CHAPTER – IV

ELECTION MANIFESTOES
There are different views and interpretations regarding the meaning of manifesto of political parties. The following are some of the definitions of manifestoes.

The Chambers Twentieth Century Dictionary defines manifesto as: ‘a public written declaration of the intention/opinion or motives of a Sovereign or of a leader, party or body.’ The Concise Oxford Dictionary gives the meaning of manifestoes as: ‘a public declaration of Policy by Sovereign, State or body of individuals.’ And the Webster’s New Twentieth Century Dictionary (Second Edition) defines manifesto as ‘a public declaration of motives and intentions by a Government or by a person or group regarded as having some public importance.’ According to Webster’s Universal Dictionary the meaning of manifesto is: ‘public statement issued by prince, leader of a party or other persons in authority of principles and future policy.’ And the Lexicon Webster’s Dictionary defines manifesto as a ‘public declaration of principles, objectives, opinions issued by a Government or political factions.

From these above definitions, the common basic thing that we can derive is that manifestoes are the declaration of common aims and objectives of a party or group of parties. Every political party in a democratic country
always comes out with a manifesto on the eve of elections. The manifesto presented by a political party on the eve of election is a kind of promise or pledge to be fulfilled when the party comes to power. In India on the eve of Parliamentary or Assembly Election since 1952, every national or regional or local party came out with their election manifestoes. The party or parties analyse their policy on public issues and propound them in their election manifestos. The manifestoes of the party justify their accountability to the voters in terms of pledges they incorporate in them.

The manifestoes form the basis of contact between a power seeking party and power conferring voters.\(^1\) Thus Election manifestoes are a kind of promises and assurances made by the political parties or candidates to the effect that if they are selected to power, they will fulfil the promises made in their respective election manifestoes. It is also a kind of vote catching technique at the time of election by the political party.

**Importance of Election Manifestoes:**

The study of election manifestoes are necessary to understand the nature of electoral politics of a given society. The election manifesto of a

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political party has two objectives. The first is to define the position of the party on major or national issues. The second objective is to win the elections with a maximum number of votes for the party. The manifesto is an indication of policies or activities intended to be taken up after the election when the party comes to power. These two are complementary in the sense that a political party may attempt to compromise its basic policy, positions and the exigencies of all electoral situation in order to gain power.

The study of manifesto is a key to an understanding of the various problems mainly of developmental nature, and the ways and means of finding a rational solution of them as viewed by different parties. Manifestoes issued on the eve of elections may not disclose the full intentions and bonafides of a party or parties. It is an exercise in draftsmanship prepared for voters consumption. Most of the manifestoes are artificial and less of facts. Wide publicity of manifestoes is a technique of vote catching which has at once "an educative and humbling process."² Significant issues and pointers and also divergent approaches to manifold issues in the manifesto help one in understanding the minds of the parties.

The manifestoes of the opposition parties has a kind of tacit consensus in the matter of accusing the ruling party in running on the affairs of the state. Primarily, the local issues dominate the election scene and these are largely focussed in the election manifesto. The party ideologies and principles were attuned and directed to meet the local requirements.

No manifesto dare to ignore or by-pass some of the vital needs and issues agitating the minds of the voters. Hence all parties focussed them in the manifestoes. Only difference one finds is one of degree and emphasis.

ELECTION MANIFESTOES:
PARLIAMENTARY AND ASSEMBLY ELECTION, 1980.

The Indian National Congress:

The Manipur Pradesh Congress Committee (I) published its election manifesto in 1980. It was a thin volume having only 3 (three) pages excluding the cover. On the cover of the manifesto, we find the following words in Manipuri:

"To bring an equal society;

To protect the interest of the weaker section;

To eliminate corruption in administration;
To remove unemployment;

To achieve rightful status of Mother tongue.\(^3\)

The first and second pages criticized the Janata Government and called the Janata Government futile mixture which is incompatible with the people and with the political groups in the party. Further it blamed the Janata Government for ruining the economic political development which the Congress achieved through many years. The remaining pages mentioned 42 issues to be taken up by the party. Among the local issues mention may be made of the establishment of a special force for the maintenance of law and order (persons belonging to minorities, scheduled cast and schedule tribes will be represented in this force), to make Manipuri the official language of the state and to include it in the VIII Schedule, to establish a Primary Education Board, to establish a full-fledged University, to promote Sports and to build a Stadium at Khuman Lampak, to establish a Sports Council, to remove the differences between the hill and the plains, to provide employment to the youths, to establish industry centres like paper mill and sugar mill etc., to provide regular supply of water, to provide the facility for electrification in rural and urban areas, to preserve Kangla and its

\(^3\) M.P.C.C.(I), Election Manifesto, Imphal, 1980.
surroundings, to implement the master plan of the Imphal City, to improve the communication system, to remove Special Power Act, 1958, to give employment to youths (one to every family), to protect the independence of judiciary, to give more autonomy to the District Council and to give powers to the Panchayats. These are some of the points contained in the election manifesto of the M.P.C.C., 1980.

The Congress (U):

The election manifesto of the Manipur Pradesh Congress Committee (U) for 1980 election was in a thin volume. It contained only 7(seven) pages with a light green cover which shows a “Charkha Symbol”. The party claims that this was only the party which can form the Government. It blamed the Janata Government as partial and corrupted. The party put up 24 (twentyfour) points (programmes) to be implemented if it comes to power.  

Some of them are the establishment of a clean and stable government, the protection of territorial integrity of Manipur, the inclusion of Manipur language in the VIII Schedule, Land Reforms and Land Revenue Acts for both hills and plains, re-organisation of the boundaries of Districts of

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4 Ibid., p.2.
5 M.P.C.C.(U), Election Manifesto, Imphal, p.2.
Manipur, preservation of Kangla, the immediate establishment of a University, the establishment of industrial centres and rural electrification, the arrangement of job facility to the youths, to implement the Manipur Panchayat Raj Act, 1975 and to increase the powers of the District Councils etc.\textsuperscript{6}

The Communist Party of India (CPI):

The party published election manifesto on the eve of Assembly election 1980. The CPI sought votes in the name of combined left and democratic forces. The party manifesto mentioned the role of other political parties in defeating corruption, partiality and failures to take along term planning and described the last government as adhoc.\textsuperscript{7} The party promised to remove corruption at higher level and to establish a stable government to oppose all forms of centralised administration, to amend the present system of election and to introduce proportionate representation in Legislative Assembly and Parliament, to curtail money power in election, to amend the present centre-state relation so as to give autonomy to states, to give full powers to District Councils, Municipalities and Panchayats.\textsuperscript{8} These are

\textsuperscript{6} Ibid., pp.6-7.
\textsuperscript{7} C.P.I., Election Manifesto, Imphal, Irabot Bhavan, 1980.
\textsuperscript{8} Ibid., pp.6-7.
some of the promises contained in the manifesto of Communist Party of India.

The Janata Party:

The Janata Party promised to bring into existence a socialist society. The party fought with the following programmes i.e. the preservation of the ancient boundary of Manipur, the preservation of the traditional culture and important historical places of Manipur, the inclusion of Manipuri language in the VIII Schedule of the Indian Constitution, greater autonomy for the states, implementation of Anti-Defection Bill, solution of unemployment problems, establishment of a full fledged University and an Engineering College in Manipur.9

The Manipur People's Party:

The manifesto of the Manipur People's Party promised maximum autonomy by amending the Indian Constitution, the improvement of agriculture, development of Manipur language, establishment of cordial relations between the hills and plains, electrification of villages, release of the youths now in jail, connection of Manipur by railways lines with other

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parts of India, removal of Manipur Armed Forces Special Power Act, 1958 and establishment of one Regiment for Manipur. The party regards the present students’ movement as political and promised to solve it politically.\(^\text{10}\) Besides there are many programmes contained in the manifesto.

**The Erkipak Leishem Party:**

The programme of the Erkipak Leishem Party includes the inclusion of Manipur language in the VIII Schedule of the Indian Constitution, immediate shifting of Assam Rifles from the Kangla and to preserve it as a sacred place, decentralisation of powers to Imphal Municipality and Gram Panchayats, to solve the unemployment problem by various methods, preservation of territorial integrity of Manipur. The party promised to bring a socialist society and to remove poverty.\(^\text{11}\)

**The Progressive Independent Front:**

The manifesto of the Progressive Independent Front described the extremist movement as a movement for independence. The Front had many programmes touching economy, education, village development,


administration, town planning, unemployment and black money etc. The political programme includes sending of 5 representatives to both Houses of Parliament, inclusion of State representatives to the central cabinet, to give full autonomy to Manipur, deportation of foreign nationals who illegally settled in Manipur after 1947 etc.

When we compare all the manifestos of the political parties both national and regional like the Congress (I), the Congress (U), the Communist Party of India, the Janata Party, the Manipur People’s Party, the Ereipak Leishemba Party and the Progressive Independent Group etc. we find some common items like the maintenance of the territorial integrity, inclusion of Manipuri language in the VIII Schedule, removal of Assam Rifles from Kangla, establishment of a full fledged University, to improve communication, industry, electrification, irrigation facility for agriculture, removal of Armed Forced special Power Act, 1958, abolition of corruption, employment problems, sports facility, more power to District Councils and deportation of foreigners from Manipur after 1947, etc.

All the manifestoes mentioned above have pointed out to vital need for the people of Manipur. The manifestoes did not play much impact to the mind of the voters particularly the rural voters. The party in power was not
able to implement the items contained in the manifestoes. It seems that manifestoes have little importance after the election.

PARLIAMENTARY AND ASSEMBLY ELECTION 1984

Indian National Congress (I) :

The election manifesto of Manipur Pradesh Congress (I) for the year 1984 Parliamentary and Assembly elections contained four pages. The Manifesto highlighted about the formation of co-alition Government led by Congress Party in the post 1980 Assembly election. Further, the manifesto mentioned about the work programmes taken by the Contress Party like:

i) Establishment of Manipur University;

ii) Making of Manipuri language as an official language of the State;

iii) Reorganising Kangla Sha as official emblem of the State;

iv) The increase of Districts in the valley i.e. Bishnupur District and Thoubal District;

v) Implementation of 20 Point Work Porgramme;

vi) Establishment of industries viz. – (a) Hundung Cement Plant, (b) Mechanised Dye House, (c) Kabo-Wakching Paper Mill, (d) Takyel Industrial Plant etc.
In the manifesto of 1984, the Congress Party pledged to the people of Manipur to take up the following measures:\footnote{\textit{Congress (I), Election Manifesto, Imphal, 1984, pp.1-4.}}

1) To abolish corruption and to establish stable Government;

2) To provide adequate funds to Municipalities, Town Committee and District Councils;

3) To supply sufficient water and electricity;

4) To improve irrigation system for agriculture;

5) To construct school and college buildings;

6) To raise the standard of education;

7) To remove pay anomalies;

8) To provide facilities for employment;

9) Improvement of tourism facilities, etc.

The manifesto criticised the Communist Party, the BJP, the MPP and the Congress (S). Lastly, the Congress Party appealed to the people to vote for Congress Party.
The Communist Party of India:

The election manifesto of the Communist Party of India for 1984 elections criticised the Congress Government. The party laid down many programmes to be taken up. The following are some of the programmes:

1) Abolition of corruption;
2) Removal of the Armed Forces Special Power Act, 1958;
3) Inclusion of Manipuri language in the 8th Schedule of the Constitution of India;
4) To protect the rights, culture and language of the hill people;
5) To give more powers to the hills Autonomous District Councils, Panchayats;
6) To provide old aged pension;
7) To give allowance to the unemployed youths;
8) To provide sufficient water and electricity;
9) To improve roads and interlinked railways to Manipur;
10) To improve the quality of the Athletes;
11) To open retail price shops;
12) To protect the rights of the workers and to improve the standard of Handloom and industry.\(^{13}\)

The Manipur People's Party, 1984:

The manifesto of the Manipur People's Party in the Assembly election, 1984 mentioned 22 programmes to be taken up. Most of the programmes are the same when compared with the election manifesto, 1980. However, we can mentioned some of them: \(^{14}\)

i) Removal of Armed Forces Special Power Act, 1958;

ii) Development of industries like paper mill, cement factory, tasar factory, sugar mill, electronic industry, watch making, rubber industry, film industry, etc.;

iii) To provide opportunities for one member of a family to get a job;

iv) Establishment of an Agricultural industry;

v) To upgrade Manipur University and Medical College into a high degree of academic standard;

vi) Inclusion of Manipuri language into the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution of India;

\(^{13}\) C.P.I., Election Manifesto, Imphal, 1984.

vii) Development of Arts and Culture;

viii) Construction of Legislative Assembly and High Court in the Kangla;

ix) Regular supply of electricity, old aged pension, and opening of Lok Pal;

x) A separate Governor and a separate High Court for Manipur;

xi) Improvement of Tourism and Sports;

xii) Opening of a separate Geological Department etc. There was no fundamental change in Election Manifesto 1984.

When we compare the election manifestoes of National and regional political parties like the Indian National Congress, the Communist Party of India and the Manipur People’s Party in the Assembly elections, 1984, we find similarities like, the abolition of corruption, inclusion of Manipuri language in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution of India, to improve electricity and water supply, irrigation, industry, tourism, sports, employment to youths, arts and culture etc. The Manipur People’s Party expressed a strong feeling about the removal of the Armed Forces Special Power Act, 1958 and a separate Governor and separate High Court of Manipur.

There was no fundamental change in the manifestoes of 1980 and 1984 except a few. One notable point mentioned in the election manifesto
of MPP in 1984 was to provide an opportunity for one member of a family to get government job.

**ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS, 1990**

**The Indian National Congress:**

The manifesto of the Congress (I) on the eve of the Assembly Elections, 1990 appeared to the voters that in most of the states of India the Congress was a ruling party and that there was no other party which was stronger than the Congress. The party blamed the communist Party, the Janata Party, the BJP, the MPP and the Congress (S) etc. for their non-creative role in the politics of India. The party put up 27 programmes, some were already implemented and some were to be implemented when it comes to power. Some of the programmes were as follows:¹⁵

1. Inclusion of Manipuri language in the 8th Schedule of the Constitution of India;
2. Introduction of Meetei Mayek up to Class-VI;
3. Construction of Stadium;


5. Housing loan to Government employees; and

6. Old aged pension scheme etc.

The following were the programmes mentioned in the manifesto to be implemented:

1. To abolish corruption,

2. To provide financial help and job opportunity to suitable athletes,

3. To construct schools and colleges wherever necessary,

4. To maintain academic standard,

5. To construct roads and provide irrigation facilities,

6. Establishment of an Agricultural University;

7. Improvement of industry and tourism department,

8. To provide adequate funds to Municipalities, Town Committees etc.

9. To give more powers to the Panchayats, and

10. To provide medical facilities to the needy persons.
The Manipur People’s Party:

The Manipur People’s Party published its election manifesto on the eve of the Assembly elections, 1990. Its notable features were:¹⁶

A. Political programmes:

i) To work for safeguarding the territorial integrity of the State;

ii) Inclusion of Manipuri language in the VIII Schedule of the Constitution of India;

iii) Removal of Armed Forces special Power Act, 1958;

iv) Effective implementation of the three language formula;

v) Reservation of 100% of the posts of the State Government for the indigenous people;

vi) More autonomy to the States;

vii) Greater decentralisation of power to the local bodies, Municipal/District Council, Panchayats;

viii) Removal of Foreigner’s Territorial Order 1963;

ix) To increase the number of Lok Sabha seats from 2 to 3 – 2 in the valley and 1 in the Hills;

x) Political settlement with insurgents.

B. Economic programmes:

i) Improvement of agricultural industry;

ii) Introduction of agricultural pension scheme and old aged pension scheme;

iii) Industrialisation of Manipur by having one Industry in each of the Districts of Manipur;

iv) Improvement of roads, transport and communication, regular water supply, power, sanitation, etc.;

v) Providing one job to one family;

vi) 50% of the resources to be earmarked for rural and hill development;

vii) Facilities to sportsmen, allowance to the educated unemployed;

viii) Formation of State Price control Board and supply of rice at Rs.2.50 per kg.

ix) Formation of the State Export Promotion Council to look after commercialisation and export;

x) Formation of Hill Areas development Authority, and State Board of environment Pollution Control;

xi) Strengthening of the State Planning Board with full time members.
The inclusion of economic programmes in the manifesto of the Manipur People's Party shows that the party considered it as an important area for getting votes as Manipur suffered financially in the process of its development.

There were no fundamental changes in the election manifestos of the Indian National Congress and the Manipur People's Party in the elections, 1980, 1984 and 1990. The common items as agreed upon between the two manifestoes mentioned above were Inclusion of Manipuri language in the VIII Schedule of the Constitution of India, protection of the territorial integrity of Manipur, abolition of corruption, development of agriculture, industry, water supply, sports, electricity, tourism, removal of foreigners, strengthening of local bodies like Municipalities, district Council, Panchayats and increase the number of M.P. from 2 to 3 etc.

The Manipur People's Party indicated the political and economic programmes separately in the manifesto of 1990 and the Congress Party mentioned the programmes implemented and to be implemented in the manifesto of 1990.
ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS, 1995

The Indian National Congress (I) :

The manifesto of Congress (I) for the year 1995 contains six pages. The manifesto highlighted the achievement and responsibilities towards the people. The manifesto criticised the other parties like the MPP, CPI and others. Some of the achievements mentioned in the manifesto were: 17

i) Inclusion of Manipuri language in the VIII Schedule of the Constitution of India;

ii) First shifting of Assam Rifles from Kangla on 13.8.1992;

iii) Establishment of Central Agricultural University etc.

The remaining part contains 48 programmes to be performed. Some of the programmes were:

i) Protection of territorial integrity of Manipur;

ii) Abolition of corruption;

iii) Inclusion of Manipuri Language on currency;

iv) Refusal of the demand of Southern Nagaland, Jomi-homeland, Zelianrong homeland etc.;

17 Congress (I), Election Manifesto, Imphal, 1995.
v) Division of Imphal into two districts;
vi) Complete shifting of Assam Rifles from Kangla;

vii) Encouragement to athletes;

viii) Solution of insurgency problems;
ix) Providing of employment opportunity;

x) To maintain academic standard;

xi) To give more grants to the University

xii) Development of agriculture, industry, irrigation;

xiii) Holding Zilla Parishad and Nagar Palika elections within 6 months;

xiv) Increasing of Rifles battalion and blocks;

xv) Connection of rail link with Manipur;

xvi) To increase the number of Lok Sabha seats to 3 i.e. 2 in the valley and 1 in hills;

xvii) Protection of Minority groups.

The Communist Party of India:

The manifesto of the Communist Party of India in the Assembly elections, 1995 contained only two pages. The manifesto did not criticise
the other parties but appealed to the people to vote for the Communist Party of India. Some of the programmes mentioned in the manifesto were:\footnote{C.P.I., \textit{Election Manifesto}, Imphal, 1995.}

i) Establishment of a stable government;

ii) Abolition of corruption;

iii) To protect the rights, the integrity and feeling of brotherhood;

iv) Solution of insurgency problems;

v) Respect for caste, creed and religion;

vi) Development of Arts and Culture and encouragement to Athletes;

vii) Providing facilities for electricity, water supply;

viii) Encouragement to agriculturist, Govt employees and other sections of the people; and

ix) Promotion of academic standard in the state etc.

\textbf{The Bharatiya Janata Party:}

The manifesto of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) for the Assembly elections mentioned the unfortunate incidents of R.M.C. i.e., killing of innocent persons by the CRPF. Further the manifesto highlighted about the
price rise in petroleum, kerosine and other essential commodities etc. The most important task of the BJP as mentioned in manifesto was to save Manipur. Keeping this in view, the BJP requested to all voters to cast their valuable votes to the BJP candidates.\(^{19}\)

The BJP promised to take up many more programmes. Some of them were:

i) To solve the insurgency problem;

ii) To protect the territorial integrity of Manipur;

iii) Handling over of Kangla to the people of Manipur;

iv) To increase the number of parliamentary seats into three (i.e. 2 seats in valley and 1 seat in hill);

v) Removal of Armed forces Special Power Act, 1958;

vi) Opening up of police station particularly for women;

vii) Immediate announcement of D.P.C. results;

viii) Appointments to be made through Public Service Commission;

ix) Job facilities to poor families;

x) Freee treatment to patients;

xi) Regular old age pension;

xii) To provide essential commodities like rice, kerosine, sugar, salt, oil, etc. at subsidised rates;

xiii) To open relations between India and Myanmar;

xiv) To encourage small scale industries like Handloom, handicraft, radio, television, etc.;

xv) Improvement of Hydro electric system;

xvi) To encourage tourism industry;

xvii) To maintain academic standard and implementation of various schemes related to Manipuri language; and

xviii) To give more emphasis on arts, culture, martial arts, polo, swimming and other sports items etc.

The Janata Dal:

The manifesto of Janatal Dal, Manipur for 1995 Assembly elections contains 7 pages. The manifesto highlighted some points on the United Legislature Front led by the Congress and the MPP after 1990 elections. In addition, some programmes as given in the manifesto were: 20

1. (a) Cleaning of Nambul river;

(b) Opening of Bio-technology research scheme at Manipur University;
(c) Industry of Loktak Lake into the scheme of National Lake Conservation Programme;
(d) Placement of one Cycle velodrome in Imphal;

2. Regular supply of electricity and water;
3. 1/3 job reservation for women in Government and public sector undertakings;
4. Free and compulsory education of the child up to the age of 14 years;
5. Adoption of Social Forestry Scheme;
6. Introduction of Sixth Schedule in the hill districts of Manipur; and
7. To broaden the National Highways No.39 etc.

The Communist Party of India (Marxist):

The manifesto of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), 1995 Manipur State Unit mentioned some programmes to be taken up. Some of them were:\(^{21}\)

i) to defeat the Congress Party and form a left democratic and secular co-alition Government;

ii) to bring communal harmony and territorial integrity;

iii) devolution of more power to states and local bodies;

iv) to provide the facilities for the development of Manipuri language included in the VIII Schedule;

v) to abolish corruption, granting of right to work, to pay unemployment allowances to unemployed youths and to increase the rate of pension;

vi) free and compulsory education up to secondary stage and to improve sports policy;

vii) to modify public distribution system and to re-organise the districts of Manipur;

viii) to provide job opportunities to women to provide financial assistance to the weavers;

ix) to provide land to the landless, to improve irrigation facilities, revising wages, establishment of agro-industries etc.;

x) to connect rail heads up to Imphal;

xi) to arrange security personnels to the National Highways No.39 and 53;
xii) to solve insurgency problems and removal of Assam Rifles from Kangla.

The Manipur Pradesh Congress Committee (S):

The Manipur Pradesh Congress Committee (S) in its election manifesto released on the eve of Assembly elections, 1995 pledged to take up the following programmes:

i) The party is committed to provide clean and efficient government;

ii) Equal participation of women in socio-economic and political reconstruction of the nation;

iii) Withdrawal of Armed Forces Special Power Act, 1958;

iv) Development of Manipuri language and scripts;

v) Safeguard of tribal customary laws and tradition;

vi) To provide good drinking water and ambulance services to all villages;

vii) Improvement of medical facilities in hospitals and dispensaries;

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viii) To provide financial assistance and technical assistance to forestry and horticulture;

ix) Improvement of communication, industries and tourism;

x) To resolve the insurgency through peaceful means without precondition, and to solve the ethnic crisis of the Nagas and the Kukis;

xi) Effective implementation of New Education Policy;

xii) Protection of territorial integrity of Manipur;

xiii) Shifting of Assam Rifles from Kangla;

xiv) Shifting of C.R.P.F. Camps in sensitive and vulnerable areas etc.

The Samata Party:

The Samata Party, Manipur branch published its election manifesto for the Assembly election in 1995. The manifesto contains 15 Point Programmes to be taken up. Some of the important programmes were.23

i) Establishment of Manipur Regiment instead of the Assam Rifles;

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ii) Formation of a Minority Commission for the protection of the minority groups;

iii) Export of handloom and handicraft goods and improvement of irrigation facilities;

iv) Protection and improvement of Historical monuments;

v) Protection of territorial integrity of Manipur and solution of insurgency problems;

vi) Effective measures to be taken in order to check the entry of foreigners into Manipur;

vii) To solve the ethnic clashes in hills;

viii) Formation of a commission to find out the reasons for failure of industries like Spinning Mill, Khansari Sugar Mill and Manipur Cement Factory and suggest measures to be taken up.

The Samajwadi Janata Party:

The Samajwadi Janata Party (Rastriya) in its election manifesto on the eve of Assembly elections 1995 promised to take up the following steps and programmes:²⁴

1. **Social policy**: Peaceful co-existence, protection of Arts and Culture, compulsory free education to the child and to solve the problems through talks and peaceful means.

2. **Political policy**: The party promised to face the political difficulties through democratic means and the party will protect the right and liberty of the people. Further, the party pledged to protect the territorial integrity of Manipur.

3. **Agricultural policy**: The party promised to develop the agriculture and the industry in Manipur with adequate financial assistance. Irrigation facilities will be developed for the purpose of double or triple cropping.

4. **Economic policy**: The party promised to develop economic policy for the establishment of a large number of industries. Old aged pension will be given. Trade and commerce will be developed. Other items mentioned in the manifesto were:

   a) Regular supply of water;
   
   b) Construction of Sports building with adequate sports materials;
c) Encouragement to athletes;

d) Good relations with the other organisation, etc.

The Manipur People’s Party:

Some important points mentioned in the election manifesto of the Manipur People’s Party were:  

i) Review of the Merger Agreement, 1949 and the transfer of Kabo Valley to Manipur;

ii) The declaration of Manipur valley as scheduled Area and granting of greater autonomy to the state;

iii) Preservation of territorial integrity of Manipur;

iv) Political solution to the insurgency problem;

v) Removal of Armed Forces Special Power Act, 1958 and TADA from Manipur;

vi) Increase of Lok Sabha seats from Manipur to 3;

vii) Amicable settlement of ethnic conflict in Manipur;

viii) To make provision for food security, control over price distortions and undue rise in prices;

ix) Door to door delivery of economic package of essential commodities and industrial outputs;

x) To frame a new industrial policy and new agricultural policy;

xi) Effective policy for food, health, education, communication, irrigation and power;

xii) Improvement of Imphal Jiribam road;

xiii) The Loktak Hydro electric Project to the brought within State Sector;

xiv) Constitution of Staff Selection Commission;

xv) Declaration of new cultural policy, new state policy on youth and sports;

xvi) Unemployment allowance etc.

The new feature of the Manifesto of the Manipur People’s Party is that for the first time the manifesto raised the issue of the Merger Agreement, 1949. The necessity to frame a new indusatrial, agricultural and cultural policies of the state also form an important part of the manifesto, 1995.
The Manipur Hill and Plain Socialist Council (MHPSC):

The election manifesto of the Manipur Hill and Plain Socialist Council contained 20 point programmes. Some of the programmes were:

i) Fixing of price of rice at Rupees four per kg;

ii) Solution of Insurgency in Manipur;

iii) Implementation of Inner Line Permit System;

iv) Constitution of Manipur Battalion instead of CRPF;

v) Abolition of corruption;

vi) Payment of Rs. 5 lakhs to the active serviceman who died on duty and facility for employment within one month under die-in-harness scheme;

vii) Improvement of roads and hospitals, removal of Armed Forces special Power Act, 1958;

viii) Connection of rail-link between Manipur and other parts of India and construction of a big stadium;

ix) Free supply of Rs. 5 lakhs with housing, plot, car, TV and VCR;

x) Upgradation of Imphal Air Port to International Air Port;

_M.H.P.C., Election Manifesto, Imphal, 1995._
xi) Payment of daily wages of Rs.150 to 200/-;

xii) Regular supply of electricity, water;

xiii) Payment of unemployed allowances to the unemployed youths.

The Federal Party of Manipur:

The Federal Party of Manipur emerged as one of the regional political parties in Manipur. The party was recognised as a regional political party on 26th October 1994. The party joined the electoral politics of Manipur in 1995. The election manifesto of the party contained nine pages. On the cover of the manifesto, the following wordings i.e. ‘Federalism is the need of the hour’, ‘Autonomy for our identity’ were written. The party promised to strive to achieve the followings.\(^27\)

i) Preservation of the territorial integrity and unity of Manipur;

ii) Autonomy for Districts and villages;

iii) Negotiation for solution of Revolutionery Movements;

iv) Protection of human rights;

v) Social unity and cultural identity;

vi) Establishment of Inter Ethnic council to solve the communal problems;


viii) Development of Manipur language included in the VIII Schedule of the Constitution of India;

ix) Shifting of Assam Rifles from Kangla;

x) Preservation of historical monuments and archeological sites, development of agriculture;

xi) Expansion of national highways no. 53 and 39, protecton and development of forests, electrification of every village in Manipur;

xii) Development of tourism, expansion of education, Central Library, Archive and Museum;

xiii) Establishment of agro-forest industry, financial support and facilities to be provided to sports persons;

xiv) A massive animal husbandry programme in the form of piggery, duckery, poultry and daily development programme will be taken up;
xv) Development of tribal languages of the State, Ban on entry of Foreigners from Burma, Nepal and Bangladesh;

xvi) Regulation of free entry of non-indigenous population in Manipur, to check demographic imbalance of Manipur;

xvii) Social programme for Scheduled Tribe, Scheduled Caste and OBC in Manipur etc.

The Federal Party of Manipur stands for equitable economic development of all regions, hill and valley, rural and urban and all sections of people living in Manipur.

The manifesto of the Federal Party of Manipur focussed on the socio-cultural aspects of Manipur especially the establishment of the Inter Ethnic Council, social unity and cultural identity, protection of indigenous people etc. The manifestos of both national and regional political politics had a common view like preservation of territorial integrity, solution of insurgency problems, removal of special power Act 1958, shifting of Assam Rifles from Kangla, development of academic standard, language, industry, electricity, water supply, sports, arts and culture, power, agriculture, abolition of corruption, solving unemployment problems, etc.
We have examined some of the election manifestoes of some regional political parties. The regional parties particularly focussed the regional issues. No mention was made as regards the foreign policy of the country and other national issues. The main points contgained in these election manifestos were protection of territorial integrity, withdrawal of Assam Rifles from Kangla, development of Manipuri language as an official language, withdrawal of Armed Forces Special Power Act, 1958, TADA, Punjab Security Act, regular supply of electricity, water, development of industry, development of Arts and Culture, tourism, solving the unemployment problem etc.

In brief the main focus of the election manifesto in 1980 elections were the inclusion of Manipuri language in the VIII Schedule, establishment of Manipur Agricultural University, removal of Armed Forces special Act, 1958 and solution of insurgency problems etc. Similarly, the main focus of the election manifesto for 1984 were the removal of Armed Forces special Power Act, 1958, development of tourism industries, sports, opening of Geological Department in Manipur, removal of Assam Rifles from Kangla, inclusion of Manipuri language and script in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution of India.
The Manipur People’s Party stressed on the demand for greater autonomy of Manipur. The party stated that the only remedy lies in the decentralisation of power. It seems that there was no substantial change in the election manifests since 1980. An interesting thing in the election manifesto of 1990 was the promise of “one family one job”. However, there has been substantial change in election manifesto of MPP in 1995. The most striking feature was the review of Merger Agreement of 1949, declaration of Manipur valley as Scheduled Area, solution of unemployment problems, to provide unemployment allowance to the unemployed youth, solution of insurgency problems through peaceful means, etc.

The main focus of the election manifesto of the Federal Party of Manipur was on regional issues such as territorial integrity, unity of Manipur, autonomy of districts and villages, social unity, cultural identity, inclusion of Manipuri language in the VIII scheduled, withdrawal of Armed Forces Special Power Act, 1958, TADA, shifting of Assam Rifles from Kangla, preservation of historical monuments, pension for members of District Councils, Zilla Parishads, upliftment of women, child, physically handicapped, ex-servicemen, old-age pension, development of agriculture, industry, electricity, education, tourism, library and sports. A noteworthy feature was the pledge to solve the revolutionary movement, protection of
human rights, giving more facility and funds, etc. to the Manipur University for higher educational pursuits etc.

The main focus of the election manifesto of MHPC was also on regional issues only. Mention may be made – fixing of price of rice at Rs.4/- per kg, to solve the demands of revolutionaries, to implement inner line permit, removal of Assam Rifles from Kangla, abolition of corruption, etc.

On going through these manifestoes of National political parties or regional political parties, there seems to propagate more or less the same objectives. However, in real electoral politics the election manifestoes of the political parties did not play an important role in the electioneering process in rural areas. It had more significance in urban areas. Majority of the voters who took interest in the election manifestoes belonged to the age group of 25 to 35 years. Olderly voters did not take interest in the election manifestoes of the political parties. Very few educated voters knew about the meaning, value and significance of the election manifestoes. Other methods of campaign like house to house campaign, rallies by political parties, posters, speeches through loud speakers played a very important part in the electioneering process and gave more impact in the minds of the voters of Manipur.
Both national and regional political parties had a strong feeling about the removal of Assam rifles from Kangla and removal of Special Power Act, 1958 but it is not fully implemented till date.

We have examined the election manifestoes of some of the national political parties. The manifestoes expressed somewhere about foreign policy as well as regional policy. For instance during the period of our review i.e. 1980-1995 the Congress (I) manifesto and the CPI(M) election manifesto expressed about friendly relation with all countries basing on non-alignment, peace, freedom, democracy, integrity, sovereignty and brotherhood. A national political party can raise only wider issues which may appear in the short run to be of remote concern to common men.\(^{28}\) Besides, there are many national political parties in Manipur like J.D., CPI(M), BJP, INC and SP. However, their main focus were mainly on regional issues.

The main focus of these national political parties on regional issues were the inclusion of Manipuri language in the VIII Schedule of the constitution of India, shifting of Assam Rifles from Kangla, the establishment of a full-fledged University, compulsory education, to solve the unemployment problem, regular supply of electricity, water, development of industry,

\(^{28}\) Narain Iqbal; State Politics in India, Published by Meenakshi Prakashan, Begum Bridge, Meerut, 4, Ansari Road, Daryaganj, New Delhi, 1976, P. 598.
agriculture, arts and culture, sports and solving the day to day problems through peaceful and honest means. Abolition of corruption, protection of territorial integrity, removal of armed Forces Special Power Act, 1958 and to solve the ethnic problems were also included in the manifestoes. It seems that the electorate now knows that grandiose election manifestoes issued and lofty pronouncements made in their regard from public platforms lack the seriousness that alone ensures their implementation.  

29 Varma S.P., Narain Iqbal; Fourth General Election in India Volume One, Published by Orient Longmans, Bombay, Calcutta, Madras, New Delhi, 1968, P. 1