

CHAPTER – I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Meghalaya became an Autonomous State within the State of Assam on 2nd April, 1970 comprising two erstwhile districts of Assam, viz. the United Khasi & Jaintia Hills District and the Garo Hills District. It was upgraded to a full fledged State with effect from 21st January, 1972.

1.2. The State, with a geographical area of 22,429 Sq. Kms, has 7 Districts viz. (i) East Khasi Hills District (ii) West Khasi Hills (iii) Jaintia Hills (iv) Ri-Bhoi (v) West Garo Hills (vi) East Garo Hills and (vii) South Garo Hills and 39 C&RD Blocks. It is strategically located in the North-East between 25° 5” and 26° 10” North Latitudes and between 98° 47” and 97° 47” East Longitudes, bounded by Bangladesh on the South as well as partly on the West (international boundary about 443 Km) and surrounded on the other sides by Assam. Meghalaya mostly comprises of hills and table lands, with the hills sloping gently towards Assam on the north but rather steeply and abruptly towards Bangladesh on the south. It boasts of small patches of beautiful valley land, fresh streams and rivers, forest cover and deep gorges. The State has predominantly three hill regions of Garo Hills, Jaintia Hills and Khasi Hills.

1.3. **Population** - The total population of the State as per 2001 census was 23,18,822 with a population density of 103.4 per sq. Km. The projected population during 2009 is 28,58,364 with a population density of 124 per sq. Km. The State’s population is predominantly tribal which constitutes 85.9 percent of the total population. The number of villages in the State as per 2001 census was 5782.

1.4. **Natural Resources**:- The State is richly endowed with natural resources. The heavy and long monsoon sustains intensive and varied flora. As per the Forest Survey Report of India (SFR 2003), area under forest cover in Meghalaya is 15,839 sq. Km., constituting over 70 percent of the total geographical area of the State. However, the area of reserved forests under the control of the State Government is small.

1.5. The total coal and limestone reserves have been estimated at 560 and 12000 million tonnes respectively. The deposit of industrial clay is about 71 million tonnes. Other commercially exploitable mineral deposits are Kaolin, feldspar, glass sand etc. The State has also rich deposits of Uranium. The hydro- power potential of the State is assessed at around 3,000 MW of which only 185.2 MW has been tapped so far.

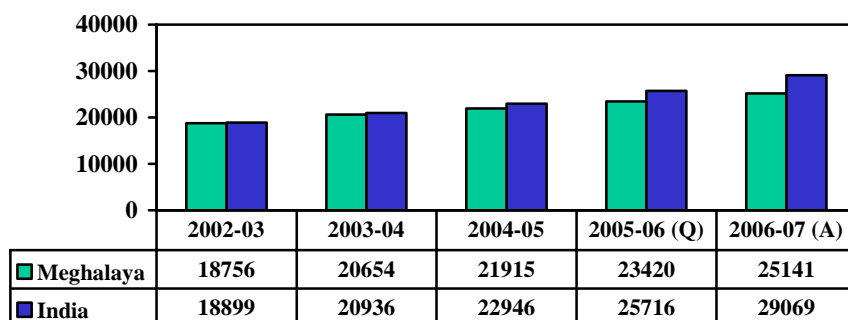
1.6. By and large, the soil is acidic, comparatively rich in organic matter and nitrogen but poor in phosphorus. Due to heavy rainfall, the soil in the border areas tends to be sandy. The Mawsynram-Cherrapunjee-Pynursla belt in Khasi Hills along the southern border records a rainfall varying between 1,000 mms to 15,000 mms annually. Streams and rivers fed by heavy rainfall and cascading down the hilly slopes provide abundant hydro power potential. However, deforestation and shifting cultivation over the years has exposed the hills to natural vagaries which have caused large scale erosion of the top soil. This, in turn, leads to poor water retention, reduced soil fertility and associated problems.

1.7. **Socio – economic indicators** :- The gross cropped area and the net area sown as in 2004-05 was 2.65 lakh hectares and 2.19 lakh hectares respectively, of which the area sown more than once is only 0.46 lakh hectares. The net irrigated area (2002-03) stands at 59,000 hectares. The total area of wastelands in the State is 3.41 lakh hectares which constitutes 15.21 percent of the total geographical area of the State. The food grain and horticulture productions in the State during 2006-07 were 2.70 lakh M.T. and 3.97 lakh M.T. respectively. The State also produces three varieties of silk – eri, muga and mulberry. The average production over the last five years of cocoons is 260 M.T. of eri and 335 M.T. of muga while the 5-year average of yarn production is 2 M.T. of eri and 90 M.T. of muga. However, between 60 to 70 percent of the cocoons produced are transferred to Assam for conversion. As on 31-03-2008, 3428 villages have been electrified constituting about 60 percent of the total number of villages in the State. The per capita consumption of electricity (2005-06) is 317.77 Kwh. The birth rate and death rate in 2005 was 25.1 and 7.5 per thousand respectively while the infant mortality rate was 49 per thousand. The Maternal Mortality Rate is

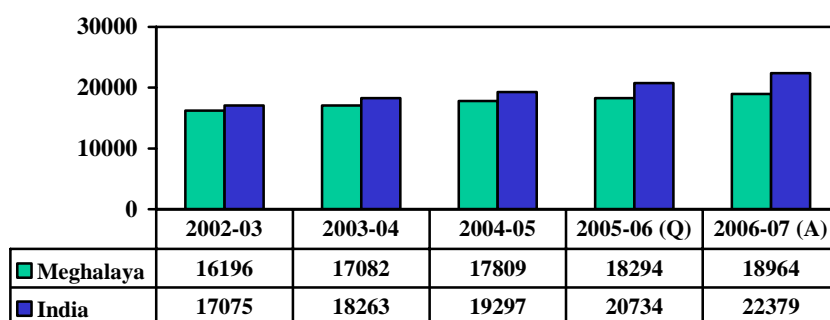
450 per lakh population and the Total Fertility Rate is 2.1. As in 2005-06, there were 568 doctors, 1232 nurses, 188 pharmacists, 687 ANMs and 172 lab technicians. There were 3166 beds (2004-05) available for medical care and the bed-patient ratio was 1:730. There are 4 primary health care centres per lakh of population. The literacy rate of Meghalaya as per 2001 census was 62.6 percent (male 65.4 percent and female 59.6 percent). The literacy rates for rural and urban areas are 56.3 and 86.3 percent respectively. As of 2005-06, there were 3 primary schools per thousand population, 8 middle schools per ten thousand population and 28 high and higher secondary schools per lakh of population. The teacher-pupil ratio stands at one teacher for every 34 students at the primary school level, 24 for middle school level and 25 for high/ higher secondary school level. There are 16 urban centres in the State with a population of 4.54 lakhs constituting over 19 percent of the State's population. The decadal growth rate of urban population is 37.59 percent as against the State's decadal population growth of 30.65 percent. Urban poor constitutes about 22 percent of the total urban population. Out of the total habitation of 9236 in the State, 4192 habitations have been fully covered constituting about 45 percent.

1.8. **State Income:** The Net State Domestic Product at current prices increased from Rs. 4439.58 crores in 2002-03 to Rs. 6254.96 crores in 2006-07 and the corresponding per capita income increased from Rs. 18756 in 2002-03 to Rs. 25141 in 2006-07. The Net State Domestic Product of the State at constant (1999-2000) prices was Rs. 3829.08 crores in 2002-03 and increased to Rs. 4713.33 crores in 2006-07. The per capita income at constant (1999-2000) prices during 2002-03 was Rs. 16177 and increased to Rs. 18944 during 2006-07.

**Per Capita Income
(at current prices)**



**Per Capita Income
[At constant prices]**



1.9. **Sectoral Income Distribution:** The estimates of Net Domestic Product reveal its changing sectoral scenario. The contribution of the agriculture and allied sector to the Net State Domestic Product is gradually declining from 23.5 % in 1999-2000 to 20.20 % in 2006-07 (Advanced Estimate) while the contribution of the industrial sector has shown an upward trend from 22.51 % to 27.13 % during the same period. The contribution of the services Sector to the Net State Domestic Product has remained consistent at about 52 percent during the period from 199-2000 to 2006-07. The table below indicates the percentage contribution of the three sectors to the NSDP over the last few years :-

SECTORS	1999-2000	2002-03	2004-05	2006-07 (Adv)
1. Agriculture & Allied sectors	23.50	22.81	21.19	20.20
2. Industrial sector	22.51	24.52	26.91	27.13
3. Services sector	53.99	52.67	52.92	52.67

[Source: Dte. of Economics & Statistics, Govt. of Meghalaya]

1.10. ELEVENTH PLAN :

1.10.1. **Priorities & Objectives** :- The Planning Commission has indicated that the projected 11th Plan outlay for the State will be of the order of Rs. 9185.00 crores. However, to catch up with the rest of the country, larger investments would be required. This can be achieved through higher allocations of Central Assistance and, more importantly, by encouraging higher private investment during the 11th Plan period. The State's priorities for the 11th Plan are as follows :-

- Power generation, transmission, grid connectivity and rural electrification.
- Agriculture and allied sectors with strong emphasis on horticulture including post harvesting management and processing.
- Roads and Bridges for ensuring better connectivity.
- Sericulture & Weaving for generation of income and employment to the women folk.
- Tourism infrastructure and tourism services.
- Trade with Bangladesh and creation of infrastructure for the same.
- Decentralization of planning and involvement of the people in the development process.
- Social Services like education, health, water supply and nutrition.
- Poverty alleviation and employment generation in rural areas through Rural Development Programmes.

1.10.2. **Financial Outlay** :- Of the projected 11th Plan outlay of Rs. 9185.00 crore, the broad sectoral break-up is indicated below :-

Sl. No.	Major Heads of Development	11 th Plan Tentative Allocation of Planning Commission	%age to Total
I.	Agriculture& Allied Services	735.22	8.00
II	Rural Development	802.30	8.73
III.	Special Area Programme	189.09	2.06
IV.	Irrigation & Flood Control	219.72	2.39
V.	Energy	1084.88	11.81
VI.	Industry& Minerals	290.50	3.16
VII.	Transport	1623.62	17.68
VIII.	Communications	0.00	0.00
.IX.	Science, Technology & Environment	245.07	2.67
X.	General Economic Services	253.00	2.75
XI.	Social Services	3481.74	37.91

Sl. No.	Major Heads of Development	11 th Plan Tentative Allocation of Planning Commission	%age to Total
	Education	1336.29	14.55
	Medical & Public Health	633.81	6.90
	Water Supply & Sanitation	580.99	6.33
	Housing	121.48	1.32
	Urban Development	321.66	3.50
	Other Social Services	487.51	5.31
XII.	General Services	259.86	2.83
	Total	9185.00	100.00

1.10.3. **Growth scenario** - During the Tenth Plan, the State achieved a growth rate of 5.6 percent as compared to 7.6 percent for the country as a whole. As against the national target of 9 percent during the Eleventh Five Year Plan (2007-2012), the projected or targeted growth rate fixed for the State is 7.3 percent. This comprises 4.7 percent growth in agriculture, 8.0 percent in industry and 7.9 percent in services sectors. The lower growth rate target fixed for the State as compared to the all-India target would imply that at the end of the 11th Plan period, Meghalaya will lag even further behind the other States of the country. To reverse this trend, there is need for ensuring that the growth rate is much higher which can be achieved by increased central investment in physical, social and economic infrastructure in the coming Plans.

1.10.4. **Dependence on primary products :-** Around 70 per cent of the population in Meghalaya is engaged in agricultural and allied activities. However, the contribution of agriculture to the State's NSDP is around 20 percent only as against the contribution of around 52 percent by the tertiary sector and 27 percent by the secondary sector. With the increase in population over the years and the decrease in availability of land for agricultural purposes, the incidence of landless labour and the resultant poverty has risen substantially.

Besides having a low per capita income of Rs. 18944 (Adv.) during 2006-07 at constant 1999-2000 prices against a national per capita income of Rs. 20813 (Adv.), Meghalaya's relative backwardness is also evident in the manner of exploitation of its natural resources and exportation of the same to markets outside the State mostly in primary form thus losing the economic benefits of value addition. In

the three decades of its existence, Meghalaya has witnessed tremendous uneconomic and unscientific exploitation of its natural and mineral resources. This has to change. Every effort has to be made to process the tapped resources and add value within the State itself and to export the same in the form of finished and semi-finished goods so as to bring about an improvement in the State's economy and to open up employment opportunities for the people.

1.10.5. **Monitorable targets during the Eleventh Plan :-** The Planning Commission has fixed monitorable targets during the 11th Plan period for the State of Meghalaya as indicated below:-

- Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) to be brought down from the level of 54 to 26 by the end of the 11th Plan.
- Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR) to be brought down from the level of 450 to 100.
- Total fertility rate to be brought down from 4.6 to 2.6.
- Sex Ratio (0-6 Years) be improved from the current level of 973 to 981 by the end of the 11th Plan.
- Anemia among Women (15-49 Years) to be brought down from the current level of 63.30 to 31.70 by the end of the 11th Plan.
- On Malnutrition of Children (0-3 Years)– to be brought down from the current level of 37.90 to 19.00 by the end of the 11th Plan.
- Drop Out Rate in Elementary Education to be brought down from the current level of 62.26 to 31.63 by the end of the 11th Plan.
- Literacy Rate to be improved from 62.56 (2001 Census) to 87.61 by 2011-12. Male and Female Literacy Rate to be improved from the 2001 level of 65.43 and 59.61 to 87.61 and 87.35 respectively by 2011-12. Gender Gap in Literacy to be brought down from 5.80 in 2001 to 0.50 by 2011-12.

Besides the above, the State Government intends to bring down the level of poverty by 10 percent. As per Household Survey 2002, the provisional figure of poverty stands at 45.02 percent. It is also planned to target generating additional work opportunities to 1.50 lakh people and facilitate further employment generation.

1.11. **DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY :-**

- Human Development with a focus on social equity and particularly gender Equity, Capacity & Institution Building and Research & Development,
- Development of basic Infrastructure particularly in the road and power sectors;

- Poverty reduction and employment generation along with a focus on the goal of maximum social and economic growth by adopting strategies which are harmonious with ground situation and which are sensitive to the social requirements.
- Focus upon an all inclusive, participative and de-segregated gender approach.
- Holistic approach to development by converging efforts of various agencies and departments of the Government and efforts of voluntary agencies where existing.
- Use of and setting up of MIS-aided mechanisms to review and monitor implementation of schemes.
- Periodical auditing of the performance under major plan programmes preferably by neutral agencies, to enable timely mid-course correction, if necessary.
- Proper deployment and re-deployment of manpower, cost effective control of maintenance expenditure, management of the State's Plan loan portfolios and consequential debt service burden.
- Implementation of suitable innovative measures for adequate Additional Resource Mobilisation through power generation, optimum harnessing of minerals & other natural resources, holistic tourism programmes under PPP mode, Government and private sector and appropriate projects for Carbon Trading benefits.
- Comprehensive measures for human resource development through diversified institutions of higher, technical and professional education, with emphasis on the teaching of science and mathematics at the secondary and higher levels.
- Focused intensification of programmes for strengthening the agriculture sector and improving the overall sown area and productivity;
- Programmes for fullest exploitation of the horticultural potential of the State, particularly High-Value Horticulture;
- Intensified macro and micro water-shed management programmes to ensure the sustainability of tapped as well as untapped water-sheds. These measures will include afforestation of barren waste lands on the southern slopes of the State which are

reported to be continuously losing over 22000 metric tonnes of surface soil, per square kilometer, per year;

- Optimum exploitation of Hydel and Thermal Power potential, inclusive of required level of transmission and distribution network with linkage to the Regional Grid, and their efficient utilization. In addition, intensified programmes for optimum harnessing of renewable energy sources to be taken.;
- Comprehensive Tourism (Eco-Tourism, Adventure Tourism, Ancillary Tourism based Activities);
- Optimum Utilization of Mineral Resources, particularly coal and limestone, including realistic assessment of the mineable reserves of the State as of now;
- Fullest exploitation of the potential of Information Technology in all areas of development activity and delivery of public services;
- Intensified programs for Empowerment of Women in all spheres of development activity;
- Proactive measures for harnessing and channelizing youth-energy for accelerated development, inclusive of qualitative and quantitative promotion of games and sports;
- Measures for addressing global warming and climate change concerns.
- Measures to facilitate execution of all programmes of the government in an open, informative, qualitative, accountable, time-bound and transparent manner.
- Promotion of the State's potential for indigenous and traditional knowledge.
- A well focused Vision with a clear Mission to enable Meghalaya to develop, progress and compete on an even footing with the rest of the country, and to imbibe the spirit of competition, an improved work culture (for there is no substitute to hard work), so as to confidently surge on the path of self-reliance.
- Launching of coordinated and institutionalized efforts by setting up missions where needed to – (i) double the overall productivity and production of the agricultural, horticultural and floricultural sectors, and in doing so to generate avenues

for accelerated employment including self-employment of the Youth, besides causing exponential growth of the State's revenue resources; (ii) generate and sustain a holistic tourism environment, particularly eco-tourism and adventure tourism, with a view to attract at least one million domestic tourists and fifty thousand foreign tourists, per year, to the State; (iii) improve the quality of education to ensure reduction of secondary school drop out rates total to below national levels, and to obtain total literacy of the State population and to improve and amplify vocational and professional education to cater to the employment-needs of emerging sectors; (iv) improve accessibility to quality healthcare services to the common man, particularly to the BPL families. Health services may also need to be provided through a PPP mode to supplement the State initiative; (v) upgrade Urban Amenities & Services in Rural Area Clusters so as to bridge the rural-urban divide and increase the prosperity of rural Meghalaya; (vi) facilitate sustained production of raw materials for cottage level and handicraft industries, with a view to generate employment and improve State Revenues; (vii) bring about Water Management in an integrated manner, for optimum exploitation of waterways, increased irrigation facilities, generation of hydel power and provision of potable drinking water to the population of the State; (viii) establish Economic Zones specifically aimed at creation of accelerated employment, including self employment and optimum generation of internal revenue.

- Keeping in view the recommendations of the 96th Session of the National Science Congress held at Shillong from the 3rd to 7th January, 2009, One Time Additional Central Assistance/ Special Plan Assistance is being provided during Annual Plan 2009-10 for setting up of the Meghalaya Biodiversity Resource Centre, the Meghalaya Indigenous Knowledge Commission and the Meghalaya State Scientific Advisory Council.

1.12. To overcome the constraints to development, the 11th Plan aims to adopt the following strategies - (i) participatory development strategy; (ii) capacity development strategy; (iii) augmentation of infrastructure, particularly connectivity and transport infrastructure including intra-State connectivity; (iv) significant and increased leveraging of the Central Government's allocation for infrastructure in the

region including efficient use of funds; (v) transforming of governance by providing a secure, responsive and market friendly environment; (vi) improving living conditions of the large concentration of people living in rural areas through increased agricultural productivity and diversified non-farm employment opportunities in the rural areas; (vii) focusing on sectors with comparative advantage based on value chain analysis and creating enabling conditions for investment promotion in these sectors. The focus will be on agro-processing industries; modernization and development of sericulture; investments in manufacturing units based on the resources available in the State; harnessing the large hydroelectric power generation potential; developing services such as tourism; extensive use of ICT and on augmenting infrastructure, including rail and road.

1.11.4. **Participatory and Decentralised Planning & Development** - The State Government is keen to ensure the participation of the people at the grass-root level in the planning process. In this connection, a beginning has been made with the implementation of the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA). Similar models of decentralization will be used for other developmental programmes of the State. Further, the involvement of traditional institutions, community based organizations, self help groups in various developmental and welfare programmes would be ensured. The State Government will undertake capacity building programmes of stakeholders to achieve the above.

1.11.5. **Livelihood Improvement** :- Generation of employment, particularly in the rural areas is one of the State's top priorities. There is a great potential in Meghalaya for creation of jobs in the rural areas in the fields of post harvest management, agro processing and tourism. There is a need to increase employment in non-agricultural sector and rural non-farm sector with development of clusters round towns/ market centres. The State Government has set up the Meghalaya Rural Development Society (MRDS) under the Livelihood Improvement Project for the Himalayas, funded by IFAD, since 31st October, 2005 with the following objectives – (i) enhancing the capabilities of the local people to select appropriate livelihood opportunities; (ii) increase incomes through more sustainable farm and non-farm

income generating activities; (iii) establish effective and appropriate delivery systems for technical, technological and financial Business Development Services (BDS) inputs and services including maintenance of assets and resources; (v) enhance the delivery of government services and capabilities of eligible local people to access them. The Project covers 5 districts, 15 blocks and approximately 610 villages. It envisages to mobilize about 1955 SHGs. The total project cost is Rs. 172.14 crore, of which 48 percent is funded by IFAD, 14 percent by the State Government, 27 percent from Institutional Finance and 11 percent in the form of beneficiary contribution.

Learning from the experiences gained from the implementation of the watershed based and Self Help Group (SHG) based approach on livelihoods under North Eastern Region Community Resource Management Programme and Livelihoods Improvement Programme assisted by International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD), the State Government is proposing coverage of all areas of the State under livelihood improvement programme of the Ministry of DoNER under the World Bank aided North Eastern Region Livelihood Programme (NERLP).

1.11.6. **Skill Development & Human Resource Development** :- The State Government recognizes that there is an urgent need to upgrade skills of the youth to enable them to stand on their own feet and become employable. Human resource development and capacity building of existing manpower in government and non-government sector would be encouraged. Assistance would be sought for the introduction of Human Resource Development programmes through provision of vocational education avenues including diversified training for skill development and generation of employment opportunities, especially in the rural areas. Further, the 11th Plan document of the Planning Commission indicates that the Government of India is keen on the use of Information Technology including Information & Communication Technology (ICT) tools in the delivery of education and other social services and, in particular, the finishing schools to impart IT and other skills. The State Government will be approaching the Central Government for assistance in establishing of an Indian Institute of Information Technology (IIIT) at Shillong. Further, the Skill Development Programme and funds available from the Government of India would be leveraged.

There is a felt need to have branches of good quality schools with proper hostel facilities in, at least, each Block headquarter of the State. Such schools will bring about a radical improvement in literacy levels for both sexes and also for tapping and promoting available rural talent in the State. The State would tap various programmes which are available under the different ministries of the Government of India. For skill development, technical education, vocational education and IT education, partnership with private sector would be encouraged while also leveraging funds from the Government of India.

1.11. 7. **Rainwater Harvesting Mission** :- Despite being one of the wettest regions on earth receiving the highest amount of rainfall, the State faces acute water shortages especially during the dry months. There is no tradition of any viable method of water harvesting in the State since the topography of the State does not allow for usage of deep tube wells. Further, deforestation has also added to the problem of water scarcity. The State had experienced a near drought situation during 2005 and 2006 which had affected power generation, agriculture, etc. In view of the above, the State Government has decided that there is a need to create the necessary infrastructure to harvest the available water through ponds, check dams and other water harvesting structures with the direct involvement of the communities besides capacity building and institutional arrangements for self sustaining management of such water harvesting structures and systems. In this connection, a Rainwater Harvesting Mission is approved in the State and a Water Harvesting Authority/ Mission is being set up.

1.11.8. **Centrally Sponsored/ Central Sector Programmes** :- The 11th Plan document of the Planning Commission indicates that there is an increase in allocation of Centrally Sponsored and Central Sector Schemes during the 11th Plan period. The State Government will leverage such funds available under Centrally Sponsored and Central Sector schemes to supplement the State Plan funds so as to achieve a higher level of investment during the 11th Plan period in the State. Priority would be given for required State share for such Centrally Sponsored/ Central Sector schemes from the State Plan.

1.11.9. **Poverty Scenario** - According to the estimate of Planning Commission, the population Below Poverty Line (BPL) during 2004-05 is 27.80% in the case of India. However, the household survey conducted by the State Government in 2002 finds that 45.02% of the households in Meghalaya are Below Poverty Line families. It is important that the list of of BPL families is finalized at the earliest. Measurement of poverty critically depends on the poverty line and proper survey and there is need for appointing a panel of experts to devise a proper methodology to define and determine the poverty line for Meghalaya. The National Institute of Rural Development (NIRD), Guwahati has attempted to conduct a study to find out the root cause of poverty and to suggest solutions to this problem.

The major reasons for prevalence of poverty in Meghalaya are :-

- (i) The operational land holding in Meghalaya is pre-dominantly small and marginal farmers with an area of below 2 hectares. Stagnation of agricultural production, soil erosion and lack of new economic opportunities are deterrent factors that caused rural poor farmer in the State to languish in poverty.
- (ii) Rural areas in Meghalaya are characterized by limited opportunities, low level of skill development, poor infrastructure, etc. There are also wide rural-urban disparities in terms of level of human development opportunities as viewed from access to amenities and other social services.
- (iii) Major reasons contributing to poverty in the North East appears to be ignorance, inadequate core infrastructure, inadequate market openings, over dependence on agriculture, lack of skills, etc., which makes them apprehensive to face the challenges that emerge in the new economy.

The State Government proposes to tackle the problem of poverty in the following ways – (i) a more focused, grass root driven, crop and altitude specific holistic *cluster approach* to agricultural & horticultural development with total integration of all required components and packages of practices from the primary production level to the points of sale is now being attempted; (ii) Helping small farmers increase productivity through investment, subsidy and appropriate linkages and a programme to include asset distribution and asset creation ; (iii) Stress on non –

farm activity that bolster traditional as well as non-traditional and private sector activities, with special attention to micro enterprises in the rural areas; (iv) More investment and Government's involvement for livelihoods improvement, micro-enterprise and poverty alleviation programmes; (v) Effective delivery mechanism and instrument in respect of poverty alleviation programmes like SGSY, IWEP, IWDP, etc. including National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP), National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS) and Backward Region Grant Fund (BRGF) to ensure the benefits of such programmes reaches the intended beneficiaries in time; (vi) Empowerment of the people with capabilities to ensure adequate food, clothing, shelter so that every family gains freedom from hunger and lead a healthy life and participate productively in the growth process should be our major commitment.

To address the multifaceted challenge of poverty and deprivation, the State Government will adopt a multifaceted approach which calls for the following 'policy and action cluster' considered crucial in the context of Meghalaya:

- i.* **Pro-poor Growth** that stimulates labour intensive works through actions such as NREGA and expanding it to cover all districts; launching rural works programmes and food for works programme that focuses on locations and sectors that have the maximum impact on poverty.
- ii.* **More investment in human development** such as nutrition, health (including reproductive health), education, water and sanitation etc. which foster a productive labour force and addressing the gaps that exists in these sectors.
- iii.* **Investing in rural infrastructure** such as roads, communications, energy, with institutional arrangements for attending to the critical inter-sectoral gaps and linkages for establishing input supply infrastructure, processing, post harvest and market centres.
- iv.* **Employment generation programmes:** Employment and improved livelihoods programmes such as Livelihoods Improvement Programme (LIPH) or **proposed NERLP of ministry of DoNER should cover poor people in all areas of my state.** There is need to expand successful experiments done in the past under the North Eastern Community resources management

(NERCORMP) as well as other employment generation programs to consolidate micro credit and micro enterprise efforts.

- v. **Ensuring a better targeting of** programmes such as nutrition programs and subsidized access to PDS, TPDS, old age, widow pension schemes, accident and maternity benefits and mid day meal programmes.
- vi. **A skill development mission** for the rural areas and particularly for the North East may be evolved and supported. The '**Rural Business Hubs**' approach recommended by the National Commission on Farmers should be implemented to improve livelihood opportunities in rural areas. **Micro-credit programme and Self Help Groups to be made the key instrument of poverty eradication and Social Empowerment programmes** for the poor.
- vii. **Social Security programmes:** All insurance programme for rural areas **should be brought under one umbrella** to make it a **comprehensive insurance programme for rural poor covering life, health, accidents and other vulnerabilities**. An expert group could work out the modalities of its implementation in the NER by redesigning and scrutinizing existing programmes with additional help if required from the Government of India.
- viii. **Governance and institutional framework:** Creation of an appropriate governance and institutional framework for participation in poverty reduction and human development efforts has to be a significant area in which **building Capacities at various levels should be** focussed. A framework for integrated planning and development by refashioning the existing governmental set up, traditional hierarchical and non-hierarchical institutions towards making them partners in governance and delivery of development should be seriously attempted and facilitated.