CHAPTER-VII

POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

(1952-1980)
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The successful working of parliamentary democracy greatly depends on the effective political participation of the people. When the level of political awareness and political consciousness is low, the institutions of parliamentary democracy cannot work well. Thus one has to examine the political background of the state as well as the emergence of the political awareness of the people and the political situations and circumstances responsible for it.

It was form the early 1930’s that the people of Manipur started to form an organisation in order to ventilate their grievances and the political party emerged only in 1938 under the name of Nikhil Manipuri Mahasabha. Another political party called the Manipur State Congress was formed in 1946. Both the Socialist party and the Communist party were formed in 1948.

The people of Manipur started to participate in the political process of the state as a voter in the elections of 1948 which was held under the Manipur state constitution Act, 1947. Those who had attained the age of 21 years were allowed to exercise their franchise in both the valley and hill areas of Manipur. The elected representative in the state assembly took part in the decision making process of the state. The Maharaja of Manipur acted as constitutional head of the state.
Under the Constitution of India, the first general election in Manipur was held in the year 1952 on the basis of adult franchise. The first general election heralded an era of people’s participation in the political process and government in the state. In Manipur there are two parliamentary constituencies namely, (1) Outer Manipur Parliamentary Constituency and (2) Inner Manipur Parliamentary Constituency. The outer Manipur Parliamentary constitutes the Manipur Hills and parts of the Thoubal district and a small portion of the Sadar Hills circle. In 1952 general elections, the Inner seat went to the Congress candidate Shri Jugeswar Singh. In the Outer constituency, the Socialist candidate, Rishang Keishing from Ukhrul District defeated his four rivals and got elected. Simultaneously along with the Lok Sabha election, 30 members of the State Electoral College had also been elected. For the polling of Electoral College, the state was divided into 30 constituencies, 20 in the valley and 10 in the Hills. The Electoral College was constituted in order to elect one member to Council of States from Manipur.

In this election, three national political parties, contested. The parties were the Congress, the Socialist and the Communist. The local parties, which fielded candidates, were the Gandhi Sevak Sabha, the Praja Shanti, the All Manipur National Union, the Historical Research Committee, the Kuki National Association, the Mao-Maram Union, the Mizo Union, the Manipur Zeliangrong Union, the Paite National Council, the Achumba Pamba Congress and the Naga National League of Manipur. Besides these parties' nominees, there were 8 independent candidates.1

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1 Ravindran Pratap Singh - Electoral Politics in Manipur, Concept Publishing Company New Delhi 1981-P.22
In the Electoral College elections of 1952, two candidates contested from the Pheisat constituency of Ukhrul district. They were Yangmaso Shaiza from All Manipur National Union and Zarrem, put up by the Kuki National Assembly. In this neck-to-neck contest, Shri Yangmaso Shaiza secured 1268 votes and Shri Zarem secured 1702 votes and defeated his nearest rival Shri Yangmaso Shaiza (AMNU). However, from Ukhrul constituency, Suisa Rungsung from All Manipur National Union (AMNU) got elected uncontested.

**Elections, 1957:**

In 1957, the second general election was held to elect two members of the Lok Sabha. As in the previous elections, the contesting parties were the Congress and the Praja Socialist. Besides these, there were also five independent candidates.

The Inner Manipur Lok Sabha seat was captured by the Socialist candidate, L. Achou Singh in five-cornered contest. But the party lost to the Congress in outer Manipur constituency. The Congress candidate R. Suisa defeated not only the Socialist candidate but also independent candidates in the outer Manipur constituency.² The hill constituencies are inhabited by the various tribes, speaking different languages and practising different cultures and customs. The names of the ten constituencies in the hills were Tengnoupal, Pheisat, Ukhrul, Mao East, Mao West, Aimol, Tamenglong, Jiri, Thanlon and Churachandpur.

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2. Ibid, P. 27. Elections 1957,(Territorial council Elections)
In 1957, Territorial Council elections, there were two constituencies in the Ukhrul district namely Pheisat constituency and Ukhrul constituency. Four candidates contested from the Pheisat constituency. The total votes polled in the 15th polling stations were 4162 out of which shri Ningheileng an independent candidate secured 344 votes, Shri Rishang Keishing Socialist got 2691, Shri Samkhohao congress 385 and Shri Hemkhodong, Independent secured 742 votes. Hence Shri Rishang Keishing got elected from Pheisat Constituency. In the Ukhrul constituency of Ukhrul district, three candidates were in the fray. They were Shri Ngavaophung, Socialist who secured 3682 votes, Shri Ngalangzar Congress 3960 votes and Shri P.R. Mingthing, Independent 300 votes. Out of the total votes polled of 7942 from 23 polling stations, Shri Ngalangzar secured the highest votes defeating his nearest rival Shri Ngavaophung by a margin of 278 votes. Thus Shri Ngalangzar was elected from this constituency.

Elections 1962:

The third general election of the country was held in 1962 and Manipur too went to polls to elect 30 members of the Territorial Council along with the two Lok Sabha seats simultaneously.

For the two Lok Sabha seats, there were eleven (11) candidates in the fray. The name of the political parties, which put up the eleven candidates in both Inner and Outer Parliamentary Constituencies were the Congress, the Socialist, the Communist and the Praja Socialist.

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3. Govt. of Manipur (Election office), Results of the Election, 1957, Lamphel.
In a six cornered contest Salam Tombi Singh, the Congress candidate defeated the Socialist, the Communist, the Praja Socialist and the two Independent Candidates for the Inner Parliamentary Seat. In the Outer Manipur Constituency, the Socialist Candidate Rishang Keishing captured the seat by a margin of only 42 votes defeating his nearest rival Shri Sibo Lorho of Congress in a five-cornered contest which also included three Independents.\(^4\)

In the Territorial Council elections in Ukhrul District, Shri K. Envy Congress from Phungyar Pheisat Constituency and Shri Solomon, Congress from Ukhrul Assembly got elected.

With the enactment of the Government of the Union Territories Act 1963, Manipur along with Himachal Pradesh and Tripura were given Legislative Assemblies. The existing Territorial council which was constituted under the Territorial Council Act, 1956, had been converted into the Territorial Legislative Assembly.

The Act of 1963 in spite of its shortcomings gave the Manipur Administration the look of a responsible government. The leader of the Manipur Congress Legislative Party Shri M. Koireng Singh who secured majority in the Assembly formed the government and the other parties were in the opposition.

Elections, 1967:

The fourth general election was held in Manipur in the year 1967 to elect two members of the Lok Sabha. In the Inner Manipur constituency, the communist leader M. Meghachandra Singh got elected defeating R.K. Jhalajit Singh of Congress. In the outer Manipur constituency an independent candidate Paokai Haokip defeated the Congress nominee Rishang Keishing by a margin of 1,541 votes only.

In the first Assembly Elections in Manipur, the Assembly Constituencies were adjusted according to 1961 census. According to the new arrangements there were 20 constituencies in the valley and 10 in the hills. The hill constituencies except one, Jiribam were reserved for the scheduled tribe under the 1967 delimitation arrangement. The constituencies in the hills were Tengnoupal, Phungyar, Ukhrul, Mao East, Mao west, Tamei, Tamenglong, Jiribam Thanlon and Churachandpur. 5

Election, 1972:

In 1972, Manipur was granted statehood with a Legislative Assembly of 60 members. In Manipur, the first Legislative Assembly election was held in February 1972. In this election no party was able to secure absolute majority.

In Ukhrul district, there were four constituencies namely Ukhrul, Kamjong, Chingai and Phungyar. These constituencies were all reserved for the scheduled tribes. For all these constituencies there were altogether 18

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5. Ibid. P.38
candidates, mostly independents. The Congress and the United Naga Integration Council (UNIC), which was an unrecognised party, contested in all the seats. The Congress could not secure a single seat but UNIC secured 3 seats and the remaining one seat went to an Independent candidate, Shri Yangmaso Shaiza.

In 1972 elections, the average votes secured in the district stood at 1,083 and for the Independent 1,321. The United Naga Integration Council candidates got 2,080 votes on the average, which showed their popularity in the district. The Congress candidates forfeited their deposits whereas only one UNIC (United Naga Integration Council) candidate who was defeated lost his deposit. In the Ukhrul Constituency, Yangmaso Shaiza won the election by a margin of 2,163 votes by defeating his nearest rival L. Solomon (Congress), former Finance Minister of the state. In Phungyar Constituency Shri Rishang Keishing (UNIC) defeated his rival Shri Stephen Ankang, a Congress candidate. The UNIC candidates got elected in both Kamjong and Chingai constituencies. In Kamjong Shri K. Envy defeated his nearest rival Shri Kongsui Luithui, an Independent candidate by 1,651 votes. In Chingai constituency, P. Peter won the seat by a margin of 547 votes over his nearest rival Shri Somi, an Independent. Ukhrul District being populated by the Tangkhul Nagas, majority of the voters voted for the UNIC candidate and posed to be a problem for the Congress. Both the parties, UNIC and the Congress put up four candidates each. Out of which the UNIC secured three seats and the Congress none. One seat went to an Independent candidate. “The electoral contest in Manipur East District was a manifestation of the
tribal politics. The demand of the merger of Naga inhabited areas of Manipur with Nagaland was the main agenda of UNIC.\textsuperscript{16}

**Mid Term Assembly Elections, 1974:**

After the imposition of President’s Rule in 1973, the state went through a mid term poll in early 1974 to elect its 60 members for Legislative Assembly after a long spell of 10 months President’s Rule. The Assembly Constituencies were delimited accordingly to the 1971 census. In the process of readjustment, Manipur North and Manipur South District got one more seat each while Manipur East(Ukhrul) and Manipur Central District lost one seat each. The number of Assembly Constituencies in Manipur west and Tengnoupal District remained as usual.\textsuperscript{7}

Just before the election, some Ex. M.L.A’s of the hills led by Shri Yangmaso Shaiza formed the Manipur Hill Union (MHU). The newly formed party fielded its candidates in the Manipur East, Manipur North, Manipur West and Tengnoupal Sub-division. The Congress also sent up candidates in all the reserved constituencies. The Manipur People’s party could send up only one candidate in the hill areas.

The names of the members returned from Ukhrul district in the election along with the parties were:

1) Shri Somi A. Shimaray – Manipur Hill Union (MHU) from Chingai Constituency

\textsuperscript{6} Ibid., P. 120.
\textsuperscript{7} Ibid., P. 178.
2) Shri Rishang Keishing- Congress from Phungyar Constituency and
3) Shri Yangmaso Shaiza, Manipur Hill Union from Ukhrul Constituency.

In this election, not a single party could form the ministry. Soon after the election, the M.P.P.(Manipur People’ Party) and the Congress tried to win different parties and Independents in order to form the Government. The MPP won the game by getting 2 SSP, 6 MHU and 7 Independents. These parties made an alliance under the name of the United Legislature Party (ULP) and formed the government on 4th March 1974 with Md. Alimuddin as the Chief Minister of Manipur but just before the swearing in ceremony of Md. Allimuddin Ministry, a section of Manipur Hill Union led by Shri Yangmaso Shaiza left the ULP due to a rift in the power struggle. Meanwhile, the opposition parties consisting of the Congress, the Manipur Hill Union, the CPI and the Independents formed an alliance called the Progressive Democratic Front. Members from the ruling party were also persuaded to come to the side with promises of position and benefits, Consequently, the new party called Progressive Democratic Front which was formed by many parties, unanimously elected Shri Yangmaso Shaiza (Tangkhul) to be the leader and requested the Governor to allow them to form the ministry. Shri Yangmaso Shaiza was eventually sworn in as the Chief Minister on 19th July 1974. But due to internal crisis within the newly formed party, the Ministry could not last long. With much resentment, Yangmaso Shaiza resigned on 5th December 1974. It is worth-while to note that for the first time in the political history of Manipur a Tangkhul in the person of Yangmaso Shaiza became the Chief Minister of Manipur. The ministry headed by him was of course short-lived i.e. about six months.
**Parliamentary Election 1977:**

The sixth Lok Sabha election was held in March 1977 and Manipur also went to polls to elect two members of the Lok Sabha. Altogether 11(Eleven) candidates contested in the election. From the Inner Parliamentary constituency, Shri N. Tombi Singh Congress returned in the election and Shri Yangmaso Shaiza got elected from the outer Manipur Constituency.

After the parliamentary elections, 1977, the government was formed by the Janata Party at the national level. It had great impact in Manipur politics. On the 2\textsuperscript{nd} May 1977, as many as 26 members left the congress legislative party and joined the Janata party. Shri Yangmaso Shaiza who was elected on the Congress party ticket also joined. The strength of the Janata was 33 but the defectors did not form the government as the state Janata Party opted for the dissolution of the Assembly and conduct a fresh election. Further, there were leadership crisis as there were two candidates, Salam Tombi Singh and Yangmaso Shaiza for the leadership. To settle the conflicting issue, two General Secretaries of the Janata Party arrived in Manipur. They did not agree with the idea of the state Janata Party for the dissolution of the state Assembly. As there was deadlock, Presidents rule was imposed. In the meantime a meeting of the Janata party was held on 26\textsuperscript{th} June 1977 and elected Yangmaso Shaiza as the party leader.

On 26\textsuperscript{th} June 1977, the President’s Rule was revoked and Shri Yangmaso Shaiza was sworn in as the Chief Minister. As Yangmaso Shaiza was then a member of the Lok Sabha, he had to seek fresh mandate to be a member of the Legislative Assembly. He was elected to the Assembly in
Dec. 1977. Soon after the formation of the Government, there were other crisis within the party. There were attempts to change the leadership but the central leaders did not accept any change in the leadership of the Janata Party. The central leaders on the other hand advised Shaiza to expand his ministry and accordingly his ministry was expanded. Yangmaso Shaiza, from Ukhrul District for the second time became the Chief Minister of Manipur.

Assembly Elections 1980:

In January 1980, Manipur went to polls to elect two members of the Lok Sabha and 60 members of the state Assembly. In the Lok Sabha election Ng. Mohendro (CPI) got elected from the Inner Manipur Constituency and N. Gouzagin from the Outer Manipur Constituency.

In the 1980 Assembly Election, four candidates contested from the Phungyar Assembly Constituency. The total number of votes polled were 4,448 and out of these 63 votes were rejected. Out of this, Rishang Keishing (Independent) got 415 votes and Engy Makan (Independent) secured 145 votes. Hence Rishang Keishing got elected from this constituency.  

In the Kamjong Assembly Constituency of Ukhrul district, four contestants were in the fray. The total votes polled was 5,697 and out of this 77 votes were rejected. In this election, K. Envy (Independent) secured 1,271, Ngazek (Congress) 810 votes and M. Ningchui (Independent) secured

8. Ibid P. 2213-14
617. K. Envy secured the highest votes and was thus elected from this Constituency.\textsuperscript{9}

In the Chingai Assembly Constituency, the total votes polled were 6,100 and out of this 114 votes were declared invalid. There were seven candidates contesting from this Constituency. P. Peter (Independent) secured 1,666 votes, Somi (Independent) 1,069 votes, Standhope (Independent) 881, R.V. Mingthing (Independent) 865 votes, Prem (Congress) 659 votes, Zingthan (Independent) 474 votes and K. Khongsan (Independent) secured 377 votes. Among these candidates, P. Peter secured the highest votes and thereby got elected from this constituency.\textsuperscript{10}

In the Assembly Election of 1980, the Congress (I) came to power and formed ministry under the leadership of Shri R.K. Dorendro Singh as Chief Minister of Manipur on 14\textsuperscript{th} January 1980 and continued up to 26\textsuperscript{th} November 1980. Later on Shri Rishang Keishing (Tangkhul) became the chief Minister on 27\textsuperscript{th} February, 1981.

**Election Campaign:**

In Ukhrul district campaign methods have undergone many changes. Some of the common methods of election campaign in the district are discussed below:

(i) **Public meeting:** In Manipur radio and television do not play any pre-eminent role in political participation. It is still more uncommon in the

\textsuperscript{9} Ibid 214
\textsuperscript{10} Ibid
rural hill areas of Ukhrul inhabited by the Tangkhuls. In this particular district, one of the best methods of canvassing and attracting the masses is through organising public meetings. The candidates take the advantage of expressing their party ideologies, programmes and try to convince the voters by tactfully exposing their party ideologies, programmes and try to convince the voters. In Ukhrul district, all the candidates will go around their respective constituency villages and hold public meetings. The public also organise joint public meetings at Tangkhul Long ground of the district headquarter and all the candidates of the district would be invited to deliver speeches explaining their party manifestoes and ideologies. People will not vote if the principles of party manifestoes go against the wishes of the people. Sometimes a particular party will call all its candidates and hold public meetings. But people have now lost their faith even though the candidates make many big promises as they have had enough experiences of not fulfilling anything for the benefit of the people. Most of the villagers just go their own way. They will listen to their speeches and adjudged the best speeches discussed and compared their manifestoes but in most cases people are not convinced. However, we find that in Ukhrul district inhabited by the Tangkhuls, holding public meetings during election campaign is one of the best media of attracting and calling the attention of the voters.

Community feast:

Community feast is one of the most interesting and popular methods of campaign adopted in the Ukhrul district. For this purpose, the candidate usually killed pigs, cows, buffaloes, etc. The leaders and important voters of a village are invited to a community (Zatkhang) feast where food is
prepared and served in a traditional Tangkhul way. Over the feast, the candidate had close talks with the voters and leaders and try to touch the heart of the people. There are some villagers and elderly people who out of sincerity, without considering the candidates’ calibre, party or his position in the society, simply voted for the candidate who offers feast or any of such kind so as not to betray him. But, now-a-days, as people are more and more educated and have become more politically conscious, this practice of organising community feast is not an effective means of election campaign. In Ukhrul district, organising such community feast is a big enjoyment for the youngsters. They will go around and join in all the feasts organised by different candidates and in the end, they will vote only to a particular person. Moreover, hosting community feast is not the criteria for raising the political consciousness among the masses, Over and above this, most candidates are not rich and cannot afford this expensive method of campaigning in all the villages. Sometimes partymen offer pigs, buffaloes or sugar for the candidate.

**House-to-House campaign:**

It is the most and common practice of canvassing in the villages. Face to face interaction and discussion enables the candidates to convince the voters better and it is more reliable as one has direct contact with the voters. Sometimes the agents also distribute leaflets containing party manifesto to the voters directly with an appeal to vote. The leaflets and the party symbols are posted on doorsteps and walls of the houses of the voters.

Party workers have a big role in catching the voters to their party. They cajole the people who are in touch with their respective villagers and
can assess the party situation of the village. If the voters are not tactfully handled and convinced, voters always change, as most of them are opportunists. Sometime due to the unpopularity and insincerity of the party workers, many voters are lost. Sometimes the party workers misuse the fund and the fund meant for the village goes into his pocket and thereby loses the voters.

**Role of money:**

The important role of money in election is an All India affair and Manipur is not an exception to it. Voters are bribed and innocent voters will vote for the candidate who bribed highest. Even in the Tangkhul area this practice is done. Some of the rich candidates go around the villages distributing money or any other materials and persuade the voters to vote for him. In Khangkhui village a candidate in the past election distributed red blankets to old people. A certain old man after getting the blankets decided to cast vote for the candidate or any family member of the candidate till his death. He said that he has been casting votes for a particular national party for more than a decade but did not get anything. The said party even promised him to construct village road but nothing has been done.\(^\text{11}\) The voters at the last hour are guided by money in exercising franchise. Of late, people have started demanding money. The voices of the voters are that they will demand money during election time as the candidate after election will not be seen. Even the elected candidate will not entertain them and will not

\(^{11}\) Interview with an old men of Khangkhui Phungcham Village—dated 12-1-02.
listen to their grievances. Some people organised a group and demanded money. People have enough experience of election and don’t believe in any party manifesto. However, capability and calibre of the candidates are considered to be more important than money in Ukhrul district. Education and increase of political consciousness are responsible for the lesser impact of money in elections, during the last decade.

**Role of Elites:**

The role of local elites is very great. In most cases they don’t openly participate in the electioneering. They enlighten the local people explaining all the pros and cons of the party ideologies. There are certain national, regional or local parties, which are very communal, and for such a party, the elites will convince the people to refrain from such party. The elites will convince their respective clans, family relations, friends’ circle and local people at large. Many candidates will catch the local elites of the village and through them they try to woo the voters. The same case is with the professionals and bureaucrats. These people gave financial assistance to candidates. The highest contributors are the businessmen and the contractors. Nowadays the local elites are not able to exercise independently as they are in between the government and underground politics. There are always certain candidates who are strongly opposed by the underground. In this atmosphere, the political elites cannot exercise their franchise genuinely and openly.

It has been found by the various researchers that with the rise of education, the participation of the Tangkhuls in political activities increased. The knowledge of governmental activities and of the state politics also
encourage them to take active part in politics. But the more educated persons show a lower turn out at the public meetings, rallies, etc., compared to the other voters. The main reason why the educated persons do not attend in any public meetings is that they are not willing to devote so much time to political affairs. On the other hand, the less educated people participated in these kinds of activities in festive mood as they get some entertainment.

The common villagers are found quite active in politics. They show great interest in public meetings, political discussions and elections. Compared to men, Tangkhul women have a lower sense of participation in politics. Their turnout in the election is much lower than that of the men but on the day of casting votes, all the women came out in large numbers. Their low turn out at the public meetings is also due to their heavy workload at home and in the fields. But of late, it has undergone a sea change in the Tangkhul society. Many women are actively involved in electioneering and politics. Many women are seen canvassing votes from house to house. They also mobilise through their women organisations and societies.

**Political Leadership:**

After the drafting of Manipur State Constitution Act 1947, Manipur was administered in accordance with the Manipur State Constitution Act 1947. Prior to this the hill and valley administration were kept separately. The hill villages were responsible for their own administration. It was only under the Manipur State Hill Peoples (Administration) Regulation 1947 that the responsibility for administration in the Hills was vested in the Maharaja in Council and exercised in accordance with the Act of the state. Under the provisions of the Act, the people of Ukhral District, particularly the
Tangkhuls started taking active role in the Manipur politics. For the first time in the history of Manipur, two tribals, namely, Major R. Khating (Tangkhul) and Mr. T. C. Tiankham were included in the Interim Council. Major R. Khathing, a resident of Ukhrul district was appointed as Minister for Hill administration and was also in-charge of Manipur Rifles in the Interim council. Late, L. Solomon Tangkhul was the Deputy Speaker of the Territorial council from August 16th 1963 to 15th November 1965. During the regime of Congress ministry, L. Solomon was again included as a Cabinet Minister from 1st July, 1968 to 12th January 1967 and from 19th February 1968 to 12th January 1967. In the third Congress ministry, he was Finance and Revenue Minister. During the United Front Ministry led by L. Thambou, K. Envy (Tangkhul) from Ukhrul district was cabinet minister from 13th October 1967 to 25th October, 1967. In the Manipur People's Party led by Coalition Ministry, he was minister of state in charge of industries from 20th March 1972 to 3rd August 1972. But he resigned from ministership on 4th August 1972.

Shri Yangmaso Shaiza was Finance minister in the M.P.P. led Coalition Ministry from 20th March 1972 to 26th March 1973 under the Chief Ministership of Md. Alimuddin. He then became Chief Minister of Manipur from 10th July 1974 to 5th December 1974 and again from 29th June, 1977 to 14th November, 1979. The Lok Sabha election for outer Manipur was held in 14th March 1977 and Shri Yangmaso Shaiza got elected in this election. He then resigned his membership of the Manipur Legislative Assembly on 28th March 1977. The government at the center was then formed by the Janata Party and it had a great impact in Manipur politics. On the second May 1977 as many as 26 members left the Congress Legislative party and joined the
Janata party. Shri Yangmaso Sheiza who was elected from the Congress party also included. The bye-election of the Ukhrul constituency caused by the resignation of Shri Y. Shaiza on his election as MP was held on 19th December 1977. In this bye-election, the Janata Party sent up Shri Y. Shaiza as their party candidate. He was declared elected in the four-cornered contest in the bye-election. The next day i.e. on 25th December 1977, Shri Y. Shaiza resigned his membership from the Lok Sabha and was sworn in as a member of the Legislative Assembly, Manipur. Eventually, President’s Rule was revoked on 22nd June 1977 and Y. Shaiza was then sworn in as the Chief Minister of Manipur for the second time.

Another prominent Tangkhul leader, Shri Rishang Keishing was elected as M.P. in the first general election of 1952 from the Outer Manipur Constituency from the Socialist party and served as M.P. from 1952 to 1957 and again from 1962 to 1967. He was also included as a Cabinet Minister in-charge of Finance in the Congress United Legislative Party Ministry from 1974 to 1995. For the third time, he was Cabinet minister from 14th January 1980 to 26th November 1980 in the Congress ministry led by Shri R. K. Dorendro Singh. He then held the prestigious post as Chief Minister of Manipur from 27th November 1980 to 28th February 1981, from 19th June to 4th January, 1985 and from 4th January 1985 to 3rd March, 1988.

Another notable person was Suisa Rungsung. He was elected to Manipur Territorial Council in 1948, from Ukhrul West Constituency. He was elected as M.P. from the Manipur Outer Parliamentary Constituency In the year 1957.
Shri R.V Mingthing a Tangkhul from Ukhrul District was the Chairman of the Autonomous District Council of Ukhrul District during the year 1977 to 1978. He again became the Chairman of the Hill Areas Committee, Manipur Legislative Assembly from 1985 tills 1988. Again another Tangkhul, Prof. M. Horam was the Chairman of the Hill Areas Committee, Manipur Legislative Assembly from February 1995 to March, 2000.

Among the women of Tangkhuls, Mrs. Shiningla Keishing was the first woman, nominated in the Manipur Territorial Assembly in 1947. Mrs. Hangmila Shaiza was the first popularly elected MLA of Manipur on Janata Dal ticket from Ukhrul Constituency. She was Minister of State during her tenure.

Ever since the Interim Council, the Tangkhuls have been taking active role in the Manipur state politics. So far two persons from the Tangkhul tribe have become Chief Minister of Manipur though there are only 3 MLA seats from Ukhrul district. As an MLA and as Chief Ministers of Manipur, they have greatly contributed in structuring the developmental plans and processes of the state. Others Tangkhul ministers have also taken a big role in the evolution of Manipur politics. Till date Rishang Keishing is marked as the person who holds Chief Ministership for the longest period in Manipur.

**Tangkhul As Founder Leader of Political Parties:**

The Tangkhuls of Ukhrul district have contributed a lot in the state politics as member of the political elites of Manipur being the leaders of
political parties. The following are some of the political parties founded by the Tangkhuls.

1. **The Manipur Hill Union**:

   Just before the Assembly elections of 1974, some Ex-MLA’s of the hills led by Shri Yangmaso Shaiza, a resident of Ukhrul district formed the Manipur Hill Union as a political party. The idea of forming this party had originated after the formation of the United Legislative Party in 1972. This party was formed by seven MLAs under the leadership of Shri Yangmaso Shaiza, The Manipur Hill Union put up candidates in the Manipur East, Manipur North, Manipur West district and Tengnoupal sub-division in the Assembly election of 1974. The M.H.U. secured 11 seats out of 15 it contested in the hill areas of the state. The M.H.U received the highest average votes per candidate (3,493) and the congress (0) the lowest (674). In Ukhrul district out of 3 seats 2 seats were captured by the M.H.U. They were Yangmaso Shaiza M.H.U from Ukhrul constituency and Shri Somi A. Shimray M.H.U from Chingai Constituency.

2. **The United Naga Integration Council (Hills)**:

   This party was formed under the leadership of Shri Rishang Keishing who was earlier a Congress member. The Hill party, which was exclusively for the Nagas of Manipur, came into existence in the later part of 1971. Prior to the formation of their political Party, the Naga Integration Committee was actively working for the Naga Integration since the mid 60s.\(^{12}\) The President

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of the Naga Integration Committee were Mono Ex- MLA and Shri Rishang Keishing Ex- MP was the General Secretary. In 1974 elections, the United Naga Integration Council secured 75 percent in the Ukhrul District, Manipur. "The UNIC a hill party, played with the sentiments of the people in the North-Eastern Naga area of the state and came out of the electoral battle with flying colours"13.

The UNIC’s best performance in this election among all the parties of the state must be attributed to the towering leadership of Shri Rishang, the acknowledged leader of the Naga.14 But the UNIC having failed to get seats in the Alimuddin ministry merged with the Congress after making a joint agreement of the two parties. "It is agreed upon that the Congress party does not oppose Naga Integration movement and does not consider Naga Integration movement as anti-party, anti-national and unconstitutional activity"15.

Thus the Tangkhuls have participated actively in the politics of the state of Manipur. With the introduction of democratic elements and practices, the Tangkhuls have become more enlightened in the art of administration and in the politics of the state at large.

In underground polities also the Tangkhul plays an important role. When the Naga National Movement was started in Nagaland led by A.Z Phizo, many young Tangkhul youths and educated persons gave a good

15 Why not South Nagaland by the Forgotten Nagas, P.68
response to his call and started participating actively in the struggle for self-
determination. Many Tangkhul Nagas took a leading role in the Naga
movement like Late Mr. Suisa Rungsung, Ramyo Zimik, Th. Muivah,
V. Atem, Hanshi, Ahao Rising, Angelus, Phungthing, etc. However, after
signing the Shillong Accord in 1975, their political view became different.
At the time of signing the Shillong Accord, Th. Muivah and Isak Swu were
in China for a mission. On their return, they came with a group of Naga
armies and established their base in Burma-Naga territory in March 1975.
They outrightly denounced the Shillong Accords. The leaders of the break
away members namely, Isak Swu, Th. Muivah and Khaplang, formed a new
political party called the National Socialist Council of Nagaland on January,
31, 1980. “They have even formed an alternative Government christened as”
People’s Republic of Nagaland . . . and branded the Accord as Accord of
Treason of 1975.”¹⁶ They also re-affirmed the use of arms to attain their
objectives. “Politics is successful”, read their manifesto “but only when
backed by arms. We are safe so long as we fight to save ourselves”. We
ruled out the illusion of saving Nagaland through peaceful means. It is arms
and arms again that will save our nation and ensures freedom to the people.¹⁷

Again in 1988, the National Socialist Council of Nagaland was split
into two rival groups. One was headed by Mr. Isac Swu and Th. Muivah and
the other led by Mr. Khaplang. Ever since the split and till date, the two
organisations have become staunch rivals of each other attacking and killing
one another.

¹⁶. M Horam - Thirty years of Naga Insurgency. Cosmo publications
N. Delhi 1988. P. 243
¹⁷. Ibid. P. 244
In the North Eastern Region NSCN has been considered as one of the oldest insurgency groups, which has trained many militants groups of the region. Naga’s demand for self determination have been running more than half a century and once again India has declared ceasefire with the N.S.C.N. (IM) from 1997, which is continuing till date extending it from time to time. The same ceasefire is also declared by the Govt. of India with the NSCN (K). Ever since the declaration of ceasefire, the Indo-Naga Peace Talk is undergoing. The public in general, has no knowledge of the details of the ongoing peace process. It is however believed that the talks between the NSCN and the Government of India will bring Peace in the Naga inhabited areas as well as to the whole community in the North Eastern region.

Thus the people of Ukhrul District mostly the Tangkhuls have undergone different stages of political development and political participation of the state. The Tangkhuls of Ukhrul district were able to produce important political leaders of the state including two Chief Ministers.