

## PREFACE

On my transfer as Director, State Institute of Rural Development (SIRD) on May 23, 1996 my first action was to change the name of the Institute to SIRD to make it at par with other states of Indian Union as it was known by the name 'Sikkim Institute of Rural Development' prior to my assuming the charges. As Director of the training institute my main thrust was to make the elected panchayat representatives aware of their social responsibilities as leader of the village for its all-round development. A copy of 'Manual of Election Law' containing the Sikkim Panchayat Act, 1993 in the form of draft was made available by Mr. K.N. Sharma, the then Director, Panchayat and later as Secretary, State Election Commission in lieu of Sikkim Panchayat Act, 1993 which was neither available in my office nor in my administrative department i.e. the then Rural Development Department. The section 129 of the Act which prohibited any person from contesting panchayat election with the support of a political party was deleted. With the help of the Act in draft form available from Mr. Sharma I lunched the training for elected panchayat representatives immediately after the panchayat election which was held on October 6, 1997, for the first time, on party-basis, with the support of the officers of almost all the development departments of Government of Sikkim. The resource persons available from different departments were overwhelmed to take classes as they find the training an easy excess over the public leaders of the village to communicate the message of their respective departments. The training became popular and continued in different batches till I retired from service in August, 2001. After my retirement I was looking for a platform to share my experience and express my feeling for proper guidance to the rural leaders in regard to proper utilization of power derived from democratic decentralization, management of fiscal resources, involvement in decision-making process etc and hence this thesis.