



STATE PROFILE · REPUBLIC OF INDIA

Manipur

A valley kingdom ringed by nine hill ranges — 2,000 years of sovereign history, a living matriarchal market economy, and India's most contested frontier with Southeast Asia.

~33 lakh

POPULATION (2025 EST.)

16

DISTRICTS

₹49,937 Cr

GSDP (2024-25 BE)

1st

ALL-WOMEN MARKET OF ITS SCALE — IMA KEITHEL

Compiled July 2026 · Sources: Census of India, NITI Aayog, RBI, NFHS-5, PRS Legislative Research, state government records

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At a Glance

Manipur is a small oval valley of wet-rice fields encircled by nine ranges of forested hills, home to a Meitei-majority plains population and a mosaic of Naga and Kuki-Zo hill communities whose uneasy coexistence has shaped — and, since 2023, convulsed — the state's politics. Once an independent Vaishnavite Hindu kingdom with two millennia of recorded monarchy, Manipur fought and lost a war against the British in 1891, hosted a pivotal World War II battlefield in 1944, and endured a bitterly contested merger into India in 1949 before finally winning full statehood in 1972 — a sequence of grievances that still echoes through the state's insurgencies and its present ethnic crisis.

Imphal

CAPITAL & LARGEST CITY

21 Jan 1972

FULL STATEHOOD

22,327 km²

TOTAL AREA

₹49,937 Cr

GSDP, 2024-25 (BE)

**Seismic Zone
V**

HIGHEST EARTHQUAKE-HAZARD
CATEGORY

210,000+

HANDLOOM-WEAVING
HOUSEHOLDS — 3RD HIGHEST
OF ANY INDIAN STATE

“Manipur is the only Indian state where all four commercial silk varieties — mulberry, eri, muga and oak tasar — are produced within a single territory, and where a 500-year-old all-women market still anchors the valley economy.

— Manipur Sericulture Department; Ima Keithel oral history, Homegrown / CNN Travel

Snapshot

Manipur is governed as a standard Indian state with a unicameral 60-seat Legislative Assembly (19 seats reserved for Scheduled Tribes, 1 for Scheduled Castes), though since February 2025 it has spent much of its time under central President's Rule due to sustained ethnic unrest, only returning to elected government in February 2026. Geographically and demographically the state is split between the Imphal Valley — about a tenth of the land area but home to the Meitei-majority, Hindu-and-Sanamahi plains population and roughly 57% of residents — and the surrounding hill districts, populated chiefly by Naga and Kuki-Zo Scheduled Tribes practising Christianity. Manipur is known nationally for classical Manipuri dance (Ras Lila), its GI-tagged Chak-hao black rice and handloom textiles, Loktak Lake's unique floating phumdi islands and the world's only floating

national park, its position as India's principal land gateway to Myanmar and the wider Act East Policy, and — since May 2023 — for one of the deadliest and most prolonged episodes of communal violence in India's post-independence history.

History

From a Neolithic valley settlement to a Vaishnavite kingdom, a British-subdued princely state, a World War II battlefield, and a late, contested entry into the Indian Union — Manipur's history is one of long independence followed by a 20th century of externally imposed transitions whose grievances still animate the state's politics today.

- **c. 2000 BC**
Neolithic settlement of the Imphal Valley; Paleolithic/Mesolithic tools found at Khangkhui Caves near Ukhrul point to still-earlier hill habitation.
- **33 AD**
Nongda Lairen Pakhangba founds the Ningthouja dynasty at Kangla, defeating the rival Khaba group and beginning the unification of the valley's clans into the kingdom of Kangleipak.
- **1074-1112**
Reign of King Loiyumba; in 1110 he formalises the Loiyumba Shinyen, an early written constitution consolidating Ningthouja rule over Kangleipak.
- **1597-1652**
Reign of King Khagemba; the kingdom reaches its greatest territorial extent and Kangla fort is substantially expanded.
- **1709-1748**
Reign of Pamheiba (Gharib Nawaz), who adopts Ramanandi Vaishnavism, makes Hinduism the state religion, and renames the kingdom "Manipur." Around 1729, the Puya Meithaba episode sees Sanamahi religious manuscripts burned at Kangla — a still-contested symbol of the state's religious transformation.
- **31 Mar-27 Apr 1891**
The Anglo-Manipur War: the Manipuri army under Paona Brajabashi is defeated at the decisive Battle of Khongjom; the kingdom is subdued but not formally annexed.
- **1891-1907**
Five-year-old Churachand is installed as Raja under direct British administration; he gains full ruling powers only in 1907, always subordinate to a British Political Agent — Manipur is now a princely state under paramountcy.
- **8 Mar-18 Jul 1944**
The Battle of Imphal, fought alongside the Battle of Kohima, decisively halts and reverses the Japanese U-Go offensive — one of the pivotal Allied victories of the Burma campaign, with roughly 54,900 Japanese and 12,600 Allied casualties.

- **15 Aug 1947**
British paramountcy lapses; Manipur briefly holds independent status under its own 1947 State Constitution Act and elected assembly, even as Maharaja Bodhachandra Singh had already signed an Instrument of Accession to India.
- **21 Sep 1949**
The Maharaja is compelled to sign the Manipur Merger Agreement at Shillong without his elected legislature's consent; it takes effect 15 October 1949, dissolving Manipur's constitution and assembly — a coercive process still cited as the root grievance behind the state's insurgencies.
- **1950-1963**
Manipur is demoted to a centrally administered Part C state (1950), redesignated a Union Territory (1956), and regains a Legislative Assembly and Council of Ministers only in 1963.
- **1964-1978**
The prolonged wait for statehood fuels armed separatism: the UNLF (1964), PREPAK (1977) and PLA (1978) are founded, beginning decades of insurgency.
- **21 Jan 1972**
Manipur attains full statehood under the North-Eastern Areas (Reorganisation) Act, 1971, alongside Tripura and Meghalaya.
- **14 Apr - 3 May 2023**
A Manipur High Court order appearing to recommend Scheduled Tribe status for the Meitei community triggers a Tribal Solidarity March; violence erupts on 3 May 2023 between Meitei and Kuki-Zo communities.
- **2023-2024**
The state effectively partitions along armed buffer zones; a 142-day internet shutdown runs May–September 2023. By late 2024, 258 dead, roughly 60,000 displaced, thousands of houses and hundreds of religious structures destroyed.
- **Feb 2025 - Feb 2026**
Chief Minister N. Biren Singh resigns; President's Rule is imposed (13 Feb 2025), extended once, then revoked on 4 Feb 2026 with Yumnam Khemchand Singh sworn in as Chief Minister — though reconciliation remains incomplete.

“The Battle of Imphal — fought on Manipuri soil in 1944 — is ranked by Britain's National Army Museum among the greatest battles in British military history, decisively ending Japan's only serious attempt to invade the Indian subcontinent.

— National Army Museum; WW2 Database

Government, Politics & Administration

Manipur runs a bifurcated governance model that mirrors its valley-hill divide: a standard state legislature and panchayat system for the Meitei-majority valley, and a separate, constitutionally distinct autonomous-council structure for the tribal hill districts — a structural fault line that runs through the state's current crisis.

60 (19 ST + 1 SC)

ASSEMBLY SEATS & RESERVED BREAKDOWN

2 + 1

LOK SABHA + RAJYA SABHA SEATS

5 sanctioned

MANIPUR HIGH COURT JUDGE STRENGTH (OFTEN UNDERSTAFFED)

Est. 2013

MANIPUR HIGH COURT, SEATED AT IMPHAL

Manipur has a unicameral state legislature — the Manipur Legislative Assembly — with 60 elected seats: 19 reserved for Scheduled Tribes (mostly hill constituencies), 1 for Scheduled Castes, and 40 general seats concentrated largely in the Imphal valley. The state returned to elected government on 4 February 2026, when President's Rule (imposed 13 February 2025 after N. Biren Singh's resignation amid the ethnic conflict) was formally revoked. Yumnam Khemchand Singh, a senior BJP leader and former Assembly Speaker, was sworn in as Chief Minister, heading a broad NDA coalition designed to bridge the valley-hill divide — Nemcha Kipgen (BJP, Kuki community) and Losii Dikho (Naga People's Front) were sworn in as Deputy Chief Ministers alongside him. The current Assembly is dominated by the BJP (36 seats) with NPP (6), NPF (5), Congress (5), Kuki People's Alliance (2), JD(U) (1) and 3 Independents. Manipur sends 2 members to the Lok Sabha — Inner Manipur (unreserved, valley-based) and Outer Manipur (ST-reserved, hill-based) — both won by Congress in 2024, and elects 1 member to the Rajya Sabha.

Judiciary: The Manipur High Court became a full High Court on 25 March 2013, ending its status as a circuit bench of the Gauhati High Court. Seated at Imphal, it has a sanctioned strength of 5 judges but has often functioned with fewer — reportedly just 3 sitting judges in 2026, a shortfall flagged as significant given the state's ongoing law-and-order crisis.

Local self-government and hill autonomy: The valley districts operate under the Manipur Panchayati Raj Act, 1994, a standard two-tier system of Gram Panchayats and Zilla Parishads

implementing the 73rd Constitutional Amendment. The hill districts fall entirely outside this Act; they are instead governed by the Manipur (Hill Areas) District Councils Act, 1971, which created Autonomous District Councils (ADCs) and Village Authorities — notably, unlike comparable councils elsewhere in the Northeast, these were never brought under the Constitution's Sixth Schedule, a long-standing grievance among hill communities. The hills' distinctive constitutional safeguard is Article 371C, which mandates a 20-member Hill Areas Committee (HAC) of the Assembly — the 19 ST-reserved MLAs plus one unreserved hill seat — that vets and recommends hill-related "Scheduled Matters" bills before they reach the Council of Ministers, with the Governor holding special responsibility for hill administration.

“Manipur's hill Autonomous District Councils were never granted Sixth Schedule status, unlike comparable tribal councils elsewhere in the Northeast — a governance gap that predates, and helps explain, the depth of hill communities' demand for greater self-rule since 2023.

— Manipur (Hill Areas) District Councils Act, 1971; Article 371C analysis

Geography & Districts

Manipur's geography is defined by a stark contrast between a flat, densely settled central basin and the sparsely populated hill ranges that ring it on every side — a divide that maps closely onto the state's ethnic geography and its 2016 reorganisation into 16 districts.

790m

ELEVATION OF IMPHAL VALLEY
FLOOR

Zone V

SEISMIC HAZARD
CLASSIFICATION

2,900m+

PEAK ELEVATION, NORTHERN
HILLS

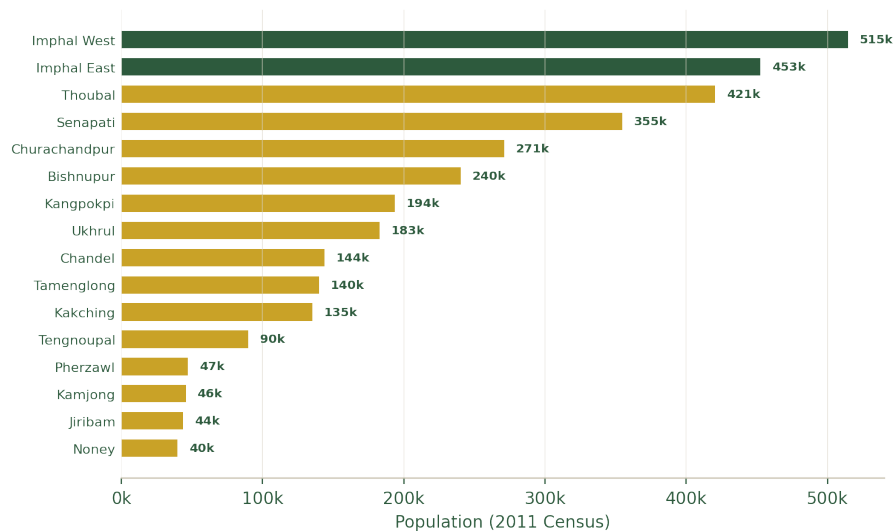
1,250-2,700mm

ANNUAL RAINFALL RANGE

The **Imphal Valley** — an oval lacustrine plain of roughly 700–2,000 km² sitting at about 790 metres above sea level — occupies barely a tenth of Manipur's land area yet holds the great majority of its population. It is drained by the Imphal River and its tributary the Iril, both of which feed **Loktak Lake**, the largest freshwater lake in Northeast India and home to floating *phumdi* islands that host Keibul Lamjao National Park, the world's only floating national park. Surrounding the valley on all sides are north–south trending hill ranges — the Naga Hills to the north, the East Manipur Hills along the Myanmar border, the Mizo/Chin Hills to the south, and the West Manipur Hills to the west — generally rising 1,500–1,800 metres, with northern peaks exceeding 2,900 metres. The Barak River, Manipur's largest, rises in the Barail Range and flows west into Assam and eventually Bangladesh. Geologically the state sits atop the collision zone of the Indian and Burmese tectonic plates, placing the entirety of Manipur in Seismic Zone V, India's highest earthquake-hazard category. The climate is humid subtropical, with mild dry winters (November–February) and a long hot, rainy season (April–October).

Administrative Structure

Manipur's original 9 districts were split on 9 December 2016 into the current 16, with Jiribam, Kamjong, Kakching, Tengnoupal, Noney, Pherzawl and Kangpokpi carved out as new units. Six districts sit wholly or mostly within the Imphal Valley (Imphal East, Imphal West, Thoubal, Bishnupur, Kakching, Jiribam) while the remaining ten are hill districts. Because the 2021 Census was postponed nationally and district boundaries remain frozen pending the next Census (expected 2027), 2011 figures — apportioned to parent districts where a new district did not yet exist as a separate census unit — remain the last full enumeration.



Population by district, 2011 Census (figures for post-2016 districts are estimated from parent-district splits). Imphal West and Imphal East, both in the valley, are the two most populous districts.

District	Headquarters	Population (2011)	Area (km ²)	Region
Imphal West	Lamphelpat	514,683	519	Valley
Imphal East	Porompat	452,661	497	Valley
Thoubal	Thoubal	420,517	324	Valley
Churachandpur	Churachandpur (Lamka)	271,274	2,392	Hill
Senapati	Tahamzam	354,772	1,573	Hill
Bishnupur	Bishnupur	240,363	496	Valley
Ukhrul	Ukhrul	183,115	2,206	Hill
Kangpokpi	Kanggui	193,744*	1,698	Hill
Chandel	Chandel	144,028	2,100	Hill
Tamenglong	Tamenglong	140,143	3,315	Hill
Kakching	Kakching	135,481*	190	Valley
Tengnoupal	Tengnoupal	~90,000*	1,213	Hill
Pherzawl	Pherzawl	47,250*	2,128	Hill
Kamjong	Kamjong	45,616*	2,338	Hill
Jiribam	Jiribam	43,818	182	Valley (western border)
Noney	Noney	~40,000*	1,076	Hill

* Figures for districts created in the 2016 reorganisation are estimated from 2011 parent-district data, since the Census was not re-conducted for the new boundaries; 2021 Census was postponed nationally.

District Profiles

IW Imphal West

Manipur's most populous and densest district (847/km²), with the state's highest literacy at 86.7%. Home to most of Imphal city, Manipur University, and the bulk of state government offices — the commercial and administrative core of the state.

IE Imphal East

452,661 people, 82.8% literacy, heavily urbanised and adjoining Imphal city; combines administration with trade and small industry along the valley's eastern rim.

TB Thoubal

420,517 people, the highest density (713/km²) among rural-majority districts; the valley's major paddy-rice belt, with Kakching historically its craft and market centre.

CP Churachandpur

The largest hill district by population (271,274), the principal urban and trading hub for Kuki-Zo and Mizo-related communities, and a centre of citrus and passion-fruit horticulture as well as ongoing "Kuki-Zo separate administration" political demands.

SN Senapati

354,772 people, the largest hill district by population, dominated by Mao, Poumai and Thangal Naga communities with an agricultural economy of terraced and shifting cultivation; borders Nagaland.

BS Bishnupur

240,363 people; economy defined by Loktak Lake fisheries, rice cultivation, and tourism, alongside deep Vaishnavite cultural roots tied to Manipuri classical dance.

UK Ukhrul

183,115 people with the state's highest female literacy (86%); cultural heart of the Tangkhul Naga community, known for orange and kiwi horticulture and the rare Shirui Lily.

KP Kangpokpi

Carved from Senapati's Sadar Hills subdivision in 2016; a predominantly Kuki-Thadou district straddling the Imphal-Dimapur highway (NH-2), making transport and trade along this corridor its key economic driver.

CH Chandel

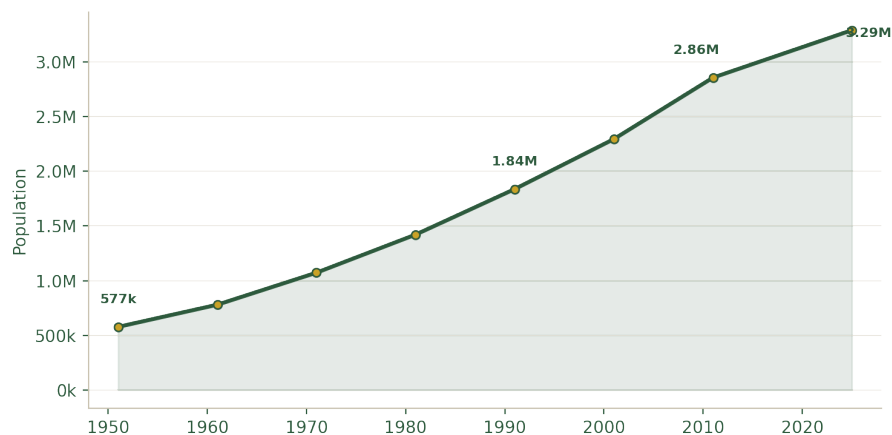
144,028 people bordering Myanmar; strategically important for cross-border trade and home to Anal, Lamkang and Maring tribes, though it recorded the state's lowest urban female literacy (62.9%).

TM Tamenglong

Manipur's largest district by area (3,315 km²) but its most sparsely populated and least literate (70.4%); a Zeliangrong/Rongmei Naga district known for biodiversity and the source of the Barak River.

Population & Demographics

Manipur's population has grown faster than the national average in every decade since 1961, but the headline numbers conceal a state sharply divided along religious, tribal and valley-versus-hill lines — divisions that are central to understanding the events of 2023 onward.



Population growth, 1951–2025 (Census of India; 2025 figure is a Registrar General projection, since no full census has been held since 2011).

115-130/km²

POPULATION DENSITY (VS. 382 NATIONAL)

985

SEX RATIO (FEMALES PER 1,000 MALES)

76.9%

LITERACY RATE, 2011 (MALE 83.6%, FEMALE 70.3%)

30.2% / 69.8%

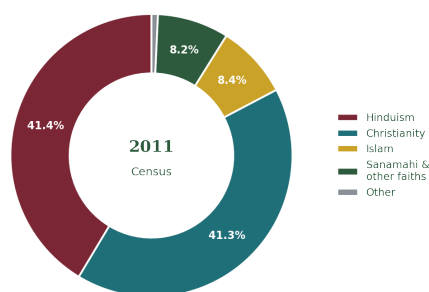
URBAN / RURAL SPLIT

57% / 43%

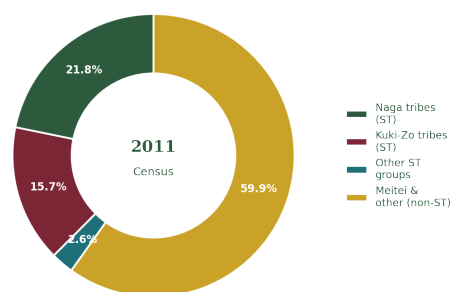
VALLEY VS. HILL POPULATION SHARE

40.9%

SCHEDULED TRIBE POPULATION SHARE



Religion, 2011 Census. The Hindu share fell from ~62% (1961) to 41% as Christianity rose from ~19% to 41% over the same 50 years.



Scheduled Tribe composition, 2011 Census. Naga and Kuki-Zo tribal groups together account for over 37% of the state's population, concentrated in the hill districts.

Hinduism (largely Gaudiya Vaishnavism, adopted by the Meitei monarchy from the early 18th century) is concentrated in the Meitei-majority valley districts, which average 62–75% Hindu. Christianity, introduced by Protestant missionaries in the 19th century, is the majority faith across the hill districts and is overwhelmingly the religion of Naga and Kuki-Zo communities. Roughly 222,000 people identify with Sanamahism, the indigenous Meitei ethnic religion centred on the deity Lainingthou Sanamahism and ancestor worship, which has seen an active revival movement in recent decades. Meitei Pangals (Manipuri Muslims), tracing their arrival to the 17th century, comprise just under 8.4% of the population.

Language: Meitei (Manipuri) is the state's sole official language and lingua franca, added to the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution in 1992. It has its own historic script, Meitei Mayek, which fell out of common use for centuries before undergoing an active revival. The hill districts host substantial additional linguistic diversity across Kuki-Chin languages (chiefly Thadou) and Naga languages (Tangkhul, Poula, Rongmei, Mao), with speakers typically also fluent in Meitei.

Scheduled Tribes and the ST-status dispute: Naga tribes account for roughly 21.8% of the population and Kuki-Zo tribes roughly 15.7%, with Meiteis (not currently classified as ST) representing just over half the state. This classification became the flashpoint for the current crisis: a March 2023 High Court order directing the state to consider Meitei ST status was seen by tribal groups as a threat to their own land and reservation protections, triggering the Tribal Solidarity March and the violence that followed — the order's disputed paragraph was later deleted on review in February 2024, though the underlying dispute remains unresolved.

“ Manipur's infant mortality rate rose from 21.7 to roughly 25 per 1,000 live births between NFHS-4 and NFHS-5, even as institutional births improved to 79.9% — a rare case of a health indicator moving in the wrong direction despite better care access.

— National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5), 2019–21

Culture, Festivals & Cuisine

Manipur's cultural calendar runs from a Vaishnavite classical dance tradition recognised by UNESCO to a pre-Hindu ritual festival that predates it — a layering of Sanamahi, Vaishnavite and tribal-Christian traditions that mirrors the state's religious history.

Signature Festivals

The **Sangai Festival** (21–30 November, running since 2010), Manipur's flagship tourism event, is named for the state's endangered brow-antlered deer and showcases Ras Leela, Naga and bamboo dances, indigenous sports (Yubi Lakpi, Sagol Kangjei — Manipuri polo) and handicrafts. **Yaoshang**, Manipur's Holi, runs five days from the February–March full moon, opening with the ritual burning of a straw hut and famous for Thabal Chongba, a moonlit circle dance. **Lai Haraoba** ("merrymaking of the gods"), observed February–June, is a pre-Vaishnavite ritual festival of the indigenous Sanamahi religion honouring roughly 364 Umang Lai (forest deities) and is considered the root of all Manipuri dance forms — predating Hindu influence entirely. **Ningol Chakouba**, held around October–November, invites married daughters back to their parental homes, a custom traced to the reign of the dynasty's founder Pakhangba. **Kut (Chavang Kut)**, celebrated 1 November by Kuki-Chin-Zo communities, is a harvest thanksgiving festival officially revived in Manipur in 1962 and marked as a state holiday. Christmas and Chumpha are widely observed among the state's substantial tribal Christian population.

Performing Arts & Craft

Manipuri dance is one of only eight classical dance forms recognised by India's Sangeet Natak Akademi. Its Ras Lila form, depicting Radha-Krishna legends through soft, undulating movement rather than sharp footwork, was systematised under King Bhagyachandra in the 18th century.

Manipuri Sankirtana — ritual singing, drumming and dancing performed at religious and life-cycle occasions — was inscribed on UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in December 2013. Pung Cholom, an acrobatic drum dance, and Thang-Ta (Huyen Lallong), an indigenous sword-and-spear martial art blending combat with spirituality, round out the state's performance traditions. In craft, **Longpi (Nungbi) black pottery** from Ukhrul district, practised by the Tangkhul Naga tribe since the Neolithic period, is hand-shaped from black serpentine stone and clay without a potter's wheel or any chemical glaze — historically reserved for Manipur's aristocracy as "Loree Hamlei," royal pottery.

Cuisine

Chak-hao kheer, a pudding made from Manipur's GI-tagged black rice, is prized for its nutty flavour. Eromba combines mashed boiled vegetables with fermented fish (ngari) and chillies; Nga-thongba is a Meitei fish curry distinguished by native citrus; Singju is a raw vegetable salad found across the state's ethnic communities; Kangshoi is an oil-free vegetable stew simmered with

fermented fish; and Ooti is a vegetarian curry built around peas and local herbs — together forming the core of the traditional Manipuri thali.

“Manipuri Sankirtana's 2013 UNESCO inscription recognised a ritual art form that fuses singing, drumming and dance into a single devotional performance — one of only a handful of Indian traditions with that global distinction.

— UNESCO Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity

Education & Research Institutions

Manipur's institutional base is modest in scale but distinctive in kind — anchored by a 1980 central university, India's only dedicated sports university, and a National Institute of Technology, even as it lacks an IIT or IIM of its own.

93% / 85%

ADULT (15-49) LITERACY, MEN/
WOMEN (NFHS-5)

108

COLLEGES AFFILIATED TO
MANIPUR UNIVERSITY

1980

MANIPUR UNIVERSITY FOUNDED
(CENTRAL UNIVERSITY)

101-150

NIT MANIPUR'S 2025 NIRF BAND (OVERALL)

The 2011 Census recorded 76.9% overall literacy (male 83.6%, female 70.3%). NFHS-5 (2019-21) offers a more current proxy for the working-age population: among adults aged 15-49, 93% of men and 85% of women are literate, suggesting meaningful improvement over the past decade, though the gender gap persists.

Manipur University, at Canchipur, Imphal, was established as a central university in 1980 (having started as a state university in 1965). It sits on a roughly 287-acre campus with about 7,400 students and 108 affiliated colleges, including two medical colleges, and placed in the 151-200 overall NIRF band in 2024. **Central Agricultural University**, Imphal, established by central act in 1993, is a Northeast-wide institution with 13 constituent colleges across six states, anchored by its founding College of Agriculture in Imphal. **D.M. College of Arts** (1946) and **D.M. College of Science** (1975) are among the state's oldest institutions, now constituent colleges of the newer Dhanamanjuri University.

National Sports University, Imphal — India's first and only central university dedicated to sports education — had its foundation stone laid by the Prime Minister in March 2018 and currently operates from the Khuman Lampak Sports Complex pending a permanent 325-acre campus. On the technical side, **NIT Manipur**, established in 2010 as an Institute of National Importance, has climbed the NIRF engineering rankings from 108th (2022) to 95th (2023); **IIIT Manipur**, established in 2015 as a public-private partnership institute at Mantripukhri, offers undergraduate and doctoral programmes. **RIMS (Regional Institute of Medical Sciences)**, Imphal, established in 1972, is the state's premier medical institution — a 1,074-bed teaching hospital admitting 125 MBBS students annually. Manipur has no IIT or IIM; NIT Manipur, IIIT Manipur and the National Sports University fill its institutes-of-national-importance tier.

“ Manipur is home to India's only National Sports University — a distinction that sits oddly alongside a state whose actual education infrastructure remains heavily concentrated in the valley, with hill districts still trailing on basic school access.

— National Sports University Act; state education infrastructure surveys

Cities & Urban Areas

Manipur's urban life is concentrated in the valley around Imphal, with a handful of hill towns and heritage sites carrying outsized cultural and strategic weight relative to their modest populations.

IM Imphal — the capital

Imphal city has a population of 268,243, with the wider urban agglomeration totalling 418,739 (90.8% literacy). It is Manipur's administrative, commercial and cultural nucleus and the historic seat of the Meitei kingdom. **Kangla Fort**, on the Imphal River, was the ancient capital dating traditionally to 33 AD and substantially expanded under King Khagemba; British forces demolished sections after 1891 and built barracks there, only returning it to the state government in 2004. **Ima Keithel** ("Mothers' Market"), reputedly the world's largest all-women-run market, traces its roots to 16th-century mandatory male military conscription that pushed women into running trade — a tradition that persists today with over 4,000 women vendors, and which has doubled as a site of political protest, notably a 2004 march to Kangla Fort against army atrocities.

CP Churachandpur

District population 274,143 (2011), 82.8% literate and 93% Christian. The largest hill district and the principal urban centre for Kuki-Zo and Mizoram-adjacent communities, combining hill agriculture and horticulture with a role as a seat of tribal cultural and political identity.

TB Thoubal

Thoubal town has 45,947 residents within a district of 422,168 — 16.4% of Manipur's population. The economy is predominantly agrarian, anchored by paddy cultivation in the valley, with Thoubal and neighbouring Kakching serving as regional educational hubs.

BP Bishnupur

Named for an ancient Vishnu temple, Bishnupur town anchors a district whose heartland is Manipuri classical dance: the Govindaji temple at nearby Ningthoukhong depicts Ras Lila scenes of Krishna, Radha and the gopis, making the district a centre of Vaishnavite culture alongside an agrarian economy built around Loktak Lake.

MR Moirang

A small town of some 16,700 people whose historical significance is outsized: on 14 April 1944, under Colonel Shaukat Malik, the Indian National Army hoisted the Indian flag on Indian soil for the first time here, during Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose's Imphal campaign. The event is commemorated annually as INA Flag Hoisting Day, and the INA Museum stands as a national memorial.

UK Ukhrul

Population 27,187 within a district of 138,382; the cultural capital of the Tangkhul Naga people. Globally known for the rare Shirui Lily (*Lilium mackliniae*), endemic to nearby Shirui Kashong peak (2,835m) and celebrated annually at the Shirui Lily Festival, a major tourism draw.

MH Moreh

A border town of roughly 17,000–40,000 (estimates vary) on the India–Myanmar frontier, Manipur's key gateway to Southeast Asia under the Act East Policy. It hosts formal and barter trade in cement, engineering goods, motorcycles and chemicals, accounting for roughly 4% of total India–Myanmar bilateral trade, and has an ethnically mixed population spanning Kuki, Tamil, Meitei, Nepali and Punjabi communities.

The Economy

Manipur's economy is small, services-heavy on paper, agriculture-heavy in employment, and structurally dependent on transfers from New Delhi — a fragility sharply worsened by the 2023 conflict, which contracted GST collections even as India's rose nationally.

₹49,937 Cr
GSDP, 2024-25 (BE), +9.6%
NOMINAL

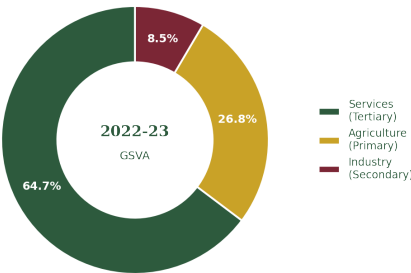
4.9%
AVG. REAL GSDP GROWTH,
2012-13 TO 2021-22 (NATIONAL:
5.6%)

41% below
PER-CAPITA INCOME VS.
NATIONAL AVERAGE (NITI AAYOG)

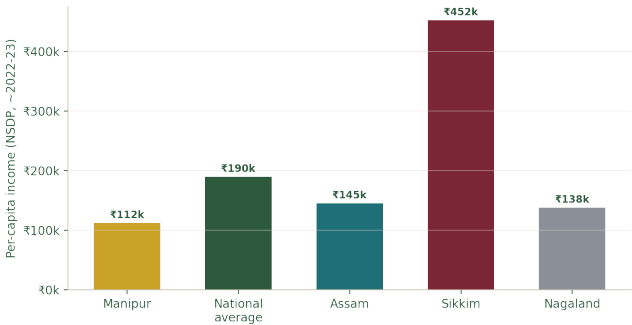
4.7%
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE, 2022-23
(NATIONAL: 3.2%)

31.3%
FEMALE LABOUR-FORCE
PARTICIPATION (NATIONAL: 37%)

47% of GSDP
DEBT-TO-GSDP RATIO, 2022-23



Sectoral composition of GSVA, 2022-23 (NITI Aayog/MoSPI). Services dominate output even though employment remains concentrated in agriculture.



Per-capita income comparison, approx. 2022-23 (NSDP, CEIC/Statista). Manipur trails both the national average and several neighbouring states.

Manipur's sectoral output is dominated by services (64.8% of GSVA) and agriculture (26.8%), with industry a mere 8.5% and effectively stagnant, growing just 0.9% annually over 2013-14 to 2022-23 against 5.0% for services and 5.6% for agriculture. Employment tells a different story: agriculture still absorbs 35.7% of the workforce and services 38%, meaning a large share of workers remain in low-productivity farming even as agriculture's output share falls — a classic sign of a state that has not industrialised enough to reallocate labour out of subsistence agriculture.

Fiscal position: Manipur runs an unusually large fiscal footprint for its size: a 2022-23 fiscal deficit of 6.9% of GSDP and a debt-to-GSDP ratio of 47%, both well above typical state levels, while simultaneously running a revenue surplus of 16.3% of GSDP — a pattern that reflects heavy reliance on central transfers rather than own revenue. In the 2024-25 budget, own tax revenue was targeted at ₹2,471 crore but only ₹1,610 crore was actually collected, dwarfed by ₹8,930 crore in the state's share of central taxes and ₹16,016 crore in grants-in-aid.

Act East relevance: As a border state adjoining Myanmar, Manipur is positioned as a land gateway to Southeast Asia under India's Act East Policy, with the North East Industrial Development Scheme (2017) offering capital, interest and GST incentives to spur industrialisation. The 2025 Rising North East Investors Summit reportedly generated regional investment interest of roughly ₹4.3 lakh crore, though Manipur's specific share was not separately disclosed.

“GST collections in Manipur contracted 19% between April and October 2023 even as national GST collections rose in double digits — a stark, immediate economic signature of the ethnic conflict that began that May.

— Business Standard, citing state GST data

Industries & What Drives Them

Manipur's real economy runs less on factories than on looms, silkworms, terraced hillsides, and a lake — small-scale, household-based industries whose scale is easy to underestimate but whose per-capita density is often unmatched anywhere else in India.

1 Handloom & Handicrafts LARGEST HOUSEHOLD SECTOR

The Fourth All India Handloom Census (2019-20) recorded roughly 210,000 weaving households in Manipur — third-highest of any state in absolute terms despite the state's tiny population of 3.2 million, giving it by far the highest per-capita weaving density in the country. Virtually every Meitei household in the valley traditionally keeps a loom, with weaving skills passed matrilineally. Three products carry GI tags, including Moirang Phee, woven simultaneously by two women with a distinctive tooth-shaped border. Driver: home-based looms requiring no factory investment, ritual and ceremonial demand for dance costumes and temple textiles, and comparatively high literacy among weavers enabling design innovation and e-commerce entry.

2 Sericulture UNIQUE NATIONALLY

Manipur is one of the few places on earth producing all four commercial silk varieties — mulberry, eri, muga and oak tasar — within a single state. Some 31,737 families across 934 villages produce 525.95 tonnes of raw silk annually. Eri silk is especially strong in Naga and Kuki hill areas, where the worms double as a household food source. Driver: agro-climatic diversity between valley (mulberry) and hills (eri/muga/oak tasar), century-old tribal rearing traditions, and government sericulture missions feeding the handloom sector as a raw-material supplier.

3 Agriculture & Chak-hao Black Rice GI-TAGGED

The valley's alluvial, water-retentive soil sustains Manipur's staple wet-rice economy. Within it, Chak-hao black aromatic rice (GI-tagged 2020) is grown on some 45,000 hectares — about 10% of state rice output — and retails at 4–6 times ordinary rice prices, with the first export consignment now reaching Europe. Driver: a unique valley microclimate and centuries of selective breeding, plus high anthocyanin content prized in health-food and nutraceutical markets.

4 Horticulture — Pineapple, Orange & Chilli **GI-TAGGED**

Pineapple is Manipur's largest fruit crop (128,000+ tonnes, 2025); Tamenglong district alone supplies over half the state's oranges, and both Tamenglong orange and Hathei chilli carry GI tags. Driver: hill-slope terracing and acidic lateritic soils ideal for citrus and pineapple, with each hill district's altitude-driven microclimate specialising in a different fruit.

5 Bamboo-Based Industries **61% OF FOREST AREA**

Manipur holds one of India's largest bamboo reserves — 55 species across 10,687 km², or 61.4% of the state's forest area and roughly 14% of India's total bamboo stock. Fifteen edible species are consumed statewide, feeding a household-economy of shoots, furniture and agarbatti-stick production. Driver: subtropical hill climate ideal for bamboo groves and near-universal household reliance on bamboo for construction and food.

6 Loktak Lake Fisheries **UNIQUE ECOSYSTEM**

Loktak sustains an estimated 30,000 people through fishing, with over 1,000 hutments built directly on floating phumdi islands housing roughly 4,000 residents; over 90% of surrounding households depend on the lake. Fish production has fallen from around 60% to just 11% of historical yield since the 1983 Ithai Barrage altered water flow and migratory fish routes. Driver: a floating-biomass ecosystem found nowhere else in the world, now under strain from hydro-engineering.

7 Border Trade with Myanmar **ACT EAST GATEWAY**

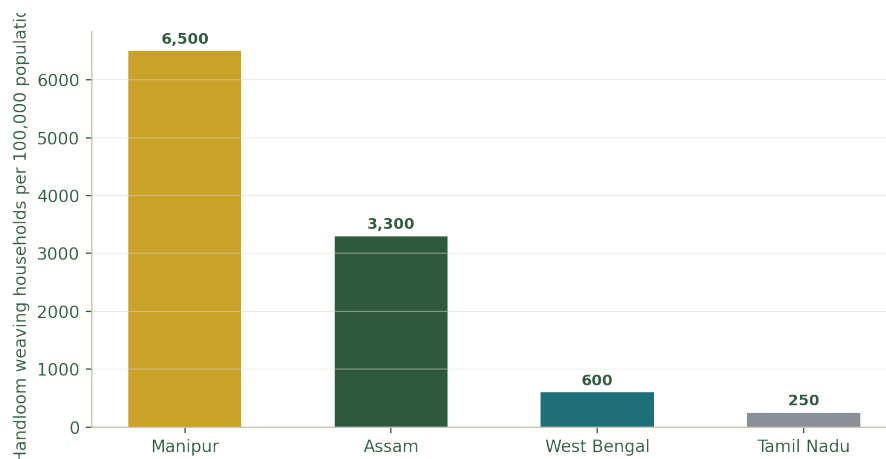
Moreh, on the Indo-Myanmar border, is India's principal land gateway to Southeast Asia, accounting for roughly 4% of total India-Myanmar bilateral trade. Trade was upgraded from "Border Trade" to full "Normal Trade" status in 2015. Driver: the sole road-connected international crossing to ASEAN in the region, and the under-construction India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway.

8 Tourism **EMERGING**

Anchored by Loktak Lake, Kangla Fort, Moirang's WWII memorial, and the Shirui Lily and Sangai festivals (the latter named for Manipur's endemic brow-antlered deer). Driver: a rare combination of natural, historical and cultural assets, though footfall has been depressed by the 2023-25 conflict.

9 Emerging IT & Manufacturing POLICY-DRIVEN

An MOU with Tata Technologies for an IT SEZ carries a ₹200 crore project cost and is projected to create 11,000 direct and 33,000 indirect jobs. Driver: central government push to leverage Act East connectivity and improving highway/rail/air infrastructure narrowing the state's historic logistics disadvantage.



Handloom weaving households per 100,000 population. Manipur's per-capita weaving density is roughly double Assam's and more than ten times West Bengal's, despite both states having vastly larger absolute weaver populations.

Transport & Connectivity

Manipur remains the only Northeast state capital without an operational rail link — a gap now closing fast, thanks to a single engineering landmark: the world's tallest railway bridge piers, rising above a hill gorge at Noney.

141m piers

WORLD'S TALLEST RAILWAY
BRIDGE PIERS, NONEY (BRIDGE
NO. 164)

~1,700 km

NATIONAL HIGHWAY LENGTH

~3,000/day

IMPHAL AIRPORT PASSENGERS

Dec 2028

TARGET COMPLETION, JIRIBAM-IMPHAL RAIL LINE

Rail: The 111 km Jiribam–Tupul–Imphal line will be Manipur's first rail connection to the national grid, running through five districts via 11 stations, 52 tunnels and 148 bridges. Its centrepiece, Bridge No. 164 at Noney over the Ijai river, is 703 metres long with piers reaching 141 metres — the tallest railway bridge piers in the world, surpassing Montenegro's 139-metre Mala-Rijeka viaduct. Remaining segments are targeted section-by-section through March 2028, with full completion pegged at December 2028; once operational, the Jiribam–Imphal journey will fall from roughly 10 hours by road to about 2.5 hours by rail.

Roads: Manipur's combined road network (national highways, NEC roads, Border Roads Task Force roads and state roads) totals roughly 12,600 km, with about 1,700 km of national highway. NH-2 (Dibrugarh–Imphal–Tuipang) is the state's principal Imphal–Dimapur/Kohima supply lifeline; NH-37 runs 356 km from Badarpur to Imphal; and NH-102 connects Imphal to the Myanmar border town of Moreh over 107 km. In October 2024 the Centre approved 50 National Highway projects covering 1,026 km, 44 of them (902 km) prioritised for hill-area connectivity; as of the latest review, 8 hill projects (125 km) were complete, with 36 more (777 km, roughly ₹12,000 crore) still in progress.

Air: Bir Tikendrajit International Airport, Imphal, is undergoing significant expansion: a new cargo terminal, targeted for operational status by April 2026 and full completion by December 2026, is expected to lift cargo capacity from about 500 to 1,500 metric tonnes a month.

Trilateral Highway: The India–Myanmar–Thailand Trilateral Highway, which enters Myanmar via Moreh along the NH-102 corridor, remains roughly 70% complete overall, with its Myanmar-side sections stalled by that country's ongoing civil conflict — a reminder that Manipur's Act East ambitions depend on stability well beyond its own borders.

Environment, Wildlife & Biodiversity

Manipur is one of the most densely forested states in India on paper, but that headline figure masks a familiar Northeast paradox: high forest cover, declining trend — and a flagship species whose recovery story is now being quietly revised downward.

75.2%

FOREST COVER OF
GEOGRAPHICAL AREA (ISFR
2023)

-47 km²

RECORDED FOREST AREA LOST,
2021-2023

40 km²

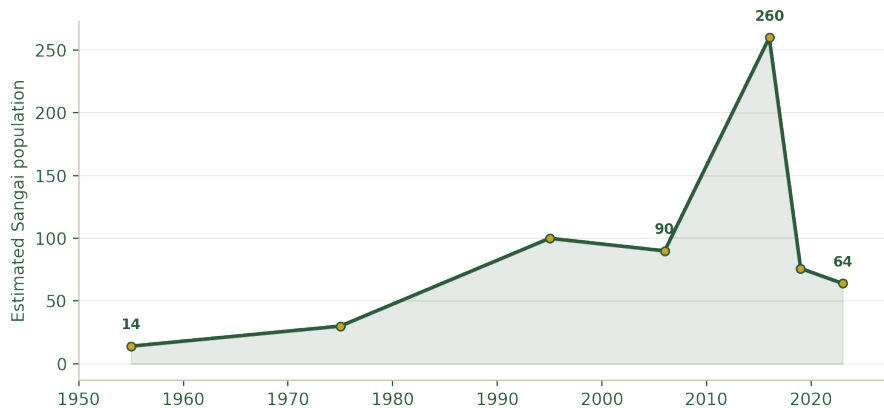
KEIBUL LAMJAO NATIONAL PARK
(NOTIFIED 1977)

~64 (2023)

ESTIMATED SANGAI DEER POPULATION, DOWN FROM ~90 IN 2006

Per the 18th India State of Forest Report (ISFR 2023), Manipur's forest cover stands at approximately 75.2% of its geographical area — among just eight Indian states/UTs exceeding 75% forest cover. Yet between the 2021 and 2023 assessments the state lost 47 km² of forest within its Recorded Forest Areas, and satellite data place Manipur among the top five Northeast states (with Assam, Mizoram, Arunachal Pradesh and Nagaland) accounting for roughly 60% of all of India's tree-cover loss between 2001 and 2023 — driven substantially by jhum (shifting) cultivation, encroachment and hill infrastructure expansion.

The state's protected-area network centres on **Keibul Lamjao National Park**, the world's only floating national park, on the southeastern fringe of Loktak Lake in Bishnupur district. Spanning roughly 40 km² of phumdi — floating mats of vegetation, soil and organic matter up to two metres thick — it was notified in 1977. Other significant reserves include the Yangoupokpi-Lokchao Wildlife Sanctuary in Chandel district (about 185 km², home to Himalayan black bear and hoolock gibbon), the Shirui Kashong Lily Sanctuary in Ukhrul district, protecting the endemic Shirui lily, and the Dzuko Valley near Mount Tempu, Manipur's highest peak.



*Estimated Sangai (*Rucervus eldii eldii*) population at Keibul Lamjao. The subspecies fell to roughly 14 individuals by the early 1950s-70s before recovering — but a 2023 Wildlife Institute of India-linked study found renewed decline since 2006.*

Keibul Lamjao is globally significant as the sole natural habitat of the **Sangai** (*Rucervus eldii eldii*), the brow-antlered "dancing deer" and Manipur's state animal, uniquely adapted to walk on the spongy phumdi mats. Hunting and habitat loss reduced the population to an estimated 14 individuals by the early 1950s-70s, and the subspecies was at one point declared extinct before rediscovery; official counts commonly cited around 260 individuals through 2016-2023. However, a more rigorous recent study linked to the Wildlife Institute of India found the population instead fell from about 90 in 2006 to 76 in 2019 and 64 in 2023 — a decline of roughly 1.9% a year, complicating the earlier recovery narrative. The IUCN lists *Rucervus eldii* as Endangered, and Keibul Lamjao remains its only viable wild population anywhere in the world.

The most acute pressure on this ecosystem is the degradation of Loktak Lake itself, driven by the Ithai Barrage (commissioned 1983). By holding water levels artificially high year-round, the barrage prevents phumdis from grounding on the lakebed during the dry season — the process by which they regenerate. Thick-vegetation phumdi cover peaked at 58.8 km² in 2007 but had shrunk to just 20.0 km² by 2022, while post-barrage fish production has fallen to roughly 11% of pre-barrage yield — a direct threat to both the lake's Ramsar-listed ecosystem and the Sangai's phumdi-dependent habitat.

Problems Facing Manipur

Manipur's structural problems are dominated by one overwhelming crisis — the 2023 ethnic conflict — but are compounded by decades-old challenges in insurgency, narcotics, border security and connectivity that the conflict has, in most cases, made significantly worse.

1 Ethnic Conflict (2023-2026)

Violence between Meitei and Kuki-Zo communities has killed at least 258 people in direct conflict, with a further 731 deaths recorded inside relief camps among the displaced. Over 50,000-58,000 people remain displaced across 281 relief camps. A total internet shutdown ran 142 days (May-September 2023) — the longest in Northeast India's history and second only to Kashmir nationally.

2 AFSPA & Militarisation

The Armed Forces Special Powers Act has applied to Manipur since 1980. After partial withdrawal from valley areas in 2022, it was reimposed across nearly the entire state in October 2024; as of an October 2025 order, only areas under 13 police stations across five districts remain exempt.

3 Insurgency & Armed Groups

Manipur hosts one of India's densest insurgency landscapes: nine MHA-banned Meitei valley-based groups (including the UNLF, founded 1964) plus roughly two dozen hill-based Kuki-Zo and Naga outfits organised under umbrella bodies KNO and UPF.

4 Drug Trafficking & Poppy Cultivation

Bordering Myanmar's Golden Triangle, Manipur has seen poppy cultivation concentrated in hill districts. Since 2017 the state has destroyed nearly 15,500 acres of poppy cumulatively, including 90 acres in a single Ukhrul operation in January 2025. Analysts link narcotics revenue to the financing of armed groups on both sides of the conflict.

5 Myanmar Border Security

Fewer than 6 km of the porous Indo-Myanmar border was fenced as of the relevant assessment, and the Free Movement Regime permits visa-free 72-hour crossings within 16 km of the border — fuelling fears of infiltration and arms movement, with a state committee identifying 2,187 illegal migrants.

6 Economic Blockades

National Highway 2 (Imphal–Dimapur), Manipur's principal supply lifeline, has been repeatedly shut by economic blockades — most notably a United Naga Council blockade from November 2016 that crippled fuel and essential-goods supply for months, and renewed blockades recurring through the 2023–26 conflict period.

7 Unemployment & Hill-Valley Gaps

Unemployment stood at 4.7% in 2022-23, above the 3.2% national average, with female labour-force participation at just 31.3%. Research documents pronounced hill-versus-valley disparities in educational infrastructure density and maternal healthcare access, with hill districts lacking basic facilities the valley takes for granted.

“731 deaths have been recorded inside Manipur's relief camps since the ethnic violence began — nearly three times the direct conflict death toll — a grim reminder that displacement itself has become one of the crisis's deadliest consequences.

— RTI data cited by The Wire; National Herald

Solutions & Policy Responses

The response to Manipur's crisis has combined direct central intervention (President's Rule), rolling security-law adjustments, and revived ceasefire diplomacy — a mix that has so far stabilised but not resolved the underlying conflict.

1 President's Rule & Unified Command

Following CM N. Biren Singh's February 2025 resignation, President's Rule was imposed on 13 February 2025 and extended six months (August 2025) before being revoked on 4 February 2026 with a new Chief Minister sworn in. A Unified Command placed state security under a central-government-appointed advisor; Amnesty International noted in May 2025 that rehabilitation of the displaced remained urgently unresolved even two years on.

2 Rolling AFSPA Notifications

Rather than a full withdrawal or blanket reimposition, the Centre continues six-monthly AFSPA renewal orders, expanding or contracting the "disturbed area" designation district by district as violence ebbs and flows — a calibrated but reactive approach that some Kuki legislators argue should instead cover the whole state to enable recovery of looted arms.

3 Revised Suspension of Operations (SoO)

After the Manipur Assembly unilaterally withdrew from the long-running Kuki SoO ceasefire in February 2024, a revised tripartite agreement was signed in September 2025 between the MHA, state government and 24 Kuki-Zo groups, including Aadhaar-linked cadre stipends and consolidation of armed-group camps away from highways and the Myanmar border — though Meitei civil body COCOMI publicly rejected the extension.

4 "War on Drugs" Campaign

Launched under the Biren Singh government and continuing under central administration, the campaign combines poppy-field destruction drives (nearly 15,500 acres cumulatively since 2017), NGO partnerships, and stepped-up NDPS Act enforcement — though critics note eradication has not addressed the underlying poverty driving hill farmers to cultivate poppy.

5 Border Fencing & FMR Suspension

The Union Home Minister has announced plans to scrap the Free Movement Regime and fence roughly 300 km of the Indo-Myanmar border via smart-fencing tenders, a project expected to take about five years — though it faces protest from hill communities reliant on cross-border kinship ties.

6 Convoy Escorts & Highway Investment

During recurring blockades, central forces have repeatedly escorted supply convoys and airlifted essential goods; longer-term, the Centre has approved 50 National Highway projects (1,026 km, over ₹12,000 crore) targeting hill-area connectivity, alongside continued investment in the Trans-Asian Highway corridor.

7 Targeted Hill-Area Investment

NITI Aayog's 2025 "Macro and Fiscal Landscape of Manipur" report calls for targeted infrastructure, healthcare and education investment in hill districts alongside special-category fiscal support — though implementation has been substantially disrupted by the conflict itself, which has stalled administration in contested areas.

What Manipur Can Learn From Other States & Regions

Manipur is far from the first place to face ethnic partition, insurgency and narcotics-fuelled conflict. Other states and countries offer concrete, numbers-backed precedents — and cautionary tales — for how such crises have been resolved, or failed to be.

1 Mizoram Peace Accord (1986)

Two decades of MNF insurgency (1966–86) ended with a single accord combining full cadre surrender, rehabilitation and statehood; Mizoram became one of the first Northeast states to go fully insurgency-free.

Lesson for Manipur: a negotiated political settlement with one empowered interlocutor can end even decades-long conflict — but Manipur's fragmented armed groups currently lack that single voice.

2 Naga Peace Process (1997 ceasefire, 2015 framework)

Over 80 rounds of talks and a standing ceasefire since 1997 have sharply cut Naga insurgency-linked deaths, even without a final settlement.

Lesson: a durable ceasefire-first, settlement-later framework can freeze violence for decades — Manipur needs a formal, monitored ceasefire mechanism, not just ad hoc SoO pacts.

3 Bodo Peace Accord, Assam (2020)

Bodo insurgency killed over 4,000 people since the 1990s; since the 2020 accord brought all four NDFB factions to disarm simultaneously, the region has seen no major ethnic outbreak.

Lesson: bringing all splinter factions to the table at once, not staggered, prevents rejectionist factions from restarting violence.

4 Northern Ireland — Good Friday Agreement (1998)

The Troubles killed 3,720 over three decades in a segregated Protestant-Catholic conflict strikingly similar to Meitei-Kuki geographic separation today. Guaranteed power-sharing government cut security-related deaths to 158 total over the following 25+ years.

Lesson: guaranteed cross-community power-sharing, not majority rule, is what let two segregated communities coexist — directly relevant to Manipur's all-Meitei-dominated state government.

5 Colombia — FARC Peace Accord (2016)

50 years of conflict killed 200,000+ and displaced ~7 million; FARC fully disarmed by 2017, but violence resurged in vacated areas once state investment failed to fill the gap.

Lesson: disarmament alone is not enough — without state investment and security presence in contested zones, violence relocates rather than disappears.

6 Thailand's Golden Triangle Crop Substitution (1969-present)

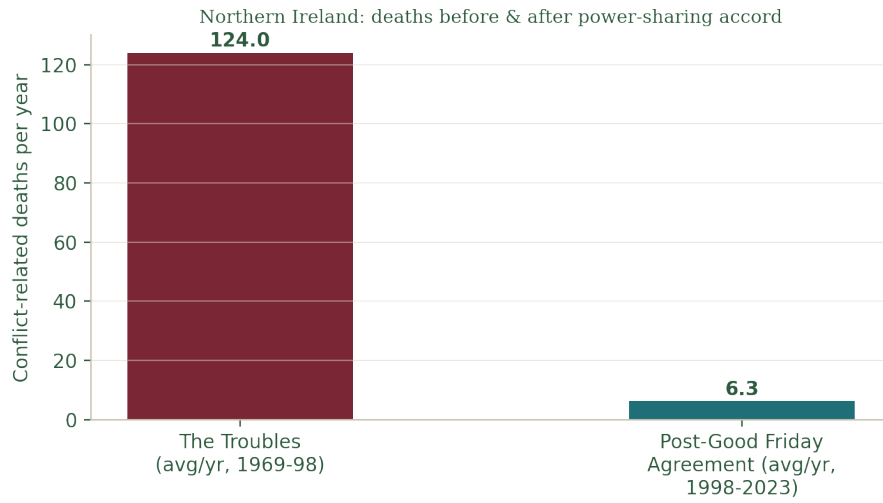
Thailand's Royal Project Foundation introduced coffee, tea and fruit to hill farmers from 1969; by 2003 UNODC delisted Thailand as a significant opium producer, with the region's opium share falling from 66% (1998) to 12% (2006).

Lesson: decades-long crop substitution with guaranteed market access breaks poppy dependency far more durably than eradication alone.

7 Punjab Insurgency Resolution (1984-1995)

The Khalistan insurgency killed roughly 20,000 before petering out by 1993 under sustained, professionalised policing combined with economic normalisation.

Lesson: professionalised state policing can break an insurgency without a formal accord — but at the cost of parallel political reconciliation, a trade-off Manipur must weigh carefully.



Conflict-related deaths per year, before and after Northern Ireland's 1998 Good Friday Agreement — a near 20-fold decline following guaranteed power-sharing government.

Future Growth & Potential

Manipur's growth pipeline — highways, an expanding airport, a solar push, an IT SEZ — is real and substantially funded, but nearly every initiative below is contingent on a political reconciliation that, as of mid-2026, remains incomplete.

₹12,000+ Cr

50 APPROVED NH PROJECTS,
1,026 KM

₹3,600 Cr

MANIPUR URBAN ROADS
PROJECT (SEP 2025)

500 MW

SOLAR TARGET BY 2030
(MANIREDA)

44,000

DIRECT + INDIRECT JOBS PROJECTED FROM IT SEZ (11K + 33K)

Connectivity: The India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway (~1,360 km) is roughly 70% complete but has stalled on its remaining stretch due to Myanmar's own civil conflict; the parallel Trans-Asian Railway link remains at the planning stage after two decades. Imphal (Bir Tikendrajit International) Airport now handles about 3,000 passengers a day as the Northeast's second-busiest airport, with a new cargo terminal targeted for completion in December 2026.

Tourism: ₹89.48 crore has been sanctioned for a Loktak Lake "Experience Project" under the Centre's iconic-tourism scheme, though the state government has been slow to submit utilisation certificates for funds already released — a sign of execution bottlenecks that predate the current conflict.

Renewable energy: Installed capacity is only around 250 MW against summer peak demand nearing 248 MW — essentially no reserve margin. Manipur's strong solar irradiance and estimated 190 MW wind and 200 MW biomass potential underpin MANIREDA's plan for a 100 MW solar park at Jiribam and a 2030 target of 500 MW solar plus 200 MWh storage.

IT and startups: A planned IT SEZ at Mantripukhri, backed by a Tata Technologies MOU, is projected to generate 11,000 direct and 33,000 indirect jobs and add ₹4,600 crore to state GDP, alongside a "Startup Manipur" policy targeting 1,000+ tech startups — though these remain early-stage relative to peer states like Assam or Meghalaya.

Demographic dividend versus risk: Manipur has a young population that could drive growth, but the 2023–25 conflict has displaced over 50,000 people, damaged or destroyed hundreds of temples and churches, and disrupted schooling for large numbers of displaced children. Nearly every project above — the Loktak tourism fund, the trilateral highway, the IT SEZ — is already

lagging in execution. The honest framing, consistent with the Colombia and Northern Ireland precedents in the previous chapter, is that Manipur's growth potential is real and well-funded on paper but almost entirely contingent on political reconciliation: infrastructure and investment without a durable political settlement tend to produce stalled or reversed gains, not sustained growth.

Notable Facts

- ✦ **The world's only floating national park** — Keibul Lamjao National Park sits entirely atop Loktak Lake's floating phumdi islands, the last natural habitat of the endangered Sangai brow-antlered deer.

- ✦ **All four commercial silk types, one state** — Manipur is among the very few places on earth producing mulberry, eri, muga and oak tasar silk within a single territory.

- ✦ **A 500-year-old all-women market** — Ima Keithel in Imphal, reputedly the world's largest market run entirely by women, traces its roots to 16th-century military conscription of men.

- ✦ **Highest per-capita handloom density in India** — roughly 210,000 weaving households across a population of just 3.2 million, the third-highest absolute count of any Indian state.

- ✦ **Birthplace of the Indian tricolour's first hoisting on Indian soil** — at Moirang on 14 April 1944, by the Indian National Army under Colonel Shaukat Malik.

- ✦ **A pivotal WWII battlefield** — the Battle of Imphal (1944) is ranked among the greatest battles in British military history, decisively ending Japan's only serious attempt to invade the Indian subcontinent.

- ✦ **The kingdom that renamed itself** — King Pamheiba (Gharib Nawaz) renamed his kingdom "Manipur" in the early 18th century upon adopting Vaishnavite Hinduism, replacing the older name Kangleipak.

- ✦ **Entirely in Seismic Zone V** — Manipur sits atop the collision zone of the Indian and Burmese tectonic plates, placing the whole state in India's highest earthquake-hazard category.

- ✦ **A GI-tagged black rice now reaching Europe** — Chak-hao, grown only in Manipur's valley microclimate, was GI-tagged in 2020 and has begun small organic export consignments abroad.

- ✦ **One of India's longest internet shutdowns** — a 142-day shutdown from May to September 2023 consumed roughly 5,000 of India's 7,000 shutdown-hours that year, the longest in Northeast India's history.

Sources: Census of India (2011, and Registrar General projections for later years), NITI Aayog state summary and macro-fiscal reports, RBI State Finances data, PRS Legislative Research, NFHS-5 (2019–21; Manipur was not surveyed in NFHS-6), state Economic Survey and government press releases, Wikipedia (cross-checked against primary sources), and contemporaneous news coverage (The Wire, Business Standard, Al Jazeera, Human Rights Watch, International Crisis Group) for the 2023–2026 conflict. Several figures — particularly post-2011 demographic estimates, exact district-level 2011 data for districts created in 2016, and

post-conflict economic-loss estimates — are provisional or approximate pending the next full Census and updated state Economic Survey; where sources disagreed, the most authoritative or most recent figure was used and discrepancies are noted in the relevant chapter.