PREFACE

Manipur has a long tradition of state parties playing a very significant role in her state politics. Their role has been all the more significant because of certain considerations - 1) the failure of political parties to win a majority in all the Territorial Council, Territorial Assembly and State Legislative Assembly Elections held prior to the 2012 State Assembly Elections; 2) the resultant multi-party system which emerged inside the state; and 3) the wide-spread problem of defection, split and merger till the coming of the 91st Amendment of the Constitution which not only served as the breeding ground for the emergence of numerous state parties but also led to frequent changes of ministries inside the state. The present study is an exercise in the understanding of the nature and dynamics of the phenomena of state parties in Manipur with the Federal Party of Manipur being taken up as the party for the study.

The present thesis is being divided into six chapters. The first chapter is an introductory one. Apart from dealing with the concept of political parties, it also tries to trace the origin of political parties; its emergence in Europe, America and Asia; types of political parties; emergence of political parties in India - national and regional; emergence of state parties and their role in the government and politics of the country; statement of the problem of the present research, its objectives, research questions, methodology, review of literature; etc.

Chapter two tries to give an overall picture of the emergence of political parties inside the state. Starting with the socio-religious reform movements during the 1930s in Manipur which served as the background from which political parties emerged inside the state, the chapter deals with the emergence of the
Nikhil Hindu Manipuri Mahasabha, Manipur Krishak Sanmelani, Nikhil Manipur Mahasabha, Manipur Praja Sanmelani, Manipur Praja Mandai, Krishak Sabha, Manipur Praja Sangha, Manipur State Congress, emergence of political parties in the hills like Kuki National Assembly, etc. It also examines their emergence during the post-independence period of Manipur like that the Manipur People’s Party, Nationalist People’s Party, Naga Nationalist Party, Kanglei League, Manipur State Congress Party, Democratic Revolutionary People’s Party, etc.

Chapter three of the thesis deals with the emergence of the Federal Party of Manipur. Starting with a highlight of the socio-political and economic environment from which party emerged the chapter also elaborates the basic socio-political ideals which were behind the formation of the party. It also examines the Preamble of the Party’s Constitution, the Party’s aims and objective, organizational structure, membership, powers and functions of the president, vice-president, general secretaries and other officials of the Party, etc.

Chapter four is a critical estimate of the participation of the Federal Party of Manipur in the electoral politics of the state. The first half of the chapter deals with a brief outline of the history of electoral politics in Manipur starting from 1948, and covers the 1948 Elections in Manipur the under the Manipur State Constitution Act 1947, the Electoral College Elections of 1952, Territorial Council and Territorial Assembly Elections and also the State Assembly and Lok Sabha Elections inside the state whereas the second half of the chapter examines the participation of the Federal Party of Manipur in the electoral politics of the state during its lifetime – both in the State Legislative Assembly and Lok Sabha Elections of the state.
The main focus of the fifth chapter is on the Federal Party of Manipur and its role in state politics. It is being assessed on the basis of two considerations – 1) at the level of its role in the formation of coalition ministries inside the state; and 2) in terms of the socio-political issues the party addressed with a view to serve and promotes the overall interests of the state and its people. Some of the important issues which the Party took up and being discussed in the chapter are federal restructuring and autonomy rights of the state; territorial integrity of Manipur; peaceful settlement of the problem of insurgency; protection of human rights of the people; shifting of Assam Rifles from Kangla; development of transport and communication, and infra-structure; etc. It also deals circumstances which led to the withering away of the party.

Finally, the concluding chapter is a systematic summarization of the findings of the previous chapters.