INTRODUCTION

Political Parties, the life line of Modern Politics constitute an integral part of any electoral system, for they organise and educate voters, select candidates for filling various posts and undertake electioneering on their behalf, formulate legislative programmes and policies, muster Parliamentary majority and form Government. Parties have become an essential ingredient of a modern Democratic State. This avocation entities them to constitutional or legal status; though this might varies according to the different kinds of regimes.

Parties are at the Centre of Indian Politics, as they are in all other major democracies. Although till recently the Constitution had not expressly referred to the
existence of Political Parties, following the inclusion of the tenth Schedule to the Constitution by fifty-second Amendment Act, 1985, there is now a clear recognition of the Political Parties by the Constitution. As in most but not all Democracies, Parties in India have to be formally registered with a Central Body. The Election Commission allots Symbols to Parties and specifies certain Symbols as reserved and others as free. The resort to the Symbol system became necessary, because the ballotting technique obtaining in advanced Western Countries could not be possibly transplanted in India where more than half of its Population remained illiterate till today. As in 1951, there was over 83 percent of the population who were illiterate.

Prior to Independence, different types of voting methods were used in different parts of the Country for the limited Elections that took place. These included the (a) Marking System (b) Token System (c) Colour Box System and (d) the Postal Ballot System.¹ In order to introduce uniformly in voting procedure, the Indian Franchise Committee (1931) advocated the use of either the Colour Box System or the Symbol System. The Commission choose the employment of the balloting system in the first General Elections of 1951-52, which was a compromise between the two suggested systems. Election Symbols are a device for easy identification of Candidates. A Ballot Paper carries a pictorial representation of the symbols against the names of the Candidates to enable an illustrate voter to register his vote. The voter is simply required to make a mark on the symbol of his choice with the inked rubber stamp given to him by the Polling Officer.

ELECTION SYMBOLS (RESERVATION AND ALLOTMENT) ORDER 1968.

Millions of voters in India are illiterate. To enable them to exercise their right to franchise through a secret ballot, symbols are considered absolutely necessary. They help them to identify the contesting candidates. For assigning appropriate symbols, the Election Commission had issued the Election Symbols (Reservation and Allotment) Order, 1968 in exercise of the power conferred by Rule 5 of the Conduct of Election Rules, 1961 read with Article 324 of the Constitution.

Symbols or emblems are not a peculiar feature of the Electoral Law in India. In Iceland and Israel, a letter of the alphabet and in Belgium, Chile and Finland, a number is added against the name of each Candidate for easy identification by electors. In Ceylon (Sri Lanka), Pakistan, United Arab Republic, Ghana, Malaysia, Nigeria, Siera Leone and some African Countries, Candidates are identified by symbols on the Ballot Papers. Different colours for each Candidate are used in Central African Republic, Turkey and the United Arab Republic.²

The Election Symbols (Reservation and Allotment) Order, 1968 provides for specification, reservation, choice and allotment of symbols at Elections in Parliamentary and Assembly Constituencies, for the registration and recognition of Political Parties in relation thereto and for resolution of disputes in cases involving splits in recognised Political Parties or amalgamation of two or more Political Parties of whom one at least is a recognised Political Party. Paragraph 3 of this order deals with

² Michel Ammeller, Parliaments (London, 1966) p. 3
registration of Political Parties. Paragraph 6 of the order deals with recognition of Political Parties.

Symbols are reserved for Political Parties. All Political Parties are divided into National Parties and Regional parties and Registered and Unregistered Parties. Paragraph 5 classifies symbols as a reserved symbol and a free symbol. A reserved symbol is a symbol which is reserved for a recognised Political Parties for exclusive allotment to contesting candidates set up by that Party. A free symbol is available for allotment to non-recognised Political Parties and Independent Candidates. Paragraph 6 lays down conditions which must be fulfilled by a Political Party to claim recognition. Paragraph 7 divides recognised Political Parties into a National Party and a State Party.

Paragraph 8, 9, 10 and 11 deal with the allotment of Symbols. Paragraph 13 lays down conditions when a candidate shall be deemed to be set up by a Political Party. After every General Election, the poll performances of the existing Political Parties and the new associations which have applied for registration or recognition are reviewed and existing Parties are allowed to continue or de-registered or de-recognised and new Parties are registered and recognised.

No Political Party in India has survived the last forty Years without splits or amalgamations. Paragraph 15 of the Election Symbols order, 1968 stated that wherever there is a split in a recognised Political Party, the Election Commission is empowered to decide as to which one of the rival sections or groups within that Party (or none at all) should be recognised as that Political Party. Under paragraph 16 of the order, a Provision is provided for a decision of the Election Commission in a case of
amalgamation of parties in which case the decision of the Commission shall be binding on the newly formed Political Party and all the component units thereof.

Paragraph 17 underline the Notification containing lists of Political Parties and symbols. Specifying the National Parties, and the symbols respectively reserved for them, the State Parties, the State or States in which they are State Parties and the Symbols respectively reserved for them in such state and the free symbols for each State. The Election Commission's decision regarding recognition of certain group constituting the original party in a dispute under Clause 15 of the Order is final and can be relied upon by Civil Court deciding question as to title to the property.³

Under the Election Symbols (Reservation and Allotment) order, 1968 association and bodies must register with the Commission as Political Parties. A registered Political Party is not automatically “recognised”. Recognition is granted to the Party (again on a State-by-State basis) on the basis of one of two criteria: (i) its existence and participation in Political activity for a period of five Years (ii) its securing at least 4 percent of the votes cast in the State for Lok Sabha or Legislative Assembly (after excluding the votes polled by the Party's Candidates who forfeited their deposits).

The votes polled by a member of the Lok Sabha or State Assembly who joined a Party after the Election would not be counted for the purpose of calculating the threshold required for recognition. From the second General Election (1957) onwards,

---
³ T P Peethambaran V. T. H. Musthafa, AIR 1990 Ker. 171
the procedure for judging whether a candidate belonged to a Political Party involved a declaration by the candidate as well as endorsement by Party functionaries.

SYMBOLS ALLOTMENT TO CANDIDATES / PARTIES IN THE GENERAL AND BYE ELECTIONS TO MIZORAM LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

1972: On the eve of the First General Election to Mizoram Union Territory Legislative Assembly, the number of recognised Political Parties comprised of only the two National Parties, namely, the Indian National Congress and the Socialist Party. The two Regional Parties, the Mizo Union and Mizo Labour Party contested the Election as an Independent. Under the revised lists of reserved symbols allotted to National Parties and State Parties by the Commission in 1971, the symbols given to the INC was “Calf and Cow” and “Tree” to the Socialist. Since there was no other contesting unrecognised Political Party besides the Independent not supported by any Party, the Mizo Union and Mizo Labour Party were assigned the “Elephant” and “Lion” symbol respectively under the provisions of Section 12 (2) and (3) (a) of the Election Symbols (Reservation and Allotment) Order, 1968. The Allotment of Symbols to the remaining Independent Candidates was carried out by the Returning Officer in accordance with the Provisions of the Election Symbols Order, 1968 Section 12b and c.

1978: In the fresh Election held to the Mizoram Legislative Assembly after the expiry of the five year term, there emerged new Political Parties contesting the Election. The spilt in the Indian national Congress at the Centre gave birth to the formation of

---

4 Election Report • Compiled by Chief Electoral Officers (Office File Record) Mizoram.
Mizoram Congress Committee of the Indian faction. The emergence of the Janata Party at the centre simultaneously brought forth the Mizoram Janata Party. Also, a new Political Party under the banner of Mizo Democratic Front (MDF) came forward to contest the Election. However, out of the four Political Parties in the fray, only the People’s Conference Party was a recognised Political Party (State Party) with the reserved symbol of “Scale” assigned to the Party. Besides the three unrecognised Political Parties, namely the Mizoram Congress Committee, Mizoram Janata party and Mizo Democratic Front, there were forty one Independent Candidates who contested the Election.

1979: In the mid-term General Election held in April, 1979 there emerged two National recognised Parties, the Mizoram Congress Committee (I) and Mizoram Janata Party. People’s Conference Party was the only State recognised Party under the Commission. The Peoples Conference ‘B’, Mizo Union and Mizo Democratic Front made up of three unrecognised Political parties also in the contest. The Independent Candidates, not backed up by any previous Election.

1984: The fourth General Election to the Mizoram Legislative Assembly was held on the 25th April, 1984. The Mizoram Branch of the Janata Party, People’s Conference ‘B’ and Mizo Democratic Front have all been dissolved and extinct. In their place, two new Political Parties, the Mizo Convention and Mizo Peace Forum came up. Thus a total of one National Party (INC), one State Party (PC) and two unrecognised political Parties along with nineteen Independent Candidates contested the 29 seats available for contests.
1987: In the Elections to the first 40 Members Legislative Assembly after Mizoram became a fullfledged State, Election was held on the 16th February, 1987. The INC was the single national Party and PC, the only State Party. The Mizo National Front and Mizo National Union were the two unrecognised Political Parties also in the contest. the independents comprised of just eleven.

1989: Following the dissolution of the State Legislative Assembly, mid-term Election was held on the 21st January, 1989. An all time record of three recognised Political Parties and four unrecognised Political Parties alongwith three Independent Candidates contested the Election.

The MNF Party by dint of winning the majority of the 40 seats in 1987 General Elections was then recognised as a ‘State Party’ and was accordingly allotted a reserved ‘Tiger’ Symbol.

The People’s Conference was another recognised State Party which has been contesting the last three General Elections, with due recognition status by the Commission. The INC remained the single National Party. The CJP, MNF ‘D’ and Hmar People’s Conference were the three unrecognised Political Parties. The Commission made available 17 free symbols to the Independent Candidates. The number of free symbols have been increased in the successive General Elections, from 12 (1972-79) to 16(84) and then to 18(87).
In the following Table is given the number of Political Parties both recognised and unrecognised and the symbols allotted to each of them in the General Elections to Mizoram Legislative Assembly.  

**TABLES - 14**

**POLITICAL PARTIES AND SYMBOLS ALLOTMENT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS (INC)</td>
<td>Calf &amp;</td>
<td>Hand (R)</td>
<td>Hand (R)</td>
<td>Hand (R)</td>
<td>Hand (R)</td>
<td>Hand (R)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>cow (R)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCIALIST PARTY</td>
<td>Tree (R)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MIZO UNION (MU)</td>
<td>Elephant</td>
<td>Camel</td>
<td>Camel</td>
<td>Elephant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MIZO LABOUR PARTY</td>
<td>Lion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEOPLE’S CONFERENCE (PC)</td>
<td>Scales (R)</td>
<td>Scales (R)</td>
<td>Scales (R)</td>
<td>Scales (R)</td>
<td>Scales (R)</td>
<td>Scales(R)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MIZORAM CONGRESS COMMITTEE (I)</td>
<td>Sparrow</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MIZORAM JANATA PARTY</td>
<td>Eagle about to fly</td>
<td>Haldhas within a wheel (R)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MIZO DEMOCRATIC FRONT</td>
<td>Lion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEOPLE’S CONFERENCE’B'</td>
<td>Two Leaves</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MIZO CONVENTION</td>
<td></td>
<td>Rising Sun</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MIZO PEACE FORUM</td>
<td>Eagle about to fly</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MIZO NATIONAL UNION(MNU)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Elephant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MIZO NATIONAL FRONTE ‘D’ (MNF D)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Elephant</td>
<td></td>
<td>Elephant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MIZO NATIONAL FRONT</td>
<td></td>
<td>Tiger</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Tiger (R)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HMAR PEOPLES CONVENTION (HPC)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAKMA JATYA PRASAD (CJP)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(R)= Reserved (Recognised Political Parties)

---

5 Ibid
BYE ELECTIONS TO THE MIZORAM LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY:

1982: Following the resignation of the four sitting Peoples Conference 'B' members in the State Assembly. Bye-election for the four Constituencies was held on the 19th April, 1982, to fill up the vacancies thus created. The Indian National Congress and the Peoples Conference were the only recognised National and State Parties while the Mizo Convention and Mizo Democratic Front made up of the two unrecognised Political Parties contesting as Independent. The two recognised Parties retained their respective reserved symbols allotted to them in the previous General Election (1979). The Mizo Convention and Mizo Democratic Front likewise were allotted the "Rising Sun" and "Lion" symbols respectively from the lists of free symbols made available.

1983: Due to the killing of the member elected from the 28 - Phuldungsei (ST) Constituency. Yet another bye-election was held on the 8th April, 1983, barely after a year has elapsed from the date on which the first bye-election from the same Constituency was held. The number of Political Parties participating in the said bye-election was the same as in the earlier Election (1982). In place of the Mizo Democratic Front, the Mizo Union Party contested as Independent with an "Elephant" symbol allotted to it. The allotment of symbols to the three remaining Parties, other than the Mizo Union was the same as the 1982 bye-Election.

6 The four Constituencies include 13 - N. Vanlaiphei (ST); 16 - Khawhai (ST); 28 - Phuldungsei (ST) and 29 - Sateek (ST)
1984: The Election to Legislative Assembly of Mizoram from 10- North Vanlaiphai (ST) Constituency was to be taken along with all other Assembly Constituencies in Mizoram on the 25th April, 1984. But as a result of the death of one of the contesting candidates belonging to the Peoples Conference Party, the Returning Officer of the Constituency countermanded the Poll under and in accordance with Section 52 of the Representation of the People Act, 1951. Election to the Constituency was held two months later on the 27th June. The Peoples Conference did not file its candidate but supported the candidate put up by the unrecognised Mizo Convention Party. Of the two remaining contestants, one was the Candidate set up by the only recognised and National Party i.e., the Indian National Congress and the other that of the unrecognised Mizo Peace Forum Political Party.

1987: Section 70 of the Representation of the People Act, 1951 and Rule 91 of the Conduct of Election Rules, 1961 provide that if a person is elected from more than one Assembly Constituency, such member has to resign all but one seat within fourteen days from the date of his Elections. Accordingly, Shri Laldenga, who was elected simultaneously from 29-Sateek (ST) and 34-Aizawl North II (ST) Constituencies during the General Elections to the Mizoram Legislative Assembly held in February, 1987, submitted his resignation of the seat from 29-Sateek Assembly Constituency to the Speaker of the State Legislative Assembly.

In the Election to fill in the vacancy, the three major Political Parties in the State viz. the Indian National Congress, Peoples Conference and Mizo National Front each filed their respective candidate. All the three Parties retained the symbols allotted to
them in the just concluded General Election. However, the Mizo National Front remained unrecognised and therefore contested the said bye-election as Independent.

The allotment of symbols to contesting candidates in the Assembly bye-elections are indicated in the following Table:

TABLE-15:

ASSEMBLY BYE-ELECTION ALLOTMENT OF SYMBOLS.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indian National Congress</td>
<td>Hand (R)</td>
<td>Hand (R)</td>
<td>Hand (R)</td>
<td>Hand (R)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People's Conference</td>
<td>Scales (R)</td>
<td>Scales (R)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Scales(R)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mizo Convention</td>
<td>Rising Sun</td>
<td>Rising Sun</td>
<td>Rising Sun</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mizo Democratic Front</td>
<td>Lion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mizo Union</td>
<td>Elephant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mizo Peace Forum</td>
<td></td>
<td>Eagle about to fly.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mizo National Front</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Tiger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Janata Dal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

R = Reserved (Recognised Political Parties)

Source: Election Reports: op. cit.

APPRAISAL:

In all the sixth General Elections and four bye-elections held between 1972-89, there were thus only two National Parties that contested the Elections. The Socialist
Party contested only in the first General Election whereas the Congress Party fought all the General Elections including the bye-elections. Among the Regional Party, People's Conference maintained a consistent record of having participated as a 'State Party' in five General Elections and in three bye-elections. The Mizo National Front was given a recognition status only in the sixth General Elections (1989) after having captured the requisite majority in the fifth General Elections on 1987 whereby the Party formed the Government. Apart from the Congress, Peoples Conference and Mizo National Front not mentioning Socialist Party, no other Political Parties have been accorded a recognition status by the Commission in the last seventeen Years. This decision of the Commission has brought about the possibility of reducing the number of Political Parties and thereby creating a sound base for a healthy Parliamentary life.

In the long spell of 17 Years during which six General Elections and four bye-elections to Mizoram Legislative Assembly were held, altogether nine unrecognised Political Parties have contested in one Election to another. The Mizo Union Party won 21 out of the 30 Assembly seats in 1972 and also captured the single Parliament seat in the same Year (Lok Sabha). The recognition accorded to the Party was withdrawn soon after Party's merger to the Congress in 1975. Since then no other Regional Parties besides the MNF and P. C. have managed to attain the requirement of four percent of the valid votes polled in Parliamentary and Assembly Elections prescribed for recognition of a Political Party by the Commission.

In matter of assigning symbols to recognised Political Parties and their Candidates, the co-ordinations between the Parties and the Returning Officers worked
well. There was no case of allotting free symbols to recognised Party Candidates for failure to communicate the names of their official candidates nor was there any case where the Commission had to revise symbols allotted by Returning Officers. However, there were a few incidences arising from the unrecognised Political Parties and independent Candidates where the Revision of the Allotment of Symbols to such group of Candidates was delayed in their failure to take steps for early adoption of Candidates and communicate the same to the Returning Officers.

In the questionnaires that the scholar prepared, questions regarding symbols was also included wherein the respondents were asked to answer the following statements:-

(1) The kind of symbols selected by Political Parties reflect what the Party stands for.

(2) There are far more important factors other than the symbols which can contribute towards the success of a candidate in Elections. Symbols are just a formality process and as such are secondary.

(3) Symbols act as the means/agency for the identification of culture and regionalism.

(4) The present system of allotting symbols to candidates belonging to Political Parties as well as Independent by the Commission is fair and proper.

(5) Mizoram having attained a literacy rate of 81.23 percent, the symbol device should be discarded and be replaced by some higher system of voting.
The total number of respondents were five hundred and ten comprising of people from all walks of life. They include college teachers, High School Teachers, Primacy Teachers, Government Gazetted officers, Manual Labourers, Political Workers, General public and the Journalists. In the overall calculation, 24.11 percent agree that the symbols selected by Political Parties reflect what the party stands for. While 76 percent did not think so. 79.41 percent believed that there are far more important factors other than the symbol factor alone leading to a candidate success or failure in Elections. Another 20.39 percent otherwise agreed that symbols occupy the top most priority in this regard. A few 11.17 percent contended that, symbol acts as the means for the identification of culture and regionalism while 88.83 percent do not approve.

With regard to the fourth question, 75.09 percent fully accept the present system of allotment of symbols by the Election Commission with 24.91 percent of them wanting for a change made from the existing system. Of those respondents in favour of the symbol devise be discarded, 19.21 percent gave their approval while 80.79 percent wanted the retention of the present system.

Article 324 of the Constitution and Rule 5 of the Conduct of Election Rule, 1961 conferred the power to the Election Commission to adjudicate disputes regarding recognition of Political Parties and Allotment of Election Symbol. Any Political Party or any person intending to contest Elections may question the allotment of Election Symbol or recognition of a Party as Political Party. Any change in the allotment of


176
symbols by the Returning Officer in compliance with the Election Commission’s directive fails with 100 (1) (d) (iv) of Representation of the People Act, 1981. If under the guise of Article 324 of the Constitution, the Chief Election Commissioner has beyond its boundaries, such a mal-exercise of power amounts to non-adherence to the norms and limitations of Article 324 and is a non-compliance with that Provision of the Constitution falling within Section 100 (1) (d) (iv).9

It was heartening to learn that, not a single case of symbol disputes has been submitted to the Election Commission by any Political Party or person from Mizoram since the Inception of the Union Territory in 1972 till date. At most, it was in the form of requests and appeal to the Commission either for the registration or recognition that the various Political Parties and Associations have voiced their demand. Recently, the State Chief Electoral Officer have requested the Commission for replacing some of the symbols listed in the Free Symbols by the more familiar symbols to be taken out of the various indigenous domestic products and tools.10 The Election Commission’s Notification in this regard though still awaited, it was hoped that the Commission keeping in mind the interest shown by all the Political Parties in the States, fulfill the requests made by the State Chief Electoral Officer.

The Election Commission, doubtless, issued a list of symbols devoid of any religious or sentimental connotation. But in electioneering, political parties and

---

8 Rooplal Sathi, Supra.


10 Couch, Jug, Mug, Railway Engine, Road Roller, Ship, Swastic within a circle, Table Fan, Two Cultivators, to be replaced by IPTE-Bag, KHUMBEU-Mizo Hat, ARBAWM-Chicken cage, VAIBEL-A smoking pipe, HREIPUI-Axe with holders, TUIBUR-Women’s smoking pipe, THUL-Cover basket, and CHEMPUI-Big knife.
candidates reversed the process and did their best to sentimentalize them and load them with positive or negative value association. The Mizo Union symbol "Elephant" had, in its own respective period, been the most effective symbol. The Party workers in turn did their best to arouse the public interests and attention. Huge dummy Elephant were erected and street processions organised. The Elephant symbol was interpreted as being unstoppable slow as it may walk - "yet the development schemes and programme of the Mizo Union Party would be achieved no matter what obstacle that may come in the way". Remarked like "I will stamp my vote on the elephant symbol, even if the Party Candidate is a dog-or a human excreta" were the slogan of over enthusiastic Party Workers. While on the other hand, the "calf and cow" symbol of the Congress was interpreted as being alien (non-Mizo) symbol and therefore stamping one's vote on the symbol meant a vote for the "Vais".\footnote{\textit{Vais} is the term given to the People from plain areas.} The new "Hand" symbol of the Congress (I) was said to symbolise the hands of the working man and that, it was in the interest of this class that the Congress (I) Party strive for. For instance, in the case of an unpopular candidate of the Congress, the Party with a standing symbol, the appeal to vote is often made for the "Hand" which stands for work, thus appealing indirectly to the working group who constitute the majority of the electorates.

It thus appear that symbols tend to obscure personalities, and discourage voters to weight relative merits of the candidates. To some extent, the system thus detracts from the value of democratic elections. However, in the present State of Political atmosphere and conditions, such resorts have to a great extent diminished and the
candidates emphasision on the positive connotation of their own symbols and arousing negative feelings in respect of symbols of their rivals have also decreased as they do not in anyway alter the outcome of the Election nor enhanced an individual candidate chances of success, for if the political climate changes on the eve of the Election, symbols cannot possibly resist the change in the verdict at Polls.

To sum up, the system of Election Symbol was evolved to enable the uneducated electorate to record their votes to the candidates of their choice without a breach of secrecy of the ballot - a concession to the extensive illiteracy in the country. In the context of Mizoram, where the literacy rate has risen to 81.23 percent leaving about 20 percent of the voters still illiterate. The retention of the system would by far be the best till such a time when the people attain a higher degree of political maturity and education becomes widespread. It was also observed from the results of all the elections held so far in Mizoram that the present systems of having symbols at elections, instead of creating confusion and favouring particular parties or candidates, have on the other hand enabled the free and fair as well as smooth conduct of Elections in the State.