ETHNICITY AND DEVELOPMENT ACROSS BORDERS: A STUDY OF THE NAGAS IN NORTH-EAST INDIA

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ABSTRACT

North East India, also known as North East Region (NER), is known for its vast socio-cultural diversities with overlapping ethnicities across the borders, both national and international, in colonial history. For instance, the Nagas are separated by boundaries within India and beyond, which resulted in longstanding ethnic identity movement today, thereby adversely affecting the economy of the region. The region lags behind mainland India in development index mainly on account of its peripheral location, coupled with large-scale intra-regional socio-cultural diversity. The State’s response to the regional problem revolves around promising development and the use of force, but failed miserably to cope with the regional problem. In this backdrop, the current paper attempts to sketch out a rather complex picture of ethnicity, by pointing out the challenges that come in the way of sustainable and inclusive development. The study focuses on Naga ethnic movement and its impact on development by linking the discourse with the agency and role of the state. Analysis is done for selected districts (Naga majority areas) in the states of Nagaland, Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh and Assam using secondary data. Composite index is used for the analysis. Findings indicate the serious ramifications that Naga identity movement or ethnic assertion has on overall regional development process.

KEY WORDS: Development, Ethnic Identity Movement, Nagas, North-East India.

REFERENCES


