PREFACE

Manipur is one of the north eastern states of India. It is bounded by the state of Nagaland, Upper Burma, Mizoram and Assam. Manipur is famous for her unique flora and fauna.

Manipur is divided into two regions - the valley and the hills and inhabited by the Meiteis, the Nagas, Kuki-chin tribes and Meitei muslims. According to 2001 census, the population of Manipur is 23,88,634 out of which the number of female population is 11,81,296.

Since early times the women of Manipur took a major role in all aspects of life, more specially in social and economic fields. The study aims to analyse the socio-economic role of women in Manipur with special reference to the women of Singjamei Assembly Constituency, Imphal. Singjamei is one of the 40 Assembly Constituencies in the valley. The study presents the socio-economic role and activities of women in the three wards i.e. Ward No 15, 16 and 17 respectively.

The thesis has been classified into seven chapters. The first chapter presents an introduction on Manipur, the status and role of women in general since traditional times till the present day. A brief sketch about the women in Singjamei Assembly Constituency is presented. The contribution of women in shaping a family and the society through various roles and activities has been studied.

The second chapter studies the position and status of women in the traditional Manipuri society. The study covers the socio-economic and political life of the women in the traditional times. Further, the emerging
trend in relation to women as a result of various measures undertaken in the National and state level to safeguard the cause of women is presented.

The third chapter examines both the social and economic role of women in Manipur since the British period till the present day. The two Nupi Lans or Women’s Movements of 1904 and 1939, the emergence of Nishabandh women and Meira Paibis or women torch bearers are studied minutely. The economic role of women in relation to trade, handloom and handicraft production are also examined and analysed.

The fourth chapter studies the social role of women in Singjamei Assembly constituency. The role includes that of a wife, mother as caretaker of the family and agents of social change.

The fifth chapter examines the economic role of women in Singjamei Assembly Constituency. The economic contribution of women working in Government, non-Governmental sectors and those who are engaged in various trades has been presented. These women have contributed in shaping the financial life of their families.

The sixth chapter examines the activities of women organisations in Singjamei Assembly Constituency. The activities of three social organisations, three economic enterprises and three political parties related to women are selected for in depth study. On the basis of the functioning and activities of women in these organisations, the nature of women leadership is analysed.

The last and the seventh chapter presents summarisation of the previous chapters and sums up the thesis with conclusion and suggestions.