

Migration and Social Tensions in Manipur

Sougaijam Priyokumar Meitei

Manipur University, Department of Anthropology, Imphal-795003, Manipur, India

Abstract: *This paper aims to understand the contemporary social unrest due to uncontrolled population influx into Manipur and contextual community conflicts thereof. The state has been infiltrated with a large number of undocumented migrants since the state has porous national and international boundaries. Due to its ill-border and improper demarcation, the Indo-Myanmar border outlining on the east of Manipur, has got a serious political dispute between the two countries. On the other side, the state has also been flooded with a large number of in-migrants beyond the patience leading to the demand of Inner Line Permit (ILP) System in the state. This paper has shown a snapshot detail of the social upheavals being sprouted in different community based organisation. The demand is about policies to regulate migration and proper documentation of population infiltration at the favour of the indigenous people of Manipur. In the interim period of turbulence, the illegal migrants have impregnated a large number of paradoxical migrant voters in the state. The Joint Committee on Inner Line Permit System, Kangleipak claimed that 71.5% of the total voters in Jiribam Sub Division are migrants from different parts of India and other countries. Therefore, there is need to formulate a policy negotiating the pros and cons of migration into the state to prevent unwanted social chaos and conflicts. A proper documentation is required to ensure constitutional safeguard for both the local and migrant population without jeopardizing the growth and development of the state.*

Keywords: Population, Migrants, Influx, Unrest, Policy

1. Introduction

Man had migrated from place to place and discovered the world, new land, isolated and un-developed countries and so on. This made the world interconnected and development of centres and urbanisation. Migration may also result in many social, cultural, economic and political problems. Migration may lead to population imbalance that ultimately rise urban unemployment, poor housing and inadequate supply of primary needs, shortage of transport and other services, and dreadfully high economic competition. This paper has a purpose to understand the contemporary social upheavals in Manipur addressing the issues of population influx and envisaging contextual social conflicts thereof. The United Committee Manipur (2005) published a book "Influx of Migrants into Manipur – A Threat to Indigenous Ethnic People" with a view to building up an integrated and cohesive society of all the different Manipuri National Subgroups of the state of Manipur. Manipur is not a big state having no big cities. But since the colonial time, it attracts a number of migrants such that the migrants and their children exceeds from the number of tribal population in the state based on 2001 census (UCM, 2005). The United Nations Multilingual Demographic Dictionary defined migration as "a form of geographical mobility or spatial mobility between one geographical unit and another, generally involving a change in residence from the place of origin or the place of departure to the place of destination or place of arrival."

Thus, migrants are the persons who have changed their place of residences at certain duration of time. Most of the migration theory is corresponding to the theory of pull and push factors. Pull and push theory suggest positive and negative factors of migration. Pull factors include better educational, health, transport, employment facilities. Push factors are poverty, war, disharmony, poor facilities in various sectors. Some other factors like personal or psychological factors may also induce migration. Theoretically, migration results advantages to both places of origin and destination. Everett Lee (1969) opines that migrations are always selective, never purely rational and all migrants do not migrate as a result of their own decision.

Migration is the most complex component of population dynamics because it involves movements of stream and counter-stream of population. Hence, the migration data are likely to be under reported often. Migrations are not rational all the time; some are forced or compelled by unwanted factors as well. Usually illegal migrations are coupled with many social evils such as smuggling, human trafficking, and malicious political agenda and so on. A study by S.C. Dube (1955) shows the influence of Hyderabad upon the political structure, caste relation, and social attitudes in a village in its orbit. The migrants live between two cultures, bring changes in dress, in the value of education, caste rule are not so strictly observed (P.N. Prabhu in Bottomore, 1986). Evaluation on the changes in social structure, inter influences between migration and social stratification has therefore got justified as the rational of the current debate of merits and demerits. Given the issues on how do migrant groups respond to social and political movements; migration policy to accommodate the influx population has to be necessarily introduced.

Table 1: Population Fact sheet, Manipur, 2011 Census

| Indicators | Manipur | National figure |
|-------------------|------------|-----------------|
| Total Population | 28.5 lakhs | 1.214 Billion |
| Male Population | 14.3 lakhs | 62.5 Crore |
| Female Population | 14.2 lakhs | 58.9 Crore |
| | | |
| Overall Sex Ratio | 985 | 943 |
| Urban Sex Ratio | 1026 | 929 |
| Rural Sex Ratio | 969 | 949 |
| | | |
| Overall Literacy | 76.94 | 74.04 |
| Male Literacy | 83.58 | 80.0 |
| Female Literacy | 70.26 | 65.46 |

Manipur is having very small population. Sex ratio and literacy rate is nearly equal or better with the national average. Nevertheless, it shares small population; Manipur has been graced by a number of ethnic groups inclusive of migrants and original peoples. Major ethnic groups are the Meiteis, the Pangals, the Kukis and the Nagas. Among the major migrant communities, the Nepalais, the Bengolis, the

Telis (Bhojpuris) and the Punjabis may be mentioned. The Marwaris, so widely expanded in the business sector of Manipur is needless to mention since the same is true for the whole national picture. The Bengolis are usually the descendants of those bureaucrat officers accompanied by the Britishers. The Telis were traders dealing grocery items employed by the Britishers when there was the intention to introduce capitalist market in the state. The Nepalis were brought as sepoys (armymen) and labourers, by allotting plot of lands to the state by the then king of Manipur. Since then, these people are assumed to be foreigners by the people of Manipur because they were once covered under the Foreigners Act of Manipur. Once the Act was revoked, people's assumption could not be instantly removed and thus continued. At different intervals, there are social upheavals sprouted in different community based organisation for the protection of the original people of Manipur. The Joint Committee on Inner Line Permit System, Kangleipak, a CBO (Community Based Organisation), claimed that 71 percent of the total voters in Jiribam Sub Division are migrants from different parts of India and other countries (<http://e-pao.net>). The FRIENDS (Federation of Regional Indigenous Society), Manipur (2013) urged that the circumstance where migrant voters enjoying franchise and largely observed in Jiribam Constituency of Manipur is at stake. According to this committee, some of these migrants are imported and encouraged by local political leaders for own political advantages. According to a study by F.G. Bailey (1957), in a village of Orissa, the population growth leads to growth of commerce, while the development of national administration results in a breakdown of political isolation, with important effects upon village organisation. Growth of commerce, initially, in fact, is a threat to the local people in connection with the local simple industries. The host people could not readily prepare to take part in competition with the migrants who are having unique interest. There is always a space of conflict between the local people and the newly arriving people. Bogue (1959) considers migration as "an instrument of cultural diffusion and social integration, which yields more meaningful redistribution of population". This means that migration is a factor of social change and plays pivotal role in spatial distribution of population over time. In fact, it brings meaningful redistribution of population when and only when the receiving people clearly understand the reasons of being migrated. Migration is found to be very difficult to define comprehensively because the movement of the people is occurred haphazardly over space and time. It is also sometimes difficult to distinguish between local move and migration because of ambiguous civil or geographical divisions. Migration into Manipur was largely explained by an incident of historical event. Just one year after Manipur merged with India, the Inner Line Permit System (Foreigners' Act) in Manipur was revoked on the 18th Nov. 1950 and it opened the floodgate of many migrants into the state through national and state borders by default. This could also be due to Manipur being possessed an opulent status of Politico-Socio-Economic conditions as compared to its neighbouring states and countries. Man usually has a concept that his wants might be satisfied elsewhere. This is quite natural because one will compromise anything for his survival. Apart from human wants, there is also forced migration which is induced by administration, war, disasters, and communal conflicts and so on. Compulsion for

migration is also occurred border issues, space and economic constraints. There are also disputes over state boundaries thereby affecting the normal life of the people. One political crisis is the ongoing dispute over Siroy Mountain and Dzuko Valley between Nagaland and Manipur. As an example relating to economic stress, when there is rise in population in tribal areas where the economy is based on forest products; there is tendency among few people to migrate to some new areas as a coping strategy to meet the growing demands. In an international scenario, the United States are having a magnetic tendency to attract a large volume of immigrants. There are multiple examples of such great movements in human history. It is true that most of these movements are historical events and had left obvious traces on the modern inhabitants and their civilizations.

Apart from the demographic perspectives, it is important to diagnose the insights over the challenging socio-political situations in Manipur due to heavy population influx. The migrants arrived in Manipur are mostly confined to Imphal City and they belong to businessmen, semi-skilled or unskilled labourers. Late migrants are engaged in several business pursuits such as retailers, dealers, running street or established vendors, hawkers, saloons, cobblers, repairing works and so forth. They are ready to take up any kind of jobs and capacitated them in the struggle to adapt to the situation of Manipur. On the other hand, the indigenous peoples are reluctant to hold blue-collar jobs as done by those migrants. This condition makes the migrants enable to occupy a key position in the society. Over time, the migrants thus become professionals and the natives are not in a position either to substitute or to compete with the migrants. Ultimately, migrants grow to be the part and parcel of the Manipuri society. For example, the Chamber of Commerce, Manipur is absolutely controlled by the migrants and their domination over making commercial decision in business sector is quite visible. Furthermore, migrants to the cities from dissimilar culture sometimes undergo personal disorganization as consequences of conflicts between different sets of folkways and system of values. Migration may also weaken the traditional controls which neighbourhoods, institution and communities exercise over the behaviour of individual and may thus lead to an increase of crime, delinquency, and disintegration of families, communalism, casteism, and cultural disorganization. The sudden arrival of large numbers of migrants in a community can lead to group fightings and unrest. There are also several questions concerning to when and why natives oppose migration, which is quite important to address the political behaviour and sense of security felt by migrants. Therefore, migrants rely on socio-cultural and political forces relating to their safety and security of its diverse population within the framework of acculturation and assimilation. As an example, Scott (1999) points out that assimilation was historically encouraged in the Malay world by accepting as "Malay" anyone willing to embrace Islam, learn to speak Malay, and follow Malay customs, including customary law (Cited in Ammarell Gene, 2002). Identity theory can provide an answer to the question why people feel proud of their country and national in-group and dislike ethnic migrants (Coenders, 2001). According to ethnic competition theory, chauvinism and ethnic exclusionism are stronger among those social categories that hold socio economic positions

similar to ethnic minorities or migrants. The minority groups may experience higher levels of inter group competition and perceived ethnic threat.

2. Migration History of Manipur

The migration history of Manipur may be classified as before and after the arrival of the British. Once, Manipur was a princely state and its kingdom was extended up to Kabow Valley of present Myanmar. During that time, immigration took place in the form of war captives. There was a remarkable case in 1606 A.D when king Khagemba of Manipur imprisoned Muslim sepoys, imported and finally they settled in Manipur by marrying Manipuri girls. The invasion of Khagemba against Burma (Myanmar) in 1630 A.D also brought war captives to the kingdom. These migrants are assimilated to the modern Manipur and there is no adverse effect of it either historically or in the contemporary society of Manipur. This clearly indicates the loyalty of the people to the king of Manipur. Chronologically, the migrants may be again divided into two types – those arrived before merging the state to India and those arrived after merge. The migrants who arrived to Manipur before merge were foreigners since they were covered by Foreigners Act of the constitution of Manipur. These migrants and the children of these migrants were not properly enumerated at the time of merge, and hence these people were mixed up with the later arrivals who are considered as internal migrants. Therefore, there is always a technical problem in sorting and classification of the type of migrants in Manipur. It is a continuing debate the chronological generation of the migrants to be included in the category as the sons of the soil. The state has three major ethnic groups – The Meiteis, the Kukis and the Nagas. Manipuri Muslims also known as “Pangals” are also residing having a distinct identity. The Meiteis having own history more than two thousand years became a caste society after embracing the Hindu religion during the 18th century. In due course, the Brahmin migrants were assimilated and occupied a respectable status, identified as „Meitei Brahmins“ under the one roof of Meitei society, speaking a language belonging to Tibeto-Burman family. M.C. Arunkumar (2010) opined that the Meitei state was transformed into Manipur state. Therefore, the Meiteis and the Manipuris are used synonymously in several literatures. He also pointed out that Bengoli Brahmins were welcomed and caste system was introduced represented by two castes, the Brahmins and the Kshetriyas. In Manipur, there are also exterior castes, locally known as the Lois who belongs to scheduled caste in Indian constitution. Apart from this social stratification, there are also Rajkumars. Rajkumars belong to Kshetriyas who are the patrilineal descendants of Manipuri Kings.

Since the arrival of Hindu missionaries and saints, Manipuri society was formed by amalgamation of Hindu culture and indigenous cultural elements. The migrants arrived to the state in the later period (post colonial) did not show a visible process of assimilation. Racial elements of Indo-Aryan particularly from the state of Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Assam and others migrated to the state for different economic pursuits. Having said that an integrated Manipur is the hope of every citizen, the people are expecting a pluralistic society of cultural harmony. Through time,

conflict smacking political unrest is also not an uncommon event in the state owing to lack of healthy politics and economy. In Manipur, these migrants who arrived during the window period of almost 200 years ago till date are called as “Mayang” by the host society. Mayang has now occupied a space in Manipur and are more or less become a part of the society. This is made possible by their attractive skills at trade and commerce activities. As a subject matter of anthropological interest, the issues relating to migrants culture and ongoing acculturation process are in a strict sense unavoidable down the line of mainstream welfare policies and programme implementation. According to Foreigners (Protected Areas) Act 1958, the term “Nepali” was not treated as the foreigner. Therefore, many Nepalese freely infiltrated to Manipur. Another issue is the ill demarcated international boundaries with Myanmar. Political dispute over fencing boundaries is still going on. Incoming migrants from other states of India are also forming a major chunk of population in Manipur. Social enclaves formed by the group of migrants have unique social and political interests quite distinct from those of the indigenous natives and thereby creating the contextual social tensions and political unrest in Manipur. Recently, several organizations claim to enact the Inner Line Permit (ILP) System in the state from the pessimistic point of view contemplating over the protection of indigenous people and tradition. Manipur is having high decadal population growth since 1901 according to Census, India; it is always higher than the national rate. Census of 1961, following the abolition of ILP system, revealed that, the decadal growth rate of Manipur was tremendously high at 35 percent against the national growth rate of 22 percent only.

In this stream of migration, people of Manipur are staying with the children of those foreigners along with in-migrants. When the Indian constitution was established in Manipur, many foreigners suddenly became internal migrants and it was really hard to the people of Manipur. The case is an opposite example to separation of Pakistan from India. Some sections of Kashmiri are unable to fully separate from their near and dear ones who are settled in Pakistan because of the partition. They could not feel the sense of being foreigner to their relatives in Pakistan. In contradiction to this model, the puppet king of Manipur was mingling with the British and their followers, people treated them as foreigners. In this sense, either the British or Bengoli or Bhojpuris or Nepalīs are the same immigrants of different races. Now all the British subjects went back but Indians continued to settle down with a view to establish capitalism in the state. When there is further expansion of settlement and arrival of migrants within the Indian constitutional framework, people may not get readily accept it as internal movement. This is also supported by the loosely referred term „Mayang“ which is quite similar with the meaning of foreigner. This is one of the biggest problems in Manipur that people started revolutionary movements on the protection of indigenous people demanding for constitutional safeguards. Considering all these realities, many native organisations proclaim to introduce an effective policy to check the infiltration into the state. It is being demanded to impose Inner Line Permit (ILP) System to check the porous boundaries and free infiltration. A proper implementation is required rather than a proper demarcation or fencing. People of Manipur have

different racial identity groups distinguishing from that of migrants. Due to acculturation, many of the Manipuris in the valley districts adopted Hinduism during 17th century. However, in the light of revivalism, many have given up celebrating Hindu traditions, festivals or transformed into customised fashion. For example, Holi Festival has been replaced more or less by Yaoshang Sports rather than playing with colours, Durga Pujah is replacing by Panthoibi Eratpa. At the same time, contradicting to the situation, there are evidences of emerging a large number of migrants (followers of Hinduism) who are committed to celebrate and popularize the Durga Pujah or Holi festivals in the state as well. So, there is no chance of these migrants being assimilated as observed in the cases of the Meitei Brahmins and the Meitei Pangal (Muslims) during the earlier period. In due course of this assimilation, the two groups adopted Manipuri culture, language and tradition creating neither social conflict nor tension to the Meitei society. However, the present scenario and trends of migration is totally different and is likely to sweep the indigenous culture and tradition unless certain migration policies are taken up at the earliest.

3. Why Social Unrest for Migration?

Manipur has been experiencing many political and social crises starting from insurgency to business monopoly out of the influx population. The question of political identity of indigenous people and the migrants is at stake. There is rise in local perception to discourage or limit incoming migrants is predominantly because of undocumented migrants. Theoretically, it seems nothing wrong of migration in the pace of development of a state provided it does not affect the question of nationalism and integration. However, it is not always benevolent to the receiving society when the host society is not properly prepared for the large volume of population influx. It is because the outnumbered groups of population always have something to do in political exercises particularly in a democratic republican country like India. The study is based on some migrants settled in and around Imphal East and West districts of Manipur representing Bengolis, Nepalis and Teli communities. At least in Manipur, there is an overlapping of national migration with international migration because arrivals during the British time and their descendents settled down in the kingdom. The then constitution of Manipur was having a system called „Foreigners Act“ which clearly identified the migrants as immigrants instead of in-migrants. Over space and time, migrants greatly intensify the socio-cultural and economic life ways of the mainstream population through the process of acculturation. At the same time, illegal or undocumented migrants may cause social deviances to the host society if there is no proper policy. In this sense simply installation of border fencing has nothing to do in state security but it is important to revive the system of administering the migrants. Migrants have peculiar political, economic and demographical behaviour as compared to the host society. They acquire unique interest as a means for adaptation. The Christian Missionaries, Marwari traders in Manipur are quite popular examples. The institutions run by these outsiders are overwhelming the people of this area due to prolonged subjugation and steady brainwash. These migrants are also well adapted and running full houses and their schools are

manned with migrants. Being credibility is extended to a high extent to the outsiders. This is a vivid example of high level integration of the migrants. Movements of the people crossing the territory or civil division cause several controversial at certain extent to the host society. This is because migration induces the competitiveness to the place of destination. As a result many local inhabitants could not take part in the competition in case there is arrival of highly skilled and capitalist competent. When the British arrived to India, apart from their intention to colonial expansion, they are also targeting to earn resources from India in the form of gold, harvest, minerals and so on. They were immigrants with a strong determination to bag resources from India. They didn't expand their colony in an autocratic or monarchic way rather introduced education, constitution and legal system, for the systematic administration. It was an operating system which is customised by them. Therefore, in no way, the original inhabitants could not combat those Britishers on that rigid platform. Likewise, the present India is a shining shadow of British India and the very platform system is still operating in India. So, we Indians are using something like pirated version of that British operating system and we could not reach up to the mark like the European nations. No doubt, the British worked based on the class whereas Indians work on caste and gender. Turning back to the problem of migration, our British constitution promote migration for development, however where there is beyond such expectation like in Mizoram, Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh (formerly part of Assam), migration was discouraged by East Bengal Frontiers, enacting an Inner Line Permit System. According to this Act, one has to get a permission card from the state government if he or she wants to visit these areas.

In Mumbai, Maharastrians condemn the administrative policy for free infiltration of migrants into the region with the slogan to go back “Bhaiya” (Hindi speaking people) who are occupying substantial key positions in commercial sectors. The movement was started by sons of the soil led by Bal Thakrey and his disciples. When the migrants occupy almost all the unskilled and semi skilled labour works, it has a negative impact to employment opportunity of the native people since the market becomes too competitive. Migrants and successive generations are playing the role as odds in the manifestation of political power since they form a stream to manoeuvre the political waves. So, the natives get resented from the migrants and emerge onslaught turbulence. Political leaders take the privilege of supporting indirectly the migrant's community as a part of their strategies so that these odds can be beneficial at the time of election. Several persecutions behind the screen may therefore theoretically as well as practically be resulted. Many trifling offences are likely to occur in hidden and likely to liquidate the agitation of the indigenous natives.

The people of Manipur feel a sense of vulnerability due to uncontrolled influx of migrants into Manipur. Migrants have been perceived as the outfits of underground economy as well as a threat to the indigenous ethnic people. Given the fact, migrants claimed for state membership in an unlawful way, the natives of the state are demanding to introduce „Inner Line Permit System“ or to enact a special law for the protection of its indigenous people. Recently, student masses

under the wing of ILP demand committee organised rallies where many got injured and one was reported killed. In the tragic incident on 8th July, 2015, Manipur police while controlling the agitation, fired rubber bullet and tear gas shell and a young protestor, called Sapam Robinhood Singh was killed. He was a volunteer protesting with thousands of people led by the Joint Committee on Inner Line Permit System in Manipur. A tear gas shell and rubber bullet hit his left cheek at close range and was declared dead at a nearby public hospital. It was also reported that several protestors who took part of the rally sustained injuries. The committee over the past few years has been taking up various forms of agitations in its longstanding demand for implementation of the Inner Line Permit System which will ensure the protection of cultural and traditional identity of the indigenous inhabitants of the state. The district magistrate imposed an indefinite curfew to prevent the agitations and escalation in the two districts – Imphal West and Imphal East. On the other hand, the demand committee declared 5 days curfew against the non-Manipuris/Mayang from being away from their respective houses. From the literatures, it is learnt that large scale migration affects the politics of recipient societies. However, the affecting pattern is dependent on the types of society, political system, political parties, and sensitivity of the area.

4. Integration Problems - A Social Pressure

Integration is a form of atmosphere, culturally plural societies living together interdependent to each other adopting various strategies that will allow them to achieve a reasonably successful adaptation to living inter-culturally. Keeping aside the positive aspects of migration, the study rather discusses as having the negative impact on the side of population as social pressure. One of the issues often raised in this context relates to combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases since these are common among highly mobile groups, such as truck drivers and commercial sex workers. Hence, to restrict population movements is unlikely to achieve positive results. International borders with ill fencing and security are also tempting factors to smugglers, refugees and insurgent groups that ultimately create problems in the integration of the state. These groups of migrant population are hardly welcomed by the host because of expected ill-impacts.

The level of integration among the migrants is characterized by their sense of being oneness and solidarity being common in their place of origin, cultural affinities, and encountered nature that deprived them from their place of origin. Therefore, their integration becomes a main feature while responding to the social adaptation to the host society. Change of milieu by a person renders to entangle his sense of inclusion or exclusion to the new setting. It is not easy for him to contrive a proper adaptation at the beginning. Migrants, therefore, are compelled to implicate with the socio-cultural traditions of the host society through acculturation and cultural radiation to pacify his socio-economic life. Migrant has to go through certain cultural stages. The first stage is termed as „honeymoon“ with full of excitement, having lots of interest in learning, quite motivated and cooperative. Thus, one will reach the final stage of „feeling home“ by complete adaptation. But, it is

certain that he will pass through an interim period of conflicts and irritation stage known as „culture shock“. The interval phase is full of problems to the host society as well as to the incoming migrants. This paper is devoted to analyse the cause and consequences of this interim stage to the society of Manipur. In this stage of culture shock, the novelty of the new culture has worn off, and focuses primarily on the differences between the new culture and origin home culture. This stage is associated with catastrophes, frustrations, and stereotypes and started complaining the host culture as if it is unhelpful and dominating.

Many times, migrants experience different circumstances at destination contrasting to expectations made before migration took place. The lean witted sense of inclusion to the mainstream often makes them feel fallible towards the host society and consequently result a distinguished interest. Their effort to open self strategy, of own interest, discerning to the host culture becomes inevitably at stake. In spite of certain conflicts with the new people, new language and new milieu, a sense of inclusion brings the migrants fiducially a mode of adaptation and adhesion. Sense of inclusion stabilizes the migrants from fidgety and communal conflicts of mainstream imbroglio. Theoretically, migrants preconceive their social inclusion or exclusion with strong prophecies to remove costiveness about the mainstream cultural regime. An imbroglio over migrants in Manipur is the enigma of the state in the running 21st century. The term “migrant” in this study has been used in a very generic way because children of the migrants who are born in the state are also perceived as migrants. The present study is a contextual picture as perceived by the local people to give lustre to migration imbroglio and migrants’ space in Manipur. For example, the Bhojpuri in Manipur are considered as migrants irrespective of their place of birth. Now they are integrating with the Manipuri culture through a means of cultural adaptation. The condition thus appears through space and time is the “Cultural Immune”, a system through which migrants respond to the host society. When a society of unique culture remains in contact over time, the little tradition has to adapt usually at three levels – isolation, integration and assimilation. Integration is the favourable condition for both the traditions. It is evidenced that the Bhojpuris are properly integrated and people of Manipur has also accepted as a community of Manipur by calling them as the „Telis“ of Manipur.

Migration is a way of livelihood to many of people nowadays due to modernisation, urbanisation and industrial development. However, outnumbered migrant community to the indigenous small size population is an onslaught in terms of job security, eco-political and cultural security and so forth. It is because the outnumbered groups of population always have something to do in political exercises particularly in a democratic republican country like India. Considering all these realities, it is natural to appear the concepts like „sons of the soil“ and protection of indigenous or native people. Uncontrolled migration is always more likely to cause population imbalance. The recipient society should have the capability to behold the growing population. The migrants are exerting vibrating waves to the people of Manipur socio-culturally due to their outgrowing population. For example, nowadays, the mainstream society has been

outlaid in the accepting trends of certain festivals originated from the Northern India like “Rakshi Bandhan” which bears a significant importance of brotherhood and sisterhood. On the 20th August 2013, the Rakshi Bandhan has been celebrated by “Brahmakummari Centre” Imphal with dignitaries of Manipur government officials including the Chief Minister of the state, different ministers and departmental officers of the state. It has made a proxy gateway of the migrants for infiltration freely and favourable scope for adaptation to the state. Certain limitation up to a benchmark is very much important to calibrate the identities of the migrants and indigenous communities to mount up the culture conscious and to understand the acculturating waves of jeopardizing potentials.

A recent event stimulating social tensions to the host society was published in the headlines of daily papers dated on the 25th August 2013, for an unauthorized adoption of traditional lineage by three migrants in Manipur. Their names were enlisted in the electoral roll of Kakching Constituency adopting the family name „Huirem” which is of their rent owner. If a group of people forming an ethnic community in an area for years, they are likely entitled to demand a unique identity and integration. In a strict sense, all of us are migrants and their children. So, duration of stay over a long period of time in a place of destination justify the migrants or children to question their right to maintain integrity and formation of enclaves and ultimately their homelands. However, the counter reaction between the host people and these evacuees should not be ignored and should not be kept in vague, since it may likely detonate social deviance. Migrants may be excellent in their integration and it may be a harsh phenomenon with its counterparts because of different status, position and culture differences. The level of integration among the migrants is largely determined by their place of origin, similar causal factors of migration and binds them together with a sense of solidarity. Migrants those encountered similar push factors try to pump up their gap through integration among themselves. Theories suggest that migrants are very active and energetic in social and economic participation. Thus, they are characterized by some common salient features that determine their level of integration subject to the economic status. Given such a tremendous prophecy, a new propaganda for the welfare of the two parties need to be pushed forward to lead a dynamic social life deprive of social tensions and resistances. The balance of cultural inspiration caused to both the host and migrant community is fugitive, as the case may be contra-acculturation, and need to germinate by cataloguing the cultural traits. The one that inspires largely, called the greater tradition should contemplate to perk up the symbiosis between the two rather than the pessimist view. In the present context of Manipur, the intentions of the indigenous people remains in vague either to go ahead or gear back the process of acculturation, just like an Utopian thought. Policies and actions need to be reframed with careful observation and monitoring through an official regime to provide satisfaction, requirements and security of the two sections without jeopardizing the notion of nationalism. Otherwise, it is not a wise idea to let the floodgate keep opening, unchecked rather it will be an invitation to attend the social tensions and chaos. Migrants of likeminded individuals tend to amalgamate and engross to envisage

persecutions carving out of political coercions and armed conflicts. It is an alleged reliance to neutralize all people through haphazard mixing up of population because it will ultimately liquidate the agitations aggravating the inter community relationships. Ignoring an alarming issue or situation is a kind of fulsome practice and should be repressed to prevent unwanted communal disharmony to disburden the internal ethnic tensions. Migration induced tensions may also observed from the political point of view. There are both national and international evidences encouraging migrants for political purposes. A range of action can be employed to influence public policy including voting, campaigning, demonstrating, and rioting (Deth, 1986). In such cases, the political leaders use migrants as deciding factor in winning election. It has also been argued that by participating in politics, citizens demonstrate a certain degree of allegiance to the system (Kleppner 1982). There are valid reasons among migrants for keen interest in political participation and social inclusion. Collectivism in political participation of the migrants is quite determining factor in politics. Even though they are not very active in major election, merely participation in local election could bring into a major force in the General Elections. The Nepali migrants in Manipur are found to be quite integrative. Most of them participate in social and political activities. Their participation to socio-political life ways is quite integral to the neighbouring communities. The political strength and behaviour of the migrants should be transparently shared with the mainstream societies to sketch the political integration in the light of building peace and security in the state. Since Manipur is having its porous national and international boundaries, it is quite suspicious to people that the arrival of illegal immigrants in the state beyond control. Abrupt changes in population size for certain communities are alarming to the different civil societies. In this situation, the migrants who arrived during the 19th century have started claiming for migrants’ cosmopolitanism, and often claim as „sons of the soil”. It is valid because many Telis and Nepalis children are born to the state and grown up acquiring 2nd generation, 3rd generation and so on. As an example of social unrest in Manipur, the conflict at Telipati area, where the Telis predominantly resides may be taken into account. A portion of the locality has been claimed as a sacred historical place by the Meitei based committee named the “Ahongpung Historical Monument Protection Committee”. The committee demanded restoration of original complex of Khurai Ahongpung and displacement of Teli encroachers. The Telis claimed they are now bonafied citizens of Manipur who can claim OBC category. During 2011, in a local paper, protesting a bomb blast at Telipati, one Teli spokesperson appealed to all sections of the people not to consider them as separate people since they have participated in many socio-political struggles in the state. The Telis further added that they have no homeland other than Manipur. They also participated in revolting against the British rule. The Telis demanded that many children born to Teli families in the state have become the son of the soil by mingling the children of other communities of Manipur. (The Sangai Express, Imphal, January 31, 2011). The Teli people have a very gracious political commitment to the present representative of their constituency. The Telis become members of the state, but some of them are temporary migrants and yet to be integrated. Such migrants confining

pockets, staying apart from the mainstream society is more likely to be misused by the politicians. Electoral roll need to be cross examined with their place of origin to ensure unique in the voter list. Proper identification and validation of the migrants are necessary for a smooth political development. If not, mere inception of Inner Line Permit system has nothing to do with political solution. Migrants' identity need to be made known to public.

5. Conclusion

The problem relating to migration and adapting patterns of migrants is an evasive study rendering socio-politically sensitive appraisal. The phenomenon of migration submits political upheaval due to extortions made by political leaders behind the curtain. Therefore, it is the time to uncover the veils by regulating the porous floodgates of several flights to prevent unwanted turbulence and to safeguard the host community from being jeopardized. A policy to control such inevitable postures and potentials is at stake. Practical inputs need to be imposed by the state authority rather than pleading Utopian type of appealing. Xenophobia is another problem in the state. Government should introduce strategies to emerge sense of integration between the migrants and the host society. Migration should be positively translated as a mean to development, a way of life for cultural diversity. Migrants who have changed their behaviour according to the system of the new environment are quite interactive to the host society and their involvement in mainstreaming is quite significant and precise. Different civil organisation claimed that the indigenous people will be paralysed socio-culturally if the free influx is not checked in time. Therefore, the demand is all about in the favour of the indigenous people, but at the same time, a proper safeguarding rule for the migrants should also be taken up to curtail the cases of communal disharmony in Manipur arising the question of proper documentation and avoid the illegal intruders.

References

- [1] Ammarell, Gene. 2002. "Bugis Migration and Modes of Adaptation to Local Situations", *Ethnology*, The University of Pittsburg, Vol. 41, No. 1, pp, 51-67. (journal style)
- [2] Arunkumar, M.C. 2010. "Meitei Diaspora and the Identity Politics" *Sociology, Social Anthropology*, 1 (1-2): 1-12, Kamla-Raj. (Journal style)
- [3] Bailey, F.G. 1957. *Caste and Economic Frontier*. Manchester. (book style)
- [4] Bogue, Donald J. 1969. "*Principles of Demography*". New York: John Wiley and Sons. pp 752-823. (book style)
- [5] Bottomore, T.B. 1986. „*Sociology*, Blackie & Son (India) Ltd. (book style)
- [6] Coenders, Marcel Theodorus. 2001. "Nationalistic Attitudes and Ethnic Exclusionism in a Comparative Perspective: An Empirical Study of Attitudes Toward the Country Ethnic Immigrants in 22 Countries". Interuniversity Center for Social Science Theory and Methodology, ICS-dissertation, Nijmegen. (dissertation report)

- [7] Deth, Jan. 1986. "*A Note on Measuring Political Participation in Comparative Research, Quality and Quantity*". 120: 120-272. (book style)
- [8] Dube, S.C. 1955. "Indian Village", London. (book style)
- [9] Kleppner, P. 1982. "*Who Voted? The Dynamics of Electoral Turnout*", 1870–1980. New York: Praeger. (book style)
- [10] Lee, Everett S. 1969. "*A Theory of Migration*" in J.A. Jackson (Ed.) *Migration*. Cambridge: University Press of Cambridge, pp 282-297. (book chapter style)
- [11] Scott, J. 1999. "The State and People Who Move Around". *IIAS Newsletter* 19:3, 45. (newsletter)
- [12] United Committee Manipur (UCM). 2005. "*Influx of Migrants into Manipur*". (book style)
- [13] United Nations. 1958. Multilingual Demographic Dictionary in *Population Studies* No. 29, New York. pp.46-48. (technical report style)
- [14] <http://e-pao.net/GP.asp?src=23..210912.sep12> retrieved on November 13, 2013. (General Internet site)
- [15] "The Poknapham" daily paper circulated in Manipur [Accessed: August 25, 2013]. (Newspaper)
- [16] "The Sangai Express", Imphal, January 31, 2011. (Newspaper)

Author Profile



Sougaijam Priyokumar Meitei did B.Sc. Anthropology from G.C.College, Silchar, and M.Sc. Anthropology from Manipur University in 2003 and 2005. During 2007-2009, he stayed as Research Officer in International Institute for Population Sciences, Mumbai after getting the MPS degree from the same institute and held the same designation in Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai during 2009-2010. He is currently a doctoral student under UGC-SRF Fellowship at Manipur University. He qualified UGC-NET examination in Population Studies, Anthropology, Sociology and Women Studies.