

**REVOLUTIONARY  
MOVEMENTS  
IN  
MANIPUR**

**N. JOYKUMAR SINGH**

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# REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENTS IN MANIPUR



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## Revolutionary Movements in Manipur

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Foreword

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*Dedicated*  
*to My beloved father*  
*Late Shri N. Mani Singh*  
*A strict disciplinarian and guiding force*  
*In the journey of my life*

## Foreword

---

It was a great pleasure for me to have gone through the book "Revolutionary Movements in Manipur" written by Professor N. Joykumar Singh, a well-known historian and an academician of commitment. This book is a study of the revolutionary political movements both at the theoretical and empirical levels. The earlier work of the author, namely, "Social Movements in Manipur: 1917-1950" deals with the anti-British and anti-colonial people's movements. The present work is an important study to understand the post-merger political movements in the state, which had two trends. The first was the peaceful agitations launched by the political parties, based on "Gandhiji's Satyagraha" to establish democratic representative form of democracy and statehood for Manipur within the Indian Union. The second one was the armed struggle for the liberation of Manipur from the so-called "Indian colonial rule" and establishment of a sovereign state outside the Indian Union. The present work of Professor Joykumar is concerned with the second category of the political movements which are described popularly as insurgency and also known in Manipur as "Naharolgi Ehou" (Movement or revolt of the youth). The movement is definitely not a youth movement in the conventional sense. It is a deep-rooted assertion of the ethnic nationalism with a clean act of revolutionary agenda. Professor Joykumar rightly described these movements as a phenomenon of "Revolutionary Movements".

This study is a well-researched and well-documented work for which the author should be commended. The scholarship and historical acumen of Professor Joykumar are unfolded in the pages of his book. The author deals with five aspects of the theme: a theoretical exposition on revolutions, the genesis of the revolutionary movements in Manipur, the nature and character of the movement, the leadership pattern and the impact of the movements. Starting with the classical definition of the revolution as "change or transformation" the author deals with a comparative theories of revolution, both Marxian and non-Marxian. If we follow the classification of the revolutionary categories one is

inclined to think the insurgencies in Manipur as the guerilla-based armed revolutions based on the classification of Paul Wilkinson. The occurrence of armed revolutionary struggle was due to denial, by the imperialist or the pro-imperialist government, of the peaceful means for the masses of the people to gain national aims including armed intervention to reverse popular trend towards independence. This type of revolutionary movement uses "violence against violence" (P. 18-19). The guerilla warfare is a form of revolutionary struggle in Manipur.

The author has given an impartial and objective account of six well-known revolutionary parties, namely, The Meitei State Committee (MSC), United National Liberation Front (UNLF), Revolutionary Government of Manipur (RGM), Peoples Liberation Army (PLA) Eastern Region, Peoples Revolutionary Party of Kangleipak (PREPAK), and Kangleipak Communist Party (KCP). The writer analyses the character of the parties on the basis of the ideological perspectives. The Meitei State Committee was a legacy of the Communist movement launched by Hijam Irabot Singh; naturally the members of MSC were admirers of Irabot Singh but their ideology was a mixture of nationalism and leftist slogans. The KCP is the inheritor of the tradition of MSC. The United National Liberation Front is based on the Manipuri nationalism and common cultural heritage of the Meiteis and hill tribes. The exploit of the RGM, which was an offshoot of the UNLF, shows its similarity of the ideology plank of the original Front. They use the name "Manipur" which is not used by other parties, which used the term Kangleipak (PREPAK and KCP). PLA is purely based on Marxism. PREPAK is based on Meitei ethnic nationalism. The author gives fairly authentic presentation of the parties, their aims, objectives and their activities, failures or achievements. The UNLF appears to be the mother of the revolutionary groups. RGM broke away from the UNLF, so also the PLA. Both PREPAK and KCP are independent of UNLF.

The analysis of the role of leaders and the pattern of leadership is a major contribution of the book. The author examines the role of Arambam Somorendro, the leader of the UNLF, O. Sudhirkumar of the RGM, N. Bisheshwor of the PLA, R.K. Tullachandra of PREPAK and W. Tomba of the Meitei State Committee. The author writes of Arambam Somorendro as a man of complex personality, a thinker, writer, a sports lover, a great playwright and a good social worker, a champion of Manipuri nationalism and a great revolutionary "ideologue". He comments on O. Sudhirkumar in the following words:



“Sudhir possessed a rare quality of leadership, a wonderful commanding personality, a man of wide reading and a revolutionary nationalist”. N. Bisheshwor was the founder of the Lasha-trained PLA, “a revolutionary activist and leader”. According to the author N. Bisheshwor Singh fits into cloak of “a charismatic leader”. While PREPAK was based on collective leadership, but during his lifetime, “R.K. Tullachandra Singh stood out as the main architect of the PREPAK”. Ibohal Singh of the KCP was a product of the Meitei State Committee who possessed a unique leadership”.

The revolutionary movements are still on-going current movements. They have produced tremendous impact on the polity, society, governance in the state and the psychology of the people. The Government of India was compelled by the movements to change their attitude towards the people of Manipur and the state of Manipur.

Professor Joykumar Singh has consulted the original sources of informations, in the possession of the government and the revolutionary parties. The rich information is supplemented by the extensive personal interviews with the leaders themselves. It is a fairly impartial and objective study of a very critical and sensitive theme.

I am sure this book will definitely have a wide readership in the general public, policy framers, academicians and students who are interested in the study of insurgency movements everywhere.

**Prof. GANGMUMEI KAMEI**



## Preface

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The *Revolutionary Movements in Manipur* is a story of political activities of some armed revolutionary organisations launched from the pre-merger period with an objective of establishing a separate political identity of Manipur state. In one sense it is not a new phenomenon in the experience of the people of Manipur. The people of Manipur had a very good experience of the activities of various types of movements right from the British colonial rule. The outbreaks of tribal movements, peasant movements, women's movements, students' movements, religious revitalization movements, etc. were the important features in the ongoing process of the history of the state. From these evidences it can be suggested that Manipur is a hot pot of various type of social movements. The author has already done some work on the nature and character of social movements in Manipur and their impacts.

As a matter of fact everybody knows those activities of the revolutionary movements in this state even to the people of outside Manipur. I am also afraid that my work will be a repetition of the existing knowledge of the people. Actually the main objective of this work is to make a humble attempt to study the nature and character of some specific revolutionary organisations, which I always consider as pioneers in such movements. My work is also confined only to a specific period of time, which I consider as significant in the history of the revolutionary movements in Manipur. As a whole, I am trying to give maximum emphasis on the theoretical concept of revolutionary movement and an attempt is also made to analyze every aspect of the movement within the conceptual and typological framework of the theory of revolution. While analyzing the different aspect of the movement I am also trying to give a historical picture of the genesis and growth of separatist tendencies among the people of the state particularly the younger generation group. I am also fully convinced that the outbreak of these revolutionary movements has produced a lot of positive impacts in every aspect of the state including the development side also. Therefore I have devoted a separate chapter on the impact of the movement where

I have tried to highlight the outcome of the activities of the movement and its response. While analyzing the different aspects of the process of the movement I always try to make a balance observation from historical perspective and also within the framework of the concept of social movement. Another objective of this small work is to highlight some historical facts of the whole activities of the movements including their ideology so that the younger generation would be able to analyze them more critically and in a more detailed way in future. If it is so, then we would be able to give a concrete and comprehensive picture of the whole movement. I never consider this small work as a comprehensive study on the activities of the revolutionary movements in Manipur. It is just a small step towards a gigantic task of academic world.

In the process of the preparation of this small work I took help from many personalities and social activists. But due to certain limitations it is not possible to mention all their names here one by one. However, I am fully aware of the fact that without their help it will not be possible for me to make a successful completion of this monograph. Therefore I would like to express my sincere gratitude to those personalities for their kind cooperation and help.

I am also greatly indebted to Prof. Roy Burman for taking a great pain in reading the manuscript in the midst of his hectic schedule in Manipur. His suggestions and observations gave a new spirit in the process of writing.

I also thank Prof. Gangmumei Kamei, a renowned historian of the region for giving a valuable guidance in every stage of my work. Actually, his is the moving force behind this work. His inspiration has given a new spirit to my moral strength. At the same time I am also really grateful to him for writing the 'foreword' of this book.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to some of my near and dear friends and well-wishers for their encouragement and moral help. Prof. P. Nabachandra Singh, my childhood friend and professional colleague, Prof. Lal Dena, Prof. G.P. Singh, and others are some of the important established personalities who have given moral encouragement to me.

In the process of the completion of the work I also took help from many of my young friends. Shri Konjengbam Meghachandra Singh, Shri Sanasam Amal Singh, Dr. N. Debendra Singh, Shri Aheibam Koireng



Singh, Shri Bhabananda Singh, Ch. Hemchandra (Khaba), Shri H. Sudhir Singh, Salam Jiten Luwang are the key persons who have rendered a lot of physical and logistic help to me. I am really grateful to them for their valuable help.

I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to Miss Shimray, the stenographer of History Department, Mr. S. Shantibala Devi, technical assistant of the Centre for Manipur Studies, for taking a great pain in typing. Without their help I would not be able to complete my work. I also thank my office peon I. Bijen Singh for his valuable physical help to me. I am also grateful to H. Shamo Singh and Dr. R.K. Somorjit Singh for taking special care of giving a new shape in cover designing process.

However, the final shape of the work is possible when it has come out in the printed form without which the completion of this research work cannot be treated as final. Therefore, the acceptance of M/s Akansha Publishing House, New Delhi, to take the responsibility of publishing and distribution of the book is a great contribution to the success of my work. So, I would like to thank the proprietor and manager Mr. M.P. Misra of this publishing house for their generous and timely help.

Lastly, I also thank all my personal friends of various circles of social life and my wife and my children for their moral and physical contribution in the process of the completion of my work.

**N. JOYKUMAR SINGH**

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## CHAPTER ONE

# INTRODUCTION

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### (A) WHAT IS REVOLUTION?

The word 'revolution' is used with different connotations according to the nature of its application. The term is derived from the Latin words 're' and 'volvere', which mean 'to turn'. So, when it refers to an action on other parts of celestial bodies and their movements from one place to another it denotes the returning or moving of an object to its place of origin.<sup>1</sup> But when it applies to the society and history it again carries a different connotation i.e., the degeneration of an established order and the emergence of a new one. In social science, the theory of revolution means social progress which replaces the old regime morally, institutionally and technologically to a more productive for the advancement to a superior stage in social evolution.<sup>2</sup> From the standpoint of the concept of the modern political movement a 'revolution' means the liberation of a nation from the domination of others. And it is an attempt to wrest the political power and social ascendancy from the ruling stratum. It is therefore suggested that revolution means a radical change by using violent method. Everett D. Martin interprets the concept of revolution as a political change involving the abolition of the traditional state authority or the encroachment on its prerogative.<sup>3</sup> Charles A. Ellwood also suggested that the term 'revolution' should be used in a strictly political sense. He observes that revolution is a change in the power structure.<sup>4</sup> However, some writers are of the opinion that revolutionary changes are nothing but an integral part of long revolution. According to them the concept of revolution may be treated as one particular ingredient of social development. Hannah Arendt writes, "revolution is a form of change within the social system, not mere change, but

change nonetheless".<sup>6</sup> On the basis of this conceptual framework revolution is a form of social change undertaken in response to specific conditions of the social system.

Apart from its relation with social system the term 'revolution' has acquired a variety of meanings: Scientific, technological, communal, financial, agrarian, educational and even sexual revolutions as well as revolution in fashion, which are distinguished as independent phenomena on the ground of their influences on society. From this point of view some western writers think that the term 'revolution' is one of the misused words and there are varieties of meaning, which make it as adaptable to personal purposes as in chameleon's skin.<sup>7</sup> According to Mark N. Hegopian, the word 'revolution' is a popular, even glamorous word nowadays. Thus many people overworked it until it loses all definite meaning.<sup>8</sup> A.S. Cohan, a British researcher, observed that the term 'revolution' has got a considerable variation in its definition. "That it may be concluded that the authors are not talking about the same phenomenon."<sup>9</sup> Thus the term 'revolution' and its conceptual definition embraces all the different issues in the society. The concept of technological and scientific revolution and cultural revolution, etc. are also other aspects which can be looked into and discussed from the conceptual definition of the term revolution. In this respect Mark N. Hegopian wrote, "revolution sometimes comes to embrace such phenomena on the 'Reformation' and the 'Industrial Revolution', which in fact lies outside the ground covered by the term. Even such developments in America's political life on President Roosevelt's New Deal have been given the status of revolution, e.g. the revolution of the New Deal, the Keynesian revolution etc."<sup>10</sup>

Such type of observations and interpretations of the western writers was regarded by the Marxian writers as 'discordance and confusion.' They said that it was a manifestation of inconsistency and absence of methodological clarity.<sup>11</sup> They called them (western writers) bourgeois researchers and their approach and mode of view point was termed as 'formalist stand'. The Marxian writers are of the view that the bourgeois researchers turned a blind eye to the distinction between phenomena which have vital, fundamental impact on the destinies of mankind, and those processes underway in various restricted areas of man's activity. Therefore, on the basis of this point of ignorance they



are equating the basic concept of revolution with so many phenomena. They further argued that their understanding of substantial changes in either individual or even several aspects of the life of the society are far from equivalent to revolution as understood by Marx Engels and Lenin. According to Karl Marx revolutions are the 'locomotives of history,' for they blaze the road for human society, leading it from one stage of historical development i.e. the transition to the new; new socio-political and economic relations and institutions, new ideas, new ethics etc.<sup>12</sup> Marx thinks that a revolution is carried out by the people but the material pre-requisites for a new social system and the objective conditions for a revolution through which these prerequisites are into being in new institutions and relations are created by the objective course of social development, primarily by the development of the productive forces; at a certain stage the latter come into conflict with the existing production relations. Marx was of the view that the revolutions, which the bourgeois researchers used to call coup d'état, do not affect the economic, political and ethical foundations of the existing social system. Revolution have some common features, but they also differ from one another in "social nature, motive forces, aims and tasks and finally, in the pattern of their emergence and development."<sup>13</sup>

Lenin said, "Revolution is a change which breaks the old order to its new foundation."<sup>14</sup> It means that it is a drastic change of an existing social system. He was of the view that to achieve the goal the revolution must tackle a wide range of concrete task, such as destruction of the old and creation of a new, consolidation of new social relations. He further said that a successful construction of socialist state could be possible only when the involvement of the working people was there. This was a difficult task. But this task cannot be fulfilled by the same force and same ways and means that were employed to solve the problems of the bourgeois revolution. To Lenin the socialist revolution differs from the bourgeois revolution not only in its aims and task and in the mechanisms involved in its emergence and evolution, but also in its motive forces, strategies or tactics. To culminate in the construction of a new society the socialist revolution embraces a prolonged, complicated and contradictory historical period. Such type of revolution, according to Lenin, would be a whole epoch of sharp class strength and many social upheavals. It is a well-known



fact that destruction and transformation of the old society are the corollaries of the revolution. The socialist revolution destroys the old society much more radically than the bourgeois revolution. Therefore during the period of revolution all the social groups faced many problems and difficulties. Lenin wrote, "Everybody knows that revolutionary movements are always and inevitably accompanied by temporary chaos, destruction and disorder... Of course, the socialist revolution cannot be immediately presented to the people to a clean, neat and impeccable form".<sup>15</sup>

In the midst of this debate between Marxian and non-Marxian writers on the issue of the interpretation of the term 'revolution', some writers also advanced different views on the term revolution. By giving justification to the earlier observation, Hannah Arendt said that a revolution always viewed at an overthrow of the social order and replacement it by a new order. On the basis of this belief the writer took revolution as a true restoration. Some suggested that the word 'revolution' should be applied only to revolution whose aim is freedom. Mousier, a French scholar is of the view that revolution aims at erasing the real illness of the society and is always violent, because the existing authorities shall naturally resist these changes. According to Lock, if the sovereign failed to carry out the terms of the social contract and protected the natural rights of the individual, the latter was free to revolt against his authority. Therefore he strongly asserted that revolution is an instrument to protect the right of the people. Herold Laski, a modern political thinker is of the view that revolution is an attempt by the use of force against the government legally in power to compel a change in what are held to be those using such force, the actual purpose of the state. According to M.N. Roy, revolution was subversive of the status quo and reorganization of society on the basis of freedom and equality. On this point of argument he again said that revolution is an international social necessity.

Although many writers and political thinkers advanced different observations and interpretations on the term 'revolution' it can be suggested that revolution always aims at a fundamental change in the existing established order. It also aims to bring a much higher progressive plan by substituting the old system, and so it helps in eliminating the deep rooted evils in the social system and transform it

into a new society. George Sawyer Peter defines revolution as 'reconstitution of the state.'<sup>16</sup> He further said that this type of revolution fraught with profound consequences for a given society or number of societies. The outcome of the revolution is such that the new condition of the state has nothing in common with its original structure. From this fact it can be observed that revolution is an illegal and, as a rule, violent-change of the existing form of government. In the process of the revolutionary activities the masses or ordinary citizens are affected. So revolution is the repeated sweeping change in many orders of the nature of the society by seeking a major alteration in the prevailing distribution of wealth and status of power. It is a complete overthrow of the established order and forcible substitution by a new order. Therefore on the basis of this understanding Wolfenstian defined the term 'revolution' as a form of politics characterized by the extensive use of violent or other illegal means in competition for control of government power and authority."<sup>17</sup>

The characters of the revolutionary movements are not at all identical. But despite the difference of patterns of revolution, there are still certain common features of the causes of the outbreak of the revolution. One important feature, which is acceptable to all, is that revolution occurred mainly due to the inefficiency of governing class and economic crisis. However, Walter Laquer is of the view that even when there is a revolutionary situation the result may not come out in the form of revolution. Sometimes it may lead to anarchy or to a non-revolutionary dictatorship if the revolutionary players are not capable of swift and decisive action.<sup>18</sup> According to Marxism, revolution arises in conformity with the objective laws governing the social development. They believe that economic causes e.g. a low standard of living is the genesis of the revolution. Further, they are of the view that social political and economic issues are the primary factors of the revolution. Lenin also gave an elaborate definition of the features of revolutionary situations. He cited the suffering and poverty of the oppressed class, a crisis in the policy of the ruling class, a considerable increase in the objectivity of the masses drawn into independent historical action.<sup>19</sup> He further said that this general law is subject to change depending on the concrete situation.

Marxian writers said that for a successful revolution there must be two revolutionary situations – highly developed productive forces



and a proletariat adequately prepared for it. But this theory also was not at all correct. In this regard some writers pointed out that France in the 18<sup>th</sup> century was poor in her developmental aspect and lacked serious political organization of the proletariats, and there was no corresponding preparation, no prolonged training of the working class. It is explained that "The revolutionary situation is the process, always objective usually lengthy, and frequently contradictory, of the growth and maturing of its features."<sup>20</sup> Lenin also shared this view. He said, "revolutions are never born ready made; they do not spring out of Jupiter's head; they do not kindle at once."<sup>21</sup> From this observation it can be deduced that the stage of the slow accumulation of strength by the oppressed classes against the stable rule of the oppressors is the basic starting point of the gradual maturing conditions for a revolutionary situation. Lenin also admitted that objective changes are not the only factor for a revolutionary situation. It is to be accompanied by subjective changes. This is the highest stage of the maturing of the revolutionary situation. He further said that subjective change is an inherent feature of this situation. It contains subjective factor. Therefore Lenin called this stage as 'directly revolutionary crisis' 'directly revolutionary struggle' 'a nation wide crisis' etc.<sup>22</sup> Whatever the case may be the Marxian writers strongly asserted that the conflict between the productive forces and production relation is the only factor for the outbreak of revolution. The development of productive forces exerts a revolutionizing influence on all aspects of the life of the society. The conflict and clashes between the new productive forces and old production relations was acting as medium for progressive or old ideas. One group is fighting to preserve the social and political system formed on the basis of old ideas and the other groups is campaigning to abolish it and establish a more progressive social and political system on the new concept that Marxists termed as new relation of production.

By adopting the pluralistic approach of analysis the non-Marxian writers advocated that 'not a single universal method nor a single theory of revolution can be worked out'. They called the Marxist Leninist doctrine of revolution as purely 'obsolete' in the present era. They do not accept the application of the same yardstick to revolutions of entirely different types. Mark Hegopian wrote, "Modern social science teaches that highly complex events such as revolution are

caused by many factors and not by a single factor."<sup>23</sup> He was of the view that the theory of revolution of the Marxist is of the monocausal theories, which explain the origin of revolution by the impact of economics and the existence of conspiratorial elites. He further argues that their approach is to give a rough idea of the multiple factors whose interaction produces the revolutionary situation. Such situation is termed by Hegopian as 'antecedent condition'.<sup>24</sup> W.F. Werthein raised some questions against the theory of revolution of Marx and Lenin. He wrote, "Is there any uniformity to be discovered in the manifold situations throughout the world history which we can assess, by hindsight, as pre-revolutionary".<sup>25</sup> In addition to this he raised many issues: whether revolutions occur in situation of extreme misery or under conditions of economic growth, whether revolutions appear under political conditions of extreme harshness or under regimes where political control has been somewhat relaxed and consequently, the dissatisfied groups enjoy some latitude for non occurring.<sup>25</sup> With this observation he was of the view that there would be a separate influence and impact according to the different historical period in which a revolution occurs.

An American researcher James G. Davies, wrote, "revolution usually occurs not when the hardship and privation are at their worst but when periods of improvement and progress, which have bred optimism and hope, give way to sudden and rapid decline. This is when discontent flows over a consequence of profound disappointment and collapse of hope."<sup>27</sup> He is of the opinion that revolution is engendered neither by poverty nor by satiety but by real situation in which social progress is not as rapid as has been expected. William J. Pomeroy thinks that "revolutions are not created by the reading of manifestoes in a village street, but are produced by deep seated basic social condition".<sup>28</sup> He further said that people are ready for struggle when their conditions of life are comparatively worsen, when they have a clear aim and when they are organized into a force. Thus various writers and social scientists of both Marxist and non-Marxist schools of thought advanced different theories about the causes of the outbreak of revolution. Whatever the case may be it is also an undeniable fact that the maximum degree of anger of the people, the dissatisfaction and unhappiness of the masses broke out only when their normal economic life is seriously disturbed either by the exploiter group of



the existing society or imperialist force. Walter Laquir has rightly observed that the incident that sparks a revolution may be trivial but temporary economic crisis have played a certain part in the outbreak of revolution. But Wolfenstien gave a total different picture about the causes of the outbreak of the revolution. Apart from the social, economic and other aspects he also tried to point out the intention and desire of the revolutionary actors of the society. He was of the view that in the modern revolutionary movement the role of the leadership is the predominant factor for the outbreak of the revolution. After making an extensive observation and analysis of revolution and reason for the outbreak of revolution he came to the conclusion that revolution is a politics of repeat and violent social change "either because the society is already in the throes of upheavals or because the revolutionary actors desire political power in order to make a sweeping change in every nature of the society."<sup>29</sup>

### **Classification of Revolutionary Movements**

The character and nature of the revolutionary movements are not at all identical or almost all the same. Some important contributors to this concept of the typology of the revolutionary movements are Feliks Gross, George Peter, E. Victor Wolfenstien, Paul Wilkinson, etc. According to Feliks Gross there are four types of revolutions i.e., 1. Revolution from the bottom, 2. Revolution from the top, 3. Combined seizure of power, and 4. Palace revolution.

Revolution from the bottom as characterized by Feliks Gross, is a large spontaneous mass movement, which erupts a sudden explosion and affects the whole life of the society and forcing the new leadership to agree to the introduction of far reaching political and social reform.

Revolution from the top means the seizure of power by an armed group of men who seize the power at pinnacle. Such type of revolution according to Feliks, is organized and planned as opposed to spontaneous mass movement. Their only aim is to capture the government and they have no wish to introduce social change.

Combined seizure of power is a form of revolution in which the revolutionary actors from the top combined with a limited revolution from the bottom. Feliks Gross said in such cases, the capture of the

political and governmental apparatus is accompanied by a movement of the broad masses.

Palace revolution as characterized by Feliks means a shift in the distribution of power within the ruling super elite. Sometimes it is also associated with violence. In such revolution a dissident group within the elite not by an outside group carries out the seizure of power. He further said that such type of revolutionaries does not champion political or social change.<sup>30</sup>

George Peter in his 'The Process of Revolution' further developed the idea of classification of Feliks. He did not make any drastic departure from the typology of Feliks. He categorized the revolutionary movement into five different types i.e., 1. A great national revolution, 2. Coup d'etate, 3. Palace revolution, 4. Insurrection, and 5. Revolution of system. The first three categories are almost all the same with the classification of Feliks. His concept of a great national revolution may be equated with Feliks' idea of revolution from the bottom, the coup d'etate with Feliks' idea of revolution from the top and the palace revolution. But the last two categories are new ideas of the typology of the revolutionary movement. George Peter defined 'insurrection' as revolt against unjust administration, law or government; 'revolution of system' means to describe the most extensive social change including that of entire social system. He also described it as great historical changes which include transition from city-state to empire; from empire to feudal system and from feudal system to nation state.

The nature of the classification of revolutionary movements of Feliks and Peter was observed by the Marxian writers as a serious ignorance of the social and economic aspects of the revolutionary process. They are of the view that the type of the characterization of the nature of the revolution by the western writers contains no analysis of the social and economic genesis of the revolution nor its class character. According to them the analysis of the western writers is restricted to the study of the power struggle between elites. So their nature of classification is superficial and one sided.<sup>32</sup> In regard to the criteria of classification of revolution R. Tanter and M. Middlarsky introduced four aspects: 1. The degree of mass participation, 2. The length of the revolutionary process, 3. The level of violence, and 4. Goals of the insurgents. The idea given by the two writers is not



original. They are of the view that this concept has a great deal in common with that evolved by Feliks Gross and George Peter. Therefore the classification of Tanter and Middlarsky is regarded as the typical example of subjectivist and most unexpected combination of heterogeneous elements.<sup>33</sup> At the same time their theory of the classification of the types of revolution based on the basis of these four points mentioned above by bringing together all the unconnected criteria as the degree of popular participation in a revolution and its duration was also regarded as an illegitimate attempt.

Another western writer Mostafa Rejai made another attempt to define the political revolution by adding an additional criterion. His theory was based on the principle of the criterion of target. He wrote, "The typology offered below is based upon a single criterion: the target or targets of political revolution. The target, or 'enemy' against which a political revolution is directed is the most distinctive characteristic."<sup>34</sup> By employing the criterion of target M. Rejai tried to identify three types of political revolution i.e. civil revolution, national revolution and abortive revolution. Violent overthrow of a domestic enemy by the masses, the replacement of one political regime by another and to introduce overall social change belong to the category of civil revolution. He also said that the term 'civil' simply suggests that the target of political revolution is an internal one and so a civil revolution is not the same as a civil war. The 'national revolution' means the mass violent overthrow of a foreign (external) power, a change in the political system, the termination of foreign rule, and the institutionalization of social change. From his conceptual idea it can be presumed that the national revolution might be spearheaded against the puppet regimes. Rejai had categorically stated that the definition of a national revolution is similar to that of a revolutionary war. He wrote, "It is in fact both a war and a revolution unfolding at the same time a war because of the formal armed clash involving a foreign government, a revolution because of the mass violence aimed at the internal political and social change."<sup>35</sup> The concept of the 'abortive revolution' as defined by Rejai "refers to the failure of the violent mass movement to reach its target, whether internal or external. Reason may include inept leadership, inadequate organization, failure of communication or planning, suppression at the hands of the authorities. An abortive revolution may be either civil or national."<sup>36</sup>

Like other social scientist Paul Wilkinson also defined the types of revolution into six categories i.e., 1. Revolutionary conspiracies of secret societies, 2. Leninist strategy of revolution, 3. Mass revolutionism, 4. Fascist movement, 5. Totalitarian movement, and 6. Guerrilla based revolution.

The revolutionary conspiracies of secret societies, as defined by Wilkinson, is a type of revolutionary movement launched by a notable and handful group of powerful military officers or ministers in order to seize the control over the organ of government at the top. Such type of revolution does not encourage and welcome the involvement of the masses. Indeed, it is almost the polar opposite to the mass uprising. Wilkinson says this type of revolution is still very much effective in those countries where there is an ineffective regime. In this respect he cited the example of some countries in South America, Central Africa and Middle East. In regard to the characteristic feature of those conspiratorial societies, he wrote, "First, their stress on the exclusiveness of their societies, and members had a duty to infiltrate and influence other organizations, acting as agents of their own brotherhood. Third, it was the aim of these movements to establish small dedicated cadres which would be in a position to take advantage of revolutionary turbulence by stimulating armed rising, and possibly by seizing political control for the brotherhood".<sup>37</sup> He further said that these conspiratorial societies tried to intimate each other, and they often underwent considerable rationalization and modernization before developing into mass revolutionary parties or movements.

The Leninist strategy of revolution, according to Wilkinson was based on three basic and major elements. First, his implacable hostilities towards the whole politico-economic structure of the autocratic government particularly of Russia, and towards the global capitalist system. Second, his maximum degree of awareness of the popular grievances of the masses of peasants and demoralized condition of the industrial worker particularly of the pre-revolutionary period of Russia. Third, his awareness that the democratic mass parties and trade unions of the social democrat model were unwieldy and ideologically and organizationally amorphous to provide a determined, ruthless revolutionary instrument for seizing political power.<sup>39</sup> On the basic understanding of these three points, Lenin strongly asserted to



have a party which could take the role of vanguard for a successful socialist revolution. The party, according to Lenin, should be formed by the elements that can maintain strict discipline, absolute loyalty and absolute obedience to the order of the leadership and unfearing dedication to the aim of capturing power. Lenin never tried to compromise his revolutionary principles. He clearly spelt out his uncompromising model of the revolutionary movement in the monograph 'what is to be done'? Here he categorically stated that no revolutionary movement could endure without a stable organization of leaders that maintains continuity. So, he strongly emphasized the need for a solid organization to be constituted mainly by the people professionally engaged in revolutionary activity. Paul Wilkinson pointed out that "Lenin's conception of the exclusive, disciplined, professional revolutionary organization under strict centralized control stems directly, therefore, from the tradition of the conspiratorial secret society. He saw such an organization as something essentially distinct from, and superior to, the mass revolutionary movement."<sup>40</sup> The idea of a centralized party for a successful mass revolution and movement was a unique characteristic feature of the 'Leninist strategy of revolution.' According to Lenin the party organization should be a vital activator, co-coordinator and manipulator of anti-political grievances. He also strongly believed that the party, with its self-professed monopoly of truth about the past, present and future of the revolution, would be able to induce from the above prerequisite mass revolutionary consciousness. The authoritative and comprehensive party ideology is the immediate necessity of the organization. Therefore the organizational activities of the party and mass movement were the secret of the vital success of the Leninist strategy of revolution.

A wide range of racial, students and non-Marxist movements was defined by Paul Wilkinson as an important feature of 'mass revolutionism.' His framework of categorization was based on the principle of the formulation of Stokely Carmichael and Charles Hamilton's ideology of 'liberation for the Black people' against the existing 'system' which they disgusted as racist society and they strongly called for the destruction of the 'system'. In order to achieve their wishes they make an attempt to create a 'new consciousness' among the 'Black people' and coined a new language of struggle and usage of 'liberation'. Carmichael and Charles Hamilton said that they

pursued their fellow Negroes to wake up because a revolutionary situation had developed for them to end their social problem. They further mentioned that this is a desperate attempt for Negroes in America and to get their wishes they even prepared to risk violence and to make thinly veiled threat of violence and revenge. They wrote, "Sin the end, we cannot and shall not offer any guarantee that Black power, if achieved, would be non-racist... The final truth is that the white society is not entitled to reassurances even if it were possible to offer them."<sup>41</sup> It is also mentioned that the style of the principle of mass revolutionism has got every possibilities to change its colour if there is no counterbalancing leadership. Paul Wilkinson wrote, "Mass revolutionism that fail to develop any counterbalancing able leadership or organizational centre frequently run out of control. They may lapse into myriad sectarian conflicts and rivalries. Alternatively, unless suppressed, they can develop a momentum of purge, counter purge and general turbulences and dislocation. Sufficient totally to disrupt normal conditions of life, production and administration."<sup>42</sup> To support his observation on the characteristic feature of mass revolutionism he also cited the example of the excess of the Red Guards, Whom Marx himself had stimulated into action in the Chinese Great Protectoral Revolution, 1956-69 that the Peoples Liberation Army had to be called in to provide some guarantee to protection of the dislocated party bureaucracy and to facilitate as return to minimal economic and political stability. So, he further said that "Overestimated mass revolutionism can reach level of a collective psychic disorder with extremely damaging social consequences."

The Fascism, which is regarded by the Marxists as a political principle of 'blood thirsty, terrorist dictatorship of the most reactionary, chauvinistic and aggressive factor of the exploiting classes, engendered by the general crisis of competition'<sup>43</sup> is treated by Paul Wilkinson as one of the important type of revolutionary movements. Fascism appeared in the early 1920s as a reaction to the world economic and political crisis. Soon after it turned into a vehement and dangerous enemy of all progressive mankind, above all, of the international workers' movement. On the other hand, Fascist movement started by Mussolini in Italy during the 1920s had acquired some ideas and slogans, which were very much popular among the people who were affected by the post war disillusion and the poverty of the depression.



The main objective of the Italian Fascist movement was to shake off the constraints of bourgeois liberal democratic value and practices, to give more emphasis on the industrial growth and modernization, to exalt the role of the youth. On the other hand, Mussolini who started his political career as a socialist party organizer and propagandist had successfully led the movement by using the technique of the mass movement. In order to consolidate his personal charisma and political power as dictator he utilized all the paraphernalia of youth movement, used the symbolism and ritual of military organization and manipulative activities was also adopted in the role of the Italian Fascism and the character of German Fascism, Marxist of Nazism. Italian Fascism lacked the racialist ideology, which Hitler successfully used in his revolutionary movement. On the basis of this ideology Hitler successfully prepared mass revolutionist strategies, mass propaganda and party organization. Another great achievement of Hitler was his successful appeal to the German youths to extend their help to revenge against the humiliation imposed by the Versailles powers. Paul Wilkinson said that Fascism was to some extent a revolution that "it was ultra-patriotic, ultra-nationalist and pro-militarist in policy and style."<sup>44</sup>

Totalitarian movement is also classified as another type of revolutionary movement. The term 'totalitarian' is defined by Marxist writers as 'a social political system characterized by the all embracing despotic interventions of the authoritarian bureaucratic state in the life of society and individual.'<sup>45</sup> The main feature of the principle of 'totalitarianism' is to make a calculated destruction of all rival parties, loyalties and potential bases of opposition to accomplish revolutionary seizure of power. Another effective aspect of the 'totalitarian movement' was that for the purpose of acquiring popular legitimization and support the leader of the movement always gave motivation to all the people of different class of the society at a high level with a view to keep their allegiance and commitment to the regime. It is also mentioned that the totalitarian state was to maintain the strict control and surveillance over the movement, their youths, workers, peasants and even the cultural life. To achieve more effective support and to maintain loyalty to the regime the leaders put special attention to propaganda dissemination and made heavy investment in mass indoctrination specially the youths. The totalitarian regimes give too



much emphasis on this policy because the leaders fully know that this is the best form of psychological and ideological defence against the anti-totalitarian regime and external forces. Wilkinson observed that this policy is vital to prepare successive generations for the possibility of military service for the regime. The Marxian writers said that the true character of totalitarian feature is observed in the absolute monarchies, for example Bonapartist regime of 19<sup>th</sup> century and similar regimes in Germany, Italy, Chile, etc. in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The totalitarian regimes of these areas make an attempt to slander the social system in the socialist countries by ignoring the true democratic issue of the reform taking place in these countries. Paul Wilkinson wrote, "the mass movement basis to totalitarian is, therefore, the essential means by which the totalitarian nation is welded together, and to the regime, it is the creator of the will which enable the regimes to survive."<sup>46</sup> Indeed, the totalitarian movements got its strength and inspiration from its method of sustaining ideological commitment, in communicating the charisma and charismatic symbol of revolution participation in the party and its satellite organization among the youths.

Guerrilla-based revolution is also classified by Wilkinson as one of the important types of revolutionary movements. From the context of the present revolutionary concept, it can be suggested that this type of revolution, because of its highly scientific techniques which can establish a firm foundation of support among the rural and urban population, has become the most successful operation in modern revolutionary movement. It is also an accepted view among the social scientists that the use of armed revolutionary struggle for independence from any type of administration or social structure is an important part of historical development. And people usually used armed method of revolution only when their non-violent attempt was exhausted and after being provoked into it. Wilkinson has rightly pointed out that the ability to establish a firm foundation of popular support among the poor is the strength of modern revolutionary movement and this base is vital to the successful operation of guerrilla revolution<sup>47</sup>. W.J. Pomeroy also expressed his observation on the same line. He said that "the occurrence of armed revolutionary struggle throughout this present period in many sectors of the world, in its guerrilla form or in other forms, can be traced in every case to a denial by imperialist or by pro

imperialist government, of peaceful means for the masses of people to gain national aims, including direct armed intervention to reverse a popular trend towards independence".<sup>48</sup> This type of revolutionary movement uses violence against violence. This is the only alternative means for those people who faced the military suppression and counter revolutionary warfare. From the evidences of the modern revolutionary movement it can be said that the guerrilla based revolutionary movement is the most effective means for an initially unarmed people to struggle against suppression. So it has greatly expanded its popular application to the present period. Here W.J. Pomeroy pointed out the differences between the guerrilla warfare which occurred in other historical periods and guerrilla warfare as a form of revolutionary struggle. The guerrilla warfare as the form of revolutionary struggle has possessed certain characteristic features of qualification such as, broad mass base, highly organized structure with democratic character and enjoy the support of anti-imperialist population. But the form of guerrilla activity without a revolutionary aim and revolutionary participation of masses has led to the degeneration in brigandage. According to Lenin the people who take up arms in the initial stages of popular guerrilla struggle are not 'a minority of agitators.' Rather they are the more advanced, more militant and more decisive elements of a revolutionized people. With regard to the importance of the guerrilla based revolutionary movement in the present context of the freedom struggle, Wilkinson has rightly observed that this base is vital to the successful operation of revolutionary movement. He wrote, "... it ensures, because of its entirely autonomous character, the vital supply of manpower, aid and succour, and invaluable secure retreats and weapons dumps."<sup>49</sup> Mao-Tse-Tung also gave an elaborate explanation about the nature and strategy of the guerrilla based revolution. At the end he emphasized the massive support of the masses for the successful operation of guerrilla based revolutionary movement. He said that the most important victory is to use the people so that guerrilla force should establish an invincible base of mass support. Thus most of the observations about the characteristic feature of guerrilla based revolutionary movement were based on the support of the masses. Nobody mentioned about the ideological principle of the guerrilla warfare. Even Che Guevara who was a staunch ideologue of the principle of Marxism said that the successful combat of guerrilla based



revolutionary movement depends entirely on "constant mobility, constant distrust and constant vigilance". In this respect it is suggested that for an effective guerrilla based revolutionary movement a clear cut ideology and an elaborate set of revolutionary principles or doctrines is not a pre-requisite one.<sup>50</sup>

The doctrines and policies of guerrilla based revolutionary movement, both before and after seizure of power, are more genuinely moulded by the whims and declarations of their charismatic leaders.<sup>51</sup> All the writers' directly or indirectly mentioned about the basic character of the guerrilla based revolutionary movement on the basis of the importance of mass support and integrity of the leadership. Col. CM. Woodhouse, a British theoretician of guerrilla warfare said, "There has never been a successful guerrilla war conducted in an area where the populace is hostile to the guerrillas, and conversely it is impossible to stamp out a guerrilla war in an area where populace continues to support the guerrillas". Indeed, the relation of guerrillas to population is the key to an understanding of struggle for national liberation. Therefore guerrilla warfare, as observed by Pomeroy "is a type of warfare demanding determined, disciplined and uncompromising leadership, within the context of popular democracy".<sup>52</sup>

Thus different writers of both Marxian and non-Marxian thought of schools advanced different theories on revolution on the basis of their observations. But one thing is clear from these theories that revolution is a form of politics to bring a radical change in the existing order by using violent method. And in regard to the causes of that outbreak of the revolutionary movement, Wolfenstein said that "the revolution broke out either because the society is already in the throes of upheavals or because the revolutionary actors desire political power in order to make a sweeping change in the very nature of the society."<sup>53</sup>

## **REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENTS IN THE PRE-MERGER MANIPUR**

Right from the early historical periods the people of Manipur had an opportunity to enjoy a very good experience of the activities of the revolutionary movements, which broke out in the different phases of the history of this place. However, most of the revolutionary



movements of the early period were dominated by palace revolt, which is a type of revolution as classified by Gross Feliks. So there was no concrete evidence about the nature of the revolution, which was based on the social and economic issues of the country. The whole character of almost all the movements was focused on the shifting of power from one ruling elite group to another group of the same class. Therefore, the involvement and participation of the masses was not figured in the chronicles and other literary sources of the history of this place. As a result of this the outcome of the movement and its impact was concentrated and confined only to limited areas with a limited scope. However, in the last part of the 19<sup>th</sup> and the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the people again witnessed the activities of the two important revolutionary movements which rendered a significant impact in the future history of Manipur. The first one was the 'revolutionary movement of 1890' and another was the armed 'revolutionary movement of 1948-51'.

### **REVOLT OF 1890**

The Revolt of 1890 which broke out just after the establishments of relationship between Manipur and British was a great landmark in the history of this state. Though, it was confined with a limited scope and objective, the result of this movement had produced a significant impact in the future history of this state. No doubt like other revolutionary movements the basic character of the movement was to make an attempt to control the political and administrative power of the state by a group of ruling elite group. In the history of this state it is popularly known as the 'Revolt of 1890.' The historical background of the causes for the outbreak of this revolt was more or less directly related with the internal feuds between the two groups of princes. They were all the sons of late Maharaja Chandrakriti Singh. Surchandra Singh, the Maharaja of Manipur was the leader of one group. The other members of this group were Pakka Sana alias Bhairabjit, Keshwarjit, Gopal Sana alias Padmalochand and another group was led by Kullachandra Singh, Yuvaraj or crown prince of the state. Other members were Tikendrajit alias Koireng, Angousana Singh and Zillangamba Singh. The main actor of the revolution was Tikendrajit Singh. There might have been many factors for their internal conflict but the final outburst was made on the 21<sup>st</sup> September 1890. On this

very day the group led by Kullachandra attacked the royal palace and captured the administrative power by removing the group of Surchandra Singh. It is quite obvious that the objective of the revolt never asked for any type of changes in the political system and social order of the state. The only objective was to control the administrative power. The character of the movement was purely on the line of the palace revolt as categorized by Feliks in his classification of the revolutionary movement. The attempt to shift in the distribution of power within the ruling elite is the main characteristic feature of this type of revolutionary movement. The revolt of 1890 was a violent type of movement. One group acquired the political power not in the process of a peaceful way. This was also another feature of the palace revolt. Feliks has rightly said that the association of violent means for the capture of power was also another feature of this type of revolutionary movement.

The importance of this revolutionary movement lies not in the course of their action but on the impact of the post-revolutionary period. It is a fact that just after the removal from the chair of power Surchandra made a serious attempt to get back the political power again with the help of the British. Ultimately such type of approach gave the golden opportunity to the British to interfere in the domestic affairs of the independence Manipur State. Though many questions were raised on the legal and moral authority of the British in their successful attempt to interfere in the affairs of the state, their direct involvement finally led to the outbreak of Anglo-Manipur War of 1891. In that war Manipur was defeated and British occupied it on the 27<sup>th</sup> April 1891. This war produced two important results, establishment of the direct colonial administration in Manipur and the loss of the distinctive national identity of the people of Manipur.

With regard to the establishment of direct British rule over Manipur, right from the very beginning the British authority had a strong desire to extend their imperialist hand in Manipur as they took Manipur as a strategic place both from political and commercial point of view. This idea was clearly shown in the nature of the signing of the Treaty of 1762 between Manipur and British. But they were compelled by the existing political scenario of the surrounding areas of Southeast Asia not to exercise their natural policy very soon. Again



in the year 1826 the British got another opportunity to implement their policy. In 1826 Manipur was liberated from the hands of Burma with the full military support of the British. In the international treaty signed at Yandaboo between British and Burma, the independence of Manipur was recognized by both powers. This time also if the British had a strong desire, they could have done it very easily. But British fully realized the problems, which they were supposed to face if they establish their direct administration in Manipur. To keep Manipur as a buffer state between British and Burma was an immediate necessity of that time. Therefore Manipur was made buffer state for the benefit of the British. In the meantime the British were able to control the whole areas of Southeast Asian countries. Almost all the areas of India up to Assam to the east was under the direct administration of the British and just after the end of Third Anglo Burmese War in the year 1885 all the area of Burma was under the control of the British. Therefore after this political development the position of Manipur as a 'buffer state' was no longer required to the British. They were waiting for an opportunity to establish their direct administration. That opportunity was given by the revolt of 1890. The moment they got the opportunity the British immediately occupied Manipur in 1891.

The occupation of Manipur and establishment of direct British rule means the end of the political status of a sovereign independent state which the people enjoyed from the early historical period with a distinctive national identity. Then after the introduction of colonial administration of British the people began to survive as a second-class citizen in their own motherland. Thus for a long period of time i.e. from 1891 to 1947 the people of Manipur had witnessed a series of political developments which greatly injured their national identity. During this period the people got the experience of the outbreak of different types of anti-imperialist and anti-feudal movement which challenged the authoritarian character of these two institutions. The indirect objective of these movements was more or less concerned with preservation and maintenance of the distinctive identity of the Manipuri people. Gradually the idea of political consciousness was developed among the people in the first part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. And the people began to ask to remove the colonial and feudal administrative system and they made a proposal to replace it by a political system based on the principle of democracy. But two groups of people emerged. One group



was in favour of the establishment of separate political identity of Manipur and another group was not in favour of this proposal. The element of the latter group was highly influenced by the Indianite political character and so they openly expressed their desire to make Manipur a part of India. Majority of the elite people of the state of that period were in favour of integration of Manipur into India. So with a strong influence and initiative of these people Manipur finally became a part of India on the 15<sup>th</sup> October 1949 and distinctive political character of Manipur state was completely lost. And along with this a distinctive separate identity of the people of Manipur was also completely vanished. This is the ultimate result of the revolt of 1890.

### **ARMED REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENTS, 1948-51**

The outbreak of armed revolutionary movement in the year 1948 was another form of revolutionary movement in the history of the pre-merger period of Manipur. This movement was launched under the dynamic leadership of Hijam Irabot Singh with an objective for the establishment of a separate political identity of Manipur based on a classless society by removing feudal and imperialist force.

The revolutionary movement of Hijam Irabot Singh was an outcome of his long struggle based on non-violent agitation for the upliftment of the social, economic and political condition of the people. He started his revolutionary career as social and religious activities under the banner of the Nikhil Hindu Manipuri Mahasabha. During this period he threw many challenges in democratic way against the social and religious policies adopted by the feudal and colonial administrators. Apart from this he also tried to bring all the Manipuri people who were scattered in different areas outside Manipur under the banner of certain concrete understanding. His strong desire was clearly reflected in his speech at the Mandalay session of the Nikhil Hindu Manipuri Mahasabha. He was also fully aware that without a political struggle things would not come to a right direction. Therefore on the 4<sup>th</sup> session of the Mahasabha which was known popularly as 'Chinga Session' of 1938, the Mahasabha became a political party. The name also changed to 'Nikhil Manipuri Mahasabha'. This was a big jump on his non-violent type of revolutionary movement. Through the political platform of Nikhil Manipuri Mahasabha, Irabot Singh began to take up many political issues which greatly helped to the growth of

political consciousness among the common people of Manipur. The demand for the establishment of a responsible government and the amalgamation of the administration of hills and plains under a single administrative unit laid a very good foundation for the growth of an idea of political institution and unity among the different groups of people within the social and political framework of Manipuri nationalism. Thus under his leadership a long political and social democratic revolution was launched by the people particularly the people of rural areas of Manipur.

However, Irabot was not free from many obstacles. A big problem was the issue of the political elements in the state who were greatly influenced by the Indianite political colour and concept. Their main objective was to make Manipur become a part of India, so that there would be peace and development in the state. Taking the opportunity of this situation some outside forces made a strong proposal to form a separate state called 'Purbanchal State' which was to be constituted of Manipur, Lushai and Tripura. This idea was supported by some forceful political elements in Manipur. Irabot was not in favour of this proposal. His only desire was to maintain a distinctive identity of Manipur state and her people. To make a strong protest against this move he prepared for a big gathering of the masses on 21<sup>st</sup> September 1948 at the hall of Manipur Dramatic Union (MDU) of Imphal. But unfortunately some undesirable incidents occurred during the process of organization of the meeting at Pungdongbam village where one police officer was killed by the mob. The government alleged that it was the work of the members of the party of Irabot. Thus, this situation compelled him to go to underground activities for the fulfillment of his political and social aim. Indeed this incident was a turning point in his political career. Then from non-violence he changed his method of political movement to armed-uprising. His armed revolution continued till his death in the year 1951.

Like the revolt of 1890, the importance of the armed revolutionary movement of 1948 lies in the outcome of its movement. The biggest positive impact of the revolution was its successful efforts for the growth and consolidation of the idea of oneness among the Manipuri people. The basic aim of Irabot was to bring unity among the Manipuris who inhabited in other areas outside Manipur. He also strongly asserted



that Manipuris should have the privilege to enjoy the opportunity and right to develop and maintain their culture, politics and social order etc. He clearly mentioned these aspects in his different political platform right from the time of Nikhil Hindu Manipuri Mahasabha. He also gave too much importance to the decision of the people. He always said that the question of preservation of national identity of Manipur should be left to the decision of the people. He was not in favour of the integration of Manipur with India. Chhatradhani who was a close associate of Irabot observes that the moment he received the information of the signing of Merger Agreement by the Maharaja, who was a constitutional head, he expressed that the Maharaja could not do it without the comment of the people,<sup>54</sup> but some writers strongly refuted this view. According to these writers Irabot never had any opinion against the integration of Manipur into India. Whatever the opinion may be the activities of his revolutionary movement are to be analyzed critically as a whole his revolutionary movement left a profound impact on political and social life of the people of the state which ultimately led to the growth of the revolutionary ideas among the younger generations. His revolutionary ideas and action gave a strong influence to the young people to reassert their strong claim for the establishment of a separate political and national identity of Manipuri people. From this point of view in one way or other Hijam Irabot Singh may be regarded as the founding father of the growth of idea of Manipuri nationalism among the people and his revolutionary movement laid the foundation for the growth of a series of revolutionary activities in the future historical process of Manipur. Therefore, because of his positive political activities R. Constantine regarded Irabot as a "national leadership timbre".<sup>55</sup>

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