

Research Article

Politicisation of Housing Scheme in Manipur

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Abstract : Central government announced a mission called 'Housing for All' which is also known as Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban) and Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana(Gramin). Before Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana- Urban (PMAY-U) and Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana -Gramin (PMAY-G) there has several schemes for providing housing to poor. These schemes have failed to fulfil the set targets for providing house to all the homeless Indian citizen. The policy may be good but its positive success genuinely depend on policy implementer. If the policy and program are implemented without nepotistic influence of politician with vested interest then there can have genuine success of implementing schemes or program. The politicization of the housing scheme in Manipur had played a significant role in the meaningfulness of PMAY-U and PMAY-G. Another major hitch is the beneficiary must have Jamabandi, and document required is hard to obtain easily by any layman. The tricky part is that, the beneficiary did not apply directly, generally it was done through elected representative's workers or representatives. Those who are opposition to the elected representatives are often left out from applying. The illiterate and unfamiliar beneficiary face lots of hardship in applying and ultimately they give up.

Keywords : PMAY-U, PMAY-G, Politicization of Housing Scheme, Nepotism, Beneficiary.

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1. Introduction

Manipur has a total area of 22,327 sq. kms as of present with population of 37.56 Lakhs (Population Census. n.d.). Manipur lies in the latitude of 23° 68'N - 25° 68' N and in a longitude of 93° 03'E - 94° 78'E, with an elevation of 795 meters above the sea level (Geography of Manipur State, n.d.), and surrounded by hills from all sides. Imphal is the capital of the state with an area of about 700 square miles, located at an altitude of 790 meters above the sea level. It has 352 km long international boundary with Myanmar (Indra Kumar, 2010). The state Physiography can be classified into two distinctive regions (Geography of Manipur State, n.d.):

1. A remote area which consist of rugged hills and slender valleys.
2. The central area of flat plain with the entire allied land forms.

Manipur has total 456,113 households (Census of India 2011). The average household size is about 5.12 people per house (Manipur. n.d.). Manipur has a total of 557859 households, with 385520 in rural areas and 172339 in urban areas (Manipur.

n.d.). Manipur does not have any slum area so the government initiatives is the up gradation of housing pattern from kucha to pucca or from mud and bamboo made to brick made (Elangbam Tomba, personal communication, 22nd May 2025). 456,113 household with a population of 37.56 lakhs means 8.23% dwelling with a house, and the report of census of India shows that 89.7% in urban and 86.3% in rural areas (Census of India 2011). Both the report shows the contradictory on the housing and house hold percentage and numbers. But the fact lies that India have 69% in urban and 95% in rural (Census of India 2011). 88% of Manipur's people have housing and the whole country has 82%, shows that Manipur has more house own people than the whole India.

Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana

Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana is a scheme by the Government of India's initiatives to make better for homeless people in India. The central and Manipur government have initiated a number of schemes and programmes to eradicate the poverty and to provide the basic needs in Manipur. Housing scheme is one of such initiative that played a crucial role. Central government announced a mission called 'Housing for All' which is also known as Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana. It was launched on 25 June, 2015 and intends to provide housing for all in urban area by 2022 (Ministry of Housing And Urban Affairs Government of India, n.d.). However, in 2022 the schemes were extended till December 2024. Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Urban (PMAY-U) is administered under the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.

To address these gaps in the rural housing program and in view of Government's commitment to providing "Housing for All" by the scheme 2024, the of has IAY has been re-structured into Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana –Gramin (PMAY-G) w.e.f. 1st April 2016 (About Us, n.d.). PMAY-G aims at providing a pucca house, with basic amenities, to all houseless householder and those households living in kucha and dilapidated house, by 2024. The immediate the objective is to cover 1.00 crore household living in kucha house/dilapidated house in three years from 2016-17 to 2018- 19 (About Us, n.d.). The minimum size of the house has been increased to 25 sq.mt (from 20sq.mt) with a hygienic cooking space. The unit assistance has been increased from Rs. 70,000 to Rs. 1.20 lakh in plain and from Rs 75,000 to Rs 1.30 lakh in hilly states, difficult areas and IAP district (About Us, n.d.).

The cost of unit assistance is to be shared between Central and State Government in the ratio 60:40 in plain areas and 90:10 for North Eastern and the Himalayan States (About Us, n.d.). From the annual budgetary grant for PMAY-G, 90% of funds is to be released to States/UTs for the construction of new house under PMAY-G (About Us, n.d.). This would also include 4% allocation towards administrative expenses .5% of the budgetary grant is to be retained at the central Level as reserve fund for special Projects. The annual allocation to the states is to be based on the Annual Action Plan (AAP) approved by the Empowered Committee and the fund to States /UTs is to be released in two equal instalments (About Us, n.d.).

Politicisation of PMAY

PMAY-U and PMAY-G while implementing in the state of Manipur can be a testimony of how it had been politicised of government initiatives for development. The people often view the PMAY as something that associated with the MLA or Pradhan or Members (Hijam Jila, personal communication, 12th May 2025). The workers of the ruling people's representatives be it MLA or Pradhan or Members often project that the beneficiary are initiated by the government under the ardent effort of respective elected leaders, central leaders or the government. This may be assumed as how the program

has been politicised at grassroot level. Those who are near to MLA have the chance to get the benefit from PMAY or any government scheme (HijamJila, personal communication, 12th May 2025). This are the general perception that everybody in Manipur felt for. The active worker of political party who are in the ruling got maximum access to the any government department related with the schemes and benefits, and this is the main reason why the government development schemes are politicised.

Challenges of PMAY implementation in Manipur

There may have many challenges in the implementation of the PMAY-U and PMAY-G schemes in Manipur some of the challenges are

1. Scarcity of land.
Manipur valley areas comprise of 10% of land and hill areas comprises of 90%, with a population of 57.2% live in valley and 42.8% live in hill (Manipur n.d.). This clearly exhibit the issues of land for the implementation of housing schemes base on the population and the seize land had become irony in case of Manipur.
2. Land acquisition and lack of infrastructure.
Land acquisition is one of the hindrance related with providing housing loan in Manipur..
3. Delayed project approvals.
The culture of Red Tapism is very high in Manipur, as the corruption is practices rampantly. This led to the delayed in approval of the projects.
4. Rising cost of raw materials and labour.
The raw material in Manipur are too expensive as compare with the rest of India. The availability of infrastructure very meagre and often face problems related with the procurement of raw materials. Since everything is costly it is natural that the labour cost is also very high.
5. Age-old technologies.
The technology employed in construction work is traditional methods. None of the engineer or masonry or labour use modern technology and machinery while constructing a house. This practices led to time consuming and high cost value of construction.
6. Lack of skilled workforce.
The workers who indulges in house construction are least expose to modern technology and equipment.
7. Unmaintained property records. Most of the property records are poorly maintain, there was often a case of record misplace and loss of certain portion of records. In the world digitalised Manipur still practices paper base record maintenance.

Suggestion for better implementation of PMAY at Manipur

Some of the suggestion can be drawn from the above study or base on the above analysis. Some of the suggestion are as follows

1. The Government should make a yardstick on how to provide document. Further the document should be consolidated and easily retrievable set of documents so that confusion and delays can be avoided.
2. There should be helpdesk to help the beneficiaries with document collection and submission procedures.
3. There should have specific timeframes for each step in the approval process.
4. Periodic review and identification of bottlenecks and what had hampering in the approval process.

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5. Strict quality control should be implemented for construction at multiple stages by independent agencies. In this process NGOs or local volunteer should be made part of quality check inspection team.
 6. The sanctioned amount should be reassessed and raised to balance the real cost of materials and construction at the different levels.
 7. The Local Government should carry out awareness campaigns within local communities to share information regarding the eligibility criteria, benefits and application process of PMAY.
 8. The Government must provide a mechanism to oversee a grievance and complaints of the beneficiary.

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