PREFACE

The thesis entitled “Electoral Politics in Manipur” is my humble effort for understanding electoral politics in Manipur for the period from 1980-1995. Election is the most important means for the full participation of the people in the democratic process resulting in the formation of the government for understanding the national and regional political hurdles to the process of development in Manipur. In democratic, socialist and secular India, the democratic level at the centre as well as in the state level is based on adult franchise, direction elections, individual freedom and competitive parties. It was in 1948 that the people of Manipur for the first time enjoyed adult franchise under the Manipur State Constitution Act, 1948. After the merger of Manipur into the Indian Union, the people of Manipur again exercised their franchise starting from parliamentary and electoral college elections in 1952.

The main object of the study is to analyse the electoral politics and the political behaviour in Manipur in the light of political participation of the voters in both Parliamentary and Assembly elections during the period, 1980 to 1995. The work deals with how the people exercised their franchise, their perception to politics, reaction to the issues, response to mass media, etc.
The role of radio, newspapers and television in giving an impact on the mind of the voters. It also examined the nature of election campaign, manifestoes, influences, role of clubs, organisations, volunteers, religious affiliation and relationship and institutional leadership of the local community are also taken into account.

The information and the opinion of the voters is obtained by means of interview with the voters, by consulting the government and official publications, documents, books, articles, newspapers, journals, etc.

The first chapter deals with the definition of democracy and its growth in India. The relation between democracy and elections, provisions of the Constitution of India relating to elections, structure of election Commission, election machinery at the state level, poll machinery at the district level and machinery at the constituency level all these are reflected in the first Chapter.

The second Chapter discussed about the definition of a political party given by different scholars and role of political parties. The origin of the national political parties like Indian National Congress, Janata Party, Communist Party of India, Bharatiya Janata Party with aims and objectives and the Regional Political Parties like Akali Dal, Dravida Munnetra
Kazhagam, All Parties Hill Leaders Conference, Mizo National Front, People’s Party of Arunachal, Tripural Upajati Juba Samiti, Asom Gana Parishad, Naga National Organisation, United People’s of Nagaland, National Council of Nagaland, National Democratic Party, Manipur People’s Party, Federal Party of Manipur with their aims and objectives are also examined.

The third Chapter deals with the previous Assembly and Parliamentary elections beginning from 1948 to 1977. The number of political parties contested, seats secured, percentage of votes polled and the results of the elections are examined and analysed.

The fourth Chapter studied the election manifestoes of the national and the regional political parties. The meaning of election manifestoes, its importance and value on the eve of elections and a comparative study of all election manifestoes are dealt in this chapter.

The fifth Chapter highlighted the behaviour of a voter, methods of campaign like door to door campaign, flag flying contest, public meetings, community feast, election procession, role of money in election, value of press, radio and television etc. all are studied in detail. The factors influencing the decision of the voters and a comparative analysis of the
Thanga Constituency and the Phungyar Constitution are also given in this chapter.

The sixth Chapter analyse about the election results and formation of government during the period from 1980 to 1995. The participation of Female, Brahmin, Muslim and Rajkumars in the election are examined. The study of election results depicting the nature of the formation of government, its stability and instability are fully examined. The by-election of Thangmeiband Assembly Constituency, in Ukhrul Assembly Constituency, in Oiname Assembly Constituency and in Singjamei Assembly Constituency are also studied in detail.

The concluding chapter gives summary and assessment of the previous chapters. It highlights about the elections in the past, electoral behaviour, role of political parties, election manifestoes, methods of campaign, analysis of election results and formation of Government in the State of Manipur. The value of a vote decide the fate of a party as well as the Government. It brings a strong state and a strong nation.

The methodology adopted for the study is mainly historical, analytical and behavioural. The work is based mainly on primary sources with the support from the secondary sources.