

Role of Education in Cross Border Connectivity and Inclusive Growth with Special Reference to North-East India

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Abstract: Education is a key to development of any nation. The main aim of education is all-round development. The role of education is becoming more vibrant and dynamic in the present liberalized, privatized and globalized (LPG) world. Education has played a pivotal role for the development of North-Eastern Region of India. The Government of India is taking prominent and prompt actions for the development of this region. ASEAN Study Centre was inaugurated in NEHU, Shillong campus on 8th August, 2016 to strengthen the relationship among North-Eastern Region and ASEAN countries. North-East India has 5300 km of international border with five countries viz., Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, Myanmar and Nepal (BBCMN). There is an urgent need to provide awareness to North-East People through education to take active participation for inclusive growth of this region. In the present paper an attempt has been made to expose the role of education in cross border connectivity and inclusive growth with special reference to North-East India.

Index Terms: Education, Cross Border Connectivity, Inclusive Growth and North-East India.

Be good, see good and do good. That is the way to God.

Money comes and goes; but morality comes and grows!

Good and bad, peace and agony, pain and pleasure, all these originate within man and not outside him.

The past is beyond recovery. We are not sure of the future. The given moment is the right time. Do not delay; do right action.

.....*Sri Sathya Sai Baba*

1. Introduction

Knowledge is power. In the present digital world people are moving from one place to another place and crossing borders easily for better education, health, job and life. India has the youngest population in the world. It is the second most populous country after China. As the world has been increasingly acknowledging India's rising power status, India has begun adapting its foreign policy, to meet the international challenges of the 21st century and to increase its global influence and status. For many years, India took pride in its role as the leader of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and viewed itself as the chief defender of the rights of the less developed countries. In the past few years, New Delhi subjected its strategic vision to enlargement most

noticeably in Asia, and allowed the definition of its security interests to get broadened. The 21st century is being touted as the Asian age, primarily belonging to China and India. The end of the Cold War and the growing impacts of globalization are inspiring India to redefine its position and its role, both at the regional and at the global level (Reddy & Amareswaran, 2012). In the present changing scenario it is good to remember the word of Chanakya to strengthen foreign relations with special reference to North-East India. “Before you start some work, always ask yourself three questions – why am I doing it, what the results might be and will I be successful. Only when you think deeply and find satisfactory answers to these questions, go ahead” (Chanakya).

2. North-East India

India's North-East is a land of undulating hills and plains with luxuriant green cover and a wide variety of rare and exotic flora and fauna. It consists of 8 states viz., Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura. Located at: Longitude 89.46 degree E to 97.30 degree E and Latitude 21.57 degree N to 29.30 degree N. the contiguous Seven Sister States (Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, and Tripura), and the Himalayan state of Sikkim. The Siliguri Corridor in West Bengal, with a width of 21 to 40 kilometres (13 to 25 mi), connects the North Eastern Region with East India, and separates Sikkim from the Seven Sister States. The region comprises an area of 262,230 square kilometres, 8.0 percent of India (en.wikipedia.org).

The states of North Eastern Region are officially recognised under the North Eastern Council (NEC), constituted in 1971 as the acting agency for the development of the eight states. At the time of induction of NEC, the North Eastern Region comprised the Seven Sister States only. Sikkim was introduced as the eighth member in 2002. Sikkim is the least populous and the second smallest state in India (en.wikipedia.org).

Demography of North-Eastern States

The given bellow tables provide the demography of North-Easter States.

Table-1: Demography of North-Eastern States

State	Population	Males	Females	Sex Ratio	Literacy %
Arunachal Pradesh	1,383,727	713,912	669,815	938	65.38
Assam	31,205,576	15,939,443	15,266,133	958	72.19
Manipur	2,570,390	1,290,171	1,280,219	992	79.21
Meghalaya	2,966,889	1,491,832	1,475,057	989	74.43
Mizoram	1,097,206	555,339	541,867	976	91.33
Nagaland	1,978,502	1,024,649	953,853	931	79.55
Sikkim	610,577	323,070	287,507	890	81.42
Tripura	3,673,917	1,874,376	1,799,541	960	87.22

Source: Census of India, 2011.

Table-2: Demography of North-Eastern States

State	Rural Population	Urban Population	Area (km ²)	Density (/km ²)
Arunachal Pradesh	870,087	227,881	83,743	17
Assam	23,216,288	3,439,240	78,438	397
Manipur	1,590,820	575,968	22,327	122
Meghalaya	1,864,711	454,111	22,429	132
Mizoram	447,567	441,006	21,081	52
Nagaland	1,647,249	342,787	16,579	119
Sikkim	480,981	59,870	7,096	86
Tripura	2,653,453	545,750	10,486	350

Source: Census of India, 2011.

3. Education

"I think an education is not only important, it is the most important thing you can do with your life."

...Dean Kamen

"The roots of education are bitter, but the fruit is sweet."

...Aristotle

"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world."

...Nelson Mandela

"Education is not a problem. Education is an opportunity."

...Lyndon B. Johnson

Definition of Education

- The act or process of educating or being educated.
- The knowledge or skill obtained or developed by a learning process.
- A program of instruction of a specified kind or level.
- The field of study that is concerned with the pedagogy of teaching and learning.
- An instructive or enlightening experience.
- The process of acquiring knowledge and understanding.
- Knowledge and understanding acquired through study and training.
- The process of teaching, especially at a school, college, or university.
- The theory of teaching and learning.

Education encompasses both the teaching and learning of knowledge, proper conduct, and technical competency. It thus focuses on the cultivation of skills, trades or professions, as well as mental, moral & aesthetic development.

4. Aim of Education

“The aim of education should be to teach us rather how to think, than what to think rather to improve our minds, so as to enable us to think for ourselves, than to load the memory with the thoughts of other men.”

...Bill Beattie

Education is the process of instruction aimed at the all round development of boys and girls. Education dispels ignorance. It is the only wealth that cannot be robbed. Learning includes the Moral Values and the improvement of character and the methods to increase the strength of mind.

Education plays an important role in the progress of an individual’s mind and country. Ignorance and poverty are major speed-breakers in the developing country and can be overcome easily through education.

The main aim of education is all-round development i.e. physical development, mental development, spiritual development, moral development, social development, political development, technological development. In the present world economic development is also added in the list of all-round development under aim of education.

5. Role of Education in Cross Border Connectivity and Inclusive Growth

“There is some self-interest behind every friendship. There is no friendship without self-interests. This is a bitter truth”.

“Education is the best friend. An educated person is respected everywhere. Education beats the beauty and the youth”.

...Chanakya

Education is a key for development of any nation. The main aim of education is all-round development. The role of education is becoming more vibrant and dynamic in the present liberalized, privatized and globalized (LPG) world. Education has played a pivotal role for the development of North-Eastern Region of India. One must always seek to befriend a person who possesses the qualities of brilliance, respect, fear, shame, and a sense of sacrifice. If these virtues do not exist in a person’s heart, then he is not worthy of one’s friendship. One can rest assured that such a friendship will not stand the test of time (Chanakya).

The investigator has identified five important things to strengthen cross border connectivity and inclusive growth of North-East India.

1) Building trust and minimizing mistrust among the states/people

The review of related literature shows that there is a lack of trust among the states and people in this region. There are so many reasons for it. It is the duty of government to build the trust and to minimize the mistrust among the states and people. Building trust isn’t hard when you approach your relationship with respect and understanding. The basic principle of trust is easy: do what you say you

are going to do. Stay true to that and a trusting relationship will naturally begin to form (www.powerofpositivity.com).

2) Strengthening of Inner-border connectivity

The transport facility of the region is not up to the mark. There is a lack of transport facility for rural people. There is an urgent need to strengthen the road, rail, and air connectivity of North-Eastern states by protecting the rights of ethnic groups. A group of people always oppose the construction of new railway tracks in the region of North-East India. There is an urgent need to create a public platform to express the feelings of people freely at any time. It is good to create a Public centre at Guwahati to take care of all the people of North-East India those who are leaving this region for better education, health and employment.

3) Awareness of international relations

India's Northeast is one of South Asia's hottest trouble spots, not simply because the region has as many as 30 armed insurgent organizations (Ministry of Home Affairs, 2002-03) operating and fighting the Indian state, but because trans-border linkages that these groups have, and strategic alliances among them, have acted as force multipliers and have made the conflict dynamics all the more intricate. With demands of these insurgent groups ranging from secession to autonomy and the right to self-determination, and a plethora of ethnic groups clamouring for special rights and the protection of their distinct identity, the region is bound to be a turbulent one (Hussain).

Moreover, the location of the eight North-Eastern Indian States itself is part of the reason why it has always been a hotbed of militancy with trans-border ramifications. This region of 263,000 square kilometres shares highly porous and sensitive frontiers with China in the North, Myanmar in the East, Bangladesh in the South West and Bhutan to the North West. The region's strategic location is underlined by the fact that it shares a 4,500 km-long international border with its four South Asian neighbours, but is connected to the Indian mainland by a tenuous 22 km-long land corridor passing through Siliguri in the eastern State of West Bengal, appropriately described as the 'Chicken's Neck'(Hussain).

There is an urgent need to provide awareness to North-East People through education to take active participation for inclusive growth of this region.

India International Organization Participation:

- 1) **ADB** : Asia Development Bank
- 2) **AfDB (nonregional member)**: African Development Bank
- 3) **Arctic Council (observer)**
- 4) **ARF** : ASEAN Regional Form

- 5) **ASEAN (dialogue partner)** : Association of Southeast Asian Nations
- 6) **BIMSTEC** : Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation
- 7) **BIS** : Bank for International Settlements
- 8) **BRICS** : Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa
- 9) **CERN** : European Organization of Nuclear Research
- 10) **CICA** : Conference of Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia
- 11) **CP** : Colombo Plan
- 12) **EAS** : East Asia Summit
- 13) **FAO** : Food and Agriculture Organization
- 14) **FATF** : Financial Action Task Force
- 15) **G-15** : Group of 15
- 16) **G-20** : Group of 20
- 17) **G-24** : Group of 24
- 18) **G-5** : Group of 5
- 19) **G-77** : Group of 77
- 20) **IAEA** : International Atomic Energy Agency
- 21) **IBRD** : International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (World Bank)
- 22) **ICAO** : International Civil Aviation Organization
- 23) **ICC (national committees)** : International Chamber of Commerce
- 24) **ICRM** : International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement
- 25) **IDA** : International Development Association
- 26) **IFAD** : International Fund for Agricultural Development
- 27) **IFC** : International Finance Corporation
- 28) **IFRCS** : International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
- 29) **IHO** : International Hydrographic Organization
- 30) **ILO** : International Labour Organization
- 31) **IMF** : International Monetary Fund
- 32) **IMO** : International Maritime Organization
- 33) **IMSO** : International Mobile Satellite Organization

- 34) Interpol** : International Criminal Police Organization
- 35) IOC** : International Olympic Committee
- 36) IOM** : International Organization of Migration
- 37) IPU** : Inter-Parliamentary Union
- 38) ISO** : International Organization for Standardization
- 39) ITSO** : International Telecommunications Satellite Organization
- 40) ITU** : International Telecommunication Union
- 41) ITUC (NGOs)** : International Trade Union Confederation, the Successor to ICFTU (International Confederation of Free Trade Unions) and the WCL (World Confederation of Labour)
- 42) LAS (observer)** : League of Arab States
- 43) MIGA** : Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency
- 44) MINURSO** : United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara
- 45) MONUSCO** : United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo
- 46) NAM** : Nonaligned Movement
- 47) OAS (observer)** : Organization of American States
- 48) OECD** : Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
- 49) OPCW** : Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons
- 50) Pacific Alliance (observer)**
- 51) PCA** : Permanent Court of Arbitration
- 52) PIF (partner)** : Pacific Islands Forum
- 53) SAARC** : South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
- 54) SACEP** : South Asia Co-operative Environment Program
- 55) SCO (observer)** : Shanghai Cooperation Organization
- 56) UN** : United Nations
- 57) UNCTAD** : United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, also known as LOS

- 58) UNDOF : United Nations Disengagement Observer Force
- 59) UNESCO : United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
- 60) UNHCR : United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
- 61) UNIDO : United Nations Industrial Development Organization
- 62) UNIFIL : United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon
- 63) UNISFA : United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei
- 64) UNITAR : United Nations Institute for Training and Research
- 65) UNMISS : United Nations Mission in South Sudan
- 66) UNOCI : United Nations Operation in Cote d’Ivoire
- 67) UNWTO : United Nations World Tourism Organization
- 68) UPU : Universal Postal Union
- 69) WCO : World Customs Organization
- 70) WFTU (NGOs) : World Federation of Trade Unions
- 71) WHO : World Health Organization
- 72) WIPO : World Intellectual Property Organization
- 73) WMO : World Meteorological Organization
- 74) WTO : World trade Organization

4) Providing the best education

The Government of India is taking prominent and prompt actions for the development of this region. ASEAN Study Centre was inaugurated in NEHU, Shillong campus on 8th August, 2016 to strengthen the relationship among North-Eastern Region and ASEAN countries. North-East India has 5300 km of international border with five countries viz., Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, Myanmar and Nepal (BBCMN). There is a need to strengthen cultural exchange programme between and among the Indian states and with neighbouring countries through education. It is good to initiate India-ASEAN Educational Foundation like US-India Educational Foundation to strengthen the relationship between India and ASEAN countries. It is also need and important to organize Orientation and Refresher courses on International Relations in the universities of North-East India. A change is possible through education only. Education is a key for change and development.

5) Stopping of malpractices in the society

There are so many malpractices continuing in this region. The investigator has observed one malpractice near NEHU at Mawlai. The people of Mawlai are not proving houses for rent other than Khasis. People of Meghalaya are demanding for ILP (Inner Line Permit). Acceding to the demand for

bringing the state under ILP would violate provisions of Article 19 of the Constitution that relates to protection of rights on freedom, a central government official said on 5th December, 2013. Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram and Nagaland are following ILP (Inner Line Permit). The state of Arunachal is also implementing PAP (Prohibited Area Permit) and RAP (Restricted Area Permit). A citizen of India other than Arunachal Pradesh need ILP or PAP and a foreigner need RAP to enter the state. ILP is also compulsory for citizens of India other than Mizoram and Nagaland to enter these states. The ILP system was brought into being by the British with the Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation Act, 1873 for administrative purposes. This is a right time to abolish this Act by protecting the rights of the local people.

6. Suggestions

The investigator has proposed few suggestions to strengthen the cross border connectivity and inclusive growth of North-Eastern Region.

- i. It is good to organize Orientation Programmes, Refresher Courses, Seminars, Conferences and Workshops on International Relations, Cross Border Connectivity and Inclusive Development/Growth at university level.
- ii. Highly qualified, committed and dedicated teachers may be recruited in the colleges/universities.
- iii. Working with community has to be insisted upon. Appropriate areas have to be allocated. Surveys, interviews, observation, demonstration, exhibition etc. may be organized and reported back to the authorities. Credits and incentives should also be introduced.
- iv. Inter institute/District/State/Country visits may be arranged for students and teachers for exchange of ideas and sharing of experiences.
- v. There is a need to establish India-ASEAN Educational Foundation to strengthen the relations among the countries.
- vi. It is good to establish High Commissions of ASEAN Countries at Guwahati.
- vii. Necessary steps should be taken to strengthen inner-border connectivity by improving road, rail and air transportation.
- viii. It is better to conduct some awareness programmes on International Relations for public.
- ix. 100% electrification and telecommunication facility should be provided for the people of North-Eastern Region for inclusive development.
- x. Necessary steps should be taken to implement strictly the provision of constitution for the people of North-Eastern Region.
- xi. Speeches of great persons (role models) may be provided at least once in a month in the educational institutions to improve the attitude and knowledge of students.

- xii. A common subject like Science & Civilization, Indian Heritage and Culture may be introduced to inculcate all types of social and human values at college and university levels.

7. Conclusion

Education provides knowledge of discrimination. Knowledge is powerful than any other weapon in the world. It tells how to treat others nicely and lovely. The people of North-East India have tasted more pain. Pain changes people, it makes them trust less, over think more, and shut people out. This is a right time to recall the words of Nizariat “The finest souls are those who gulped pain and avoided making others taste it”. It is possible through education only. People always think that the most painful thing in life is losing the one you value. The truth is, the most painful thing is losing yourself in the process of valuing someone too much and forgetting that you are special too. The North-Eastern Region was neglected by the Government of India decades and decades. This is a right time to take care about North-East India for the sake of overall development of India by strengthening the relations of India with ASEAN countries through North-Eastern States. There is no doubt at all education should play a pivotal role to strengthen this relation.

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