Preface

The term 'Opposition' is derived from the Latin word 'opposition' which means to oppose. As such the main function of the Opposition is to oppose any policy of the ruling party which is in contradiction to the will of the people. The Opposition is a fundamental part of the legislature which functions mainly on the basis of a parliamentary or cabinet form of Government.

The concept of the Opposition is not new to the State politics of Meghalaya as a semblance of Opposition had emerged when Meghalaya was not a State but were districts within the State of Assam. This opposition had culminated in the formation of the State of Meghalaya. With the emergence of Meghalaya as a State it paved the way for the inception of the Meghalaya Legislative Assembly, comprising the ruling party and the Opposition. The role of the Opposition in the Meghalaya Legislative Assembly denotes a difference from the two party system as prevalent in Western countries. Here in Meghalaya no party remained in the Opposition for a longer period even during the fixed term of the Assembly. Rather, the Legislative Assembly in Meghalaya is marked by frequent changes in the groups of the Opposition parties during the period of study, that is, 1972-1988.

In this study, an attempt was made to trace the emergence of representative institutions in Meghalaya beginning with the formation of the Autonomous State, and to examine their nature in terms of membership pattern, party affiliations and role in Government formation. The study also traces the emergence and nature of the Opposition parties in Meghalaya. Finally, the study tries to focus and analyses the role of the Opposition in ventilating of public grievances as well as criticisms of the Government's policies relating to certain specified issues such as:
1. Boundary problems between Meghalaya and Assam.

2. Land Tenure and Land Relations.

3. Law and Order problems especially in the State Capital and the Problem of Influx.

This study proposes to cover the period of the first three terms of the Meghalaya Legislative Assembly that is, from 1972 to 1988.

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[Signature]

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