

URBANIZATION IN THE NAME OF DEVELOPMENT'- MEDIAS ROLE IN MANIPUR

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The term 'Development' is the need and means which is necessary for a better living of a society. It includes not only economic growth but also human development which consists of health, nutrition, education and a well established environment. Although it is good for a society to develop, on the other hand there are many drawbacks and disturbances faced by the society behind development. Sometimes it becomes a root which affects the human privileges and disturbs the peace and harmony of the society. It might also become a main cause in affecting the environmental changes of the society. Situated in the eastern most part of the country and having a conflict zone development in the state of Manipur is far lacking behind. An all round development of the society is much needed for a state like Manipur to build up a well cohesive society. Media taking the role of an informer and a communicator its role in the development of a society is enormous. It also plays the role of an educationist and a watch dog in every field. Role of media in the development of Manipur is vast and endless. The main objective of this paper is to highlight the development of Manipur, the role played by media in the development of Manipur and to find out the settlement and consequences that came after development. Two case studies on development and urbanization has been taken up by the researcher as research material.

Keywords: development, privileges, peace, harmony, media, consequences, settlement, drawback, urbanization.

Introduction

The term development is hard to define and it is also a complex phenomenon. Many scholars, researchers have work hard and try many processes to define the term development but the development scholars are yet to define development all across the world. The concept of development has been kept on changing with the changes of the world. Due to globalization and its frequent changes in social structure, economic growth, policy, communication, technology the sign of development are also changing according to the needs of the society. Development literature has been ruled by several indicators like economic growth, per capita income, social welfare, urbanization but in today's world many other terms have come up in the literature of development. Human development and environmental development are the terms that have been added in the dictionary of development. In general the primary indicators of development have been identity as that of economic growth, social welfare and good communication facilities.

Good communication facilities here mean mass media which consists of print media, electronic media, new media and social media. Mass media or mass communication is the process of delivering information and ideas thereby educating and communicating with the mass all over the world through a common medium. In this world of new technology many new methods and process has been employed to inform, to develop and to strengthen the power of a nation. Mass media is the most powerful tool of communication. The present paper deals with development, urbanization, role of media in the development of a society and the merit of all round development and demerits of urbanisation in the name of so called development in the society.

Development in manipur

Manipur being a state of North east and situated at the corner of our country India, development in Manipur is quite lacking behind. Development in terms of economic growth, social welfare urbanization, new technology, policy and communication in the state Manipur is in a developing process. The government has taken up many steps, policies, programs to help in the overall development of Manipur. Certain programs have also been taken up for human development and environment development. But the main focus of the state government is on the urbanization of the

state. In the name of urbanization the work in the construction and expansion of roads has been taken up. Some government office infrastructure was also expanded in the recent past alongside some small scale industries and big industries have been built up. Plans are on for more expansion in the state. Due to this urbanization, the society and the people of the state has been enjoying a lot of facilities. In spite of all these urbanization, the state has a long way to go before being called developed. An all-round development in the state is required. Urbanization alone cannot bring up a well developed and solid society. Development in every field is much needed. As it has already been mentioned that the primary indicator of development in general is that of economic growth, mass media facilities and social welfare, none of these three primary indicators in Manipur is up to the mark. The society and the government need to discuss on the relevant issue of development to build up a well developed society. A society can develop only when its people are well educated and the environment and surrounding that society is congenial and well developed.

Media in manipur

The wave of mass media in Manipur could be felt only in the early part of 1920s with the introduction of print media by Hijam Irabot. The first recorded event in the history of the print media in Manipur is publication of the journal Meitei Chanu by Hijam Irabat in the mid-1920s. Despite the fact that Hijam Irabot published Meitei Chanu in 1922 as the pioneer in this field but many feels that it cannot be trusted as the first chapter of print media journalism in the state as the said publication was not in printed form. It was a hand-stencilled one and cyclostyled by Irabot himself. The State of Manipur witnessed a sudden increase of newspapers and magazines after the attainment of full-fledged state in 1972. There was a big wave of mass media brewing in all parts of the State. The people of Manipur, particularly the 'hoi polloi' started to understand the importance of media in development process. Awareness among the public was visibly increasing. A new gear of media spirit was added to the journalists' community following the attainment of statehood. It is, therefore, no surprising to see the number of newspapers and magazines increasing by leaps and bounds.

Role of media in development of manipur

The effects of mass communication and mass media on society are phenomenal. It gives the real exposure to the mass audience of what is happening in the society. It has a constructive role to play for the society. The print media, electronic media and new media are the subsets of mass media. As media is the new mantra of development, it can play the role for solving many social menaces and becoming a force multiplier of the modern civilization. It also plays a very important role in shaping the personality of people. So mass media are the storage and transmission channels or tools for using to store and deliver information or data. It bridges the gulf, broadens the horizon of knowledge and understanding and inculcates scientific temper in this global world. Truly it can be mentioned that mass media act as a bridge in this information world in getting information, education, knowledge etc. It can function as a watchdog, ombudsman, constructive critic, public investigator and expositor, philosopher, guide and even an entertainer of the society. It is therefore, called the fourth pillar of the state.

The role of mass media in development can be defined from the responsibilities and functions that are vested in media. And Manipur is no exception. Media needs to stay attentive and keep an eye on the development of the state. Media also needs to stay alert on the policies and programs taken up by government in the name of development. Their duties are to inform and give knowledge to the society about these new policies and programs. Their duty is also to examine how far these new policies and programs are useful and utilized to the society. Not only examine the importance of these policies and programs, media also has to look upon both the merit and demerit that will come up to the society after development. In every field there is both merit and demerit and the duty of the society is to utilize the importance.

Development has brought a lot of changes in today's society. In Manipur, urbanization is taken as one of the most important changes and development of the society. The government has started many policies and programs for urbanization. Urbanization in one way is very important and useful for the people but on the other side due to this urbanization many have been adversely affected in the society. These adverse affects can be termed as violation of human right. In such case the duty of the media is to look upon both the benefits and demerits of urbanization. They

have a duty to inform the society as well as educate the policy makers of the consequences of such policies and programs. Simply reporting the news is not their duty, from their reporting the society will come across both the advantages and disadvantages of urbanization. So media's role in the development of the state is enormous.

Case studies on urbanization

Two case studies have been taken up in the present research each of which is of prime importance in the development of the state of Manipur. The first case being the building of Sport University in Manipur and the second one is building and expansion of High court of Manipur.

Sport university

In the 100 days program of Modi Government, building up a Central Sport University in Manipur is also one of the program's which was included. The Prime Minister, Narendra Modi has announced this program and the present Government has already sanctioned 100 crores for this program. It is needless to mention here that Manipur is extremely privileged to have a Central Sport University in the state and it will be the first of its kind in India. The state Government of Manipur has selected the site for the Sport University and it has been decided at Loushi Loukol near Yaithibi Mountain in the Thoubal district. Loushi Loukol is a farming land. Though the land is not good enough for farming the localities of this area has been living on that since ages. As a result, finding themselves landless and jobless the localities of that area started arguing regarding of this selection of site. Two groups of that particular local area have been divided. One group is against giving their farming land to the Government and the other group is supporting the Government. Many controversies have come up within the localities regarding building up the Sport University. In the mean time some other regions of the state have urged the state Government to build up the Sport University at their locality. The regions that came up with the proposal are Khumbi Moirang side, Lamsang Candre and Senjam Chirang. The proposal has also been flashed in the newspapers for 4-5 times but till now the State Government is not giving any acceptance reply. It has been almost 4, 5 months but still now the site has not been decided. The regions which have come up with the proposal of Sport University are not agricultural land and most important of all the localities' have willfully agreed to house the project in their site.

The issue has compelled the people of Manipur to doubt whether the State Government is playing some secret game or there is some hidden agenda behind. They are also wondering whether the state Government failed to take up a right decision due to the controversies that prevails among the localities.

Building the first Central Sport University in a remote state of North East like Manipur will give a lot of importance to the state and it will definitely help in all round development of the state in general and human resource development in particular. However, considering the above stated controversial situation the State Government can find out a way which will not render people homeless or jobless. If the intention is to develop the Government should work with good and balanced policy thereby building the Sport University without affecting the nature, environment and surrounding. Media has a very important role to play here. It can bring the entire controversy into focus and abrupt the government Central, if not State to rethink on the project and find a site without disturbing the resources.

Capitol/Capital Project

The Manipur State Government has constructed a Capitol/Capital Project in Manipur. The Project include of expansion of the state Legislative Assembly Hall, Secretariat building and Guwahati High Court (Imphal Branch). As a part of this project Manipur State cabinet has take a decision on dated 16 December 2011, to take up the land of Lei-Ingkhol village, in addition to the land that has already been occupied in the area of Mantripukhri for the Project. Several tensions have been arising among the villagers of the Lei-Ingkhol following the decision of the state Cabinet. The villagers of this village have carried out a continuous protest from February 2005 to September 2006 against the displacement of their village. Lei-Ingkhol is a village located at Mantripukhri, Tahsil under Imphal East District, which is five kilometres from the hub of the Imphal City, Manipur. It was originally an unoccupied marshland which is an isolated area. Around 1940's medical service has provided some area of the village to those lepers and tuberculosis patients. Several socially ignored and ill treated landless patients suffering from these diseases, who

could no longer stick together to their original families, settled in this marshy land. In the late 1970s, due to social fear of spreading the diseases, the society had compelled them to confine together and the village was settled up for the lepers and tuberculosis patients. The state Government decision of shifting the village to another local area is quite an inhuman decision. Several protests have been taken up by the villagers but the Government is indifferent. The Government has promised the villagers that they will be relocated and land will be provided and houses will be built for each household. The Government has decided to shift the villagers at the Koirengai side. Four (4) years since the State Government destroyed the Lei-Ingkhol village for the new Capitol project but till date Koirengai has seen only few houses built up and the majority of the villagers are still homeless.

The Capitol/Capital project taken up by the State Government cannot be termed as a developmental project because it is not balanced in nature. It is trying to develop a section of the society at the cost of the other sections livelihood leaving them homeless. The project have been lacking in transparency and public accountability. Displacement and destructive tendencies in the selection of construction site and frequent changes in the blue print of the project were the main controversy of the project. The village has its own history, environment and natural boundaries and its people their economic survival, and psychological makeup. Disturbance to any of these will not bring in any kind of development rather destruction. Here in this case also the government's role is in question and media's role is important.

Conclusion

Development is necessary everywhere for an individual and a society to build up. But the steps taken up for development should not disturb the environment and already existing convenient livelihood. Economic zone should not be disturbed for settlement area and vice –versa. Development can only be in the truest sense if it is well planned. The Government and the society should have good planning for development. Without proper planning there will always be an chaos in the blue-print and the project leave alone development. Thus to bring in development, proper planning is needed and the future balance should be kept. From the above two case studies it can be concluded that the State Government of Manipur have taken up certain projects and policies without proper planning.

In the mean time media has also failed to play its role as an informer and watchdog of a society. Media here had a role to play by informing the government and the civil society about the consequences. Though some news items were covered in the local newspapers but simply reporting the news will not bring in the desired solution. An analysis should have been done by the media houses so that the consequences of the issue could be understood beforehand. There were protests but their voices were not heard. Media also could have played a role here and let their voices be heard in not only at the state level but also at the national level. Thus there is no denying to the fact that Media contain strong potential for combating the evils of the society. It can be used as an effective means for social, economic, plotical, etc transformation.

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