



**COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK
REPORT OF MANIPUR**

YOUTH PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT FORUM

NEW DELHI

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FOREWORD

Manipur has emerged as a state with immense potential and serves as the vital gateway for India's Act East Policy. The state has established itself as a national powerhouse in sports, rich cultural heritage, biodiversity, traditional industries, and agro-based enterprise. With Imphal serving as an important cultural, commercial, and strategic centre in the Northeast, Manipur has demonstrated how leveraging local resources, strategic border positioning, and community-driven policies can accelerate economic growth while creating opportunities for its people. As India advances towards becoming a developed nation by 2047, Manipur is uniquely positioned to play a transformative role in connecting the country's economy with Southeast Asia and shaping the region's future.

However, as we navigate the rapidly changing economic, technological, and environmental realities of the twenty-first century, it has become increasingly evident that Manipur stands at an important stage in its development journey. While the state has achieved remarkable progress across multiple sectors, it also faces complex challenges that require long-term strategic planning. Bridging the hill-valley developmental divide, employment generation for a growing youth population, sustainable urbanization, improving connectivity and logistics, climate resilience, agricultural modernization, environmental conservation, and expanding border trade have become critical priorities for the coming decades.

To fully realize its immense potential, Manipur must continue its transition towards a globally connected, sustainable, and inclusive economy. It is within this important context that The Comprehensive Development Framework Report of the State of Manipur was conceived. When the Youth Peace and Development Forum, through its Council for Comprehensive Development Frameworks, entrusted me with the responsibility of leading this ambitious initiative, our objective was clear—to prepare a forward-looking, evidence-based, and actionable roadmap capable of guiding the state's long-term development.

Leading this extensive project has been both a privilege and an intellectually enriching experience. Over several months, our research team carefully examined the structural opportunities and emerging challenges that will shape Manipur's future. From the outset, we recognized that sustaining high economic growth requires more than incremental policy improvements. It demands integrated planning, institutional innovation, data-driven governance, and coordinated reforms across every major sector of public administration and economic activity.

This document represents the culmination of rigorous research, comparative policy analysis, and extensive deliberations among researchers, young professionals, subject experts, and policy enthusiasts. Rather than serving merely as an assessment of existing systems, this framework has been designed as a practical blueprint for transformative action. The strategic recommendations presented throughout this report seek to strengthen Manipur's long-term competitiveness while ensuring inclusive and sustainable development.

Our recommendations place particular emphasis on strengthening higher education, research, and advanced skill development to build a competitive workforce; expanding ecosystems in eco-tourism, organic farming, handlooms and handicrafts, sports infrastructure, agro-processing, and bamboo resources; accelerating economic growth through border trade and Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs); modernizing agriculture with sustainable practices; improving healthcare systems; strengthening digital governance; expanding renewable energy; enhancing urban and rural infrastructure; and developing climate-resilient communities. Throughout this framework, we have remained committed to one guiding principle: economic progress must be accompanied by environmental sustainability, social inclusion, and equal opportunities for every citizen.

As the lead of this important initiative, I take immense pride in the dedication, professionalism, and commitment demonstrated by every member of our research and drafting team. We firmly believe that the youth of India should actively contribute to shaping public policy rather than merely observing it. The contributors to this report devoted countless hours to analysing developmental trends, studying international best practices, consulting policy literature, and evaluating innovative solutions to ensure that every recommendation presented here is both ambitious and practically achievable.

This report reflects our generation's vision for a future-ready Manipur. We envision a state that combines rich cultural heritage with inclusive growth, enterprise expansion with environmental stewardship, regional connectivity with social equity, and economic excellence with a high quality of life. We aspire to build a Manipur where innovation flourishes, entrepreneurship thrives, talented young people find meaningful opportunities, and every region of the state—from the hills to the valley—shares in the benefits of sustained development.

It is my sincere hope that this Comprehensive Development Framework will serve as a catalyst for informed discussion, constructive collaboration, and long-term strategic planning. We invite policymakers, administrators, academicians, industry leaders, civil society organizations, development practitioners, and citizens to engage thoughtfully with the ideas presented in this report. While no single document can provide definitive solutions to every developmental challenge, we believe the recommendations contained herein provide a strong and practical foundation for shaping Manipur's future.

I invite you to read this report with an open mind, critically examine its recommendations, and join us in the collective endeavour to build a prosperous, peaceful, sustainable, and vibrant Manipur for generations to come.

Dheeraj G. N.
Chairman
Youth Peace and Development (YPD) Forum
New Delhi

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The Youth Peace and Development Forum (YPD Forum) expresses its sincere gratitude to all individuals whose dedication, expertise, and commitment made the preparation of *The Comprehensive Development Framework Report of the State of Manipur* possible.

This report forms part of a larger national initiative undertaken through the Council for Comprehensive Development Frameworks (CDF Council), constituted by the YPD Forum to facilitate the fast-track preparation of comprehensive development frameworks for all 28 States of India. The Council represents the Forum's commitment to promoting evidence-based policymaking, strategic planning, and long-term developmental thinking across the nation.

The Forum places on record its deep appreciation to **Dheeraj G. N.**, Chairman of the Youth Peace and Development Forum, for his vision, leadership, and initiative in conceptualizing and guiding this ambitious project. The Forum also extends its heartfelt thanks to **Aravind Saj**, Vice Chairman of the Youth Peace and Development Forum, for his constant support and encouragement throughout the execution of this initiative.

Special appreciation is due to **Aman Chauhan**, Resource Person of the Council for Comprehensive Development Frameworks, for his valuable coordination support. The Forum further acknowledges the contributions of **Monish Krishna**, Secretary-General of the Youth Peace and Development Forum, whose administrative leadership, organizational support, and commitment have been instrumental in the successful implementation of the Council's activities.

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The Forum acknowledges the commitment, intellectual curiosity, and sense of responsibility demonstrated by each member of the Council. Through research, analysis, discussion, drafting, review, and continuous engagement with developmental issues, these members contributed significantly to the realization of the Council's objectives. Their willingness to dedicate their time and talents to a national developmental initiative reflects a commendable spirit of public service and constructive citizenship.

The Forum also recognizes that the preparation of a comprehensive development framework requires engagement with a wide range of ideas, perspectives, and sources of knowledge. Accordingly, sincere appreciation is extended to all researchers, academicians, policy experts, development practitioners, government publications, statistical agencies, think tanks, and public institutions whose work provided valuable insights and reference material for this

report. Their contributions to the broader body of knowledge on governance, economics, social development, environmental sustainability, infrastructure, education, healthcare, and public policy have enriched the quality and depth of this framework.

The Youth Peace and Development Forum is particularly grateful to the students, young researchers, and volunteers associated with the Forum who continue to demonstrate that youth can play a constructive role in addressing national challenges. Their enthusiasm, creativity, and commitment to public causes embody the ideals upon which the Forum was founded and reaffirm the importance of empowering younger generations to participate actively in nation-building.

The Forum further extends its appreciation to all well-wishers, supporters, advisors, and stakeholders who encouraged this initiative and contributed to its successful completion. Whether through guidance, feedback, consultation, or moral support, their contributions helped strengthen the quality and relevance of this work.

This report represents more than a policy document; it reflects a collective effort to envision a better future. It is the product of shared aspirations, collaborative research, and a common belief that informed planning and constructive dialogue can contribute to meaningful social, economic, and institutional progress. While the recommendations contained herein are intended to support the development of Manipur, they also form part of a broader national effort to strengthen the foundations of a developed, inclusive, sustainable, and prosperous India.

As India advances towards the centenary of its independence in 2047, the Youth Peace and Development Forum remains committed to fostering research, dialogue, and innovation in support of national development. It is hoped that this report will serve as a useful resource for policymakers, administrators, researchers, civil society organizations, industry leaders, and citizens, and that it will contribute meaningfully to the ongoing pursuit of inclusive growth, good governance, and sustainable development.

With gratitude to all who contributed to this endeavour, the Youth Peace and Development Forum proudly presents this report as a modest contribution towards the shared vision of a stronger Manipur and a developed India.

Media and Publication Division

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PREFACE

Manipur occupies a unique and pivotal position within the Indian Union. Situated along the nation's eastern frontier, bounded by Nagaland to the north, Mizoram to the south, Assam to the west, and sharing an international border of over 350 kilometres with Myanmar to the east, the state functions as India's natural overland gateway to Southeast Asia. Under the strategic orientation of the Act East Policy, Manipur is positioned not merely as a peripheral borderland, but as a critical transit corridor, commercial hub, and diplomatic bridge linking South Asia with the ASEAN economic bloc. Realizing this strategic potential requires a clear-eyed understanding of the state's internal realities. Manipur's development landscape is shaped by its distinctive valley-and-hills topography, its rich cultural heritage, its complex ethnolinguistic landscape, and its historical vulnerabilities in connectivity and fiscal autonomy. This Comprehensive Development Framework has been prepared to provide a structured, evidence-based assessment of the state's developmental trajectory across its geographic, demographic, fiscal, economic, social, infrastructural, environmental, and governance dimensions. It is intended as an authoritative reference for policymakers, development practitioners, academic researchers, and citizens seeking an integrated understanding of Manipur's current standing and its pathways toward sustainable transformation over the coming decades.

A rigorous development framework depends fundamentally on the integrity and transparency of its baseline empirical material. The preparation of this document has required deliberate care due to unprecedented gaps in the national statistical architecture. The decennial Census of India scheduled for 2021 was deferred and remains unconduted at the time of publication. Consequently, foundational population figures, household structures, and village-level demographic distributions still rely substantively on the 2011 Census baseline, supplemented wherever possible through interim estimates, representative surveys, and administrative records. Datasets from the National Family Health Survey, the Periodic Labour Force Survey, the Sample Registration System, the Reserve Bank of India, and NITI Aayog have been integrated to reflect contemporary realities. Wherever more recent administrative or survey data exists, it has been used and dated accordingly. Wherever authoritative recent data is absent, that gap is stated openly rather than papered over with invented precision or artificial extrapolation, ensuring that every baseline limitation remains transparent to the reader.

This framework is also authored at a critical juncture in Manipur's modern history, following a period of intense trauma and disruption. The ethnic violence that erupted in May 2023 between the Meitei and Kuki-Zo communities resulted in severe loss of life, widespread destruction of private and public property, the internal displacement of tens of thousands of citizens into relief camps, and profound fractures in administrative and social cohesion. Development cannot occur in a vacuum that ignores peace, justice, and security. A framework that omitted this reality would fail both in empirical credibility and practical relevance. Accordingly, the structural impacts of the conflict are addressed directly across the relevant sections of this document, assessing disruptions to agrarian production, supply chain

fragilities, fiscal strain, capital expenditure diversion, and the severe psychosocial and educational toll on displaced populations. The recovery pathways proposed herein emphasize conflict-sensitive planning, decentralized service delivery, equitable infrastructure deployment, and the institutional reforms required to rebuild social trust and economic stability.

The structural architecture of this document moves systematically from foundational contexts through sectoral realities to forward-looking strategic horizons. The opening chapters examine geography, physiography, environmental vulnerability, updated demographic profiles, and the state's fiscal architecture, including own-tax revenue mobilization and central transfer dependence. The sectoral chapters evaluate key economic drivers—agriculture, horticulture, handlooms, cross-border trade, and industrial infrastructure—alongside human capital development in primary and tertiary healthcare, school education, technical skilling, and public utilities. The final sections address climate adaptation, forest governance, digital connectivity, administrative accountability, and a comprehensive roadmap toward 2047, the centenary year of India's independence. Every statistic presented is dated to its year of origin, and every claim of fact is attributed to its source following APA 7th edition referencing conventions. A master reference list is provided at the end of the document rather than after each chapter, ensuring that sourcing can be cross-checked in one place. It is hoped that this framework serves as an analytical record and a balanced, pragmatic foundation for sustainable recovery, inclusive prosperity, and lasting institutional resilience in Manipur.

Sidharth Singh Solanki

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Executive Summary

Manipur is a state of roughly 3.3 million people as of 2026, based on population projections carried forward from the 2011 Census baseline of 2,855,794 (StatisticsTimes, 2025; FindEasy, 2026). It is geographically divided between the central Imphal Valley, home to a large majority of the state's population, and the surrounding hill districts, which cover most of the state's land area but hold a smaller and more dispersed population, a structural imbalance that shapes almost every development challenge described in this report.

On national comparative indices, Manipur presents a mixed picture. It was among the ten new entrants to the "front runner" category in NITI Aayog's SDG India Index 2023-24, with the state improving its composite score alongside states such as Assam, Punjab, and West Bengal (Press Information Bureau, 2024; EnsureIAS, 2025). At the same time, Manipur's Chandel district was ranked the top performing aspirational district nationally by NITI Aayog as early as 2021, indicating pockets of strong administrative delivery even in historically underdeveloped hill areas (Deccan Herald, 2021). These are signs of genuine institutional capacity, set against a backdrop of continued structural disadvantage typical of Northeastern hill states, including terrain constrained connectivity, a narrow industrial base, and heavy dependence on central transfers.

The events of 2023 to 2025 represent the single most significant disruption to the state's development trajectory in recent memory. Ethnic conflict has displaced tens of thousands of people, divided administrative and economic activity along community and territorial lines, and interrupted normal functioning of education, health, and local governance institutions in the affected districts. Recovery, reconciliation, and the restoration of unified administrative functioning are treated in this report as preconditions for the achievement of nearly every other sectoral goal, from education outcomes to investment climate.

Fiscally, Manipur follows the pattern common to Northeastern special category states, with a high dependence on central devolution and grants relative to own tax revenue, and a corresponding vulnerability to changes in Finance Commission awards and centrally sponsored scheme design. Economically, the state's primary sector, particularly horticulture, sericulture, and fisheries, along with a modest but growing services sector centered on Imphal, form the backbone of the non-government economy, while large scale industry remains limited.

This framework sets out, chapter by chapter, the current status, constraints, and policy priorities across twenty-one thematic areas, culminating in a Vision 2047 chapter that outlines a medium and long-term roadmap grounded in the realistic starting conditions described in the chapters that precede it.

Chapter 1: State Profile — Geography, Demography and Society

1.1 Geographic and Ecological Characteristics of the State

Manipur is located in the northeastern region of India, bordered by Nagaland to the north, Mizoram to the south, Assam to the west, and sharing an international border with Myanmar to the east, across a boundary that runs for several hundred kilometers through hill terrain and forms one of the state's most strategically significant features. The state's terrain is dominated by hill ranges that encircle a central plain, the Imphal Valley, which occupies a comparatively small proportion of the state's total land area, generally estimated at under one-tenth of the state's territory, but carries a disproportionately large share of its population, economic activity, and administrative infrastructure (Census2011.co.in, n.d.). This valley to hill divide is the single most important geographic fact shaping the state's development pattern, since it produces sharply different conditions for connectivity, agriculture, service delivery, and market access depending on which zone a community occupies, and it has, over the course of the state's modern political history, also become the geographic substrate onto which ethnic, administrative, and electoral distinctions have been layered.

The hill districts are characterized by dense forest cover, steep and often unstable slopes prone to landslides during the monsoon, and a network of rivers that drain toward the Barak river system in the west and toward the Chindwin river system in Myanmar to the east and southeast, meaning Manipur sits astride two distinct river basins that ultimately feed, respectively, the Bay of Bengal via the Barak-Surma-Meghna system and the Irrawaddy system inside Myanmar. This dual drainage pattern has ecological significance for biodiversity and hydrological planning, since species assemblages, fish migration patterns, and catchment management needs differ meaningfully between the two basins, and it has strategic significance given the state's border with Myanmar, since river valleys have historically served as natural corridors for both trade and, at times, cross-border movement of armed groups, a factor directly relevant to the internal security discussion in Chapter 15.

The valley, by contrast, is a low lying, largely flat basin historically formed by lake sedimentation over geological time, with an average elevation considerably lower than the surrounding hills, which in places rise to over 2,500 meters. Loktak Lake, the largest freshwater lake in Northeast India, is situated in the southern portion of the valley and functions simultaneously as an ecological, economic, and cultural landmark for the state. Loktak's distinguishing ecological feature is the presence of phumdis, floating masses of vegetation and organic matter that support the Keibul Lamjao National Park, the world's only floating national park, itself a habitat for the endangered Sangai, or brow-antlered deer, a species found nowhere else in the world and one that has become a de facto symbol of the state's environmental identity and conservation priorities, matters treated in greater depth in Chapter 13.

Manipur's climate is subtropical highland in character, with a monsoon season that supplies the bulk of annual rainfall between May and September, moderate winters with occasional

frost in the higher hill areas, and considerable variation in temperature and rainfall between the valley and the higher hill areas, a variation that can exceed several degrees Celsius between locations only a short distance apart in elevation terms. This variation supports a wide range of agro-climatic conditions suitable for horticulture, including citrus fruits, pineapple, and a variety of vegetables in both valley and mid-hill zones, as well as sericulture and forest based livelihoods, including collection of non-timber forest produce, bamboo, and medicinal plants, in the higher and more remote hill areas. The ecological diversity produced by this terrain variation is one of the state's genuine comparative advantages for horticultural and forest based livelihood diversification, a theme returned to in Chapters 3 and 18.

1.2 Administrative Divisions: Districts, Divisions and Sub-State Units

Manipur's administrative map has undergone significant change in the past decade, with the number of districts expanded from the original nine to sixteen following a reorganization carried out in the 2010s, splitting several of the original hill districts into smaller units intended to bring administration closer to remote populations that had previously been served by district headquarters located at considerable and often difficult travel distances. The valley is served by a smaller number of geographically compact districts, including Imphal East and Imphal West, which together hold the state capital and the bulk of urban population and government offices, along with Bishnupur and Thoubal districts, which are also substantially valley based and agriculturally significant, while the hill districts, including Senapati, Tamenglong, Churachandpur, Chandel, Ukhrul, and their subdivided successor districts such as Kangpokpi, Noney, Pherzawl, Kamjong, and Tengnoupal, cover the great majority of the state's land area with much lower population density (Census2011.co.in, n.d.).

Sub-state administration in the hill areas has historically operated through a combination of the general district administration and traditional or customary institutions of village governance among the state's tribal communities, alongside statutory bodies such as Autonomous District Councils established under state legislation for certain hill areas, a system with some structural resemblance to, but distinct legal basis from, the Sixth Schedule autonomous councils found in neighboring states such as Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram, and Tripura. Manipur's hill areas are not covered under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution, a fact that has been, and remains, a significant point of political contention among hill communities, some of whom have long argued that Sixth Schedule protection, or an equivalent constitutional safeguard, would provide a more secure basis for land and customary governance rights than the existing state-legislated Autonomous District Council framework.

This layered structure of formal district administration, autonomous council arrangements, and customary village authority is a distinguishing feature of governance in Manipur relative to many other Indian states, and it has become a subject of renewed debate and negotiation in the period following the 2023 conflict, as questions of territorial administration and autonomy for hill communities, including proposals ranging from enhanced autonomous

district council powers to more far-reaching territorial arrangements, have moved to the center of the state's political discourse. This report treats the resolution of this administrative and territorial question, whatever form it ultimately takes, as a prerequisite for durable governance stability, and it is returned to directly in Chapter 15 on administrative governance reform and Chapter 21 on the state's long-term vision.

1.3 Demographic Structure: Population, Density, Growth and Composition

According to the 2011 Census, Manipur's population stood at 2,855,794, comprising 1,438,586 males and 1,417,208 females, with a sex ratio of 986 females per 1,000 males, above the national average of 943 at that time (Census of India, cited in CensusOfIndia.net, n.d.; StatisticsTimes, 2025). The decadal growth rate for 2001 to 2011 was recorded at 24.5 percent, a moderation from the preceding decade's growth rate, which stood at approximately 24.86 percent, but still well above the national average growth rate for the same period (StatisticsTimes, 2025). The child population, aged 0 to 6 years, stood at 375,357 as of 2011, representing 13.14 percent of the state's total population, with a child sex ratio of 931 females per 1,000 males, somewhat less favorable than the state's overall sex ratio, a pattern consistent with broader South Asian trends toward declining child sex ratios even in states with historically favorable overall sex ratios (CensusOfIndia.net, n.d.).

In the absence of a completed 2021 or later Census, population for 2026 is necessarily a projection rather than a measured count, and this report treats every such projection with appropriate caution. Independent demographic projections place Manipur's 2026 population in the range of approximately 3.3 million, with one widely cited projection estimating 3,306,395 persons, comprising approximately 1,657,000 males and 1,650,000 females, and projecting further growth to approximately 3,333,252 persons by 2027 (FindEasy, 2026). A separate projection using a different methodology estimates the 2025 population at approximately 3.29 million, with Manipur accounting for roughly 0.23 percent of India's total population, a share that has declined marginally from a peak of 0.24 percent in 2011, and an annual growth rate for 2025 of approximately 0.89 percent, implying an addition of roughly 29,000 people to the state's population during that year (StatisticsTimes, 2025). These figures should be treated as estimates bounded by meaningful uncertainty rather than as measured facts, a caveat that applies with particular force given that the population displacement associated with the 2023-2025 conflict, discussed further below, is not and cannot be captured in projection models built on pre-conflict growth trends.

Rural residence remains the norm for most of the state's population, with approximately 70.8 percent of the population classified as rural as of the 2011 Census, concentrated heavily in the hill districts, while urban population is concentrated overwhelmingly in the Imphal valley districts (Census2011.co.in, n.d.). Housing patterns recorded in the 2011 Census indicated that 93.73 percent of houses in the state were owner-occupied, with only 4.76 percent rented, and that 77.78 percent of couples in the state lived in single-family, rather than joint or extended family, households, a household structure broadly consistent with patterns found

across much of upland Northeast India (Census2011.co.in, n.d.). Population density is consequently extremely uneven across the state, with valley districts registering density many times higher than hill districts, a pattern that has intensified pressure on land, housing, and public services within the Imphal urban agglomeration over the past two decades, and that has also meant that the state's political representation, historically weighted by population, has been structurally tilted toward the valley relative to the hill areas' share of total land area, a further layer of the valley-hill tension discussed throughout this chapter.

1.4 Linguistic, Ethnic, Religious and Cultural Profile

Manipur is one of the most ethnically and linguistically diverse states in India relative to its population size. The Meitei community, concentrated predominantly in the Imphal valley, forms the largest single ethnic group and speaks Meiteilon, also known as Manipuri, which is recognized as a Scheduled Language under the Eighth Schedule of the Indian Constitution and is written using the indigenous Meitei Mayek script, which has undergone a significant revival in recent decades after centuries of predominant use of Bengali script for the language, alongside continued Bengali script usage in many everyday and administrative contexts. The hill districts are home to numerous recognized Scheduled Tribes, broadly grouped under the Naga and Kuki-Zo community clusters, each comprising multiple distinct tribes, including groups such as the Tangkhul, Mao, Maram, and Poumai among Naga communities, and groups such as the Thadou, Hmar, Paite, Zou, and Vaiphei, among others, within the broader Kuki-Zo cluster, each with its own language or dialect, customary institutions, and territorial concentration within particular hill districts.

Religiously, the state reflects this ethnic diversity, with the Meitei community historically following Sanamahism, an indigenous faith centered on ancestral and nature worship, alongside a significant Hindu Vaishnavite tradition introduced in the eighteenth century under royal patronage and subsequently deeply woven into Meitei ritual, festival, and social life, including major festivals such as Yaoshang and the Ras Leela tradition of classical dance performance. A substantial share of the state's tribal population, particularly among Naga and Kuki-Zo communities, follows Christianity, introduced through missionary activity from the nineteenth century onward and now the majority faith across most of the hill districts, with church institutions playing a significant role not only in religious life but also in education and community organization in these areas. This layered religious geography, broadly Hindu and Sanamahi in the valley and predominantly Christian in the hills, maps closely, though not perfectly, onto the state's ethnic and territorial divisions, and this overlap of ethnic, religious, and territorial identity has been a significant factor in the social tensions that culminated in the 2023 conflict, even though the underlying disputes have centered principally on land, forest rights, reservation status, and political representation rather than religious doctrine as such.

Manipur's cultural profile includes internationally recognized traditions such as Manipuri classical dance, one of the eight classical dance forms of India, characterized by its fluid,

circular movements and connection to Vaishnavite devotional themes, along with martial arts traditions including Thang-Ta, a combined armed and unarmed combat tradition, indigenous sport traditions including Sagol Kangjei, considered by many historians and sports bodies to be a precursor to modern polo, and a strong tradition of handloom weaving and handicrafts that remain economically significant for household livelihoods, particularly among women, across both valley and hill communities, as discussed further in the economic chapters of this report. The annual Sangai Festival, held in the state capital, has become the state's flagship platform for showcasing this combined cultural, culinary, and craft heritage to domestic and international visitors, and is discussed further in Chapter 19 on tourism and the creative economy.

1.5 Human Development Index: State Ranking and Trend Analysis

A dedicated, current state level Human Development Index specific to Manipur, computed on the UNDP methodology, is not routinely published on an annual basis, and the most policy relevant recent comparative tool for Indian states is NITI Aayog's SDG India Index rather than a strict HDI. In the SDG India Index 2023-24, national state scores ranged from 57 to 79, with Kerala and Uttarakhand jointly leading at a score of 79, and Manipur was named among the group of states that recorded improved scores and that newly entered the "front runner" performance category between the 2020-21 and 2023-24 editions of the index, alongside Assam, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, and West Bengal (Press Information Bureau, 2024; EnsureIAS, 2025). This represents a genuine and citable improvement in the state's composite development performance as measured by India's principal subnational SDG tracking tool, since the "front runner" category, positioned above "performer" and "aspirant" categories but below the top "achiever" category occupied by states like Kerala and Uttarakhand, reflects scores generally in the range of 65 to 99 on the index's 0 to 100 scale, though it is important to note that this improvement predates the 2023 conflict and does not yet capture its effects on health, education, and livelihood indicators in the affected districts.

At the national level, India as a whole ranked 134th out of 193 countries on the UNDP Human Development Index for 2023-24, placing the country in the medium human development category with a national HDI value of 0.644, up from 0.434 in 1990, reflecting sustained improvement in life expectancy, educational attainment, and per capita income over more than three decades (Testbook, 2025; Vajiram and Ravi, 2025). Because disaggregated, methodologically comparable state level HDI figures for Manipur specific to 2025 or 2026 are not available in any credible published source located for this report, this section deliberately does not manufacture a state specific HDI value, and instead relies on the SDG India Index as the most defensible current proxy for the state's relative development standing, while flagging this as a data gap that a future state-commissioned Human Development Report for Manipur, of the kind several other Indian states have periodically produced, would be well positioned to fill.

1.6 Poverty, Inequality and Multidimensional Deprivation Indices

At the national level, NITI Aayog's Multidimensional Poverty Index reporting for 2022-23 found that 11.28 percent of India's population remained in multidimensional poverty, even as approximately 135 million people were estimated to have exited poverty in the preceding years since the index's baseline period, and that poverty among Scheduled Tribe populations nationally, at approximately 33 percent, remained roughly triple the national average (Vajiram and Ravi, 2025). Given that a large share of Manipur's hill district population is tribal, and that hill districts have historically shown weaker outcomes on infrastructure and service access indicators than the valley, this national pattern on tribal multidimensional poverty is directly relevant to understanding intra-state inequality in Manipur, since it suggests that the state's hill districts are likely to carry a materially higher multidimensional poverty burden than the state's valley districts and than the state's headline average would indicate on its own.

A Manipur specific, current multidimensional poverty figure disaggregated by district was not located in the sources reviewed for this report and should be sourced directly from NITI Aayog's state and district level MPI releases, or from the state Planning Department, before being cited in any policy document requiring district level precision. What can be stated with confidence, given the pattern documented nationally for tribal populations and the well-established rural-urban and valley-hill infrastructure gradients described throughout this report, is that inequality in Manipur is likely to be substantially understated by any single state level average figure, and that a credible poverty reduction strategy for the state must be built around district and community disaggregated data rather than a single headline number.

1.7 Intra-State Disparities: Aspirational Districts and Backward Region Identification

Manipur has direct, citable evidence of both strength and weakness in its intra-state development pattern through its participation in NITI Aayog's Aspirational Districts Programme, launched in January 2018 to accelerate progress in districts identified as lagging on health and nutrition, education, agriculture and water resources, financial inclusion, skill development, and basic infrastructure, using a monthly delta ranking methodology that measures incremental progress rather than only absolute status (Deccan Herald, 2021). Notably, Manipur's Chandel district, a hill district bordering Myanmar, was ranked the top performing aspirational district in the entire country in the delta ranking for June 2021, ahead of over 112 aspirational districts nationally, including districts such as Sahibganj in Jharkhand, which ranked second, Firozpur in Punjab, which ranked third, and Dhubri in Assam and Kiphire in Nagaland, which ranked fourth and fifth respectively (Deccan Herald, 2021). This finding is significant for policy purposes because it counters any assumption that hill district underperformance is structurally inevitable, and instead points to program design, sustained administrative attention, and effective local leadership as decisive variables that can produce nationally leading outcomes even in a resource-constrained, terrain-challenged hill district.

At the same time, the events of 2023 to 2025 have introduced a new and severe form of intra-state disparity that did not previously exist in this form, namely the de facto administrative and economic separation of significant parts of the valley and hill areas along ethnic lines during the conflict period, with disruption to trade, movement, and service delivery across the affected boundary areas, and with entire communities displaced from mixed or contested areas into camps or relocated settlements. This new dimension of disparity is qualitatively different from the older, more familiar valley-hill infrastructure gap discussed above, since it concerns not merely differential access to schools, hospitals, and roads, but a more fundamental breakdown in the shared administrative and economic space that previously connected valley and hill communities. Addressing both dimensions simultaneously, the long-standing infrastructure gap and the newer conflict-driven separation, is a central challenge for the remainder of this decade, and is treated at further length in Chapters 7, 14, and 15.

1.8 State's Position in National Rankings Across Key Development Indicators

Taken together, the indicators reviewed in this chapter place Manipur in a position that is neither uniformly lagging nor uniformly strong relative to other Indian states, a nuance that a simple state ranking exercise would tend to obscure. On the SDG India Index 2023-24, the state's inclusion among "front runner" states with an improving score places it ahead of the lowest performing states such as Bihar, which scored 57, and Jharkhand, which scored 62, though behind leading states such as Kerala and Uttarakhand at 79 (EnsureIAS, 2025). On district level administrative delivery, Manipur has produced a nationally top ranked performer in Chandel district, demonstrating a genuine capacity for high-quality local governance under the right conditions. On demographic indicators, the state's sex ratio has historically been more favorable than the national average, and its literacy rate, at 76.94 percent as of the 2011 Census, exceeded the national average recorded at that time, with rural literacy specifically recorded at 73.40 percent (Census2011.co.in, n.d.).

Against these areas of relative strength must be weighed the state's small economic base, described further in Chapter 3, its high dependence on central fiscal transfers, described in Chapter 2, its exposure to natural hazards common to the Northeast, described in Chapter 14, and, most urgently, the social and administrative disruption caused by the 2023 to 2025 conflict, whose full effect on the state's comparative national ranking will only become measurable once post-conflict data collection, and eventually a new Census, are completed. Internet access, recorded at only 2.03 percent of the population as of the 2011 Census, though certainly much improved since through the expansion of mobile broadband, illustrates how far certain baseline infrastructure indicators had to travel even before the more recent disruption (Census2011.co.in, n.d.).

Chapter 2: Fiscal Architecture of the State

2.1 Revenue Framework: Own Tax Revenue, Non-Tax Revenue and Devolution

Manipur's revenue base is structurally narrow and heavily dependent on transfers from the Union government, a pattern typical of Northeastern special category states, whose combination of small population, difficult terrain, limited industrial base, and international border location has historically justified preferential central fiscal treatment relative to larger, more industrialized states. According to the state's own Budget at a Glance documents, the composition of receipts for 2025-26 shows the State's own tax revenue contributing only about 6 percent of total receipts and the State's own non-tax revenue contributing approximately 1 percent, while devolution and grants from the Centre together account for the majority of resources, with the share in central taxes alone estimated at around 30 percent of total receipts and grants from the Centre at approximately 26 percent (Government of Manipur, 2025b). Market borrowings, negotiated loans, Government of India loans, and public account transactions make up most of the remainder, a composition discussed further in Section 2.5.

In absolute terms, the state's own tax revenue was estimated at Rs. 2,470 crore for 2024-25 and its own non-tax revenue at Rs. 300 crore, against total revenue receipts of Rs. 27,716 crore for that year, illustrating the scale of the gap between own-source revenue and total resource availability (KRC Times, 2024). For the revised estimates of 2025-26, own tax and non-tax receipts were placed at Rs. 1,934 crore and Rs. 450 crore respectively, against total revenue receipts of Rs. 22,835 crore, while the Budget Estimates for 2026-27 project own tax and non-tax receipts rising to Rs. 2,437 crore and higher, alongside total revenue receipts of Rs. 23,102 crore (Northeast Today, 2026). Expressed as a share of GSDP rather than of total receipts, own tax revenue stood at 3.2 percent of GSDP in the actual figures for 2024-25, was revised to 3.3 percent of GSDP for 2025-26, and is budgeted to rise modestly to 3.5 percent of GSDP in 2026-27 (PRS India, 2026), a trajectory that, while directionally positive, remains well short of the own tax revenue to GSDP ratios typically seen in larger, more industrialized Indian states, where own tax revenue frequently exceeds 6 to 8 percent of GSDP.

This consistent pattern, in which own revenue covers roughly one-tenth of total receipts in most years, means that the state's fiscal space is determined less by its own administrative or economic effort than by the design of central devolution formulae and the discretionary allocation of central grants, including scheme-linked and disaster or conflict related assistance. It also means that Manipur's fiscal position is unusually sensitive to decisions made outside the state, whether by the Finance Commission in setting devolution shares, by individual central ministries in designing centrally sponsored schemes, or by the Union Cabinet in approving special assistance packages, a dependency that is discussed at greater length in Section 2.9 in the specific context of the 2025 period of President's Rule.

2.2 Expenditure Profile: Composition, Quality and Efficiency

Manipur's expenditure is dominated by committed revenue expenditure, particularly salaries, pensions, and interest payments, which together constrain the fiscal space available for development spending in a manner common to most Indian states but particularly acute in a state with such a narrow own revenue base. Budget documents for 2025-26 show salaries accounting for approximately 18 percent of total expenditure, pensions approximately 10 percent, and interest payments approximately 4 percent, meaning that roughly one third of the state's entire budget is absorbed by these three committed items before any discretionary development spending decision is made, with other revenue expenditure making up roughly 25 percent and capital outlay approximately 12 percent of total expenditure, the remainder being accounted for by discharge of internal debt and public account transactions (Government of Manipur, 2025b).

Total expenditure for 2025-26 was proposed at Rs. 32,436 crore under one budget presentation, comprising Rs. 20,767 crore in revenue expenditure and Rs. 4,761 crore in capital outlay (Northeast Today, 2026), while a separate presentation of the same fiscal year, tabled in Parliament during the period of President's Rule, recorded total expenditure of Rs. 35,103.90 crore, up from Rs. 32,656.81 crore in the preceding year, including capital outlay increased by 19 percent to Rs. 7,773 crore (Business Standard, 2025). The variation between these figures, on the order of roughly Rs. 2,700 crore, reflects the unusual budgetary situation created by the imposition of President's Rule in the state in February 2025, under which successive budget presentations, first by the Union Finance Minister in Parliament and subsequently by a restored state government presenting its own Revised Estimates, produced differing figures for the same fiscal year (Business Standard, 2025). This kind of discrepancy between successive presentations of a single year's budget is unusual for an Indian state and is itself a marker of the administrative discontinuity the state experienced during this period, discussed further in Section 2.8.

A distinctive and administratively significant feature of the 2025-26 expenditure profile is the explicit budgetary provision for conflict related relief and security, including Rs. 15 crore for temporary shelter for internally displaced persons, Rs. 35 crore for housing for displaced people, Rs. 100 crore for relief operations, and Rs. 7 crore for compensation, alongside a substantially larger allocation of Rs. 2,866 crore as incentives for police personnel posted in sensitive areas (Business Standard, 2025). Considered together, these allocations, unprecedented in scale in the state's recent fiscal history, represent a direct budgetary consequence of the 2023-2025 ethnic conflict and constitute a claim on resources that would otherwise have been available for regular development expenditure in sectors such as education, health, and rural infrastructure. The scale of the police incentive allocation in particular, at nearly three thousand crore rupees, is a useful single indicator of how substantially internal security considerations have come to shape the state's overall spending pattern in this period, a theme returned to in Chapter 15.

On expenditure quality, the state's own budget documents disaggregate capital outlay by general, social, and economic services, a disaggregation examined further in Section 2.3, but

a fuller efficiency assessment, of the kind that would examine scheme-level utilization rates, delays in fund release, and the gap between budgeted and actually spent capital outlay in a given year, was not available in the sources reviewed for this report and would require direct reference to the state's Finance Accounts and the relevant CAG state finances audit report for a complete treatment.

2.3 Capital Expenditure: Infrastructure Investment and Asset Creation

Capital outlay has shown an upward trend in nominal terms over recent budget cycles, rising from Rs. 2,668 crore in 2022-23 to Rs. 3,485 crore in 2023-24, and further to a revised estimate of Rs. 6,519 crore in 2024-25, before being budgeted at Rs. 4,040 crore for 2025-26, a figure the state government has described as a 49 percent increase over a comparator base figure of Rs. 2,748 crore (Government of Manipur, 2025a, 2025b, 2025c). Within this, capital outlay on social services rose sharply in recent years, moving from Rs. 907 crore in 2022-23 to Rs. 2,003 crore and higher in subsequent years, reflecting increased spending on health, education, and urban infrastructure assets, alongside general services capital outlay, which covers administrative and security related asset creation, and economic services capital outlay, which covers roads, irrigation, and productive infrastructure (Government of Manipur, 2025c).

A significant enabling factor for this expansion has been the Union government's scheme of 50-year interest-free loans to states for capital expenditure, first introduced in 2020-21, under which Manipur has been budgeted to receive approximately Rs. 2,000 crore in both 2025-26 and 2026-27 (PRS India, 2026). Notably, this loan is treated as outside the state's annual net borrowing ceiling under the Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management framework, giving the state additional headroom for capital spending beyond what its regular fiscal deficit limit would otherwise allow, and effectively functioning as a Centrally financed capital expenditure supplement layered on top of the state's own borrowing capacity. Given the scale of Manipur's infrastructure deficit, particularly in road connectivity discussed in Chapter 8 and in power transmission discussed in Chapter 9, this scheme represents one of the more consequential instruments available to the state for narrowing its infrastructure gap without further straining its already elevated debt to GSDP ratio, discussed next in Section 2.4.

2.4 Fiscal Deficit, Primary Deficit and Debt Sustainability

Manipur's fiscal deficit has followed a volatile path over the past several years, driven by both the state's underlying revenue constraints and the exceptional disruption of 2023-25. As a share of GSDP, the fiscal deficit was recorded at 6.88 percent in 2020-21, moderating to 4.74 percent in 2021-22, rising again to 6.11 percent in 2022-23 as per revised estimates against a budgeted 6.5 percent for that year, before falling to 4.91 percent and then to a budgeted 3.06 percent by 2024-25 (Government of Manipur, 2024; PRS India, 2025). This trajectory of moderation through the mid-2020s reflected a genuine consolidation effort,

broadly consistent with the central government's general fiscal deficit ceiling guidance to states of around 3.5 percent of GSDP for that period, with an additional 0.5 percentage points made conditionally available to states, including Manipur, upon completion of specified power sector reforms (PRS India, 2023).

The trajectory for 2025-26 has diverged significantly from these earlier projections: the fiscal deficit was originally budgeted at 3.5 percent of GSDP, but revised estimates place it substantially higher, at either 5.4 percent or 5.5 percent of GSDP depending on the source, a slippage of roughly two full percentage points of GSDP attributable in large part to the administrative disruption of President's Rule and continued conflict related expenditure described in Section 2.2 (Northeast Today, 2026; PRS India, 2026). For 2026-27, the state has targeted a substantial consolidation, projecting a fiscal deficit of only 2.1 percent of GSDP, equivalent to approximately Rs. 1,421 crore, alongside a projected revenue surplus of 4.8 percent of GSDP, or approximately Rs. 3,295 crore, reflecting an assumption of both improved revenue collection and expenditure restraint as the state moves toward post-conflict normalization (PRS India, 2026). Whether this consolidation target proves realistic will depend substantially on whether the underlying drivers of the 2025-26 slippage, namely security related expenditure and administrative disruption, genuinely recede, or whether they persist into 2026-27 in a way that again pushes actual outcomes away from budgeted targets, as occurred the preceding year.

Outstanding debt as a share of GSDP has remained persistently high throughout this period, recorded at 43.62 percent in 2020-21, declining gradually to 34.50 percent in the 2024-25 budget estimate, before revised estimates for 2025-26 placed outstanding debt back up to a figure reported variously as 37 percent, 38.4 percent, or 40 percent of GSDP depending on the specific budget presentation and vintage consulted (Government of Manipur, 2024, 2025b; Business Standard, 2025; Northeast Today, 2026). This debt ratio remains well above the level generally considered prudent under Finance Commission guidelines for special category and Northeastern states, which have typically recommended debt sustainability paths targeting a gradual reduction toward levels closer to 25 to 30 percent of GSDP over the medium term for most states, underscoring the importance of the fiscal consolidation path the state has targeted for 2026-27 and beyond. A primary deficit figure, which nets out interest payments from the overall fiscal deficit and therefore gives a cleaner picture of the state's underlying fiscal balance independent of past borrowing decisions, was recorded by the Comptroller and Auditor General as having decreased marginally between 2021-22 and 2022-23, alongside a broadly similar decrease in the overall fiscal deficit for that period, from Rs. 1,803.18 crore to Rs. 1,756.55 crore (Comptroller and Auditor General of India, 2024), indicating that at least prior to the 2023 conflict, the state's underlying fiscal trajectory, net of interest costs, was improving modestly.

2.5 State's Borrowings, Guarantees and Off-Budget Liabilities

Manipur's borrowing programme for 2025-26 and 2026-27 combines market borrowings, negotiated loans, Government of India loans, and Ways and Means Advances from the Reserve Bank of India, with market borrowings composing approximately 4 percent of total receipts, Government of India loans approximately 6 percent, negotiated loans approximately 1 percent, and Ways and Means Advances, short-term borrowings typically availed multiple times during the year and repaid within the year, accounting for a notably high 15 percent of total receipts in the 2025-26 budget composition (Government of Manipur, 2025b). This heavy reliance on Ways and Means Advances is itself a meaningful indicator of cash flow stress within the fiscal year, since WMA facilities exist specifically to bridge temporary mismatches between a state's receipts and expenditure obligations, and a state that draws on them repeatedly and at scale is signaling that its regular revenue flow does not reliably keep pace with its regular expenditure commitments, consistent with a state whose revenue collection is thin and whose expenditure commitments, particularly salaries and conflict related relief, are relatively inflexible.

As noted in Section 2.3, the Rs. 2,000 crore annual capital investment loan from the Centre is treated as outside the state's normal borrowing ceiling, a design feature that increases the state's effective debt stock without being counted against its formal fiscal deficit limit under the FRBM framework (PRS India, 2026). This is not unique to Manipur and reflects a broader design choice in national fiscal federal architecture during this period, under which the Centre has sought to expand states' capital spending capacity through instruments that sit formally outside the ordinary state fiscal deficit ceiling, but it does mean that headline fiscal deficit and debt figures for Manipur somewhat understate the state's total effective liabilities once this loan facility is taken into account. The sources reviewed for this report did not identify any material state government guarantee exposure to Public Sector Undertakings or off-budget special purpose vehicles for Manipur, though, as noted in Chapter 4, a dedicated review of the state's PSU portfolio was not available and this remains a data gap.

2.6 Finance Commission Awards: Allocation and Utilisation

As a Northeastern and special category state, Manipur receives a share of central tax devolution determined by the recommendations of the Finance Commission, along with revenue deficit and other statutory grants where applicable, in addition to the discretionary grant-in-aid discussed in Section 2.1. The state's Budget at a Glance for 2024-25 recorded the share in central taxes at Rs. 8,930 crore for that year, alongside grant-in-aid from the Centre, together forming the majority of the state's revenue receipts (Government of Manipur, 2024). Manipur's Autonomous District Councils also receive a share of certain devolved funds, with a CAG review noting that of a specified allocation intended for local bodies, 35.28 percent was to be transferred to Panchayati Raj Institutions, 22.49 percent to Urban Local Bodies, and the remaining 42.23 percent to Autonomous District Councils (Comptroller and Auditor General of India, 2024), illustrating that fiscal devolution within the state itself, not only from the Centre to the state, follows a distinct formula that channels a substantial share of local body funding specifically toward the hill area councils.

The 15th Finance Commission's award period concluded with the 2025-26 fiscal year, and the recommendations of the subsequent Finance Commission, whose award period would ordinarily commence with 2026-27, will materially affect Manipur's resource envelope from that year onward. Given the scale of the state's dependence on central tax devolution documented in Section 2.1, changes in either the state's specific devolution share within the horizontal formula, which typically weighs factors including population, income distance, area, forest cover, and demographic performance, or in the overall vertical share of central taxes devolved to states as a group, would have an outsized effect on Manipur's fiscal position relative to states with a larger own revenue base. The specific recommendations of the relevant Finance Commission for the 2026-27 onward award period were not finalized within the scope of the sources reviewed for this report and should be confirmed directly against the published Finance Commission report once available.

2.7 GST Implementation: Revenue Impact and Compensation Status

The Goods and Services Tax compensation mechanism, under which states were guaranteed compensation for revenue shortfalls relative to a fixed growth assumption for the first five years following GST implementation in July 2017, expired at the end of June 2022, and Manipur, like other states with a narrow indigenous tax base, has since had to absorb GST-related revenue volatility without the earlier compensation cushion. This structural change is reflected in the continued small size of the state's own tax revenue relative to total receipts described in Section 2.1, since GST forms a substantial component of most states' own tax revenue, and it reinforces the state's dependence on devolution and grants rather than own-source GST or other tax collection as the primary lever of fiscal management. For a state like Manipur, whose economy, as discussed in Chapter 3, is heavily import reliant for manufactured goods, the destination-based design of GST, under which tax revenue accrues predominantly to the state where final consumption occurs rather than the state of production, is in principle favorable, since it allows a net importing, net consuming state to capture GST revenue on goods produced elsewhere and consumed within Manipur. The state budget documents reviewed for this report do not provide a separately disaggregated GST collection figure for Manipur, and this remains an area where more granular Goods and Services Tax Network or state Commercial Taxes Department data would be needed for a fuller assessment of how effectively this structural advantage is being realized in practice.

2.8 Public Financial Management Reforms and Audit Compliance

Public financial management in Manipur has faced added strain from the administrative discontinuity associated with the imposition of President's Rule in February 2025, following the invocation of Article 356 of the Constitution, during which budgetary authority was exercised through Parliament rather than the state legislature for part of the fiscal year, before being restored to an elected state government (Business Standard, 2025). This period necessarily affected the continuity of routine public financial management functions, including treasury operations, scheme implementation monitoring, and the normal legislative

budget scrutiny process that would otherwise be carried out by the Manipur Legislative Assembly's committees, including its Public Accounts Committee, whose oversight function depends on a functioning legislature to receive and act on CAG audit findings. The discrepancy between the Rs. 35,103.90 crore expenditure figure tabled in Parliament for 2025-26 and the subsequently revised Rs. 32,436 crore figure presented once the state government resumed budgetary authority, discussed in Section 2.2, is itself a visible symptom of this disruption to normal public financial management continuity.

The sources reviewed for this report do not provide a specific, current assessment of Comptroller and Auditor General audit findings or Public Accounts Committee compliance status for Manipur during this period, beyond the general state finances observations on fiscal deficit and liabilities trends cited elsewhere in this chapter (Comptroller and Auditor General of India, 2024). This is flagged as an area requiring direct reference to the most recent CAG state audit reports, once the Legislative Assembly has resumed normal processing of them, for a complete treatment in any future revision of this chapter.

2.9 Centre-State Fiscal Relations: Trends and Themes

Centre-State fiscal relations have been unusually prominent in Manipur's recent experience, both because of the state's structural dependence on central transfers described throughout this chapter, and because of the direct exercise of central authority over the state's budget during President's Rule in 2025, when the Union Finance Minister tabled the state's budget in the Lok Sabha rather than the budget being presented through the ordinary state legislative process (Business Standard, 2025). During this period, the Union Finance Minister also sought a Vote on Account covering the first six months of the 2025-26 financial year, a mechanism ordinarily used at the national level to authorize interim spending pending full budget approval, and its use in the Manipur context illustrates how directly the machinery of national fiscal governance was extended into state level budget management during the period of central rule (Business Standard, 2025).

The Union budget for that year also carried specific conflict related provisions for Manipur, including allocations under the Special Assistance to States for Capital Investment scheme exceeding Rs. 2,000 crore and a social sector outlay of Rs. 9,520 crore, alongside the relief, rehabilitation, and security allocations noted in Section 2.2 (Business Standard, 2025). This period illustrates, in an unusually direct way, how central fiscal support and central administrative authority can become intertwined in a state facing acute internal security and governance stress, with the Centre acting simultaneously as financier, through devolution, grants, and special assistance, and as direct administrator, through the exercise of Article 356 powers. It sets the context for the sectoral chapters that follow, each of which must be read against the backdrop of a state whose fiscal architecture leaves limited room for independent maneuver, and whose recent experience underscores both the value and the limits of a fiscal federal system in which a resource-constrained state's development trajectory remains, in practice, substantially co-authored by decisions made in New Delhi.

Chapter 3: Economic Structure, Growth and Sectoral Performance

3.1 Gross State Domestic Product: Trends, Growth Rate and Sectoral Share

Manipur's Gross State Domestic Product has grown steadily in nominal terms over the past decade, though from a small base relative to most other Indian states, a starting point that matters for interpreting even large percentage growth figures, since a high growth rate applied to a small base still yields a comparatively small absolute increase in economic output. At current prices, the state's GSDP was estimated at approximately Rs. 60,112 crore, or about US\$7.02 billion, in the 2025-26 budget estimate, with the state's GSDP reported to have expanded at a compound annual growth rate of approximately 11.90 percent between 2015-16 and 2025-26 (India Brand Equity Foundation, 2025). A separate analysis places Manipur's GSDP for 2026-27 at Rs. 68,823 crore at current prices, implying growth of approximately 18 percent over the 2025-26 level used in that same analysis, a figure that differs somewhat from the IBEF estimate above and illustrates the ordinary variation between successive budget documents, revised base estimates, and differing choices of current versus constant price series rather than a contradiction in underlying economic performance (PRS India, 2026). Because Manipur's GSDP series has been rebased over time, most recently to a 2011-12 base year for both current and constant price calculations, care should be taken when comparing growth rates quoted across sources that may reference different base years or price bases (Indiastat, n.d.).

On sectoral composition, sources diverge modestly depending on whether current or constant prices and which vintage of data are used, but the broad pattern is consistent and has held for at least the past several years. According to IBEF, drawing on the Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Manipur, the tertiary or services sector contributed 68.34 percent of the state's Gross State Value Added at current prices in 2023-24, with the secondary or industrial sector contributing 10.31 percent and the primary sector, principally agriculture, contributing 21.35 percent (India Brand Equity Foundation, 2025). A Comptroller and Auditor General state finances audit report, covering the 2018 to 2023 period, similarly found the services sector to be the largest contributor to GSDP, ranging between 60.09 and 61.86 percent over that period, with agriculture as the second largest contributor showing a fluctuating trend, and a modest decline in the industry sector's share, of approximately 1.75 percentage points, in 2022-23 compared with 2018-19 (Comptroller and Auditor General of India, 2024). Both sources agree that Manipur's economy is services led, agriculture dependent as a secondary pillar, and only thinly industrialized, a structure that has direct implications for the employment and investment priorities discussed later in this chapter and in Chapter 4, and that also distinguishes Manipur's growth pattern from the more industry-led growth trajectories seen in states such as Gujarat or Tamil Nadu, or even from more diversified neighboring hill economies such as Uttarakhand, where industry contributes closer to half of gross value added (Wikipedia, 2025a).

It is also worth noting that a services-dominated GSDP composition of this kind, in a state where private sector formal services remain limited as described in Chapter 3.5, tends in

practice to be heavily weighted toward public administration, government services, and government-adjacent activity such as construction contracted through government schemes, rather than toward the private, market-driven services activity, such as finance, information technology, and professional services, that dominates the tertiary sector in more economically diversified states. This distinction matters for interpreting the headline GSDP composition figures, since a large services share driven primarily by public administration signals a different set of policy priorities than a large services share driven by private commercial activity.

3.2 Per Capita Income and Purchasing Power Analysis

A current, precisely sourced per capita income figure specific to Manipur for 2025 or 2026 was not located with sufficient reliability among the sources reviewed for this report, and this section deliberately avoids presenting an invented figure rather than compromise on accuracy for the sake of completeness. What can be stated with confidence is the comparative pattern common to Northeastern hill states: per capita income in Manipur has historically trailed the all-India average, a gap consistent with the state's narrow industrial base described in Section 3.1, its high transport and logistics costs arising from hill terrain and distance from major national markets and ports, and its historically limited private investment inflows described further in Chapter 4.

For comparison, per capita income in a better performing Himalayan state such as Uttarakhand stood at approximately Rs. 261,173 for FY 2023, above the national average of approximately Rs. 212,000 for the same year (Wikipedia, 2025a), and Manipur's per capita income has generally been positioned below such comparator states, reflecting Uttarakhand's more diversified industrial base, including pharmaceuticals and manufacturing clusters that Manipur has not developed at comparable scale. Purchasing power within the state also varies significantly between the valley and hill areas, given the transport cost markup on goods moving into remote hill markets, meaning that a single state average income figure, even if it were reliably available, would understate the effective cost of living burden faced by hill district households relative to their nominal income, a pattern consistent with the broader intra-state disparity theme introduced in Chapter 1. A dedicated, current Directorate of Economics and Statistics release for Manipur should be consulted directly for the exact per capita income figure in any policy document requiring precision on this indicator.

3.3 Primary Sector: Agriculture, Horticulture, Animal Husbandry and Fisheries

Agriculture and allied activities remain the second largest contributor to Manipur's GSDP, at approximately one-fifth of gross value added, and continue to employ a substantially larger share of the workforce than their GSDP contribution alone would suggest, consistent with the informal, smallholder character of the sector and its correspondingly lower value addition per worker compared with services or industry (India Brand Equity Foundation, 2025; Comptroller and Auditor General of India, 2024). The Imphal Valley supports paddy

cultivation as the dominant food crop, benefiting from the flat terrain and relatively assured irrigation described in Chapter 10, while both valley and hill areas support horticultural production, including citrus fruits, pineapple, and a range of vegetables suited to the state's varied agro-climatic zones described in Chapter 1. Jhum, or shifting cultivation, remains a significant traditional agricultural practice in parts of the hill districts, though it has come under increasing pressure from land scarcity, population growth, and forest conservation policy, a tension discussed further in Chapter 13 on environmental governance.

Sericulture and fisheries, particularly around Loktak Lake and its associated wetland ecosystem, contribute further to rural livelihoods, with Loktak's fishing communities, including those living on and around the floating phumdis described in Chapter 1, dependent on the lake's fish stocks for both subsistence and market income, a livelihood base that has periodically come into tension with conservation objectives tied to the Keibul Lamjao National Park. Animal husbandry, especially piggy, remains culturally and economically significant across both Meitei and tribal communities, with pork forming a central component of traditional cuisine and ceremonial practice across most of the state's ethnic groups, giving the sector a demand base that is broader and more culturally embedded than in many other parts of India.

Manipur's total exports, a partial proxy for surplus agricultural and light manufacturing output beyond state consumption, stood at only Rs. 3.52 crore for the April to July period of FY26, down from Rs. 10.36 crore recorded for the full FY25 year, with petroleum products, drugs, cotton yarn, and ceramic products among the leading export categories (India Brand Equity Foundation, 2025). These export figures, while small in absolute national terms, indicate the very early stage of market integration for the state's primary sector output beyond regional consumption, and they stand in some contrast to the state's growing reputation, discussed in Chapter 4, for niche, high-value agricultural products such as Geographical Indication certified Chakhao black rice, suggesting that the gap between the state's agricultural production potential and its formal, recorded export performance remains substantial and represents a clear area for targeted market linkage investment.

3.4 Secondary Sector: Industry, Manufacturing and Mining

Industry contributes only around 10 percent of the state's gross value added, and the CAG's state finances review found this share to have declined slightly rather than grown over the 2018 to 2023 period, a trend that runs counter to the aspiration, expressed in successive state industrial policies discussed in Chapter 4, of building a larger manufacturing base (Comptroller and Auditor General of India, 2024; India Brand Equity Foundation, 2025). Manufacturing activity is concentrated in small and micro enterprises, including food processing, handloom and handicraft production, and bamboo based industry, rather than large scale manufacturing, and this pattern is consistent with the MSME dominated industrial landscape described in Chapter 4, where the vast majority of registered enterprises fall within the micro category. Mining activity in Manipur remains limited relative to mineral rich states

elsewhere in India such as Odisha, Jharkhand, or Chhattisgarh, and the state has not developed a significant extractive industry base, notwithstanding some documented mineral potential in parts of the hill districts that has not been developed at commercial scale, a matter discussed further in Chapter 13.4 on mining and mineral resource governance.

This narrow secondary sector base is a central constraint on the state's ability to generate non-agricultural, non-government formal employment, a constraint with particular significance for the state's youth population, since manufacturing employment typically offers a wage and skill progression pathway for workers transitioning out of agriculture that is not easily replicated by either subsistence agriculture or informal services. The comparatively high transport cost of moving both inputs and finished goods in and out of a landlocked, hill-terrain state, discussed in Section 3.2 and in Chapter 8, is frequently cited as a structural, geography-driven constraint on manufacturing competitiveness that policy incentives alone, of the kind discussed in Chapter 4, have not yet been sufficient to fully offset.

3.5 Tertiary Sector: Trade, Finance, Real Estate and Services

The services sector is unambiguously the largest component of Manipur's economy, contributing between roughly 60 and 68 percent of gross value added depending on the data vintage and pricing basis used, as noted in Section 3.1 (Comptroller and Auditor General of India, 2024; India Brand Equity Foundation, 2025). This sector includes trade and commerce centered on Imphal, where the Ima Keithel market, discussed further in Section 3.6, serves as a major commercial hub, public administration and government services, which are unusually large relative to the private economy given the state's dependence on central transfers described in Chapter 2, along with transport, communication, education, and health services. Government employment and government linked service delivery form a disproportionately large share of formal sector activity in Manipur relative to more industrialized Indian states, a pattern that is common across the Northeastern region and that has implications for both fiscal sustainability, since a large public payroll adds directly to the committed expenditure burden discussed in Chapter 2.2, and for the composition of skilled labour demand, since government jobs tend to reward general educational credentials and civil service examination performance rather than the vocational and technical skills more relevant to private industry, a tension explored further in Chapter 5 on education and Chapter 17 on skill development.

Banking and financial services penetration, while improved from the very low base recorded in the 2011 Census, when only 28.64 percent of the state's population had access to banking and non-banking financial services (Census2011.co.in, n.d.), remains an area where continued expansion, particularly in hill districts, would support both consumption smoothing for households and working capital access for the MSME sector discussed in Chapter 4. Real estate activity is concentrated almost entirely within the Imphal urban agglomeration, reflecting the population density and land value patterns described in Chapter 1.3, with hill

district real estate markets remaining thin and largely governed by customary land tenure arrangements rather than formal market transactions.

3.6 Informal Economy: Size, Significance and Integration Challenges

As in most Northeastern states, the informal economy in Manipur is large relative to the formal, registered economy, encompassing smallholder agriculture, home based handloom and handicraft production, small trade, and informal service provision, much of it carried out by women. The state's well known Ima Keithel, or "Mothers' Market," in Imphal, run entirely by women traders, is a distinctive institutional example of this informal economic activity and a significant source of household income for thousands of families, as well as a widely cited symbol of women's economic agency within Manipuri society, a status reflected in the notably high rate of women's MSME ownership in the state documented in Chapter 4.2. This informal economic base extends well beyond the Ima Keithel itself into a broader pattern of home based production, particularly in handloom weaving, where a large share of rural and peri-urban households, especially in Thoubal and Bishnupur districts, engage in weaving as a supplementary or primary income source, often without formal registration, credit access, or market linkage beyond local and regional trade networks.

Integration of this informal economy into the formal financial and regulatory system remains a persistent challenge, compounded in the 2023-2025 period by the disruption of normal trade routes and market access between valley and hill areas during the ethnic conflict, which affected informal traders and transporters on both sides of the divide, and which in some documented cases forced informal traders to establish entirely new, parallel supply chains within their own ethnic-territorial zone as movement across the previous, unified market space became difficult or unsafe. The Global Buyers and Sellers Summit discussed in Chapter 4.7, at which the state Governor specifically noted the resilience of displaced communities re-engaging in economic activity, illustrates one policy response aimed at helping informal producers, including those displaced by the conflict, reconnect with formal national and international markets (News on Air, 2025).

3.7 Labour Market: Employment, Unemployment and Workforce Quality

A precise, current unemployment rate specific to Manipur for 2025 or 2026 was not found among reliable sources reviewed for this report, and no invented figure is presented here. What can be stated is that the state's labour market reflects the sectoral pattern described above, with a large share of the workforce engaged in agriculture and informal services, a comparatively small formal manufacturing employment base as described in Section 3.4, and continued reliance on government employment as a preferred and often scarce formal sector opportunity, a pattern that contributes to youth outmigration from the state toward metropolitan centers such as Delhi, Bengaluru, and Guwahati for both education and employment, a trend widely documented anecdotally and in state migration policy

discussions even where precise current outmigration statistics were not available among the sources reviewed here.

Workforce quality in Manipur benefits from a comparatively strong educational foundation relative to many other low-income states, given the state's literacy rate advantage documented in Chapter 1.8, but this educational attainment has not, on current evidence, translated into a correspondingly large base of formal, skilled private sector employment within the state itself, a mismatch explored at greater length in Chapter 17.6 on skill development and workforce alignment. The 2023-2025 conflict has had a direct and severe labour market effect in the districts most affected by displacement, where normal economic activity, including agricultural cultivation cycles in contested or abandoned land, and normal school-to-work transitions for young people in affected communities, were substantially disrupted for an extended period, an effect whose full labour market consequences will likely only become clear through post-conflict labour force surveys.

3.8 Inflation, Price Stability and Consumer Welfare

State specific, current consumer price inflation data for Manipur for 2025 or 2026 was not identified among the sources reviewed for this report. Nationally, inflation has remained a policy priority, and Northeastern states, including Manipur, are structurally exposed to elevated price levels relative to the national average due to high transport costs for goods brought in from other parts of India, a vulnerability that was materially worsened during periods of the 2023-2025 conflict when highway blockades and disruptions to the main supply routes into the Imphal Valley led to acute, well documented shortages and price spikes for essential commodities including fuel and food items in the state capital and surrounding areas.

This experience illustrates a broader structural vulnerability in the state's price stability outlook that predates and will likely outlast the current conflict: because so much of Manipur's essential consumption, from fuel to packaged food to construction materials, arrives via a small number of highway corridors, any disruption to those corridors, whether from conflict, landslide, strike action of the kind referenced in Chapter 4.1 regarding National Highway 37, or simple poor road maintenance, translates rapidly into consumer price shocks in a way that would be far less likely in a state with more diversified transport infrastructure or a larger locally produced share of essential goods. A dedicated state Directorate of Economics and Statistics or Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation consumer price index release for Manipur should be consulted for precise current figures, and this report recommends that state planning bodies treat highway corridor resilience, addressed further in Chapter 8, as being directly linked to consumer price stability rather than as a purely logistical concern.

3.9 Growth Corridors: Engines of Economic Expansion

Several infrastructure and connectivity initiatives are positioned as the state's principal near-term growth corridors. Road connectivity improvements, including the phased completion of the Khongsang-Awangkhul, Awangkhul-Noney, and Noney-Imphal highway stretches targeted for completion between March 2026 and March 2028, are intended to improve the state's connectivity to the national highway network and reduce the transport cost disadvantage described in Section 3.8 (India Brand Equity Foundation, 2025). In September 2025, the Prime Minister announced additional major projects for the state, including a Manipur Urban Roads Project, intended to strengthen intra-state connectivity within the Imphal urban agglomeration (India Brand Equity Foundation, 2025). The Jiribam-Imphal rail link, discussed further in Chapter 8.2, represents a further potentially transformative growth corridor, since rail connectivity would offer a lower cost, higher capacity alternative to the state's current near-total dependence on road transport for both passenger and freight movement.

Beyond physical infrastructure, the state's horticulture and organic produce potential, its handloom and handicraft sector, and its position as a potential trade gateway to Myanmar and, through it, to Southeast Asia under India's Act East Policy, are consistently identified in state and central planning documents as the primary medium-term growth corridors for the Manipur economy. The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India reported that the North Eastern states collectively had 12.75 million wireless subscribers and 0.287 million wireline subscribers as of August 2025, alongside 0.09 million Fixed Wireless Access subscribers, indicating a growing digital connectivity base across the region that could support a further growth corridor in digital services and e-commerce integration for Manipur specifically, discussed further in Chapter 16 (India Brand Equity Foundation, 2025). Realization of all of these growth corridors, whether physical, digital, or trade-based, remains contingent on the restoration of durable peace and unified administration across the state's valley and hill areas, a precondition discussed further in the governance and internal security chapters of this report, and one that this report treats as the binding constraint on the pace, rather than the direction, of Manipur's medium-term economic growth.

Chapter 4: Investment, Industry and Private Sector Development

4.1 Investment Climate Assessment and Ease of Doing Business

Manipur's investment climate is shaped by a combination of genuine locational advantages and persistent structural constraints, and any honest assessment of the state's attractiveness to investors needs to hold both in view simultaneously rather than defaulting to either boosterism or pessimism. On the advantage side, the state promotes its position as India's gateway to Southeast Asia under the Act East Policy, its international airport at Imphal with air cargo services, and its connection through four national highways as core selling points for prospective investors (India Investment Grid, n.d.). Imphal's airport, in particular, gives Manipur a form of connectivity that several other Northeastern states with more difficult air access do not enjoy to the same degree, and this has historically supported a modest tourism and business travel sector discussed further in Chapter 19.

On the constraint side, the state remains heavily import reliant, with most of the population engaged in low value addition farming and most daily use manufactured items brought in from outside the state, a structural feature that raises costs across the investment chain, since almost any industrial or commercial venture in Manipur must budget for higher input transport costs than an equivalent venture located closer to India's major manufacturing and port hubs (Manipur Industrial Development Corporation Limited, 2024). The 2023-2025 ethnic conflict added a further, severe constraint during its most acute phase, with normal commercial activity disrupted across large parts of the state for extended periods, and its aftereffects continue to shape investor perception of the state's stability even as conditions gradually normalize. As a live illustration that basic infrastructure reliability, not only formal ease of doing business rules, remains a central and ongoing concern for investors and traders alike, a drivers' union in the state threatened an indefinite strike as recently as mid-2026 over the deteriorated condition of National Highway 37, one of the state's critical supply arteries connecting the Imphal Valley to the rest of India (Northeast Now, 2026). For an investor evaluating Manipur against other potential Northeastern locations, this kind of recurring, headline-grabbing disruption to the single most important supply corridor is likely to weigh at least as heavily in an investment decision as the formal regulatory and licensing framework captured in standard ease of doing business indices.

Formal ease of doing business reform in Manipur has generally followed the national Business Reform Action Plan framework administered by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade, under which states are assessed and ranked on the implementation of specified regulatory simplification measures, though a current, disaggregated Manipur specific Business Reform Action Plan score was not identified among the sources reviewed for this report and should be sourced directly from DPIIT's most recent state ranking exercise for a precise, current assessment.

4.2 Industrial Policy Framework and MSME Development

Manipur's State Industrial Policy offers capital subsidy and power tariff concessions to registered industrial units, administered through the Manipur Industrial and Sericulture Development Corporation, which manages the state's industrial estates (Entrepreneur India, 2026). This policy architecture is broadly consistent with the incentive frameworks offered by other Northeastern states competing for a similar, relatively small pool of prospective industrial investment, meaning that Manipur's fiscal incentives alone are unlikely to be a strongly differentiating factor relative to neighboring states, and that non-fiscal factors, including connectivity, security perception, and administrative predictability, are likely to weigh more heavily in an investor's final location decision.

The Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises sector is the backbone of the state's registered private economy, and it is here that Manipur shows its most distinctive and genuinely promising private sector characteristics. Manipur has been described as a frontrunner in MSME registrations among the northeastern states, and the sector shows a notably high rate of women's ownership, an outlier characteristic relative to national gender patterns in enterprise ownership that a 2024 Strategic Investment Plan prepared under the Ministry of MSME's Raising and Accelerating MSME Performance programme identifies as a distinctive strength for the state (Manipur Industrial Development Corporation Limited, 2024). This pattern of high women's enterprise ownership connects directly to the informal economic base described in Chapter 3.6, particularly the handloom and Ima Keithel trading traditions, suggesting that much of the state's formally registered MSME growth may in fact represent the formalization of pre-existing, women-led informal economic activity rather than the creation of entirely new enterprises, a distinction with real implications for how policymakers should design support programmes, since formalizing an existing informal trader has different needs, around credit history, market linkage, and regulatory literacy, than incubating an entirely new venture.

The same 2024 report identifies major constraints facing the sector, including difficulty accessing finance, a comparatively high rate of non-performing assets within the state's MSME lending portfolio, limited access to technology, weak infrastructure, and low awareness of government schemes among entrepreneurs (Manipur Industrial Development Corporation Limited, 2024). The high MSME non-performing asset rate is a particularly significant finding, since it suggests that the state's MSME credit ecosystem may be caught in a difficult cycle, where lenders, having experienced high default rates, become more conservative in extending further credit, which in turn constrains the working capital available to otherwise viable small enterprises, particularly in a state where formal collateral, such as clear land title, can be difficult to establish given the customary land tenure arrangements common in hill areas discussed in Chapter 1.2. Institutions active in supporting the sector include NABARD, the North Eastern Development Finance Corporation, the Small Industries Development Bank of India, the state's own Directorate of Industries and Commerce, the Khadi and Village Industries Board, the Khadi and Village Industries Commission, and various commercial banks, reflecting a fairly dense institutional support

architecture on paper, even if the outcomes documented above suggest continued gaps in its effectiveness on the ground (Manipur Industrial Development Corporation Limited, 2024).

The Union Budget 2025 revision of MSME classification criteria, raising the investment limit for micro-enterprises from Rs. 1 crore to Rs. 2.5 crore and the turnover cap from Rs. 5 crore to Rs. 10 crore, was specifically highlighted by the state government as a measure expected to benefit Manipur's large base of micro-enterprises, particularly in handloom and handicrafts, by allowing more of them to access larger-enterprise support without losing beneficial micro-enterprise status (Northeast Now, 2025). Because Manipur's MSME base is so heavily concentrated at the micro end of the size distribution, changes to classification thresholds of this kind have a proportionally larger effect on the state's enterprise population than they would in a state with a more even distribution of enterprise sizes across the micro, small, and medium categories.

4.3 Large and Anchor Industries: Sectoral Analysis

Manipur does not host large scale anchor industries of the kind found in more industrialized states, and its industrial base, as noted in Chapter 3, contributes only around 10 percent of gross value added. The state's most distinctive industrial and agro-industrial assets are niche and craft based rather than heavy industrial, including Geographical Indication certified Chakhao, or black rice, described as one of the state's fastest growing export products, along with the traditional handloom fabrics Wangkhei Phee and Moirangphee (Entrepreneur India, 2026). Geographical Indication certification of products like Chakhao is a meaningful policy tool for a state in Manipur's position, since it allows a small producer base to compete on distinctiveness and provenance rather than on price or scale, a strategy far better suited to Manipur's smallholder, craft-based production structure than an attempt to compete directly with large scale commodity agriculture from other parts of India.

Food processing linked to horticultural and fisheries output, and central government incentive schemes for pharmaceuticals, food processing, and information technology investment, are identified in state investment promotion material as priority areas for anchor investment rather than as existing large scale industries (Entrepreneur India, 2026). The absence of any single dominant anchor industry of the kind that defines the industrial identity of many other Indian states, such as automotive manufacturing in parts of Tamil Nadu or pharmaceuticals in parts of Himachal Pradesh, means that Manipur's industrial development strategy is necessarily more diversified and incremental by design, built around a portfolio of smaller, craft and agro-processing based initiatives rather than a single flagship investment.

4.4 Special Economic Zones, Industrial Corridors and Clusters

Cluster based development, rather than formal Special Economic Zones, is the more prominent instrument used in Manipur, particularly for handloom and bamboo based MSME clusters supported under national cluster development schemes (Entrepreneur India, 2026).

This preference for cluster development over formal SEZ designation reflects both the practical reality of Manipur's small enterprise scale, since SEZs are generally designed around larger export-oriented manufacturing operations that Manipur's current industrial base does not yet support, and a more deliberate policy judgment that cluster-based support, which strengthens shared infrastructure, market linkage, and skill development for groups of small producers working in a common craft or product line, is better matched to the state's actual enterprise composition.

The Northeast Special Infrastructure Development Scheme and the North East Industrial Development Scheme provide the principal central incentive architecture supporting industrial estate development and cluster investment in the state, administered alongside the Manipur Industrial and Sericulture Development Corporation's own industrial estates (Entrepreneur India, 2026). The Moreh Integrated Check Post, on the Myanmar border, is positioned as a logistics and trade node intended to anchor a future border trade corridor, functioning as Manipur's principal formal land trade gateway to Myanmar and, in principle, to the broader Association of Southeast Asian Nations market beyond it. Its full potential remains constrained by the broader connectivity and security conditions described elsewhere in this report, including both the domestic highway reliability issues discussed in Section 4.1 and the periodic instability on the Myanmar side of the border, a factor briefly noted in Chapter 4.8 and discussed further in Chapter 15 on internal security.

4.5 Foreign Direct Investment: Inflows, Sectoral Distribution and Policy

Foreign Direct Investment inflows into Manipur remain very small in both absolute and comparative national terms. According to the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade, as cited by the India Brand Equity Foundation, cumulative FDI inflows attributed to Manipur between October 2019 and June 2025 amounted to a negligible sum relative to major investment destination states, reported at a scale of roughly US\$1,139 over that nearly six year window, effectively indicating that formally recorded, state attributed FDI into Manipur has been minimal to the point of statistical insignificance in national terms (India Brand Equity Foundation, 2025). This near-total absence of recorded FDI should be read alongside the state's total export performance, also very small, at Rs. 3.52 crore for the initial months of FY26 against Rs. 10.36 crore for the whole of FY25, confirming that Manipur's private economy remains only lightly integrated into international investment and trade flows at present, and that any state ambition to position itself as a genuine gateway to Southeast Asian trade and investment, as described in Section 4.8, currently rests on infrastructure and policy potential rather than on demonstrated current performance (India Brand Equity Foundation, 2025).

This pattern is broadly consistent with the FDI experience of most Northeastern states, where distance from major ports, small local market size, and security perception have historically combined to direct the overwhelming majority of India's FDI inflows toward coastal and metropolitan states. Reversing this pattern for Manipur specifically would likely require a

combination of demonstrated, sustained internal stability following the 2023-2025 conflict, meaningfully improved highway and rail connectivity of the kind discussed in Chapter 8, and a deliberate, sustained investment promotion effort targeted at the specific niche sectors, discussed in Sections 4.2 and 4.3, where the state has genuine comparative advantage, rather than an attempt to compete broadly across all sectors for investment that will in most cases continue to be directed toward states with stronger existing industrial ecosystems.

4.6 Public Sector Undertakings: Performance and Reform Agenda

The sources reviewed for this report did not surface a current, dedicated performance review of Manipur's state Public Sector Undertakings. Given the state's fiscal constraints described in Chapter 2, where committed expenditure already absorbs roughly a third of the budget before discretionary spending decisions are made, the ongoing performance and fiscal burden of any loss making state PSUs would be directly relevant to the state's overall fiscal sustainability, since chronically loss making PSUs typically require recurring budgetary support that competes directly with development expenditure. Given the general national policy direction toward disinvestment and reform of underperforming state PSUs pursued by many Indian states over the past decade, this is an area that would benefit from direct reference to the state Finance Department's PSU review or the relevant CAG audit report on public sector undertakings in any future, more detailed revision of this chapter, and this report flags it explicitly as a data gap rather than presenting an unsupported assessment.

4.7 Public-Private Partnership Framework and Pipeline

Public-private partnership activity in Manipur remains at an early stage relative to larger states, concentrated principally around tourism infrastructure, such as hospitality development around Loktak Lake and the annual Sangai Festival discussed in Chapter 19, and around select connectivity projects. The comparatively underdeveloped state of PPP activity in Manipur is consistent with the broader pattern described throughout this chapter, since PPP structures typically require a baseline of investor confidence, regulatory predictability, and demonstrated project pipeline credibility that the state's current investment climate, as assessed in Section 4.1, has not yet fully established.

The state's Global Buyers and Sellers Summit, held in Imphal in 2025 under the RAMP initiative and jointly organized by the Directorate of Trade, Commerce and Industries, the Manipur Industrial Development Corporation, and the Manipur Chamber of Commerce and Industry, drew participation from Myanmar, Bangladesh, and Thailand as well as representatives from Japan and several other Northeastern states, alongside local entrepreneurs and businesses, and was framed explicitly around the theme of "Bridging Business Sans Borders," reflecting the state's aspiration to position itself as a trade and investment node connecting India to Southeast Asia (News on Air, 2025). At the summit, various stalls were set up by local entrepreneurs showcasing the state's diverse range of indigenous products and innovations, giving the event a dual character as both an investment

promotion platform and a domestic market access opportunity for the state's MSME sector discussed in Section 4.2. Addressing the gathering, the Governor of Manipur acknowledged the state's recent difficulties directly, noting that communities across Manipur, including those that had been displaced by the 2023-2025 conflict, were showing resilience by re-engaging in economic activity and bringing value-added products such as black rice, organic produce, and handloom goods back into national and international markets (News on Air, 2025). This kind of direct, unvarnished acknowledgment of the conflict's economic impact within an official investment promotion setting is itself notable, and this report treats it as a more credible basis for assessing the state's genuine investment climate trajectory than promotional material that omits the conflict's effects entirely.

4.8 Regional Cooperation: Shared Region and Growth

Manipur's investment and industrial development agenda is inseparable from its position within the broader Northeastern region and its border relationship with Myanmar. Regional cooperation instruments, including the Act East Policy, North Eastern Council funded infrastructure, and cross-border trade facilitation through the Moreh-Tamu corridor discussed in Section 4.4, remain central to the state's long-term growth strategy, even as instability on the Myanmar side of the border, including the ongoing conflict within Myanmar itself since 2021, and the internal disruption of 2023-2025 within Manipur, have constrained the near-term realization of this potential. The state's participation in regional forums alongside neighboring Northeastern states, and its engagement with international participants from Myanmar, Bangladesh, and Thailand at events such as the Global Buyers and Sellers Summit described in Section 4.7, indicates a continued institutional commitment to this regional cooperation strategy even during a period when the underlying conditions for its full realization remain unfavorable.

The state's own promotional narrative continues to describe Manipur as standing "at the threshold of a transformational economic moment" on account of this regional position (Entrepreneur India, 2026), a characterization that this report treats as a genuine long-term aspiration grounded in real locational and cultural assets, but one that remains, as of the time of writing, substantially unrealized in the investment, trade, and FDI data reviewed throughout this chapter. Whether that threshold is crossed over the coming decade will depend less on further refinement of the state's industrial policy incentives, which are already broadly comparable to those offered by neighboring states, and more on the resolution of the connectivity, security, and administrative stability constraints examined throughout this report, a judgment this document carries forward into the transport, governance, and Vision 2047 chapters that follow.

Chapter 5: Education — Access, Quality and Future Readiness

5.1 Elementary Education: Enrolment, Retention, Dropout and Learning Outcomes

Manipur's elementary education system presents one of the more striking and concerning data points to emerge from recent national school data collection exercises. According to state-wise analysis of the 2025 school dropout data, Manipur recorded the highest primary school dropout rate of any state in India, at 12.6 percent, against a national average of just 1.4 percent, placing it well ahead of the next highest states, Assam at 9.6 percent and Arunachal Pradesh at 7.7 percent (IndiaDataMap, 2026). This is a genuinely significant finding, since primary level dropout, covering the earliest years of schooling, is generally the stage at which dropout is lowest nationally, precisely because young children are the easiest to retain in school before competing demands such as household labour, migration, or early livelihood responsibilities begin to pull older students away. A primary dropout rate nearly nine times the national average signals a systemic access or retention failure at the very foundation of the state's education system, one that predates and has almost certainly been worsened by the disruption to schooling in conflict-affected districts during 2023 to 2025, discussed further below.

This dropout picture sits alongside a further, distinct data quality concern. The Ministry of Education's UDISE+ 2024-25 report found Manipur among the states with the lowest rates of Aadhaar seeding for enrolled students, at 61.0 percent, ahead of only Meghalaya, at 31.9 percent, and Nagaland, among all states and union territories nationally (Ministry of Education, 2025). Because Aadhaar seeding underpins the "uniqueness" checks that UDISE+ uses to identify duplicate or ghost enrolments and to track individual student retention and dropout over time, a low seeding rate in Manipur means that the state's own enrolment, retention, and dropout figures carry more measurement uncertainty than those of states with near-complete seeding, such as Andhra Pradesh at 99.6 percent or Haryana at 98.5 percent (Ministry of Education, 2025). This report treats the 12.6 percent primary dropout figure as directionally credible and genuinely alarming, while noting that the state's underlying data infrastructure needs strengthening before more granular, block or district level dropout patterns can be reliably tracked and targeted.

At the national level, the broader UDISE+ 2024-25 data shows encouraging trends that provide a useful benchmark against which Manipur's own performance should be judged going forward, with national dropout rates falling from 3.7 percent to 2.3 percent at the preparatory stage, from 5.2 percent to 3.5 percent at the middle stage, and from 10.9 percent to 8.2 percent at the secondary stage between successive reporting years, alongside improved retention rates of 98.9 percent at the foundational stage, 92.4 percent at preparatory, 82.8 percent at middle, and a still comparatively weak 47.2 percent at secondary level nationally (Education for All in India, 2025). Manipur's own PGI 2.0, or Performance Grading Index, score for 2025-26, a composite national school system quality metric, was recorded as having declined compared with the 2024-25 edition, placing Manipur alongside Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, and Uttarakhand as one of the states registering a fall in PGI score even as the

national trend, and the gap between the highest and lowest performing states nationally, narrowed overall (EnsureIAS, 2026). A declining PGI score at a moment of national narrowing in the performance gap is a notable, and concerning, divergence for Manipur specifically, one plausibly linked to the administrative and school-level disruption associated with the 2023-2025 conflict in significant parts of the state.

5.2 Secondary and Senior Secondary Education: Transition and Achievement

Nationally, dropout remains most acute at the secondary stage, recorded at 8.2 percent for 2024-25 under the improved UDISE+ methodology, down from 10.9 percent the previous year, though a separate 2025 analysis places the national secondary dropout average closer to 12 percent, with states such as Odisha at 25.9 percent, Bihar at 19.5 percent, and Meghalaya at 19.3 percent showing the most severe secondary stage attrition (Education for All in India, 2025; IndiaDataMap, 2026). A Manipur specific, current secondary and senior secondary dropout figure comparable in reliability to the primary level figure cited in Section 5.1 was not located among the sources reviewed for this report, and given the Aadhaar seeding limitations noted above, any such figure should be treated with particular caution until confirmed against the state's own Directorate of Education, Manipur data. Given that Manipur's primary level dropout already substantially exceeds the national average, and given the general national pattern in which dropout compounds cumulatively as students move through the schooling pipeline, it is reasonable, though not confirmed by direct data, to expect that a meaningful share of the cohort already lost before completing primary education in Manipur would not appear at all in secondary stage enrolment counts, understating the true scale of the state's overall out-of-school population if secondary dropout alone is examined in isolation.

Transition rates from secondary to higher secondary, and achievement on board examinations administered by the Council of Higher Secondary Education, Manipur, and the Board of Secondary Education, Manipur, represent a further area where current, granular state data was not available among the sources reviewed for this report, and this section flags that gap explicitly rather than substituting an estimate.

5.3 Higher Education: Institutional Capacity, Gross Enrolment and Quality

Manipur's higher education institutional base includes Manipur University, a central university, along with the National Institute of Technology Manipur, an autonomous, centrally funded technical institution located in Imphal. NIT Manipur's own comparative national performance offers a useful, if narrow, benchmark of institutional quality trajectory: its B.Tech programme ranking under the National Institutional Ranking Framework improved from 114th out of 300 institutions nationally in 2021, to 108th out of 300 in 2022, to 95th out of 200 in 2023, indicating a genuine, sustained improvement in the institute's relative national standing over that period (Collegedunia, 2025). This upward trajectory at the state's flagship technical institution is a genuinely positive signal for the state's higher education sector, even

as it represents only a single institution within a broader higher education landscape that includes a larger number of state government and private degree colleges whose comparative quality and capacity data was not available among the sources reviewed for this report.

Gross Enrolment Ratio figures specific to Manipur's higher education sector for 2025 or 2026 were not located among reliable sources reviewed for this report. What can be stated is that the state's genuinely strong literacy foundation, discussed in Chapter 1.8, historically above the national average, provides a comparatively favorable base from which to expand higher education access, provided that institutional capacity, particularly outside Imphal and in the hill districts, is expanded to match demand, a theme returned to in Section 5.8.

5.4 Technical, Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Ecosystem

A dedicated, current assessment of Manipur's technical and vocational education ecosystem, including enrolment in Industrial Training Institutes, Polytechnic colleges, and skill development programmes under the National Skill Development Corporation architecture, was not located with sufficient granularity among the sources reviewed for this report. Given the labour market pattern described in Chapter 3.7, in which the state's workforce skews toward agriculture and informal services with a comparatively small formal manufacturing employment base, and given the persistent mismatch between the state's relatively strong general educational attainment and its narrow formal private sector employment base, strengthening the TVET ecosystem represents a clear structural priority for the state, one this report returns to at greater length in Chapter 17.6 on skill development and workforce alignment, where it can be considered alongside labour market demand data rather than in isolation.

5.5 Teacher Recruitment, Training and Professional Development

The UDISE+ 2025-26 and PGI 2.0 national reports specifically highlight improved teacher availability and improved Pupil-Teacher Ratios as a contributing factor to national school system gains over the reporting period (EnsureIAS, 2026). Whether this national improvement in teacher availability has been matched in Manipur specifically, particularly in hill district schools that have historically faced greater difficulty attracting and retaining qualified teachers given remoteness and, more recently, conflict related disruption, is not confirmed by a Manipur specific figure among the sources reviewed for this report. Given that Manipur's own PGI score declined even as the national picture on teacher availability improved, discussed in Section 5.1, teacher recruitment, deployment equity between valley and hill schools, and continuity of professional development activity during the 2023-2025 disruption period are all plausible contributing factors that warrant direct examination against state Department of Education records in any future, more detailed revision of this chapter.

5.6 Digital Education, EdTech Integration and ICT in Schools

Digital infrastructure available to support ICT integration in Manipur's schools has historically been constrained by the very low base recorded as of the 2011 Census, when only 2.03 percent of the state's population had internet access (Census2011.co.in, n.d.), though this figure has certainly improved substantially since through mobile broadband expansion. More recent regional data indicates the North Eastern states collectively had 12.75 million wireless subscribers as of August 2025 (India Brand Equity Foundation, 2025), suggesting a meaningfully improved connectivity base relative to a decade ago, even though a Manipur-specific, school-level ICT infrastructure figure was not located among the sources reviewed for this report. National UDISE+ analysis for 2024-25 explicitly links stronger school infrastructure, including digital infrastructure, to reduced dropout, improved retention, and higher Gross Enrolment Ratios (iDream Education, 2025), a relationship that, if it holds in Manipur specifically, would suggest that closing the digital infrastructure gap in the state's hill district schools could plausibly contribute to addressing the elevated primary dropout rate documented in Section 5.1, though this report does not have direct Manipur-specific evidence to confirm that causal link and flags it as a hypothesis worth testing against state data rather than an established finding.

5.7 Special Education: Children with Disabilities and Inclusive Schooling

A dedicated, current assessment of special education provision and inclusive schooling infrastructure for children with disabilities in Manipur was not located among the sources reviewed for this report. This is flagged as a data gap requiring direct reference to the state Department of Education's records on Samagra Shiksha inclusive education provisions, and to any state specific disability census data, once available, for a complete treatment in any future revision of this chapter.

5.8 State-Specific Educational Challenges and Reform Priorities

Taken together, the evidence reviewed in this chapter points to a small number of clear, high-priority challenges specific to Manipur's education system. First, and most urgently, is the exceptionally high primary school dropout rate documented in Section 5.1, at nearly nine times the national average, which represents the single most concerning education statistic identified anywhere in this report and warrants immediate, targeted investigation at the district and block level to identify whether it is concentrated in conflict-affected hill districts, in specific community groups, or more broadly distributed across the state. Second is the state's comparatively low Aadhaar seeding rate, which constrains the reliability of the state's own education data infrastructure and should be treated as a foundational data quality priority, since effective targeting of any dropout reduction programme depends on being able to track individual students reliably across years and school transfers. Third is the state's declining PGI score at a moment when most other states were improving, which suggests that whatever combination of factors, plausibly including conflict related disruption to school functioning, administrative discontinuity during the 2025 period of President's Rule discussed in Chapter 2.8, or underlying resource constraints, is affecting the state's education system

deserves urgent, dedicated attention rather than being treated as a routine year-to-year fluctuation.

Against these challenges, the state carries genuine underlying strengths, including a literacy rate that has historically exceeded the national average, discussed in Chapter 1.8, and a flagship technical institution, NIT Manipur, with a demonstrated, multi-year improving trajectory in national rankings. The task facing state education planners over the remainder of this decade is to protect and build on these underlying strengths while addressing, with real urgency, the acute retention crisis at the foundational level that current data suggests is unfolding in the state's primary schools, a task made more difficult, but not less necessary, by the broader governance and security disruption documented throughout this report.

Chapter 6: Health, Nutrition and Population

6.1 Public Health Infrastructure: Facilities, Human Resources and Gaps

Manipur's public health system has been organized since 1951 around the state's Directorate of Family Welfare Services, structured on a community based and decentralized model that has embedded local governance procedures directly into health service delivery, particularly for maternal and child health (Vajirao Institute, 2025). Early antenatal registration and immunization outreach are delivered at the village level through Accredited Social Health Activists and Auxiliary Nurse Midwives, a grassroots delivery architecture credited with building trust and improving health-seeking behavior, particularly among rural and tribal populations who might otherwise face significant distance and access barriers to formal health facilities (Vajirao Institute, 2025). One of the more distinctive innovations within this system has been the establishment of Birth Waiting Homes in remote hill areas, allowing expectant mothers from villages far from the nearest functional health facility to relocate temporarily closer to institutional delivery services in the weeks before their due date, directly addressing the terrain based access constraint that, as discussed throughout this report, shapes so much of service delivery in Manipur's hill districts (Vajirao Institute, 2025).

A dedicated, current facility-level inventory, covering the number and functional status of Primary Health Centres, Community Health Centres, and District Hospitals, along with current human resource vacancy rates for doctors, nurses, and specialists, was not located with sufficient granularity among the sources reviewed for this report, and this remains an area requiring direct reference to the state Directorate of Health Services and National Health Mission state annual reports for a complete treatment in any future revision of this chapter.

6.2 Epidemiological Profile: Communicable and Non-Communicable Disease Burden

The National Family Health Survey has tracked tuberculosis prevalence in Manipur, alongside a broader set of communicable disease indicators, as part of its 2019-21 round, though a precise, current disaggregated tuberculosis or other communicable disease burden figure for Manipur was not located among the sources reviewed for this report (Indiastat, n.d.). A dedicated, current assessment of the state's non-communicable disease burden, including diabetes, hypertension, and cardiovascular disease prevalence, likewise was not located, and this is flagged as a data gap that would benefit from direct reference to the state's Non-Communicable Disease Cell and National Health Mission surveillance data.

6.3 Maternal and Child Health: MMR, IMR, Under-5 Mortality and Nutrition

Manipur's maternal and child health data presents a genuinely complex and, on the surface, somewhat contradictory picture that this report treats honestly rather than resolving artificially in favor of the more flattering figure. According to Sample Registration System data as of 2023, Manipur recorded the lowest Infant Mortality Rate of any Indian state, at just 3 deaths per 1,000 live births, against a national average of 25 per 1,000 live births for the

same year, a result attributed to the state's strong community health systems, effective maternal outreach, and culturally sensitive service provision described in Section 6.1 (Vajirao Institute, 2025). Institutional delivery rates in the state rose substantially between NFHS-4 and NFHS-5, reaching 79.9 percent, with more than half of these institutional deliveries taking place in public sector facilities, a shift with well established links to improved birth safety outcomes (Vajirao Institute, 2025).

Set against this encouraging SRS finding, however, an analysis of the NFHS-5 survey round, covering 2019-21, found that Manipur was among a small group of states, alongside Tripura, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, and Meghalaya, that recorded a spike, rather than a decline, in all three categories of child mortality, namely Neonatal Mortality Rate, Infant Mortality Rate, and Under-Five Mortality Rate, compared with the preceding NFHS-4 round (Down To Earth, 2020; Drishti IAS, n.d.). This finding stands in direct tension with the SRS 2023 figure cited above showing Manipur with the nation's lowest IMR, and this report does not attempt to force these two findings into false agreement. The most likely explanation lies in differences of survey methodology, sampling, and reference period between the Sample Registration System, a continuous large-scale demographic surveillance system, and the National Family Health Survey, a periodic household survey with its own distinct sampling design, and it is also possible that a small state's mortality estimates carry wider statistical uncertainty across survey rounds than larger states with bigger sample sizes. What can be said with confidence is that these two authoritative national data sources disagree meaningfully about the direction of Manipur's recent child mortality trend, and any policy document citing a single one of these figures without acknowledging the other would be presenting an incomplete picture. The Union Health Ministry released NFHS-6 on May 29, 2026 (NFHS, 2026), and this newer round, once its Manipur specific fact sheet is published, should be consulted to help resolve which of these two competing pictures better reflects the state's current trajectory.

Nationally, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has reported continued improvement on maternal and child health indicators through its National Health Mission programme, with the national Maternal Mortality Ratio falling from 103 per 100,000 live births in 2017-19 to 97 per 100,000 live births in 2018-20, national Infant Mortality Rate falling from 32 to 28 per 1,000 live births between 2018 and 2020, and national Total Fertility Rate falling from 2.2 in NFHS-4 to 2.0 in NFHS-5, against a 2025 replacement-level target of 2.1 (Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, 2024). A Manipur specific Maternal Mortality Ratio figure, current and disaggregated, was not located among the sources reviewed for this report and should be sourced directly from the state's SRS or NFHS-6 fact sheet once available.

On nutrition, the NFHS-5 country report found anaemia to be a major health problem in Manipur, particularly among women and children, consistent with the broader national pattern documented across nearly all Indian states in that survey round, with the report noting that a smaller share of Manipur's women, around 8 percent, were classified as too thin compared with some other states, while around three-fifths of both women and men in the

state were found to be at a healthy body weight (International Institute for Population Sciences, 2021). The NFHS-5 report also documented birth spacing patterns in the state, finding a median interval between births of 41 months, with 7 percent of births occurring within 18 months of a previous birth and 16 percent within 24 months, patterns with direct relevance to both maternal and child health outcomes given the well-established research finding that shorter birth intervals are associated with elevated infant mortality risk (International Institute for Population Sciences, 2021).

6.4 Universal Health Coverage: State Health Assurance Schemes

Manipur's population is covered, as with other Indian states, by the Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana, India's flagship public health insurance scheme, which had extended coverage to over 36.16 crore beneficiaries nationally as of December 2024 (Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, 2024). A dedicated, current Manipur specific PMJAY enrolment and utilization figure, along with details of any supplementary state-level health assurance scheme, was not located among the sources reviewed for this report and would need to be confirmed against the state's own Health and Family Welfare Department records.

6.5 Mental Health Services: Availability, Access and Stigma Reduction

A dedicated, current assessment of mental health service availability, access, and stigma reduction programming in Manipur was not located among the sources reviewed for this report. Given the scale and duration of the 2023-2025 ethnic conflict, and the well-documented association between conflict exposure, displacement, and elevated mental health need in affected populations generally, this represents an area of likely significant, currently undocumented need in this report's source base, and the state's mental health service planning should, as a matter of priority, be informed by dedicated post-conflict psychosocial needs assessments conducted directly with displaced and affected communities, rather than by pre-conflict service planning assumptions.

6.6 Nutrition Programmes: ICDS, Mid-Day Meal and Poshan Abhiyan

Manipur participates in the national Poshan Tracker system, which has recorded malnutrition indicators for children aged 0 to 5 years in the state on a monthly basis from February 2023 onward, providing a continuous, real-time monitoring mechanism for child nutrition status (Indiastat, n.d.). A dedicated, current summary of Manipur's specific stunting, wasting, and underweight prevalence trends drawn from this Poshan Tracker series was not extracted with sufficient precision among the sources reviewed for this report, and this represents a valuable, genuinely current data source that state nutrition planners and any future revision of this chapter should draw on directly, given that it offers monthly rather than only periodic five-year survey data.

6.7 Population Stabilisation and Family Planning

Manipur's Total Fertility Rate and contraceptive use patterns were documented in the NFHS-5 survey round, alongside detailed data on currently married women's contraceptive method use, though a precise, current disaggregated figure was not extracted with confidence among the sources reviewed for this report (Indiastat, n.d.). The NFHS-5 country level analysis noted a broader national finding of concern that is directly relevant to Manipur: an increase in both child marriage and teenage pregnancy in several states between NFHS-4 and NFHS-5, with Manipur specifically recording an increase in child marriage prevalence from 13.7 percent to 16.3 percent, alongside similar increases recorded in Tripura and Assam, and with Manipur also named among states showing an increase in teenage pregnancy over the same period (Drishti IAS, n.d.). This finding is significant for family planning and population stabilisation policy in the state, since it runs counter to the general national trend of declining child marriage prevalence over the same period, and it connects directly to the maternal and child health concerns discussed in Section 6.3, given the well-established elevated health risks associated with adolescent pregnancy for both mother and child.

6.8 Health System Strengthening and Future Preparedness

Taken together, the evidence reviewed in this chapter presents a genuinely mixed picture of Manipur's health system that resists easy summary. The state's community based, decentralized primary health delivery model, and its innovations such as Birth Waiting Homes, represent real institutional strengths that appear to have driven substantial gains in institutional delivery rates and, according to at least one authoritative data source, an exceptionally low infant mortality rate. Set against this, the NFHS-5 finding of a child mortality spike, the documented rise in child marriage and teenage pregnancy, and the persistent, high prevalence of anaemia among women and children all point to areas of continued, serious concern that a single headline IMR statistic would obscure if presented alone. The imminent availability of Manipur-specific NFHS-6 data, released at the national level in May 2026, represents an important near-term opportunity to reconcile these competing pictures and to establish a more confident, current baseline against which the state's post-conflict health system recovery and strengthening efforts, discussed further in the context of displacement and mental health in Chapter 14, can be measured going forward.

Chapter 7: Social Justice, Inclusion and Community Welfare

7.1 Scheduled Castes: Demographic Profile, Deprivation and Development Programmes

Manipur's Scheduled Caste population is comparatively small relative to the state's Scheduled Tribe population, reflecting the state's overall demographic composition, in which the numerically dominant groups are the Meitei community of the valley, who have historically been classified as an Other Backward Class rather than a Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribe, and the Naga and Kuki-Chin, or Zo, communities of the hills, who are recognized as Scheduled Tribes (Dhyeya IAS, 2023; Deccan Herald, n.d.). A dedicated, current disaggregated welfare programme performance assessment specific to Manipur's Scheduled Caste population was not located among the sources reviewed for this report and would need to be confirmed against the state Social Welfare Department's records.

7.2 Scheduled Tribes: Rights, Forest Dwelling Communities and Welfare Measures

Scheduled Tribes form a very substantial share of Manipur's population and are concentrated overwhelmingly in the hill districts, which together account for approximately 90 percent of the state's geographical area (Deccan Herald, n.d.). According to the 2011 Census, out of Manipur's total population of 28.56 lakh, 11.67 lakh people, or approximately 40.9 percent of the state's population, belonged to Scheduled Tribes, placing Manipur fifth among Indian states by ST population share, behind Mizoram at 94.4 percent, Nagaland at 86.5 percent, Meghalaya at 86.1 percent, and Arunachal Pradesh at 68.8 percent, and ahead of Sikkim and Tripura (Deccan Herald, n.d.). The state's recognized Scheduled Tribes are drawn from two broad community clusters, the Naga groups, comprising an estimated 24 percent of the state's total population, and the Kuki-Chin, or Zo, groups, comprising an estimated 16 percent, together with the Meitei community, who are not recognized as a Scheduled Tribe and who comprise the largest single group at approximately 53 percent of the state's population (International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs, 2023).

This demographic and legal configuration lies at the center of the most significant recent development in Manipur's social justice landscape: the 2023-2025 ethnic conflict. The proximate legal trigger for the conflict was an order issued by the Manipur High Court on 14 to 19 April 2023, which recommended that the state government consider extending Scheduled Tribe status to the Meitei community, a decision later criticized by the Supreme Court of India and, in February 2024, formally revoked by the Manipur High Court itself through the deletion of the relevant paragraph from its earlier order, on the grounds that it conflicted with a Supreme Court constitution bench position on the matter (Business Standard, 2024; Wikipedia, 2026). Tribal organizations, led by the All Tribal Student Union Manipur, interpreted the original High Court recommendation as a direct threat to constitutionally protected land rights and reservation benefits reserved for Scheduled Tribes, since extending ST status to the numerically dominant, politically powerful Meitei community, who at the time held forty of the state's sixty Legislative Assembly seats, was seen by many tribal leaders as opening the door to competition over hill land and resources

currently restricted to Scheduled Tribe communities under existing land protection provisions (Tribune India, 2023; Round Table India, 2026). In response, the union organized a "Tribal Solidarity March" across the hill districts on 3 May 2023; a Meitei counter-blockade and clashes near the border of Churachandpur and Bishnupur districts that same day marked the beginning of sustained violence that continued, in varying intensity, through 2025 and into 2026 (Wikipedia, 2026; International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs, 2023).

The human cost of the conflict has been severe. Official figures place the death toll above 200, with over 60,000 people displaced from their homes, and documented destruction including 4,786 houses burnt and 386 religious structures, including both temples and churches, vandalised, with independent and unofficial estimates in some cases higher than official figures (Business Standard, 2024; Wikipedia, 2026; Round Table India, 2026). This report presents these events as a matter of documented fact central to the state's current social justice landscape, without adjudicating the underlying merits of the Meitei community's ST status claim or the tribal communities' opposition to it, both of which remain contested and unresolved as of the time of writing, and both of which rest on genuinely held concerns, respectively regarding perceived historical marginalization and regarding protection of constitutionally guaranteed land and resource rights. What is not contested is that the conflict has produced the most significant disruption to Scheduled Tribe welfare, land security, and physical safety in the state's recent history, and that any credible social justice and welfare programming for Manipur's tribal population over the remainder of this decade must be built around post-conflict reconciliation, resettlement, and reconstruction, addressed further in Chapter 14.

7.3 Other Backward Classes: Identification, Reservation and Social Mobility

The Meitei community, as noted above, has historically been classified as an Other Backward Class under India's reservation framework rather than as a Scheduled Tribe, a classification the community's ST status advocates argue does not adequately reflect their claimed historical marginalization, while opponents of the ST demand argue that the community's dominant position in the state's political leadership, government employment, and valley based economic activity, documented throughout this report, is inconsistent with the rationale for Scheduled Tribe protection (Dhyeya IAS, 2023; Tribune India, 2023). This unresolved classification dispute, discussed at length in Section 7.2, means that Other Backward Class policy in Manipur cannot be treated as a routine, settled administrative category in the way it might be in many other Indian states, but is instead directly entangled with the state's most significant current political and security challenge.

7.4 Gender Equity: Women's Participation in Education, Economy and Governance

Women's economic participation in Manipur shows a distinctive and, in several respects, genuinely positive pattern relative to national norms, most visibly through the Ima Keithel market and the state's notably high rate of women's MSME ownership, both discussed in

Chapters 3 and 4. This pattern of strong women's participation in informal and small enterprise commerce sits alongside less encouraging indicators in other domains. The state's literacy rate, discussed in Chapter 1, has historically exceeded the national average, and rural literacy specifically was recorded at 73.40 percent as of the 2011 Census (Census2011.co.in, n.d.), a foundation that supports, though does not guarantee, women's continued educational and economic advancement. A dedicated, current assessment of women's representation in state government, the Legislative Assembly, and senior administrative positions was not located among the sources reviewed for this report.

7.5 Child Rights, Protection and Development: POCSO, Child Labour and Nutrition

Child protection in Manipur intersects directly with the family and reproductive health patterns documented in Chapter 6, where NFHS-5 data found an increase in child marriage prevalence in the state from 13.7 percent to 16.3 percent between survey rounds, alongside a documented increase in teenage pregnancy, both counter to the general national trend of improvement over the same period (Drishti IAS, n.d.). These findings place child protection, and specifically prevention of child marriage, among the more pressing child rights concerns identified anywhere in this report, since they run against the broader national direction of travel rather than merely lagging behind it. The 2023-2025 conflict has additionally created a distinct, acute child protection concern, given the documented displacement of over 60,000 people, a population that inevitably includes a substantial number of children who have experienced displacement from their homes, disruption to schooling, of the kind documented in the education dropout data discussed in Chapter 5, and, in some cases, direct exposure to violence, a set of concerns that this report treats as requiring urgent, dedicated child protection programming, coordinated with the health and education recovery efforts discussed in Chapters 5 and 6.

7.6 Welfare of Elderly Persons: Pension, Care Infrastructure and Policy

A dedicated, current assessment of elderly welfare programming, pension coverage, and care infrastructure specific to Manipur was not located among the sources reviewed for this report. This is flagged as a data gap requiring direct reference to the state Social Welfare Department's records on the National Social Assistance Programme and any state-specific old age pension scheme.

7.7 Persons with Disabilities: Rights, Accessibility and Empowerment

A dedicated, current assessment of disability rights implementation, accessibility infrastructure, and empowerment programming specific to Manipur was not located among the sources reviewed for this report, consistent with the similar data gap noted for special education in Chapter 5.7. This is an area requiring direct reference to the state Social Welfare Department's implementation records under the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act.

7.8 Minority Communities: Development, Representation and Welfare

Manipur's religious minority communities include Muslims, concentrated in certain valley areas and known locally as Pangal, and smaller Christian populations within otherwise Hindu or Sanamahi majority valley areas, in addition to the predominantly Christian hill tribal communities discussed in Section 7.2, whose minority status is better understood through the ethnic and tribal lens already discussed than through a separate religious minority framework. A dedicated, current assessment of minority community welfare programming outcomes specific to Manipur was not located among the sources reviewed for this report.

7.9 Social Security and Beneficiary-Linked Welfare Architecture

Manipur's beneficiary-linked welfare architecture includes national programmes such as the Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana health insurance scheme discussed in Chapter 6.4, and, as documented in Chapter 2, distinct conflict-specific relief provisions introduced during the 2025-26 budget cycle, including Rs. 15 crore for temporary shelter for internally displaced persons, Rs. 35 crore for housing for displaced people, Rs. 100 crore for relief operations, and Rs. 7 crore for compensation (Business Standard, 2025). These conflict-specific allocations represent a new and, prior to 2023, unprecedented category within the state's social security architecture, one that this report expects will need to remain a significant component of the state's welfare spending for a sustained period beyond the immediate crisis, given the scale of displacement and destruction documented in Section 7.2, and given that resettlement, land dispute resolution, and community reconciliation processes of this kind typically extend well beyond the period of active violence itself, a theme this report returns to directly in Chapter 14 on disaster risk reduction and post-disaster response, and in Chapter 15 on administrative governance reform.

Chapter 8: Transport and Connectivity Infrastructure

8.1 Road Network: National Highways, State Highways and Rural Roads

Manipur's connectivity to the rest of India depends overwhelmingly on its road network, given the state's current absence of any operational passenger rail link and its reliance on a single major airport, both discussed further below. The state is connected by four national highways, with National Highway 37 functioning as one of the most critical of these arteries, linking the Imphal Valley westward toward Assam and the rest of the national highway grid (India Investment Grid, n.d.). As discussed in Chapter 4.1, the reliability of this corridor remains a live and recurring concern rather than a settled achievement: a drivers' union in the state threatened an indefinite strike from July 1, 2026, over the deteriorated condition of National Highway 37, illustrating that basic road maintenance, rather than only new construction, remains an urgent priority (Northeast Now, 2026).

New road construction is also underway to improve internal and inter-state connectivity, with the Khongsang-Awangkhul stretch, spanning 9.1 kilometres, targeted for completion by March 2026, the Awangkhul-Noney stretch, spanning 9.15 kilometres, targeted for March 2027, and the Noney-Imphal stretch, spanning 37.02 kilometres, targeted for March 2028 (India Brand Equity Foundation, 2025). This phased road development runs on a broadly parallel timeline and, notably, along a broadly overlapping corridor to the Jiribam-Imphal railway project discussed in Section 8.2, suggesting a deliberate, coordinated approach to opening up the state's difficult western approach corridor through both road and rail investment simultaneously. In September 2025, the Prime Minister additionally announced a Manipur Urban Roads Project, intended to improve intra-city connectivity within the Imphal urban agglomeration, addressing the congestion pressures created by the population density pattern discussed in Chapter 1.3 (India Brand Equity Foundation, 2025). Rural road connectivity in the state's more remote hill districts, addressed under the national Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana framework, is discussed further in Chapter 12.5 in the context of rural development.

8.2 Railways: Existing Network, Pending Projects and Expansion Proposals

Manipur's rail connectivity has historically been minimal, with a railway line already existing from Jiribam to Noney but remaining largely non-operational for passenger movement, carrying only occasional goods train services (NorthEast Live TV, 2026). This is set to change substantially through the Jiribam-Tupul-Imphal railway project, a 111-kilometre extension that will, for the first time in the state's history, bring rail connectivity to Imphal itself. The project traverses the steep rolling hills of five districts, Imphal West, Kangpokpi, Noney, Tamenglong, and Jiribam, and comprises 11 stations, 52 tunnels, and 148 bridges constructed across genuinely difficult terrain, at a total project cost reported at Rs. 21,885 crore, or approximately US\$2.75 billion (Eastern Mirror Nagaland, 2026; India Investment Grid, 2026; Social News XYZ, 2026).

The centerpiece of this project is the Noney Bridge over the Ijei River, described as the world's highest railway pier bridge, standing 141 metres high and extending 703 metres, constructed at a cost of Rs. 6.5 billion and inspected in person by the Union Minister of State for Heavy Industries and Steel in February 2026 and by the Governor of Manipur in a separate visit (Construction World, 2026; Social News XYZ, 2026). As of March 2026, the project was reported to have achieved approximately 90 percent physical progress overall, with the Noney Bridge component specifically targeted for completion by March 2026, while the entire line, including the Imphal Railway Station under construction at Yurembam in Imphal West district, was targeted for completion by December 2028 (Social News XYZ, 2026; Construction World, 2026; India Today NE, 2026). Earlier project timelines had targeted a late 2025 completion date, a target that was subsequently revised to December 2028, illustrating the kind of schedule slippage common to large infrastructure projects undertaken across genuinely difficult, landslide-prone hill terrain (Construction World, 2025, 2026).

Once completed, the railway line is expected to reduce travel time between Jiribam, the state's current railhead, and Imphal from the present approximately 10-hour road journey to roughly two and a half hours by train, a transformative reduction with direct implications for freight cost, tourism access, and the broader connectivity-driven growth corridor discussed in Chapter 3.9 (Eastern Mirror Nagaland, 2026). Upon completion, Imphal will become the fifth capital city in the Northeastern region to gain rail connectivity, following Dispur, Agartala, Itanagar, and Aizawl, meaning Manipur has, for an extended period, been something of an outlier among Northeastern states in its continued lack of rail access to its own capital (Social News XYZ, 2026). The Manipur state government has publicly reiterated its commitment to facilitating land acquisition, security arrangements, and local community engagement to help keep the project on schedule, reflecting an evident state-level political priority attached to the project's timely completion (Construction World, 2026).

8.3 Aviation: Airport Infrastructure and Air Connectivity

Imphal's Bir Tikendrajit International Airport is the state's principal air gateway and one of its most important existing connectivity assets, offering air cargo services in addition to passenger connectivity (India Investment Grid, n.d.). As of mid-2026, construction of a new integrated terminal at the airport was reported to be progressing and expected to be completed soon, an upgrade intended to expand the airport's capacity and improve the passenger experience for a facility that carries particular importance given the state's continued absence of operational passenger rail service as described in Section 8.2 (Eastern Mirror Nagaland, 2026). The airport's role extends beyond routine passenger and cargo movement to include a security dimension, illustrated by a reported case in April 2026 in which an individual was arrested at the airport in possession of approximately 7 kilograms of morphine, a reminder that international and domestic air connectivity in a border state such as Manipur carries narcotics interdiction and security responsibilities alongside its economic and connectivity

functions (NorthEast Live TV, 2026), a theme addressed further in Chapter 15.4 on police modernisation and internal security.

8.4 Ports, Inland Waterways and Logistics Hubs

As a landlocked state with no coastal access, Manipur has no seaport infrastructure, and its inland waterway potential is limited principally to Loktak Lake, discussed in Chapters 1 and 3 primarily in its ecological and fisheries context rather than as a significant freight or passenger transport corridor. The state's principal logistics hub function is instead oriented toward land based, cross-border trade through the Moreh Integrated Check Post on the Myanmar border, discussed in Chapter 4.4, which serves as Manipur's primary formal gateway for overland trade with Myanmar and, in principle, the broader Southeast Asian market beyond it.

8.5 Urban Mass Transit: Metro, Bus Rapid Transit and Integrated Mobility

A dedicated, current assessment of formal urban mass transit infrastructure, such as bus rapid transit or metro rail systems, specific to the Imphal urban agglomeration was not located among the sources reviewed for this report, and the state's urban connectivity investment identified in this chapter, principally the Manipur Urban Roads Project announced in September 2025, appears oriented toward road based rather than dedicated mass transit infrastructure at this stage (India Brand Equity Foundation, 2025). Given the population density concentration in the Imphal urban agglomeration documented in Chapter 1.3, and the general national trend toward increased private vehicle ownership placing pressure on urban road capacity, dedicated public transit planning represents an area this report identifies as a likely future priority, even though current, concrete state planning documentation on the subject was not available among the sources reviewed here.

8.6 Multimodal Logistics: Last-Mile Connectivity and Freight Corridors

Taken together, the road, rail, and air connectivity investments discussed in this chapter point toward a coordinated, if still incomplete, multimodal logistics strategy for Manipur centered on the western approach corridor linking Jiribam, Noney, and Imphal, where road and rail construction are proceeding on broadly overlapping timelines and alignments. Once complete, this combination is intended to substantially reduce the state's historic reliance on a single vulnerable highway corridor for the movement of both passengers and freight, directly addressing the price stability vulnerability discussed in Chapter 3.8 that stems from the state's current dependence on road transport alone. Last-mile connectivity within the hill districts, beyond these major trunk corridors, remains comparatively underdeveloped, and rural road connectivity, discussed further in Chapter 12.5, represents the logistics layer most directly relevant to the everyday economic life of the majority of the state's hill district population, whose market access continues to depend on smaller, often poorly maintained roads feeding into whichever trunk corridor, road or eventually rail, serves their district.

Chapter 9: Energy, Power and Renewable Transition

9.1 Power Generation: Installed Capacity, Mix and Dependence Profile

Manipur's power sector is defined by an unusually stark fact: the state's own electricity generation capacity is negligible, and the overwhelming majority of power consumed within the state is drawn from central sector generating stations located elsewhere in the Northeastern region, rather than from generation assets located within Manipur itself. According to the Manipur State Power Company Limited, there is only one state owned hydro generating station currently in operation, the Leimakhong Stage-I Micro Hydel plant, with a capacity of just 600 kilowatts, alongside a Leimakhong Heavy Fuel Based Power House with a capacity of 36 megawatts that is used only in emergency situations given its abnormally high cost of generation, and a set of diesel power houses that function purely as standby capacity, operated only when grid supply from outside the state fails (Manipur State Power Company Limited, n.d.). The Manipur State Power Company Limited states this plainly in its own public disclosure: the state's own generation is negligibly small (Manipur State Power Company Limited, n.d.).

Instead, Manipur's power supply depends entirely on the state's allocated share of power from central sector power plants located across the wider Northeastern grid, including the Loktak Hydro Electric Project, the Kopili Hydro Electric Project, the Khandong Hydro Electric Project, the Assam Gas Based Power Project at Kathalguri, the Agartala Gas Turbine Power Project at Ramchandranagar, the Ranganadi Hydro Electric Project, the Doyang Hydro Electric Project, and a shared power plant of the Tripura State Electricity Corporation Limited at Baramura (Manipur State Power Company Limited, n.d.). The availability of power to the state varies according to the actual generation performance of these external plants, and the situation deteriorates whenever any generating unit at any of these stations experiences an outage, meaning Manipur's electricity security is, to an unusual degree even by Northeastern regional standards, hostage to the operational performance of infrastructure the state neither owns nor directly controls (Manipur State Power Company Limited, n.d.). To mitigate resulting gaps between demand and supply, the Manipur State Power Distribution Company Limited resorts to buying and selling power through the power exchange market as a balancing mechanism (Manipur State Power Company Limited, n.d.).

Statista, citing Reserve Bank of India data, recorded Manipur's total installed power capacity at approximately 278 megawatts at the end of fiscal year 2022, following a steady increase from fiscal year 2005 through 2020 (Statista, 2026). Consistent with the extremely small scale of this figure relative to major generating states, a 2025 comparative state ranking of India's power generation capacity, expressed in whole gigawatts, listed Manipur, alongside Arunachal Pradesh, Ladakh, Lakshadweep, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, and Tripura, as reporting 0 GW of generation capacity, a result attributable to rounding rather than a literal absence of any generation asset, and the report itself attributes this pattern to the shared characteristics of these states and union territories, namely remoteness, small

population, and challenging terrain that complicates the establishment of large power plants (IndiaDataMap, 2026).

9.2 Transmission and Distribution: Infrastructure, Losses and Reliability

Given Manipur's near-total dependence on power imported from outside the state, transmission infrastructure connecting the state to the broader Northeastern and national grid is of unusually high strategic importance. The state has taken a direct equity stake, contributing Rs. 24.9684 crore, in the North East Transmission Company for construction of the 400 kV double-circuit Pallatana-Silchar-Bongaigaon trunk transmission system, a major regional transmission backbone linking generation at the Pallatana Gas Power Project, comprising two units of 363.6 megawatts each, to consuming states including Manipur (Manipur State Power Company Limited, n.d.). This kind of direct financial participation in regional transmission infrastructure reflects the state's practical recognition that, absent significant own-generation capacity, its power security depends fundamentally on the reliability and capacity of the transmission corridors connecting it to generation sources elsewhere in the region. A dedicated, current Aggregate Technical and Commercial loss figure for Manipur's distribution network was not located among the sources reviewed for this report and would need to be confirmed against the Manipur Electricity Regulatory Commission's most recent tariff order.

9.3 Rural and Household Electrification: Coverage and Quality

A dedicated, current household electrification coverage figure specific to Manipur was not located among the sources reviewed for this report. What can be documented is a concrete, well-sourced example of innovative rural electrification practice in the state: the village of Hengbung, located in the Himalayan foothills of Manipur and subject to prolonged power cuts given its mountainous, hard to reach terrain criss-crossed by streams, became the site of India's first hydro-solar integrated pumped storage power system, which began operating in July of the year documented, combining solar-powered pumps with a pumped-hydro storage facility built on a local stream, using two interconnected reservoirs with a combined capacity of 1.9 million litres of water functioning as what has been described as a giant water battery, storing renewable power for release during grid outages or periods of peak demand (Scroll.in, 2023). This project was highlighted by NB Institute for Rural Technology founder and central government energy advisor Santi Pada Gon Chaudhuri as demonstrating a viable pathway for transitioning to a sustainable energy future in exactly the kind of difficult, remote hill terrain that characterizes so much of Manipur (Scroll.in, 2023), and it stands as a genuinely replicable model for addressing rural electrification quality in similarly situated hill villages elsewhere in the state.

9.4 Renewable Energy Potential: Solar, Wind, Hydro and Biomass

Manipur's renewable energy potential is substantial relative to its current development, given the state's hill terrain, numerous rivers spanning two distinct drainage basins as described in Chapter 1.1, and reasonable solar insolation typical of the broader Northeastern hill region. The state's own generation base, however, currently exploits only a tiny fraction of this hydro potential, limited to the 600-kilowatt Leimakhong Stage-I Micro Hydel plant described in Section 9.1, notwithstanding the presence of much larger central sector hydro projects, such as the Loktak Hydro Electric Project, operating within or near the state's boundaries but classified as central rather than state generation assets. The Hengbung hydro-solar pumped storage project described in Section 9.3 offers a proof of concept for smaller-scale, community-oriented renewable deployment that could plausibly be replicated across other similarly remote hill villages, representing a genuinely promising direction for closing the state's rural electrification quality gap using local renewable resources rather than relying solely on further central sector grid allocation. A dedicated, current state-level assessment of technical solar, wind, and biomass potential specific to Manipur, of the kind typically produced by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy or state renewable energy development agencies, was not located among the sources reviewed for this report.

9.5 Energy Efficiency, Conservation and Demand-Side Management

A dedicated, current assessment of energy efficiency and demand-side management programming specific to Manipur was not located among the sources reviewed for this report. Given the state's near-total dependence on imported power described in Section 9.1, and the resulting exposure to supply variability whenever central sector generating units experience outages, demand-side management and efficiency measures arguably carry outsized importance for Manipur relative to states with larger, more diversified own-generation bases, since reducing demand directly reduces the state's exposure to a supply chain over which it has limited direct control.

9.6 State Electricity Regulatory Framework and Tariff Policy

The Manipur Electricity Regulatory Commission is responsible for setting electricity tariffs and regulating the state's power distribution sector, operating under the same broad national regulatory framework applicable to other Indian states under the Electricity Act, 2003. A dedicated, current summary of the Commission's most recent tariff order, cross-subsidy structure, and regulatory priorities specific to Manipur was not located among the sources reviewed for this report, and this represents a data gap requiring direct reference to the Commission's published orders for a complete treatment in any future revision of this chapter. Given the structural dependence documented throughout this chapter on power purchased from outside the state, tariff policy in Manipur necessarily operates within tighter constraints than in states with substantial own-generation capacity, since the state distribution company's core cost base is set largely by external power purchase agreements and transmission charges rather than by controllable domestic generation costs.

Chapter 10: Water, Sanitation and Solid Waste Management

10.1 Drinking Water Supply: Coverage, Quality and Infrastructure

Manipur participates in the Jal Jeevan Mission, the Government of India's flagship rural drinking water programme, launched by the Prime Minister on 15 August 2019 with the objective of providing safe and adequate drinking water through individual household tap connections, known as Functional Household Tap Connections, to every rural household in India (Jal Jeevan Mission, n.d.). The state's own citizen-facing dashboard confirms Manipur's participation in the mission's core objectives, including planning of a participatory rural water supply strategy to ensure long-term drinking water security for every rural household and public institution, such as Gram Panchayat buildings, schools, Anganwadi centres, and health centres, alongside creation of the underlying water supply infrastructure needed to achieve full household tap coverage (Manipur Citizen, n.d.).

Nationally, the mission has made substantial progress, though it has fallen short of its original target date. As of October 2025, more than 15.72 crore rural households across India, representing over 81 percent of the country's rural population, had gained access to clean tap water through the mission, a dramatic rise from just 3.23 crore households, or 16.71 percent, at the mission's launch in 2019 (Press Information Bureau, 2025). Having missed its original 2024 completion deadline, the Ministry of Jal Shakti set its sights on 2025 to achieve universal coverage, and the Union Budget for 2025-26 subsequently extended the mission's timeline further, to 2028, alongside a substantially increased funding allocation of Rs. 67,000 crore for the mission specifically within a total Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation allocation of Rs. 74,226 crore, itself a significant rise from the revised estimate of Rs. 22,694 crore to Rs. 29,916 crore for the department in 2024-25, depending on the specific comparison basis used across reporting sources (India Water Portal, 2025; Deccan Herald, 2025a, 2025b). As of that reporting period, larger states including Rajasthan, Jharkhand, Kerala, and West Bengal were specifically identified as trailing with less than 60 percent household tap connection coverage (Deccan Herald, 2025c); Manipur was not named among this group of laggard states in the sources reviewed for this report, though a precise, current, disaggregated Manipur-specific tap connection coverage percentage was not located with sufficient confidence to cite here and should be confirmed directly against the state's Public Health Engineering Department dashboard or the national Jal Jeevan Mission dashboard for an accurate current figure.

Water quality monitoring under the mission has been strengthened through a network of testing laboratories and community level participation, with a total of 2,843 water testing laboratories nationally, comprising 2,184 institutional and 659 treatment-plant-based facilities, having tested 38.78 lakh water samples across 4,49,961 villages during 2025-26 as of late October 2025, alongside 24.80 lakh women trained to conduct water quality testing using Field Testing Kits across 5.07 lakh villages nationally (Press Information Bureau, 2025). Given the terrain-driven water source variability documented throughout this report, particularly the difference between valley and hill district hydrology described in Chapter 1.1,

this kind of decentralized, community based water quality monitoring approach is particularly well suited to Manipur's dispersed and topographically varied rural settlement pattern, though a Manipur-specific breakdown of laboratory coverage and community tester training numbers was not located among the sources reviewed for this report.

10.2 Irrigation Infrastructure: Command Area, Efficiency and Water-Use Productivity

Manipur's irrigation infrastructure is concentrated primarily in the Imphal Valley, where the relatively flat terrain and established paddy cultivation tradition described in Chapter 3.3 support a more developed canal and command area network than is feasible in the state's hill districts. In the hill areas, agriculture, including the jhum or shifting cultivation practices discussed in Chapter 3.3, remains substantially rain-fed rather than irrigation-supported, given the steep terrain and dispersed settlement pattern that make conventional canal irrigation infrastructure difficult and costly to construct and maintain. A dedicated, current assessment of Manipur's total irrigated command area, water-use efficiency, or productivity per unit of irrigated land was not located among the sources reviewed for this report and would need to be confirmed against the state's Water Resources Department and Directorate of Agriculture records. Given the state's dual river basin geography described in Chapter 1.1, spanning both the Barak and Chindwin drainage systems, irrigation planning in Manipur also carries a degree of cross-border and inter-state water sharing complexity not present in landlocked, single-basin states, a consideration relevant to any future irrigation expansion planning in the state's eastern hill districts near the Myanmar border.

10.3 Sanitation and Open Defecation Free Status: Post-ODF Sustainability

Manipur, in common with the rest of rural India, has moved through the phases of the national Swachh Bharat Mission-Grameen programme, from the initial achievement of Open Defecation Free status to the subsequent Phase II objective of Sampurn Swachhata, or complete cleanliness, which seeks to sustain ODF status while adding solid and liquid waste management infrastructure, transforming villages from a basic ODF designation to the more comprehensive ODF Plus Model standard (Jharkhand government portal citing national DDWS guidance, n.d.). Nationally, this transition has progressed substantially, with 95 percent of India's villages, or 5,60,897 out of 5,86,707 total villages, having declared ODF Plus status as of the most recent reporting period reviewed for this report (Deccan Herald, 2025c). The total estimated outlay for Swachh Bharat Mission-Grameen Phase II nationally stands at Rs. 1.40 lakh crore, funded through convergence across multiple government financing verticals, with the Union Budget for 2025-26 specifically allocating Rs. 7,192 crore to the programme, a figure consistent with the previous year's allocation and directed at maintaining ODF status while implementing solid and liquid waste management systems in villages nationally (Jharkhand government portal, n.d.; India Water Portal, 2025).

A precise, current, Manipur-specific ODF Plus village count or percentage was not located among the sources reviewed for this report. Given the geographic dispersion and terrain

challenges facing the state's hill district villages, described throughout this chapter and this report more broadly, sustaining the physical infrastructure and behavioral gains associated with ODF status is likely to present particular challenges in Manipur's more remote settlements, where maintenance access, replacement parts, and technical support for sanitation infrastructure are more difficult to deliver reliably than in the more accessible valley districts, a pattern consistent with the broader valley-hill service delivery gradient discussed throughout this report.

10.4 Solid Waste Management: Municipal, Biomedical and Hazardous Waste

Solid waste management infrastructure in Manipur is concentrated principally in the Imphal urban agglomeration, where population density, discussed in Chapter 1.3, generates the state's largest volume of municipal solid waste requiring organized collection, transport, and processing. A dedicated, current assessment of Manipur's municipal solid waste management infrastructure, including waste-to-energy facilities, sanitary landfill capacity, or door-to-door waste segregation coverage, was not located among the sources reviewed for this report. Biomedical waste management, governed under national Biomedical Waste Management Rules, and hazardous waste management, governed under national Hazardous and Other Wastes Management Rules, both require dedicated treatment and disposal infrastructure that a state with Manipur's limited industrial base, described in Chapter 3.4, would be expected to need only at modest scale relative to more heavily industrialized states, though healthcare facility biomedical waste generation remains a universal requirement regardless of a state's industrial profile. This represents an area requiring direct reference to the Manipur Pollution Control Board's records for a complete, current treatment in any future revision of this chapter.

10.5 Liquid Waste and Sewerage: Urban and Peri-Urban Treatment Infrastructure

Liquid waste and sewerage treatment infrastructure in Manipur, consistent with the pattern in most small and medium Indian cities, remains concentrated in and around the Imphal urban agglomeration, with rural and peri-urban areas relying more heavily on decentralized on-site sanitation systems addressed under the Swachh Bharat Mission-Grameen ODF Plus framework discussed in Section 10.3 rather than centralized sewerage networks. Loktak Lake's ecological health, discussed in Chapter 1.1 and Chapter 13.3, is directly affected by liquid waste and nutrient loading from surrounding settlements and agricultural runoff, making sewerage and liquid waste management planning in the valley districts immediately relevant to the state's most significant wetland conservation priority, rather than a purely urban infrastructure concern in isolation. A dedicated, current assessment of urban sewerage treatment capacity utilization for Imphal specifically was not located among the sources reviewed for this report and represents a further data gap for future revision.

Chapter 11: Urban Development, Housing and Smart Cities

11.1 Urbanisation Trends and Urban Governance Architecture

Manipur's urbanisation pattern is, as established in Chapter 1.3, heavily concentrated within the Imphal urban agglomeration, with approximately 70.8 percent of the state's population classified as rural as of the 2011 Census and urban population correspondingly concentrated in a small number of valley towns rather than distributed evenly across the state (Census2011.co.in, n.d.). Urban governance in Manipur operates through a layered structure of municipal bodies, with the Imphal Municipal Corporation functioning as the largest and most significant urban local body in the state, comprising elected councilors representing individual wards, with executive functions carried out by a Mayor and Deputy Mayor supported by a municipal commissioner, and with responsibilities spanning urban planning and zoning, infrastructure development including roads and bridges, water supply and sanitation, public health services, education and recreational facility provision, and local revenue collection through property tax, advertisement fees, and related levies (Manipur PSC Notes, 2024). Overall policy, regulation, and financial allocation for urban governance across the state is coordinated by the state's Urban Development Department, which is responsible for ensuring compliance with national urban programmes including AMRUT, the Smart Cities Mission, and the Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban (Manipur PSC Notes, 2024).

Beyond Imphal itself, the state's broader urban network extends to a further set of valley towns, most of which fall within Imphal West, Imphal East, Thoubal, Kakching, Bishnupur, and Jiribam districts, the same six districts identified as containing towns eligible for AMRUT 2.0 coverage, discussed further in Section 11.4 (EastMojo, 2026). This concentration of the state's formally recognized urban centres almost entirely within valley districts reinforces the broader valley-hill development asymmetry documented throughout this report, since it means that the institutional machinery, funding streams, and planning capacity associated with formal urban governance in Manipur are themselves geographically concentrated in the same areas that already enjoy the state's strongest infrastructure and service delivery, while the hill districts, discussed further in Chapter 12 on rural development, are governed predominantly through rural rather than urban local body structures regardless of the population size of their largest settlements.

11.2 Urban Local Bodies: Financial Health, Capacity and Service Delivery

Manipur's urban local bodies, principally the Imphal Municipal Corporation, depend substantially on devolved central and state scheme funding rather than robust own-source revenue, a pattern consistent with the broader state fiscal architecture documented in Chapter 2, where own tax and non-tax revenue together cover only a small fraction of total government receipts. The state budget's dedicated Demand for Municipal Administration, Housing and Urban Development includes specific line items for the Imphal Smart City Mission's state share, budgeted at figures including Rs. 723 crore, Rs. 1,000 crore, and Rs. 1,295.56 crore across different budget heads and years, alongside separate AMRUT 2.0

central share and state share allocations, and a distinct allocation for the historic Gandhi Memorial Hall, illustrating the granular, scheme-by-scheme structure through which urban development funding flows into the state's municipal administration budget (Government of Manipur, 2024). A dedicated, current assessment of Imphal Municipal Corporation's own-source revenue collection efficiency, such as property tax coverage and collection rates, was not located among the sources reviewed for this report and would need to be confirmed against the Corporation's own financial statements for a complete treatment.

11.3 Housing: Demand Assessment, Affordability and Flagship Schemes

Housing delivery in Manipur operates under the national Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana framework, in both its urban and rural variants, alongside the state's own housing programmes. A January 2026 State Review Meeting chaired by the Union Minister of State for Housing and Urban Affairs specifically flagged delays in completion of Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Urban 1.0 in Manipur, with the state noting that this first phase of the scheme had experienced completion delays even as the subsequent PMAY-Urban 2.0 phase had already been launched nationally, creating a degree of overlap and administrative complexity between the two phases within the state (EastMojo, 2026). Only Beneficiary-led Construction, one component category within the broader PMAY-Urban framework, was specifically highlighted as reported at that review meeting, with the fuller detail of progress across other PMAY-Urban components, such as Affordable Housing in Partnership or Credit Linked Subsidy components, not captured with confidence among the sources reviewed for this report (EastMojo, 2026). The state government indicated it would formally request the Ministry to support proper implementation of the delayed PMAY-Urban 1.0 components, suggesting the delay was recognized as a live administrative concern at the time of the review rather than a fully resolved matter (EastMojo, 2026).

As documented in Chapter 2.2, the state's 2025-26 budget also carries distinct, conflict-specific housing provisions entirely outside the ordinary PMAY framework, including Rs. 35 crore specifically allocated for housing for people displaced by the 2023-2025 ethnic conflict, a category of housing need that has no precedent in the state's pre-conflict housing policy and that sits alongside, rather than replacing, the state's ordinary affordable housing delivery obligations under PMAY (Business Standard, 2025). This dual housing challenge, ordinary affordable housing delivery running behind schedule under PMAY-Urban 1.0, layered on top of an entirely new and large-scale displacement housing need arising from the conflict, represents one of the more concrete illustrations in this report of how the 2023-2025 conflict has compounded, rather than simply added to, the state's pre-existing development challenges.

11.4 Smart Cities Mission and AMRUT: State-Level Implementation Review

Imphal is Manipur's sole city covered under the national Smart Cities Mission, and it was also among the seven cities across five Northeastern states, alongside Itanagar and Pasighat in

Arunachal Pradesh, Kohima in Nagaland, Namchi and Gangtok in Sikkim, and Shillong in Meghalaya, that signed a memorandum of understanding with the central public sector undertaking Bharat Electronics Limited to develop a cloud based Integrated Command and Control Centre in support of Smart City implementation (Business Standard, 2018). As of the January 2026 State Review Meeting, the Imphal Smart City Mission was reported to have achieved 21 completed projects, with four further projects still ongoing (EastMojo, 2026; ProKerala, 2026). Concrete, named examples of completed Smart City work in Imphal include the beautification of Kangla Nongpok Torban as part of the city's heritage and public space upgrading plan, and the associated Ima Keithel Road development project, later extended further to the Khoyathong junction, directly linking Smart City infrastructure investment to the historic women's market discussed in Chapters 3.6 and 7.4 (Wikipedia, n.d.-a).

Significantly, officials at the January 2026 review meeting attributed delays in completing the mission's remaining projects directly to two compounding factors: the challenging security situation that has persisted in the state over the preceding three years, a direct reference to the 2023-2025 conflict documented throughout this report, and unprecedented flooding across two consecutive years, which together were cited as justification for the implementing department's request for a project timeline extension through September 2026 (EastMojo, 2026; ProKerala, 2026). This is a rare instance in the sources reviewed for this report of state officials explicitly and jointly naming both the ethnic conflict and a distinct climate or weather-related hazard, discussed further in Chapter 14, as compounding causes of an infrastructure delivery shortfall, and it illustrates concretely how security disruption and climate exposure can interact to slow even well-funded, centrally supported urban development missions.

On AMRUT 2.0, the state's Town Planning Department reported that 27 towns across six districts, Imphal West, Imphal East, Thoubal, Kakching, Bishnupur, and Jiribam, are eligible for the mission, which is explicitly oriented toward making cities water secure and is deliberately focused on towns that had not been covered under earlier urban infrastructure schemes, funded on a 90:10 Centre-state basis (EastMojo, 2026; ProKerala, 2026). The Union Minister of State for Housing and Urban Affairs, addressing the same review meeting, characterized the Prime Minister's broader development initiatives as having changed the outlook of the Northeastern states, a characterization state officials did not directly contest at the meeting but that this report notes should be read alongside the same officials' own, more sobering account of security and flooding related delays presented at that identical meeting (ProKerala, 2026).

11.5 Heritage Cities, Cultural Landscapes and Urban Tourism

Imphal's urban heritage assets, most notably the historic Kangla Fort complex and its associated Kangla Nongpok Torban gateway area, discussed in Section 11.4, and the Ima Keithel market complex, discussed in Chapters 3.6 and 7.4, form the core of the city's cultural

landscape and urban tourism appeal. Smart City investment in Imphal has been deliberately directed toward beautification and public space upgrading around these heritage assets, reflecting a coherent, if still incomplete, strategy of linking urban infrastructure investment directly to the city's cultural tourism potential, discussed further in Chapter 19. A dedicated, current assessment of visitor footfall or urban tourism revenue specifically attributable to these heritage sites was not located among the sources reviewed for this report.

11.6 Urban Poverty, Slum Rehabilitation and In-Situ Upgradation

A dedicated, current assessment of urban poverty incidence, slum settlement mapping, or in-situ slum rehabilitation progress specific to Imphal or other Manipur towns was not located among the sources reviewed for this report. Given the population density pressures within the Imphal urban agglomeration documented in Chapter 1.3, and the housing delivery delays documented in Section 11.3, it is reasonable to expect that informal and inadequately serviced urban settlement represents a real, if currently undocumented in this report's source base, dimension of the state's urban development challenge. This is flagged as a priority data gap for the state's Urban Development Department and Imphal Municipal Corporation to address through a dedicated slum or informal settlement survey, both to inform PMAY-Urban targeting going forward and to ensure that the state's post-conflict, displacement-driven housing needs, discussed in Section 11.3, are not planned in isolation from its pre-existing, ordinary urban poverty and informal settlement challenges.

Chapter 12: Rural Development and Decentralised Governance

12.1 Panchayati Raj Institutions: Structure, Devolution and Capacity

Rural local governance in Manipur operates through a structure that differs meaningfully from the standard three-tier Panchayati Raj model found across most of India, reflecting the valley-hill administrative divide introduced in Chapter 1.2. In the valley districts, Panchayati Raj Institutions function broadly along conventional lines, administered by the state's Department of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, which oversees implementation of national rural development schemes including MGNREGA and the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana, discussed further in Sections 12.2 and 12.5 (Government of Manipur, 2025d). In the hill districts, however, standard Panchayati Raj Institutions do not operate in the same form, and rural governance instead runs through the combination of Autonomous District Councils and customary village authority structures described in Chapter 1.2, a bifurcation that has direct fiscal consequences documented in Chapter 2.6, where a Comptroller and Auditor General review found that of a specified central devolution allocation intended for local bodies in the state, 35.28 percent was directed to Panchayati Raj Institutions, 22.49 percent to Urban Local Bodies, and the largest single share, 42.23 percent, to Autonomous District Councils rather than to conventional Panchayats (Comptroller and Auditor General of India, 2024).

This devolution split is a useful, concrete illustration of how deeply the state's dual governance architecture, ordinary Panchayati Raj Institutions in the valley and Autonomous District Council administration in the hills, is embedded not merely in customary practice but in the formal fiscal transfer mechanisms that determine how devolved development funding actually reaches rural communities. It also means that capacity building, training, and administrative support efforts designed around the standard national Panchayati Raj model, of the kind promoted nationally by the National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, may require meaningful adaptation before they can be applied with equal effectiveness in Manipur's Autonomous District Council administered hill areas, a consideration this report flags as relevant to any future capacity building programme design for the state's rural governance institutions.

12.2 MGNREGA (Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act): Coverage, Wage Trends and Livelihood Outcomes

Manipur's Department of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj administers the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act scheme within the state, with dedicated staffing structures, including Multi Tasking Staff positions specifically created to support MGNREGA implementation under the Directorate of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Manipur, for which new recruitment rules were formally notified as recently as October 2025 (Government of Manipur, 2025d). This kind of ongoing administrative capacity building at the departmental level suggests continued state-level institutional investment in

the scheme's implementation machinery even as the state has passed through the disruption of the 2023-2025 conflict documented throughout this report.

A precise, current, Manipur-specific figure for MGNREGA person-days generated, wage rates paid, or the scheme's employment demand fulfillment rate was not located among the sources reviewed for this report. For national context, the scheme's guaranteed employment framework has in recent periods been adjusted upward in specific circumstances, such as the increase to 150 guaranteed person-days granted to Jammu and Kashmir in November 2025 in response to flood-related livelihood distress, explicitly justified on the grounds of strengthening livelihood security in flood-affected rural areas (News on Air, 2025). Given that Manipur has itself experienced both conflict-driven displacement, documented in Chapter 7.2, and, as noted in Chapter 11.4, unprecedented flooding across two consecutive years that specifically disrupted Imphal Smart City Mission project completion, a comparable case could reasonably be made, on the same logic applied in the Jammu and Kashmir instance, for enhanced MGNREGA person-day guarantees in Manipur's most severely affected districts, though whether such an enhancement has in fact been requested or granted for Manipur specifically was not confirmed among the sources reviewed for this report.

12.3 Rural Housing: PMAY-Gramin and State Schemes

Rural housing delivery in Manipur operates under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Gramin framework, the rural counterpart to the PMAY-Urban scheme discussed in Chapter 11.3, which specifically flagged completion delays in the state's urban housing delivery. A dedicated, current, disaggregated assessment of PMAY-Gramin house completion rates, waitlist size, or beneficiary satisfaction specific to Manipur was not located among the sources reviewed for this report. Given the urban PMAY delivery delays documented in Chapter 11.3, and the general pattern of hill district service delivery lagging valley district delivery documented throughout this report, it would be reasonable to expect that rural housing delivery in the hill districts specifically may face at least comparable, and plausibly greater, implementation challenges relative to valley areas, though this expectation is not confirmed by direct Manipur-specific rural housing data in the sources reviewed here, and should be tested against the state's own Rural Development and Panchayati Raj Department records.

12.4 Livelihood Promotion: SHGs, Cooperatives and Rural Enterprise

Self Help Groups form an important component of the national rural livelihood promotion architecture, supported through the Ministry of Rural Development and showcased nationally through platforms such as the Saras Melas, flagship marketing events at which SHGs from across India's states and union territories participate to sell their products (Ministry of Rural Development, 2026). A dedicated, current, Manipur-specific count of active SHGs, their thematic focus areas, or their aggregate turnover was not located among the sources reviewed for this report. Given the state's genuinely distinctive pattern of high women's economic

participation, documented through the Ima Keithel market and the state's notably high rate of women's MSME ownership discussed in Chapters 3.6 and 4.2, Manipur's rural SHG ecosystem plausibly represents an area of underlying strength consistent with this broader pattern, though this remains an inference from adjacent evidence rather than a directly confirmed finding, and a dedicated state-level SHG performance assessment would be needed to confirm it with confidence.

12.5 Rural Infrastructure: PMGSY, Connectivity and Market Linkages

Rural road connectivity in Manipur is governed under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana, launched nationally on 25 December 2000 with the explicit objective of providing all-weather road access to unconnected rural habitations, and administered jointly by the Ministry of Rural Development and state governments (Manipur Citizen, n.d.). Critically for a hill state like Manipur, the scheme applies a differentiated habitation-size eligibility threshold that recognizes the distinct challenges of hill and Northeastern terrain: while plain areas require a habitation population of 500 persons or more to qualify for coverage, Manipur, alongside the other Special Category States of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, Tripura, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, and Uttarakhand, along with Tribal Schedule V areas, qualifies at the substantially lower threshold of just 250 persons or more (National Rural Infrastructure Development Agency, n.d.). The scheme also applies a differentiated definition of what counts as already connected: a habitation within 500 metres of a road is considered connected in plain areas, but this distance extends to 1.5 kilometres of path length in hill areas, directly acknowledging that the same straight-line distance represents a far greater practical travel burden in Manipur's steep hill terrain than in flat plains terrain (Manipur Citizen, n.d.).

The scheme's current phase, PMGSY-IV, carries a substantially expanded national outlay of Rs. 49,087.50 crore in central share and Rs. 21,037.50 crore in state share, targeting 25,000 previously unconnected habitations nationally and the construction of 62,500 kilometres of new all-weather roads, alongside associated bridges, using the same population thresholds described above, meaning Manipur's hill habitations of 250 persons or more, or as few as 100 persons or more in specific special category areas, remain eligible for coverage under this expanded phase (Standing Committee on Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, 2025). A Parliamentary Standing Committee review of the scheme in 2025 specifically flagged persistent implementation challenges relevant to a terrain-constrained state like Manipur, including delays arising from difficult terrain itself, land acquisition disputes, contractor delays, legal hurdles, and bureaucratic bottlenecks stemming from delayed environmental and forest clearances from the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, the last of which is likely to be a particularly significant constraint in Manipur given the state's substantial forest cover discussed in Chapter 13.1 (Standing Committee on Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, 2025). A precise, current count of Manipur's own completed, ongoing, and pending PMGSY habitations was not located among the sources reviewed for this report, though the programme guideline that road maintenance

responsibility transfers to Panchayati Raj Institutions five years after construction completion (National Rural Infrastructure Development Agency, n.d.) is worth flagging as a further point where the state's bifurcated valley-hill local governance structure, described in Section 12.1, may complicate long-term road maintenance handover specifically in hill areas administered through Autonomous District Councils rather than conventional Panchayats.

12.6 Community-Based Development Institutions and Participatory Planning

Village level participatory planning in Manipur, as elsewhere in India, is intended to be anchored in Gram Panchayat Development Plans prepared with SHG input, informed by data collected through national Mission Antyodaya rural infrastructure surveys, which track indicators related to 47 physical assets across village level rural infrastructure categories (Ministry of Rural Development, 2026). In the valley districts, where conventional Panchayati Raj Institutions operate, this participatory planning architecture functions along broadly standard national lines. In the hill districts, participatory rural development planning is shaped more heavily by the customary village authority institutions described in Chapter 1.2, operating alongside, and in some cases through, the formal Autonomous District Council structure, meaning that effective community engagement in the hill areas requires working through both the formal, state-recognized council structure and the informal, but often more locally legitimate and trusted, customary village leadership, a dual engagement requirement that state and central rural development planners need to explicitly account for when designing hill area programming, rather than defaulting to planning templates built around the standard, valley-style Panchayati Raj model discussed throughout this chapter.

Chapter 13: Environment and Natural Resource Governance

13.1 Forest Cover, Biodiversity and Wildlife Conservation

Manipur is one of India's most heavily forested states in proportional terms. The India State of Forest Report 2023, the eighteenth in a biennial series published by the Forest Survey of India under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, identified Manipur as one of only eight states or union territories nationally with forest cover exceeding 75 percent of geographical area, a group that also includes Mizoram, Lakshadweep, the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Meghalaya, and Tripura (Press Information Bureau, 2024; ClearIAS, 2024; Drishti IAS, 2024). This places Manipur firmly within India's most forest-dense tier of states, a status directly connected to the hill terrain described in Chapter 1.1, where the great majority of the state's land area consists of forested hill ranges surrounding the comparatively small, cultivated Imphal Valley.

This overall proportional strength, however, sits within a troubling regional trend: the same 2023 assessment found that the Northeastern states as a group continued to record a declining trend in forest cover, with Mizoram the sole exception among them to register an increase, of 178 square kilometres, while the remaining Northeastern states, a group that includes Manipur, recorded net forest cover decline (PMF IAS, 2024). Even so, the Northeastern region as a whole retained a combined forest and tree cover of 174,394.70 square kilometres, equivalent to 67 percent of the region's total geographical area, a proportion far exceeding the 25.17 percent national average for forest and tree cover combined (Drishti IAS, 2024; PMF IAS, 2024). Manipur's specific inclusion among the declining Northeastern states, rather than among the small group of states nationally that added forest cover, is a concerning trend that this report connects directly to the jhum cultivation pressure documented in Section 13.2, and it suggests that Manipur's still-high absolute forest cover percentage should not be read as evidence that current land use pressures on the state's forests are benign or sustainable.

Manipur's most internationally significant biodiversity asset is the Loktak Lake ecosystem, discussed in Chapter 1.1 and examined further from a pollution perspective in Section 13.3, which supports 132 plant species and 428 animal species, and which is home to the endangered Sangai, or brow-antlered deer, found nowhere else in the world, within the Keibul Lamjao National Park, the world's only floating national park, situated on the lake's characteristic phumdis, or floating vegetation masses (International Collective in Support of Fishworkers, 2026). Loktak Lake was designated a Ramsar Site of International Importance in 1990, in recognition of this globally significant wetland biodiversity, though it was subsequently added to the Montreux Record, a register maintained under the Ramsar Convention for wetland sites experiencing or likely to experience changes in ecological character, due to persistent ecological stress including declining fish stocks, rising pollution, and heavy sedimentation (International Collective in Support of Fishworkers, 2026).

13.2 Land Use Change, Soil Degradation and Land Resource Management

A 2026 scientific study conducted with support from the Manipur Forest Department, the Manipur Pollution Control Board, and the Indian Institute of Technology Delhi used Land Use Land Cover mapping to analyze water quality across nine rivers feeding Loktak Lake, namely the Khuga, Western, Nambul, Imphal, Kongba, Iril, Thoubal, Heirok, and Sekmai rivers, and in doing so produced some of the most granular, directly sourced land use and environmental data available for this report on the specific mechanisms linking upstream land practices to downstream ecological outcomes in the state (International Collective in Support of Fishworkers, 2026). The study found a direct, quantifiable link between upstream land use and downstream water degradation: the Nambul River emerged as the most polluted of the nine rivers studied, with low dissolved oxygen and high biological oxygen demand corresponding to a sub-catchment land use profile of 47 percent agricultural land and 11 percent settlement area, while the Khuga River ranked second in pollution despite having higher forest cover than the Nambul, a result attributed largely to the fact that 42 percent of the Khuga's catchment was under jhum, or shifting, cultivation (International Collective in Support of Fishworkers, 2026).

By contrast, the Iril and Thoubal rivers, both flowing predominantly through forest-dominated catchment areas with comparatively little jhum cultivation or settlement, exhibited measurably better water quality, a finding the study's lead researcher, Dr. Khwairakpam, used to underscore the protective role of natural vegetation cover for water quality outcomes (International Collective in Support of Fishworkers, 2026). This finding carries direct policy significance for the jhum cultivation tension introduced in Chapter 3.3 and Chapter 1.2: it demonstrates, with site-specific quantitative evidence rather than general assumption, that shifting cultivation practices in Manipur's hill catchments measurably degrade downstream water quality even in areas that retain comparatively high overall forest cover, meaning that forest cover percentage alone, the headline metric discussed in Section 13.1, is an incomplete indicator of catchment ecological health if it does not also account for the specific land use practices, such as jhum cultivation intensity, occurring within that forested land. Dr. Khwairakpam's own stated conclusion from the research, that land use decisions in upstream villages and forests directly determine the lake's future, and that community-led land management, controlled agricultural runoff, and regulated jhum cycles are essential to restore Loktak, points toward a land resource management strategy grounded in upstream catchment governance rather than lake-focused intervention alone (International Collective in Support of Fishworkers, 2026).

13.3 Water Bodies, Wetlands and River Ecosystem Health

The cumulative effect of the catchment-level land use pressures documented in Section 13.2 is most visible in the deteriorating ecological condition of Loktak Lake itself, the state's most significant water body and, as discussed in Section 13.1, a wetland of recognized international importance now listed on the Ramsar Convention's Montreux Record specifically because of this stress (International Collective in Support of Fishworkers, 2026). The lake's ecological decline has become a matter of national legislative attention: in a

December 2025 Rajya Sabha discussion on the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Amendment Act specifically concerning Manipur, Member of Parliament Neeraj Dangi of the Indian National Congress explicitly highlighted the rising pollution level in Loktak Lake as a matter requiring national attention, while a separate member, Susmita Dev of the Trinamool Congress, emphasized more broadly that water pollution is an extremely important subject requiring parliamentary priority (News on Air, 2025). Notably, in the same debate, Priyanka Chaturvedi of Shiv Sena, Uddhav Balasaheb Thackeray faction, raised the issue of President's Rule in Manipur and the suspension of the State Assembly, illustrating how directly Loktak Lake's environmental governance has become entangled, in national political discourse, with the state's broader 2023-2025 governance crisis documented throughout this report, since a suspended state legislature is, by definition, unable to exercise its ordinary environmental oversight and legislative function over matters such as lake conservation during the period of central rule (News on Air, 2025).

Union Environment, Forest and Climate Change Minister Bhupender Yadav, responding to the same debate, addressed national water pollution concerns broadly, including a 90 percent reduction in stubble burning in states adjoining Delhi since 2016, but the response as captured in available reporting did not include a specific, targeted commitment on Loktak Lake restoration measures, leaving the lake's future restoration trajectory, at the time of this report's preparation, more a matter of ongoing parliamentary concern than of confirmed, funded remedial action (News on Air, 2025).

13.4 Mining and Mineral Resource Governance

As noted in Chapter 3.4, mining activity in Manipur remains limited relative to mineral rich states elsewhere in India, and the state has not developed a significant extractive industry base. A dedicated, current assessment of the state's mineral resource inventory, active mining leases, or mineral resource governance framework was not located among the sources reviewed for this report, and this remains an area requiring direct reference to the state's Directorate of Geology and Mining, or the Ministry of Mines' state mineral resource maps, for a complete treatment in any future revision of this chapter.

13.5 Pollution: Air, Water, Noise and Soil — Status and Regulatory Response

Water pollution, as documented at length in Sections 13.2 and 13.3, represents the most directly evidenced pollution concern in Manipur among the sources reviewed for this report, with the Manipur Pollution Control Board itself a named research partner in the Loktak catchment water quality study discussed above, indicating active state regulatory engagement with the issue even where a comprehensive remedial programme was not confirmed (International Collective in Support of Fishworkers, 2026). A dedicated, current assessment of air quality, noise pollution, or soil contamination specific to Manipur, of the kind more commonly documented for major metropolitan centres such as Delhi, was not located among the sources reviewed for this report, and given the state's comparatively small industrial base

discussed in Chapter 3.4 and its high forest cover discussed in Section 13.1, air quality concerns in Manipur are likely to be of a substantially different character and scale than in India's major industrial or metropolitan centres, though this expectation is not confirmed by direct current air quality monitoring data for the state.

13.6 Coastal and Marine Resource Management (Where Applicable)

Manipur is a landlocked state with no coastline and no marine resource base, and this section, present in the standardized document format for completeness and comparability across coastal and non-coastal states alike, is accordingly not applicable to Manipur.

Chapter 14: Climate Change and Ecological Security

14.1 State Climate Vulnerability and Risk Profile

Manipur's climate vulnerability profile is defined by the intersection of its hill and valley terrain, described in Chapter 1.1, with an intensifying pattern of extreme rainfall events that has produced what local reporting has repeatedly characterized as some of the worst flooding in the state's recent history. Reporting on the climate dimension of this vulnerability notes explicitly that changing rainfall patterns, rapid urbanisation, deforestation, and climate change together are increasing the region's susceptibility to disasters such as floods, and that this susceptibility is likely to increase further in the coming years across the wider Northeastern region, not only in Manipur (Down To Earth, 2024). India as a whole experienced extreme weather events on 99 percent of days between January and September 2025, a striking statistic that situates Manipur's own flood experience within a broader national pattern of climate volatility rather than as an isolated state-level anomaly (Deccan Herald, 2025).

The valley districts, given their low-lying, basin topography described in Chapter 1.1, are structurally vulnerable to riverine flooding whenever the Imphal, Iril, Kongba, Thoubal, and Nambul rivers, the same rivers examined for pollution in Chapter 13.2, breach their banks or embankments, while the hill districts face a distinct but related vulnerability to landslides triggered by the same intense rainfall events, compounded by the terrain instability and jhum cultivation pressures discussed in Chapter 13.1 and 13.2. This dual valley-flood, hill-landslide vulnerability pattern means that a single major rainfall event, such as those documented in Section 14.3, can simultaneously trigger multiple, geographically distinct categories of disaster impact across the state in a single episode.

14.2 State Action Plan on Climate Change: Review and Second Generation Reforms

A dedicated, current assessment of Manipur's State Action Plan on Climate Change, including its most recent revision status or second generation reform priorities, was not located among the sources reviewed for this report. Given the demonstrated linkage documented in Chapter 13.2 between jhum cultivation intensity and downstream water quality degradation, and the flood vulnerability documented in this chapter, any credible second generation State Action Plan on Climate Change for Manipur would need to integrate upstream catchment land use management directly with downstream flood and water security planning, rather than treating climate adaptation, water resource management, and land use policy as separate planning tracks, a fragmentation this report's review of the state's ecological and infrastructure evidence base repeatedly suggests has been a limiting factor in the state's environmental governance to date.

14.3 Disaster Risk Profile: Hazard, Exposure and Vulnerability Mapping

Manipur's recent disaster record provides some of the most concrete, well-documented evidence available anywhere in this report of a specific hazard materializing repeatedly with severe consequences. Floods in 2024, caused by a western bank breach of the Imphal River, affected approximately 200,000 people and damaged over 24,000 houses across 348 villages and urban localities, making it one of the worst floods in the state's recent history (Mongabay India, 2025). Despite this scale of impact, Manipur did not make the cut for the flood assistance package announced in the central government budget the following year, a notable gap this report flags as a distinct point of concern in the state's disaster financing architecture, discussed further in Section 14.5 (Mongabay India, 2025).

The 2025 monsoon season brought further, compounding flood events. In early June 2025, relentless rainfall driven by a depression over northern Bangladesh and adjoining Meghalaya triggered widespread flooding and landslides across both hill and valley regions, with major portions of Imphal West submerged, multiple embankment breaches along the Imphal, Kongba, and Iril rivers, and Manipur's main arterial route, National Highway 2, completely cut off by a massive landslide exceeding 25 metres near Phesama on the Kohima-Mao Gate stretch in neighboring Nagaland, following earlier landslides that had already disrupted traffic in Senapati and Kangpokpi districts (Down To Earth, 2025). Almost 4,000 people were evacuated to 77 temporary relief camps during this episode (Mongabay India, 2025). A second, distinct wave of flooding struck in September 2025, inundating and displacing households across the Thoubal and Iril river basins, affecting previously unaffected locations including Mayang Imphal town in Imphal West district and Kshetrigao in Imphal East district, where floodwaters were reported to have swept away the walls of at least one kacha, or non-permanent, house (Mongabay India, 2025).

These 2025 flood events followed directly from an earlier, even more severe hazard event connected to the very infrastructure project discussed in Chapter 8.2: on 30 June 2022, a landslide at the Tupul railway construction site in Noney district, directly tied to the Jiribam-Imphal railway line's Noney Bridge construction area near the Ijei River, killed 58 people, including 29 Indian Army Territorial Army personnel serving as security for the rail construction and 29 civilians, with three additional people reported missing, and created a temporary dam across the Ijei River that rescuers feared could give way and cause a larger secondary flood (Wikipedia, n.d.-b). This event is a stark, specific illustration of how the state's infrastructure development ambitions, discussed with considerable optimism in Chapter 8.2, and its disaster risk exposure, are not separate storylines but are directly intertwined, since major infrastructure construction in landslide-prone hill terrain itself constitutes a source of disaster risk exposure for the workers and communities involved, quite apart from the infrastructure's intended long-term connectivity benefits.

14.4 Disaster Risk Reduction: Institutional Mechanisms and Preparedness

Manipur's disaster risk reduction response during the 2025 flood events involved both state administrative machinery and the State Disaster Response Fund, with the Ministry of Home

Affairs approving a sum of Rs. 29.20 crore for Manipur on 10 July 2025 for allocation to the State Disaster Response Fund following the June 2025 flood episode (Mongabay India, 2025). The state's flood response during this period was not, however, without institutional controversy: the president of the Manipur Congress and a sitting member of the Manipur Legislative Assembly, Keisham Meghachandra, accused the state's Water Resource Department of creating what he characterized as a man-made disaster, and specifically alleged inadequate communication between government institutions and downstream communities regarding dam discharge decisions during the flooding, an allegation the Water Resource Department countered by stating that the discharge in question was mandatory in light of extraordinary natural inflow rather than a discretionary dam operation decision, and that adequate mobile communication had in fact been completed by field staff to communities downstream (Mongabay India, 2025). This report presents both the allegation and the department's response as documented, unresolved matters of local political and institutional accountability, rather than adjudicating which account is more accurate, since the sources reviewed here do not provide sufficient independent verification to resolve the dispute conclusively.

More broadly, the Himalayan and Northeastern hill region's disaster preparedness architecture has been the subject of renewed national attention following the severe 2025 disaster season across the wider Indian Himalayan Region, with the National Disaster Management Authority revising its National Disaster Management Plan specifically to prioritize Himalayan and hill-specific hazards including landslides, floods, and earthquakes, with emphasis on hazard risk mapping, inter-agency coordination, and community engagement (Drishti IAS, 2025). Given that this revised national plan explicitly targets the same category of hazards, landslides and floods in seismically active hill terrain, that Manipur has itself experienced repeatedly and severely as documented in Section 14.3, the state's own disaster preparedness institutions stand to benefit directly from this national level revision, provided the resulting hazard mapping and inter-agency coordination mechanisms are implemented with specific attention to Manipur's own river systems and landslide-prone construction corridors rather than only to the higher-profile Himalayan states such as Uttarakhand and Sikkim that drove the 2025 national policy attention.

14.5 Post-Disaster Response, Relief and Reconstruction Framework

The exclusion of Manipur from the central government's flood assistance package following the severe 2024 floods, despite an impact scale of 200,000 people affected and over 24,000 houses damaged across 348 villages, stands as one of the more concrete, documented gaps identified anywhere in this report between a state's evident disaster impact and the central assistance framework's response to it (Mongabay India, 2025). This gap is compounded by the state's broader disaster waste management capacity constraints: reporting following earlier, related flood episodes affecting Imphal East, Imphal West, Thoubal, Bishnupur, and Kakching districts specifically identified the absence of a disaster waste management plan as an urgent, unmet need, noting that debris and waste generated after floods, if not cleared

promptly, becomes a breeding ground for disease vectors and poses a direct public health risk, and that this discourse remains one of the most overlooked subjects in the state's disaster response planning (Down To Earth, 2024).

Reconstruction and relief funding for the state's flood-affected communities has, as documented in Section 14.4, relied substantially on the State Disaster Response Fund allocation mechanism, a funding stream that in this instance was activated at Rs. 29.20 crore, a sum this report notes should be assessed for adequacy against the documented scale of damage, evacuation, and displacement described in Section 14.3, though a detailed reconciliation of relief funding against verified damage assessment was not available among the sources reviewed for this report.

14.6 Green Economy Transition: Opportunities and Structural Challenges

Manipur's genuine natural asset base, its exceptionally high forest cover documented in Chapter 13.1, its substantial hydro potential documented in Chapter 9.4, and its emerging renewable innovation exemplified by the Hengbung hydro-solar pumped storage project discussed in Chapter 9.3, together provide a plausible foundation for a green economy transition strategy specific to the state's hill terrain and ecological endowment. Realizing this potential, however, requires directly confronting the structural tension documented in Chapter 13.2 between traditional jhum cultivation livelihoods, on which many hill communities depend, and the forest and water quality conservation objectives that a genuine green economy transition would need to prioritize, a tension this report does not resolve here but flags as the central design challenge for any green economy strategy specific to Manipur, one that would need to offer hill communities credible, sufficiently remunerative livelihood alternatives to jhum cultivation rather than simply restricting the practice without a replacement livelihood pathway. Given the compounding climate hazard exposure documented throughout this chapter, and the demonstrated institutional and financing gaps in the state's current disaster response architecture, this report treats climate adaptation and disaster resilience investment, rather than green economy transition in the narrower sense of new low-carbon industry, as the more immediate and urgent ecological security priority for Manipur over the remainder of this decade.

Chapter 15: Administrative Governance Reform

15.1 Structure of State Administration and Inter-Departmental Coordination

Manipur's administrative structure was subjected to an extraordinary and prolonged disruption between February 2025 and February 2026, a period this report has referenced throughout its fiscal, infrastructure, and social chapters and now addresses directly as a governance event in its own right. Following the resignation of then Chief Minister N. Biren Singh amid the continuing ethnic conflict documented in Chapter 7.2, President's Rule was imposed in Manipur on 13 February 2025 under Article 356 of the Constitution, with the state's Legislative Assembly, whose term runs until March 2027, placed under suspended animation rather than dissolved outright (Deccan Herald, 2025; News on Air, 2026). This distinction, suspended animation rather than dissolution, meant that the elected Assembly's underlying mandate remained legally intact even as its normal legislative and oversight functions, including the budget scrutiny function discussed in Chapter 2.8, ceased to operate for the duration of central rule.

This period of central administration proved unusually long by recent standards, extended twice by Parliament, first for six months from 13 August 2025, and subsequently to February 2026, with the Union Home Minister moving the extension resolutions in the Lok Sabha on each occasion (Next IAS, 2025; National Herald, 2025). During the second extension debate, a group of sitting MLAs wrote jointly to flag that the people of Manipur had welcomed President's Rule with high expectations but that there had been no visible action to restore peace and normalcy, and that a strong apprehension persisted among the common people that violence could recur, with several civil society organisations having come out openly against the continuation of central rule and instead demanding the installation of a popularly elected government (National Herald, 2025). This represents a rare instance of state legislators publicly criticizing the very form of central administration ostensibly imposed to stabilize their state, and it illustrates the genuine tension inherent in Article 356 governance: central rule can supply administrative neutrality, as its proponents argued it would in preventing biased handling of the conflict between Kuki-Zo and Meitei communities, but it cannot, by itself, manufacture the underlying political reconciliation needed for a return to normal governance, and its prolongation was itself experienced by at least some elected representatives and civil society actors as a source of continued uncertainty rather than only stability (Drishti IAS, n.d.).

President's Rule in Manipur was ultimately revoked on 4 February 2026, with the Ministry of Home Affairs issuing a notification announcing immediate revocation, and BJP MLA Yumnam Khemchand Singh sworn in as Chief Minister that same day at a ceremony held at Lok Bhavan in Imphal, administered by Manipur Governor Ajay Kumar Bhalla, with Nemcha Kipgen of the BJP and Losii Dikho of the Naga People's Front sworn in as Deputy Chief Ministers, and Govindas Konthoujam of the BJP and Khuraijam Loken of the National People's Party administered as ministers (News on Air, 2026a). Speaking after taking the oath, the new Chief Minister stated that Manipur will play an important role in Viksit Bharat

2047, directly invoking the same national centenary development vision framework this report addresses in Chapter 21 (News on Air, 2026a). The state's 12th Legislative Assembly resumed normal functioning almost immediately, holding its seventh session the following evening, 5 February 2026, with the new Chief Minister chairing his government's first cabinet meeting the night before (News on Air, 2026b). This restoration of elected government is, in this report's assessment, the single most significant governance development affecting the state's administrative outlook since the conflict began in May 2023, and it reopens the possibility, discussed further in Chapter 21, of state-led rather than centrally-administered reconciliation and reconstruction planning going forward, though the underlying tribal-Meitei tensions documented in Chapter 7.2 remain unresolved and the new government's capacity to manage them will only become evident over time.

Manipur's cumulative record of central rule impositions is itself notable in a national comparative context: as of the most recent imposition, Manipur and Uttar Pradesh had previously shared the record for the highest number of President's Rule impositions among Indian states, at 10 each, with Manipur's February 2025 imposition making it the sole national record holder at 11 (Next IAS, 2025). This statistic reflects a longer history of periodic central intervention in the state's governance that predates the current conflict, consistent with Manipur's location within a Northeastern security and political landscape that has, across decades, proven unusually prone to the kind of constitutional machinery breakdown that triggers Article 356 intervention.

15.2 Anti-Corruption Framework: Lokayukta, Vigilance and Enforcement

A dedicated, current assessment of the functioning and caseload of Manipur's Lokayukta institution, or of the state's Vigilance Commission enforcement record, was not located among the sources reviewed for this report. Given that the state's normal legislative and executive machinery was suspended for a full year between February 2025 and February 2026, as documented in Section 15.1, it is reasonable to expect that ordinary anti-corruption oversight processes dependent on a functioning elected government and legislature, including any Lokayukta reporting obligations to the Assembly, would have experienced at least some continuity disruption during this period, though this expectation is not confirmed by direct evidence in the sources reviewed here and should be tested against the Lokayukta's own annual reports once available.

15.3 Legal and Judicial Administration: Pendency, Access and Reform

A dedicated, current assessment of case pendency, court infrastructure, or access to justice indicators specific to Manipur was not located among the sources reviewed for this report. The Manipur High Court's own role in the origins of the 2023-2025 conflict, discussed at length in Chapter 7.2, where its April 2023 order recommending Scheduled Tribe status consideration for the Meitei community was later revoked by the same court in February 2024 following Supreme Court criticism, illustrates that the state's judiciary has itself been

directly and consequentially engaged with the central governance crisis addressed throughout this report, rather than functioning as a neutral institution positioned entirely outside it, a dynamic with implications for how judicial reform and access to justice initiatives in the state are likely to be perceived by different community groups going forward.

15.4 Police Modernisation and Internal Security Management

Internal security management has been the single most resource-intensive dimension of Manipur's governance throughout the conflict period, reflected concretely in the Rs. 2,866 crore budgeted in 2025-26 as incentives for police personnel posted in sensitive areas, documented in Chapter 2.2, a sum that dwarfs the state's combined conflict relief and housing allocations for the same year. The Union Government reimposed the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act in six police station areas of Manipur, including Jiribam, effective from 14 November 2024 through 31 March 2025, reversing the state government's own 2022 repeal of AFSPA in these areas, which had at the time been justified on the grounds of improved security and a greater sense of public safety (IAS Gyan, 2025). This reimposition, occurring in specific, named police station jurisdictions rather than uniformly across the state, reflects a security assessment that treated the conflict's threat profile as geographically concentrated rather than evenly distributed, consistent with the district-level variation in conflict intensity documented in Chapter 7.2.

Joint security force operations against insurgent groups intensified during the President's Rule period, with the Minister of State for Home, responding to the July 2025 Lok Sabha debate on extending central rule, stating that no deaths due to violence had been reported in Manipur in the preceding four months, a data point cited by the government at the time as evidence of improving security conditions under central administration (Deccan Herald, 2025b). Separately, as noted in Chapter 8.3, a case in April 2026 involving the seizure of approximately 7 kilograms of morphine at Imphal's Bir Tikendrajit International Airport illustrates that narcotics interdiction remains an active dimension of the state's internal security workload alongside the ethnic conflict response, consistent with Manipur's border location and its established role in regional narcotics trafficking routes.

Separately from the Manipur-specific security response, the Union Government notified a new Single Window System for appointing State Directors-General of Police, effective 22 April 2025, introduced against the backdrop of several states not fully following the Supreme Court's 2006 Prakash Singh judgment on police reform (Next IAS, 2025). Whether and how this national policy change has been applied to Manipur's own police leadership appointment process during the period of central administration was not confirmed among the sources reviewed for this report.

15.5 Regulatory Governance: Quality, Consistency and Independence

A dedicated, current assessment of regulatory governance quality or independence specific to Manipur's state regulatory bodies, beyond the Manipur Electricity Regulatory Commission discussed in Chapter 9.6, was not located among the sources reviewed for this report.

15.6 Reduction of Red-Tapism: Simplification and Way Forward

A dedicated, current assessment of administrative simplification or red-tape reduction initiatives specific to Manipur was not located among the sources reviewed for this report. Given the year-long suspension of normal legislative and cabinet-level administrative processes documented in Section 15.1, it is plausible that ordinary administrative decision-making in the state experienced procedural slowdowns during the President's Rule period, consistent with the budget presentation discrepancies documented in Chapter 2.2 and 2.8, though a dedicated assessment of this effect was not available in the sources reviewed here.

15.7 Civil Service Strength: Vacancy Rates and Training Institutions

A dedicated, current assessment of civil service vacancy rates or training institution capacity specific to Manipur was not located among the sources reviewed for this report. One concrete data point relevant to this section is the October 2025 notification of new recruitment rules for Multi Tasking Staff positions specifically supporting MGNREGA implementation under the Directorate of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, discussed in Chapter 12.2, which indicates that at least some categories of state civil service recruitment continued to proceed even during the period of central administration, suggesting that routine, scheme-linked administrative recruitment was not uniformly frozen throughout the President's Rule period, even where higher-level political and legislative functions were suspended.

Chapter 16: Technology-Enabled Service Delivery

16.1 Digital Infrastructure: Broadband, Optical Fibre and Connectivity Coverage

Manipur's digital infrastructure story over the 2023 to 2026 period cannot be told separately from the state's ethnic conflict, since internet connectivity itself became one of the most contested and consequential instruments of governance during this period. Following the outbreak of violence in May 2023, the state government imposed a statewide internet shutdown from 3 May to 3 December 2023, executed through 44 separate orders with only a brief three-day reprieve in between, lasting 212 days and affecting the state's approximately 3.2 million residents, a duration independently documented as the world's longest internet shutdown recorded in 2023, exceeding 5,000 cumulative hours (Global Voices Advox, 2025). This shutdown was justified by the state government on the grounds of thwarting the activities of anti-national and anti-social elements and preventing the spread of misinformation and rumours through social media platforms capable of inflaming communal tension (SFLC.in, 2026).

The Manipur High Court intervened through an order dated 7 July 2023, directing the state government to restore internet service through broadband connections while maintaining certain safeguards, and directing a survey and whitelisting process for select mobile numbers to restore communication services even before the broader shutdown was lifted (SFLC.in, 2026). On 3 December 2023, the state government revoked the shutdown orders in areas not directly affected by violence, establishing a more geographically targeted approach under which shutdowns would going forward be confined to specific conflict-affected areas rather than applied statewide (SFLC.in, 2026). This more targeted approach has, in practice, continued through 2024 and into 2025, with district-specific suspensions imposed and lifted repeatedly in response to specific triggering events, including a nine-district suspension imposed in mid-November 2024 following the kidnapping and killing of six civilians in Jiribam district, withdrawn on 9 December 2024 after a review of the law and order situation (News on Air, 2024), and a further five-day suspension across the five valley districts of Imphal West, Imphal East, Thoubal, Bishnupur, and Kakching beginning 7 June 2025, following the arrest of a local organisation leader and citing apprehension that anti-social elements might use social media to transmit hate speech and inflammatory content (News on Air, 2025). Cumulatively, Manipur recorded more than 257 total internet shutdown days between 2017 and mid-2025 (Imphal Times, 2025).

Even where broadband service has been restored, it has frequently been subject to unusually stringent conditions rarely seen elsewhere in India: connections provided only through static IP addresses, subscribers prohibited from creating Wi-Fi networks or hotspots from their own routers, mandatory daily changes to login credentials, and physical monitoring to check for violations of these conditions (Internet Society Pulse, 2026). During the peak 2023 shutdown period, even after broadband was nominally permitted, more than 96 percent of the state's population remained without functional internet access, since less than 4 percent of the population nationally had broadband access as opposed to mobile data access at that time,

meaning the broadband exemption offered little practical relief to the great majority of ordinary residents (SFLC.in, 2026). This pattern of prolonged and recurring shutdown, rather than the more conventional digital infrastructure metrics of towers, fibre kilometres, or 4G coverage percentages typically reported for other Indian states, is the single most defining feature of Manipur's recent digital infrastructure experience, and any assessment of the state's technology-enabled service delivery capacity must be read against this backdrop rather than in isolation from it.

16.2 e-Governance Architecture and Digital Public Infrastructure

The economic and administrative cost of the shutdown pattern documented in Section 16.1 falls disproportionately on precisely the digital public infrastructure and e-governance services this chapter would otherwise assess in isolation. Reporting on the cumulative effect of Manipur's shutdowns notes that internet access has become a public utility as essential as electricity or water, given its role underpinning mobile banking, Unified Payments Interface transactions, online education, and digital governance services, and that citizens were repeatedly forced to queue outside cyber cafés where satellite or fibre connectivity remained available, paying elevated rates simply to access exam forms, job applications, or basic banking functions during shutdown periods (Imphal Times, 2025). Government-to-citizen services specifically, including Direct Benefit Transfers, a core digital public infrastructure mechanism used nationally to deliver welfare payments, were repeatedly delayed or blocked during shutdown periods, causing direct distress to thousands of intended beneficiaries who rely on these transfers for basic subsistence (Imphal Times, 2025). This represents a direct, documented case in which the state's own security-driven digital infrastructure policy has periodically undermined the effectiveness of the very digital public infrastructure and e-governance architecture that national policy, and the state's own development ambitions discussed throughout this report, otherwise depend upon.

16.3 Citizen Service Delivery: CSCs, Service Portals and Mobile Governance

Common Service Centres and other citizen-facing digital service delivery channels in Manipur operate under the same structural vulnerability documented above: any digital service channel, whether a Common Service Centre terminal, a mobile governance application, or an online service portal, becomes non-functional for the duration of any active internet suspension, regardless of how well-designed or resourced the underlying service architecture may be. Automated banking systems, including those operated by cooperative banks, microfinance institutions, and nationalized banks, stalled during shutdown periods, leaving pensioners and daily wage earners specifically unable to withdraw cash as digital service queues effectively replaced physical ones, with ATMs running dry due to backend connectivity disruption even where physical cash was in principle available (Imphal Times, 2025). Students, who in a post-pandemic environment increasingly depend on online access for classes, study materials, assignments, and digital examinations, bore one of the heaviest

documented burdens of the shutdown pattern, a finding directly relevant to the education access and dropout concerns already documented in Chapter 5 (Imphal Times, 2025).

16.4 Data Governance, Open Data Policy and Privacy Framework

A dedicated, current assessment of Manipur's state-level open data policy or data governance framework was not located among the sources reviewed for this report. The shutdown conditions documented in Section 16.1, including mandatory daily password changes and physical monitoring of subscriber compliance, do, however, illustrate a distinctive feature of the state's current approach to citizen data and connectivity governance during the conflict period: a security-first posture that has, as a matter of documented practice, prioritized monitoring and control of digital communication channels over the ordinary data privacy and service continuity expectations that ordinarily inform ordinary data governance policy design in stable operating conditions.

16.5 Cybersecurity: State-Level Institutional Mechanisms

Academic analysis of the 2023 Manipur shutdown, published in December 2025, frames the episode explicitly through a cybersecurity and digital rights lens, characterizing it as a case of repressive connectivity in which digital infrastructure was deployed to suppress dissent, and situating it within broader academic discourse on algorithmic governance and surveillance capitalism in conflict-affected regions (Third World Quarterly, 2025). The same analysis notes, in a more constructive vein, that the shutdowns also provoked adaptive forms of digital resistance, including encrypted messaging and legal mobilisation, among affected communities seeking to maintain communication and organizing capacity despite state restrictions (Third World Quarterly, 2025). A dedicated, current assessment of the state's own institutional cybersecurity capacity, distinct from its use of shutdowns as a security tool, was not located among the sources reviewed for this report.

16.6 Emerging Technologies: AI, Geospatial Systems and Smart Governance

A dedicated, current assessment of artificial intelligence, geospatial systems, or other emerging technology adoption specific to Manipur's state administration was not located among the sources reviewed for this report. Given the internet infrastructure disruption pattern documented throughout this chapter, adoption of technologies that depend on consistent, reliable connectivity, including AI-enabled citizen service platforms or geospatial monitoring systems of the kind discussed in the land use context of Chapter 13.2, is likely to face a more fundamental adoption constraint in Manipur than in states without comparable shutdown histories, since the underlying connectivity reliability that such systems require has been, as documented in Section 16.1, itself the subject of repeated and prolonged state-imposed suspension. This report's overall assessment is that any future technology-enabled service delivery strategy for Manipur must treat connectivity continuity and shutdown policy reform, discussed candidly rather than avoided, as a foundational

precondition for the success of any more advanced digital governance initiative the state may wish to pursue, a conclusion this report carries forward into the discussion of the state's innovation ecosystem in Chapter 17 and its long-term vision in Chapter 21.

Chapter 17: Innovation, Research and Knowledge Economy

17.1 State Innovation Ecosystem: Startups and Accelerators

Manipur's formal startup promotion effort began with the launch of the Manipur Startup Policy 2018, operationalized through the "Startup Manipur" initiative, which set an explicit target of fostering 1,000 innovative, technology-based startups across the state within a defined operational period running from 1 January 2018 through 31 December 2021, later referenced in some programme materials as extending toward an August 2022 target date (Manipur Citizen, n.d.; eGovtSchemes, 2025). The policy established multiple incubation centres across the state and sought to build a platform connecting entrepreneurs to grants, bank loans, and fiscal incentives, alongside mentorship and regulatory assistance delivered through a dedicated Manipur Startup Portal and Startup Cell (Manipur Citizen, n.d.; eGovtSchemes, 2025).

A 2025 academic review of the scheme's performance, published in the International Journal of Research and Scientific Innovation by a faculty member of Manipur University's Department of Vocational Studies and Skill Development, offers a more measured assessment of the ecosystem's actual development against this ambitious original target, concluding that Manipur has made significant strides in fostering innovation and entrepreneurship, particularly in supporting student entrepreneurs and women-led startups, while simultaneously identifying a continuing need for additional measures, including specific incentives such as a monthly support stipend for women-led ventures and the establishment of University Innovation Hubs in urban centres, to further strengthen the ecosystem (Thongam, 2025). This assessment, describing meaningful but still-developing progress rather than either failure or full achievement of the original 1,000-startup target, is consistent with the broader pattern across this report of a state with genuine underlying entrepreneurial strengths, discussed in Chapters 3 and 4 in the context of women's MSME ownership, that has not yet been matched by fully mature supporting institutional infrastructure.

17.2 Research and Development: Academic-Industry Linkages

Manipur's principal technical research institution, the National Institute of Technology Manipur, describes its own institutional vision as building toward a knowledge hub of excellence in education, research, innovation, and entrepreneurship, explicitly framed around nurturing skilled professionals committed to a sustainable ecosystem, under the leadership of a director with 35 years of experience in teaching, research, and consultancy in computer science and engineering who assumed the institute's directorship on 1 June 2024 (NIT Manipur, 2025). In July 2025, NIT Manipur joined a formal collaborative partnership among seven Institutes of National Importance across the Northeastern region, comprising NIT Sikkim, NIT Manipur, NIT Nagaland, NIT Silchar, NIT Agartala, NIT Mizoram, and the Indian Institute of Information Technology Manipur, explicitly designed to support national flagship initiatives including Make in India, Digital India, and Skill India by building a talent pipeline equipped with industry-relevant skills and innovation capabilities, spanning joint

research and innovation, co-development of curriculum and micro-credentials, advanced skilling, faculty development, startup incubation, and co-hosted national and international events (MyNation, 2025). This regional Institute of National Importance collaboration represents a genuinely significant academic-industry and inter-institutional linkage mechanism for Manipur specifically, since it embeds the state's technical research capacity within a coordinated Northeastern regional network rather than leaving NIT Manipur to build research partnerships and industry linkages in isolation.

17.3 Intellectual Property: Awareness, Registration and Commercialisation

A dedicated, current assessment of intellectual property awareness, registration rates, or commercialisation activity specific to Manipur was not located among the sources reviewed for this report, beyond the Geographical Indication certification of products such as Chakhao black rice and traditional handloom fabrics discussed in Chapter 4.3, which represents the most concrete, documented intellectual property commercialisation success identified anywhere in this report's review of the state's economy. Extending this Geographical Indication model to further distinctive Manipuri products, and building broader awareness of patent, trademark, and design registration processes among the state's MSME base discussed in Chapter 4.2, represents a plausible near-term priority, though a dedicated state IP strategy document was not located among the sources reviewed here.

17.4 Knowledge Institutions as Engines of Development

Manipur's knowledge institution base includes Manipur University, a central university, NIT Manipur, and the Indian Institute of Information Technology Manipur, together forming a comparatively strong technical and higher education foundation relative to the state's population size, an observation consistent with the state's above-average literacy rate documented in Chapter 1.8. NIT Manipur's own admission structure reflects a deliberate design balancing state and national talent integration, reserving 50 percent of its annual intake of 150 students specifically for students domiciled in Manipur, with the remaining 50 percent open to students from other Indian states, alongside a Direct Admission of Students Abroad programme that has operated since the 2013-14 academic year, extending the institute's reach to international students as well (India Science, Technology and Innovation Portal, n.d.). This balanced admission design ensures that the institute functions simultaneously as a genuine local capacity-building asset for Manipur's own student population and as a nationally and internationally networked institution, rather than functioning purely as either an exclusively local or exclusively national facility.

17.5 Building a Youth Innovation and Research Ecosystem

The Manipur Startup Policy's specific emphasis on student entrepreneurs, documented in Section 17.1, together with programmes such as the TOTALSTART entrepreneurship ecosystem initiative, which includes Manipur among eleven states across which it conducts

an annual search for groomable micro and small district-level entrepreneurs through Regional District Hubs, indicates at least some multi-institutional effort directed specifically at Manipur's youth innovation base beyond the state government's own Startup Manipur programme (TOTALSTART, n.d.). Given the youth outmigration pattern toward metropolitan centres discussed in Chapter 3.7, driven substantially by the state's narrow formal private sector employment base, a genuinely effective youth innovation and research ecosystem represents one of the more promising, if still developing, pathways for retaining skilled young people within the state economy rather than losing them to outmigration, provided the incubation, mentoring, and funding infrastructure discussed in Section 17.1 can be built out to the scale envisioned in the original 2018 policy.

17.6 Skill Development, Employability and Workforce Alignment

The mismatch between Manipur's comparatively strong general educational attainment, discussed in Chapter 1.8, and its narrow formal private sector employment base, discussed in Chapter 3.7, remains the central workforce alignment challenge facing the state, and it is a challenge the Northeastern Institute of National Importance collaboration described in Section 17.2 explicitly targets, given its stated objective of building an industry-relevant skills and innovation talent pipeline aligned with national flagship initiatives (MyNation, 2025). The 2025 academic review of Manipur's startup ecosystem specifically recommends encouraging young people to explore entrepreneurship as a career option by offering relevant courses and developing entrepreneurship programmes within vocational institutions, rather than treating entrepreneurship promotion and vocational skill development as separate policy tracks (Thongam, 2025). This integration of entrepreneurship education directly into vocational and technical training institutions, if implemented at scale across Manipur's ITI and polytechnic network discussed in Chapter 5.4, would represent a coherent response to the state's workforce alignment challenge, addressing simultaneously the narrow formal employment base documented in Chapter 3 and the education-to-employment transition gap documented in Chapter 5, though the current scale of implementation of this integrated approach across the state's vocational institutions was not confirmed among the sources reviewed for this report.

Chapter 18: Agriculture, Allied Sectors and Food Security

18.1 Cropping Pattern, Agricultural Productivity and Input Use

Agriculture and allied activities employ approximately 52.81 percent of all workers in Manipur, a workforce share that considerably exceeds the sector's contribution to gross value added, discussed in Chapter 3.1, consistent with the lower value addition per worker typical of smallholder, informal agricultural employment described throughout this report (Chief Commissioner Manipur portal, n.d.). Rice and maize form the state's principal cereal crops, with pulses including arhar, urad, cowpea, pea, and broad beans, and oilseeds including mustard, groundnut, and soybean rounding out the state's core cropping pattern, alongside a wide range of fruits, including pineapple, lime, banana, orange, and papaya, and vegetables, including cauliflower, cabbage, tomato, peas, carrot, and pumpkin, reflecting the agro-climatic diversity across valley and hill zones described in Chapter 1.1 (Chief Commissioner Manipur portal, n.d.).

Rice, the state's dominant staple crop grown principally in the Imphal Valley, showed year-on-year production variability typical of monsoon-dependent cultivation, with the state producing an estimated 4.91 lakh tonnes of rice in 2020-21, up from 3.85 lakh tonnes in 2019-20, according to state agriculture department estimates (Chief Commissioner Manipur portal, n.d.). A dedicated, current 2025 or 2026 rice production figure specific to Manipur was not located among the sources reviewed for this report and would need to be confirmed against the state Directorate of Agriculture's most recent crop estimates.

18.2 Irrigation and Water Use Efficiency in Agriculture

As discussed in Chapter 10.2, irrigation infrastructure in Manipur remains concentrated in the Imphal Valley, where canal-supported paddy cultivation benefits from the relatively flat terrain, while hill district agriculture, including the jhum, or shifting cultivation, practices discussed in Chapters 3.3 and 13.2, remains substantially rain-fed. The demonstrated link, documented in Chapter 13.2, between jhum cultivation intensity in specific river catchments, such as the Khuga River's 42 percent jhum-cultivated catchment area, and measurably degraded downstream water quality, means that irrigation and water use planning in Manipur cannot be treated as a purely engineering question of canal capacity and command area, but must be integrated with the upstream catchment land management priorities discussed in Chapter 14.2, since water available for irrigation downstream depends directly on the condition of the forested and cultivated hill catchments feeding the valley's rivers.

18.3 Agricultural Marketing, Price Realisation and Farmer Income

Nationally, the Union Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, under Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, released its Final Estimates for 2024-25 and First Advance Estimates for 2025-26 of horticulture crop area and production, reporting total horticulture crop area growing from 290.86 lakh hectares in 2023-24 to 301.36 lakh hectares in 2024-25, a 3.61

percent increase, and total production climbing from 3,547.44 lakh tonnes to 3,707.38 lakh tonnes, a 4.51 percent increase, with 2025-26 production projected to reach 3,708.46 lakh tonnes nationally, attributed by the Minister to sustained government investment in technology, irrigation, value chains, processing, storage, cold chains, and markets aimed at raising farmer incomes (Press Information Bureau, 2025). A dedicated, current, Manipur-specific farmer income or price realisation figure disaggregated from this national horticulture data was not located among the sources reviewed for this report, and given the state's comparatively underdeveloped market linkage and export performance documented in Chapter 3.3, it is plausible that Manipur's farmers realize a smaller share of this national horticulture growth story than farmers in states with more developed cold chain, processing, and market access infrastructure, though this remains an inference rather than a directly confirmed finding.

18.4 Food Processing Industry and Value Chain Development

Manipur's food processing sector is described by the Ministry of Food Processing Industries as concentrated particularly in organic horticulture, spices, and indigenous food products, with the state holding the distinction of being a leading producer of organic pineapples and passion fruit, alongside significant cultivation of ginger, turmeric, chili, and medicinal plants, developed in alignment with the state's organic farming policy under the Mission Organic Value Chain Development for North Eastern Region, a dedicated central scheme supporting organic value chain development specifically across the Northeastern states (Ministry of Food Processing Industries, n.d.). This organic and indigenous product orientation is consistent with the Geographical Indication certification strategy for products such as Chakhao black rice discussed in Chapter 4.3, reflecting a coherent, if still developing, state strategy of competing on distinctiveness and organic provenance rather than on the commodity scale that larger agricultural states can offer.

18.5 Animal Husbandry, Dairy and Poultry: Economic Contribution

As discussed in Chapter 3.3, animal husbandry, particularly piggery, remains culturally and economically significant across both Meitei and tribal communities in Manipur, given pork's central role in traditional cuisine and ceremonial practice across most of the state's ethnic groups. A dedicated, current assessment of the state's dairy or poultry sector output, milk production volumes, or livestock population figures was not located among the sources reviewed for this report and would need to be confirmed against the state's Directorate of Veterinary and Animal Husbandry Services records.

18.6 Fisheries: Inland, Marine and Aquaculture

As a landlocked state, Manipur's fisheries sector is entirely inland, centered principally on Loktak Lake and its associated wetland ecosystem, discussed in Chapters 1.1, 3.3, and 13.1, where fishing communities living on and around the lake's characteristic floating phumdis

depend on its fish stocks for both subsistence and market income. As documented in Chapter 13.3, however, Loktak's inclusion on the Ramsar Convention's Montreux Record reflects, among other pressures, declining fish stocks associated with the lake's broader ecological stress, meaning the sustainability of fisheries-based livelihoods around Loktak is directly tied to the success or failure of the catchment-level water quality and land use interventions discussed in Chapter 13.2 and 14.2, rather than being a fisheries management question that can be addressed through fisheries-specific policy alone.

18.7 Horticulture, Floriculture and Medicinal Plants

Manipur's horticulture sector shows a distinctive pattern of substantial identified potential relative to current realized cultivation. The state's Department of Horticulture and Soil Conservation identified 2,77,064 hectares as potential area suitable for horticulture crops including fruits, vegetables, spices, root and tuber crops, and aromatic and medicinal plants, against which only approximately 44,335 hectares, representing just 16 percent of this identified potential, was under actual horticultural cultivation as of the 2002-03 baseline assessment (Thangjam Agro, n.d.). While this specific utilization figure is dated and a current, updated utilization percentage was not located among the sources reviewed for this report, it illustrates a persistent structural pattern relevant to the state's development planning: a horticultural resource base that appears to considerably exceed current cultivation intensity, suggesting meaningful room for expansion provided the market linkage, irrigation, and processing infrastructure constraints documented elsewhere in this chapter and in Chapter 3 can be addressed.

Pineapple is the state's most economically significant horticultural crop by volume, cultivated across all of the state's original nine districts since its introduction in 1947, grown predominantly as a rainfed crop on hill slopes using the Giant Kew variety, suited to processing, and the Queen variety, grown for table consumption, alongside Khasi Mandarin and Orange as the state's most popular citrus varieties and Assam, Eureka, and Kachai lemon varieties grown under foothill conditions in Ukhrul, Churachandpur, Tamenglong, and Senapati districts (Department of Horticulture and Soil Conservation, Manipur, n.d.; Thangjam Agro, n.d.). Recent production data shows pineapple output at 128,429 tonnes in 2025, up from 125,672 tonnes in 2024, though still below the sector's all-time high of 166,483 tonnes recorded in 2020, against a historical low of 116,570 tonnes in 2012, indicating a sector that has grown substantially over the past decade but has not yet recovered to its peak output level (CEIC Data, 2026).

18.8 Agricultural Credit, Insurance and Risk Management

A dedicated, current assessment of Kisan Credit Card penetration, crop insurance coverage under schemes such as the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana, or institutional agricultural credit flow specific to Manipur was not located among the sources reviewed for this report. Given the high MSME non-performing asset rate documented in Chapter 4.2 and the more

general pattern of constrained formal credit access facing the state's small enterprise base, it is plausible that Manipur's smallholder farmers face comparable formal credit access constraints, particularly in hill districts where formal land title, needed as collateral for institutional lending, can be difficult to establish given the customary land tenure arrangements discussed in Chapter 1.2, though this remains an inference from adjacent evidence rather than a directly confirmed finding, and a dedicated assessment of agricultural credit and insurance penetration specific to Manipur would be needed to confirm it with confidence.

Chapter 19: Tourism, Culture and Creative Economy

19.1 Tourism Asset Inventory: Natural, Heritage, Religious and Adventure

Manipur's tourism asset base draws directly on the geographic, ecological, and cultural endowments documented throughout this report. Loktak Lake, discussed in Chapters 1.1, 13.1, and 13.3, functions as the state's single most recognized natural tourism destination, its floating phumdis and the Keibul Lamjao National Park, home to the endangered Sangai deer found nowhere else in the world, giving it a genuinely distinctive ecological tourism proposition beyond generic hill-station or lake tourism found elsewhere in India (Ajmal IAS Academy, 2025). Heritage tourism centers on the Kangla Fort complex in Imphal, discussed in Chapter 11.5, while religious and cultural tourism draws on the state's Vaishnavite temple tradition and Manipuri classical dance heritage described in Chapter 1.4. Adventure tourism potential exists across the state's hill districts, given the terrain diversity described in Chapter 1.1, though a dedicated, current assessment of adventure tourism infrastructure development specific to Manipur was not located among the sources reviewed for this report.

19.2 Tourism Infrastructure: Hotels, Connectivity and Facilitation

Tourism infrastructure investment in Manipur has been directly tied to the state's flagship cultural events, with the 2025 edition of the Manipur Sangai Festival receiving a state government sanction of approximately Rs. 15 crore specifically to elevate the festival's international stature, funding multiple exhibition zones, thematic shows, and cultural arenas alongside infrastructure upgrades, improved connectivity around festival venues, and enhanced visitor facilities intended to integrate Manipur more fully into broader national and international travel circuits (Travel And Tour World, 2025a). This event-linked infrastructure investment pattern is consistent with the broader connectivity investments discussed in Chapter 8, particularly the Imphal airport terminal upgrade discussed in Chapter 8.3 and the Jiribam-Imphal railway project discussed in Chapter 8.2, both of which, once complete, stand to materially improve visitor access to the state, though as of the 2025 festival season, tourism infrastructure remained still substantially dependent on road access and the single existing airport, given that the rail link remained under construction.

19.3 Domestic and International Tourist Flows: Trends and Targets

Manipur's tourism sector has experienced a severe and well-documented disruption directly attributable to the 2023-2025 ethnic conflict. Reporting from late 2023 captured this disruption through the direct testimony of local tourism-dependent workers, including a fish seller from Karang island on Loktak Lake, who described how, prior to the conflict, large numbers of tourists visited the island, providing her with a good income, but that the conflict had brought what she described as an unforeseen lull in her business (Imphal Review of Arts and Politics, 2023). This individual account is consistent with the broader pattern documented throughout this report, in which state efforts to promote tourism as a potential job-creating sector, including hosting major events such as Femina Miss India and the Durand Cup

football tournament alongside the Sangai Festival, had begun to gain genuine momentum before the conflict's onset disrupted this trajectory (Imphal Review of Arts and Politics, 2023).

The Sangai Festival itself was suspended entirely for two years following the outbreak of violence in May 2023, before returning for its 12th edition, held from 21 to 30 November 2025 (Ajmal IAS Academy, 2025). A dedicated, current, precise visitor footfall figure for the 2025 festival, or for the state's tourism sector more broadly, was not located among the sources reviewed for this report, though reporting in the run-up to the 2025 festival noted that a proscribed group had declared a 24-hour general strike overlapping with festival activities and warned of further shutdown action if certain conditions were not met, a threat explicitly identified as likely to reduce tourist mobility and footfall given the established pattern in which bandhs halt transportation and restrict local services, prompting travelers to cancel or postpone visits (Travel And Tour World, 2025a).

19.4 Cultural Heritage Preservation and Institutional Framework

The 2025 Sangai Festival's return after its two-year suspension became the occasion for a genuine and substantive public debate about the appropriate role of cultural tourism promotion during an unresolved humanitarian crisis, a debate this report presents as a matter of documented record rather than adjudicating a single correct position. The festival's inauguration on 21 November 2025, attended by Governor Ajay Kumar Bhalla, was met with protests by internally displaced persons and organisations including the Coordinating Committee on Manipur Integrity, who gathered to demand resettlement of displaced people and a resolution of the underlying ethnic conflict, with tensions escalating into clashes between protesters and police involving tear gas and lathi charges (Travel And Tour World, 2025b, 2025c). A commentary published in the Imphal Review of Arts and Politics argued forcefully that holding the festival amid the state's humanitarian catastrophe, political instability, and economic collapse served no public interest, generated no meaningful tourism revenue or healing, and instead wasted public funds while deepening mistrust, arguing that communities in the hills could not travel to valley festival venues and Meiteis from the valley could not travel to hill venues such as the Cherry Blossom and Flower Festival at Mao Gate, with artisans and performers from conflict-affected and segregated districts unable to cross buffer zones to participate at all (Imphal Review of Arts and Politics, 2025).

Set against this critique, the state government and Governor's office framed the festival's return as a deliberate statement of resilience and cultural continuity, with the Governor, at the festival's closing ceremony on 30 November 2025, praising government efforts to promote tourism and strengthen infrastructure and emphasizing that despite challenges, the festival highlighted unity, cultural pride, and the resilience of Manipuri society (Ajmal IAS Academy, 2025). This report notes that both positions rest on genuinely held and defensible premises, one prioritizing the symbolic and economic value of cultural continuity and normalcy signaling, the other prioritizing the practical and ethical primacy of humanitarian resolution

over cultural celebration during active displacement, and it presents this tension as itself a significant, unresolved feature of the state's current cultural heritage governance landscape rather than a settled matter.

19.5 Creative Industries: Handicrafts, Performing Arts and Cultural Economy

The Sangai Festival itself functions as the state's primary institutional platform for showcasing its creative industries, with the 2025 edition specifically featuring Manipur's handloom, handicrafts, traditional sports, and performing arts alongside music, dance, indigenous games, textiles, and local cuisines, drawing on the same craft traditions discussed in Chapters 3.6 and 4.3, including handloom fabrics and Geographical Indication certified products (Ajmal IAS Academy, 2025; Travel And Tour World, 2025a). As documented in Section 19.3, this festival economy is genuinely significant for a specific segment of the state's informal and small enterprise workforce, supporting artisans, food stall operators, homestay owners, tour guides, performers, transporters, and vendors, many of whom rely on festival-season earnings to sustain their livelihoods through the quieter months of the year, meaning that disruptions to the festival, whether from conflict-related security concerns or from the boycott and strike actions documented in Section 19.3, carry direct and material livelihood consequences for this specific creative economy workforce (Travel And Tour World, 2025a).

19.6 Film, Media and Content Industries as Economic Drivers

The Sangai Festival includes a dedicated Sangai Film Festival component, indicating some institutional recognition of film and media as part of the state's broader cultural and creative economy strategy (Ajmal IAS Academy, 2025). A dedicated, current assessment of Manipur's broader film and media industry output, employment, or economic contribution beyond this festival component was not located among the sources reviewed for this report, and this remains an area requiring direct reference to the state's Department of Art and Culture for a complete treatment in any future revision of this chapter.

Chapter 20: Cross-Cutting Themes and Integrated Policy Imperatives

20.1 Sustainable Development Goals of the State

Manipur's SDG performance, tracked through NITI Aayog's SDG India Index, was documented in Chapter 1.5 as having improved sufficiently between the 2020-21 and 2023-24 editions to place the state among the newly designated "front runner" category nationally, alongside states including Assam, Chhattisgarh, and West Bengal (Press Information Bureau, 2024). This composite improvement, however, sits uneasily alongside the sector-specific findings documented throughout this report: an education system, discussed in Chapter 5, showing the nation's highest primary dropout rate and a declining Performance Grading Index score; a health system, discussed in Chapter 6, with genuinely conflicting evidence on child mortality trends; and a social justice landscape, discussed in Chapter 7, disrupted by the most severe ethnic conflict in the state's recent history. This report's assessment is that the SDG India Index's composite, pre-conflict-weighted score should be read as a snapshot of the state's trajectory prior to 2023 rather than as a current, real-time indicator of the state's present development condition, and that a genuinely current SDG assessment for Manipur, incorporating conflict-period data on displacement, education disruption, and health system strain, would very likely show meaningful divergence from the 2023-24 published index score.

20.2 Gender Mainstreaming Across Sectors

Gender dynamics recur as a distinctive thread across nearly every sector examined in this report, though not in a uniform direction. Manipur's women demonstrate notably strong economic agency through the Ima Keithel market and the state's high rate of women's MSME ownership, documented in Chapters 3.6 and 4.2, a pattern of genuine, comparative strength relative to national norms. Set against this, the state's child marriage prevalence rose between NFHS survey rounds, from 13.7 to 16.3 percent, against the national trend of improvement, documented in Chapters 6.7 and 7.5, and the conflict has generated distinctly gendered harms, with mass rape documented among the methods of violence employed during the 2023-2025 conflict according to conflict-tracking academic sources (Wikipedia, n.d.-c). Effective gender mainstreaming policy for Manipur must hold both halves of this picture together: building on the state's genuine, demonstrated strength in women's economic participation and market leadership, while directly and explicitly addressing the documented deterioration in child marriage prevalence and the gendered violence associated with the conflict, rather than allowing the positive economic narrative to obscure the more troubling protection and safety findings.

20.3 Youth Policy and Demographic Dividend Realisation

Manipur's youth population faces the structural mismatch, documented across Chapters 3, 5, and 17, between comparatively strong general educational attainment and a narrow formal private sector employment base, a combination that has historically driven youth

outmigration toward metropolitan centres such as Delhi, Bengaluru, and Guwahati. The state's Startup Manipur policy and its emerging Institute of National Importance research collaborations, discussed in Chapter 17, represent genuine, if still maturing, institutional responses aimed at retaining and productively employing this youth population within the state rather than losing it to outmigration. Realizing any demographic dividend from Manipur's youth population over the coming decade will depend substantially on whether these institutional efforts can be scaled fast enough to outpace both the underlying structural employment mismatch and the specific, additional disruption the conflict has imposed on young people's schooling and early career trajectories, documented in Chapters 5 and 7.5.

20.4 Migration: Internal, Inter-State and International Dimensions

Migration in Manipur must be understood along three distinct dimensions that this report has documented separately but which together form a single, integrated picture. The first is the longstanding pattern of youth outmigration to other Indian states for education and employment, discussed in Section 20.3. The second, and by far the most significant in current scale and urgency, is the internal displacement caused by the 2023-2025 conflict, which has forced the relocation of approximately 67,000 people, a scale of displacement one academic study characterizes as the largest internal migration event in Southeast Asia in recent years (International Journal for Multidisciplinary Research, 2026). This displacement has proven unusually persistent rather than transitory: most displaced persons remain unable to return home because their houses have been destroyed or remain occupied by other communities, because of continuing insecurity, and because of the absence of adequate rehabilitation support, a combination of factors that has transformed what were originally intended as temporary relief camps into what this report's source material describes as semi-permanent settlements (International Journal for Multidisciplinary Research, 2026).

In response, the state government has committed to a Rs. 523 crore Resettlement and Rehabilitation Package, announced in the Manipur Budget 2025-26, structured around a three-phase programme beginning in mid-2025: first, resettlement of families whose houses were only partially damaged; second, rehabilitation delivered through a dedicated allocation within the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Gramin framework discussed in Chapter 12.3, tailored specifically to displaced households within their home districts; and third, inter-district relocation between valley and hill areas where return to the original home location is not feasible, alongside a stated plan to close 350 relief camps over the course of this phased process (International Journal for Multidisciplinary Research, 2026). More than 10,000 internally displaced persons from over 2,200 households were specifically identified as covered under the early stages of this programme (International Journal for Multidisciplinary Research, 2026). The third dimension of migration relevant to Manipur is cross-border movement associated with its international frontier with Myanmar, discussed in Chapters 4.4 and 4.8 primarily in a trade context, but which also carries a documented, contested migration dimension, with alleged illegal migration and refugee influx from Myanmar cited among the disputed contributing factors to the broader conflict according to

conflict-tracking sources, a claim this report notes as contested and unresolved rather than an established causal finding (Wikipedia, n.d.-c, n.d.-d).

20.5 Science, Technology and Innovation for Development

Manipur's science, technology, and innovation landscape, discussed at length in Chapters 16 and 17, presents perhaps the starkest internal contradiction identified anywhere in this report: a state building genuine institutional innovation capacity through NIT Manipur's improving national rankings and its new Institute of National Importance regional research collaboration, while simultaneously experiencing more cumulative internet shutdown days than nearly any other Indian state, a pattern that directly undermines the connectivity-dependent digital public infrastructure, e-governance, and citizen service delivery systems that any innovation-led development strategy would ordinarily assume as a baseline. Reconciling this contradiction, building the state's innovation capacity while simultaneously protecting the connectivity continuity that innovation depends upon, is a distinctly Manipur-specific policy challenge not faced in comparable form by most other Indian states, and this report identifies it as one of the more urgent, if underexamined, structural tensions in the state's current development strategy.

20.6 Statistical System Strengthening and Evidence-Based Policymaking

This report's preparation has itself surfaced a recurring and significant finding about the state of Manipur's statistical infrastructure: across nearly every chapter, current, granular, state-specific data proved considerably harder to source reliably than would be the case for a more heavily documented state. The low Aadhaar seeding rate in the state's own school data, documented in Chapter 5.1, the absence of a current, disaggregated state Human Development Index, documented in Chapter 1.5, and the genuine, unresolved discrepancy between SRS and NFHS child mortality findings, documented in Chapter 6.3, together point to a state statistical system that would benefit substantially from dedicated strengthening investment, both to improve routine data quality and completeness and to enable more confident, evidence-based policymaking across every sector examined in this report. This report treats statistical system strengthening not as a narrow technical afterthought but as a foundational precondition for the effective targeting of nearly every other policy priority identified throughout this document, since programmes designed and evaluated against unreliable or incomplete baseline data cannot be reliably assessed for their actual effectiveness.

20.7 Public Participation: Behavioural Change and Citizen Engagement

Public participation in Manipur's governance has been shaped decisively by the events of 2023 to 2026 documented throughout this report, from the civil society organisations that publicly opposed the continuation of President's Rule, documented in Chapter 15.1, to the internally displaced persons who protested at the 2025 Sangai Festival to demand

resettlement priority over cultural celebration, documented in Chapter 19.4, to the community-led catchment management approach recommended by researchers studying Loktak Lake's water quality, documented in Chapter 13.2. Across each of these examples, this report observes a consistent pattern: Manipur's citizens and civil society organisations have shown themselves willing and able to engage directly and publicly with contested governance decisions, rather than remaining passive recipients of state policy, a civic engagement capacity that state and central policymakers should treat as a genuine asset to be incorporated into policy design processes going forward, rather than as an obstacle to be managed or worked around.

Chapter 21: State Vision 2047 — Strategic Priorities and Development Roadmap

21.1 Long-Term Vision and Flagship Missions

Manipur's long-term development vision must be situated within the national Viksit Bharat 2047 framework, the Government of India's overarching initiative to transform India into a developed nation by the centenary of its independence, built around a stated development mantra of comprehensive development for all and a trinity of demography, democracy, and diversity, backed by collective national effort (Bharatiya Janata Party, 2024; Viksit India, n.d.). NITI Aayog's foundational approach paper for this vision sets ambitious national targets, including GDP in the range of USD 30 to 40 trillion and per capita income between USD 15,000 and 18,000 by 2047, alongside social objectives including zero poverty and universal quality education and healthcare, and environmental commitments including net-zero carbon emissions (Viksit India, n.d.). Newly sworn-in Chief Minister Yumnam Khemchand Singh explicitly invoked this national framework immediately upon taking office in February 2026, stating that Manipur will play an important role in Viksit Bharat 2047, a framing this report treats as a genuine, if as yet undetailed, statement of the new government's intended development orientation (News on Air, 2026a).

For Manipur specifically, this report's own synthesis across the preceding twenty chapters suggests that a credible long-term vision cannot simply adopt the national Viksit Bharat targets unmodified, but must instead be built around a small number of flagship missions calibrated to the state's actual starting conditions as documented throughout this report: first, a Peace and Reconciliation Mission addressing the unresolved ethnic conflict and its humanitarian aftermath, discussed further in Section 21.2; second, a Connectivity Completion Mission built around the Jiribam-Imphal railway, highway corridor completion, and urban roads investment documented in Chapter 8; third, an Ecological Security Mission integrating the water quality, forest cover, and disaster resilience findings of Chapters 13 and 14; and fourth, a Statistical and Digital Foundations Mission addressing the data quality gaps documented in Chapter 20.6 and the connectivity-innovation tension documented in Chapter 20.5.

21.2 Medium-Term Priority Action Plan (2025–2030)

The restoration of elected government in February 2026, documented in Chapter 15.1, creates a genuine, near-term window for state-led, rather than centrally administered, action on the most urgent items identified throughout this report. In this report's assessment, five priorities warrant the most immediate attention over the remainder of this decade. First, completion of the Rs. 523 crore, three-phase Resettlement and Rehabilitation Package documented in Chapter 20.4, closing the state's 350 relief camps and enabling the sustainable return or resettlement of the roughly 67,000 people displaced since May 2023. Second, urgent, targeted investigation and intervention on the primary school dropout crisis documented in Chapter 5.1, where the state's 12.6 percent primary dropout rate, nearly nine times the national average, represents the single most alarming statistic identified anywhere in this report.

Third, completion of the Jiribam-Imphal railway line, targeted for December 2028, and the parallel Khongsang-Noney-Imphal highway corridor, targeted for March 2028, both documented in Chapter 8, which together would fundamentally restructure the state's connectivity profile. Fourth, implementation of the catchment-level land use interventions recommended by the Loktak Lake water quality research documented in Chapter 13.2, given the lake's Montreux Record status and its centrality to the state's ecological and tourism identity. Fifth, a dedicated state statistical system strengthening initiative, addressing the Aadhaar seeding gap in education data, the absence of a current state HDI, and the SRS-NFHS child mortality discrepancy, all documented in Chapter 20.6, as a foundational enabler for every other priority on this list.

21.3 Financing Strategy: Resource Mobilisation, Revenue Enhancement and Expenditure Rationalisation

As documented extensively in Chapter 2, Manipur's fiscal architecture leaves limited room for independent financing of this ambitious agenda from own-source revenue alone, given that own tax and non-tax revenue together cover only a small fraction of total government receipts. The state's financing strategy for the priorities identified in Section 21.2 must therefore continue to rely substantially on central devolution and targeted central schemes, including the 50-year interest-free capital investment loan facility discussed in Chapter 2.3, while pursuing incremental own-revenue enhancement through the GST destination-based collection advantage discussed in Chapter 2.7 and continued MSME formalization discussed in Chapter 4.2. Expenditure rationalisation, particularly a wind-down of the extraordinary security and police incentive allocations documented in Chapter 2.2, currently absorbing nearly Rs. 2,866 crore annually, as the security situation continues to normalize following the February 2026 restoration of elected government, would free substantial fiscal space for redirection toward the education, health, and connectivity priorities identified throughout this report.

21.4 Centre-State Partnership: Centrally Sponsored Schemes and Special Grants

The documented gap in Chapter 14.5, where Manipur did not receive central flood assistance package support despite the severe 2024 flooding that affected 200,000 people, alongside the genuinely substantial central support the state has received for the Jiribam-Imphal railway, the capital investment loan facility, and conflict relief funding, together suggest that Manipur's Centre-State partnership over the coming years should prioritize more consistent, predictable disaster and climate resilience financing alongside its already well-established infrastructure and security financing channels, ensuring that the connectivity and security gains documented throughout this report are not undermined by an under-resourced response to the recurring flood and landslide hazards documented in Chapter 14.

21.5 Inter-State Cooperation: Regional Development Councils and River Boards

Manipur's dual river basin geography, spanning the Barak system feeding toward Assam and the Chindwin system feeding into Myanmar, discussed in Chapter 1.1, means the state's water resource and disaster management planning is inherently a matter of inter-state and, in the case of the Chindwin system, international coordination rather than a purely intra-state concern. The state's continued engagement in the North Eastern Institute of National Importance research collaboration documented in Chapter 17.2, and its participation in regional trade forums alongside Myanmar, Bangladesh, and Thailand documented in Chapter 4.7, illustrate an existing institutional foundation for this kind of regional cooperation that could plausibly be extended to formal river basin management coordination with neighboring Assam and, security conditions permitting, with authorities across the Myanmar border.

21.6 International Collaboration: Common Development Agenda and Global Partnership

Manipur's most concrete international collaboration dimension remains its position as a prospective land gateway to Myanmar and, through it, to the broader Association of Southeast Asian Nations market, discussed throughout Chapter 4 in the context of the Act East Policy and the Moreh Integrated Check Post. As documented in Chapter 4.7, the state's own Global Buyers and Sellers Summit in 2025 drew participation from Myanmar, Bangladesh, Thailand, and Japan, indicating a genuine, if still early-stage, international engagement posture. Realizing this international collaboration potential at greater scale remains contingent, as this report has emphasized throughout, on the durable restoration of peace and administrative unity documented as the state's central governance challenge in Chapter 15.

21.7 Monitoring, Evaluation and Results Framework

Given the statistical system gaps documented in Chapter 20.6, this report's central recommendation for Manipur's monitoring and evaluation framework going forward is that the state prioritize closing its own data reliability gaps as a precondition for any credible results framework, rather than adopting an ambitious set of headline targets that cannot be reliably measured against current baseline data. A results framework built around the specific, well-documented indicators available in this report, including the primary dropout rate documented in Chapter 5.1, the fiscal deficit and debt trajectory documented in Chapter 2.4, and the displacement and resettlement progress documented in Chapter 20.4, offers a more credible near-term monitoring foundation than an aspirational framework built around indicators the state cannot yet reliably measure.

21.8 Accountability Architecture: Legislature, Civil Society and Citizens

The restoration of Manipur's Legislative Assembly to normal functioning in February 2026, following a full year of suspended animation documented in Chapter 15.1, restores the state's primary formal accountability mechanism for the priorities identified throughout this Vision 2047 chapter. Alongside this formal legislative accountability, this report's review across

Chapters 15, 19, and 20 has documented a consistently engaged civil society landscape in Manipur, from the MLAs who publicly criticized the prolongation of President's Rule, to the internally displaced persons who protested at the 2025 Sangai Festival, to the researchers and civil society voices engaged on Loktak Lake's ecological future. This report's concluding assessment is that Manipur's path toward its own version of Viksit Bharat 2047 will be shaped as much by the quality and inclusiveness of this civic accountability architecture, and by whether the state's diverse valley and hill communities can rebuild a shared sense of common purpose following the 2023-2025 conflict, as by any specific fiscal allocation, infrastructure project, or sectoral policy reform documented in the twenty chapters that precede this one.

End Note

This Comprehensive Development Framework for the State of Manipur has sought to provide an honest, evidence-grounded account of the state's development condition across twenty-one thematic dimensions, current as of July 2026. Three overarching conclusions emerge from this exercise. First, Manipur possesses genuine, well-documented strengths, including an internationally distinctive natural and cultural endowment, a demonstrated capacity for high-quality local administration exemplified by Chandel district's national ranking, a women-led informal and small enterprise economy of real vibrancy, and a technical education institution, NIT Manipur, on a genuinely improving trajectory. Second, the state faces serious, well-documented structural constraints predating 2023, including a narrow own-revenue base, thin industrial development, and a persistent valley-hill service delivery gradient. Third, and most consequentially, the 2023-2025 ethnic conflict and the resulting year-long period of central administration have compounded these pre-existing constraints with an acute, ongoing humanitarian, administrative, and fiscal crisis whose full resolution remains, as of this report's preparation, incomplete.

This report has been prepared with deliberate restraint regarding data precision: every statistic has been dated to its actual year and source, gaps in available data have been stated openly rather than filled with invented figures, and genuinely conflicting data sources, such as the SRS and NFHS child mortality findings in Chapter 6, have been presented as unresolved rather than artificially reconciled. The restoration of elected government in February 2026 offers a genuine opportunity for renewed, state-led progress on the priorities identified throughout this document, though the underlying tensions that produced the 2023 conflict remain, as of this writing, only partially addressed.

Council for Comprehensive Development Framework

Youth Peace and Development Forum

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