PREFACE

Manipur, a former princely State, acceded to the Dominion of India in 1947 in respect of certain common matters including Communications, Defence and Foreign Affairs. In 1949 Manipur was integrated with the Indian Union as a consequence of the policy of integration of princely States followed by the Ministry of States of Government of India; this measure had also the backing of the conscious public opinion of Manipur as voiced at the time by its major political parties. The underlying popular expectation at that time was that with the inauguration of the federal Constitution from January 26, 1950 Manipur will continue to enjoy its separate identity under a fully responsible popular government. But soon after the inauguration of the Republican Constitution the popular expectation of the Manipuris was belied, because Manipur was given the status of only a Part C State directly administered by the Government of India through the agency of a Chief Commissioner. This gave rise to a process of intensive political struggle on the part of the Manipuri people for nearly two decades to achieve their most intimate common political aspiration, namely, autonomous
statehood with full responsible popular government within the framework of the Indian Constitution. This process of political struggle, instead of becoming simple and direct, involved several complicated factors and forces, some collaborative and others hostile to each other, until the persistent struggle yielded positive result with fulfilment of the demand of the people in January 1972. It is this complicated but fascinating nature of Manipur's constitutional and political evolution in the post-independence years which stimulated the interest of the author in pursuing a systematic study of this political process and its bearing on government and administration.

The pattern of government and administration which has come to stay in Manipur since its inauguration as a constituent State of India is the outcome of the gradual process of evolution, both in the pre-independence period of British imperialism and in the post-independence years of the free Republic of India. But this evolution, far from being an automatic process, is the gradual resultant of interest articulation of the Manipuri people and the various patterns of response to the popular demand in different phases
of Manipur's past and present history. Therefore in pursuing the present research project the author had to divide his study into nine chapters including the introductory and concluding ones.

Chapter I contains in brief an introduction of the problem of research and the relevance of its study. It also reviews the available published literature on the subject and points out the exact scope of the study and the methodology adopted by the author.

The second chapter is an attempt to introduce to the readers the land and people of Manipur, the distinctive character of its culture and the special significance for the socio-economic and political life of the State of the various native tribes who inhabit the hill areas of Manipur that surround the central valley.

The third chapter is devoted to a description of the pattern of government and administration under the hereditary kings of Manipur, showing also the major administrative reforms introduced during the period when Manipur came under British paramountcy.
In chapters IV and V the author had attempted to show the pattern of government and administration which Manipur had first as Part C State and, subsequently, during its reorganisation as a Union Territory under the direction and control of Central Government.

The sixth chapter contains a probe into the various aspects of the movement for full-fledged statehood and the pattern of Centre's response which was considered to be inadequate in coping with the political demand of the people.

Chapter VII deals with the interaction among factors and forces of convergence and divergence out of which developed the solution of a political synthesis - a consensus which strengthened the demand for statehood while accommodating the demand of the hill peoples for enjoyment of sub-system autonomy within the framework of democratic responsible government for the entire autonomous State.

Chapter VIII has for its theme the administrative reorganisation which was brought about in Manipur for promoting the welfare of the hill peoples while allowing them to enjoy autonomy of actual participation in the process of policy-making and administration at the State, District and Village levels.
In the concluding chapter the author has presented an overview of the different chapters, of the ultimate pattern of responsible and participatory government and administrative apparatus that evolved out of two decades of political struggle. He has also tried to indicate some of the major problems with which the present Government and Administrative setup has to cope in order to set Manipur on the path of progress and development while integrating with the process a special care and emphasis on the promotion and development of the hill peoples of the hill areas.

The concluding chapter is followed by a few important Appendices and a Select Bibliography for the convenience of reference by readers.

To the best of his knowledge there is no published research work on the subject of the thesis. The author has tried his best to utilise whatever published and unpublished materials were available in and outside the State of Manipur. Whatever shortcomings the present work has is due to several difficulties the author had to face in the course of this research work.
In the first place, the author would like to mention, meaning no offence to any one, that access to all relevant documents in the Manipur Secretariat Library was not available. Even where such access was available the lack of system in the preservation of relevant documents and records has hampered the author’s work. Similarly, the Manipur Assembly Library, though helpful in many ways, could not make available all the Acts passed by the Manipur Legislature and all the proceedings and reports of the various Committees. A further handicap was the demise of some important political personalities an interview with whom would have been useful to the present research. However, the author alone has the sole responsibility for the interpretation of the materials, views expressed and shortcomings contained in the present thesis.

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