

CHAPTER 5

DEVELOPMENTAL PERSPECTIVE: SOCIO-CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC DIMENSIONS OF THE PNAR

Development has been the demand of the day for ever. Every individual, society, state and country march towards development and progression across both time and space. No one wants to be stagnant or saturated with static ideas and activities. Hence, development aims at the dynamic process of progression in which someone or something develops towards transition and change. A multitude of meaning is attached to the idea of development; the term is complex, contested, ambiguous, and elusive. However, in the simplest term's development can be defined as bringing about social change that allows people to achieve their human potential (www.soas.ac.uk retrieved on 15/06/2019). An important point to emphasize is that development is a politically conceived term. It has a range of meaning that depend on the context in which the term is used, and it may also be used to reflect and to justify a variety of different agendas held by different people or organization. On the whole in the parlance of social sciences development can be conceived as change in desired direction within a stipulated time frame.

Development is a process that creates growth, progress, positive change or the addition of physical, economic, environmental, social and demographic components. The purpose of development is a rise in the level and quality of life of the population, and the creation or expansion of local / regional income and economic / employment opportunities, without damaging the resources of the environment. Development is visible and useful, not necessarily immediately, and includes an aspect of quality change

and the creation of conditions for a continuation of that change (www.scd.israel.org/en/development retrieved on 15/06/2019).

But development is not simply about the interactions between human groups; it involves the natural environment, the habitant and the surroundings, the myths and magic of life and above all a constant conversion of natural resources into cultural resources. The renowned Indian economist, Amartya Sen (1990) developed the concept of 'capability approach', which defined development as a tool empowering people to touch the utmost level of their ability, through granting freedom of action, i.e., freedom of economic, social and family actions, etc (www.ohi.org.uk retrieved on 15/05/2010). Development is an advancement of augmentation and alterations essential for improved living and existence. It is a word completely connected to human beings than anything that exists in this universe. The purpose of development is to ensure quality of life of the population, and the formation or extension of local / regional income and employment opportunities without detrimental to the resources of the surroundings.

Development always brings improvement in the life of the people, however, the environment and the surroundings are effected by the ruthless encroachment by the humans into the treasures hidden in the womb of the mother earth and it takes a diverse course and return to humans, where he / she finds with alarm and solves the challenges that mother paused before them. Thus, development in recent years proposed sustainability for all that finds accommodation in the nature. Sustainable development or holistic development aims at a higher relationship between the entire nature and all it contains at large and individual in particular.

5.1. OBJECTIVES OF DEVELOPMENT

Human beings have an innate desire to upgrade his / her life. Thus the main objective of development can be seen as: (i) to increase the accessibility and extend the dispersal of basic life-sustaining properties such as food, shelter, health, and protection; (ii) to advance levels of living, including, better education, higher job opportunities, greater incomes, and special attention to cultural and human values, keeping not only

material well-being but also to generate greater individual and national self-esteem and enhancement; and (iii) to develop the range of economic and social aptitudes by freeing humans from the forces of ignorance, slavery and human misery. Thus, one can easily say that the core values of the development can be seen as: (i) sustenance, the ability to meet the basic needs; (ii) self-esteem, giving dignity in choosing the work; and (iii) freedom, to make choices as one pleases without curtailing the dignity of others.

5.2. HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Human development is defined as the process of enlarging people's freedoms and opportunities and improving their well-being. Central to the human development approach is the concept of capabilities. While enlarging the freedom to choose and improve the qualities of life it is also important to note that everyone respects the presence of the 'other' in the society and one individual's development should not be prioritized at the cost of the other. It is internationally accepted that every individual has a right for good health, access to knowledge and dignified way of living. Apart from these basic elements development also extends its wings to participate in decision making that affect one's life, mutual and friendly relationship with the environment. While expecting societal respect, development also urges the individual to shun violence for a relaxed way of living. These improve not only the quality of life but also aim at a holistic and sustainable development.

5.3. TRIBE: A CONCEPTUAL UNDERSTANDING

The word tribe is derived from the Latin root 'tribus' meaning a particular kind of social and political organization existing in all societies. Originally it was used to imply three divisions among the early Romans. Later on, it was used to show political division in the society, the poor or the masses (Panda, 2006: 33). In the western world the term is meant for families and communities having same title and later it stood for division of

territory allotted to a family or community. But much later with the rise of academic specialties social scientists tried to define the term in many ways.

Max Weber (1958: 31) gives six elements in defining the term 'tribal' like (i) fixed territory, (ii) lack of professional specialization, (iii) lack of social ranking with special reference to a larger community, (iv) presence of a political association, (v) presence of an exogamous sib and no clear cut endogamy of the tribe as a whole, and (vi) absence of commensality rules.

A.R. Desai (1961: 48-63), the renowned Indian social scientist suggests that the tribals are those communities which are still confined to the original forest habitats and follow an old pattern of life. Semi-tribal communities are those who have more or less settled down in rural areas and have taken to agriculture and allied occupations. Those who have migrated to urban or semi-urban areas and are engaged in modern industries and vocations and have adopted modern cultural traits can be termed as assimilated tribes of the Indian population.

According to the anthropologist Ghurye (1963: 37), the common features possessed by all tribal groups are as follows: (i) they live away from the civilized world in the inaccessible parts in the forests and hills, (ii) they speak the same tribal dialect, (iii) they belong either to one of the three stocks – Negritos, Austroloid or Mongoloids, (iv) they profess primitive religion known as animism in which worship of ghosts and spirits is the most important element, (v) they follow primitive occupation such as gleaning, hunting and gathering of forest products, (vi) they are largely carnivorous, (vii) they lived either naked or semi naked, and (viii) they have nomadic habits and love for drink and dance (Panda, 2006: 34).

T. B. Naik (1968: 84-97) gives seven facts to identify the tribal community: (i) functional interdependence within the community, (ii) economic backwardness (iii) geographical isolation, (iv) common dialect, (v) politically a unit under a common tribal authority, (vi) own traditional laws, and (vii) members are averse to change.

Vimal Chandra (1968: 27-28) argued that primitiveness and backwardness can be counted as the basic elements for a tribal group. While studying the main tribal groups he suggested four basic elements: (i) tribal origin, (ii) primitive way of life, (iii) habitat in

remote and less accessible areas, and (iv) general backwardness in all respect. Suresh Chandra Rajora (1986: 7-10) considers tribal society as: (i) tribal society is a whole society, (ii) tribal oral system is a normative binding force, (iii) culture of silence, (iv) tribals have their own specific economic system, (v) clan of solidarity, and (vi) liquor economy.

D.N. Majumdar (1980: 24) in his famous book *An Introduction to Social Anthropology*, defined tribe as ‘a social group with territorial affiliation, endogamous with no specialization of functions, ruled by tribal officers, hereditary or otherwise, united in language or dialect, recognizing social distance from tribes and castes, but without any stigma attached in the case or a caste structure following tribal traditions, beliefs and customs, illiberal of naturalization of ideas from alien sources, above all conscious of a homogeneity of ethnic and territorial integration’.

The running features of tribe and tribals in all these definitions can be seen as (i) homogenous category, (ii) definite territory, (iii) traditional or sustainable mode of living of livelihood. These features make them feeble and submissive, which leads to assimilation to the non-tribal communities.

5.4. TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT IN INDIA

Though the British took initiative to start tribal development in India, we have the anecdotes wherein the emperor Asoka was the first one to initiate the process by creating the post, *Anta-mahamatya*, the minister for the ‘downtrodden’. In 1885 the British in India used the term ‘tribe’ to enumerate certain social groups in India. The British administrators felt the necessity of labelling certain ethnic groups as ‘tribes’ on the basis of an impressionistic characterization of their physical and socio-cultural isolation from the mainstream of caste bound Indian society (Ghurye, 1963: 1-24). The Government of India Act 1935 used the term ‘Backward Tribe’ and the constitution replaced the term ‘backward’ with ‘scheduled’. The tribal people are differently identified as *Vanyajati* (forest caste), *Vanvasi* (forest-inhabitants), *Pahariya* (hill men), *Adimjati* (primitive

castes), *Adivasi* (original settlers), *Janajati* (folk communities) and *AnusuchitJanajati* (scheduled tribes) in India.

5.4.1. Tribal Development in India: Policies

After the independence of the country in 1947, the national government of the nascent nation developed certain strategies for rural and tribal development in consultation with experts in this field. Three types of policies are adopted in India towards tribal development:

5.4.1.1. Policy of Segregation

The policy of segregation was initiated by the British rulers by virtue of which they isolated the tribals from the general populace of the country. The entry of the British into the tribal dominated area was resisted by revolts and rebellions. The tribal masses were unaware of the intention of the British rulers and of the implication of the policy of segregation. As a result, they were cut off from the mainstream of society and remained as a prey to the exploitation of the non-tribal moneylenders, *zaminders* and forest contractors. Against this backdrop, with the attainment of independence the Government of independent India too followed a policy of isolation for some time. Although the Government tried to cure the malady of the tragedy of the tribals through welfare measures but that could not prevent the separatist tendencies of the tribals to demand for separate statehood (Panda, 2006: 54-55).

5.4.1.2. Policy of Assimilation

Assimilation involves a total loss of cultural identity for the group that is being assimilated. It is absorbed into the dominant group by adopting the norms, attitudes and values of the latter. The minority community harbours the fear of losing its cultural identity and develops a defense mechanism aimed at safeguarding their cultural identity.

A.V. Thakkar writes: ‘The aborigines should form part of the civilized communities of our country not for the purpose of swelling the figures of the followers of this region or that, but to share with the advanced communities the privileges and duties on equal terms in the general social and political life of the country. Separatism and isolation seem to be dangerous theories and they strike at the root of national solidarity’. The policy of assimilation, however, has its own dilemma. On the one hand it protects the tribals from experiencing the pains of isolation but on the other hand their assimilation with the majority groups sometimes reduce them to a compromising, vulnerable situation as they found themselves awkward juxtaposition (Panda, 2006: 55-56).

5.4.1.3. Policy of Integration

The third way of approaching the tribal development is the policy of integration. Myron Weiner identifies five uses of the term ‘integration’: (i) national integration or the integration of the diverse and discrete, cultural loyalties and development of a sense of nationality, (ii) territorial integration, (iii) value integration, (iv) elite-cum mass integration, and (v) integration of individuals into organization for purposive activities. Considering the tribal situation in India, the administrators of the country took a deep insight to the tribal problem and an integrated approach as its solution. There were exchange of ideas and ideologies amongst the historians, social scientists, political scientists and anthropologists. It was decided unanimously that the tribals should not be left to lag behind and cut off completely from the mainstream (Panda, 2006: 58). Based on contemporary situation Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India envisaged five principles for tribal development which is famously known as *Panch-Sheel*. The principles are:

- People should develop along the lines of their own genius and we should avoid imposing anything on them. We should try to encourage in every way their own traditional arts and cultures.
- Tribal rights in land and forests should be respected.

- We should try to train and build up a team of their own people to do the work of administration and development. Some technical personnel from outside will, no doubt, be needed, especially in the beginning. But we should avoid introducing too many outsiders into tribal territory.
- We should not over-administer these areas or overwhelm them with a multiplicity of schemes. We should rather work through and not in rivalry to their own social and cultural institutions.
- We should judge results, not by statistics or the amount of money spent, but by the quality of human character that is evolved (www.gktoday.in retrieved on 17/05/2019)

5.5. CONSTITUTIONAL SAFEGUARDS FOR THE TRIBALS

There are almost twenty Articles and two Special Schedules in the Constitution of India which elaborately explains the protective privileges meant for the tribal people. The special provisions incorporated in the Constitution under different sections are Part 3 on Fundamental Rights, Part 4 on Directive Principles of State Policy, Part X on Scheduled and Tribal Areas, Part XII on Finance, Property, etc., Part XVI on Special Provisions relating to certain classes and lastly the Vth and VIth Schedule of the Indian Constitution. The Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act 1989, Provision of Panchyats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996, the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 epitomized the fact.

The educational safeguards have been given to the tribals by Article 15(4) and Article 29, the safeguards for employment to the tribals have been given by Article 16(4), 320(4) and 333, economic safeguards have been promised by the Article 19 and Article 46 which furnishes protection from all forms of exploitation. As per Article 17, all citizens shall have the right to freedom of speech and expression, to assemble peacefully and without arm, to form associations or unions, to throughout the territory of India, to acquire, hold and dispose of property and to practice any profession, or to carry on any

occupation, trade or business. However, important exceptions have been made to some of the fundamental rights for protection of the interest of the Scheduled Tribes.

The Article 275 (1) provides grants from the Union to certain States for tribal development. The creation of Sixth Schedule for the formation of autonomous regions and regional councils as regards the management of resources according to the customs also receives direction under the Article. Thus, the entire welfare program for the Scheduled Tribes is based on Article 46, whereas the required funds are provided under Article 275 (I). The Articles 330, 332, 335 ensure reservation of seats for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the *Lok Sabha* (Article 330) and State Legislative Assemblies (Article 332). The Articles 330, 332, 335 ensure reservation of seats for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the Lok Sabha (Article 330) and State Legislative Assemblies (Article 332).

5.5.1. Ministry of Tribal Affairs

A new Ministry of Tribal Affairs was created in October 1999 headed by a cabinet minister for a focused attention on tribal issues and to plan, administer and supervise the programmes, projects and schemes for the development and welfare of the tribal communities. The central Government provides grants-in-aid to non-governmental organizations. The National Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Finance Development Corporation was bifurcated and a new corporation called National Scheduled Tribes Finance Development was established in April 2001 (www.tribal.nic.in retrieved on 10/05/2018).

5.6. DEVELOPMENTAL PARAMETERS

While analyzing the development of a state there are some parameters which determine the growth of the state. These attributes can be seen as in the light of macro data.

1. **GDP Gross Domestic Product:** GDP is the most widely used tool for assessing a country's economic development. "Gross" means that all production is evaluated regardless of its goals. It can be directed to immediate consumption, investment in new fixed assets or to replace impaired fixed assets. "Domestic" refers to the territory of the country. There are many ways to measure GDP. Usually, the following formula is used for this: $GDP = \text{consumer spending} + \text{gross investment} + \text{public expenditure} + (\text{export} - \text{import})$. To assess the quality of life, the GDP per capita (per inhabitant of the country) is usually used.

2. **GNI Gross National Income:** GNI is the aggregate market value of the total volume of final production of goods and services in the economy in one year. The final means are purchased for direct use and not for resale or further processing. In the calculation of GNI, non-productive transactions are excluded: financial (state and private transfer payments, operations with securities) and sale of second-hand goods. GNI is determined by summing up all the income received from the production in the given year. Methods of calculating GNI: $GNI = \text{consumer spending of households} + \text{investment costs of business} + \text{government purchases of goods and services} + \text{expenses of foreigners}$; $GNI = \text{expenses and payments not related to the payment of income} + \text{wages} + \text{rental payments} + \text{interest} + \text{profit}$. There are nominal and real GNI. Nominal GNI is expressed in current prices, in the currency of the respective country. Gross National Income adjusted for inflation (price increases) or deflation (price reduction) is the real GNI expressed in dollars at a constant rate.

3. **Improving the living standard:** The standard of living is one of the most important economic indicators of development. Under the standard of living is the provision of the population with the necessary material goods and services, the adequate level of their consumption and the degree of satisfaction of reasonable (rational) needs. The monetary valuation of the goods and services actually consumed in the average household within a certain period of time and corresponding to a certain level of satisfaction of needs is the cost of living. In a broad sense, the term "standard of living of the population" includes the conditions of life, labor conditions, everyday leisure, health, education, natural habitat, etc. In this case, the term "quality of life" is also often used.

4. **Branch structure of the economy:** There are "primary", "secondary", and "tertiary" sectors of the economy. This indicator is determined by the structure of GNI or the structure of employment of economically active population. In the more developed countries, the service sector prevails, while in the less developed ones - agriculture or the mining industry. A high proportion of people employed in agriculture indicates that a significant part of the population produces food only for their own consumption. On the contrary, the low share of citizens employed in agriculture area indicates its high efficiency - a small number of farmers satisfy the needs of the rest of society or the country does not produce food in general but buys it by selling oil or high-tech products. In more developed countries, there is a trend of job growth in the tertiary sector of the economy and a decline in industrial employment.

5. **Inflation level:** Among the causes that affect inflation, there are money emission, trade union activities aimed at increasing the wages of employees, imperfect competition in the market among manufacturers, and many others. Limitation of inflation in modern market conditions is necessary, not only to protect the economy from overheating but also to prevent the deterioration of the economic situation in the conditions of recession or crisis.

6. **Human Development Index:** This is a combined indicator characterizing human development in countries and regions of the world that is drawn up by the United Nations Development Programme and is used in the special series of reports of the United Nations (UN). It consists of three main components that characterize human development: life expectancy, education, and living standards. Education is measured by the literacy of adults and the average number of years of study. The standard of living is

measured by real GDP per capita adjusted for the local cost of living (purchasing power parity).

7. Development of entrepreneurship: The social importance of small business is determined by the massiveness of a group of small proprietors - owners of enterprises and their employees whose total number is one of the most significant qualitative characteristics of the economy of the country. It is this group of the active population that serves the bulk of consumers, produces a complex level of products and services in accordance with rapidly changing market requirements.

8. Place of the country in the international division of labor: This refers to the specialization of economies of individual countries in the production of a certain type of goods and services that they exchange. This indicator serves as an objective basis for the internationalization of the economic area of the world community and the foundation for the peaceful coexistence of states.

9. Population growth: Rapid population growth lowers the sums of savings, increases labor force and makes it difficult to control it, aggravates the quality of labor resources by reducing the level of spending on education and health, weakens technical innovations, reduces the number of resources per person, and ultimately slows GDP growth per capita.

10. Employment: One of the main goals of the national economy is to achieve a high level of employment. This does not contradict the laws of the country but it is aimed at satisfying personal or social needs, while bringing earnings to the people. The able-bodied population includes all those who may work by age and for health reasons. Now you know what the main indicators of economic development of any country are. We hope that this information was useful for you. (<https://www.legit.ng/1139672-top-10-indicators-economic-development-a-country.html> retrieved on 13/02/2020).

Even after completion of the Eleventh Five-Year Plan (2007-2012) of the country, the state of Meghalaya and both the East and West Jaintia Hills districts have been suffering from a slow pace of development. The economic development of an area depends mainly on its geographical characteristics, resource base, socio-economic and political-cultural factors which normally vary over time and space. As these factors determine the initial level of economic development, this chapter attempts to analyze the socio-economic and cultural characteristics of the development of the districts.

5.7. DEVELOPMENTAL PERSPECTIVE AMONG THE PNAR

Jaintia Hills is predominantly a hilly terrain. Being the eastern part of Meghalaya, it is an imposing plateau with rolling grasslands, hills and river valleys. It is marked by deep gorges and abrupt slopes. Waterfalls rush down steep slopes and valleys through which flowing rivers fall to the plains. At the foot of these slopes, a narrow strip of plain

land runs along the international border with Bangladesh. The districts are blessed with many natural resources. The hard working labour force of these districts find their living in agricultural works as well as other skilled and semi-skilled activities. In the East Jaintia Hills District Pnars are employed in the cement companies and other allied activities.

5.7.1. The Pnar Habitat: A Storehouse of Minerals

The Pnar territory is a store house of minerals. The principal mineral deposits explored in Jaintia Hills are limestone, coal, and clay. These minerals are utilized in several mineral-based industries in the country. The total estimated reserve of limestone is 15,100 million tonnes. Huge deposits of limestone and coal are found in the eastern part of Meghalaya in the Jaintia Hills districts. Most of the minerals are being extracted and sold without any value addition. Thus, these minerals have an immense potential for processing as well as for exports. Being situated in the eastern part of the state Jaintia Hills shares boundary with Bangladesh, which is a huge mart for the minerals of the Jaintia Hills. Most of the economic resources of Jaintia Hills are related with tertiary formation of Eocene age. The main minerals associated with the formation are:

5.7.1.1. Limestone

The total estimated reserve of limestone is 15,100 million tons. Huge deposits of limestone are found in Lumshnong, Sutnga, Nongkhlieh, Lakadong, Syndai and Nongtalang. It is the main raw material for the cement production. It is used in the local factories and exported to other states like Assam and outside Assam to Bangladesh. During the year 2009-2010 the total production of limestone was 14,97,360 metric tones as is evident from available records.

5.7.1.2. Coal

The coal reserves in the Jaintia Hills have calorific value with low ash content but high sulphur content, which is suitable for setting up of thermal power projects. The coal is also suitable for producing iron, steel, gas, coke for metallurgical purposes, etc. The main coalfields are Lakadong, Bapung, Sutnga, Rymbai, Jalaphet, Moopala, Jarain, Barato, Raling, Shangpung, and Musianglamare. According to the Department of Mining and Geology, Government of Meghalaya the production of coal was 3,722,21 metric tonnes during the year 2009-2010, which boosts the state's economy. Due to the availability of rich mineral resources, a number of cement factories were set up in the State. In the Jaintia Hills district, there are a number of cement factories in Lumshnong, Thangskai, Mynkree, Nongsning, etc. Major plants like Cement Manufacturing Company Ltd. (Star Cement), Meghalaya Cement Ltd. (Topcem), M/s JUD, M/s Adhunik Cement Ltd., M/s Hills Cement Ltd., M/s Amrit Cements and M/s Green Valley Industries Pvt. Ltd. are already in operation in the State. A number of groups like Lafarge Cement, Dalmia Group, Balaji Group and others are also exploring possibilities of setting up cement plants in Meghalaya. Coal is exported to Guwahati and also to outside Assam and to Bangladesh.

5.7.1.3. Clay

Clay is found in different parts of the West Jaintia Hills districts of Meghalaya. The main China Clay deposits are found in Mynngat, Thadlaskein, Mulieh and Shangpung. The total estimate of reserves of China Clay in the district is about 200 million tones that enriches the state's economy.

5.7.1.4. Soil and Crops

From the available geomorphological studies, it is evident that the Jaintia Hills Districts have red sandy and red loamy soil, with poor phosphorus but rich in nitrogen

and medium potash content. The district uplands have dry soil both in its north and south. Though rice and maize are cultivated in large scale, cereals and millets also available in the district. Vegetables such as brinjal, bottle gourd, bitter melon, cabbage, cauliflower, carrot, turnip, pears, pumpkin and fruits like pineapple, citrus fruits, banana and papaya, oil seeds like soya bean, sesamum, rapeseed and mustard seeds are grown in these districts. Apart from these there are many seasonal fruits and vegetables are cultivated and consumed by the people of these districts.

5.7.1.5. Agriculture

Meghalaya is an agrarian state. Large number of people are still engaged in agricultural activities and agriculture remains as the major source of income and it contributes significantly towards the state GDP. Agriculture thus plays a great role in the overall economic development of the district and the state. The generation of income and employment also depends upon the agricultural activities. It is common perception that the comparatively low productivity of the agriculture in the upland areas which forms the major portion of the land in the district /state leads to uneconomical operation in the field and this in many cases has resulted in agriculture being the only subsistence farming. Efforts have been taken to adopt modernize methods of technology in cultivation to reduce large scale *jhum* cultivation through settled cultivation with high economic value crops. During the Ninth Plan period, a number of measures / activities have been taken up by the Department of Agriculture especially in introducing horticultural cash crops like Tea, Mushroom, Cashew nut, etc. and encouraged other activities like floriculture and establishment of horticultural nurseries in the private sector for commercialization towards economic development. Thus, the authority has given renewed thrust on infrastructural development of agriculture including horticulture so that productivity can be increased and that the level of economic activity in the villages and rural areas can be given the desired momentum to bring about economic transformation in agricultural production. The gross cropped area in 2008-2009 was 3,373,94 hectares and net cropped area 2,841,49 hectares. Although the agricultural growth rate is yet to touch the national level in the district, it is however, slowly and steadily progressing during the period in

spite of various constraints such as undulating topography, problem of communication, dispersal pattern of population, land tenure system, unsystematic marketing avenues, inadequate credit support, etc. Through continued efforts in the agricultural sector, with greater vigour and renewed emphasis and by adopting certain thrust and priority production to improve the productivity of both agricultural and horticultural, food self-sufficiency may be expected in future.

Table 5.1

Production of Agricultural crops in the District with the Area and Yield in 2009-2010

Sl. No	Crops	Area in Hectars	Production in Mt. Tonnes	Yield in Kg. / Hectares
01	Cereals			
	Rice	12374	21097	1705
	Maize	3066	3661	1193
	Other cereals and small millets	162	181	1117
02	Pulses			
	Other Rabi pulses	77	52	675
03	Total oil seeds	499	575	1152
04	Sugarcane	7	5	818

Directorate of Agriculture Meghalaya

5.7.1.6. Irrigation

Irrigation facilities in the districts are not adequate. Out of the cultivated area of 45,126 thr irrigated area is only 2,222 hecters. The main source of water is riverds and streams. Based on the existing topography and the hilly terrain of the district, there is practically no scope for major irrigation is possible. Considering the need to improve the agricultural production many minor irrigation projects have been taken up in the past years. Two main minor irrigation projects are: (1) life irrigation project and (2) flow

irrigation project. With these 2,222 hectares are covered and many hectares of land are being slowly getting covered with these schemes.

5.7.1.7. Animal Husbandry

Animal husbandry which includes livestock and poultry is an important indicator that shows the pace of growth and contribution to the rural economic scenario at the district and state levels. In case of self-employment in livestock and dairy-based farming and food processing, livestock and poultry is the only alternative vocation of the villagers for a subsidiary living. Livestock including trend of poultry farming reflect the pace of development in the animal husbandry sector. The district has also recorded 1 veterinary hospital, 13 veterinary dispensaries, 13 veterinary aid centers, 3 mobile veterinary dispensaries and 1 vigilance unit (www.megavht.gov.in retrieved on 20/05/2019).

Table 5.2

The Various Forms of Livestock Available in the District

SI No	Livestock	Number
1	Crossbred cattle	1208
2	Indegenous Cattle	146289
3	Buffalo	2224
4	Crossbread sheep	30
5	Indigenous Sheep	12
6	Goats	27005
7	Horses and ponies	33
8	Crossbread pigs	13776
9	Indigenous pigs	56432
10	Rabbits	4
11	Fowls	367303
12	Ducks	7536

5.7.1.8. Fishery

The available fishing resources, in the district, are either in natural pond or in river. Fisheries in large scale are yet to be developed in a scientific manner. The traditional and old method of fish culture has been practiced by the fish farmers in the district. During the year 2007-08, the total number of fish seeds distributed is 3,15,000 as against 91,000 in 2000-2001, which reflects a steady growth. The State Government has set up feed mill for fish seed in the private sector to create employment for the unemployed youth and to raise the economic condition of the fish farmers by supplementing the feed requirement in the centers nearest to the C.D. Block headquarters and important places, etc. to remove the hurdles responsible for this poor growth due to the fact that many farmers do not provide proper feeding to the fishes as the procurement of feed and the cost of transport from the main centers, etc. supplied by the district authority made it quite inconvenient and expensive for the fish farmers and as such most of the fish farmers neglected to pay much importance to this aspect(www.megahvt.gov.in retrieved on 20/05/2019).

5.7.1.9. Trade and Commerce

Trade is considered to be one of the major sources of livelihood of the people in the district. Transactions of goods and articles at the local level is chiefly carried on through weekly markets held at different places in the district. The chief articles exported from the district are timber, cotton and *muga* yarn, lime, coal, various varieties of citrus fruits including oranges, limes and lemons, pineapple, banana and cash crops like betel-leaf, arecanut, bay leaf, honey, hides and skins, etc. Coal and potato are steadily gaining importance in the field of export. Goods imported include rice and other food grains, sugar, salt oils, iron and steel goods, mill cloth and silks, pulses, wheat, medicines, etc. The rapid development of the road network has contributed greatly to the expansion of trade and commerce especially in the town of Jowaithat serves as the nerve center for dissemination of goods and articles. Development of transport facility also aided in the expansion of trade and commerce. Jowai being the only town in the Jaintia Hill Districts,

it has now become the principal centre of the whole sale trade as it is well connected with other centres within and outside the district.

Table 5.3

Blockwise list of Primary Markets Linked to the Jowai Market

Sl.No.	Name of the Market and periodicity	Principal Commodities	Present ownership
1	Thadlaskein C & RD Block		
	Wahiajer (weekly)	Rice, maize, potato oranges, sweet potato, vegetables, and livestock	JHADC
	Nangbah (weekly)	Rice, maize, potato oranges, sweet potato,	JHADC
	Nartiang (weekly)	Rice, maize, potato oranges, turmeric	Doloi of Nartiang
	Namdong (weekly)	Rice, maize	JHADC
	Jowai (weekly)	Rice, maize	JHADC
	Khanduli (weekly)	Rice, maize, potato oranges, sweet potato, vegetables, and livestock	JHADC
2	Laskein C & RD Block		
	Mookaiaw	Rice, maize, potato oranges, banana and livestock	JHADC
	Barato	Rice, maize, banana and livestock	Doloi of Shiliang Myntang
	Raliang	Rice, maize, banana	JHADC
	Garampani	Rice, maize, banana	JHADC
	Shangpung	Rice, maize, potato oranges, turmeric, potato, vegetables, and livestock	Doloi Shangpung
3	Amlaram C & RD Block		
	Jarain	Rice, maize, potato oranges, sweet potato, vegetables, and livestock	JHADC
	Muktapur	Areanut, betel leaf, oranges and pineapple	JHADC
	Dawki		Headman of Dwaki
	Khliehriat C & RD Block		
	Khliehriat	Rice, maize, potato oranges, sweet potato, vegetables, and livestock	Headman of Khliehriat
	Chiehruphi	Rice, maize, potato oranges, sweet potato, vegetables, and	Doloi of Narpuh

4		livestock	
	Lumshnong	Rice, maize, potato oranges, sweet potato, vegetables, and livestock	Doloi of Narpuh
	Umkiang	Rice, maize, potato oranges, sweet potato, vegetables, and livestock	JHADC
	Rymbai	Rice, maize, potato oranges, sweet potato, vegetables, and livestock	Doloi of Rymbai
	Sutnga	Rice, maize, potato oranges, sweet potato, vegetables, and livestock	Doloi of Sutnga

5.7.1.10. Forest

In every economy forest plays an important role since it provides greater quantities of timber and fodder besides conservation of water and soil. These two districts have highest reserved forests, both classed and unclassed, areas which is about 1,540.64 sq. km for the year 2009-2010. Many varieties of trees, valuable plants and rare orchids are grown in the forest and these are exported in large quantities to different parts of the state and outside.

5.8. GROWTH OF INDUSTRY

Industrial arena in the Jaintia Hills has improved considerably during the last two decades. Factories, thermal plants, small cottage industries multiplied in the Jaintia Hills that not only gave employment to the people but it increased the living standard of the people and per capita income. It improved the infrastructural facilities, financial assistance, incentives to the people of the district and above all to the state and country. Most of the industries are Agro-based production, leather processing, forest based, minerals based, etc. The total number of small-scale industries registered with the Directorate of Industries as per 2007 to 2008 is 816 with a total investment of Rs.

1239.84 lakhs that provided employment to 3154 persons. The type of Small-scale industries available in the District is presented in the table below.

Table 5.4

Industry

Sl.No.	Type of Industry	Number
1	Wooden, furniture and fixture	34
2	Cement based industries	28
3	Steel based industries	47
4	Leather based industries	5
5	Stone products	3
6	Tailoring	82
7	Lime making	7
8	Saw Mills	17
9	Betelnut preservation	195
10	Motor repairing and servicing	43
11	Tyre retreading	8
12	Bakery	101
13	Printing press, Offsets	8
14	Cane / Bamboo works	19
15	Knitting and embroidery	25
16	Weaving, Handloom	3
17	Blacksmithy	18
18	Computer and data processing	2
19	Atta <i>chaki</i> and flour mills	39
20	Satellite Cable and T.V. Network	4
21	Others	128

Directorate on Industries Meghalaya

5.8.1. Electricity and Power

Electricity and power play an important role in the economic development. The Jaintia Hill districts owns immense potentialities for generating power on large scale measurable in terms of MKWH based on water and coal resources. In the state of Meghalaya, all the activities of electricity and power are managed and controlled by the Meghalaya Energy Corporation Limited (MeECL) constituted by the State Government (www.meecl.nic.in retrieved on 15/10/2018). The Jaintia Hills district is blessed with Lechka hydro thermal power plant that was commissioned to boost the capacity for production of electricity.

Table 5.5

The Status of Villages Electrification as on 31/12/2012

Sl. No	Particulars	Number
1	No. of villages	499
2	No. of Habitat villages	467
3	uninhabited	32
4	Elect (Old Defn)	431
5	Percentage	92.29
6	Elect (New Defn)	414
7	Percentage	88.65
8	MNREDA	28
9	DDG	3
10	Proposed for electrification through SPV system	5

www.meecl.nic.in

5.8.2. Road, Transport and Communication

As the State has hilly topography and difficult terrain, roads are the only means of transportation. A good arterial road connects Shillong the capital city of the State with the rest of the county, through Assam. The district is not connected by railways or river transportation as yet. The nearest railhead is Guwahati (204 kms. from Jowai). The only

airport in the State is in Umroi (135 kms. from Jowai) which provides connecting flight to Kolkata, Aizawl, Agartala, Imphal and Silchar and other parts of the country. The roads in the Jaintia Hills Districts are classified into:

- Village Roads: maintained by community Development Block
- District Road: maintained by District Council
- Town committee Road: Maintained by Town Committee
- Forest Department Road: Maintained by Forest Department
- District PWD Road and State Highway: Maintained by PWD
- National Highway: Maintained by PWD

Though both public and private sectors are involved in ensuring the transport facilities, the latter share the greater part. Due to hilly terrain of the districts, buses are few in number and the ordinary mode of transport is taxis. However, buses are seen in cities and main towns.

5.8.3. Health Facility

The Jaintia Hill Districts, both East and West, have two civil hospitals one in Jowai and the other in Khliehriat, eighteen Primary Health Centers and seventy-five Sub-Centres with four Set-Centres. There are 58 doctors working in these two districts in different hospitals and health centres. There are 13 nurses in the East Jaintia Hill District while 62 of them are working in West Jaintia Hill District. There are 10 and 18 pharmacists respectively in these districts. There are 54 A.N.M who are working in East Jaintia Hill district while 86 of them are on duty in West Jaintia Hill District. Health visitors are 8 in East Jaintia Hill District where 14 are in West Jaintia Hill District. Apart from these there are 9 Lab Technicians and 5 Vaccinators in East Jaintia Hill District while 18 Lab Technicians and 9 Vaccinators render their service in West Jaintia Hill District.

Table 5.6

Number of Para-Medical Staff in the Jaintia Hill Districts

District	Doctor	Nurse	Pharmacist	A.N.M.	Health Visitor	Lab-Technician	Vaccinator
East Jaintia Hills	58	13	10	54	8	9	5
West Jaintia Hills		62	18	89	14	18	9

Statistical Handbook Meghalaya 2017

According to the Statistical Report of 2017 Jaintia Hills District do not have special beds in the hospital like Maternity Beds, Pediatric Beds, T.B. Beds, etc. rather both the districts have 430 beds in General, 120 in East Jaintia Hill District and 310 in West Jaintia Hill District (Statistical Handbook of Meghalaya, 2017). There are 27 villages in the East Jaintia Hill district and 8 villages in the West Jaintia Hills District were given Drinking water facilities during the period 2015-2016.

5.8.4. Labour Force and Employment

In Jaintia Hills districts of Meghalaya 1,54,180 are workers that constitute 39.02 per cent of the total population out of which 88, 839 (45.46 per cent) are males and 65,341 (32.86 per cent) are females. The percentage of the main workers is 28 percentage that figures to 1, 10, 617 individuals, out of which 67,267 (34.27 per cent) are males and 43,350 (21.80 per cent) are females. The percentage of the marginal workers are high in both the districts of Jaintia Hills. A total of 43,563 are marginal workers that constitute 11.03 percentage of the population. There are 21,572 male marginal workers and 21,971 are females. It is interesting to note that the female marginal workers are more in number than males. Among the non-workers 54.74 per cent are males that figures to 1,07,446 individuals while there are 1,33,498 are females. They constitute 67.14 per cent of the population, while male non workers make up 54.74 per cent of the population.

Among the workers cultivators constitute 32.98 per cent of the population of the districts (50,844). There are 30,916 male individuals are engaged in cultivating that makes 34.80 per cent of the population while 30.50 per cent are female cultivators that is 19,928 souls.

5.8.5. Tourism Industry

Discover Jaintia: Nature's Own Land (2013), published by the Jaintia Tourism and Environment Society listed 40 places with tourist importance. It could be either historical places or places with natural beauty because Meghalaya is known for 'cascading rivers, mighty water falls, undulating grass covered hillocks, picturesque landscapes and thick forests, rich presence of flora and fauna, numerous streams, brooks and rivulets with crystal clear cold water'. Some of the important sites are mentioned below.

5.8.5.1. Nartiang Monoliths

Monoliths exist throughout the length and breadth of the Khasi and Jaintia Hills. However, the biggest collection of monoliths or megalithic stones in one single area is to be found north of the Nartiang market. These consists of Menhirs (upright stones) *Moo Shynrang* and Dolmens (flat stones in the horizontal position) locally known as *Moo Kynthai*. Within the perimeter of these megalithic collection stands the tallest Menhir erected by U Mar Phalyngki a trusted lieutenant of the Jaintia King to commemorate his victory in the battle. Other monoliths were erected by U Mar Phalyngki, U Luh Lyngskor Lamare and various clans of Nartiang village between 1500 A.D. and 1835 A.D.

5.8.5.2. Kiang Nongbah Monument

On the banks of the Myntdu River in the Syntu Ksiar Valley on a field known as *MadiahKmalBlai* stands a monument dedicated to Kiang Nongbah. Kiang Nongbah, a

Jaintia patriot during British rule died as a martyr for the cause of Indian liberation from British rule. The last words uttered by him from the scaffold before the public hanging on 30th December 1862 had remained true: "If my face turns eastwards when I die, we shall be free again within a hundred years. If it turns westward, we shall be enslaved forever".

5.8.5.3. Krang Suri Falls

Krang Suri is one of the most beautiful waterfalls in the District. It is located in the Amlarem Civil Sub Division. To transform the place into a tourists' destination the District Administration has initiated steps to construct chiseled and graveled footpaths and viewpoints to enable visitors to better appreciate the beauty of the waterfall and its surroundings. The footpaths are hewn from the natural multi colored stones available in the area, no cement has been used and stones have been placed symmetrically to enhance the aesthetic appeal of the area.

5.8.5.4. Ialong Park

The Park is located about 8 kms from Jowai. It is known for its sacred grove and for its setting which overlooks the beautiful Pynthorwah Valley. Through the Special DRDA Tourism Project the District Administration has taken step to beautify the park by creating infrastructure such as water dams and canals, toilet facilities with changing rooms, hoardings, *jungle* clearance which has attracted tourist far and wide. A water eco-park is also taking shape with an intention to change Ialong into a major Tourism Hub of the District.

5.8.5.5. Umlawan Cave

The sleepy hamlet of Lumshnong village came into lime-light recently when it has been confirmed that the Umlawan cave situated in this village is the longest and also the deepest in the sub-continent. The Umlawan cave is interconnected with two other

caves namely Kot-Sati and Umskor caves. The total length of these caves is more than 21 kms and about 100 m in depth. This place is 60 kms east of Jowai. Dotted across the entire district there are numerous caves and caverns with spectacular stalagmites and stalactite formations. Till now only a few of these caves have been explored and surveyed.

Apart from these there are many other places like Syntu Ksiar, Stone Bridge, Syndai Cave, Dwaki, Kupli river, Urdula water falls, Leshka, etc. that really attract the tourist to Jaintia Hills District.

5.9. THE PNAR DEVELOPMENTAL ATTRIBUTE

While analyzing the development in the two Jaintia Hills districts of Meghalaya one could find that the state the districts are lagging behind in many ways with regard to the educational facilities especially higher education. Both districts have two each degree colleges. The highest number of schools are in the Thadlaskein block in the west Jaintia Hills district. Though Khliehriat block is third with regard to population yet it has more educational institutions than Laskein block. It is to be noted that there is no single engineering college in these two districts.

Table 5.7

Summary of Villages Having Educational Facilities

Name Of Block	Villages having education institutions						
	Pre-primary	L.P	U. P.	Secondary school	Senior Secondary school	Degree colleges	engineering
Thadlaskein	115	114	54	14	4	2	0
Laskein	82	81	47	15	3	0	0
Amlaram	85	82	33	19	6	0	0

Khliehriat	101	96	45	16	5	2	0
Saipung	75	74	30	8	0	0	0

Figure 5.1

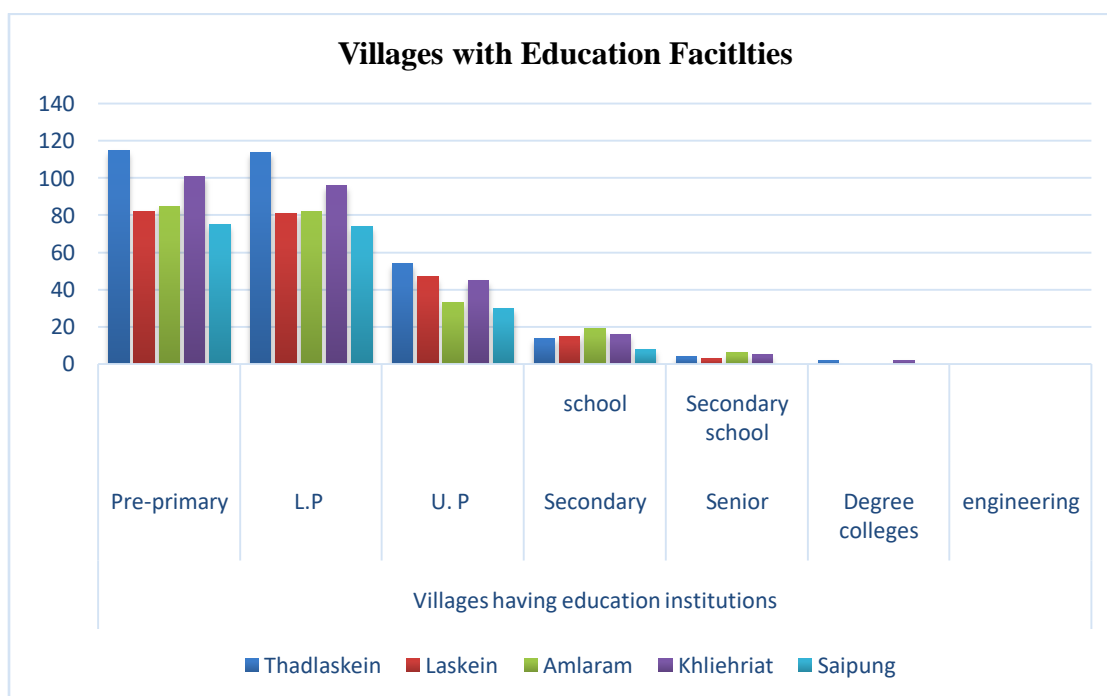


Table 5.8

Literacy Rate – Block – Wise

Block	Total			Rural			Urban		
	Person	Male	Female	Person	Male	Female	Person	Male	Female
Thadlaskein	64.45	60.44	68.28	56.56	51.44	61.53	91.10	91.83	90.44
Laskein	57.40	50.37	64.37	57.40	50.37	64.37	N. A.	N. A.	N. A.
Saipung	57.12	55.52	58.73	57.12	55.52	58.73	N. A.	N. A.	N. A.
Amalaram	70.24	68.59	71.89	70.24	68.59	71.89	N. A.	N. A.	N. A.
Khliehriat	58.78	58.08	59.46	58.78	58.08	59.46	N. A.	N. A.	N. A.
Jaintia Hills	61.64	58.14	65.06	59.05	55.29	62.75	91.1	91.83	90.44

From the above table it is clear that the Tadalaskein block under the West Jaintia Hillshas the highest number of educational institutions followed by Khliehriat, Amalaram, Laskein and Saipung blocks. The literacy rate of the Khliehriat block remains below 60 per cent both in male and female category. Among the total and rural literacy rate Amlaram block (70.24 per cent) standsfirst, while Saipung block(57.12 per cent) stands last.It is also noted that there are only four-degree colleges in both the districts and alarming to see that there is not even a single engineering college in these two districts of Jaintia Hills.

Table 5.9

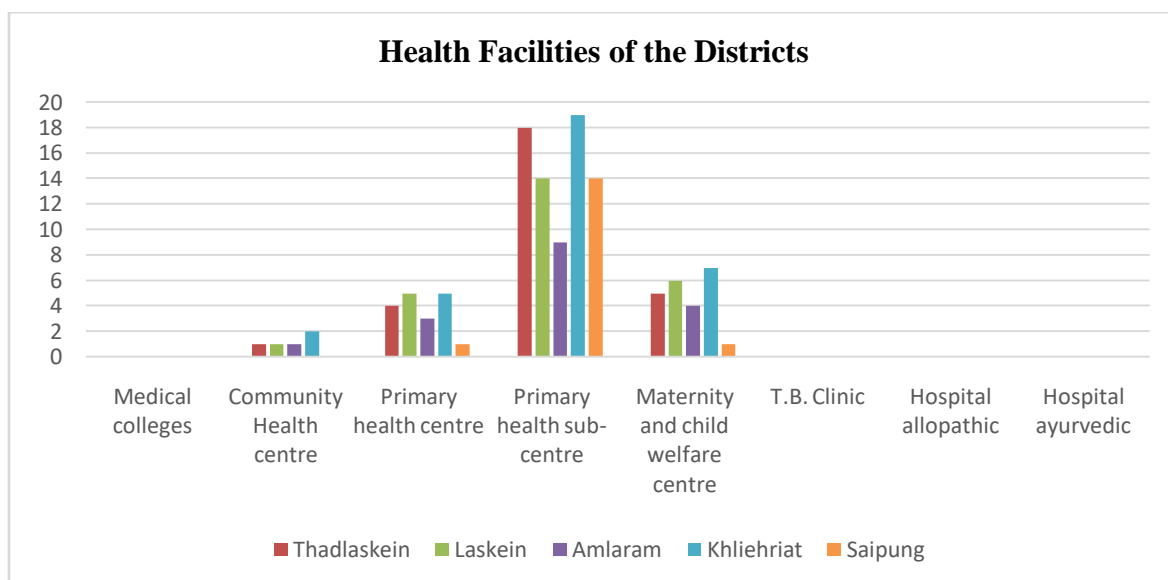
Summary of Villages Having Health facilities

Name Of Block	Medical colleges	Community Health centre	Primary health centre	Primary health sub-centre	Maternity and child welfare centre	T.B. Clinic	Hospital homeopathic	Hospital ayurvedic
Thadlaskein	0	1	4	18	5	0	0	0
Laskein	0	1	5	14	6	0	0	0
Amlaram	0	1	3	9	4	0	0	0
Khliehriat	0	2	5	19	7	0	0	0
Saipung	0	0	1	14	1	0	0	0

Statistical Handbook of Meghalaya 2017

Both the districts of Meghalaya do not have adequate health facilities. As per the Statistical Hand Book of Meghalaya says that the districts have only two civil hospitals with 5 community health centers, 18 Primary health centres, and 75 Primary sub-centres. Both the districts do have a single T.B. Clinic, Ayurvedic Homeopathic hospitals. Both districts have only 58 doctors and 75 nurses.

Figure 5.2



Water scarcity is very much acute in both the districts of Jaintia Hills. Many people are depending of the government water supply from the department of P.H.E. Constant mining and escavation coupled with the felling of trees in large number and levelling of hills and mountains pushed the water sources deeper. Natural water sources are dried up and tube wells are dug in various villages to meet tnhe needs of the human beings.

“Coal mining in the district undoubtedly has brought wealth and employment opportunities but leads to large scale denudation of forest cover, scarcity of water, pollution of air, water and soil and degradation of agricultural land. The chemical quality of surface water is worst affected as a result of coal mining in the district. Most of the rivers and streams in the mining areas are polluted. The main source of this pollution in the mining area is “Acid Mines Drainage” originating from mines and spoils, leaching of metals from soil and rocks, organic enrichment, silting etc. The waters of the mining areas have been found containing sulphate concentration between 16 to 161 mg/L. The high concentration of sulphates is mainly due to presence of iron sulphide in coal and rocks and its reaction with water and oxygen. On the other hand, water of the non-mining areas very low concentration of sulphates. Water pollution is exhibited by the colour of the water in mining areas which varies from brownish to reddish colour. Other parameters which characterized the degradation of water quality are low pH, high conductivity, high concentration iron and toxic metals, low dissolved oxygen and high BOD” (www.cgwb.gov.in retrieved on 23/05/2019)

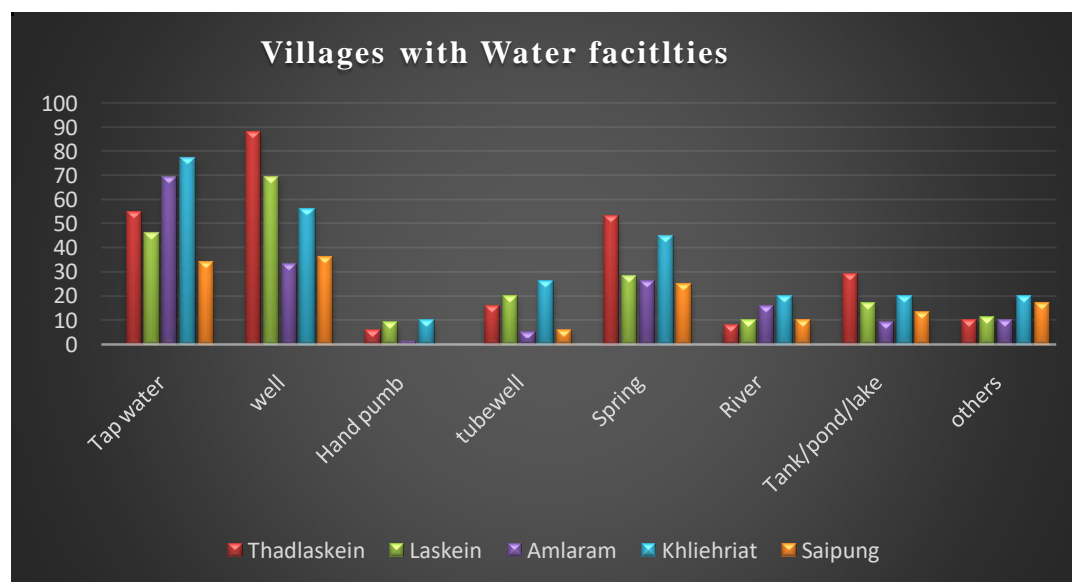
Table 5.10

Summary of Villages having Water facilities

Name Of Block	Tap water	well	Hand pumb	tubewell	Spring	River	Tank/pond/lake	others
Thadlaskein	55	88	6	16	53	8	29	10
Laskein	46	69	9	20	28	10	17	11
Amlaram	69	33	1	5	26	16	9	10
Khliehriat	77	56	10	26	45	20	20	20
Saipung	34	36	0	6	25	10	13	17

Village Directory of Meghalaya 2017

Figure 5.3



Meghalaya is one of the fastest growing states in India with a GSDP growth rate of 9.05 percent in the year 2018-19. Meghalaya is recorded the highest growth rates in Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) in the year 2017-18. It has seen some of the

largest downfalls in poverty in India. In Meghalaya, the percentage of population below the poverty line was 17.1 per cent in 2009-10 which fell to 11.9 percent in 2011-12. Meghalaya has the second-lowest unemployment rate in India, after Gujarat, with 0.4 percent in rural areas and 2.8 percent in urban areas as per the record of 2011-12.

The Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) of Meghalaya at current prices during 2011-12 was Rs. 19,918 crores. It increased to Rs. 21872 crores in 2012-13 and further increased to Rs. 22938 crores in 2013-14. During the same periods, that is 2011-12, 2012-13 and 2013-14, the estimates of GSDP at constant prices stood at Rs. 19,918, 20,354, 20,726 crores respectively. In 2017-18 and 2018-19, the GSDP at current prices are Rs. 30,790, 34,389 and constant prices were, 23,742, 25,890 respectively. The annual growth rate of GSDP registered was 5.29 per cent during 2016-17 and 9.26 per cent during 2017-18 and 9.05 per cent during 2018-19. The GSDP growth was highest in the financial year 2017-18 (9.26 per cent) and lowest in 2014-15 (-2.74 per cent).

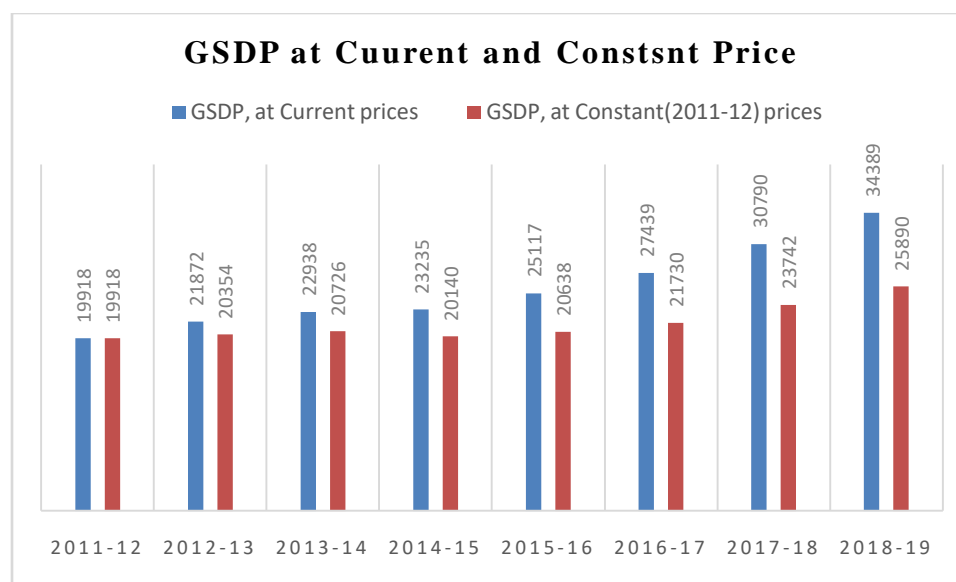
Table 5.11

Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) of Meghalaya (As on 01-08-2013)

Year	GSDP (Current Prices)	GSDP At Constant (2011-12) Prices)	Per capita income At current prices	Per capita income At constant (2011-12) prices	Growth rate of GSDP at (2011-12) Prices (%)
2011-12	19918	19918	60013	60013	-
2012-13	21872	20354	64036	59703	2.20
2013-14	22938	20726	65118	58681	1.80
2014-15	23235	20140	64638	5580	-2.74
2015-16	25117	20638	68836	56039	2.38
2016-17	27439	21730	73753	57752	5.29
2017-18	30790	23742	81098	61789	9.26
2018-19	34389	25890	89024	66223	9.05

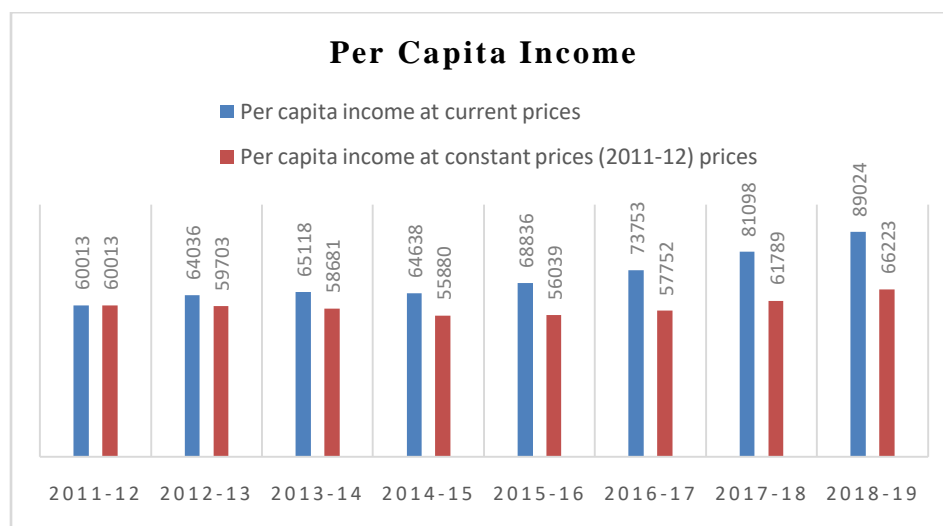
Statewise data as on 28/02/2020

Figure 5.4



Per Capita income at current prices was Rs.60,013 in 2011-12, which increased to Rs.64,036 in 2012-13 and further increased to Rs.65,118 in 2013-14. Per Capita income at constant prices was Rs.60013 in 2011-12, Rs.59,703 in 2012-13 and Rs.58681 in 2012-2013. By 2017-18 the per capita income further increased to Rs. 81,098 and in 2018-2019 Rs. 89,024 crores. Those years the per capita income in constant (2011-12) prices increased from Rs. 61,789 to Rs. 66,223 crores.

Figure 5.5



District Statistic Handbook of Meghalaya carries the detailed description of the Jaintia Hills districts of Meghalaya with its socio- economic parameters and indicators (www.megplanning.gov.in retrieved on 13/02/2020) that keeps these two districts slightly above the state averages in many ways.

Table 5.12

Jaintia Hills Districts Socio-Economic Indicators

Item	Units	Year	East Jaintia Hills	West Jaintia Hills	Meghalaya
Density of Population	Per Sq. Km	2011	-	103	132
Sex Ration	Females per '000 males	2011	-	1013	989
Rural Population		2011	-	92.8	79.93
Sch. Tribe		2011	-	95.18	86.15
Sch. Caste		2011	-	0.33	0.58
Decadal growth		2011	-	32.1	27.95
Literacy rate		2011	-		
persons		2011	-	61.64	74.43
Males			-	58.14	75.95
Females			-	65.06	72.89
Main workers		2011	-	27.99	31.06
Percentage of Workers		2011	-		
Cultivators		2011	-	39.47	44.62
Agricultural labourers		2011	-	16.81	12.44
Workers in Industry		2011	-	1.16	1.3
Others workers		2011	-	42.55	41.63
Net area sown		2015-16	99.56	98.48	83.33
Area sown more than once		2015-16	0.43	1.54	20.00
Average Yield	Kgs/Hec	2015-16	-		
Rice	Kgs/Hec	2015-16	2091	2068	2555
Potato	Kgs/Hec	2015-16	6457	5585	11227
Maize	Kgs/Hec	2015-16	2249	1862	2284
Rapeseed & Mustard		2015-16	909	891	967
Per capita net area sown	Hect	2015-16	-	0.09	0.10

Co-operative societies served per lakh of population		2014-15	-	67	49
Post offices per lakh of populations		2014-15	-	19	16
Bank offices er lakh of population		March-17	10	15	9
Population served per bank office		March-17	10245	6639	8650
Per capita deposits		March-17	49626	61935	69826
Per capita advance		March-17	4408	9699	17865
Credit-deposit ratio		March-17	1.11	1.6	1.4

Government of Meghalaya, Directorate of Economics & Statistics, 2018

The district has remained backward in spite of the fact that it is endowed with rich natural resources. There has been unscientific exploitation of natural resources. These resources are exploited and supplied to markets outside the state but without any value addition. Necessary steps need to be taken in order to tap the resources to ensure a sustainable economic development of the state. Though Meghalaya has an agricultural economy with 63 per cent of the people are engaged in this activity. In spite of having natural resources and other benefits the state lagging behind income generation. The villages are far behind in getting drinking water, sanitation and other basic facilities. Out of the six villages which are studied three villages face acute water shortage, five villages without health facilities within the vicinity, and all the six villages are without a secondary school.

5.10. CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

‘Culture provides something like an inclusive web of world view, which makes the life comprehensible to the common man and woman of the society’ (Sinha, 2009: 196). Thus, culture remains the key concept for defining a community distinct from others. Cultural development engages people of a community in taking action to build up and improve their shared culture. If culture is what connects us, then cultural

development is the tool that tempers and strengthens the connection. Culture develops over the years when a particular community interacts with the other it develops both inwardly and outwardly. It is through the culture one communicates. The customs, traditions, manners, rituals, supernatural beliefs occupy ample place in the developmental paradigm of the culture. The history of every tribal religion is coloured with numerous legends, poems and folk-tales.

The Pnar as an ethnic group differ from other tribals of Northeast in many aspects. Their matriliney, inheritance and customary law make them unique among the many tribes of India. Anthropologists and ethnographers have been quite confused about their origin of this people. In the tribal community all the aspects of life are linked and interwoven to each other. The Pnar society while keeping up the tradition given to them by their elders try with utmost care to keep the uniqueness and integrity of theirs in the midst of pull and push of modernity, which unleash changes in an alarming speed that touches every walks of life.

The Pnar down the centuries kept up their culture as: i) Theo-centric, ii) Eco-centric, and iii) Anthro-centric.

Theo-centric (God centered culture): For the Pnar God is the centre of their life. He is the one who controls their life, actions and talks. They call their God (*u Tre Kiro*) as God Almighty (*U Blai WaBooh, WaThoo*) who control the nature and all it contains. They look at the nature with awe and wonder. They see God everywhere and in everything. Natural forces and calamities are the interventions of God, who reveals his power and strength through various happenings in the nature. God is the head and source of everything and he is omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent.

Eco-centric (Nature centered culture): For every tribal community nature plays an important role. The life revolves around seasons and the Pnar connects themselves. Most of their feasts and festivals are related with nature and its changes. While analyzing their traditions one could easily find that it is coupled with legends, folktales and customs. All these are related to nature and its movements.

Anthro-centric (Human centered culture): The Pnar culture over the years grew very much humane and people-oriented. The religious (*Niam*) tenents speak much

on human relationships and maintaining it with great care. The concept of ‘*tip bru*’, enables every Pnar to care for the other. Reach out them in need and treat them with dignity and respect. The Pnar keeps ‘knowing the other’ (*tip bru*) parallel to ‘knowing God’ (*tip Blai*). Every Pnar, they believe, is created by God and their prime aim is to ‘earn righteousness’ (*kamai ia ka hok*). Their every action is animated by this teaching. Their relationships at home with parents or elders, spouses or children are all bound up not only social sanctions but also with greater reverence, love and respect. Their spoken words are considered sacred and it is binding to abide by it.

While analyzing the Pnar community one could easily find there are some elements that hold the community together and these elements remain as a distinguished mark of the community providing ethnic solidarity across all levels and identity at the socio-cultural level. These are values that animated their socio-cultural and religious life.

5.11. ANIMATING ELEMENTS OF SOCIO-CULTURAL LIFE

Down the centuries the Pnar kept up their uniqueness and integrity. They fostered these values from one generation to the next and it animated their social-cultural and religious life.

5.11.1. Egalitarian Community

Egalitarian societies are human populations or cultures that function without centralized political and economic power or hereditary status structures, or as Fried (1967:33) defines, ‘an egalitarian society is one in which there are as many positions of prestige in any given age-sex grade as there are persons capable of filling them’. Notwithstanding the fundamental ethos of equity, relationships among the sexes are extremely diverse in these societies extending from highly sexually egalitarian to severely gender stratified (Begler, 1978). Egalitarian political and social structures are characteristic of band and tribal level societies (Service, 1962), which include hunter gatherer, horticultural, and pastoral groups (Boehm, 1999). The Pnar society is very much

egalitarian and it is very strong among them. Maintenance of equality in the community is a desired goal for the community members. (www.digitalcommons.nul.edu retrieved on 16/05/2019).

It is theorized that human populations will likely exhibit egalitarianism when living in small, locally autonomous social and economic communities (Boehm, 1999). As social complexity increases and subsistence strategies intensify, social stratification becomes more prominent (Johnson and Earle, 1987). Egalitarian populations have become increasingly rare as state level societies broaden their influence within a global economy. Therefore, studying egalitarian societies, as in the case of the Pnar, is useful in understanding the nature of group values and individual behaviors in the context of political and social systems that are more likely to characterize humanity's evolutionary history. In egalitarian society ascribed statuses have many social implications, however, achieved status earned through prestige systems is connected to leadership and authority, and confers greater access to resources than other ascribed statuses, such as age or gender (Wiessner, 1996a). This research defines status in egalitarian societies as an earned position relative to one's contemporaries within a social hierarchy. Status is determined by individual prestige and grants increased social influence and greater access to resources. The example of the Pnar fit well within the ambit of all the above parameters.

Elwin presented a picture of sexual egalitarianism and as tribal women enjoying the optimal ideals of feminism. His texts present women as they 'rule the house', change their sexual partners, remarry, inherit property, are uninhibited in the public domain in consuming liquor or other substances and display a confidence in their daily engagement with their production and domestic life on an equal footing with their husbands. He interprets sexual relations as a tribal male's duty and a tribal woman's rights to demand sexual fulfillment (Guha, 1996) in contrast to the prudishness of Hindu morality. Tribal social customs relating to sexuality and marriage were too shocking for the colonial and Christian notion of morality.

The Pnar community keeps a very sense of equality among the members of the community. Each one has a specific role to play in the society with proper rights and duties. Equal justice is given to all. Any discrimination will be entertained whatsoever.

Men and women are equal but separated based on their role in the family and society. It is the women who make the family; however, the men look after the affairs of the society. Though the heredity is matrilineal, the role of the male members in the family is respected with greater dignity. The Pnar have a strong sense of right and wrong. Since they believe that they are sent by God to earn righteousness they follow right means to earn their livelihood.

5.11.2. Democratic System

In the modern world democracy is considered to be representative and majority are ruled by it. Traditional democracies in the tribal land of northeast in general, and the Pnar in particular, are considered to be direct, participatory and deliberate. Each able men of age directly participate the village council meetings, and deliberation is ensured before a decision is made. The basic idea of arriving at a decision in the indigenous democracies is 'absolute consensus'. In order to arrive at a consensus decision, village elders make persuasion to all the members. If the village council is to be represented by clans and sub-clans or other categories it is only through consensus that the representative are chosen. Other representatives in the village council are also consensual candidates. The council also arrived at certain decisions based on consensus of all the members present.

On this clearly marked out distinction between traditional and representative democracy Udayon Misra (2014: 354) pointed out: "the major difference that marked the traditional 'people's assemblies' presided over by hereditary chiefs and the rajas and the district/autonomous councils was that while the former was 'consensual' in character, the latter was part of the overall process of representative democracy". Elwin (1965: 21) also observed that 'The council is democratic in the sense that all vital problems of the village are freely and publicly discussed. Discussion by the members, persuasion where necessary results in consensus'. When there is no consensus or the village council cannot arrive at a consensus decision, no decision is taken at all. The matter has to be dropped, and perhaps to be taken up again at a later meeting as has also been observed among the Pnar. (<https://papers.ssrn.com> retrieved on 16/05/2019).

The Pnar exhibit democratic system of government. They have their leaders elected. *Dolois*, *Rangbah Shnong* and others are elected based on their integrity of life and sense of belongingness to the community. The unit of administration of the Pnar is village. In most villages a council is formed by men of age and experience, who can attend and speak for the welfare of the people and community. Though the village council has the right to frame laws, sanction and promulgates them, yet these laws should not contradict to the decisions of the district council, which is an appellate body for reference and clarifications.

The traditional Pnar polity is a three-tier system. At the lowest level is the village which has a traditional council of male adults called *Dorbar Shnong* presided by the *Rangbah Shnong* or the headman. This is the lowest level of governance, and ‘a village level assembly of the people around which the life of the community is organized’ (Hasan, 2011: 84).

Verrier Elwin (1965: 3-4) the famous ethnographer speaks:

“A Democratic form of government has existed among the Khasis/Jaintias of this block from time immemorial. Each village has its own *darbar* (council) where important decisions are taken on matters affecting the general interest. A group of villages form an *elaka* with a *dolloi* as its head. The *dolloi* is elected on an adult franchise basis with, however, the provisions that only member of certain clans are eligible to contest as candidates” (<https://papers.ssrn.com> retrieved on 16/05/2019).

5.11.3 Community Sense

The social organization of tribal societies is more elaborate than band level. Tribes are larger conglomerations of more kinship segments, tightly bound through marriage ties and social structures (Service, 1962). Although tribal societies exhibit more socio-centric status labels through social groups, such as sodalities, in both band and tribal level society leadership is personal and based on accomplishments and charisma with no true political positions or individuals with coercive power (Service, 1962). In egalitarian societies, both tribes and bands value qualities such as generosity, bravery, and leadership. However, they are liberal in leveling and preventing excessive gaps in perceived abilities or resources (Fried, 1967). Either collectively or individually members of egalitarian societies use tactics such as criticism, ridicule, disobedience, deposition,

exile, and execution, to subdue excessively assertive leaders who may be too aggressive, not generous, morally unsound, or ineffective (Boehm, 1993). Egalitarian societies universally have a flexible social hierarchy based on individual accomplishments. Collective values shape prestige systems and prioritize the activities most important to the group. Therefore, prosocial investment becomes the most salient strategy for status striving. Theoretical and ethnographic literatures suggest that egalitarian societies will, cross-culturally, award status through success in prosocial activities.

The Pnar belong to the community, and not live in the community. This is expressed in their daily living and sharing as members of the same family. Their feeling of the clan (*kur*) is tremendous. Over the years the Pnar community developed the following features which marked their ethnic identity: (i) sense of unity, (ii) endogamous group, (iii) exogamous *kur* (clan), (iv) importance of kinship, (v) common dialect, (vi) ties of relationship (*kur-kha*), (vii) distinct political organization, (viii) common culture, (ix) egalitarian values, (x) matriliney, and (xi) inheritance.

Clan (*kur*) plays the most important role in the management of social unit of the community. Being a micro unit above the level of family it builds up the solidarity among its members for maintenance of identity and building up of the sense of ethnicity at the macro level of community integrity. Being exogamous in nature it also helps to maintain the endogamy of the community playing important role in kinship bondage, ties of relationship (*kur-kha*), egalitarian values, holding and inheritance of landed property and related social organizational parameters. In total seventy-one clans have been identified from the six studied villages of the Pnar, which has helped to consolidate the intra-ethnic relations both within the village and outside. The identity of each clan is of paramount importance in dealing with the matrimonial affairs of the community in the social organizational map of the Pnar community. Being matrilineal, the community of Pnar inherits mother's clan which is not only important while a person is alive but also it is the most important feature after death since the bone of the dead is to be kept in the bone depository of his/her mother's clan. Probably the Pnar exhibit and maintain their traditional culture through the identification of clan at the lowest level and community at the highest level, reflecting strong sense of ethnicity of the community even at the phase of poly-ethnic nature of existence in the larger canvas of the society.

Table 5.13

Village Wise Clan (*Kur*) Name

Sl. No.	Clan	Mynso	Jarain	Mynkre	Pynthor	Nongk hyllep	Iongs hiwiat	Total
1	Bareh	01	02	15	-	-	-	18
2	Bhoi	-	-	-	-	-	03	3
3	Biam	-	-	-	-	-	03	3
4	Borlong	-	-	01	-	-	-	1
5	Chen	23	-	-	-	-	-	23
6	Chuelt	16	-	-	-	-	-	16
7	Dhar	-	-	01	-	46	94	141
8	Dkhar	01	73	70	186	01	28	359
9	Jat	-	-	-	-	-	16	16
10	Kamar	-	61	-	-	-	-	61
11	Khuppah	01	-	-	-	-	-	1
12	Khlem	-	-	-	01	-	-	1
13	Kroo	01	-	-	-	-	-	1
14	Ksoo	-	-	-	-	-	09	9
15	Kya	03	-	-	-	-	-	3
16	Kyndait	-	-	-	04	-	-	4
17	Lakadong	-	18	-	-	-	-	18
18	Laloo	-	-	-	-	-	14	14
19	Lamo	-	-	37	-	-	-	37

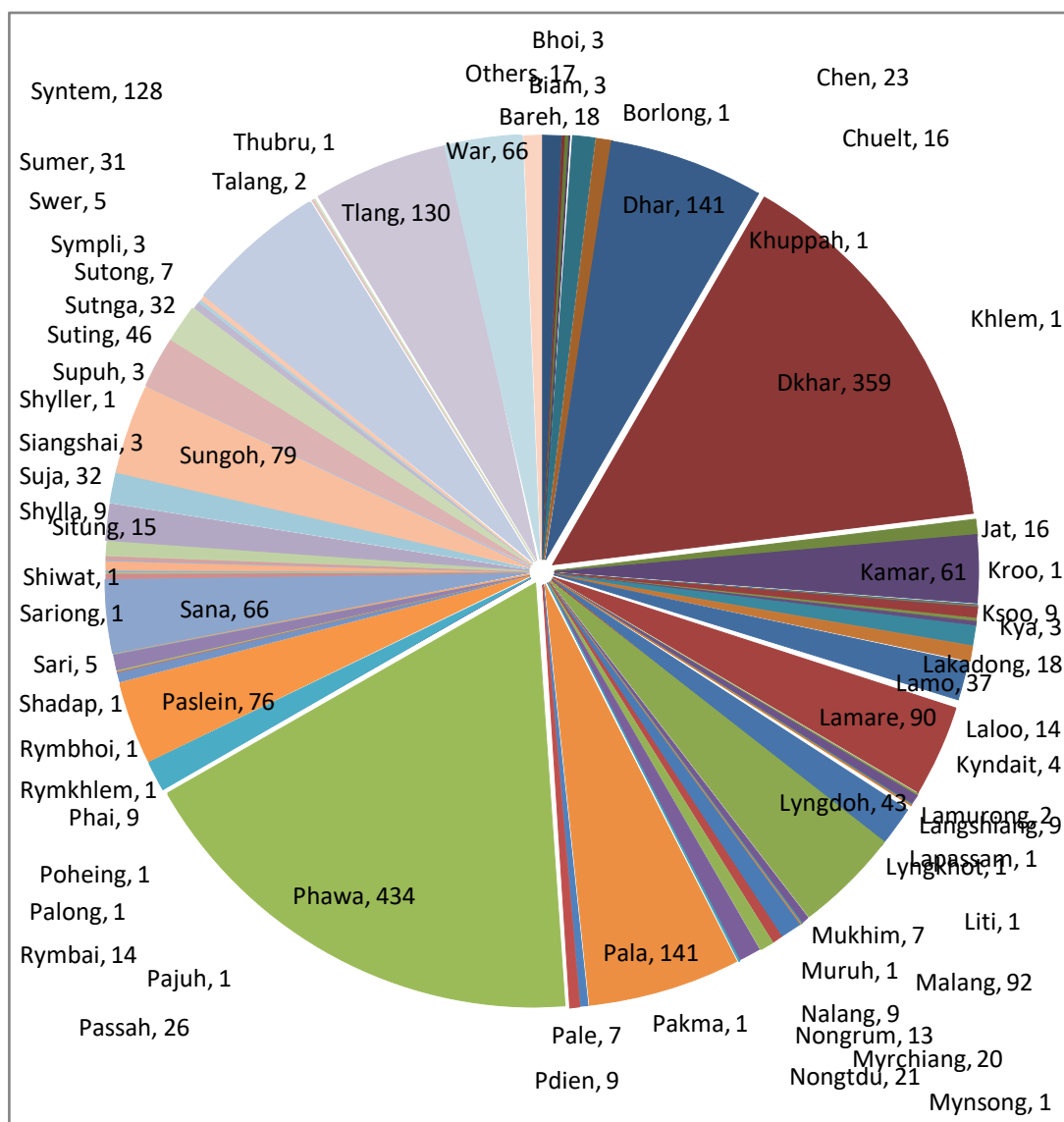
20	Lamare	06	84	-	-	-	-	90
21	Lamurong	-	-	-	01	-	01	2
22	Langshiang	-	-	-	-	-	09	9
23	Lapassam	01	-	-	-	-	-	1
24	Liti	01	-	-	-	-	-	1
25	Lyngdoh	21	02	-	-	-	20	43
26	Lyngkhot	-	01	-	-	-	-	1
27	Malang	-	92	-	-	-	-	92
28	Mukhim	-	-	-	-	01	06	7
29	Muruh	-	-	-	-	01	-	1
30	Mynsong	-	-	-	-	-	01	1
31	Myrchiang	20	-	-	-	-	-	20
32	Nalang	-	09	-	-	-	-	9
33	Nongrum	-	-	-	-	-	13	13
34	Nongtdu	-	01	20	-	-	-	21
35	Pakma	01	-	-	-	-	-	1
36	Pala	-	97	44	-	-	-	141
37	Pale	03	04	-	-	-	-	7
38	Pdien	-	-	-	09	-	-	9
39	Phawa	-	-	01	406	05	22	434
40	Pajuh	01	-	-	-	-	-	1
41	Passah	26	-	-	-	-	-	26
42	Paslein	01	58	-	-	-	17	76
43	Phai	09	-	-	-	-	-	9
44	Poheing	-	01	-	-	-	-	1
45	Palong	-	01	-	-	-	-	1

46	Rymbai	-	-	-	-	05	09	14
47	Rymbhoi	01	-	-	-	-	-	1
48	Rymkhlem	-	-	-	01	-	-	1
49	Sana	-	-	-	66	-	-	66
50	Sari	-	-	-	-	-	05	5
51	Sariong	-	-	-	-	01	-	1
52	Shadap	-	-	01	-	-	-	1
53	Shiwat	-	-	-	-	-	01	1
54	Shylla	03	-	03	02	-	1	9
55	Shyller	-	01	-	-	-	-	1
56	Siangshai	-	-	-	-	-	03	3
57	Situng	15	-	-	-	-	-	15
58	Suja	-	01	-	-	-	31	32
59	Sumer	-	-	26	-	04	01	31
60	Sungoh	79	-	-	-	-	-	79
61	Supuh	-	01	-	-	02	-	3
62	Suting	31	01	-	-	03	11	46
63	Sutnga	01	29	02	-	-	-	32
64	Sutong	-	07	-	-	-	-	7
65	Sympli	-	-	03	-	-	-	3
66	Swer	02	01	01	-	-	01	5
67	Syntem	128	-	-	-	-	-	128
68	Talang	01	-	-	-	-	01	2
69	Thubru	-	-	-	-	-	01	1
70	Tlang	-	-	130	-	-	-	130

71	War	66	-	-	-	-	-	66
72	Others	03	04	08	02	-	-	17
Grand Total		466	549	363	678	69		2446

Figure 5.6

Total Distribution of Clans in Six Villages



5.11.4 Ethical Teachings

The Pnar community has very strong ethical norms. *U Blai* (God) expects that the human beings follow these norms in their relation with God, with one another and with the nature. They have to adhere to the supreme command of God ‘earn righteousness’ (*kamaiiakahok*), through their virtuous living that animates their entire life. This leads to ‘knowing and respecting God and man’ (*tipbru tipblai*) and by ‘knowing one’s own maternal and paternal relations’ (*tipkur tip kha*). These are the golden rules that animate their whole life, upholding social, religious and ethical values. In a way this demonstrates community solidarity bringing in the sense of cohesiveness and corporateness of the society.

5.12. TRANSITION AMONG THE TRIBES

Change takes place in every moment. There is a fable that tribals signify unbending communal arrangement and they do not change on their own. The endogenous and exogenous forces of change have brought tremendous shifts in the tribal society. Change is the reality that one faces every day. The process of change affects the very fabric of the society creating an atmosphere of behavior modification (Rose, 1957). Social change takes place in mostly favourable conditions. Today’s world is passing through a breathlessly rapid process of change, heading into a hazy future (Dasgupta, 2012). Majumdar defined social change as a new fashion or mode, either modifying or replacing the old, in the life of a people, or in the operation of a society. This changing over to the new takes place knowingly and unknowingly whether the conditions are favourable or not. Gillin and Gillin (1950) opines that the social changes are variations from the accepted modes of life; whether due to alteration in geographical conditions, in cultural equipment, composition of the population or ideologies and whether brought about by diffusion or inventions within the group. According to Maclver (1931) social change is alteration that occurs in the social organization or the structure of society. Though individual changes cannot be treated a social change but individual changes can

lead to social change when that change is accepted by a community entirely. That is what Merrill and Eldredge proposed while saying that the social change means that a large number of persons are engaged in activities that differ from those which they or their immediate forefathers engaged in some time before. (<http://www.sociologydiscussion.com> retrieved on 20/07/2019).

While analyzing the nature of social change one can observe that it is a universal phenomenon. Community, either, traditional or modern experience change every day. The people change, technologies expand, ideologies and values take on new course and organized structures and purposes experience redesigning and reinterpreting. Anderson and Parker once said that social change involves alteration in the structure or functioning of social forms or processes themselves. Thus, one can easily say that social change is a community change (<http://www.sociologydiscussion.com> retrieved on 20/07/2019). Though the individual change cannot be termed as social change yet it could lead to a social change in the long run. While analyzing the social change that the community faces today it is also noted that the speed with which each community is getting changed varies. Educated society may adapt many things faster than the traditional communities. Among the various elements of the culture, religious changes may takes longer span of time than other elements. Adaptability is faster among the people exposed to modernity than the traditional indigenous communities. The following aspects can be identified as the causes which are responsible for the change in the tribal world.

Apart from these, famous social analyst Kuppaswamy (1972) gives six factors of social change.

Democratic factors: Democratic factors could be could be seen as change in the population both in numbers and composition, that leads to change in the economic life, further proceeds to change in the various aspects of life like social, cultural and political,

Technological Factors: technological changes worked as a catalyst in bringing lasting changes in the society. Development and change in society are linked with the development and change in the technology. It improved the production and sale communication and relationships.

Economic Factor: it influences the quality and direction of social change. Karl Marx proposed this and he propagated that the economic factors are the root to social change.

Cultural Factor: various cultural factors like ideas knowledge, values and beliefs accelerate change in the society. It leads to social change. When many societies come in contact change bound to happen. Diffusion is an important mechanism of social change.

Planning and Legislation Factor: Laws and legislations cause social change. It also involves the people to become a cause for change by using their right to vote for many legislations and executions of the laws. It inculcates self-respect and responsibility among the citizens.

Education Factor: educations seem to be an important cause in bringing changes in the society. It brings all round growth in the society. Educated masses think differently, act differently and brings far-reaching changes both in individual and social lives of the society.

Change may vary from society to societies with different speed altogether. Though in certain occasions the people are not able to face the challenges that posed on them by social change at an alarming speed, yet, the change take community by reviving from within. There could be various possibilities for a reformatory change to reform or reshape the communities. When community is faced with many unwanted elements which are powerful and degrading the society the changes could be revolutionary, which leads to a complete overhauling. Thus, every change leaves certain ripples in the society that gradually moves everyone to get the desired result.

5.12.1. Government Initiatives

The government initiated developmental programmes in the tribal communities and tribal inhabited areas in the name of 'modernization', and often they have become an easy victim of commercial transaction and industrial and mining activities. This initiative of the government forced the tribal people either to accept the change initiated by the government or to perish in the long run. The government frames laws and regulations that

force the tribal people to accept the initiatives of the government as national interest and the interest of the tribal people almost like a treat to the national integrity.

5.12.2. Ignorance and Illiteracy

Illiteracy and ignorance of the tribals are often exploited by the non-tribals and they take maximum advantages of it and force them to evict their land which consequently results in land alienation. Land is not only the productive resource for the tribals, but also important place in their psyche as the backbone of their social and religious practices, connecting it to their ancestry.

5.12.3. Restrictions from the Government

The government of India time to time has formulated several rules that restricted the tribal people their freedom in using the forest and forest goods. The National Forest Policy of 1988 was enacted which stipulated that all agencies responsible for forest management which should ensure that the tribal people are closely associated with the regeneration, plantation, development, harvesting of forest so as to provide them gainful employment. Clauses like, 'carrying capacity', 'powers of settlement officers', 'classification of the forests', give arbitrary powers to the forest officials which deny the rights of the forest dwellers guaranteed by the earlier and present forest legislations. When the tribals are uprooted from their forests to make way for modern industries it is genocide and when their culture is systematically destroyed, it is ethnocide (Bhowmik, 1988: 1006). The government also denied the permission for the practice which they followed since ages altogether. As an example, one can say that slash and burn cultivation was banned by the government on the ground of 'ecologically unsound' practice.

5.12.4. Natural Calamities

Natural calamities like flood, famine, drought also results in the displacement of the tribals from their homeland and resulting into forced migration. Coupled with that, the mega-projects have also complemented the process. All tribal development projects hitherto introduced in the agency areas have only developed the tribal region, but not the tribal people.

5.12.5. Detribalizing from Within

The tribals are often found to detribalize themselves by assimilating with the mainstream as they get influenced by the cultures of the aliens, and consequently adopt the same. The tribals have tried to emulate the symbols, values and norms of the groups which surround them in their traditional habitat. They have acquired an urge for prestige and this has brought about changes of magnitude in their dress pattern, diet and social practices of various kinds.

5.12.6. Altering the Scheduled Tribe List

Non-tribals have managed to gain legal tribal status, that is, to be listed as a Scheduled Tribe, which led the tribal groups to lose their land to the newly declared scheduled tribe.

5.12.7. Vulnerability

The problem of indebtedness is a menace to the tribals which pushes the tribals to extreme conditions of poverty and forces them to dispense with their meagre resources, including the small quantum of land to pay off the loans at exorbitant rate of interest charged by the money-lenders. The commercial vending of alcohol had further impoverished the tribals.

5.13. SOCIAL CHANGE AMONG THE PNAR

Change could be well-defined as alteration that transpire in the lives of the people. The Pnar community over the years experienced tremendous changes in all the spheres of life: cultural, political and religious. There are various factors that played vital roles in bringing changes in the society. However, they hold fast to their traditions and code of laws that survived the onslaught of change and lives vibrantly in the heart of the *Niam Tre* people. Change is alteration, says Moore (1963) that occurs in social organization. This change is experienced in every walks of life of the Pnar. It is observed that the Pnar are more vulnerable to change that dominate their everyday life. It is quite evident that the West had influenced them from the beginning of the colonial rule, however, due to the proximity with the neighboring states, influx of the people from various states to Pnar habitation especially in the East Jaintia Hills District the change is fast growing and adaptation is far more visible both in attire and life style. Western outfits coupled with ‘so called mainland’ cuisine, jewelry and household setup make them far more advanced than any other communities. While analyzing the social change among the Pnar of Meghalaya one could notice that the changes that the community faced could be categorized as religious change, cultural change and political change, over a considerable passage of time.

5.13.1. Religious Change and Transformation

The Pnar habitat was exposed to Hindu religion during the Jaintia rules. The Jaintia Hills were a part of the Jaintiapur kingdom. The king built a summer capital at Nartiang and gradually that became the center of the Hindu religion in the Pnar area. Nevertheless, Hinduism has never actually got into the ethos of the Pnar society. However, one cannot see a sweeping change in the Pnar society due to the influence of Hinduism. Though Nartiang remained as the pivot of the Hindu Influence among the Pnar, one can easily observe that the rituals and sacrifices done in the temple and the village boundaries of Nartiang are more akin to the tribal sacrifices than the traditional

Hindu practices. Apart from the single village, Nartiang, rest of the villages strongly adhere to traditional tribal religion (*Niam Tre*) than Hinduism. Though the temple priest of the Nartiang Durga temple is a Brahmin from Maharashtra much of the ritual prayers are conducted in local dialect by his assistants. Apart from these the Hindu festivals are not observed in the Pnar area except in Naritang. Thus, one can easily conclude that Hinduism could not find inroads in the Pnar lives as much as the Christianity could accomplish.

Table 5.14

Similarity in the Basic Teachings of *Niam Tre* and Christianity

Sl. No.	<i>Niam Tre</i>	Christianity
01	Earn righteousness (<i>Kamaikahok</i>)	Do to others whatever you would have them do to you (Mt. 7:12). Unless your righteousness surpasses that of scribes and Pharisees you will not enter the kingdom of heaven (Mt. 5:20)
02	Know God and Know men (<i>Tip bru tip Blai</i>)	You shall love your God ... with all your heart ... with all your soul ... with all your mind ... you shall love your neighbor as yourself (Mt. 22: 37-38)
03	Know your paternal and maternal relations (<i>tip kur tip kha</i>)	Honour your father and your mother, that you may have a long life in the land in which the LORD your God is giving you (Ex. 20:12)
04	<i>U Lakriahis</i> leading the <i>Hynniew Trep</i> to the promised land (Ka Pyrthai)	Moses is leading the Isralitis to the promised land

Christianity really reaped the harvest by converting more than 65 per cent of the total population into their side. During the British rule the Pnar were exposed to the western culture and religion. Many of their religious practices were really altered and religious affiliation was shifted from the traditional Pnar religion of *Niam Treto* Christianity, the religion of the rulers. Consequently, the religious world view of the Pnar experienced a comprehensive alteration. Moreover, the very similarity with regard to the teaching of Christianity and traditional Pnar religion (*Niam Tre*) made the way comfortable for them to accept the foreign religion as their own.

Apart from these one could easily notice that with the advent of Christianity in the Pnar terrain the traditional beliefs got scattered. The single Pnar society thus divided into three based on religious affinity like *Niam Tre* Pnar, Christian Pnar, and Hindu Pnar. Though this caused disintegration for the unity of the Pnar, one could easily observe that the *Niam Tre* is once again slowly getting organized with regular prayers and religious gatherings on various occasions, thus strengthening the faith of the people in God (*U Tre Kiroi*).

It is also argued that the Christianity that found easy inroads in the lives of the Pnar also brought in tremendous changes in the Pnar ethos which is inter-related and incorporated to form a separate indigenous culture altogether. The fact no one denies is that Christianity came along with the power of the colonial rulers with their elite cultural, economic and familial values that in way looked down the nuances of the Pnar culture and succeeded in changing the convictions and beliefs of the vast majority of the Pnar community that not only divided the community into many fragments on the basis of religion but also uprooted the traditional core values that kept the Pnar a distinct and dynamic community. While stressing on the role of Father with the help of the Bible, they weakened the role of uncle (*Masan*) in the Pnar society. The role of the youngest daughter (*ka Diah*) in the family and clan, her role as the custodian of ancestral property and bone repository were challenged and amended by the influence of Christianity. Due to the exodus to the new found faith by the Pnar indigenous people the traditional offices like *Doloi*, *Wasan*, *Patan*, *Maggi* reached in the hands of them, who least cared in discharging the role allotted to them by the age-old tradition.

The traditional concept of sacred groves (*khlookyntang*, *khloolangdoh*) was destroyed and felling of the forest in the sacred groves became a common phenomenon and it was given religious sanctions by Christianity. In some Pnar families it is also observed by the researcher that the traditional property is shared among the children even among the boys than the whole property is given to the youngest daughter alone. Apart from this, one could also easily observe that the married couple set up their own houses after the marriage and look after the affairs of the house. The husband at times disagree with the in-laws especially male relatives from his wife in taking major decision concerning the family and property.

Much before the advent of Christianity in the Pnar terrain, Hinduism took roots in certain places due to its contact with the Jaintiapur kings of erstwhile East Bengal (now Bangladesh) who ruled the Pnar area for many decades. By 15th century Naritang was selected as the summer capital of the king. Brahmin priests were appointed. Various animals and birds (*masi*, *blang*, *syiar*) were sacrificed to appease the spirits at certain point of time human sacrifice was prevalent at Nartiang. All these sacrifices, selection of animals and the rituals and rubrics associated with sacrifice had a religious sanction. When Hindu ideology had gone deeper the Pnar started giving names to the male twins as Ram, Lakhon and female twins as Konka, Durga and so on (Lamare, 2005: 96). Though there isn't any grading of the clans in the Pnar cultural domain, however, some clans are not able to contest elections to the post of *Doloi*, like *Wasan* and so on due to their interracial mixing with outsiders. The Pnars who are exposed to the Hindu religion accepted it and started celebrating the feast and festivals like *Durga Puja*, *Bishari Puja* and so on.

5.13.2. Cultural Change and Transformation

The traditional Pnar culture embraced the western culture with the advent of the British to India. Education slowly gathered momentum in the community. The traditional tribal culture accepted the western way of life and made life comfortable with western gadgets and stuffs. Western clothing, food habits, table etiquettes, good manners, beautifications of house and surroundings changed the cultural ethos of the people. The

Pnar community owe to the westerners for showing the womenfolk to lead the family that can strengthen the society.

Religion is an integral part of culture. There is nothing strange that the Pnar accepted the western culture together with the religion. This acceptance of a foreign religion weakened the Pnar traditional society and the values. Along with the western culture 'modernization' that got into the Pnar psyche toppled down the traditional values and customs, which they followed down the centuries. In many places Christian leaders became the *Doloi*, who are supposed to be the guardian of the traditional faith overlooked the ritual performance during the various occasions. The matrilineal system which is the core of the Pnar social structure also affected due the conversion to Christianity. The traditional role of the youngest daughter as the custodian of the bone repository and the various rituals associated with rites of passage are ignored. The role of maternal uncle in the lives of his nephews and nieces was brought down considerably. Many of the traditional teachings on social and moral integrity of an individual are sidelined. It is also noted that when the Pnar traditional community were exposed to more advanced groups of people like westerners (Europeans) they tried to adopt their way of life by considering their culture and traditions are inferior to them. Along with these they also adapted western dress and attire, music, arts and crafts by shunning their own. Here it is good to note that in educated family's people are more aware of what education has instructed on them than what tradition has imparted them. It is also significant that in modern Pnar families the role of uncle (*U Masan*) is considerably brought down and on certain occasions they are not even consulted by the educated nephews and nieces in disposing ancestral property, finding mates and taking some serious decisions. During the interview the researcher found that some of the Pnar girls showed their preference in marrying non-Pnars for their smartness, economic security and decent living. Many married the non-Pnars and this brought not only confusion in the society but great anxiety also. Amidst the fast-changing attitude towards ancestral property and declining role of uncle in the families the traditional community fears that the property could reach in the hands of non-Pnar in the long run. Such acts bring greater grief to the menfolk, who consider themselves more traditional and custodian of the traditional values and caretakers of the religion and culture. While analyzing the transition of the traditional Pnar community, the

researcher, observed that Pnar identity is formed on a multiple set of relationships based on social roles and traditional identity. If these values are eroded in the long run society might face skirmishes and uncertainty. Moreover, the established structure that supports the ethnic life and traditional physicians is also eroded and subverted in the process of transition. The transition that the community witnessed over the years slowly caused transformation in many areas like: personal and community life, moral and ethical code, work and worship and so on.

It is also noticed that during the field study there is an innate desire among the Pnar, if not among all, at least a sizable number especially the youth, to adopt non-tribal way of life. While Technology advances it brings changes in the cultural realm also. The modern technology is closely associated with the western cultural advancement, which is more consumeristic and profit-oriented. This advancement challenged the modern tribal youth of the Pnar community, who are more acquainted with the western / non-tribal songs, music dance and other cultural expressions as their own. *Shad pastieh*, *shad pliang*, and so on are now showcased items and are taken out only during the rare occasions. The Pnar youths are more familiar with Rock music and Rap music, Break Dance and so on than their own traditional dances and songs.

Constant contact with people from other states, who are in the Pnar habitat as employees in the factories, tourists, and labourers, both skilled and unskilled, have created a dent in their life. In the studied villages the researcher found that all the masons and carpenters are from the plains of Assam, Bihar and west Bengal. Their presence and influence affected the Pnar community both culturally and linguistically. The Pnar in studied villages could converse with these people in Hindi and vendors in the markets are able to speak to customers comparatively well in Hindi. Apart from these the non-tribals residing in Lad-Rymbai, Khliehriat celebrate their religious festivals with great enthusiasm, which affected the Pnar people, who these days participate in those celebrations. Many words are borrowed from Hindi language like *puja* (sacrifice), *niam* (religion), *pyrda* (curtain), *dudh* (milk), *nam* (name) and so on for their daily conversation.

The role of medicine man (*kobirait*) and the traditional medicine (*kempat / dawai khloo*) is slowly disappearing. The easy access to the allopathic medicine introduced by the missionaries and their quick effect in releasing the pain and agony of the sufferer brought the demand high and traditional medicines takers have gone down considerably.

One of the main sources of income for the tribal people is cattle rearing. The Pnar traditionally are known for cattle grazing and many from the villages are involved in this vocation. However, this means of income generation is abound partially due to non-availability of grazing fields and cow boys (*nongcharaimasi*).

5.13.3. Political Change and Transformation

In the political life too, one could witness changes overlapping the traditional administrative system with modern political authority. Though in many cases village administrative system is kept intact with all rights and duties, however, there are many instances the members of the Pnar community approach other legal authorities for solving their issues. Other than the village authority the police is involved in solving issues, unlike earlier. The headman (*Waheh Chnong*) of some villages are accused on discharging their responsibilities in unfair manner, favouring nepotism, taking undue advantages from the people and government, failing to be a custodian of the village property and so on. In some cases, the *Dolois* were suspended for their involvement in malpractices like treachery, cheating, and framing rules and regulations for his personal conveniences.

5.14. AGENTS OF CHANGE IN THE PNAR LAND

The Pnar society experienced sweeping changes in the community due their contact with socio-cultural and politico-religious influences that came along with the Colonial rulers. The Pnar people looked with wonder and amusement the Western world their economic stability, social standard, cultural dignity, political superiority, elite living, educational quality, infrastructural ability, health consciousness, mass media and

communication and so on. These really shook the Pnar fabric as it got inroads in their lives. Among the many agents that brought about changes in the Pnar society, a few are very important and worth mentioning.

Christianity: Christianity brought along with it tremendous changes in all the spheres of life. It toughened the cultural aspects and called for a radical change and urged the people to shun all that is contrary to the gospel and embrace what the gospel teaches as the one and only way to salvation. Thus, the new socio-cultural and politico-economic life of the people started changing rapidly. It also succeeded in changing the convictions of the people and their belief system to a great extent.

Education: Education is always a cause of change. While analyzing the tribal community it becomes all the more evident that education plays a paramount importance in bringing changes in the society. It brings changes in the society as an agent. The superstitions and other unwanted elements in the belief system are questioned and discarded by the educated of the community. It helps the people to preserve the traditions and the values. In many cases social reformation happens, when people are given education. Education transforms the intellect and transmits what is worthwhile. Education engages in rebuilding the society by inculcating values in the minds of the people. Education in many cases works as a catalyst in social change, it creates ripples in the society that eventually brings the desired changes in the course of time.

Mass Media and Communication: the fast-growing world with media advancement and communication technologies, the Pnar society witnesses the changes in the community due to its advancement. It offered changes in every realm of life. The posed questions and asked for self-evaluation that might kept the traditional society at a receiving and self-protective side, that later days moved towards change. It really challenged the existing norms and called for creative change. It questioned and clarified the validity of myths and magic, belief system, rituals and rubrics and all that is associated with the traditional way of life. It could cause crisis in the society, tension in articulations, crunch in connecting with others and relating in a novel means.

Modern economic and political life: with the advent of modernity the traditional Pnar society is exposed to modern economic and political life. The agricultural fields

heard the sound of tractors and received the high yielding seeds. Apart from the traditional administrative system modern methods of elections and two-tier administrative system was introduced in the Jaintia districts of Meghalaya. This brought changes in the lives of the people and are slowly getting into a lyre higher in the social ladder with regard to their economic and political life.

Advanced technology for exploiting minerals and other natural resources:

The Phar habitat is blessed with natural resources like coal, limestone, clay, etc. with the arrival of advanced technologies to exploit minerals and other natural resources the community began to advance economically, which in turn brought changes in the society.

Advent of factories and mega projects:

Jaintia districts, especially East Jaintia Hill District has many cement factories due to the availability of limestone the prime raw material for the production of cement. Apart from these, Lechka Hydro Thermal Project and other factories and companies brought many changes in the lives of the people. These changes affected them both positively and negatively. Within a radius of 15 kilometers one could see eight cement factories and more factories yet to be established. This also serves as a factor for change in the lives of the Pnar people.

Influx of population from other states and countries:

Many people from various states of the country and also from neighbouring countries of Nepal, Bangladesh and so on are here in the Pnar area in search of work and livelihood. The coal extraction is mainly done by the people from Nepal and from other states. This living together makes the Pnar to adapt many things from other cultural communities.

Self-awareness:

Changes that happens any society could be from within the people from within demands for a change. This urge brings out change either as revolution, reformation or renewal. Pnar society experienced this sort of change in many folds. Their educated leaders, various organizations like JSU (Jaintia Students Union), *Sein Raj*, and so on are actively involved in bringing changes in the traditional society while keeping up the values nurtured by their forefathers for centuries.

Exposure to development:

India like any other country is developing in various facets of social elements. In many causes that which is traditional is called underdeveloped and these are counted as clear indicators of malnourished development in

the country. There is an urge in every society to overthrow the anything that is traditional to show that people are modern and developed. These days the people are exposed to development and other parameters of development that caused them to reflect and brings necessary actions in the fields concerned. Many students and getting educated in many metropolitan cities of the country. Their worldview and outlook get widened when they return. So also the members and leaders of the Pnar community is frequented with visits and tours to many other states and countries in the world that brings not only changes but development in the community.

Intercultural living: The Pnar domain has become a platform for intercultural living. Due the mushrooming of factories, and other projects and plentitude of natural resources invited many to come in search of work and livelihood. This influx of the people from various cultural background to the Pnar habitat made it a micro-culturally diverse unit. This living together and borrowing from each other not only changed the elements of culture but also it enhanced very fabric of the Pnar society. Intercultural marriages, adaptation of food habits, dress, jewelry is a common sight in the Pnar area.

The tribals everywhere today is more aware of the threat that falls on them and their culture. The *Adivasi* in the Chotanagpur belt, and the *Bhil-Bharalas* of the central and western India are getting united and announcing that they are proud to be called as *adivasis*. It may be an outburst of the people who were suppressed and oppressed for many centuries, getting organized and asserting their rights and dignity in the so called 'cultured society'. In many states in India one could notice in the recent years the indigenous people are forming various organizations for protecting their culture and cultural deposits. The tragedy of the day is that the so-called developed people and culture do not allow the indigenous people to be true to their religion, true to their culture and traditions. The history always carries the story of alluring the weaker section by the powerful in the name of religion.

The Pnar of Meghalaya shows the history of getting organized for protecting and promoting their culture and tradition from the onslaught of Christianity and other external forces. The Pnar of Meghalaya these days conduct seminars and workshops of traditional *Niam Tre* religion, celebrate the feasts and festivals with full enthusiasm, publishes news

and articles related to the *Niam Tre* and its tradition. It looks into the rights of the indigenous people and keep a watch on all those forces that infringes their rights and dignity. It speaks on advancement, natural resources, ethnic identity, marriage, family and traditional institutions, and so on. The Pnar has their own cultural organization. They work united for the promotion of their tradition and the values their forefathers held high. Their language, tradition, complexion, attire, cuisine, and so on are not in par with the so called 'main land, India'. Therefore, they are treated as outsiders and intruders in many metropolitans of the country. Bruised by the elite, the Pnar in many occasions kept mum like any other tribal does. Now they are getting awakened and organized. Though the state is reluctant to encourage the tribal culture, the people promoting and some enlightened members of the group is giving a new vision to the people to get organized and feel proud to be called a *Niam Tre*, follower of the original religion.