed in Church administration and organisation by exacting contributions in the form of tithes, missionary fund, etc., from the masses. They operated mainly through Church organisations like the North-East India General Mission (NEIGM), the Independent Church of India (ICI), the Evangelical Free Church of India (EFCI) etc. Despite their professed brotherhood, each Church organisation developed its own hierarchical structure. There were the Church-elders, teachers at village level, evangelists, pastors and superintendents at district level and directors or secretaries for Church organisations at the regional level. With the Hmars now 100% Christian, the Church leaders exert considerable influence especially within their particular church and are a force to be reckoned with.

Like the Church leaders who substituted the traditional priest, modern political leaders (*khawltang thuoitu*) had more or less the same orientation. With the spread of education, democracy and consequently, adult franchise, they began to question the rights and privileges of the traditional leaders who were dubbed as 'lackeys of the colonial government'. This is not to say that they were opposed to perceived ideals and principles of westerns institutions. In fact, it was through the acceptance of these ideals that they claimed their right to leadership. As a result they lacked firm legitimacy in the society in which they lived. They denounced tradition as a basis for legitimacy and

demanded democratization of traditional political institutions, which meant the abolition of the traditional councillor, chief and feudal servitudes such as the *busung-sadar* and forced labour. Finally, with the introduction of the Manipur Hill Village Authority Act of 1956 and the introduction of various development programmes in the area, the traditional authorities were slowly and legally dethroned.

Modern political leaders further appealed to the sentiments of the people through the formation of various political parties like the Hmar Mongolian Federation, the Hmar National Congress and now the Hmar National Union. Such parties exerted a strong appeal and there was inevitably a popular reaction against traditional leaders. However, efforts of modern political leaders to completely eliminate the influence of traditional leaders is yet to see success as they, like the religious leaders, finds a way to maintain their power and control over the people even in modern political set-ups by either becoming village authority chairmen or members. This therefore compels modern political leaders to establish an alliance with them in order to avoid any confrontations that might cause them more harm than good. Mr. Lalthang, a Hmar Youth Association leader from Patpuihmun village when asked about this particular situation answered *“The traditional leaders still have lot of influence among the people. This is one of the main reasons why modern political leaders cannot therefore ignore them. Since the church leaders also have well-knit organizations and have a hold on the people in religious matters, the political leaders cannot ignore them either. At the time of elections, the political leaders seek the co-operation of the church leaders and the*

traditional leaders. Though the political leaders profess to work for the establishment of a secular democracy, their reliance on church leaders and the traditional leaders in a sense perpetuate the survival of these types of leadership” (Source: Fieldwork). Nonetheless, even though the traditional leaders still maintain control over their respective field and the politicians compelling to make an alliance with them, the latter is normally perceived and looked upon as a leader of the tribe.

From what have been discussed above, it can be seen that the emergence of a modern political and Church leadership is due to the colonial experience, education provided by government and non- government agencies and other planned development coupled with the forces working within the premises of traditional Hmar society. However, consciousness of moral imperatives aimed at economic and social reconstruction seems to be more or less absent within the leaderships. This is particularly so in the case of political leadership. The moral imperatives which characterised earlier relationship between the leaders and the people in are gradually beginning to disappear. There is now intent to get maximum personal benefits from development programmes by getting political and administrative control. Having obtained this control, the political leaders tend to narrow down the community’s interest to personal self-interest and more seriously, they begin to live in urbanized towns thereby gradually losing whatever contact they have with the majority of the people. The result is that the ordinary individual of the Hmar society has fallen victim to the machinations of the different types of leaderships.

Another notable change triggered by development on village administration is the rise of a very powerful organisation called the Hmar Youth Association (HYA). This new organisation is an indirect result of development and now functions as an institution where the traditional youth commanders (*val-upa*) who, in the past operated through the institution of *buonzawl*, are now operating. Hmar Youth Association (HYA) can be viewed as a substitute for the old dormitory system. Surprisingly enough, the role and even the basis of the relationship between the youth commanders and the youths has remained intact despite the tremendous impact of development through various development programmes orchestrated both by the Government and NGOs in the area. Even though the *buonzawl* had fallen a victim to development influence, the youth commanders, through the HYA, still play a crucial role in Hmar society. The continued survival of youth commanders can be attributed to the fact that their indispensability for such social occasion as death, marriage, mobilizing the youths for community services, etc has not been negated by the development in the area and that certain traditional concepts and practices successfully fuse with modern concepts and practices.

Last but not the least, another noteworthy contribution of development on the change in village administration among the Hmars in Tipaimukh is the increased involvement of the people in various forms of local government and elections both at the micro and macro levels (in spite of the poor practice of it). However, one point to be noted here is that the involvement of women in village administration and development

implementations are practically nil although they have their own organisation working for the improvement of women's position in the society. Development has so far been unable to generate, encourage or bring about increase participation of women in its process.

5. Social Relationship

Although development programmes may not have any direct impact on social relationship, one can find that development programmes has played an important role in the changing social relationship of the Hmars of Tipaimukh.

The Hmar social structure was based on Tribe-Clan-Sub Clan-Family-Individual category. They had strong social interactions based on clans. It is obligatory for the clan members to help each other during agricultural operations, house constructions, and birth and death ceremonies. There are as many as 16 different clans found among the Hmars. Each of these clans resides in a particular area or village and many of the villages are named after the clan occupying it (Laldena 1995). The Zote clan is the largest with as many as 14 sub- clans while Sakum clan is without any sub- clan.

An individual cannot survive alone and need others for survival. Thus, clans are necessary social complements that facilitate co-operation and cohesion within different individuals. Although the clan system has been largely left intact, many changes in social interaction among them can be seen after the onset of development in the area. Nobody was a stranger. *“In olden days, although we had no roads and lived far from each other, a man from another village is a known face even in other village. The*

reason was that due to lack of proper transport and communication, visits were rare but special. If we go to a village one day to visit a girl or for some other business, we make maximum use of the opportunity to get to know as many people, to make as many friends as possible, visit and try to identify relatives living in that village as much as we can. In this way, we get to know many people. Getting to know each other was very important and special and we did not have much opportunity to do so. So, we always make the most of it. This practice actually also brought us closer to each other and made relations special. Because of the chance offered to meet people, friends, relatives- both new and old, we also literally count the day for the next Youth annual conference or general assembly of several churches. Absence of roads was not considered a problem. It was normal and actually much exciting to light a torch and go to another village with friends and return early the next morning or we sometimes went to visit girls from another village from the Jhums during winter when some of us were required to stay in the Jhums to guard our crops against animals. However, due to the passage of time, better communications, etc, youngsters do not do those kinds of things anymore. They hardly even think of going to visit a girl from another village during the night. Now, the only opportunity for interaction is during a Church conference or assembly. This sadly weakened the level of interaction and ultimately the clan-ties along with (are two words) community ties. Now, even youngsters from the same village sometimes do not even know each other especially if they are not from the same church” said Mr.

Liena, the Village Authority Chairman of Thingkal Village Authority when interviewed during fieldwork.

As far as the clan system is concerned, what Mr. Liena said above is true to an extent for the Hmar living in Tipaimukh. Instead of the clan system weakening, it is evident that the clan system is evolving in such a way that clans are getting bigger and expanding even though not with the same feeling and vigour as it used to be before. This particular condition shows that the traditional system is adapting itself to match modernity. Development or its aspects *did not replace* the traditional elements present in the clan system but only brought changes in its structure. Thus, in anthropological terms, one can say that there is an impact on attributes rather than on interactions. Attributes such as hair style can be changed overnight but patterns of social interactions cannot. Disintegration of the closed village system, migration of individuals or families from villages like Parbung, Patpuihmun, etc to towns like Churachandpur in search of a better living, works in government offices or to pursue higher studies may be the reason for the changing form while content continues to be the same. It can also be argued that development has in fact strengthened the clan system. This trend can be ascribed to, like what Mr. Phirremthang, a village authority member from Patpuihmun village aptly remarked “*A direct result of modernization and the development of infrastructure like transport and communication*” (Source: Fieldwork). Table 33 shows the level of differences of preferences and thoughts on clan and clan relationship between the older and younger generations.

Table 33: Status of clan system among the people.

Age of respondents	No. of respondents	Is clan feeling stronger or weaker		Is it good to retain/have strong clan feelings/ties	
15-30 years	500	Stronger	10%	Good	10%
		Weaker	30%	Not good	30%
		Don't know	60%	Don't know	60%
40 years above	500	Stronger	15%	Good	70%
		Weaker	70%	Not good	15%
		Don't know	15%	Don't know	15%
	1000	100%		100%	

Source: Fieldwork

From the above table, it can be seen that there is a rather huge difference in matters of thoughts on clan or kinship, especially the traditional system that was mainly followed in the past. In matters of clan system, the Hmar of Tipaimukh, like many other tribes in North-East India has strong clan/kinship ties. According to Hmar practices, clan/kinship determined marriage rules, village administration and other traditional ways of life. Taking for instance marriage rules, people belonging to the same clans were more or less regarded as blood relations and therefore marriages among clan members were rarely concluded although specific laws/rules prohibiting marriages between clan members were not given. Many believed that this condition is based on conscience - where marriages between people regarded as brothers and sisters were somehow considered inappropriate. However, this particular view on marriage between clan members is changing rapidly. Now-a-days, there is high degree of marriages between clan members and even actually thought to be better as there is less complication during and after the marriage due to the simple fact that clan members

find it easier to understand, agree, adjust, etc. The same thing can also be said of relationships. In the past, relationships were mostly based on what clan an individual belongs to. But now little regard is given to one's position or membership in a particular clan.

Relationship is becoming more open leading to villages opening up not on the basis of a clan but more on the basis of being a member of a larger group, which is the tribe itself. This changing relationship among the people is more obvious among those who are more exposed to the outside world through development processes initiated both by the government and non-government agencies that introduced, enabled and develop better and more opportunities for education, communication, presence of relatives in the city with whom constant contact is maintained, etc who feels that clan feelings are not conducive for the tribe's unity and future prospects.

Government's contribution:

After the onset of development programmes in Tipaimukh, there have been rapid and constant changes in the Hmar's life. The government, through its various development programmes has been implementing several development projects like construction of roads: inter village roads, state and national highways, setting up of government run educational institutions from grant-in-aid to high schools and other government infrastructures like:

- a. Educational institutions (almost all of them are now just a name) from grant-in-aid, lower primary to full-fledged high schools in almost all villages of Tipaimukh.

- b. Community Health Centre in Parbung village, Primary Health Centre in Patpuihmun and Senvon villages, Primary Health sub-Centres in villages like Kangreng, Tinsuong, Tuolbung, Taithu, Lungthulien, Sipuikawn (which are now literally defunct).
- c. State Bank of India branch in Parbung village (which is now defunct)
- d. Police Station in Parbung village (now absent)
- e. Both Sub-Divisional and Block Development offices in Parbung village
- f. Public Distribution system like go-down, government fair price shops, etc (most of which are now literally defunct)
- g. Community halls in every village
- h. Post Office in Parbung village and Branch Post Offices in several other villages (now literally defunct for being absent)
- i. Diesel Power house for electricity at Parbung village (which is now defunct)
- j. Distribution of Solar Panels by the government enabling people to have and run Television sets and WLL telephones, etc.

Non-government agencies contribution:

Among NGOs, the church is the main contributing agency whose works and contribution to the development and changes of the Hmar social life deserves to be mentioned. The church, through its various development initiatives with special emphasis laid on education has been, in a way, having more worthwhile and crucial impact in Tipaimukh development scenario from recent times, i.e. especially after government agencies began to slowly lose their effectiveness and gradually became

defunct. During all that, the Church and its educational institutions along with their corresponding programmes to promote education has been the mainstay for many, as far as education is concerned. Some of its development projects are:

- a. Educational institutions in many villages of Tipaimukh from Lower Primary to Junior High Schools. These schools are run by Churches like the Independent Church of India (ICI), Evangelical Free Church of India (EFCI), and Reformed Presbyterian Church (RPC). Except for ICI, the other two churches also offer part and full sponsorship with donors from foreign countries;
- b. Setting of trust funds and scholarship-like aids for students whose parents are apparently unable to support due to lack of funds for fees, books, uniforms, etc;
- c. Development projects on agriculture, brick-making factories in Parbung, Patpuihmun and some other villages;
- d. Administrative offices equipped with solar panels run Wireless in Local Loop (WLL) phone and even Computer facilities in some offices, etc.

Due to availability of modern transport and communication systems, modern educational institutions and other infrastructures as a result of both government and NGOs initiatives, the Hmars in Tipaimukh have been given more opportunity for development in many aspects that led the once closed society to open up and be exposed to modern ways of life, thoughts and perceptions drastically leading to changes in inter and intra- clan relationships. While development in Tipaimukh has been instrumental in bringing some positive change in the relationship status, it is also used

by some as the tool or medium to re-ignite old clan feelings leading to discrepancies and conflicts within the society that many times present a hinder to a peaceful and sustainable development process. As a result, there is now a strong movement among the youths toward a de-structuring on the very clan relationship citing that high clan consciousness is not conducive to the tribe's unity, cohesion and often leads to nepotism, groupism and even corruption. The younger generation is more inclined toward a generalization of clan relationships while the older generation still clings to the old inter and intra clan relationship. They feel that clan feelings harbour dissensions and favouritism within the society; that inter-clan feelings, if allowed to continue, would eventually lead to the total disintegration of the Hmar tribe itself. The setting up of clan based bodies like *Lawitlang- Zote- Ngurte Inzawmkhawm* (An alliance of three clans, viz. Lawitlang, Ngurte and Zote), *Lungtau Farnu Pawl* (A group of the female members of the Lungtau clan), etc with the sole objective of helping only their clan members in times of need and important occasions are good examples. This has resulted in the silent rebellion of many youths against the clan system thereby affecting other socio-cultural elements like marriage, death and even religious institutions in the process that can and also sometimes directly or indirectly affect social cohesion and unity crucial for a successful and smooth development process.

An educated and employed youth from Parbung village by the name of Mr. Rawna Hmar said "*the factional fighting in our society- be it the churches, the 'underground' or politicians are as a result of clan consciousness and the resultant*

*favouritism that prevails because of this. Everyone turns to his clansmen for support and cooperation for their own interest". Citing an example, he added "When a politician wants to contest the MLA post in the sub-division, he calls upon his clansmen and its allies as it is believed that clansmen and their allies will naturally be faithful to their own member. In the aftermath of the election, distribution of privileges are also always based on one's clan ties with the ruling MLA. A Lawitlang MLA will hardly ever turn away from one of his or her clan member and vice-versa. It is also the same case with the church where leadership within the church is based on one's ties with the present or out-going leader. Same is with the erstwhile underground factions: the Hmar Revolutionary Army (HRA) and the Hmar Peoples' Convention - Democratic (HPC-D) where the HRA was led and followed mostly by the Lawitlang and Zote clans while the HPC-D was led and followed more by the Darngawn and Khawbung clans. All of these factors are our main problems in unity and cohesion that invariably hinders our overall development processes. Therefore, to be truly democratic and have peace within the society, we need to somehow break down the age-old clan feelings that were also in fact the main cause of fighting, wars and killings in the past, especially before the British came and eventually brought together the ever fighting diasporic groups under one group called **Hmar**" (Source: Fieldwork). This same thought has also been echoed by many of the youth both within and outside villages of Tipaimukh.*

On the other hand, the thoughts of younger generations like Mr. Rawna Hmar are not fully shared by majority of the older generations still living in Tipaimukh.

According to them, preserving the age-old relationship is the only solution to the tribe's continued survival. Having strong clan ties does not necessarily mean that clans will fight among themselves. Rather, it gives an individual or group a sense of responsibility, belongingness and awareness about one's community and place. It also builds up among individuals the virtues of sharing, caring and loving. Mr. Mawia, a 57 year old man from Thingkal remarked during an interview *"I cannot help but feel sorry and nostalgic about the past when life was so simple; when everyone, especially within the clan shared and cared. But now, things are different as the people who have gone have become corrupted and blinded by life in the city and they have brought those evils into our villages and we have no way of dealing with it. They do not even know what clan they are, who their relatives are or how to address them! Now, our village is the dumping ground for evils that were never there before. Even in a remote village like ours, because of development, people are slowly forgetting the values of sharing and caring. Our carefree and altruistic ways are almost gone"* (Source: Fieldwork).

A 70 year old man from Patpuihmun by the name of Mr. Pienga Darngawn also remarked when asked about clan feelings and ties *"Youngsters of today do not know the values of clan relationship and of their crucial role in the development of the community as a whole. Clan, as understood is composed of individuals who are related by blood. This very relation imbibes to each clan member a feeling of family, creating, in the true sense, families and society is made up of several families coming together. Say, if one family is called Lawitlang, the other is called Darngawn. The cooperation*

and harmony of all these families makes what we call 'society'. So, now, what do you think will happen if these families were broken up? Simple! We will all be broken societies! And I ask you, do you like broken societies? Clan systems make us capable of being aware of the values of society and of the tribe” His argument makes further sense when he continued “If families can live together in one village or area, why cannot clans also live together? No, I say clan feelings are not the source for our changing relations rather, they are caused by ideas that people learn from books or others but not really applicable on the ground. I do agree that clan feelings sometimes can and have been instrumental in fermenting troubles within the society but what I am asking is: ‘Is this because of the clan feelings without any outside forces getting involved or is it due to the crafty manipulation and fanning of these innocent feelings by some for their own vested interest?’ Leave the clan relationship as they are but yes, we should not set up separate Clan societies like the newly created Lawitlang- Zote clan societies or the Darngawn- Khawbung clan societies whose sole aims are to serve the interests of only those within the clan or clans. These are not advisable as such societies are and can be easily susceptible to manipulations by vested parties or individuals to serve their interests” (Source: Fieldwork).

The above thoughts and counter-thoughts give a very paradoxical but interesting picture of the impact of development on the concept of clan relations and its practice, especially when it comes to development issues. The younger generations advocate a more open distribution and execution of development programmes free from any

involvement or interference of clan feelings and systems while the older generation still desperately holds on to the old system and advocates a development process which does not interfere with the traditional clan systems. This has led to a silent conflict between the older and the younger generations in matters of development programme implementation and distribution of benefits in the area. Although the style of conflicts may have changed, it can be clearly seen that the present re-emergence of clannish feelings is reminiscent of 'old wine in a new bottle' but with new dimensions added to it.

Apart from the prevailing confusion, conflicts and changes within the Hmar society on clan and clan relationship, development has also affected the relationship between the youths and the religious leaders that many times bring about strained relations between the two parties. Even though the youths are opposed to strengthening of traditional clan system and its involvement in the development process, the entry of new thoughts and ideas into the area as a result of development in education, exposure, etc has brought among the youths a renewed awareness on the importance of preserving some old cultural practices of the Hmars like the festivals, folk dances and folk songs. This has led many youths to make an attempt at re-enacting old festivals, learning and practising traditional dances and songs, etc although well within the new Christian faith. However, this attempt on the part of the youths is seen or interpreted by many Church leaders as opposed to the Christian belief and theology who are also, many times, supported by some local politicians who feel that supporting the Church leaders is wiser

because of their power over the masses. Many times, the Church has banned or condemned the re-enactment of such festivals, learning and practising traditional dances and songs by the youths under the leadership of the Hmar Youth Association and the Hmar Students' Association terming it as 'un-Christian and a sin against God'. Due to this, parents have, in many cases, forbid their children on getting involved in such activities for fear of the Church leaders' and God's wraths. This opposition led many youths to openly defy and challenge the authority of the Church leaders. The recent fight between the Hmar Students' Association (HSA) and the Church leaders over the HSA organised and government sponsored *Sikpui ruoi* or 'winter festival' the oldest surviving festival of pre-Christian era, at Senvon village and the subsequent removal of the pre-historic *Sikpui ruoi* Dolmen from *Zopui thlang* (Zopui hill) by church leaders during 2005 are good examples of this conflict. There is therefore a constant debate between the youths and the Church leaders on such issues thereby greatly affecting the relationship between the two and the society as a whole.

As a result of differences in ideology and perceptions on the clan system and structure between the young and the old, there is clearly a divide. The Hmars are very conscious of the ideal of individual dignity and independence. Such an ideal requires a balance. This balance was found in the clan. However, in spite of the fact that both traditional and modern ideals are not contradictory but overlap with each other (Rudolph & Rudolph 1967), modern premises have the tendency to oppose traditional ideals as irrational and contradictory to modern ideals. This tendency often disturbs the

original equilibrium and leading the entire tribe searching for a new equilibrium between traditional and new practices (Brouwer 2000b) thereby triggering changes within the clan system. Thus the question is how can development programmes be implemented and carried out in such a way that it does not weaken the traditional system but at the same time put a check on the interference of clan systems and feelings in its process? The answer is: by recognizing the traditional ideal and trying to match at conceptual levels development programmes and traditional concepts. A weakening of the clan system can both act as an inhibitor and facilitator for a more open process of development while, at the same time, the strengthening of the same clan system can also be both an inhibitor and facilitator. A middle path or rather an interface is clearly needed that can allow both side of the divide to come together.

6. Traditional values

While development programmes may not directly touch the value system of the people, they nevertheless indirectly contributed to triggering changes on certain aspects like:

(a) Honour:

On the dimension of honour as the root for many traditional value systems that prevail in the Hmar society - both past and present, the practice of *thangsuo* may be taken as one important example as its attainment by an individual also requires the possession and practice of almost all the traditional values that the society regards as important by that individual thereby making a *Thangsuo* the role model of that society. Being a highly patriarchal society, *thangsuo* was a practice that can be attained or attempted

only by a man. Even though the practice of *thangsuo* has many important social consequences such as giving status and respect to an individual, according to Mr. Tawnga²⁹, an 87 year old man, it was also a practice that was heavily laced with the traditional religious beliefs where “*belief in life after death in a paradise called Pielral was the main player. Its attainment predominantly centres on one’s hope for a better life and higher status in Pielral as it was believed that a Thangsuo will never have to work or hunt for food anymore because the spirits of those killed - be it animals or people - will provide him all that he needs and that his other achievements during his lifetime will earn the respect of others in Pielral. Being uninterrupted and in close proximity to religion gave the efforts and attempts to becoming a Thangsuo a sense of purpose and responsibility towards his society. A wrong deed or action done or perpetrated during the process of attainment might undo all the other good and extraordinary deeds done and that it could also bring forth the wrath of the main deity, a Goddess called ‘Khuonu’ or ‘Mother of all the gods’ who was both loved and feared*” (Source: Fieldwork).

To become a *Thangsuo*, several criteria such as personal test of wit, intelligence, courage, bravery and toughness in times of war and hunting have to be fulfilled and achieved. However, apart from fulfilling and achieving the above, a *Thangsuo* is also expected to be altruistic (*tlawmngai*). For instance, voluntarily sharing one’s things and helping others in times of need is regarded as the most important and most honourable

²⁹ Tawnga is a retired Manipuri teacher from Taithu village and resides now in Lamka town, the District Headquarter of Churachandpur.

deed a person can perform. No matter whether the one in need is a complete stranger, it is regarded as a sacred duty of all Hmar to be altruistic and never shy away from helping others and that too without any condition or thoughts of repayment in any form. Even the meat of an animal reared by individual, especially four-legged animals, is never sold and is taken as an insult to the village and the society as a whole if such attempts were made. Such a person is usually scorned upon and likely to be out casted from the society. Instead, when someone butchered an animal, it is equally shared by everyone in the village or a feast is organized. Apart from altruism, an aspirant *Thangsuo* also needs to have and cultivate other values like respect for elders (*upa inzana*), honesty (*indikna*), diligence (*taimakna*) and sincerity (*titakna*). Until and unless a man is conscious and aware of these practices along with the will and resolution to fully practise them, that person cannot be accorded a *Thangsuo* even though he may be outstanding in both war and hunt. Thus it is only after fulfilling such criteria and feats that this position of honour is formally acknowledged by the society itself through a ritual and a feast in which everyone participates.

The Hmars of Tipaimukh still continue to stress on ‘honour’ and the practice of *Thangsuo*. With the inevitability of change in any culture and society, the practice of *thangsuo*, if it is to be retained, also need to change and along with it, the value system too if the practice is to be tolerated by both religious institution and the law of the land as the original practice of *thangsuo* that involves killings of many animals (some of which are endangered) and headhunting is seen as a criminal act by both the new

administrative systems of the modern state and Christianity. This is exactly what the Hmars did. Mr. Lalthanglien Ruolngul from Pherzawl village, a 30 year old Government employee aptly remarked during an interview “*the practice of thangsuo, if to be performed or exhibited in its pure form today would be most inconvenient as it would also mean breaking of laws that the modern- nation state has laid down for its citizens.*” Citing an example, he further argued that “*If I were to kill a hundred wild animals to attain the honour, imagine the number of wild animals I have to kill it would not only lead to rapid decrease of the number of wild animals in the land, it will also invariably land me in trouble or worse, imprisonment as the animals to be killed are mostly on the list of endangered species of the government; imagine if I go and take the head of somebody. Under government courts that would be murder now. I will be indicted, put in prison or worse, hanged! And under Church laws, I will be cursed and outcaste*” (Source: Fieldwork).

However, apart from the changes in the practices that are in tandem or done with an aim to find more legitimacy and acceptance within the Church and the state, there are also some other changes that do not necessarily takes place on that basis but rather a result of the relegation of traditional values and perceptions towards a more materialistic and political inclinations. In this respect Mr. Damkung, a man of about 80 and one of the most well-known cultural leaders among the Hmars said during an interview “*The practice, in many cases, is no longer necessarily based on altruism and other social values or done with religious purposes. People still practice thangsuo but*

differently. Any person can now become a Thangsuo if that person have attained or done something which is not seen or experienced normally. For example, a man who has succeeded in bringing up all his children to become officers in the government can be awarded the title of Thangsuo; or an individual who gets through in the Union Public Service Commission held Civil Service examination is awarded the title or an individual who have attained a kind of success normally not attained - be it academic or political and so on - can be awarded the title without even having to be altruistic at all! I have seen some people awarded the title who does not even know how to behave in front of their elders, corrupted officials or even who have not even done any social services. These people, even though awarded the Thangsuo title cannot be role models for others anymore and have therefore made a mockery of the many social values we hold dear. Modern certificates, awards, souvenirs have taken the place of the heads in the showcases in the middle class living room” (Source: Fieldwork).

Notwithstanding the need for change and the changes as can be seen from what have been discussed so far, the concept and practice of *thangsuo* in general has remained very much intact but with major changes in the values and expression that accompanies it. The trails and tests that an individual needs to go through to become a *Thangsuo* also remains more or less equally demanding in the present as was in the past. As a result, a *Thangsuo* title is still regarded as one of the most prestigious titles that can be conferred to or attained by an individual. A simple explanation for the continued survival of this practice lies in the fact that the Hmar culture has a very strong concept

of its own on the idea of individual dignity, self- reliance and the individuals' dependency on others for survival and perpetuation. For instance, while such traditional values like altruism, respect for elders, honesty, diligence, sincerity, etc among the Hmars serves to protect the ideal of individual dignity and self- reliance, practices such as *thangsuo* helps to mediate and bring about a balance between such ideals and the individuals' dependency on others for survival and perpetuation. As can be seen from the account of both Mr. Lalthanglien Ruolngul and Mr. Damkung, any weakening of this practice by development induced changes in both conceptual and practical level will also invariably lead to a weakening of that mediating ability of *thangsuo* between individuals or extremes thereby weakening the society's ability to survive and exist in harmony and dignity.

(b) Wealth (*hnienghnar*) and Happiness (*hlimna/ lawmna*):

Before the advent of development and modernity, tribal societies, especially the economy and market, were characterised by a non-monetised subsistence economy. This non-monetised subsistence economy of the tribal societies differentiates them from other existing societies especially on the perception and understanding of wealth and the corresponding mental category of 'happiness'. However, after the advent of development and modernity, now coupled with globalisation, the perception and understanding of wealth and happiness has been subjected to drastic changes.

A Hmar man was considered wealthy if he can harvest enough to last him more than one year; enough to feed at least more than one family other than his own; have

lots of mithun (*sieI*), cows (*bawng*), etc among the Hmars of Tipaimukh. Money (*tangka*) was not considered in their definition of wealth. The salient feature being that even though a man and his assets are personal to him, it is expected of him to be willing to share with others and the wealthy man in turn try to live up to this expectation. This was a mitigating aspect to soften the gap between rich and poor.

Material assets apart, it was found that the Hmar's concept of wealth was also closely related to their concept of happiness. Happiness, according to them is also another asset without which a man cannot be called rich or wealthy. This close proximity of happiness with wealth could be one reason why a wealthy man was supposed to share his wealth. On the other hand, it could also have a religious dimension where a magnanimous (*tikthlai*) person is believed to be treated well in the afterlife. Whatever may be the case, it can be said without doubt that wealth and happiness are more or less taken as one and the same thing or that happiness is a condition for wealth and not the other way round. However, in recent time, especially after Tipaimukh has been opened up to the outside world as a result of education, development programmes like IRDP, JRY, EAS, NREGS, better inter-village roads, the construction of National Highway No. 150, etc that offered accessibility to better and faster modes of transportation and communication, more availability of money and easier accessibility to other modern accessories bring about a marked change in the Hmars' perception and understanding of wealth and happiness, especially among the youth. Wealth and happiness, according to many of the older generations was not

necessarily based on money. Rather it was based more towards aspects that were more or less devoid of material assets like money. Ms. Thiengi³⁰, a woman of over 60 from Patpuihmun village, understood wealth and the resultant change as a result of development: *“as the ability and opportunity to live in peace and happiness; to be able to go out of my house without the need to lock it like people used to do when I was a small girl. We never need to lock our houses or fear theft as there were none. Everybody was so self-sufficient and contented that nobody needs to steal. That was real wealth. What is the use of having all the money, television, gas stoves, etc without security and peace of mind? In the past, the people do not have all these but were most happy and contented. People come and say ‘you must do this to live a better and richer life’ but so far, all these have only brought trouble, disunity and corruption. If this is what you call development, then frankly I do not like it at all. Development according to me (and I thought the people who came also meant) is simple - Simplicity, happiness and contentment with what we have along with freedom, security and peace of mind. However, all these aspects have been slowly erased from our society as people have become selfish, power hungry, corrupt and lazy with a rising parasitic tendency among the people as a direct result of our society becoming exposed and introduced to development and other outside elements”* (Source: Fieldwork).

To augment what Ms. Thiengi said on wealth and happiness and the ongoing changes, let us also quote two others who also provided more or less the same

³⁰ Ms. Thiengi (name changed) was one of the most ardent female social leaders, a rare thing because women rarely get involved in social activities as a leader in her time. It was an area considered the place of men only. She is also a champion for the rights of women.

understanding on the subject. When asked the same question asked to Ms. Thiengi, Mr. Lalremsung Ralsun, a middle-aged man from Patpuihmun village answered *“We do not need others to come and develop us. We were much healthier, happy and contented than the so-called educated and economically better people in the cities. For us, people in the hills, the sprout of just a seedling is enough to make us happy as it was directly related to our sweaty but honest works devoid of all the complicacies and complexities of modern living. This is so because our world was small; our perceptions and needs were simple and few and once they were met, we are satisfied. In the past, we do not wait for monthly salaries to be happy but are always happy whether one get salaries or not for we were always filled with joys, happiness and contentment as we are able to always witness the fruits of our labour in the jhum fields and elsewhere. This is the real wealth; the really sustaining wealth that is more lasting and satisfying than all the joys that money, the amenities and knowledge that development has brought among us. We take firewood, timber, seeds, etc from the land itself and look after the land in return”* (Source: Fieldwork).

Mr. Hmingthang³¹, an 80 year old man from Taithu village also observed *“In the past, our women hardly go to the doctor to give birth or go for pregnancy checks. Why, I myself was born in a jhum hut deep in the jungle. I was told my mother gave birth to me while she was weeding. Look at me now. I am healthy or maybe healthier*

³¹ Mr. Hmingthang is an ex-serviceman in the Assam Rifles. After retirement, he got a Hindi teacher job at Taithu Junior High School is still in service. He is one of the few teachers who stay in one's posting place and regularly attend. He is also a Church Elder at the Evangelical Assembly Church, the patriarch of all the other Hmar Churches.

than you! Everything has changed now. We have money but we are not happy anymore. Many times, we go now to our jhum not to smile at the crops but to complain if the crops are not as good as expected or to calculate how much we can earn by selling the crops. All our thoughts are now filled with money and an insatiable love for more”
(Source: Fieldwork).

However, in contrast to the definition and understanding of wealth and happiness among the older generation in Tipaimukh, a member of the younger generation like Mr. Lalneithang³², a 30 year old school teacher of Patpuihmun Junior High School, Patpuihmun village said *“We should also change according to time. According to me, to recognize wealth as only something so outdated as the number of Mithuns or food grains is not only absurd but also simply impractical. Today’s world, especially the economy is ruled by money. Without money, nothing can be done anymore. You need money to buy food, cloths, build houses, run churches, etc. Moreover, a man without money has no influence no matter how educated or qualified. So, how can a person be happy or be called wealthy without money. In olden days that might be possible but not now. Going by the prevalent trend, wealth is nothing but a position determined by one’s financial condition along with material assets. However, on happiness, I am inclined to agree that money cannot buy real and lasting happiness. Nothing can. It only depends on the mentality of a person. The source of happiness may not be the happiness or source for others. I believe happiness lies or is determined more*

³² Mr. Lalneithang is a Graduate and also presently the President of the Hmar Students’ Association, Vangai Joint Headquarters, Tipaimukh.

by spirituality and one's ability to detach from worldly possessions. Many people try to equate 'satisfaction' with happiness but this is not true. Being satisfied does not necessarily mean to be happy. A person can be satisfied but still be unhappy" (Source: Fieldwork). Table 34 shows the changing perception/understanding on wealth and happiness.

Table 34: Changing concept on wealth and happiness.

Age group	No. of respondents	Is wealth based on money?		Is happiness a result of money		Are people happier now?		Is development responsible for the change in concepts of health and happiness?	
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
18- 40	500	Yes	75 %	Yes	50 %	Yes	70 %	Yes	95 %
		No	20 %	No	50 %	No	30 %	No	-
		Can't say	5 %	Can't say	-	Can't say		Can't say	5 %
50 above	500	Yes	30 %	Yes	90 %	Yes	80 %	Yes	99 %
		No	70 %	No	10 %	No	17 %	No	-
		Can't say	-	Can't say	-	Can't say	3 %	Can't say	1 %
Total	1000		100 %		100 %		100 %		100 %

Source: Fieldwork

The above narrations and table clearly demonstrate the changing perceptions on wealth and happiness among the Hmars in Tipaimukh. Economic life of the Hmars in Tipaimukh before the advent of planned development was based more on 'needs' basis due to scarcity or unavailability of options like factory- made products, etc whereas the present Hmar society of Tipaimukh is now more strongly inclined towards 'wants' rather than 'needs' as a result of increase in available options and more accessibility to

things. Consequently, inspite of the various approaches and efforts towards tribal development along with more accessibility to things, the Hmars in this area are in fact a poorer and discounted lot ever than before. This condition is surprising as the most logical and appropriate thing to be seen should be a better, happier, richer and more independent life after so much effort. So, one cannot help but ask “Is something wrong and if yes, when, where and why does something that have been apparently well-planned and implemented coupled with enough funds and manpower possibly go wrong; and what exactly is the level of dependency and impoverisation?” Let us try to find an answer to this query in the following paragraphs.

(c) Self-reliance:

Self-reliance and independence is probably the ideal of all human cultures at all times. However, no cultures have been completely self- reliant or independent even though some extent of self- reliance and independence can be found in every society. Rather, interdependencies within and between communities is what characterise most societies. Nevertheless, the ideal of self- reliance remains to occupy the central point in every society. The Hmar society in Tipaimukh is no exception to this.

The ideal of self-reliance has never been as low as it is now. During one fieldwork interview, Reverend Lalneikhup Sungte, a District Superintendent of The Independent Church of India (ICI) presently posted in Phulpui village, a dependency of Patpuihmun village remarked “*In olden days, we hardly depended on others to do something which we, ourselves can do. We were able to meet almost every of our daily*

needs from the smallest to the biggest. We had our own technology, versatility and creativity that spring from our own vast source of indigenous knowledge system that enables us to create, produce and innovate. However, these capabilities along with our close relationship with nature have been gradually destroyed by the invasion of many external elements as a result of development” (Source: Fieldwork). Reverend Lalneikhup Sungte was unable to give in detail what he meant by ‘external elements’ but going by the prevailing situation, there is no doubt that these external elements include aspects like planned development, the new political system of modern nation state, etc. For instance, during the heydays of IRDP, many villagers said they were told by officials that jhuming have a negative impact on their environment and they should seek alternative means for their livelihood. However, the villagers lament the fact that these officials never provided or educated them on how these alternatives are to be obtained; they were told that they should go for modern accessories and modern education if they are to catch up with the rest of the outside world; telling them to let go of their traditional and customary laws and administration and instead follow the ‘modern’ and ‘democratic’ systems without however teaching them on the pros and cons of the ideologies on progress, so-called transition from the ‘primitive’ to the ‘modern’ systems,. This has ironically put the Hmars of Tipaimukh in dilemma and confusion. The dilemma and confusion made the people open to exploitation, manipulation and corruption by both government officials and politicians ultimately leading them to their present predicament. The traditional systems has been changed

and sometimes replaced by another form which unfortunately is alien to the people gradually leading the people to lose their old familiar system that led them to become dependent and be patronised whether by members of their own group or by others outside the society. The very concept of *pa le pa* or the desire to maintain a certain degree of self- reliance or independence has been greatly weakened.

Shri. Lalsanglur, the present MLA of Tipaimukh constituency remarked during a speech on the 50th Anniversary of the Hmar Students' Association which was celebrated at Senvon village in November, 2005 "*The people of Tipaimukh have been confused, exploited, spoilt, corrupted and pampered by the government, specifically the politicians, government workers responsible for development projects and also by the Church through its own educational development project based on free and full sponsorship children for their education*". Thus, when asked on why there is a rising dependency among the Hmars of Tipaimukh and who could be the main accused, The Headmaster of Parbung Government High School Mr. Laibatthang, who is also among the few government employee to stay in one's place of posting, said "*If you ask me why, I would say that it is not the Government that spoils us now but it could be the root. It is ourselves who are now corrupt and in the process, destroying each other by inculcating within us the tendency to depend on others for things which one can do oneself*" (Source: Fieldwork). He cemented his argument by providing an illustration of the possible outcome of this type of tendency by telling one Hmar narrative about a Cricket. The story goes thus-

A Cricket sang "*chiriit, chiriit, chiriit*" and danced and danced away the whole summer without working. Winter neared and he became hungry but he has no food as he didn't store any during the summer. At last, having no option, he began to eat himself by starting with his legs. After the legs, then his body and lastly, having nothing more to eat ate his own head.

When asked the same question, Mr. Thluonga, a 68 year old retired teacher of a mission school run by the Independent Church of India, Parbung village said: "*Due to the changing traditional social system by factors foreign to the society, the collectivistic nature, altruism and other forms of social sharing and caring began to wane. Community maintained forest, locally initiated development projects like water tanks, canals, inter-village road repairing done regularly by the community ceased. Unless, some development funds came, people hardly come together in attempts to develop the village; nobody cared for each other anymore. Community resources like forests, lands, animals which were hitherto communally cared for and utilized accordingly by the whole village are now gradually destroyed and depleted due to careless and selfish use/manipulation/wasted with no thoughts for others and tomorrow.*

"The whole situation is one of unsustainability from sustainable ways of living. Now nobody has anybody and we are left with very few resources. Famines are now frequent. The number of thieves is now increasing. In olden days, we never locked our houses even when we went out of the house. Nobody work like we used to do anymore. Why should not there be hunger and poverty when even a family of ten members

cultivate a jhum where only one tin full of rice can be sown? In olden days, even a family of only three sowed or cultivated a jhum big enough to sow ten tins full of rice. We had no problems clearing, weeding and harvesting, because everyone joined in and helped each other one after the other. It is not a depletion of land areas (as many tend to say) that we are doing less work, clear less area for Jhums, rather it is the dependency syndrome, because of all the aids and funds we get from the Government and NGOs for our development that sowed among the people a taste for easy money and corruption. To say our land area is not enough to feed us anymore no matter how much we work is just an idle excuse. Tipaimukh's population has been more or less constant, not because of high birth-rate but because of the high rate of migration out of the area to towns and cities. Our depletion in resources especially on flora and fauna is our own doing. We have nobody to blame but ourselves. It is our growing lack of consciousness about our cultural and traditional values and corruption of our characters by ideas and practices not of our own and many of them not applicable to our settings. If we can somehow regain our old values and knowledge systems, our lands are more than enough to still feed us and our resources and also be renewed/regained after a short while through conscientious and sustainable practice as was done in the old days. Our attachment with our environment needs to be renewed. We must leave this refugee tendency. Unless we somehow bring renewed awareness, revitalize the old values of sharing, caring and altruistic consciousness, we'll be left

with nothing and eventually rendered to a state where we will be left with no options but to also eat our own head like the Cricket" (Source: Fieldwork).

Going by the above statements, the traditional system of community collaboration in certain activities like agriculture has been completely destroyed in most cases under the impact of development. Concomitantly, the logic for the traditional control mechanism has disappeared and the state cannot replace it. This is visible in increased corruption, dependency and theft. The words of Mr. Rama, a 70 plus villager from Parbung village succinctly summed up what the others have been trying to convey. According him, *"We now have our solar panels, our graduates and matriculates, officers, television sets, schools, tin roofs, etc. We are thankful for all these. However, I cannot help but admit the fact that there is also a very serious side-effect to this development. We are now so dependent on others and things not our own that it has brought upon us many unwanted elements. Foremost among them could be our loss of self-sufficiency on simple but important things for daily use. In the past, even I can recall that we were able to produce almost everything we needed. We were happy and content not because of having lot of money or other modern amenities, but by being able to stand on our own two feet, looking after ourselves and always able to witness the fruits of our labour while at the same time keeping in mind the values and way passed and taught to us by our ancestors and forefathers. But now, look at us. We are no more content with what we have but instead go after things that are way beyond our level of understanding and standards; we are now trying to fleece others of what they*

have rather than try to help or assist. I frankly do not know what is happening to us anymore. By becoming like this, we have clearly lost our self-reliance along with our self-respect. Where is the pride that enables us to hold our heads high?" (Source: Fieldwork).

The above statement, while succinctly summing up what has been said so far, also add another very important element in the issue of self-reliance to development and that is 'self-respect' and 'dignity' which are crucial for continued community cohesion and self-reliance. Development, in contrary to the vision of development planners of raising or retainin the self-respect and dignity of people, have rather resulted in the loss of these aspects crucial to building confidence and capacities among the people. When the people lost these, then it invariably led to the loss for the will to sincerely carry on their works in order to develop and also *loss of a sense of ownership* for any development schemes carried out among them. Loss of a sense of ownership have been also adversely affecting, not only development projects in the area, but even the land itself. People like Rama now lacks confidence and dignity in themselves that they feel they will be unable to survive by themselves without the help of others. Their very vitality have been lost due to lack of confidence and loss of dignity and pride that were one of the main driving forces behind their survival and development. This loss of the ideal of self-confidence, self-respect and dignity has been actually one of the main obstacle on the path of development is be the loss of the ideal of.

Mr. L. B. Sinate³³, remarked during an interview *“The problem with the people of Tipaimukh is that many of them have become so used to easy money and accustomed to being helped from outside due to all the development programmes and schemes carried out by the government and non-government agencies like the Church that even if you give them passion fruit seeds or saplings to them free of cost for cultivation, they still ask money to help them plant and cultivate it. Moreover, they do not even try to seriously look after the crop and let fruits rot instead of trying to make a living out of them. Their excuses are numerous. They complain about the lack of market and buyers, about the cost of cultivating them, etc. However, if they had properly taken care of the crop, market will automatically come into existence. People will just come to buy it. Markets cannot be made unless there is the product, to help create it. A parasitic tendency has taken over the people”* (Source: Fieldwork). Mr. Zoliensang Zote, an ex-Serviceman from Rawvakawt, a village in Tipaimukh when interviewed about his view on this remark of L. B. Sinate answered *“We do not want to depend on others for our livelihood. Many of us are ashamed of what we have become; of how dependent we have become on others to live our lives. But what can we do? We are already in this too deep. There is now no way for us to undo what has been done. To revert to the old ways is now already a thing not only absurd but impracticable. We are now compelled out of*

³³ Mr. L. B. Sinate a retired Indian Administrative Officer from Senvon village and is the founder of Passion Food Grower’s Association (PFGA). The aim of the organisation is providing Passion fruit seeds and saplings to villagers in Tipaimukh and other Hmar inhabited areas of Churachandpur district with the aim of providing an alternative means of livelihood apart from Jhuming

necessity to learn and live with it no matter how much we hate to be dependent”

(Source: Fieldwork).

Consequently, instead of progressing and catching up with the mainstream, they are filled with a dependency syndrome that also invariably results in the loss of confidence amounting to hyper inferiority complex coupled with a general feeling of incapability when it comes to facing things outside their villages or areas. In short, their fear of the unknown has been magnified due to lack of confidence nurtured by the loss of dignity and self-respect along with other changes in their socio-cultural life by modern ways of living. The opposition here invariably lies between the Modern State concept of a collectivistic and patronising development programmes and the concept of a dignified individual in Hmar culture that many times is stronger than even territory.

Nevertheless, inspite of Tipaimukh area reeling under an acute dependency syndrome, it was found that Thingkal village, considered the remotest and least developed has somehow been successful in maintaining a certain degree of self-reliance in food and other needs. As this was a subject of considerable interest and importance, special attention was given to Thingkal village. A breakthrough in the investigation was met when, during the course of an interview; a leader of the Thingkal Unit of the Hmar Youth Association by the name of Mr. Chalremsung Hrangate spoke about how Thingkal village have been able to sustain its self-reliance. According to him, their self-reliance is simply based on their concept of progress or '*Hmasawmna*'. He said "*Hmasawmna, according to the old people of the village is nothing but a positive and*

successful hybridization of other cultures into one's own culture without endangering one's present societal set-up. 'Hmasawwnna' is, first and foremost, therefore a development of one's own thoughts, mentality and perception on what is good and what is not. Development can either be negative or positive. In the old days, our fathers have no definition for the word 'development' but did have the word for both 'progress' which is 'Hmasawwnna' and 'civilized' which is 'Changkang'. This is what we believe and try to maintain in our village. Thingkal people are more fortunate than others because we are deprived of most of the development funds, thus saving us from many evils that development funds and schemes bring with them. I think we are much happier. Even the youths are all alcohol and drugs free. This is the difference you will find in our village when compared to others. Now, if we are to be developed, I would say we are already developed in our own way. That original capacity in the other villages is however destroyed or weakened by a new type of development which is not at all the progress that we know but a type of development that is more materialistic. Money and materials, according to me disconnects individuals in a society. Why, after all these new developments, even villagers almost do not know each other anymore. In the name of being modern or civilized, people started erecting tall fences around their houses, new sights in many of our villages. Tall fences imply the need or stress on privacy. This is the divide and when people are divided, they do not work or think together anymore thus leading to the gradual disintegration of social bonds. In the old days, people never fenced off their house except maybe the garden where they grow crops for the house's

immediate needs. A village with no fencings around houses enables more openness and a sense of oneness among the villagers. The recent trend of building fencings around the houses in the other villages is a sign of disconnection between members of the village” (Source: Fieldwork).

So, looking at the statement of Mr. Chalremsung, it appears that the relative self-reliance of Thingkal village on certain things like food, etc is on the remoteness that partially isolates them from other villages thereby minimising the degree of unwanted elements filtering in into the village. It is not to say that Thingkal is free from all problems but the fact remains that the factors mentioned somehow enabled them to retain and sustain the traditional values and practices more successfully than others. Mr. Remsung, a village elder from Patpuihmun village answered when asked on the reason behind Thingkal’s relative self-sufficiency in comparison to the other two villages studied *“They are hard working people and need to work hard anyway as their situation compels them to do so. They know full well that many of the development funds and schemes will not reach them and also due to the fact that their village is least developed land or water (Barak) transport than any other villages of Tipaimukh, they need to try to be self-sufficient as they have no other option. This lack of options enabled and strengthened the traditional self-reliant capabilities and also offers protection against unwanted elements as people or things hardly visited their village due to its remoteness”* (Source: Fieldwork). This statement follows that traditionally available options and capabilities, when applied or perceived from a solely modern yardstick or

concept, are weakened thereby leading to such situations like loss of self-reliance. Complete isolation of a people or complete disregard of modern concepts of development may not be the best option but, for the Hmars of Tipaimukh and their development process, a careful study of the Thingkal example may be needed to correct the imbalances thus providing a much needed alternative solution to the vexed issue of self-reliance and dependency.

7. Hmar Women

The traditional Hmar society is patriarchal and the father is the head of the family. The father is mostly responsible for inter-clan and community relations. By custom and convention, a Hmar women had no inheritance rights or share in the property of her father unlike the male child. The Hmar women had no freedom to choose her future partner, which was entirely in the hands of her parents. For instance, the bias against women in Hmar customary laws is amply highlighted by the specific penalties prescribed for women who committed adultery either while the husband is alive or even after the death of the husband. If she committed adultery while her husband is alive, the whole of the bride-price paid had to be returned to her husband. The husband is also entitled to retain his wife's *mosawm*. If she committed adultery after her husband's death while living in her husband's house, she had to compulsorily perform three ceremonies, which were *thlaichhiah*, *thlahuol*, and *mithi bu pek*.

Thlaichhiah is a sacrificial ceremony for a dead husband, which originated from the belief that the spirit of the animal slain will become the husband's property in

Mithikhuo or *Pielral*. Another inseparable ceremony is the *thlahual*, which was performed in general for those grieving too much over their beloved ones in order to prevent their soul (*thla*) from following the spirit of the deceased. But in this particular context, the women's unfaithful behaviour is believed to have disturbed her husband's spirit and the ceremony was usually performed in order to quieten her husband's spirit. It is a kind of expression of deep anguish over her immoral act. When this ceremony was performed, the woman had to remain at her father's house for at least three months.

During this period, she was to perform daily, another sacrificed called *mithi chaw pek* – a ceremony of putting aside a part of the food which the woman was to eat at each meal for her dead husband. But the question here is: what happened to the man with whom she committed the act of adultery? Hmar custom is completely silent on this. Divorce is also very easy for the man. One had to simply say to his wife “*I divorce you*”. Of course there were several ways of divorce in traditional Hmar society³⁴ (by simply returning the bride-price, by mutual agreement, etc). When divorced, a woman cannot claim ownership of the children unless she agrees not to remarry again and remain single with her child. If, at a later stage she remarries, then her child will be taken away from her by the husband's family. On the other hand, with regard to the position and responsibility of a man, he is free from all these responsibilities that a Hmar woman need to carry out or observe. As far as a woman's right to justice is

³⁴ The rules and procedures of this negotiation and its implementation are based on ‘Hmar Hnam Dan’ or ‘Hmar Tribe Law’ guidelines prepared by the Hmar Youth Association (HYA), a social organisation that is responsible and the sole authority in matters of customary laws and their practices.

concerned, the only law that can apply to a man (both bachelor and married) is when he illegitimately impregnate a girl, he is required to pay a certain price³⁵ called *Sawn-nau man* whether he takes the child or not. The amount or value of the price to be paid depends on how the clansmen from both sides negotiate. If the negotiation did not go well and that the girl's clansmen are displeased, they can fix any price and the boy's family is required to pay them.

However, inspite of Hmar women being sidelined, deprived of many rights and marginalised by the traditional system, this does not mean that Hmar women in traditional Hmar society were just passive members of the society. In fact, the whole social system, starting from the household cannot be run or maintained without the active participation of the women as is evident from traditional religious beliefs where a female deity called '*Khuonu*' is the most popular; folktales like *Sakhilawngdar* (where the wife *Sakhilawngdar* acts as the chief advisor for her husband *Riengtepa* who succeeded in outwitting a powerful *vai* king many times) and *Paruolpasari* (where a girl gave birth to a divine being who was to rescue the whole family/ clan from captivity and death); agriculture practices where it is the women who acts as the keeper of the seeds to be planted in the jhums; the socialisation process where it is the women who are the actual keeper of tradition and imparting traditional values and knowledge to the children, within the household, etc. There are also many instances where Hmar women

³⁵ In the past, the price was paid or fixed mostly in kinds. However, these days it is in cash amounting from Rs. 20, 000 and above. The rules and procedures of this negotiation and its implementation are called '*Hmar Hnam Dan*' or 'Hmar Tribe Law' guidelines prepared by the Hmar Youth Association (HYA), a social organisation that is responsible and the sole authority in matters of customary laws and their practices.

are far more important in maintaining inter-clan relations and diffusing many volatile situations. Regardless of these importance, the role and importance of women in traditional Hmar patriarchal society is, more often than not, left unacknowledged, unsung and marginalised through socially induced perceptions of women maintained by the male dominated society like (1) *the wisdom of women does not extend beyond the banks of a river*; (2) *A women (wife) and old fencing can be replaced any time*; (3) *Let women and dogs bark as they like*; (4) *Women and crabs have no religion*; etc.

Thus, keeping in view the status of women in traditional Hmar society as highlighted above, this study attempt to see how far and to what extent their status has been affected by planned development in the area. We shall divide the findings of the study into two sections. The first section is “Hmar women in the planned development period” while the second will be on the “Hmar women movements for emancipation as a result of planned development”.

Hmar women in the planned development period

Traditional norms and beliefs were instrumental in placing women in a subordinate and inferior position in the family and society that result in their economic dependence and non-participation in the decision making. Even in times of marriage, there is a clear manipulation and subordination of women for the sake of tradition. Especially in matter of inheritance, women have no right. Thus, in cases where a man does not have any male issues, a daughter is encouraged to marry someone who will be willing to stay in the girl’s house as *makpa sungkhum* and not set up a new home so that the girl can

indirectly inherit through her husband. If this is not possible, the whole ancestral property is passed on to the nearest male kin alive. However, in opposition to the traditional practice of male inheritance, there have been some instances where women are able to inherit ancestral property after the introduction of such administrative reforms in Manipur like Manipur Land Revenue (MLR) and Land Reform (LR) Act, 1960 coupled with growing awareness on women's legal rights among Hmar women. The case of Ms. Lalthakhawl clearly illustrates that the strict patrilineal rule of inheritance is slowly but surely changing.

Case 1:

When her husband died without any male issue in 2002, Ms. Lalthakhawl distributed all the ancestral properties to her daughters. This story was however not without opposition and she faced a lot of objection from the relatives of her husband. However, as Ms. Lalthakhawl was educated and also had knowledge of the legal rights women have, she decided to distribute her property among her daughters since the property is in her name under the MLR & LR Act, 1960. Helped both by the government act and by the Hmar women's organisations like the Hmar *Nupui Inzawmkhawm Pawl* (HNIP) and Hmar Women's Association (HWA), she was able to let her daughters inherit her husband's properties without having to pass it on to the nearest male kin.

The case of Ms. Lalthakhawl clearly demonstrates the central role of education bringing about awareness among Hmar women on their rights. In the not so distant past, Hmar parents refused to send their daughters to school, saying "who would work in the

house if the girls were sent to school?” A group of Hmar men even told one government official that they did not want to have their girls educated, because women and girls were destined to do household works. Furthermore, based on the old Hmar saying “*nuhmei var in tui ral a kai nawh*” meaning “a woman’s wisdom does not even cross the river”, they argued that there was no point in bothering about their education. Despite this opposition, Hmar girls began to come out and get education, pursue professional careers like child care, home nursing, cooking, knitting, etc as a result of which there was a great difference in the facial expressions and outlook of educated women and those of uneducated women. With the coming of modern education and other planned development programmes in the area by the government, Church and other Civil Society groups like Hmar Students’ Association, etc, many Hmar women, who were hitherto cooped up in the house began to move out of their homes to get education within and without. The value system also underwent sweeping changes. Traditional value systems were slowly replaced by modern and western value systems, mostly strongest in the bigger village like Parbung and Patpuihmun while in smaller villages like Thingkal, the impact is not so pronounced. Especially during the last two decades, the position of Hmar women has seen some changes in education, employment, etc.

Women’s Movements

With empowerment of women becoming one of the important development issues, development programmes are carried out with an aim to also accelerate social and

policy reforms regarding the status of women. It is also theorized that social and economic changes combined with modernization should help a women overcome many of the social barriers engrained in the patriarchal culture of Hmar society. However, due to the failures of development programmes to effectively address the needs of Hmar women in Tipaimukh and the continuing discrimination of women in Hmar society, Hmar women have recently formed the *Hmar Nupui Inzawmkhawm Pawl* (HNIP) and its counterpart *Hmar Women's Association* (HWA) to spearhead the movement for the overall emancipating and welfare of women in Hmar society like eradication of increased commercialization of the bride-price, sexual exploitation of women of any kind and inequality between men and women. At the same time, it has also taken measure to uphold women's values and rights; to promote and bring about a cosmopolitan outlook to women in general through various activities like seminars, workshop and conferences; to impart instruction to rural women through demonstrations and lectures; to serve as a channel of communication for the protection of women's interests; to sensitize women for eradication of social evils, economic exploitation and cheap commercialism concerning women; to encourage women's participation in public life including politics; to promote women's education and to take up their mental and moral welfare; and to raise funds through donation, subscription, fees and other contributions from the members of the association, general public and financial institutions including government. All these efforts are attempts to address

both the 'practical gender needs' and 'strategic gender needs'³⁶ of Hmar women in Tipaimukh. On the success of such women's organisation, Ms. D. Vari, a prominent Hmar women leader remarked during an interview in 2007 *"Thanks to the two frontal women's organizations, Hmar women today have a better place in society. Marriage is now a matter in which our opinion is first sought. Exploitation in the name of sex has greatly decreased. Unlike in the past, social stigma on widows or divorced women has disappeared. Today a Hmar woman plays a very significant role in all walks of life. A visit to market places reveals that almost all shops are run by women with their neat, tip-top dresses and stylish hairdo like those of the "Bold and the Beautiful". The picture is no different when one goes to offices or educational institutions, which usually employ fewer women than men. Socially and economically, a woman has now an honoured placed in today's Hmar society. A Hmar woman is now relatively free and independent as compared to her position in the society a few decades back. She has now a due share in her parental or ancestral property and is even entitled to inherit her father's property. It can be observed that this changing status of women has been one of the most important and crucial impact of development programmes like education"*.

Nevertheless, inspite of several developments on many fronts like education and competence as civil officers both in the state and central services coupled with the various attempts at emancipation and empowerment of Hmar women in Tipaimukh, their role in the society is yet to assume noticeable significance. Discrimination and

³⁶ See Caroline Moser, *Gender Planning and Development: Theory, Practice and Training*, Routledge, London, 1993.

prejudices against women opting for higher studies still prevails in Tipaimukh. It was found during the study that in Parbung village, only 1 out of 10 educated women continue education after graduation (In Patpuihmun village, 1 out of 10, and Thingkal village nil). Some reasons for this discrimination are actually based or have their roots in tradition. Concepts and perceptions against women like *the wisdom of women does not cross even the other side of a river bank* and therefore of no use to send them for higher studies; that educated women will become too independent and look down upon the men; that spending money on women is considered by some as a loss as they are eventually to get married and taken care of by their husbands anyway, etc still prevails. Ms. Lalthangzo Songate, the first Hmar woman to be selected for Indian Economic Service (IES) said “*Yes. The position and status of women in the Hmar society has seen marked improvements. We can now see women doctorate holders like Ms. Ruolkhumzo, women bureaucrats, women politicians like Ms. Lawmi, women evangelists like Ms. Zosangkim, women social workers like Ms. D. Vari, women lecturers in Universities, government employees, research scholars, etc. Discrimination against women getting basic and formal education is becoming fewer inspite of some prejudices still there against women going for higher education, especially at the M. A., M. Phil or Doctorate levels*” (Source: Fieldwork).

Thus, while modern education, democratization and empowerment³⁷ through planned development and legislative reforms enabled overcome the many problems that

³⁷ Two mechanisms may be considered in this regard: increased proportional representation of women in all elected bodies and fixation of a certain quota of offices therein; and increase of political activity by

still exist for the Hmar women of Tipaimukh, such increased empowerment through planned development or legislative reforms, even though important, appears to be not enough. While empowerment of Hmar women through modern education, planned development and legislative reforms provide Hmar women an avenue through which she can continue her long journey towards total emancipation, it is also necessary to carefully adjust the traditional perception of women with the modern perception on women through gradual gender sensitisation and then establish equilibrium between the two that is acceptable to the male and female groups. This is so because many planned development and legislative reform that seeks to empower and improve the status of women in Tipaimukh has often directly and tactlessly attacked the patriarchal tradition of the Hmars of Tipaimukh. This has led to stiff opposition from the highly patriarchal male- dominated Hmar society supported by the Church - an opposition which is in turn opposed by the women groups thus continuing to sow seeds of conflict. Such opposition is however silenced as most planned development and legislative reforms often touch only the empirical aspect while leaving untouched the deep-rooted traditional values and perceptions as regard to women. As long as these traditional perceptions and value system on women are still fundamentally left untouched and remains strong, empowerment of women is still a far cry with the dominance of the males remaining strong and the decision or authority to either accept or reject any development initiatives still fully rest on the men and not the women.

autonomous women's bodies. Then, and only then, can she be counted among the policy-making and implementing elite of all development programmes or process and can also ultimately play a decisive role in enhancing her own status in society.

CHAPTER V

FACTORS FOR THE FAILURE AND SUCCESS OF DEVELOPMENT

PROGRAMMES IN TIPAIMUKH

The history of India's planned development is a history of trials and errors since the first five year plans till date. Even after more than fifty years of planning, the country's planned development is still sadly beset with many problems. This makes the results very varied with more failure than the much sought- after successes, no matter how much theoretical or structural changes; no matter how much money has been pumped in into this development undertaking or no matter how many development programmes with different approaches, objectives and funding has been implemented in the country. In this respect, it is of utmost importance to make an attempt to study what ails the development programmes that have been so devoid of successes even though they are apparently done with a good intention. With Tipaimukh sub-division as the subject of this study, this chapter will make an attempt to explore both the pros and cons of development programmes being implemented in the area for the development of the people in the hope of bringing out the lacuna of the problems faced and experienced do far.

Discussions were held during the course of the study at several levels - the members of the beneficiary households, government officials both at the block and district level (DRDA) and the officials of leading institution - at several points of time to identify the major problems that have arisen in the implementation of the development programmes in the area. Sufficient cross checks before arriving at a

conclusion and in presenting the views of the concerned people in tabular form. It will be wrong to say that development programmes in Tipaimukh did not meet any success. It does have its bright side. However, the situation is different when we take the all Manipur development performance and compare it with the few accurate and reliable data that were obtained in Parbung, Patpuihmun and Thingkal village as a base for the whole of Tipaimukh. For instance, after careful study of the data obtained from Parbung, it was observed that the real benefactors are those with connections or the local village leaders who have powers or influence. The condition or the quality of life of the common people has been largely left unaffected as far as being beneficiaries of the various programmes are concerned. For instance, inspite of the success of JRY in Manipur from the year 1995 to 1999, the performance of JRY in Tipaimukh during these periods appear to be low as compared to other areas of Manipur although officially lakhs of rupees have been spent. In the following paragraphs, attempt has been made to identify the reasons for the poor performance of development programmes in Tipaimukh sub- division.

Factors for the Failure

Awareness of the programme-Beneficiary Perception:

Since most of the rural population has little capacity to understand the intricacies of tribal development programmes as well as their possible benefits available, they should be informed of the details and be motivated to participate in the schemes. However, such information dissemination to make the people aware of development schemes and

programmes was hardly done in Tipaimukh. The case of Mr. Rama, a villager from Parbung and Mr. Darropieng, a villager from Patpuihmun clearly demonstrates this lack of awareness with regard to development schemes.

Case 2:

Mr. Rama was a recipient of a certain development scheme in 1984 during which he received Rs. 800 from the village authorities without any prior information and on how he was to utilise the money as he was neither consulted nor made aware of the scheme. When he asked the village authorities further about the details of the scheme, he was told that he should not ask questions and just be glad that he was selected to be a beneficiary. Fearing withdrawal of the money by the village authorities, he stopped asking questions. However, at a loss on what to do, he decided to buy four pigs with the money and out of which he sold two and donated the rest to the Church for Christmas feast. Till today, he still has no idea from what scheme or how he was selected to be a beneficiary and so regarded it as a stroke of luck.

Case 3:

Mr. Darropieng wanted to open a small grocery shop. To do this he decided to apply for a grocery scheme under IRDP during 1985. He went to the Block Development Officer's (BDO) office in Parbung village to get some information about the availability of such schemes under IRDP. Once there, he was told that plans for identification and selection of beneficiaries for schemes under IRDP were only about to start and that villagers will be duly notified about it. With the information, he came back to

Patpuihmun and waited for the announcement. However, after three months, he was shocked and very disappointed to get the news that some people in the village has already received money for several schemes under IRDP and that very few people in the village have any idea about it as no notification or any activities regarding identification and selection of beneficiaries for the schemes were done in the village.

Both case 2 & 3 shows that most villagers are not even aware of any development schemes nor consulted as is supposed to be. The only thing they are aware of is that some money has been received by the village leaders for some development scheme like construction or repairing of the village road, etc. Many times, they do not even know under what schemes money is being disbursed and on how they are supposed to utilise the money. Moreover, without outside help they cannot observe all formalities and follow the procedures in obtaining a scheme, subsidy, bank loan, etc. As a matter of fact, there is nothing wrong, if there is an intermediary such as an extension worker or a village/political leader or social worker, who educates the households with regard to the benefits of the scheme and the procedures to be followed in obtaining bank loan, subsidy etc. If brokers act as middlemen between the beneficiaries on the one hand and official of the bank and development block on the other, various malpractices like misappropriation of subsidy, receiving grace money etc., by the middlemen arise. To know through whom the beneficiaries have come to know of the development programmes, information has been collected from the sample beneficiaries in the study area by way of eliciting answers to questions. The responses can be seen in Table 35.

Table 35: Sources of Information for beneficiaries from Parbung, Patpuihmun and Thingkal villages about the Schemes.

Sl. No.	Source	Number of Sample Beneficiaries
1	Self	07
2	Middlemen	40
3	Friends/Relatives	12
4	NGOs	65
5	MLA/ Village Authorities	8
6	BDO/Other government officials	30
7	No idea	238
Total		400

Source: Fieldwork

It can be seen from the above table that about 62% of the beneficiaries are dependent on outside sources for information regarding the scheme. Local leaders, MPs, MLAs, BDO and other government officials have played a part in educating and motivating to the extent of only about 9.5% out of a total household of 400. Historically, suppression of information to poor people by government officials is the principal reason for exploitation by the middlemen. About 19 beneficiary households (self, friends or relatives) are aware about the scheme because their relatives or friends happen to be members of some organization or institution involved or that they themselves have some connection to information sources as shown in table 20 above. They have come to know of the programme through exchange of information with the other members of the organization/institutions, with friends in the streets or roadside vendors, tea stalls, etc. In the meanwhile, a staggering 238 household out of the total

400 sample beneficiaries have no idea about the schemes or any development beneficiaries.

Identification of Beneficiaries:

Identification of eligible beneficiaries is the first step in the implementation of the any development programme. The guidelines provide that the final selection of families or beneficiary villages should be based on comprehensive household survey to ascertain the income level in a particular village or area. List of poor families should be prepared on the basis of the Antyodaya Principle, so that families with an annual income of less than Rs.3, 500 are assisted first. Beneficiary villages are also selected on the basis of the number of families in a village with an annual income of less than Rs.3.500 and also on the basis of the existence of infrastructural facilities need by the village for its present and future development. It is found that household or village survey was not done in most of cases. As per the Government of India guidelines, Gram Sabhas or in the case of Tipaimukh, the village authority is to be involved in the process of selection of beneficiaries. Such a process seems to be desirable in the sense that it promotes/ensures public scrutiny of the selection made by government officials and banks. Unfortunately, these guidelines are more or less absent in Tipaimukh (see Case 2 & 3). This is true for many development programmes like IRDP. When the guidelines laid down for it are not followed strictly, political influence start playing a vital role in the selection of beneficiaries. Table 36 shows how beneficiaries are selected.

Table 36: Selection of Beneficiaries from Parbung, Patpuihmun and Thingkal villages (Sample Beneficiaries).

Sl. No.	Procedure followed	No. of Sample Beneficiaries
1.	Household survey carried out:	
	(a) Carried out (b) Not carried out	42 358
2.	Methods of selection:	
	(a) Selected through public meetings called by the village authorities or headman	10
	(b) Selected through block or other government officials	156
	(c) Self effort	07
	(d) Selected by others (relatives, local politicians, etc)	227
3.	Display of list of Beneficiaries list:	
	(a) Not displayed at a common place in the village	258
	(b) Not displayed at block office	140
	(c) Displayed at block office and other public places	2

Source: Fieldwork

As mentioned, a thorough household survey needs to be done in every village in order to facilitate accurate identification of eligible beneficiaries for a scheme. However, the situation in Tipaimukh is such that hardly any household survey is carried out for beneficiary identification. 89.5% of sample beneficiaries interviewed admit that no household surveys were done before beneficiary selection. This has led to wrong identification of beneficiaries eventually leading to the failures of development programmes in Tipaimukh.

Secondly, selection of beneficiaries is also another problem in accurate beneficiary identification and selection. Only 2.5% reported that they were selected through public meetings called by the village authority or headman while 56.7% of the respondents reported that they were selected through kinship, political or other connections and another 39% reported that they were selected through block or other government officials thus highlighting the possibility for the existence of high nepotism and discrepancies in beneficiary identification and selection.

Thirdly, as per procedures, the list of selected beneficiaries (individual or groups or a particular village or villages from village cluster) has to be displayed both in the village at a common place and also in the block office. It was reported by 64.5% of the respondents that the list was not displayed at a common place in the villages and another 35% per cent stated that the list was also not displayed in the block office.

Lastly, according to the findings, 0.5% of sample beneficiaries who said that the list are displayed in the Block office and also that the people were properly informed about the selection are past and present local leaders or one who is related to the people who are in control of the village administration. Thus, an honest and impartial administration should not have any serious difficulty in adhering to the requirement of giving transparent information to all those concerned so that maximum public awareness about the development schemes for their village (s) could prevail. Not displaying the list gives rise to the suspicion that there is something wrong in selection of beneficiaries.

Out of 400 sample households taken in Parbung, Patpuihmun and Thingkal village, there are many families well above the poverty line who are engaged in cultivation; lumbering, trading and other lucrative professions apart from several government employees whose annual income crosses Rs. 10, 000. But even all these families identify themselves as poor. In fact, they are the ones who get most of the benefits that reach their villages. The case of Ms. Ramngai from Parbung village can be taken to better illustrate this point.

Case 4:

Ms. Ramngai is a widow with two children of 13 and 15 years of age respectively. She has been identified as Below Poverty Line during the last census carried out by the government in 1981 and has been eking out a living by working on the jhums of other villagers or doing odd jobs around the village. Due to poverty, sending her children to school would have been utterly impossible if not for the Partnership Mission Society scholarship that generously paid for their schoolings. She is also unable to repair the house in which her family lives. The thatched roof of her house is profusely leaking and the house, as a whole, needs repair. Members from her Church helped to repair some parts of the house. They also helped her in applying for a housing scheme under IAY during 1986 hoping it will enable her to change her roof to tin sheet provided under IAY housing scheme. However, when the beneficiary list came out, it was found that while some families already with good houses and well above the poverty line were selected for the housing scheme, she was not selected. As a result, she continued to live

in her broken down house until it was repaired with new roofing through money donated from Church members.

The above case shows that there is no fairness and strict criteria for selection of beneficiaries. One explanation for this slackness in selection and demarcation of beneficiaries is that the government officials and village level workers have no real sense of responsibility and gave away the benefits or select beneficiaries only to those who have influence or due to the reason that they were advised by some powerful individuals or groups both from within and outside. *“As long as the record is straight in the government files, nobody really cares what actually happens”* says one informant from Parbung village.

Formulation of household/village schemes:

After identification, schemes have to be given to them on the basis of resources available, the skills and experience of the family members in a village or of the village itself. Moreover, the families or village shall have the choice in accepting the schemes. However, in actual practice, detailed household or village plans are not prepared for the selected families/village due to non-availability of adequate expertise and manpower. Moreover, the socio-economic and environmental settings of the people were completely ignored leading to confusion and misplacement of familial or village criteria necessary for maximum utilization and maximum positive results from implementation of the schemes.

Obtaining finance, infrastructure and other pre-requisites:

The beneficiaries experienced a number of difficulties in obtaining subsidy and term loans from the financial institutions. The credit camp method as suggested in Tribal Development Programmes like IRDP guidelines was not implemented in the area, with the result that the ignorant and often crude beneficiaries have to visit the bank offices in Churachandpur which is about 200 km from Tipaimukh. Many times, the people have to go there alone or with somebody to help them but in the process losing some working days besides having to spend money for visits; to pay or bribe the helper and the officials so as to speed up the lending process. This kind of bribe is called '*cha thak naba*' which means "for drinking tea" in Manipur. It is also said that many bank officials from whom the loans for the schemes are to be taken also take part of the subsidies from the families on the plea that it is free money that need not be repaid. The case of Mr. Remsung from Patpuihmun village can be taken to better demonstrate what have been said.

Case 5:

In the year 1986, Mr. Remsung was selected under IRDP agricultural scheme. As he was instructed to go to the DRDA office to obtain the sanction order and after that draw out the money at United Bank of India (UBI) in Churachandpur, he went to Churachandpur. It took him two days to reach the place. The first few days were spent in trying to meet the officials at DRDA office in charge of the schemes as they were found to be either too busy or absent. At last in desperation, he gave money to a certain

clerk in the office to help him get the sanction order so that he can go to the bank to withdraw the money. After two days, he was finally issued the sanction order but only after paying some more money to the officer in charge as “*cha thak naba*”. Right after getting the sanction order, he went to the bank and commenced the long process of withdrawal. The whole process, which includes verifications, filling out forms, etc alongwith more “*cha thak naba*” took him three more days. In all it took him two weeks to get everything done during which he spent more than Rs. 4000 which was a lot of money in those days. To add to his woes, the total amount he got for the scheme came to only Rs. 6000 after some ‘required deductions’ by DRDA and bank officials. With already more than Rs. 4000 spent out of Rs. 6000, only about Rs. 1500 was left to him and which, according to him was already too less to do anything. The whole business to him was therefore just a loss of time, energy and money.

Thus, as demonstrated by the above, the delays, losses and various other difficulties faced by beneficiaries de-motivated many people from seeking the schemes in future or properly implementing the schemes even if and when they actually got the money.

Time gap between identification and implementation of the schemes and non-arrival of the funds:

Many schemes could not be immediately implemented due to delays in providing financial assistance to beneficiaries for several reasons which will be discussed below.

The results relating to the time gap between applying for the loan and sanction of the loan as reported by the sample beneficiaries are presented in Table 37.

Table 37: Time Gap between Identification and Implementation of Scheme.

Sl. No.	Time	Respondents in percentage
1.	Up to 4-5 months	22 .0
2.	Up to 6 months	20.5
3.	Up to 7-8 months	50.7
4.	No actual implementation	06.8
		Total: 100.00

Source: Fieldwork

From the above table, it can be seen that there is a long gap between identification of beneficiaries and implementation of scheme. Only 22% answered that implementation of the scheme for which they applied for happened 4–5 months after being identified as beneficiaries; 20.5% after 6 months; 50.7% after 7-8 months while the remaining 06.8% answered that they never received the money and the necessary facilities for actual implementation even though they have been identified as beneficiaries. According to the potential beneficiaries this is due to their inability to go personally to the bank offices or pay a visit to the development officials as they lack money or powerful acquaintances.

Levels at which delays occurred in sanctioning:

The reasons for the delays in sanctioning the amount for the execution of the schemes can be inferred from the table below.

Table 38: Levels at which delays occurred in sanctioning.

Sl. No.	Items	Percentage of beneficiaries reporting
1.	Block level	17.7
2.	DRDA level	18.0
3.	Bank level	19.9
4.	Political interference	20.4
5.	Transport and communication	10.0
6.	No Idea	14.0
		Total: 100.00

Source: Fieldwork

It can be seen in the table above that 17.7% of the respondents blame the block level for the delay in sanctioning while 18.0% and 19.9% blame the DRDA and Bank level respectively for the delay and 20.4% blame political interference. 10% blame transport and communication and the rest - 14.0% are without any plausible explanation for the delays. As per the rules of most development schemes, loans and any financial or non-financial assistance are to be sanctioned within 15-20 days from the date of application unless there are unforeseen or exceptional circumstances that prevent it from being sanctioned.

Distribution & acquisition of assets:

One of the problems besetting the implementation of development programmes in Tipaimukh is the middlemen, especially when it comes to distribution of super-fine rice or other essential commodities. There are many instances where the food grains and other essential commodities meant to be distributed either free or at a subsidized rate by an authorized distributor are siphoned off and sold at a high price to the people in the village. In many instances the authorized distributor is also part of the racket. There are

also many cases where only a quarter of the original quantity of the sanctioned commodity is actually distributed and even that with a price. This can happen because the majority of the people have not been made aware of the schemes by the development officials. They are thus effectively unaware about the scheme and its finer details, for example, regarding sanctions. Sometimes it occurs that the quantity of the commodity sanctioned is not enough to have an impact on the people as a whole, even if properly distributed. It may thus be concluded that lack of transparency in implementation is an important factor to the problem of effective implementation. The case of Mr. Lura from Patpuihmun village is a perfect example of these discrepancies.

Case 6:

As is customary among the Hmars for married sons, except for the youngest, to move out of the ancestral house and establish a new residence, Mr. Lura is in dire need of money to build a new house where his family could shift. This need was accentuated further by the fact that the ancestral house was getting congested. As his parents were unable to help and not in a position to do it himself, he applied for a housing scheme under IAY in 1985 hoping that he will be selected. His hopes were not in vain for he was identified as eligible by the village authorities who were in charge of beneficiary identification in the village. Following this, he was subsequently selected. With high expectations, he waited for the arrival of the housing materials along with the financial package under the scheme. However, in contrary to his high expectations, he was filled with disappointment when only five tin sheets were given to him and that too without

the money that was supposed to come along with the sheets. Unable to do anything, he was compelled to build a small house with what he had and somehow find a way to fit in his big family into the house. Till today, Mr. Lura has nothing but contempt and mistrust for any government development programmes.

The above case demonstrates the existing discrepancies and undependability of many government development programmes. Such cases of discrepancies and undependability on account of distribution of assets have imbibed to the people distrust and sometimes, utter contempt at any development programmes and schemes implemented by the government. This create a big hurdle for the successful implementation of development programmes as the people are mostly unwilling to respond positively and participate to it- the most important pre- requisites for the success of any development programmes. Similarly, for the execution of several schemes, procurement of assets is the pre-requisite. The arrangement for procurement of assets for most development schemes is through government agencies. For different assets, a list of authorized dealers or agents is prepared by the DRDA. The beneficiaries are directed to purchase these assets only from these authorized dealers or agents. To help prevent discrepancies in the disbursement or purchase, a committee is set up but the problem is that the committees are rarely present or are sometimes hand-in-glove with the dealers. There are cases where the committee members themselves take bribes and issue certificates of purchase to the dealers/agents with no actual purchase. There are also reports that sub-standard assets are sold to the beneficiaries at a higher price

than the normal market rate on the basis of quotations and acceptance of the lowest tender by the dealers/agents in collusion with the banks. The beneficiaries fear that they will be disqualified as such if they do not buy the assets from the approved dealers/agents as directed by the DRDA. The procedure for procurement of assets in the study area is presented in the table below.

Table 39: Procedure for Procurement of Assets.

Sl. No.	Item	Respondents in Percentage
1.	Through purchase committee	33.60
2.	Direct purchase	20.61
3.	Through government agencies	25.00
4.	Through private agencies/brokers	16.14
5.	No answer	4.65
		Total: 100.00

Source: Fieldwork

Infrastructural facilities:

Discussions was held with the beneficiaries to ascertain their views with regard to the availability of infrastructural facilities and conclude after close observation and scrutiny that infrastructural network has not been adequately developed to bring all-round development to the villages or the society as a whole especially economically and socially. A defunct Public Distribution System (PDS) in most villages and lack of proper marketing facilities leads to stagnation of the economy as most of the agricultural and other products are left to rot with no place to profitably sell them or that the products are being transported down the Barak river to either Fulertal or Silchar in Assam which is about 300 km from Tipaimukh. To transport the products from the

villages to the Barak river alone is a back-breaking process where the products are manually carried from the forest to the villages and then, if available, horse-carts or broken- down and repaired trucks are used to transport the products from the villages to the Barak river through the treacherous, slippery and pot-holed National Highway No. 150 which has not been repaired for more than 15 years thus costing much energy, time, risks and money. For Patpuihmun and Thingkal villages, even transportation of products from the villages to the Barak River is a far cry as there is no proper road that connect the villages to the Barak or any place where their products can be sold. So, the only option left to them is to transport the heavy loads on their head.

The condition of transport and communication also poses another problem. Many government officials like those of the development agencies, bank officials, police and other security forces to ensure security to the people and the government officials present in Tipaimukh are absent. The excuse offered by these government officials is the lack of proper transport and communication facilities added with the treacherous and often inhospitable environment leading to a security nightmare and physical strain for all those who go in into and out of Tipaimukh be it men or machines.

Diversions and misuse of loans:

Misuse of funds is very common in Tipaimukh. For realizing the benefits of the scheme and to secure incremental income, the beneficiaries have to spend or use the sanctions solely for the purpose for which they are granted. However, many of the beneficiaries use the sanctions for a completely different purpose which has no relation to the main

reasons behind the implementation of the schemes and then hood-wink the any visiting officials by applying several appeasement tactics like bribes, etc. These diversions of development sanctions happened due to several reasons and foremost among them is economic as the funds are being diverted by many beneficiaries to meet the economic exigencies arising out of personal circumstances. In the three village studied, it was found that more than 310 sample beneficiaries out of 400 beneficiary households have misused the sanctions one way or the other and then when it comes to village shares to be utilized for development of the villages, Parbung villagers or the village authority members, and leaders of other local bodies, etc for instance have been diverting at least 20% of the total sanctions from village shares under different schemes for either personal consumption or other vague reasons. About 10 beneficiary households reported that they transferred the sanction to others for repaying past debts (in cash or in kinds) or for family's sake while a staggering 300 beneficiary families admit to have utilized or divert the development sanctions for purposes best known to them as the reasons for this case are many, some are valid while some are merely fictions. To summarize, the main reason for the widespread misuse of the sanctions by beneficiaries is due to the reason that there is hardly any monitoring done by the various government development agencies and government officials on whether the sanctions are utilized appropriately as they themselves are part of the system. For the record, from the data collected through village authority files, BDO's files and others, the only evidence of monitoring solely concerned with studying the implementation of development

programmes in Tipaimukh was done only in 2002 by a Parliamentary Committee for Development.

Unrealistic targets and strategies:

Fixing the development targets and strategies unrealistically is also another reason for the failure of development in Tipaimukh. An example of such unrealistic development target and strategy in Tipaimukh is the implementation of a fishery scheme in Parbung village.

Case 7:

During 1986- 1990, a scheme for reclamation/renovation of ponds and tanks was undertaken by Fish Farmer's Development Agency (FFDA) in Parbung village with grants from the State Government. With the village situated on top of a hill and water very low, one needs to dig more than thirty feet to find water. In the past, when the village had more rains, there was however enough water to fill a small pond with waters from rain and streams that gets filled up during the rainy season. However, these are not viable or dependable enough for any fishery which needs to be regularly fed with water. Moreover, there is no properly functioning water supply system and the only viable water source is a small mountain spring where, in winter time, people need to get up at around 2:00 or 3:00am and await their turns for hours to fill their pots and sometimes need to come back empty-handed as the water in the spring has dried up. As a result, water availability in the village is such that even getting water for just cooking and washing is sometimes very difficult.

As can be seen from the above, due to the unfavourable condition of the area for such a scheme, the fishery scheme in Parbung utterly failed. Likewise, the repeated failures of many development programmes in Tipaimukh in fact is inevitable due to the incidence of such unrealistic targets and strategies commonly taking place as a result of improper planning and implementation in the area.

Political interference, nepotism and favouritism:

As can be seen in tables 35 and 36, about 90% of beneficiaries of any development schemes are either related to or have good relation with the local MLA, related to or have good relation with the authorities, officers or agencies in charge or involved in the schemes. This shows that there is a high level of political interference, nepotism and favouritism in beneficiary selection on grounds of political allegiance, clan, wealth and influence, etc. As a result, accurate identification of beneficiaries and even distribution of development benefits are absent eventually leading to the complete failures of development programmes.

Absence of women participation:

Women are important traditional knowledge bearers, and that without their participation, no society could develop or continue to progress. However, in the case of Tipaimukh, it is observed that there is virtually no participation of women in development processes. Instead of development programmes and funds being utilized for the development, empowerment and emancipation of women among other things, discrimination of women in such development processes is still rampant even though

the need for the involvement of women in any development programmes are categorically laid down. In this respect, the case of the *Hmar Nupui Inzawmkhawm Pawl* (HNIP), Parbung Unit's unsuccessful attempt at increasing women's involvement in decision making, especially in village administration and development programmes implementation in Parbung village is an example.

Case 8:

During 2008, the HNIP unit of Parbung decided to make an attempt at empowerment of women through increased involvement in village administration and development programmes implementation. In view of this decision, HNIP leaders approached the Hmar Inpui and village authority members with a proposal. Among other things, the proposal contained points such as:

- To give to the women, their shares, as per the guidelines of development programmes;
- To include women leaders such as the Chairperson and Secretary of HNIP as ex-officio members of any social or political organisations such as the Hmar Students' Association, Hmar Youth Association, Hmar Inpui, Hmar National Union, etc present in the village;
- Women to be consulted and included in the decision making processes of any development programmes in Tipaimukh.

The proposal was received with much reservation by most and some even consider it as absurd and an attempt to undermine the traditional system by the women.

It became such a hot issue that it led to seminars and debates among the Hmars living in town and cities like Churachandpur, Delhi, etc where the men, with the support of the Church, eventually prevails over the women. However, as a result of that proposal and its outcome, HNIP (in collaboration with HWA) is still at loggerheads with the men but with no progress as yet.

The above case shows that women involvement in the development processes in Tipaimukh is minimal and that their active and full participation is still a far cry. The total absence of their active and direct participation in almost all development processes has led to a lack of enthusiasm, loss of the *sense of ownership* and *responsibility* among the women even for women-specific development schemes like maternity schemes, early childhood care, etc carried out through Anganwadi and Accredited Social Health Activist (ASHA).

Insurgency:

Insurgency in the area is another factor that contributes to the failure of development programmes in the area. According to many people in Tipaimukh, insurgency in the area divides and also creates a kind of fear psychosis among the people while at the same time also discouraging both government and non-government agencies to come to Tipaimukh and carry out development projects.

Assumption of people as passive recipient:

Another factor for the failure of planned development in Tipaimukh is that people are often wrongly perceived as passive recipient rather than active recipient of development

by both government and non- government officials. Thus, it is often the case that people are completely ignorant of what programme is being implemented in their villages and for what purpose. Many times, even beneficiaries do not know what to do with what is being given to them, where it came from or for what purpose. This was especially common with IRDP schemes during the early 1980s. Even the concepts were not explained to them as it is taken for granted that the people will just accept whatever is being given to them. One government official commented *“What is the use of explaining the concepts, source or objectives of development schemes to them as they will not understand. They will accept everything as long as it includes money or something that is free. Moreover, they are too poor and do not have a choice but to accept it as long as it is given for free and done with a good intention”*. This is actually what happens in reality. People are taken for granted that anything or everything given to them will be enthusiastically taken and accepted. However, this is not so as with growing awareness among the people, the people are certainly not passive but rather very active recipients- either negatively or positively as in the end, the failures or success of development ultimately rest on the people.

Tradition versus modernity:

Another factor for the failure of development programmes in Tipaimukh is the assumption held by some Church leaders, politicians and also by some administrators, planners, government officers- both from within and outside the society, responsible for carrying out or in a position to influence the process of development programmes in the

area with regard to tradition and modernity. In spite of the fact that tradition is not opposed to modernity and that the two are rather complimentary to each other, many people in Tipaimukh, notably the Church, politicians and even administrators/development planners often have the opinion that most traditional concepts and practices are outdated and irrational and opposed to modern concepts³⁸. Let us examine the role/ contribution of some of these players in/to the failures of development due to this wrong assumption.

On the Church leaders' side, the opposition of traditional concepts and practices are mostly concentrated on such development initiatives that aims at the promotion of any pre- Christian cultural practices related to religion like *Sikpui ruoi* or Sikpui festival, dances and folksongs that are somehow related to pre- Christian deities, performing dances that have relation to pre-Christian religious festivals, etc. On the other hand, the politicians, apart from their own reasons for opposing some traditional concepts and practices like administration, usually directly or indirectly support them to gain their confidence and loyalty as they know the power of the Church and Church leaders over the people and their importance in election politics. This cause a serious

³⁸ (a) The assumption that modernity and tradition are radically contradictory rest on a misdiagnosis of tradition as it is found in traditional societies, a misapprehension of the relationship between tradition, and modernity and therefore flawed. This exclusion and misdiagnosis of traditional features by modern state concepts often led many planners and administrators to underestimate the modern potentialities of tradition (See *The Modernity of Tradition: Political Development in India* by Lloyd I. Rudolph and Susanne H. Rudolph, 1967)

(b) The connections between various domains in modern nation-state society, with reference drawn from western concepts and ideologies, which make up for democracy and the economic system is very much an expression of typical European cognition. It is therefore often the reality that development planners and political leaders never really understood tribal society with its system that are often more absolute than not instead of understanding it simply as a different culture.

problem to the successful implementation of development programmes as village leaders like the village authority members and, in many cases, even the insurgent groups are either under their control or in league with them for political and financial reasons.

Thus such development initiatives usually fail or meet stiff opposition instigated by the Church. A continuation of such programmes without proper consideration of the prevailing social condition along with the players involved usually results in conflicts³⁹ and more often than not, the ultimate failure of that development programme.

Coming to development planners, it is often the case that development schemes and policies often attack the traditional practices of the people like Jhuming as outdated, unscientific and destructive to the environment. This is, however, vehemently opposed by the people on many grounds. Some of these are:

1. Jhuming is part of their culture, tradition and that this practice gave them their culture and identity. In view of this, ending this practice is tantamount to surrendering their very identity and culture.
2. Secondly, without proper and viable alternatives like increased employment opportunities, letting go of Jhuming will be like committing suicide as this is still the only main source of livelihood and only available occupation to earn a living for majority of the people.

³⁹ See the conflict between the HSA and religious leaders as given in Paragraph 15 under Social Relationship, Chapter 4)

3. Thirdly, this occupation does not do any harm to the environment if properly done and carried out as done by their forefathers. Rather it is such development undertaking like the Tipaimukh dam that is more destructive to the environment and for the people- be it politically, economically or socially⁴⁰.

In view of the above reasons, many development programmes that directly or indirectly attacks any traditional practices without due consideration of the people's sentiments and attachments to that particular tradition usually faced stiff opposition or general indifference from the people and ultimately fails as there are little or no lasting improvements in the life of the people as a result of such programmes.

Factors for the success

1. The presence of transport and communication infrastructure like National Highway No. 150 and inter- village roads is, by far, the most important factor for the success of development programmes in Tipaimukh. They helped to facilitate the implementation of development programmes related to education, health, income and occupation, etc and without which implementation of such programmes in the area would have been greatly hampered.

⁴⁰ The 1500MW Tipaimukh dam proposed by North-Eastern Electric Power Corporation (NEEPCO) in collusion with the Indian government at the confluence of the Barak river and Tuivai river from Mizoram is a source of conflict both within the Hmar community and between communities namely the Zeliang Nagas, the Hmars, the Meeteis, the Paites, the Kukis and the Bengalis. However, the main issue is that the Mizo-Chin-Kuki tribes regard Ruong-le-Vaisuo as a heritage; as a part of their history having physical, cultural and spiritual dimensions and to be deprived of those attachments and identity is a matter of grave concern and anger for many and a greater danger for the people who are living in the area and who will be directly affected by the dam.

2. Less corruption coupled with a more favourable political condition and the absence of insurgency is also another factor for the success of development till the late 1970s. The favourable condition of that time encourage the launch and success of several government development projects like construction of inter village roads, state and National Highway- 150, setting up of government run educational institutions from Grant-in-Aid to High Schools and other government infrastructures. This period has been termed by the people of Tipaimukh as the 'golden period of Tipaimukh'. In fact, most of the existing infrastructure- both government and non- government of Tipaimukh were established/ constructed during this period.

3. Another important factor that facilitated the successful implementation of development programmes in Tipaimukh is the involvement of non- government agencies in the development process. Non-government agencies initiated development projects like setting up of educational institutions, trust funds and scholarship for students, agriculture, brick-making kilns, etc has been an encouragement and, in some cases, pressures upon the government officials to perform or face consequences from some quarters notably the Church, civil society organisations like the Hmar Students' Association, Hmar Youth Association, Hmar Inpui, etc.

4. Collaboration and resource sharing between government and non- government agencies on some development programmes is also another factor for the success of development in Tipaimukh. There has been instances where government agencies and non- government agencies shared resources to implement development schemes. Such

working together and co-operation apart from coercion in some cases have helped to contribute to the success of some development programmes especially in education, sanitation etc.

5. Another important factor for success of development in Tipaimukh is on cases where certain concepts of the state and the Hmars match in certain fields like, for instance, the rise of a very powerful and influential organization called Hmar Youth Association (HYA) as another mechanism through which the traditional *val-upa* or “youth elder” can exert control over the youths even after the absence of the traditional dormitory (*buonzawl*) system.

6. Most development programmes in Tipaimukh fail to accurately meet the needs of the people sometimes leading to violence, apathy or withdrawal of the people which result in rejection of programmes by the people. In such cases, we find failures. However, in spite of most development programmes failing, there are nonetheless some government development undertakings like JRY and EAS implemented in Tipaimukh that meet, at least to some extent, the needs of the people infrastructures like roads, employment, additional income, etc. In such cases, there is positive response and relative success.

Thus, the factors for the failure and success of development in Tipaimukh sub-division, whether analyzed statistically or non-statistically, clearly shows that the problems of development in Tipaimukh sub-division are diverse and encompass all the socio-cultural, socio-economic, socio-political and geographical dimensions. This therefore brings to the fore the importance of thoroughly understanding and recognising

the role of not only the economic dimension of development but also the role of the social, political, cultural and geographical dimensions in shaping or influencing the outcome of any development programmes through a holistic approach.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

The present study revealed that there are perceptible differences in the level of impacts of development and corresponding changes between Thingkal on the one hand and Parbung and Patpuihmun on the other hand. When data from the three villages studied were analysed and compared, these differences were found to be influenced by the proximity of the villages to roads and other communication facilities, presence of development infrastructures, amount of development that enter the village, etc. For instance, in Parbung and Patpuihmun village, the level of acceptance and the substitution of local perceptions and categories for modern perceptions and categories of development are high, especially on aspects like dress, income, diversification of occupation, education, health, transportation and communication, modern accessories like television, DVD players, etc. However, this analysis became dotted with questions and doubts on whether such achievement really enabled or afford the people a better quality of life, standard of living, levels of aspiration, happiness etc especially when the traditional knowledge systems are taken into account. These two villages are the worst affected when it comes to increased materialism; rivalries and competitions among the people in dress, food, houses and money; social conflicts and breaking down of relationships; corruption; economic dependency; drugs and alcohol abuses; decline in traditional values like altruism; environmental degradation and loss of traditional knowledge like ethno-medicine, arts and crafts. The two villages have also seen the

highest increase in a dependency syndrome that, in the past, was considered a shame.⁴¹ With the concept of individual autonomy or self-reliance not as strong as it was before, people from these villages have no more qualms on being patronized or assisted even for things that the people can do themselves.

On the other hand, looking at the development level of Thingkal village from the modern perspective and categories, it can be said that Thingkal is the least developed with absence of development infrastructure like roads, lowest educational status, lowest employment level, etc. However, looking at it from another perspective, people from Thingkal have somehow been successful in maintaining a certain degree of self-reliance in food, natural resources and other needs, almost total absence of drugs and alcohol abuses when compared to the other two villages studied.

Nevertheless, in spite of the level of difference in development and acceptance of modern development programmes in the three villages studied, one thing is visible everywhere in Tipaimukh- the traditional system is adapting or trying to adapt itself to match modernity. The present Hmar society of Tipaimukh is constantly facing challenges to accommodate the contesting values generated from their tradition on the one hand and rapid modernization as a result of development processes on the other hand. Notwithstanding some successful adaptation and transition (e.g., the successful substitution of the traditional *buonzawl* by the *val-upa* institution), such process of adaptation and transition often disturbs the original equilibrium of the society leading

⁴¹ As the traditional and modern views on social relationships differ, the level and type of interdependencies also differ. What is not a shame for the modern state is a shame traditionally.

the entire tribe to search for a new equilibrium between original traditional ideals and new concepts of development and practices resulting in haphazard confusion between tradition and modernity; breaking up of the original equilibrium and encouraging the emergence of elements like corruption, materialism, dependency and strife that has led to disintegration rather than integration within the society. The stiff opposition of a section of the people of Tipaimukh over the proposed Tipaimukh dam on the confluence of the Tuivai river and the Barak river locally called *Ruong- le- Vaisuo* that will submerge many areas and sites considered sacred by the people apart from the possibility of affecting the people's main occupation - jhuming and the acceptance of the dam by another section of the people who believe that the dam will bring development in the area is one of the various examples of the prevailing confusion between tradition and modernity among the Hmars of Tipaimukh. In yet another instance of the confusion, planned development under the banner of democracy has attacked the patriarchal tradition of the Hmars of Tipaimukh leading to opposition and rejection of such attempts by the men and, to an extent by the Church. This opposition and rejection is challenged by women groups like the *Hmar Nupui Inzawmkhawm Pawl* (HNIP) and Hmar Women's Association (HWA) resulting in a power battle between male and female groups. Since no group or class is able to dominate all other groups (because of checks and balances built into a democratic system of governance), a 'plurality' of competing interest groups, political parties and so forth is seen to characterize the present Hmar society of Tipaimukh.

The study also revealed that inspite of more than half a century of planned development in India, development programmes have not directly had an impact on the life of the Hmar of Tipaimukh in most cases as desired but only help to indirectly trigger changes and to hasten the process of changes that have been going on even before the advent of planned development in the area brought about by forces which are external to the system as well as by forces which are internally present within the system.

While many development programmes in Tipaimukh are often based on the belief that culture can be changed from the outside by means of materially and financially induced development interventions, material enhancement, etc, this concept often relegates to the side many traditional values and concepts on '*changkangna*' (development) or '*hmasawna*' (progress), inter-dependency and solidarity (e.g., the concept of *hnathlang* where people of the village come together to help a person or for the village as whole), non-monetised concept of wealth, obligations and counter-obligations (e.g., the concept of *inlawm* where a person help another so as to be help by the other another day in return for the help rendered thus protecting the dignity of both the giver and receiver of the help), '*tlawmngaina*' (altruism), etc that are often the bases for solidarity and equilibrium within the society⁴².

⁴² This particular analysis is not intended as an attempt to romanticize the past but is rather an attempt to point out that there is still a misunderstanding of tradition as opposed to modernity by some people, administrator, planners, etc and thereby missing the fact that some elements of tradition may actually fit a model of modernity.

The relegation of many traditional values, concepts and practices as a result of the wrong assumption of modernity as radically opposed to tradition still maintained by some Church leaders, politicians, and even by some highly trained planners and administrators etc and also by development policies that are inherently upward-focused tools for maintaining the legitimacy of interventions rather than laying the groundwork for 'grassroots' or 'on-the-ground' implementations (Mosse 2005) has therefore largely been responsible for the failure or success of planned development in Tipaimukh. As demonstrated by the study, the factors responsible for failures of development in Tipaimukh such as nepotism, unrealistic development targets and strategies, insurgency, opposition to some concepts of development like gender equity by the men, etc mostly relate to various socio-cultural patterns, concepts and perceptions notably of social relationships and ultimately world-view of the people which planned development often fail to understand. On the other hand, the factors responsible for success such as construction of roads, setting up of educational institutions, administrative reforms like substitution of the traditional *buonzawl* by the Hmar Youth Association etc mostly relate to those aspects of development concepts and practices that understood and succeeded in addressing the socio- cultural patterns, concepts and perceptions of the people thereby illustrating the importance of mapping out the traditional socio-cultural patterns, concepts and perceptions of the Hmars and those underlying development programmes in the area.

Given the importance of tradition in development, development in Tipaimukh can only be corrected if and only it is fully recognised by planners, administrators, Church leader, that some traditional concepts and ideas of the Hmars actually fits and complements a model of planned development and of modernity itself and then try to match at the conceptual levels of development programmes such traditional concepts that will enable development and changes entailing a synthesis of old and new, that renew and reaffirm the bonds of the community and the links with the past while redefining them for the future. The traditional socio- cultural patterns, concepts and perceptions can well be utilized to promote the overall goals of development. Hmar farmers may be encouraged to adopt modern agricultural practices in the belief that from the resultant gains in additional incomes they will be better placed to meet their family and kinship obligations. The authority of traditionally respected leaders can be invoked in aid of many development programmes at the village level (Mathur 1995). This particular analysis is further accentuated by the fact that even among the Hmars of Tipaimukh popular participation in development is facilitated where there is a strong tradition of the involvement of local leaders and organization. Such an approach enable one to appreciate the role of social values and prevailing norms influencing various social features like gender equity, roles of trust in socio-economic- political relationships Therefore, accurate identification of those practices, values and institutions that can be used for constructive social change together with the strategies

appropriate to different kinds of situations and to incorporate this knowledge in specific programmes of development is needed.

Last but not the least, an important issue is the total absence of monitoring. This has led to lack of accountability of development programmes implemented in the area. Coupled with poor implementation, the total absence of monitoring has allowed the continuance of several faulty development programmes that do not address and meet the needs of the people. This has weakened the peoples' faith and trust in development initiatives undertaken by the government in the area. To correct this lacuna and ensure the greater possibility of tailoring and engineering development programmes to meet the needs of the people, proper monitoring is the need of the hour in Tipaimukh.

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PHOTO GALLERY



Plate- 1: A view of Parbung village

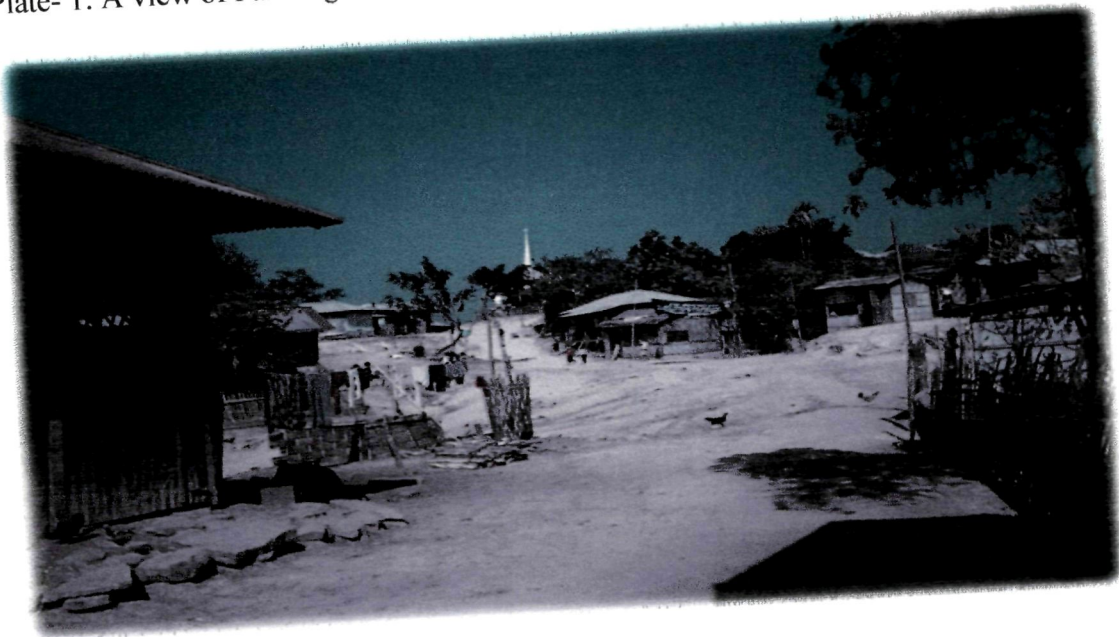


Plate- 2: A view of Patpuihmun village



Plate- 3: Thingkal village



Plate- 4: Tipaimukh Bazar



Plate- 5: Hmar modern house, Tipaimukh



Plate- 6: Village authority members, Parbung village



Plate- 7: Joint meeting of *val- upa* and HYA, Thingkal village



Plate- 8: Terrace field, Tipaimukh

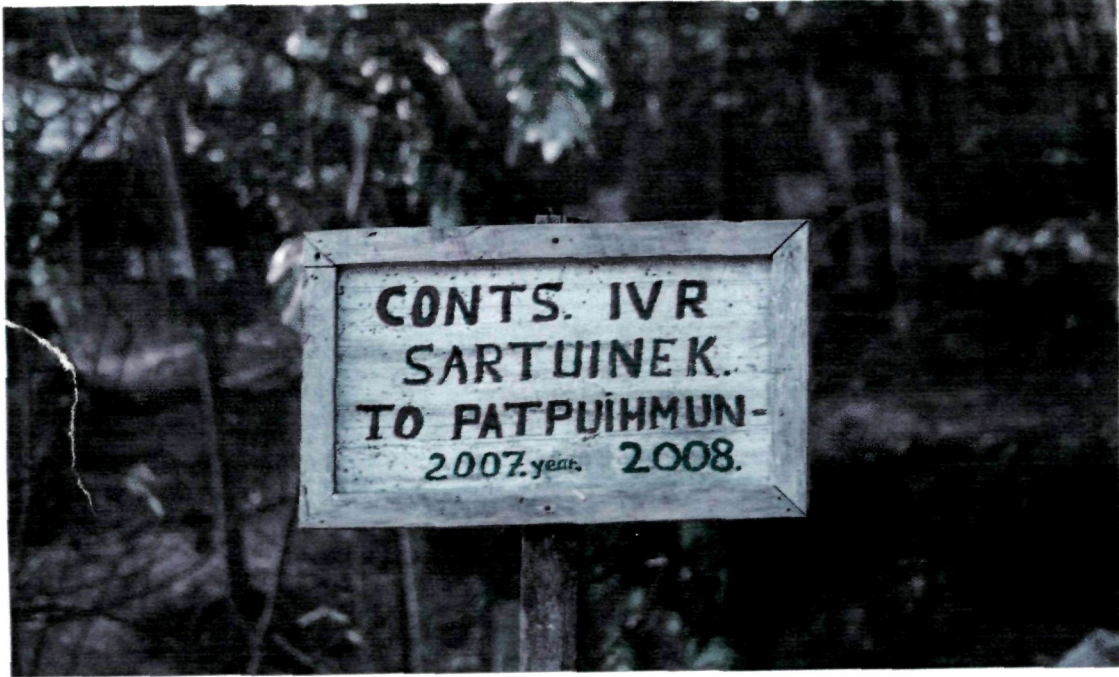


Plate- 9: An IVR construction



Plate- 10: Improvement of IVR under NREGS

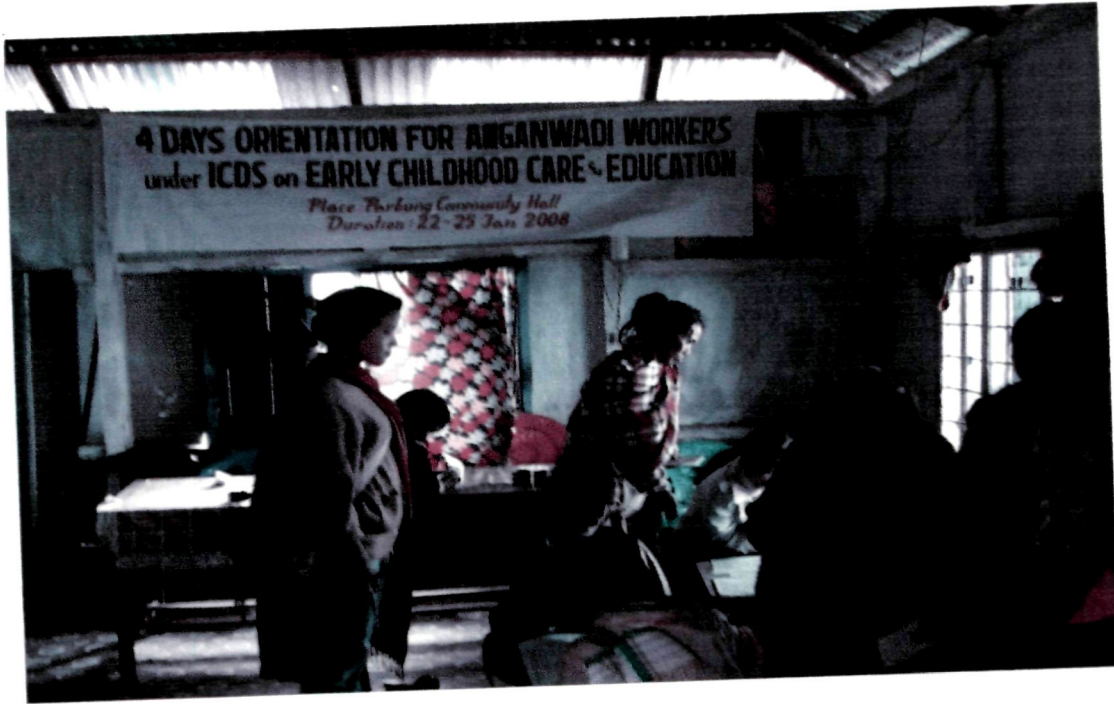


Plate- 11: Anganwadi center, Parbung village

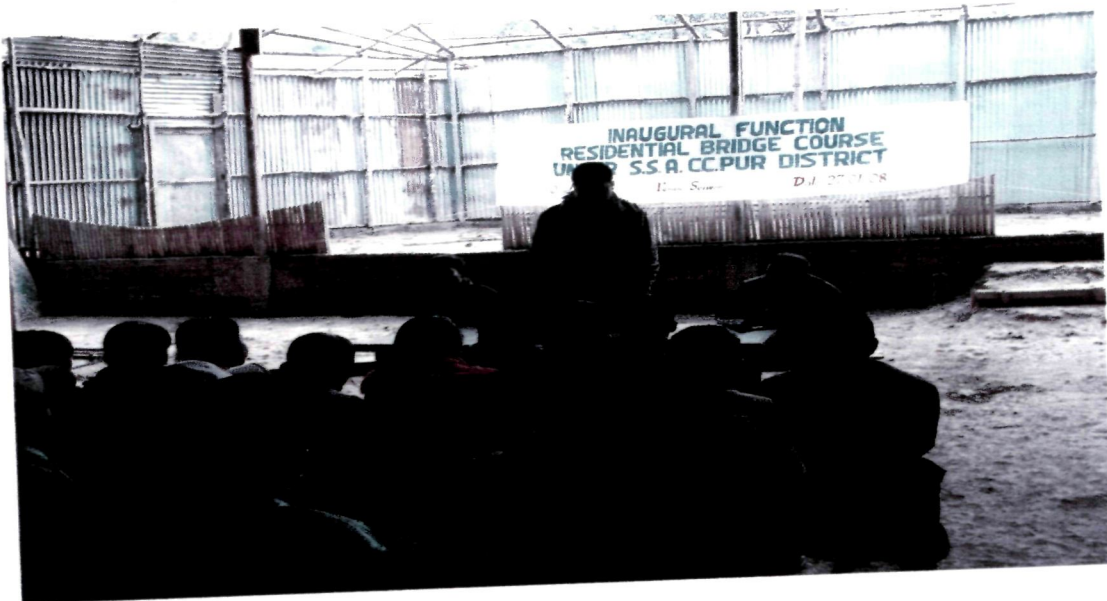


Plate- 12: Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, Senvon village

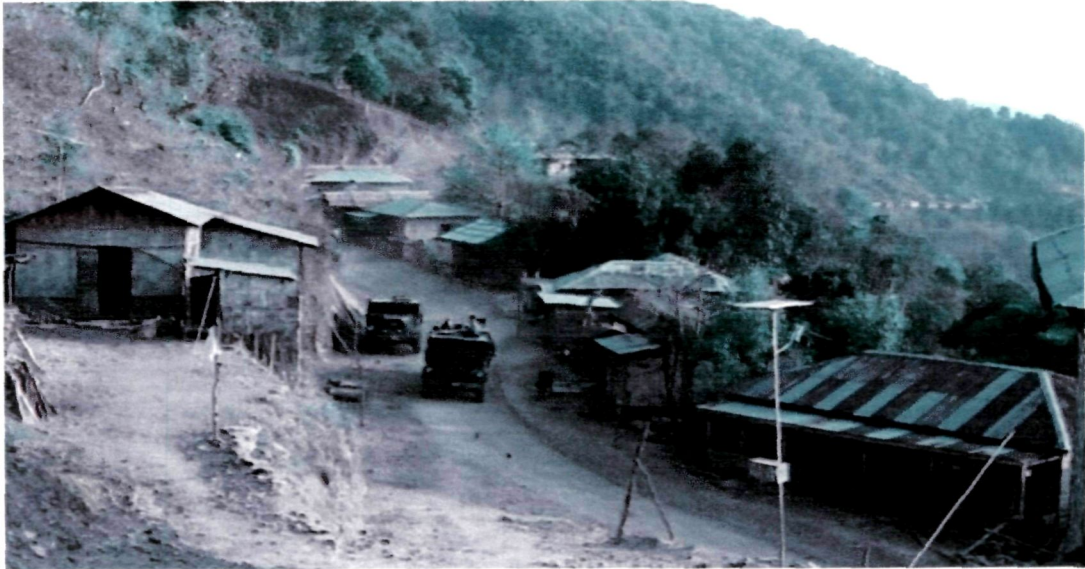


Plate- 13: Trucks plying on National Highway No. 150 between Tipaimukh bazaar & Parbung village



Plate- 14: Defunct Dispensary, Parbung village



Plate- 15: Defunct water storage tank, Parbung village

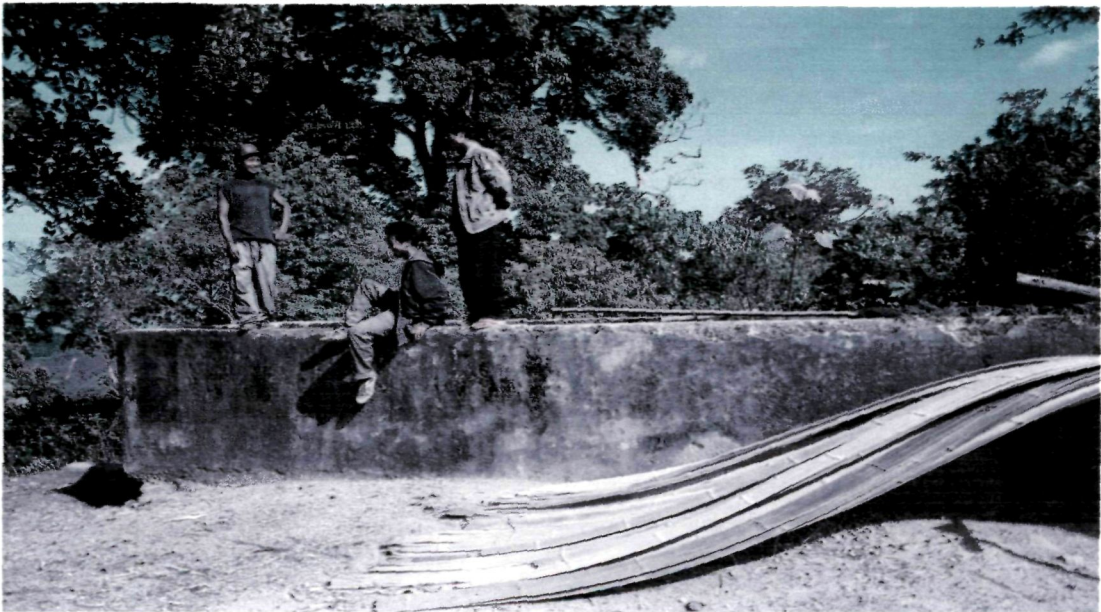


Plate- 16: Defunct water storage tank, Patpuihmun village



Plate- 17: A shop in Patpuihmun



Plate- 18: Modern goods outside a tea shop in Parbung



Plate-19: Youths singing with an electronic keyboard in Tipaimukh



Plate- 20: A government Junior High School, Sipiukawn



Plate- 21: A mission school in Kangreng village



Plate- 22: Students of RPC school inside the class, Parbung



Plate- 23: Textbooks being distributed by the local MLA, Senvon, 2006



Plate- 24: A toilet in Parbung village

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