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CONTENTS

Sr. No.	TITLE & NAME OF THE AUTHOR (S)	Page No.
1.	DIRECTION AND TRENDS OF INDIA'S PINEAPPLE EXPORTS: A STUDY IN THE FREE TRADE REGIME JOMY M THOMAS & DR. MARY JOSEPH	1
2.	A STUDY ON HOUSEHOLDS' CONSUMPTION PATTERN OF AAVIN MILK IN ERODE DISTRICT SARAVANAN. R., YOGANANDAN. G., RUBY. N & KARTHI.C	6
3.	A JOURNEY FROM FERA TO FEMA & ITS IMPACT ON FOREX DHEERAJ GANDHI & DR. I.C.KASHYAP	10
4.	EMERGENCE OF MORAL PRINCIPLES AND ETHICS IN MANAGEMENT EDUCATION U. PADMAVATHI	15
5.	EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN THROUGH MICROFINANCE: A STUDY IN CHITTOOR DISTRICT K. RAMANAMMA & P. MOHAN REDDY	18
6.	THE IMPACT OF MACROECONOMIC VARIABLES ON STOCK MARKET INDEX: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY PRADEEP K & DR. Y. NAGARAJU	22
7.	IMPACT OF COALMINE INDUSTRIAL EFFLUENTS ON PRODUCTIVITY OF PULSE CROP DR. S. RADHA KRISHNA	29
8.	IMPACT OF MERGER ON THE PROFITABILITY PERFORMANCE OF REGIONAL RURAL BANKS (RRBs) IN BIHAR STATE OF INDIA: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY DR. MANAS CHAKRABARTI	32
9.	PERFORMANCE OF MGNREGA IN MANIPUR: A CROSS DISTRICT ANALYSIS JIYAUUR RAHMAN & ZEBBA SHEEREEN	37
10.	A STUDY ON PROSPECTS AND FINANCE PROBLEMS OF FOOD BASED SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO MADURAI DR. S.FATIMA ROSALINE MARY & D.ANUSANKARI	42
11.	PROGRESS AND PERFORMANCE OF PRIMARY AGRICULTURE CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES IN INDIA PARDEEP KUMAR CHAUHAN	48
12.	SUSTAINABLE GROWTH: UTILIZATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES V. VANEENDRA SASTRY	51
13.	HEALTH INFRASTRUCTURE IN HARYANA: AN ANALYSIS ISHU GARG	54
14.	CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR RURAL WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS JAINENDRA KUMAR VERMA	58
15.	A STUDY ON PERFORMANCE OF STATE CONSUMER DISPUTES REDRESSAL COMMISSIONS IN INDIA GURLEEN KAUR	60
16.	STUDY OF SENSITIVITY TOWARDS IMPORTANCE OF GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATION REGISTRY IN UTTARAKHAND DEEPAK JOSHI	63
17.	MARKET MIX STRATEGIES FOR DESTINATION AS A RURAL TOURISM PRODUCT AJAZ AHMAD DAR, HAMID ABDULLAH & PRIYA SINGH	70
18.	SPECIES-WISE MAJOR MARINE FISH PRODUCTION: TRENDS AND GROWTH PERFORMANCE IN SINDH DR. MOHAMMAD PERVEZ WASIM	74
19.	GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE AND ECONOMIC GROWTH IN ASEAN-5: LONG-RUN TENDENCIES AND SHORT-TERM ADJUSTMENT EHSAN RAJABI & JUNAINA MUHAMMAD	85
20.	AN ASSESSMENT OF COMPETITIVE STRATEGIES ADOPTED BY COMMERCIAL COLLEGES IN NAIROBI, KENYA IN IMPROVING THEIR ENROLMENT CAPACITY ALICE WAIRIMU KANDE	90
21.	ORGANIZATIONAL ANALYSIS OF PANCHAYATI RAJ INSTITUTIONS IN INDIA PARDEP KUMAR CHAUHAN	95
22.	RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EXCHANGE RATE AND TRADE BALANCE OF SOUTH ASIA: THE J-CURVE PATTERN ADNAN ALI SHAHZAD	99
23.	VOLATILITY IN GOLD PRICE IN INDIA: AN UPDATE MADHUSMITA BHUYAN	106
24.	A STUDY ON PERFORMANCE OF CONSUMER DISPUTES REDRESSAL AGENCIES IN STATE OF KARNATAKA GURLEEN KAUR	111
25.	THE LONG RUN RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STOCK MARKET RETURNS AND INVESTMENT GROWTH IN NIGERIA: (1960 - 2010) DR. FREDRICK ONYEBUCHI ASOGWA	113
26.	THE EFFECT OF PENSION FUNDS ON THE GROWTH OF NIGERIAN ECONOMY SAMUEL, KEHINDE OLUWATOYIN & OKE, MARGARET ADEBIMPE	117
27.	AGRICULTURE AND WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN INDIA HRIDESHWER GUPTA	123
28.	WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP: AN EMERGING WORKFORCE IN 21 st CENTURY JAINENDRA KUMAR VERMA	126
29.	AN EMPIRICAL STUDY ON THE DYNAMICS OF COMMODITY DERIVATIVE MARKET'S IMPACT ON INDIAN INVESTMENT PRASAD R.A	128
30.	AGRICULTURAL GROWTH AND FOOD SECURITY: PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES KUMARI MARY MATHE	131
	REQUEST FOR FEEDBACK	138

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PERFORMANCE OF MGNREGA IN MANIPUR: A CROSS DISTRICT ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, the flagship welfare programme was introduced in February 2, 2006. Under this Act, every adult member of any rural household who is willing to do unskilled manual work have a legal right to get 100 days in a financial year at the statutory minimum wage. On 1st April, 2008 the act has been extended to the entire rural areas of India. Manipur, one of the eight north eastern states of India is a rural-based economy where majority of the population depend on agriculture. In this context, the rural employment guarantee programme has played a significant role in alleviating the rural poverty by giving them hundred days guaranteed job during a year. The Act was operating in Manipur from February 2, 2006 and covered the entire districts of the state on 1st April, 2009. The purpose of the study is to analyse the performance of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act in Manipur state with cross district analysis. However, the paper finds inter-district variation using some important indicators like the average person days generated per household, the proportion of works completed to works taken up and the proportion of total funds expenditure to total available funds. The study found that Senapati district performed better as compared to the rest of the districts while the Thoubal district performed the worst. Out of the nine districts, five districts performed better than the state Composite Achievement Index while the remaining districts were lagging behind.

KEYWORDS

Employment, Manipur, MGNREGA.

1. INTRODUCTION

Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), the flagship welfare programme of India was passed by the Parliament in August 2005 and came into effect on 7th September 2005. Under this Act, every adult member of any rural household who is willing to do unskilled manual work have a legal right to get 100 days in a financial year at the statutory minimum wage. The law was initially called the NREGA (National Rural Employment Guarantee Act) but was renamed as the MGNREGA on 2nd October, 2009 on the eve of the birth anniversary of the Father of Nation, Mahatma Gandhi. It brings a path breaking legislation that provides a social safety net to the poor people in India. On February 2, 2006, the MGNREGA came into force in 200 most backward districts of India (Known as Phase I districts) formally launched at Bandlapalle village in Ananthpur District of Andhra Pradesh. It was further extended to 130 additional districts w.e.f. 1st April 2007 (Known as Phase II districts) making a total of 330 districts under the act. The Act has been universalised w.e.f. 1st April 2008 to cover all the remaining backward districts in the country except the districts that have hundred per cent of urban population (NREGA, 2008). It is found as one of the world's largest public employment guarantee programme to give the right to employment to every rural household.

The prime objective of the Act is to enhance wage employment and rural development with an aim to eradicate poverty, to promote social and gender equality (as per rules of the Act, 23 % of workers are Scheduled Castes¹, 17 % are Scheduled Tribes¹ and 50 % are women under the scheme), in order to reduce the pull and push migration of the rural poor and to create useful assets in rural India. As a reason of these one can proudly say that the "MGNREGA is hope of the poor" (Maruti and Shivaji, 2012). For the first time in India, the poor people in rural areas can now demand work if he/she needs it without waiting for the government to initiate a particular programme or without having to be selected as a Below Poverty Line (BPL)² family (Kamath, 2010). The Act addresses to suggest the kinds of work which causes persistent poverty like drought, deforestation and soil erosion, so that the process of employment generation is maintained on sustainable basis. The main provisions of the MGNREGA are:

- Adult members of a rural household, willing to do unskilled manual work, may apply for registration in writing or orally to the locally Gram Panchayat.³
- The Gram Panchayat after due verification will issue a job Card. The job Card will bear the photograph of all adult members of the household willing to work under NREGA and is free of cost.
- The job Card should be issued within 15 days of application.
- A job Card holder may submit a written application for employment to the Gram Panchayat, stating the time and duration for which work is sought. The minimum days of employment have to be at least fourteen.
- The Gram Panchayat will issue a dated receipt of the written application for employment, against which the guarantee of providing employment within 15 days operates.
- Employment will be given within 15 days of application for work, if it is not then daily unemployment allowance as per the Act, has to be paid liability of payment of unemployment allowance is of the States.
- Work should ordinarily be provided within 5 km radius of the village. In case work is provided beyond 5 km, extra wages of 10 per cent are payable to meet additional transportation and living expenses.
- Wages are to be paid according to the Minimum Wages Act 1948 for agricultural labourers in the state, unless the Centre notifies a wage rate which will not be less than ₹ 60 per day. Equal wages will be provided to both men and women.
- Wages are to be paid according to piece rate or daily rate. Disbursement of wages has to be done on weekly basis and not beyond a fortnight in any case.
- At least 1/3rd beneficiaries shall be women who have registered and requested work under the scheme.
- Work site facilities such as crèche, drinking water, shade and first aid have to be provided.
- The shelf of projects for a village will be recommended by the Gram Sabha⁴ approved by the Zilla Panchayat.⁵
- At least 50 per cent of works will be allotted to Gram Panchayats for execution.
- Permissible works predominantly include water and soil conservation, afforestation and land development works.
- A 60:40 wage and material ratio has to be maintained. No contractors and machinery is allowed.
- The Central Government bears the 100 per cent wage cost of unskilled manual labour and 75 per cent of the material cost including the wages of skilled and semi-skilled workers.

- Social Audit has to be done by the Gram Sabha.
- Grievance redressal mechanisms have to put in place for ensuring a responsive implementation process.
- All accounts and records relating to the Scheme should be available for public scrutiny.

The focus of the MGNREGA includes works carried out on common land i.e., water conservation and water harvesting; Drought proofing (including afforestation and plantation); Irrigation canals including micro and minor irrigation works; Provision of irrigation facility; Renovation of tradition water bodies including desilting of tanks; Land development; Flood control and protection works including draining in water logged areas; Rural connectivity to provide all-weather access; Horticulture plantation and land development facilities to land owned by households belonging the Scheduled Castes (SCs) and the Scheduled Tribes (STs) or Below Poverty Line (BPL) families or to beneficiaries of land reforms⁶ or to the beneficiaries under the Indira AwasYojana⁷ of the Government of India or that of the small farmers or marginal farmers as defined in the "Agriculture Debt Waiver and Debt Relief Scheme, 2008"⁸ (NREGA, 2009).

The purpose of the study is to analyse the performance of MGNREGA in Manipur state with cross district analysis. For a better understanding of the study the paper is divided into five sections. Section 1 gives a brief introduction of MGNREGA. Section 2 describes the brief profile of the state while section 3 informs about the methodology and data source. Section 4 discusses the status of different districts according to their performances and Section 5 determines the composite achievement index and relative position of all the districts. Finally, Section 6 summarises the study and offer a concluding remark.

2. THE PROFILE OF MANIPUR STATE

Manipur, one of the eight states of the North-East India⁹ is located in the slopes of the Sub-Himalayan Ranges at latitude 23°50' N to 25°42' N and longitude 92°58' E to 94°45' E. The state is surrounded on all sides by hills and the centre is a small oval-shaped valley. It shares the boundary with Nagaland in the North, Mizoram in the South and Assam in the West among the Indian states and shares the international border with Myanmar in the East as well as the South. It covers an area of 22, 327 sq.km. which forms 0.7 per cent of the total land of India. The capital city of Manipur i.e., Imphal stands at an altitude of 790 metres above the M.S.L. About Ninety per cent of the total area of Manipur i.e., 20, 089 sq.km. is covered by hills which comprises five districts namely, Senapati, Tamenglong, Churachandpur, Chandel and Ukhrul while the remaining 10 per cent of the area i.e., 2, 238 sq.km. is a small valley constituting four districts viz., Imphal East, Imphal West, Bishnupur and Thoubal (the state has currently nine administrative districts).

According to 2001 census, the population of Manipur is 22.9 lakh (of which 11.6 lakh were males and 11.3 lakh were females) which constitute nearly 0.22 per cent of the total population of India. There are 7 scheduled castes (SCs) communities and 33 scheduled tribes (STs) communities in Manipur (Economic Survey, Manipur, 2008-09). The density of population of the state as per 2001 census was 103 persons per sq.km. as against 82 persons per sq.km. in 1991 census. Regarding the size of the district population, the valley districts, namely, Imphal-West, Imphal-East, Thoubal and Bishnupur districts are most populous districts in the state which accounted 61.54 per cent of State's population in 2001 census.

Agriculture plays a significant role in the economy of the state which contributes 23.61 per cent to the Total State Domestic Product in 2008-09 (RBI, 2010-11). About 52 per cent of the total workers are engaged in cultivation and Agricultural labourers. However, the performance of agriculture in the state mainly depends on timely rainfall and weather conditions. The number of person BPL was 3.76 lakh (22.3 %) and 0.20 lakh (3.3 %) in the rural and urban Manipur respectively according to 61st Round (2004-05) of National Sample Survey (NSS).

In Manipur maximum numbers of people live in rural areas constituting about 74.89 per cent (17.14 lakh) of the total population. Enhancement in the quality of life of the economically weaker sections of the society through generating employment, improving the health facilities, providing cheap education facilities, rural infrastructure, etc. has been one of the basic objectives of the development planning of the state. In order to achieve this goal a number of programmes viz., SGSY¹⁰ (Swarnjayanti Gram SwarozgarYojana), IAY (Indira AwaasYojana), PMGSY¹¹ (PradhanMantri Gram SadakYojana), Bharat Nirman¹², SSA¹³ (SarvaShikshaAbhiyan), Mid-day Meal Scheme¹⁴, MGNREGA, etc. have been implemented in the state. These programmes ensure minimum wage to vulnerable rural households and enable them to acquire assets and income through self-employment ventures which gives an opportunity to combine growth with equity (Economic Survey, Manipur, 2008-09).

3. DATA SOURCE AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study is based on the data of secondary sources which is availed from the official website of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (www.nrega.nic.in). For the measurement of the performance of MGNREGA in the different districts of the state of Manipur, three indicators are used:

1. Average Person days generated per Households
2. Proportion of works Completed to works Taken up
3. Proportion of total fund expenditure

All the three indicators mentioned above are taken from the financial year, 2010-11. These indicators were then converted into scores by using the UNDP's Human Development Index construction method (Mukherjee and Ghosh, 2009). As a result there emerge three indices like:

- ❖ AIP (Achievement Index with respect to the Average Person days generated per Households);
- ❖ AIW (Achievement Index with respect to the Proportion of work Completed to works taken up); &
- ❖ AIF (Achievement Index with respect to the Proportion of total fund Expenditure)

From these three indices, the Composite Achievement Index (CAI) can be determined to show the relative position of all the districts in order of their respective ranks.

4. PERFORMANCE OF MGNREGA IN THE DISTRICTS OF MANIPUR

The MGNREGA is now in its seventh year to achieve its twin objectives that is to create employment and rural development. If the Act is implemented effectively, it can not only enhance the income of the rural poor in the short-term but also can create durable assets in the villages and generate productive infrastructure in a sustainable manner which is needed for alleviation of poverty in the long-run (Mukherjee and Ghosh, 2009). It has created a sense of hope amongst the rural poor which can be further strengthened if people understand that the act gives them employment as a matter of right and that claiming this right is within the realm of possibility (Bhatia and Dreze, 2006).

Tamenglong district of Manipur state is one among the 200 most backward districts in India selected for launching the MGNREGA enacted by the UPA Government to provide a legal guarantee for 100 days of work to rural households on February 2, 2006. Subsequently, Churachandpur and Chandel districts had been covered under the Act in the second phase w.e.f. April 1, 2007. The remaining six districts of Manipur i.e., Bishnupur, Imphal-East, Imphal-West, Senapati, Thoubal and Ukhrul have also been covered under the Act w.e.f. April 1, 2008.

4.1 AVERAGE PERSON DAYS PER HOUSEHOLD (APDH)

The first indicator, Average Person Days per Household is the ratio of employment provided to the person days and employment provided to Households. The APDH of all the districts was then converted into scores to get the Achievement Index with respect to APDH (AIP).

TABLE 1: EMPLOYMENT GENERATED DURING THE YEAR, 2010-11

Phase	Districts	Employment provided to Households	Persondays of Employment provided (in Lakh)	Average persondays per Households	Achievement Index (AIP)	Rank
I	TAMENGLONG	24618	20.43	82.99	0.80	5
II	CHANDEL	31188	31.17	99.94	1	2
	CHURACHANDPUR	54055	54.05	99.99	1	1
III	BISHNUPUR	36276	23.94	65.99	0.61	6
	IMPHAL EAST	62146	22.60	36.36	0.27	8
	IMPHAL WEST	52811	31.38	59.42	0.53	7
	SENAPATI	78405	65.66	83.75	0.81	4
	THOUBAL	48957	6.43	13.14	0.00	9
	UKHRUL	45400	39.95	88.00	0.86	3
	TOTAL	433856	295.61	68.14	0.63	

Source: www.nrega.nic.in and Author's own calculation

Four districts out of nine lies below the overall state APDH i.e., Bishnupur (65.99), Imphal-West (59.42), Imphal-East (36.36) and Thoubal (13.14). Following the AIP, Churachandpur district stood the first and Thoubal district stood last among the nine districts.

4.2 PROPORTION OF WORKS COMPLETED TO WORKS TAKEN UP (PWCWTU)

Proportion of Works Completed to Works Taken Up is the ratio of works completed and works taken up. The result shows that out of nine districts, four districts i.e., Chandel, Churachandpur, Bishnupur and Senapati give the total result for works completed to the total works taken up (Table 2). For the rest, PWCWTU is in between 17 per cent to 94 per cent- Thoubal (17.13 per cent), Ukhrul (56.36 per cent), Tamenglong (77.35 per cent), Imphal-East (81.40 per cent) and Imphal-West (94.88 per cent).

TABLE 2: PROPORTION OF WORKS COMPLETED TO WORKS TAKEN UP DURING THE YEAR, 2010-11

Phase	Districts	Total Works Taken Up	Total Works Completed	Proportion of Works Completed (in %)	Achievement Index (AIW)	Rank
I	TAMENGLONG	945	731	77.35	0.73	4
II	CHANDEL	1043	1043	100.00	1	1
	CHURACHANDPUR	1845	1845	100.00	1	1
III	BISHNUPUR	421	421	100.00	1	1
	IMPHAL EAST	215	175	81.40	0.78	3
	IMPHAL WEST	781	741	94.88	0.94	2
	SENAPATI	2459	2459	100.00	1	1
	THOUBAL	356	61	17.13	0	6
	UKHRUL	747	421	56.36	0.47	5
	TOTAL	8812	7897	89.62	0.87	

Source: www.nrega.nic.in and Author's own calculation

After the conversion of PWCWTU into scores to get AIW, it is found that Chandel, Churachandpur, Bishnupur and Senapati stood first because of acquiring the same rank. Imphal-West stood second in rank followed by Imphal-East, Tamenglong, and Ukhrul. Here also, Thoubal district stood last according to the performance of total works completed to total works taken up.

4.3. PROPORTION OF TOTAL FUNDS EXPENDITURE (PTFE)

Proportion of Total Funds Expenditure (PTFE) shows the ratio of total funds expenditure and the total available funds. Two districts exceeds total expenditure to their total available funds out of nine districts i.e., 147.81 per cent total expenditure by Tamenglong and 128.63 per cent by Senapati. Due to this, the state average becomes 104.53 per cent. Following these two districts, the PTFE of Churachandpur, Bishnupur and Ukhrul district were near about to utilise the total available funds i.e., 99.93 per cent, 99.60 per cent and 99.95 per cent respectively.

TABLE 3: TOTAL UTILISED FUNDS AS A PROPORTION OF THE TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDS DURING THE YEAR, 2010-11

Phase	Districts	Total Available Funds (₹ in Lakh)	Total Expenditure (₹ in Lakh)	Proportion of Total Funds Expenditure (%)	Achievement Index (AIF)	Rank
I	TAMENGLONG	1749.19	2585.47	147.81	1	1
II	CHANDEL	4204.22	3638.74	86.55	0.24	8
	CHURACHANDPUR	7534.02	7529.08	99.93	0.41	4
III	BISHNUPUR	4413.21	4395.34	99.60	0.40	5
	IMPHAL EAST	3451.35	3043.81	88.19	0.26	7
	IMPHAL WEST	4510.67	4041.89	89.61	0.28	6
	SENAPATI	10188.94	13106.33	128.63	0.76	2
	THOUBAL	1140.87	762.09	66.80	0	9
	UKHRUL	4970.12	4967.76	99.95	0.41	3
	TOTAL	42162.59	44070.51	104.53	0.47	

Source: www.nrega.nic.in and Author's own calculation

Among the remaining seven districts, Thoubal district's PTFE was only 66.80 per cent which shows the lowest utilisation of the fund available in comparison to the other districts. Therefore, there were seven districts that were below the state average out of nine.

The AIF can be determined by the similar method as mentioned earlier. Out of nine districts only two districts were above the state PTFE. Amongst them, Tamenglong district scores the highest and Thoubal district score the lowest.

5. COMPOSITE ACHIEVEMENT INDEX AND THE RELATIVE POSITION OF ALL THE DISTRICTS

In the final and last stage, all the individual scores of AIP, AIW and AIF are added up to obtain the final scores by giving 50 per cent weights to the first indicator and 25 per cent weights to each of the other two indicators (Mukherjee and Ghosh, 2009). The districts were then ranked according to the composite index of their performance.

TABLE 4: COMPOSITE INDEX AND THE RELATIVE POSITION OF ALL THE DISTRICTS OF MANIPUR DURING THE YEAR, 2010-11

Phase	District	AIP	AIW	AIF	CAI	Rank
I	TAMENGLONG	0.80	0.73	1.00	0.814	3
II	CHANDEL	1.00	1.00	0.24	0.811	4
	CHURACHANDPUR	1.00	1.00	0.41	0.852	2
III	BISHNUPUR	0.61	1.00	0.40	0.753	5
	IMPHAL EAST	0.27	0.78	0.26	0.521	8
	IMPHAL WEST	0.53	0.94	0.28	0.673	6
	SENAPATI	0.81	1.00	0.76	0.894	1
	THOUBAL	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.000	9
	UKHRUL	0.86	0.47	0.41	0.554	7
	TOTAL	0.63	0.87	0.47	0.712	

Note: AIP = Achievement Index with respect to the Average person days generated per Household; AIW = Achievement Index with respect to the Proportion of Work Completed; AIF = Achievement Index with respect to the Proportion of Total Funds Expenditure; CAI = Composite Achievement Index

The Composite Achievement Index (CAI) can determine the relative position of all the districts under consideration according to their performance with respect to all the three indicators. Table 4 shows that out of nine districts, Thoubal district performed the worst according to the CAI. Five districts performed better than the state CAI. They were Tamenglong, Chandel, Churachandpur, Bishnupur and Senapati. According to the rank-wise, Senapati stood first, followed by Churachandpur and then by Tamenglong. Thoubal district stood the last by showing no performances in all the three indicators as compared to the rest of the districts.

6. CONCLUSIONS

The MGNREGA was introduced to tackle the problems of widespread rural unemployment and underemployment in different parts of India, especially in the poorer districts. While it can take account of likely seasonal variations in the labour market, it is not designed specifically to handle sudden onset of disasters during the course of the year (Krishnamurty, 2006).

In the state of Manipur, poverty is found to be very high in rural areas as compared to that of the urban areas. The number of poor in rural areas is six times higher than that of in urban areas though the population concentration in urban areas is nearly two times larger than the rural areas. Majority of rural people directly depends on agriculture for their economy. These agricultural products came from the large-scale practice of shifting (Jhum¹⁵) cultivation in rural areas which led to turn most of the land into uncultivable barren land. As a result, many rural poor become unemployed and they have come down below the poverty line (Haokip, 2012). In this context, MGNREGA plays an important role in maintaining the rural employment which helps people living in rural areas to sustain themselves during the off-harvest season.

Currently the Act is operating in all the districts of Manipur. The above study shows that Senapati district performed better as compared to the rest of the districts while the Thoubal district performed the worst. Out of the nine districts, five districts performed better than the state CAI while the remaining districts were lagging behind.

The MGNREGA promotes the rural infrastructure, reduces migration and unemployment of rural people, increases agricultural production, reduces flood affected areas, promotes better rural communication, increases vegetation covered area and augments financial activities of rural household as well as of women in spite of the poor awareness among the rural population, delay in wage payment, corruption and irregularities, lack of transparency and accountability, shortage of staff, absence of effective grievance redressal system etc.

In order to eliminate the problems stated above there is an urgent need to initiate the measures such as creation of widespread awareness, wages should be made regular, transparency and disclosure practices, sufficient staff should be recruited and proper training of the programme should be given, each district should provide facilities at worksite as per norms of the Act, effective grievance redressal system and financial inclusion through banks and Insurance companies should be promoted. If the MGNREGA is implemented in a sound manner, it has the power to promote the economic condition of the rural people.

NOTES

1. Scheduled Castes (SCs), also known as the "Dalit" and the Scheduled Tribes (STs) are two groupings of historically disadvantaged people that are given express recognition in the Constitution of India. The SCs and STs make up around 15 % and 7.5 % respectively of the population of India, or around 24 % altogether, according to the 2001 census.
2. Below Poverty Line is an economic benchmark and poverty threshold used by the government of India to indicate economic disadvantage and to identify individuals and households in need of government assistance and aid. The Tendulkar Committee report that, 37 % of people in India live below poverty line.
3. Gram Panchayat are local self-governments at the village or small town level in India. It consists of a between 7 and 17 members, elected from the wards of the village, and they are called a "panch". Peoples of village selects panch, with one-eighth of seats reserved for female candidates. To establish a Gram Panchayat in a village, the population of the village should be at least 500 people of voting age (anyone who is 18 years old and more). The Gram Panchayat is the foundation of the "Panchayati Raj" system in India.
4. Gram Sabha is a "body consisting of persons registered in the electoral rolls (who should have completed 18 years old) relating to a village comprised with the area of Panchayat at the village level" (according to Article 243 (B) of the Indian Constitution).
5. Zilla Panchayat is one of the 3-tier systems of Panchayati Raj system in India. It is a district level governing system. It provides essential services and facilities to the rural population.
6. Land Reforms in India: Soon after independence, i.e., 1947, India has adopted a Land Reforms programme which includes elimination of intermediaries, tenancy reforms and consolidation of holdings.
7. Indira Awas Yojana is a Government of India social welfare programme to provide housing for the rural poor in India. This scheme, operating since 1985, provides subsidies and cash-assistance to people in villages for constructs their houses themselves.
8. Small Farmers or Marginal Farmers as defined in Agriculture Debt Waiver and Debt Relief Scheme, 2008: 'Marginal Farmers' means a farmer cultivating (as owner or tenant or share cropper) agricultural land up to 1 hectare (2.5 acres) and 'Small Farmers' means a farmer cultivating (as owner or tenant or share cropper) agricultural land of more than 1 hectare and up to 2 hectares.
9. North-Eastern states of India refer to the easternmost region of India consisting of the Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura. They are ethnically distinct from the rest of India and have strong ethnic and cultural ties with East Asia and Southeast Asia.
10. Swarnjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY) is an initiative launched by the Government of India on April 1, 1999 to provide sustainable income to poor people living in rural areas of the country. The SGSY aims at providing self-employment to villagers through the establishment of Self-help groups.
11. The Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana is a nationwide plan in India to provide good all-weather road connectivity to unconnected villages. It was launched on 25 December, 2000. The programme envisages connectivity all habitations with a population of 500 persons and above in plain areas and 250 persons and above in Hill states, Tribal areas, Desert area and in the Left Wing Extremism affected / Integrated Action Plan districts as identified by the Ministry of Home Affairs / Planning Commission.

12. Bharat Nirman is an Indian plan for creating basic rural infrastructure. It seeks to provide electricity to all remaining villages, drinking water supply to all uncovered and slipped-back habitations, connect all habitations with a population of 1000 (500 in hilly and tribal areas) with an all-weather road, create additional irrigation capacity of ₹ 1 crore hectares, build 60 lakh houses for the rural poor and cover every village with a telephone.
13. SarvaShikshaAbhiyan or "Education for all programmes" is the national flagship programme aimed at the universalization of elementary education "in a time bound manner" as mandated by the 86th Amendment to the Constitution of India making free and education to children of ages 6-14 a fundamental right.
14. Mid-day Meal Scheme is a popular name for school meal programme in India which started in the 1960s. It involves provision of lunch free of cost to school children on all working days. The key objectives of the programme are protecting children from classroom hunger, increasing school enrolment and attendance, improved socialisation among children belonging to all castes, addressing malnutrition, and social empowerment through provision of employment to women.
15. "Jhum" or "Jhoom" cultivation is an agricultural practice done by the tribal groups in the north eastern states of India. This practice involves clearing a piece of land by setting fire or clear felling and using the area for growing crops of agricultural importance such as upland rice, vegetables or fruits.

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