CHAPTER - I

INTRODUCTION
The idea of democracy has been practised ever since the time of Herodotus to denote that form of Government in which the ruling power of the state is largely vested not in any particular class or classes but in the members of the community as a whole. The members of the community by direct vote decided what is good for the community. Majority of the decisions were taken unanimously. Sometimes decisions were on the basis of majority vote.

Democracy as a rule of the majority was advocated by the Greeks. It was against monarchical system of government i.e. rule by one person and oligarchy the rule by a few persons. These ruling persons belonged to a previledged class either by birth or by property.

Growth of Democracy:

In recent years the term democracy has been used to denote sometimes a state of mind, sometimes a quality in manners. The term has been associated with all sorts of associations, attractive or repulsive or ethical or poetical or even religious matters.

\footnote{Bryce James, \textit{Modern Democracies, Volume I}, The World Press Pvt. Ltd., Calcutta, 1962, p. 28.}
Democracy, politically means the rule of the people. The sovereign power belongs to the people. The people generally express their political desire or will through the elections. Elections may be direct or indirect.

The nature and characteristics of democratic countries in the world may be different from one another, depending on the size, population and political background. But the basic common feature of all democratic countries of the world is that the supreme political or sovereign power always rests with the people.

In other words the literary meaning of the word democracy is the government of the country by the people; a form of government in which the supreme power is vested in the people and exercised by them or by their elected representatives. Political and social equality is the spirit of democracy. In other words democracy produces a direct or indirect popular government by the people, for the people. Democratic government may be federal or unitary in character. Democracy aims at good life for every individual which includes satisfaction of the essential economic needs which would create in him a chance to develop his creative faculties. A democratic form of government is an instrument for the development of social and economic context as a method of approach in the settlement of problems. In
other words democracy means distribution of power and decentralisation. Democracy is to be understood in three aspects viz., social, economic and political.

Growth of Democracy in India:

The concept of democracy is not quite new in India. The idea and substance of self government lie embedded in the past. India had a long tradition of self rule or self government. Democratic institutions like popular assemblies had been in existence in our country as early as the Vedic age. Popular assemblies like the Samiti and the Sabha, the former an assembly of people and the later a smaller but a selected body of elders, had been functioning as a parliament for disposing of public business by debate and discussion. Besides the Samiti and the Sabha, democracy at the grassroots level had thrived in the country since centuries in the form of Gram Shabhas or Village Assemblies. The country was thus enriched in democratic traditions and the democratic ethos and thus provided the basic foundation for adopting parliamentary form of government after independence.

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When the Indian administration was taken over by the British crown in 1858, the British government slowly introduced democratic reforms as a step for establishing rapport with public opinion. Tracing the roots of India's democratic institution to 1892, one Indian political scientist observed:

"The period from 1892 is best described as one which saw the growth and realization of self government. The evolution of self government in India has two aspects. On the one hand, it involves the demand by Indians for the government of the country by and for themselves – the nationalist idea; and on the other the demand for sharing of the political power by an increasing number of people – the democratic ideas. The Indian National Congress held its first meeting in 1885 and it demanded the presence of elected members in the legislative councils, the right to discuss the issues to the House of Commons. Ultimately the maximum concession then deemed possible and wise by the Government took shape in an Act of 1892 which recognised though only indirectly, the principle of election to both the central and local legislatures"\(^4\).

The next step in the same direction was the Minto-Morely Reforms of 1909 which increased the elective elements in the Legislative Councils. But it was not based on new policy because the Legislative Councils could only deliberate but could not control the executive who were responsible only to the British Government. The Act of 1919 introduced several changes in the political framework of India as regards both the central and provincial

governments. The central legislature was made bicameral. There was a majority of elected members⁵.

After the Round Table Conferences held in London, the Government of India Act 1935 was enacted. It was brought into operation in 1937 and it was an important landmark in India’s march towards self Government. It gave autonomy to the states where even the executive was elected by the Legislative Assemblies and responsible to it. Ultimately, the British Government recognised India’s right to decide her own destiny. Under the Cabinet Mission plan of May 16, 1946 a Constituent Assembly of India was formed for framing the Constitution of the country. When India became free she had considerable experiences in parliamentary government. The most important innovations of the Indian Constitution relating to the Centre and the Legislative Assemblies in the state were – first, that the Executive were made solely responsible to the elected bodies and secondly, the members were elected on adult franchise and not on the restricted franchise as done before 1947⁶.

⁵ Ibid., p. 26.
The Constitution of India came into force on January 26, 1950. The first election of the Lok Sabha was held in May, 1952.

Definitions of Democracy:

The term “Democracy” is derived from the Greek words ‘demos’ and ‘Kratos’. Demos means people and while Kratos means power. Democracy thus means ‘power of the people’ or ‘rule of multitude’. Many writers and thinkers gave different meanings and definitions of the terms ‘democracy’. The following are some of the meanings and definitions given by different persons.

According to Abraham Lincoln, President of USA ‘Democracy is the government of the people, by the people, and for the people’.

Dicey defined democracy as a ‘form of Government in which the governing body is a comparatively large fraction of the entire nation’.

According to Lowell ‘Democracy is a government in which everyone has chance and knows he has it’.

Seeley described ‘it is a government in which everyone has a share’.

Chesterton described ‘it is a government which is in accord with the general will of the governed’.
Charles E. Merriam defines: 'Democracy is not a set of formulas or a blueprint of organisations, but a cost of thought and mode of action directed towards the commonwel as interpreted and directed by the commonwill'.

J.S. Mill described it, 'as a form of government in which the whole of people or some numerous portion of them exercise the governing power through deputies periodically elected by themselves'.

Cicil regards it, 'as a government which is in accord with the general will of the governed'.

Thomas Mann defined it, 'as that form of government and of society which is inspired above every other with the feeling of consciousness of the dignity of man'.

According to Harold Laski, the essence of the democratic idea is 'the effort of men to affirm their own essence and to remove all barriers to that affirmation'.

Barker writes: 'Democracy is two things'. It is a principle of the action of human spirit, the principle that free spirits in the area of social and political actions of individual life should freely guide themselves to freely determined ends. It is also a system of institutions, operative in political
community which enables the principle to be realised and served as the means of its realisation. Both these things are interconnected and both of them must be present in order to constitute democracy in the full and general sense of the word.\footnote{Sharma R.P., Modern Western Political Thought, Sterling Publishers Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, pp. 228-229.}

He further said democracy does not mean the well-being or prosperity of the people, but a method of Government of the people and a democratic measure is one which originates from or tends to promote, such a method of Government – not a measure which tends to increase the amount, or rectify the distributions of property or well being.

From the definitions given by different persons we can conclude that democracy is not merely a form of Government but also a form of state as well as a society. Social democracy means a way of life which recognizes liberty, equality and fraternity as the principle of life. These principles of liberty, equality and fraternity are not to be treated as a separate items in a trinity. They form a union of trinity in the sense that to divorce one from the other is to defeat the very purpose of democracy. Liberty cannot divorced from equality, equality cannot be divorced from liberty.
Nor can liberty and equality be divorced from fraternity. Without equality, liberty would produce the supremacy of the few over the many. Equality without liberty would kill individual initiative. Without fraternity, liberty and equality could not become a natural course of things.

Observation:

If democracy means 'government of the people, by the people, for the people', as stated by Abraham Lincoln in his Gettysburg address of 1863 the phrase 'Government by the people' becomes all the more important. The following conjectures may be made: (i) Government by the people say a self governing people is a direct democracy; (ii) conversely, that the people are the object of government that they are governed; (iii) that the government belongs to the people, whatever this 'belonging may mean; (iv) that Government is chosen and guided by the people; (v) that Government emanates from the people in the sense that it derives its legitimacy from the people's consent; and (vi) that the Government is responsible to the people.

Growth of Democracy in India:

The idea of democracy has a long history. It may be traced back since the East India Company set foot on the Indian soil. There were many more
Acts which relates to the growth of democracy in India. The following Acts gives us light for better understanding of the matter.

The Regulating Act of 1773: The Regulating Act, 1773 was passed by the British Parliament to control over the Company affairs and its administration in India without assuming direct administration. This Act is a milestone in the history of constitutional development in India. It makes the beginning of control of British Parliament over Indian affairs. Though the British Crown did not acquire sovereignty over Indian territory till 1858, this Act makes the beginning of parliamentary control over the affairs of the East India Company which had become a political institution along with being commercial organisation.

The Pitt’s India Act, 1784: The Act was passed in August 1784. This Act represented the political exigencies of the British Government. The main provisions of the Act deal with the Home administration of the Company affairs in the hands of the British Government, and to provide centralised administration in India.

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10 Ibid., p. 19.
The Charter Act of 1833: It is one of the most important constitutional Acts passed by the British Parliament. The main provision of the Act was that company was made a political body. It provides for centralisation. The Governor of Bengal became the Governor-General of India. Law making was in the hands of Governor General-in-Council.

The Charter Act of 1853: The Act was the last of its kind. Five years later the Crown assumed sovereignty over Indian possession directly. The number of members of the Court of Directors was reduced to 18 out of which 6 were to be nominated by the British Government. Provisions were made for appointment of Governor of Bengal and in his absence a Lieutenant Governor. Legislative functions were separated from the Executive. For legislative purpose, the legislature was to consist of 12 members. All were to get assent of the Governor General.\(^{11}\)

The Act of 1858: The period of the East India Company was one of repression and exploitation in India. There was no sound financial and administrative system. Poor became poorer and rich people became richer. The people of India rose as a nation against the authority of East India Company. So, the British Parliament decided to take over the Indian

\(^{11}\) Ibid., pp. 38-41.
administration from the East India Company and their power was transferred from the East India Company to the Crown. Accordingly Government of India Act, 1858 was passed in that year.\textsuperscript{12} The Crown assumed direct sovereignty of India. India was to be governed by and in the name of Her Majesty. The Court of Directors and Board of Control established under the Act of 1784 came to an end. The superintendence, direction and control of the Indian affairs was vested in the Secretary of State for India. The Council consisted of 15 members. Eight were appointed by the Crown and 7 by the Directors.

\textbf{The Indian Council Act of 1861}: The Act of 1861 is of a vital constitutional importance. It made the beginning of legislature in India and division of law making authority between the centre and the provinces. It provides the relation between the Governor General-in-Council and the legislative body. The Act sought to establish some kind of contact between the rulers and ruled. The people got an opportunity to put forward their grievances and Government got an opportunity to defend its policies and programmes. The Act made the beginning of representative government in

\textsuperscript{12} Dr. Raj Hans, \textit{Indian Political System}, Surject Publications, 7 K-Kolhapur Road, Kamla Nagar, New Delhi – 7, 1985, p.21.
India. Non-official members were added to the councils but they were not elected by the people but nominated by the Governor-General or Governors.

The Indian Council Act 1892: The electoral system in India developed during the British rule in an undemocratic manner. The election element was first introduced under the Indian Council Act 1892. Though the term election was neither mentioned in the Act nor in the regulations yet the Act introduced elective elements in the councils. The rules provided for the election of (a) eight members of each Provincial Council by Municipalities, District Boards, Chambers of Commerce, Universities, etc. and four of the Supreme Court by the non-official members of the local councils.\(^\text{13}\)

Indian Council Act, 1909: This Act is known as Moreley Minto reforms. Act. The Act recognised indirect election and it divided the electorate into three kinds of constituencies (i) General electorate, (ii) Class electorate and (iii) Special electorate. The general electorate comprised non-official members of the provincial Legislative Council. The class electorate include land holders and Muslim constituencies from the provinces. The last one represented two seats from Chamber of Commerce from Bengal and

Bombay Provinces. The size of the Provincial Legislative Council was also enlarged. The Act classified the members into elected officials and elected non-officials.

The Government of India Act, 1919: Some changes were made under the Act. It included the franchise of the central legislature. The electoral system were three (i) Provincial, (ii) Legislative Assembly and (iii) Council of States. Each system had two constituencies – (a) General and (b) Special. The General was meant for Muslims, Sikhs, Europeans, Anglo Indians and others. Special constituencies were land holders, universities, industries. Under this system of bicameralism, the franchise of the Council of States was extremely restricted and it raised difference from province to province. It is based on property qualification. The franchise of the legislative assembly was also based on property qualification. It varied from province to province.

The Government of India Act, 1935: This was the last important Act which was given to the people of India by the British Government. According to the Act federal executive was to consist of Governor-General and his council. The Governor-in-Council has extensive powers. Further,

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14 Ibid., p.3.
15 Ibid., p.5.
federal legislature in India was bicameral i.e. Upper House and Lower House.\textsuperscript{16} The Act did not introduce the system of universal suffrage and the right to vote was limited. The property qualification continued to be the main basis of franchise for both the Houses. In the Upper House the rich man or the previledged persons such as Raj Bahadur, Executive councillors, Ministers, Judges, etc. have the right to vote. The franchise in the Lower House was fixed at the level of much lower than under the Act of 1919.\textsuperscript{17} The bicameral central legislature was a curious mixture of many principles like democratic and autocratic elements. The provinces send their elected representatives on their behalf. Communal representation was given to small communities. It can be said that electors were influenced by communal or provincial consideration in their choice while exercising the right to vote.

In the provincial election, 1937, the Indian National congress took part in the election inspite of opposition to the electoral system under the Government of India Act, 1935. Election results of the Congress were tremendous but the Muslim League fared badly.

During discussions in the Constituent Assembly some members pointed out that the right to vote should be treated as a fundamental right of adult citizen. There should be free and an independent machinery. It was discussed by the Fundamental Right Sub-Committee on March 29, 1947. It was recommended that (a) Universal adult suffrage must be guaranteed by the new Constitution of India (b) election should be free, secret and periodic and (c) election should be managed by an Independent Commission. These recommendations became a part of Draft Article 289. The Draft Constitution was settled by the Drafting Committee on February 21, 1948. The Draft Constitution provided for a separate Election Commission for both the centre and the states.

On June 15, 1949 Dr. Ambedkar introduced a new Article which made comprehensive provision for Central Election Commission. After a long discussion with the Experts, the new Article as moved by Dr. Ambedkar on June 16, 1949. It was adopted by the Constituent Assembly abolishing the principle of reservation of seats for Muslims, Anglo Indians, Sikhs and Indian Christians. With this change, it became as Article 325 of the Constitution of India.
Thus during the British period, the Indian Legislatures were elected on a very restricted franchise and only a small fraction of the population was eligible to exercise the right to vote.

Today every citizen not below 18 years of age has the right to vote. Adult franchise has proved itself to be quite successful during the last five decades irrespective of the size of the electorate in India.

**Relation between Democracy and Elections:**

There is a close relation between democracy and election. Elections are the soul of democracy. Free and fair election is a necessary ingredient for the successful working of real democracy. It may not be wrong to say that both the terms ‘democracy’ and ‘free and fair elections’ go together and are the two sides of the same coin. Keeping this fact in view, democracy without election is meaningless and election without democracy is unthinkable.

Election provides proper channel for the formation of Government. Democracy and elections are inter-related. We may note down the inter-relationship in the following manner:
a) In a democracy, the ultimate power and authority of the state rests with the people. The Government derives its power from the people through elections.

b) The democratic government is solely responsible to the electorate for its policies and actions. People have the right to criticise the activities of the Government when it fails to satisfy their aspirations. The democratic government cannot exercise dictatorial power over the people.

c) In a democracy people enjoy various freedoms including the right to elect and to be elected.

d) Democracy believes that the state is a means to an end. It exists for the good life of the people. The people can check and control the working of democracy through elections.

e) Democracy is characterised by the existence of different political parties. The peoples can exercise their choice, according to their convictions to different political parties. And the existence of political parties are necessary for the conduct of elections periodically.
To conclude we may say that if there is Democracy there is election for forming the Government. Both are interdependent and inseparable.

Provisions of Constitution of India Relating to Elections:

There are many provisions relating to elections in the Constitution of India. Some of the important provisions are\(^{18}\):

**Article 324 (I):** The superintendence, direction and control of the preparation of the electoral rolls for, and the conduct of, all elections to Parliament and to the Legislature of every State and of elections to the offices of President and Vice-President held under this Constitution...shall be vested in a Commission (referred to in this Constitution as the Election Commission).

**Article 324 and 327 (I):** The power of Parliament to make laws relating to election is subject to other provisions of the Constitution which include Art 324 and the power of the Election Commission under the Constitution as well as intra vires Rules and Orders.

Thus, Art 324 is an independent source of power of the Election Commission and it can make appropriate orders as required during the entire

course of election from the date of notification by the President under section 14 of the Representation of the People Act, 1951, and the declaration of the result by the Returning Officer, including cancellation of poll and directing repoll.

**Article 325 :** There shall be one general electoral roll for every territorial constituency for election to either House of Parliament or to the House or either House of the Legislature of a State and no person shall be eligible for inclusion in any such roll or claim to be included in any special electoral roll for any such constituency on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, creed or any of them.

**Article 326 :** The elections to the House of the People and to the Legislative Assembly of every State shall be on the basis of adult suffrage; every person who is a citizen of India and who is not less than twenty-one years of age on such date as may be fixed in that behalf by or under any law made by the appropriate Legislature and is not otherwise disqualified under this Constitution or any law made by the appropriate Legislature on the ground of non-residence, unsoundness of mind, crime or corrupt or illegal practice, shall be entitled to be registered as a voter at any such election.
Article 327: Subject to the provisions of this Constitution, Parliament may from time to time by law make provision with respect to all matters relating to, or in connection with, elections to either House of Parliament or to the House or either House of the Legislature of a State including the preparation of electoral rolls, the delimitation of constituencies and all other matters necessary for securing the due constitution of such House or Houses.¹⁹

Article 328: Subject to the provisions of this Constitution and in so far as provision in that behalf is not made by Parliament, the Legislature of a State may from time to time by law make provision with respect to all matters relating to, or in connection with, the elections to the House or either House of Legislature of the State including the preparation of electoral rolls and all other matters necessary for securing the due constitution of such House or Houses.

Article 329: Notwithstanding anything in this Constitutions: -

(a) the validity of any law relating to the delimitation of constituencies, or the allotment of seats to such constituencies, made or purporting to be made under Article 327 or Article 328, shall not be called in question in any court;

(b) no election to either House of Parliament or to the House or either House

¹⁹ Ibid., pp. 802-803.
of the Legislature of a State shall be called in question except by an election petition presented to such authority and in such manner as may be provided for by or under any law made by the appropriate Legislature.\textsuperscript{20}

**Electoral Machinery in India:**

Under Article 324(I) of the Constitution of India the superintendence, direction and control for the preparation of electoral rolls and the conduct of all elections to the parliament and to the legislature of every state and of elections to the office of the President, Vice-President held under this Constitution shall be vested in a Commission known as Election Commission.\textsuperscript{21} It is an autonomous body entrusted with the task of conducting elections to the Union and the State Legislatures as well.

**Structure of the Election Commission:**

According to Article 324(2) the Election Commission consists of the Chief Election Commissioner and such member of Election Commissioners, if necessary, as the President of India may from time to time fix when any other Election Commissioner is appointed, the Chief Election Commissioner acts as the Chairman of the Election Commission. Thus the Constitution

\textsuperscript{20} Ibid., pp. 303-305.

authorises the President to have a single member or multi member Election Commission. It is further provided that these officials of the Election Commission working under him shall be governed by the law of Parliament.\textsuperscript{22}

The President of India after consultation with the Election Commission may appoint some Regional Commissioner to assist the Election Commission in the performance of its functions. It may be recalled that the Drafting Committee steered a middle course in favouring a permanent officer of the Election Commission so that a skeleton machinery would always be available as election might take place even before the end of every five years when the Lower House might be dissolved and by-elections might takes place at any time. Article 324(2) reads as: “The Election Commission shall consist of Chief Election Commissioner and such numbers of other Election Commissioners, if any, as the President may from time to time fix and the appointment of the Chief Election Commissioner and Election Commissioners, shall, subject to the provisions of any law made in that behalf by Parliament, be made by the President”. Two Regional Commissioners were appointed at the time of first General Elections held in 1951-52 for a period of six months. Thereafter, no

\textsuperscript{22} Ibid., p. 34.
Regional Commissioners were appointed at any of the subsequent General Elections. Since the system of having Regional commissioners did not prove much of a success, it was discontinued at the time of second General Elections. However, the two new posts of Deputy Election Commissioners were created in 1956 in the place of Regional Commissioners. Thereafter only one post was retained. Under Section 19-A of the Representations of Peoples Act, 1951 the Deputy Election Commission is empowered to perform any of the functions of the Elections given by the Chief Election Commissioner.

The following is the organisational set up of the Election Commission of India as per the First Annual Report, 1984 published by the Election Commission of India:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisational set up of the Election Commission of India</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Election Commissioner</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chief Election Commissioner</td>
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<tr>
<td>Under Secretary</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Administration</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Election Section-IV</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 Receipt &amp; Issue Section</td>
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List of Chief Election Commissioner of India and their tenure.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>From</th>
<th>To</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.  Dr. Nagendra Singh</td>
<td>1.10.1972</td>
<td>6.2.1973</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.  Mr. T. Swaminathan</td>
<td>7.2.1973</td>
<td>17.6.1977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.  Mrs. Ram Devi</td>
<td></td>
<td>Officiated for sometime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. M.S. Gill</td>
<td>1996</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources from N.S. Gehlot, op.cit., p.355.

Election machinery at the State level:

At the State level, the election machinery consists of the Chief Electoral Officer who is selected by the Election Commission out of a panel of names provided by the State Government. Usually, the recommendation of the state is accepted. He is from the rank of a senior Secretary. In some states it is on whole time basis and in some states it is on part time basis. According to Section 13-A of the Representations of Peoples Act, 1950, the
Chief Electoral Officer shall supervise the preparation, revision, correction of all electoral rolls in the state. It is subject to the superintendence, direction and control of the Election Commission of India. The Election Commission may appoint one or more persons as Assistant Registrar Officer to assist the Electoral Registration Officer.

The Chief Electoral Officer is the king-pin of the whole Electoral machinery of the state. He, however, does not enjoy any statutory status. He was given statutory recognition in 1956. The law does not specify whether the Chief Electoral Officer should be a whole time officer of the State Government exclusively attending the work of election work or not.

As a result, the Chief Electoral Officer attends to the election work in addition to his other administrative duties. With a view to tonning up the electoral administration at the state level, the Election Commission in 1957 suggested for the creation of Deputy Chief Electoral Officer in the states where the Chief Electoral Officers were part time officers. The recommendation was implemented before the third general election held in 1962. Now, the Chief Electoral Officers in all states and Union territories except small territories as Dadra, Nagar Haveli are assisted by at least one
whole time officer designated as either Joint Deputy or Assistant Chief Electoral Officer or as Assistant Secretary.

The Election Commission has no branch of its own in any part of the country to regulate the election. It has to depend upon the Chief Electoral Officer of the State Administration who functions under the control of the State Government. The Chief Electoral Officer function as the "branch of officer" of the Election Commission during the election period.

The Administrative structure of the office of the Chief Electoral Officer varies from state to state depending upon the size of the state and the volume of work involved. Usually the office of the Chief Electoral Officer is an integral part of the State Government. It has adequate staff to perform the task of election speedily, expeditiously and efficiently.

**Poll machinery at District level:**

According to Section 13-A of the Representation of Peoples Act, 1950 the election work in the District is entrusted to an officer known as District Election Officer (D.E.O.). The District Election Officer shall co-ordinate and supervise all work in the District or in the areas within his jurisdiction in connection with the preparation and revision of the electoral rolls for all Parliamentary, Assembly Constituencies within the district. He is also
required to perform all such other functions as may be entrusted to him by
the Election Commission and Chief Electoral Officer. In the Union
Territories, there are no District Election Officers. Their duties are
performed by the Returning Officers.\textsuperscript{23}

It may be recalled that the organisation of electoral machinery at the
district level varied from state to state till 1966. The saddening aspect of this
structure is that the District Election Officer on whom the entire work of
election falls is at present a part time officer including other officers working
under his control. They are not in a position to devote sufficient time or
labour to election work due to their overburden administrative duties.

In Manipur there are Assistant Election Officers, Election Supervisors
and others in each district. They are for preparation and conduct of election
on the advise of Chief Electoral Officer and the Election Commission.

Since the actual conduct of elections is the responsibility of the
Returning Officers, they must function under the supervision and control of
the Election Commission.\textsuperscript{24}

\textsuperscript{24} Ibid., p. 41.
Machinery at the Constituency level:

At the Constituency level, there are four statutory officers known as

a) the Electoral Registration Officer,

b) the Assistant Electoral Registration Officer,

c) the Returning Officer, and

d) the Assistant Returning Officer for the preparation and revision of

the electoral rolls and conduct of elections.

The officers of the status of Deputy Collectors are designated as
Electoral Registration Officers and Revenue Officers such as Tehsildars are
known as Assistant Electoral Registration Officers. The Assistant Electoral
Registration Officer and the Assistant Returning Officer assists the Electoral
Officer and Returning Officers from time to time.

The Presiding and Polling Officers are appointed by the District
Election Officer. These Officials actually conduct the poll. The District
Election Officer may appoint a Presiding Officer for each polling station and
such Polling Officers as are necessary. Actually, a polling party consists of
one Presiding Officer, four or five Polling Officers in case of simultaneous
elections to the Legislative Assembly and Lok Sabha. The Presiding Officer

\textsuperscript{25} \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 41-42.
ensures the fair and free conduct of the poll at the polling station. Usually, the Government servant with administrative capacity and some knowledge of election laws are picked up for appointment as Presiding Officers. Whenever sufficient number of Government servants are not available such as non Government school teachers, employees of local bodies are requisitioned.26

The following is the list of the Chief Electoral Officer of the Government of Manipur. The sources are from the Government of Manipur, Election Office, Imphal, 1998.

List of the Chief Electoral Officer, Manipur

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl.No.</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>From</th>
<th>To</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>H.M. Shrivastava, HJS</td>
<td>10.1.66</td>
<td>16.7.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>O.P. Mehrotra, HJS</td>
<td>17.7.67</td>
<td>31.8.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>H. Kar, HJS</td>
<td>1.9.71</td>
<td>20.11.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>S.S. Agrawal, HJS</td>
<td>21.11.73</td>
<td>6.1.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Y. Ibotombi Singh, MJS</td>
<td>7.1.77</td>
<td>5.3.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>B.N. Srivastava, HJS</td>
<td>6.3.79</td>
<td>31.7.80</td>
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<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>I. Bijoy Singh</td>
<td>1.8.80</td>
<td>7.6.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>A.H. Choudhury, IAS</td>
<td>8.6.81</td>
<td>31.11.83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

26 Ibid., p. 43.
10. A.P. Sharma, IAS  1.1.86  31.3.88
11. B.S. Lamba, IAS  1.4.88  22.7.90
12. Jarnail Singh, IAS  23.7.90  7.7.92
13. Rakesh, IAS  8.7.92  3.1.93
14. H.V. Lalringa, IAS  4.1.93  31.8.94
15. A.P. Sharma, IAS  1.9.94  15.2.95
16. Jarnail Singh, IAS  16.2.95  1.6.96
17. P. Saratchandra, IAS  1.7.96  3.1.98
18. A.E. Ahmed, IAS  3.1.98  31.5.98
19. D.S. Poonia, IAS  1.6.98  -


Office of the Chief Electoral Officer, Manipur:

The office of the Chief Electoral Officer, Manipur consists of only 34 members in the staff. There is one Joint Chief Electoral Officer and one Assistant Joint Chief Electoral Officer.

Office of the Chief Electoral Officer, Lamphelpat:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl.No.</th>
<th>Name of post</th>
<th>No. of post</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Jt. Chief Electoral Officer</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Assistant Jt. Chief Electoral Officer</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>A.E.O.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>ES</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.  UDC       3
6.  Head Clerk  1
7.  Ldraftsman  1
8.  Steno       1
9.  LDC        3
10. Driver     2
11. Draftsry   1
12. Chowkidar  1
13. Mali       1
14. ERC        13
15. Peon       10
             Total  43

Office of the D.C. (ERO) – Imphal West

1. A.E.O.       1
2. UDC          1
3. ERC          2
4. Grade IV     2
               Total  6

Office at the District Level:

There are election offices in the nine districts of Manipur. The strength of the staff in these offices differ from one District to another
District. In Imphal West there are six employees, whereas in Thoubal District, there are 13 persons in the staff. In Bishnupur District there are 11 employees in the staff and in Churachandpur and Ukhrul, the election offices consists of 8 employees each. In Chandel Election office there are only five employees whereas in Senapati and Tamenglong the Election office consists of 9 and 6 employees. In Imphal East, there are five staffs.

Election and Political Parties:

Political parties and elections go hand in hand. Both are inseparable and interlinked. Elections without political parties is meaningless. Candidates contest in the elections to be the members of decision making bodies through political parties. Political parties also present to the voters different political ideologies to choose according to their likings and desires.

Political parties are generally organised on the basis of ideological considerations. It is the party organisation with a unified statement of political principles gives political education to the masses and acts as a healthy check on Government from being despotic. A political party is defined as a group of citizens more or less organised having agreement on broad principles of national policy and trying to capture the Government through constitutional means. Political parties plays different roles through election for power.
After independence a number of political parties have appeared on the political horizon of India. Some are national and some are regional basis.

Political parties may be (1) recognised national political parties or (2) state political parties, or (3) registered but unrecognised political parties etc.

The candidates for election to the House of the People as well as to the State Assemblies are sponsored by political parties. There is however, no constitutional bar as such and a candidate could as well be Independent without the backing of any political party.\textsuperscript{27} Political parties plays different roles for winning the election either by money or by any other methods of election campaign. True elections are the heart of political parties.

Political parties published their symbols for all the candidates officially sponsored by them for both elections to the House of the People and to the State Assemblies. The member of political parties contesting elections is increasing over the decades. There were 9 political parties recognised as National Parties while another 44 were recognised as Regional Parties by the Election Commission in 1991.\textsuperscript{28}


\textsuperscript{28} Govt. of India, Census, 1991.
In 1980 Assembly elections in Manipur national political parties namely the Congress (I), the Congress (U), the C.P.I., the CPI(M), the Janata Party, the Janata (S) contested the election. Besides regional political parties such as the Manipur People's Party, the Ereipak Leishemba Party and Progressive Independent (Front and Kuki National Assembly) and others also contested in the election. In the eighth Assembly election held in 1984 seven National political parties such as the INC, the INC(U), the Janata, the CPI, the CPI(M), the BJP and the Lok Dal contested the election. Besides a number of Regional political parties like the KNA, the MPP and a number of Independent candidates contested the election. In 1990 Assembly election six National political parties such as the INC, the INC(U), the Janata, the CPI, the CPI(M) and the BJP contested the election. Regional political parties such as the KNA, the MPP, the NPP, the MHPC and Independents contested the election. In 1995 Assembly election national political parties namely Congress (I), the Communist Party of India (CPI), the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), the Janata Dal (JD), the Congress (S), the Samata Party and the Samajwadi Janata Party (SJP) contested in the election. Besides regional political parties, i.e. the Manipur People's Party (MPP), the Federal Party of Manipur (FPM), the Manipur Hill Peoples Conference (MHPC) and others contested the election.
Thus it is observed that Democracy provides the facility for election with one or many political parties. In the case of direct democracy there may be election without political party. Elections are like the box of a radio and political parties produces the tune.

The political parties published their election manifestoes. The national political parties like the Indian National Congress (I), the Indian National Congress (U), The Communist Party of India, the Janata Party, the Bharatiya Janata Party as well as the regional political parties like the Manipur People's Party, the Manipur Hill and Plain Council, the Federal Party of Manipur, published election manifestoes in 1980, 1984, 1990 and 1995 elections respectively. The common programmes included in the election manifestoes of both the national political parties and the regional political parties, are the following:

i) the inclusion of Manipuri Language in the VIII Schedule;
ii) the establishment of a full-fledged University;
iii) the establishment of industries;
iv) the shifting of Assam Rifle from Kangla;
v) to promote Arts, Culture and Sports;
vi) to remove corruption;
vii) the establishment of Agricultural University.
viii) the protection of territorial integrity;
ix) to provide facility for electricity;
x) to promote academic standard;
xi) to solve insurgency problems;
xii) to provide essential commodities, etc.

The common methods of election campaign adopted by all political parties both National and Regional are the holding of public meetings, house to house campaign, flag hoisting, community feast, use of posters, etc. Money also played a very important role in all the elections held in 1980, 1984, 1990 and 1995.