

Manipur

State (pop., 2008 est.: 2,627,000), northeastern India.

Manipur literally meaning "A jeweled land" nestle deep within a lush green corner of North East India. It seems much like an exquisite work of art executed by superb hands of Nature and is indeed a state of exquisite natural beauty and splendors, the beauty of which once inspired Mrs. St. Clair Grimwood described it as " A Pretty Place more beautiful than many show places of the world" Late Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru paid a fitting tribute by describing it as "Jewel of India".

Surrounded by blue hills with an oval shaped valley at the centre, rich in art and tradition and surcharged with nature's pristine glory. Manipur lies on a melting pot of culture. It is birth place of Polo. This is the place where Rajashree Bhagyachandra created the famous Ras Lila, the classical dance of Manipur, out of his enchanting dream by the grace of Lord Krishna.

Her folk dances reveal the mythological concept of creation of Manipur.

Having a varied and proud history from the earliest times, Manipur came under the British Rule as a Princely State after the defeat in the Anglo-Manipuri War of 1891. After independence of India in 1947, the Princely State of Manipur was merged in the Indian Union on October 15, 1949 and became a full-fledged State of India on the 21th January, 1972 with a Legislative Assembly of 60 seats of which 20 are reserved for Scheduled Tribe and 1 reserved for Scheduled Caste. The State is represented in the Lok Sabha by two members and by one member in the Rajya Sabha.

Area : 22327 sq.km

Population : 22,93,896

Capital : Imphal

State Language : Manipuri

State Emblem : Kangla Shaa

State Bird : Nongyeen

State Animal : Sangai

State Game : Manipuri Polo

State Flower : Siroi Lily

Density of Population(per Sq Km.) : 82

Literacy Rate : 59.89%

Altitude : 790mtrs.above MSL (Imphal)

Latitude : 23.83°N to 25.68°N

Longitude : 93.03°E to 94.78°E

Rainfall : 1467.5mm(Avg.)

Rainy Season : May to October

Literacy Rate : 68.87

Schedule Tribes : 33(Recongised by Government)

Assembly Constituencies : 60(40 General, 19 ST, 1 SC)

Parliamentary Constituencies : 2:(One for Inner and One for Outer)

National Highways : 3(39-Indo-Myanmar road, 53-New Cachar Road, 150-Jessami-Tipaimukh Road)

Occupying an area of 8,621 sq mi (22,327 sq km), it is bordered by Myanmar (Burma) and the states of Nagaland, Assam, and Mizoram; its capital is Imphal. Its two main physical features are the Manipur River valley and the western mountainous region. In 1762 and 1824 Manipur requested British assistance in repelling invasions from Myanmar. The British administered the area in the 1890s, but in 1907 a local government took over; a tribal uprising in 1917 led to a new government administered from Assam. In 1947 Manipur acceded to the Indian union; it was ruled as a union territory until it became a state in 1972. Agriculture and forestry are economic mainstays.

state of India, located in the northeastern part of the country. It is bordered by the Indian states of Nagaland to the north, Assam to the west, and Mizoram to the southwest and by Myanmar (Burma) to the south and east. The state capital is Imphal, located in the centre of the state.

The name Manipur means “land of gems.” Like other northeastern states, it is largely isolated from the rest of India. Its economy centres on agriculture and forestry, and trade and cottage industries also are important. Area 8,621 square miles (22,327 square km). Pop (2008 est.) 2,627,000.

Land

The state has two major physiographic regions: the Manipur River valley and a large surrounding tract of mountainous country. The valley, encompassing some 690 square miles (1,787 square km), runs north-south and lies at an elevation of 2,600 feet (790 metres). Its main physical feature is Logtak Lake, which covers about 40 square miles (100 square km) and is the source of the Manipur River. The river flows southward through the valley into Myanmar, where it joins the Myittha River, a tributary of the Chindwin.

The hill ranges, connected by spurs and ridges, run generally north-south. These ranges include the Naga Hills to the north, the East Manipur Hills along the eastern Myanmar border, the Mizo and Chin hills to the south, and the West Manipur Hills to the west. Average elevations vary between 5,000 and 6,000 feet (1,500 and 1,800 metres), although the hills in the north rise above 9,500 feet (2,900 metres). In the

west the Surma River, known as the Barak River in Manipur, has cut a narrow steep-sided valley through the West Manipur Hills as it flows to join the Meghna River in Bangladesh.

Climate

The climate is temperate in the valley and cold in the hills. In summer the average high temperature is in the low 90s F (about 32–34 °C), while in the winter temperatures can drop into the mid-30s F (about 1–2 °C). Rainfall is abundant, with about 65 inches (1,650 mm) of precipitation occurring annually. November through February are the state's driest months.

Plant and animal life

The hills are densely covered with mixed forests containing stands of bamboo and teak. Other trees include oak, magnolia, and chinquapin. The Luzon pine grows in the Naga Hills. Among the state's notable plants are rhododendrons, primroses, and blue poppies. Animal life includes the Asiatic elephants, tigers, leopards, and wild buffalo. The rhinoceros is hunted for its horn, which, when ground, is valued as an aphrodisiac. The brow-antlered deer is in danger of extinction. Gaurs are the largest wild bison in the world; the mithan (or gayal), the domesticated form, is widely distributed in the state.

People

About two-thirds of the people are Meithei, who occupy the Manipur valley and are largely Hindus. Meithei women conduct most of the trade in the valley and enjoy high social status. Indigenous hill tribes, such as the Nagas in the north and the Kukis in the south, make up the rest of the population. Divided into numerous clans and sections, the people of these tribes speak languages of the Tibeto-Burman family and practice traditional animist religions. Some of the Nagas have been converted to Christianity. More than three-fifths of the people speak Manipuri, which, along with English, is the official language of the state. Manipur's population is largely rural, Imphal being the only city of any size.

Agriculture, forestry, and fishing

Agriculture and forestry are the main sources of income. Rice is the major crop, and the rich soil also supports corn (maize), sugarcane, mustard, tobacco, orchard fruits, and pulses (legumes). Terracing is common in the hills, where the farmers plow the ground with hand hoes. Among some of the hill tribes, domestic animals are kept only for meat and are not milked or used for hauling. Teak and bamboo are major forestry products. The Nagas are known to use intoxicants to catch fish.

Manufacturing

Manufacturing is limited to several well-established cottage industries. The designed cloth produced on hand looms is in demand throughout India and outside the country. Other industries include sericulture (silk production), soapmaking, carpentry, tanning, and the manufacture of bamboo and sugarcane products. An industrial complex, including an electronics plant, has been established at Imphal.

Transportation

Manipur remains somewhat isolated from the rest of India, and communications within the state are poor. A national highway passes through the state from Tamu on the Myanmar border in the south via Imphal to Dimapur (in Nagaland) in the north; this highway also connects Imphal with the Northeast Frontier Railway near Dimapur. There are air links from Imphal to Guwahati and Silchar in Assam and to Kolkata (Calcutta) in West Bengal state.

Constitutional framework

The governor, appointed by the president of India, is the constitutional head of the state. The governor functions on the advice of the elected chief minister and the Council of Ministers. Manipur has a unicameral legislature consisting of a Vidhan Sabha (Legislative Assembly) of 60 members. The state shares a common High Court with Assam. Manipur is divided into eight administrative districts.

Health, welfare, and education

About three-fifths of the population is literate; the state has a university at Imphal and more than 30 colleges. Major health problems include tuberculosis, leprosy, venereal disease, and filariasis. The state continues to have an inadequate number of health facilities.

Cultural life

Polo and hockey are popular sports. Manipur has given birth to an indigenous form of classical dance known as *manipuri*. Unlike other Indian dance forms, hand movements are used decoratively rather than as pantomime, bells are not accentuated, and both men and women perform communally. The dance dramas, interpreted by a narrator, are a part of religious life. Themes are generally taken from the life of Krishna, the pastoral god of Hinduism. Long an isolated art form, *manipuri* was introduced to the rest of India by the poet Rabindranath Tagore in 1917.

History

The earliest recorded history of the Manipur region dates to about 900 ce. The beginning of Manipur's more recent history dates from 1762, when the raja Jai Singh concluded a treaty with the British to repel an invasion of Burmans from Myanmar (Burma). Further communication was minimal until 1824, when the British were again requested to expel the Burmans. Disputed successions were a continual source of political turmoil until Chura Chand, a five-year-old member of the ruling family, was nominated raja in 1891. For the next eight years the administration was conducted under British supervision; slavery and forced labour were abolished, and roads were constructed.

In 1907 the government was assumed by the raja and the *durbar*, or council, whose vice president was a member of the Indian civil service. Subsequently, the administration was transferred to the raja, and the vice president of the *durbar* became its president. After an uprising of the Kuki hill tribes in 1917, a new system of government was adopted; the region was divided into three subdivisions, each headed by an officer from the neighbouring government of Assam.

With the accession of Manipur to India in 1947, the political agency exercised by Assam was abolished. Two years later Manipur became a union territory governed by a chief commissioner and an elected territorial council. In 1969 the office of chief commissioner was replaced by that of lieutenant governor, whose status was changed to governor when Manipur became a constituent state of the Indian union on July 21, 1972.
