

**NAGA PEACE TALKS: A STUDY OF OFFICIAL  
NEGOTIATION AND PEACE INITIATIVE FROM  
NAGA SOCIETY**

*Dissertation submitted to the Jawaharlal Nehru University in partial  
fulfilment of the requirement for the award of the degree of*

**Master of Philosophy**

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## Certificate

This is to certify that this dissertation entitled "Naga Peace Talks: A Study of Official Negotiations and Peace Initiatives from the Naga Society" submitted by Mr. S. Rock in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of degree of **Master of Philosophy**, has not been previously submitted for any degree of this or any other University and this is his own work.

We recommend that this dissertation may be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

  
Prof. Kuldeep Mathur  
(Chairperson)

  
Dr. Sudha Pai  
(Supervisor)

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**Dedicated to my father who had  
gone forever for his heavenly  
abode, when I was in JNU.**

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Last of all to my friends, thank you.

I hope this piece of work would be of some help to those who aspire to study the struggle of the Naga people towards its political goal.

**S. Rock**

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## Chapter I

### Introduction

The Nagas had been waging low intensity war against the Indian State since the 1950s. In its struggle for political freedom, ranging across four decades, the movement has witnessed both negative and positive responses from the Government of India. The imposition of martial law and curfews through various Governmental-legislation, on one hand, remain to be one of the cornerstones of government policy towards the Naga problem. On the positive side, the introduction of tools of "Peace Talks" and "Cease-fire agreements" exult hopes of an end to the problem that have taken tolls of human lives, both civilian and armed personnel, and also properties of huge magnitude.

**The Theoretical Context:** The concept of peace as an analytical tool emerged late on the academic scene. Or rather, even though the significance of "Peace talks" have existed ever since human civilization began to flourish, as an analytical concept the term entered the academic scene only after the end of the Second World War. The quest for peace has been a central motive in the

life of man from the first moment of his entrance on the worldly scene.

Epistemologically, the examination of peace is man himself. A holistic view of human nature, a social perspective on the nature of people in their manifold associations institutions and attitudes. It moves from the study of man as a knowing and doing individual to man as a member of a national, economic, religious and cultural group. What initially begins as an inductive shifting of facts describing the nature of man, culminates more often than not, in a conception of collective man i.e. society.

**Conceptualizing Peace and the idea of Attainability of**

**Peace**: Historically speaking bargaining and negotiations had been part and parcel of human society. Beyond the individual self, the recognition of differences between people in their modes of life and culture is a permanent source of harmony at every level of peace.<sup>1</sup> That is if we understand peace to be the goal underlining any type of negotiation. Then, how do one define peace?

The problem of meaning can be variously interpreted. At its simplest form peace can be defined negatively as

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<sup>1</sup> Horowitz, Irving L., *War and Peace in Contemporary Social and Philosophical Theory* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press 1973) P.12

the absence and hostility.<sup>2</sup> What is implied here is peace can be achieved on an individual, in the strict sense of the term, without necessarily alluding to a community of peace loving man. On another level peace can be taken as a social condition, without necessarily implying the inner calm of an individual. Likewise peace between sovereign nations does not casually imply the existence of peace within each nation. At this point peace is externalized.

Contemporary political philosophy devotes much attention to the nation state because of the understanding that realization of peace is deeply rooted in the functioning of the nation state. One view insists that the peace of a nation cannot be within the framework of irrepressible economic antagonisms. Another insists that the nature of state sovereignty prohibit peace because it operates in disregard of individual liberty. The extent to which political or economic antagonism can said to be contrary to the meaning of social peace is a practical problem.

Conflict within a nation has been a frequent occurrence. Laying aside the philosophical question of whether peace is compatible with progress, a notion which philosophers from the day of Plato to Hegel have tried to

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<sup>2</sup> *ibid.* p.13



grapple, one must look into the colonial era and seek an answer to the causes in the disruption of peace in certain regions of the world. The maintenance of harmony between sovereign having institutional and cultural differences of the most profound types does not automatically resolve individual tensions or restore a sense of community to the people.<sup>3</sup> It nonetheless eliminates a large factor in such friction that does exist namely, the doubt concerning survival. Coming to a point of colonial era and the colonial upheavals that swept across Africa and Asia damaged the chance of peace by upsetting political balance concocted in the place of the mighty. In this regard could the right of sovereignty be called a legal fiction? If every change in government structure become a veiled threat to existing institution, then is the idea of to be achieved only by retaining the existing relation of forces? Or eruption of new economic forces thereby an evil in that it precipitates world hostility. So this approach has more shortcomings than evident. The real issue is how the velocity of social transformation and a national aspiration<sup>4</sup> can be reconciled to the needs of peace, both international or within a country. Therefore a mature consideration of peace must be in terms of basic level of human

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<sup>3</sup> *ibid.* p.17

<sup>4</sup> 'national' here refers to ethnic entity. See Smith, Anthony D. (Routledge, London.1998)

functioning, to provide a philosophy of survival through the integration of the common aims of people for life and abundance. And appreciation of varieties of human existence is a necessary stage in the study of attainability and value of peace.

The problem of the attainability of peace is primarily a tough-minded issue of the theory in its most intricate relation to action. Unlike the problem of causality and meaning, whether peace can be attained or not is by the very nature of a predictive statement answerable on purely empirical or descriptive grounds. Likewise attainability is separated from desirability by the vast gulf between practical consciousness and ethical consciousness. Thus the issue of attainability is, in a sense, a halfway house between the actual and the desirable.<sup>5</sup>

But when two parties are in conflict, there is scope for attaining peace. The attainability of peace is almost invariably linked to a general worldview i.e. it is cast in a form which usually announces that if (and only if) principles *a*, *b*, *c* are adhered to, then can *x* come into being.<sup>6</sup> This is a broader paradigm of attaining peace. Within this perspective lies the practicality of

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<sup>5</sup> Horowitz, *op. cit.* p.18  
<sup>6</sup> *ibid.*

negotiations. If peace is desirable and if it is to attain then negotiations are undertaken between the two disputing groups.

**Negotiation:** Negotiation is defined in various ways. Louis Kriesberg opines that the word negotiation refer to a great variety of conduct. When understood in the context of peace talks negotiations are explicit representatives of adversaries in which proposals for an agreement are exchanged and mutually modified.<sup>7</sup>

Zartman and Berman defines negotiation as a process in which divergent values are combined into an agreed decision and it I based on the idea that there are appropriate stages sequences, behaviors, and tactics that can be identified and use to improve the conduct of negotiations and better the chances of success.<sup>8</sup>

The notion of stages or phases of a negotiation is an analytical one that, while corresponding to reality, is far shaper in concept than is ever the case in human event. It analysis, for purposes of identification and discussions phase can be isolated and examined in detail, but in the real world they tend to have shady borders, overlap each other, and even hide when their names are called.

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<sup>7</sup> Krishberg, Louis, *International Conflict Resolution* (London: Collier Mac Millan, 1978)  
<sup>8</sup> Ibid pp., 1-2

Three reasons are inherent in the nature of peace process. First, negotiation is a symmetrical process. Every piece of advice that is available to one party is available to the other, every tactic is open to one as well as the other, both parties can play it tough and come to no agreement or play it soft and give in on crucial points.

Second, negotiation is not a finite process. Moves can go in all directions, including backtracking as long as either side can stop or change directions, it not possible to provide a deterministic theory or winning strategy for the process. Furthermore, the positions, stakes, issues, demand, and minimum of the parties even when "known" are not fixed. Indeed the essence of the process is to juggle, combine, eliminate and change any of these elements, and this may involve changing one's own values as well as those of the party or parties.

Third, the participants in the negotiation both anticipate and react, so they have a double motivation. One may well react to one's own or the other parties' previous moves, but there is no guarantee that either party will continue to react in the same way. When, instead, a party begins anticipating the other party's reactions, a process of indeterminate regression begins, one that can suggest very different behavior depending on

when the process stops. Then the stage is to recognize that negotiations are not about winning. It is all about minimizing losses under the above given conditions, and create the largest possible total sum of benefits out of which each party got the most.

**Negotiation Process- doing better, not one of winning:**

Recent studies on negotiating processes acknowledge three basic concepts that capture the essence of negotiation-process as one doing better, not of winning.

1) One is the game theory notion of "non-zero-sum encounters." The core of the negotiation process is the transformation of zero-sum negotiation and attitudes into positive sum solutions and approaches. In the zero-sum situation, one mans loss is the other mans gain, and the process involves one party taking something from the other.<sup>9</sup> On the other hand, if two parties are in conflict is able to negotiate a deal, and then each party can gain from the negotiation. In a positive, non-zero-sum situation each party comes out with some benefits; no one comes off unilaterally or exclusively best but all parties come off better than before; even though one party may come off more better than the other.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Milnor, John W and Shapley, Lloyds "In Games of Survival" In Harold W Kuhn and A W Taylor ed., *Contributions to the Theory of Games* (Princeton: Princetoon University Press, 1957)

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p.13

Harold J. Nicholson in his book *Diplomacy* refers to this perception as the personality type of Shopkeeper and Warrior. He saw Shopkeeper as man of goodwill and limited aim seeking positive sum solutions and Warrior as man of ill-will and extended goals seeking their demands at the expense of other party.<sup>11</sup> But Nicholson also suggested that agreement is always a good thing in itself, always possible, and that for the Shopkeeper there is always a mutually acceptable price for goods. The fact is that sometimes the value of good is rightly high and more than willingness to agree is needed for an accord. Some interest is more vital and more negotiable than others are, and rights may not be negotiable at all. There must be a little Warrior in every successful Shopkeeper and somehow must be found to relate the two perceptions of values.

(2) The second closely related is known as Homans's theorem. It is a key to the accomplishment of a change from a zero-sum to a non-zero-sum situation. It says, "The more the item at stake can be divided into goods valued more by one party than they cost to the other and goods valued more by the other party than they cost to the first, the greater the chances of successful

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<sup>11</sup> Harold J Nicholson, *Diplomacy* (London: Oxford University Press, 1982)pp., 20-35

outcomes".<sup>12</sup> The notion of variable value implies that items are evaluated differently by different parties and also that these evaluations can be changed, by such devices as precautions, inducement, alternatives and reorganization of ideas. Negotiation is a matter of discovering and conveying these different evaluations, in the first phase, and of thus mutually grouping and altering them so that they fit together into an agreement, in the second. This concept and Homans's formulation of it indicates that parties generally do not - and cannot- seek to prevail over the others argument by persuading them to change their basic views, but rather use persuasion to arrange the components of these views into a common decision.

(3) The third concept is that of toughness and softness, or holding out and giving in, an old notion in the literature on negotiation. Bartos tried to draw some conclusion about the time for toughness and time for softness (making a historical study of bygone days).<sup>13</sup> He came out with two aspects to the toughness- softness question.<sup>14</sup> One aspect is substantive: any decision on when to hold out and when to give in depends on the importance of the items at stake and the ability of a party to shave

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<sup>12</sup> Homans, George, *Social Behaviour* ( New York: Hartcourt Brace Publishers, 1961) p., 61

<sup>13</sup> Barhos, Otomar J, *Process and Outcome of Negotiations* (New York: columbia University Press: 1974) pp., 29-45

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.,

off a little bit in order to move in the direction of another party's wishes. This aspect is similar to that of the warrior in every Shopkeeper. The other aspect is procedural, referring to the process of negotiation; both toughness and softness have their meaning, these moments, their measures, and their manipulative effects. These are what make the process of negotiation, the operations and possibility that must be understood to bring substantive viewpoints into one agreement. How and when to be tough or soft is one of the major questions of applied theory to be answered by the practical negotiator.

Stages of peaceful negotiation: Robert F. Randle in his book *The Origin Of Peace* gives various stages of peaceful negotiation. According to him a peace settlement is usually achieved in two stages. The first, the resolution of military questions, includes the cessation of hostilities and the subsequently deployment of the armed forces of the belligerents during a period, sometimes an extended period after the truce. The second stage, which of the political settlement is usually at the stage of the peace conference or more generally, the stage of negotiations whose aim is agreed upon political, legal and economic times for some form of a restoration of a peaceful relations between the belligerents.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Randle Robert F, *The Origin of Peace*(New York: Free Press, 1973)p., 84



The settlements of internal wars: In most internal wars, the insurgents fight to achieve some measures of control over their government. If they seek to replace the incumbent regime and take over the state entirely we have an internal war for control of polity. The second type is a war of Independence. If the insurgents want only autonomy or independence for their group, they may seek to control only a part of the territory or people of the state. Both types of internal wars are fought to establish the rights of the insurgents to govern, whether all or part of the state; and in both types the insurgent objective is to be wholly or partially free of the incumbent of governmental authority.

Political settlement of a war of independence: The war for independence is an internal war in the sense that the conflict begins internally within a state<sup>16</sup>. The insurgent faction is in rebellion against an incumbent government, which the rebels regard as alien. The basis for this judgement is the cultural, religious or national differences between the incumbent governors and the insurgent leaders and between the elite and people that support each faction. The internal war of independence may end in the complete destruction of the forces of the insurgents. If however, the insurgent faction gains

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid p., 95

independence, or even frees the incumbent government to grant it some measure of local autonomy, we will have a peaceful settlement.

The political settlement could take the following ways:

Independence to the insurgent faction. A part of the territory of the state will be assign in perpetuity to the insurgents. This territory will become a new, independent successor state<sup>17</sup>.

(1) Autonomy for the insurgent faction. An area of the state will be assigned to the insurgents, who are given the right to govern themselves. Formally, the insurgents are not sovereign and independent. Their state is associated in some way (delineated in the peace treaty) with the state of the incumbent government. The insurgent faction might be given the right to determine its own domestic policies, while foreign affairs and defence policy remain with incumbent government. The military state as it existed before the war would be transferred to a federative or confederative state by the peace treaty and accompanying legislation.

(2) A third possible solution entails granting political concession to the insurgent factions and the people that supported them. The creation of the state of Nagaland was

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid p., 95

an example in this regard. But the insurgents did not accept it and continues their struggle.

If the political solution by the war of independence is to be a grant of autonomy then, the compact of settlement will in effect amend the constitution of the state. Its most dramatic and far-reaching constitutional effect is the conversion of a unitary state into a confederation.

The domestic origin of peace: The decision makers of a belligerent actor are subject to a number of influences both external and internal, that will, in various circumstances, move them to make peace or strengthen their resolve to continue to make war. Internally, pressures upon decision-makers originate with the elite of a polity, the news media the legislatures (if any) and the public<sup>18</sup>. But whether the decision-makers respond to the pressure in another matter entirely. That depends on the source, the intensity of the pressure and other factors, including the personalities and the determination of the decision makers, the structure and the stability of the government (enabling the policy makers to resist, or compelling them to yield to the

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid p., 431

pressures) and the skill of the policy makers in neutralizing pressures- from any source.

Given this broad theoretical understanding of peace and the attainability of peace through the incorporations of negotiations, the proposed study undertakes to analyze the various Peace talks, which have taken place between the Government of India and the Naga underground groups. The first question that enters one's mind is if peace was/is desirable in the Naga inhabited areas of India then why was there not a continuous rounds of talks between the two rival groups. Secondly the secrecy over the contents of such talks had kept away vital information from the civil society- both Indian and Naga. This undermines democratic principles of mass information.

As will be seen in the following chapters, the creation of the Nagaland State could not calm down the Naga movement. So the proposed study also examines the circumstances under which the birth of the state took place and how certain sections of the Naga population were co-opted into the mainstream Indian hegemonic system.

Peace efforts from the civil society (the Naga civil society) were visible right from the beginning of the movement. In their capacity the clergy and other civil society played their limited part to strengthen lasting peace in the strife torn area. In doing so they performed a dual task- one of urging the rival groups lay down arms and bring a political solution to the on going conflicts. On the other hand mass consciousness was created. This included above all sharpening the political and civil rights of the Naga people through formal and informal contact programs, and discharging knowledge about the Naga problem to a broader audience both within India and abroad. But the question is would grassroots participation be allowed in future negotiations the absence of which was one of the reasons for the failure of the various peace talks between the two conflicting parties?

The absence of violence is the hallmark of peace as discussed above and also negotiation process involves minimizing losses. Seen under this context, the study, finally, wishes to examine the degrees to which the Nagas could retrace from their initial

political demands of sovereignty. For aspiration is one thing and political realism altogether a different thing. And how far the Indian leadership would understand this aspiration.

The second chapter gives a brief historical background of the Naga movement. It traces the genesis of the movement to the days of British colonial era and outlines the evolution of the movement in its various phases and their underlying demands. Third chapter deals with the various Peace Talks and cease-fire agreement. This chapter gives a conclusive analysis of the negotiations in retrospect. The fourth chapter evaluates the contribution of Naga civil society towards building peace in Naga inhabited areas of India. The research study ends with a conclusion that peace can be attained in the Naga inhabited areas only if a political solution is reached. This calls for a judicious approach from the Indian Government and a reconsideration of the political aspiration of a group of people who longs to be united under one single-political-unit. This is one among the many possible solutions.

## Chapter II

### A Brief account of Naga Movement

The Naga national movement is the consequence of the intermingling of ethnicity, geographical factors, history and most significantly the indomitable spirit of the Nagas. The Nagas belong to Mongoloid race, speaking language, which fall under Tibeto - Burman category. The Nagas who are presently settled in the tri-junction of India, Myanmar and China that have occupied the region called the *Naga Hills* for centuries. Nagaland was apportioned between India and Myanmar after India gained independence. The part, which falls under India, spreads across four states namely Manipur, Nagaland, Assam and Anurachal. The eastern part of Nagaland, which falls under Myanmar, is placed in Kachin State and Sagaing Division (formerly known as the *Naga Hills*). Mr. Mills defines the area inhabited by the Naga tribes as "bounded by the Hukwang Valley in the North-East, the plains of the Brahmaputra to the North- West of Cachar to the Southwest and the Cindwin to the East. In the South, the Manipur Valley roughly marks the point of contact between the Naga tribes and the very much closely

inter-related group of Kuki tribes".<sup>1</sup> Till the arrival of the Britishers in the early part of the nineteenth century, the Nagas were living contentedly in their ancestral homeland. Each village was a state by itself with a chief and Council of Elders. They settled all disputes in accordance with the traditional customs and age-old practices. Anarchy and confusion were things unknown to a Naga who was peaceful, hospitable, good-natured, and honest when he was in his village. For hundreds of years, "the Naga tribes remained untouched by higher civilizations, neither Hindu culture nor the influence of Buddhism into these hills, where primitive races were persisting in ancient types of culture".<sup>2</sup> Baring the few skirmish and meager trade exchange with the plains of Assam and the Imphal valley, their regular contact with the outside world started only in the nineteenth century. In this long indulgence of complete freedom accentuated by their passionate spirit of independence lies the foundation of the Naga Movement through which they assert their own sovereignty over their land which they believe rightfully and naturally belong to them.

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<sup>1</sup> Mills, JP, *The Lotha Nagas*, (Macmillan and Co. Ltd. London, 1922), p. xv.  
<sup>2</sup> Fure- Haimendorf, *The Naked Nagas*, (Methuen, London, 1939), p. 1.



The contact with the British started in 1832.<sup>3</sup> Since, customarily, it was a necessity for the Naga warriors to procure heads to increase the fertility of their villages and also to enhance their social status those, whose village located near the Assam and Imphal plains raided the plain dwellers. These acts greatly annoyed the Britishers. To prevent these raids it was expedient to establish some sort of control over the Nagas. It was the necessity of protecting their subjects on the borders of Nowgong and Sibsagar districts (and elsewhere) against Naga raids that the British were compelled to enter the hills and control the Nagas from within. Indeed without any material gains, the British were reluctantly compelled to occupy the Naga territories in order to protect peace-loving people on the British borders. But later, they became obligatory on them to intervene in the age-old custom of head-hunting and massacres between the rival villages and communities and to control them to live in peaceful and 'civilized' ways.<sup>4</sup> After policies, like posting an officer in Asalu North Cachar in 1854, establishing a line of frontier post, setting up of Kuki colonies and recruiting the Nagas into military services proved to be ineffective, the British

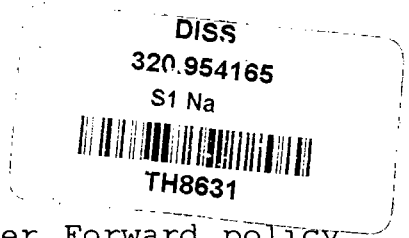
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<sup>3</sup> Johnstone, J, *Manipur and the Naga Hills*, (Vivek Publishing House, Delhi, 1971), p. 22.

<sup>4</sup> Tajenyuba, Ao, *British occupation of Naga country*, Naga literature Society, Kohima,

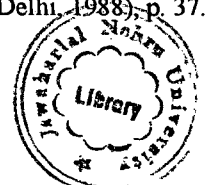
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government was compelled to adopt a bolder Forward policy. In 1886, the Naga Hills District was formed with Samagudting as the Deputy Commissioners' Headquarters.<sup>5</sup> In 1876, a Sub- Division of the Naga Hills was started at Wokha. Kohima was subjugated after heavy fighting and the district headquarters was shifted to Kohima in 1887. The British foray into the Naga areas contributed to the unity of the Nagas confronted as they were by an alien rule. Nagas who went to France in the labor corps during the First World War came back with new ideas and a sense of belonging.<sup>6</sup> The *Naga Club*, which was founded in 1918, was the first political organization with the objective of preparing themselves politically in the event of India gaining her independence from the British- a happening they then visualized as being imminent.<sup>7</sup> Thus their chief concern was the political future of their homeland after the exit of the British. When the Indian National Congress under the leadership of Gandhi was mounting its campaign for more political reforms and ultimately for the liberation of India, the Nagas untouched and insulated from the Indian National Movement started their own movement for achieving

<sup>5</sup> Ghosh, BB, *History of Nagaland*, (S. Chand Co. Ltd. New Delhi, 1982), p. 97.  
<sup>6</sup> Singh, KS (ed.), *Tribal movements in India- I*, (Manohar Publication, New Delhi, 1982), p. 70.  
<sup>7</sup> Horam, M, *Thirty years of Nagaland insurgency*, (Cosmo Publication, New Delhi, 1988), p. 37.



complete sovereignty once the British leaves India. They expressed their desire for Independence to JH Hutton, the then Deputy Commissioner of the Naga Hills District. He convened a meeting of the Naga leaders to ascertain their wishes after the departure of the British. He then submitted his report and this brought about the visit of the Simon's Commission to Kohima in 1929.<sup>8</sup> A memorandum was submitted by the members of the *Naga Club* that the Nagas should be left to decide and shape their own future should the British leave India. The British however declared it as *Excluded Hills* of the province of Assam in 1937.<sup>9</sup>

CR Pawsey the then Deputy Commissioner, Naga Hills District established the *Naga Hills Council* in 1945, which was later converted into the *Naga National Council* in February 1946. The Council's main objective was to unify the Nagas and to look after the welfare and social aspirations of the Nagas. It received a wide patronage of the administration as a unifying, and a moderating factor. But gradually the NNC extended its activity into the political field and became a very powerful and an all-

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<sup>8</sup> Elwin, V, *Nagaland*, (P. Dutta, Calcutta, 1961), p. 49.

<sup>9</sup> Horam, *opcit*, p. 38.

pervading political organization<sup>10</sup>, which also proved to be the harbinger of future political agitation and upheaval.<sup>11</sup>

The talk for complete independence from India was at first a mild cry, but when it came to be known that the British had a scheme to carve out a "Trust Territory" comprising the Naga Hills, NEFA and the upper part of Burma inhabited by the people by the Naga people, the Nagas opposed it.<sup>12</sup> A proposal was also sent forward by Sir Reginald Coupland. He was for a treaty between the Government of India and Burma with the British to work out the territory and share the responsibility of administration. Both the NNC and the INC were quite vehement in rejecting the plan.<sup>13</sup>

The NNC, in this uncertain period, decided in favor of Central Government of India to act as the *Guardian Power* for a period of ten years after which Nagas would decide their own future.<sup>14</sup> Thus negotiations started with the sub committee of the advisory committee on the Aboriginal Tribes and finally an agreement was concluded with Sir

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<sup>10</sup> Ghosh, BB, *opcit*, p. 158.

<sup>11</sup> Manekar, DR, *On the slippery slopes in Nagaland*, (Manak Tales, Bombay, 1967), p. 36.

<sup>12</sup> Alemchiba, Ao, *A brief historical account of Nagaland*, (Jananbhuni Press, Jorhat, 1970), p. 165.

<sup>13</sup> "A Naga leader" quoted in Elwin, *opcit*, p. 51.

<sup>14</sup> Horam, *opcit*, p. 41.

Akbar Hydari, the then Governor of Assam, which is generally known as the *Nine Points Agreements*. Its preamble states that the rights of the Nagas to develop themselves according to their freely expressed wishes is recognized. The last point which read *the Governor of Assam as the agent of the Government of the Indian Union will have a special responsibility for a period of ten years to insure the due observance of this agreement; at the end of which period, the NNC will be asked whether they require the above agreement to be extended further period, or a new agreement regarding the future of the Naga people arrived at*, became the crux of the problem. The NNC consistently maintained that the Nagas has the right to claim independence and secede from the Union of India after ten years whereas the Government of India's interpretation was that after a period of ten years the Nagas would be free to choose for themselves the precise pattern of administration... whether they would join the plain district of Assam or unite with the contiguous areas such as Manipur or perhaps become a separate state in the Indian Union.<sup>15</sup> However for various reasons the Hydari agreement was not ratified by the Constituent Assembly.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Gundevia, YD, *War and peace in Nagaland*, (Palit and Palit Publishers, Delhi, 1975), p. 61.  
<sup>16</sup> Mankekar, *opcit*, p. 42.

Not long after signing the agreement the Naga leaders realized that their demands were not likely to be fulfilled by India. While the Indian leaders maintained that the Hydari agreement would be the basis of their relationship,<sup>17</sup> the NNC declared complete independence of the Naga people on 14<sup>th</sup> August 1947. The message of this declaration was sent to the king of England, the Government of India and the Secretary General of United Nations at Lake Success.<sup>18</sup> The Naga leaders vigorously pursued this issue with the successive Indian leaders and in their initial stage they decided not to use violence to achieve their ends.<sup>19</sup> The Nagas met such leaders as Gandhi and Rajagopalachari, the then Governor General, to discuss the Naga issue. Both the leaders expressed their views against the forced union of the Nagas with India.<sup>20</sup> But Nehru was always against complete secessions.

With the election of AZ Phizo, as the President of the NNC towards the end 1949, the movement took a new turn as it began to be dominated by the extremist. The NNC rejected the Sixth Schedules, which was constituted in the

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<sup>17</sup> Tarapot, B, *Insurgency movement in North east India*, ( Vikas Publication , Delhi, 1996), p. 107.

<sup>18</sup> "India and the Nagas," Minority Rights Group, London, Report no. 17. Quoted in Haskar/ Luithui, *Nagaland File: A question of human rights*, (Lacers International, New Delhi, 1981," p. 9.

<sup>19</sup> Horam, *opcit*, p. 44.

<sup>20</sup> Alemchiba, *opcit*, pp. 173- 174.

Constitution of India for the tribal areas of Assam and Naga Hills. Phizo now got the NNC to proclaim Nagaland as a sovereign state "to be established at the earliest possible date".<sup>21</sup>

Phizo had several meetings with Nehru, in December 1951 (near Tezpur in Assam), in March 1952 at Delhi and in July 1952 (at Dibrugarh) but could not bring a final solution to the Naga issue.<sup>22</sup> So he toured the Naga Hills District campaigning for plebiscite on the question of Naga independence and the boycott of the election to the district council and then the general elections to the parliament and the state legislature.<sup>23</sup>

A plebiscite was conducted in 1951, "when all the villages were visited, signatures and thumb impressions were taken and oaths were administered in the tribal fashion to fight for Naga independence".<sup>24</sup> The outcome was 99% of the respondents supporting the movement. They refused to pay taxes and refused to cooperate in road making and road repairs. Schoolteachers resigned en masse, schoolboys, and girls stopped going to schools. The village

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<sup>21</sup> Mankekar, *opcit*, p. 45.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.* p. 46.

<sup>23</sup> Tarapot, *opcit*, p. 107.

<sup>24</sup> Elwin, *opcit*, p. 54.

head- men returned their prestigious red blankets and boycotted officials' celebrations to bag their resignations. The Gaonburras also refused supply labors and stopped selling supplies to the government officials.<sup>25</sup> Thus, without counter measures encountered from the authorities the civil disobedience proved quite a success and soon escalated into more militant and hostile acts against the government and its supporters.<sup>26</sup> The separation of the Tuensang sub- division from the Naga Hills District and merging it with the NEFA in 1952 to insulate the areas from the NNCs influence <sup>27</sup> also whetted the hostility of the Nagas.

To help appeasing the Naga upsurge, Prime Minister Nehru visited Kohima along with the Burmese Premier Thakin Nu on March 1953, when feelings against the government were running high.<sup>28</sup> After according the two premiers a warm welcome the Nagas, infuriated by the report that they would not be allowed to address the meeting, resorted to a large walk out, some allegedly forced by the NNC volunteers from the meeting ground, leaving only the officials and

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<sup>25</sup> Horam, *opcit*, p. 50.

<sup>26</sup> Mankekar, *opcit*, p. 47.

<sup>27</sup> Rmmuni, Murkot, *The world of the Nagas*, (Northern Book Center, New Delhi, 1988), p. 67.

<sup>28</sup> Alemchiba, *opcit*, p. 180.



interpreters to listen to Nehru and Nu.<sup>29</sup> This unfortunate incident hardened the attitude and stand of both the Nagas and the Indian government. When the NNC leaders got wind of their imminent arrest, its leaders along with their followers went underground in order to evade arrest. The senseless display of force by the army filled many peace-loving Naga citizens with a burning resentment against India and the same army which was in the Naga Hills to prevent insurgency instead drove so many Nagas to insurgency and rebellion.<sup>30</sup>

Though the NNC never officially approved a policy of violence<sup>31</sup> the extremists started preparing for an armed uprising sometime in 1953. For this purpose they shifted to a more favorable base of operation, to remote Tuensang division on the Burma border. Phizo established an underground parallel government known as "Hongkin Government" and announced that the rebels would first liberate Tuensang and then extend their activities to the Naga Hills.<sup>32</sup> In March 1956, the Federal Government replaced the Hongkin Government. It framed a constitution, which

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<sup>29</sup> Rammuni, *opcit*, pp. 622- 623.

<sup>30</sup> Horam, *opcit*, p. 52.

<sup>31</sup> Elwin, *opcit*. P. 55.

<sup>32</sup> Mankekar, *opcit*, p. 51.

declared Nagaland to be a sovereign republic. There was an elaborate scheme for a parliamentary set up, administrative, legal and foreign affairs.

With the mounting number of people joining the rebels the Indian Government called in the army to take control of the situation in 1956. There was an incessant fighting between the rebels and the armed forces. Army outposts were attacked, convoys and patrolling parties were ambushed. The army resorted to burning down of villages and people were rendered homeless.<sup>33</sup> The Nagas, caught in the crossfire between the two groups, had to undergo a lot of suffering. After so much of violence and killing, people were looking for ways and means to bring about peace. Liberal leaders and churches condemned violence and began appealing to the people to restore peace and order. The peace efforts resulted in the All Tribes Naga Peoples Convention first at Kohima and later in Ungma and Makokchung. The outcome of this convention was the creation of Nagaland State, which came into existence on December 1, 1963. However, the NNC did not recognize it and Phizo, the NNC President who was staying on in England sent a message saying that he did not recognize the New Delhi- Naga Peoples Convention Pact as

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<sup>33</sup> Alemchiba, *opcit*, p. 185.

having any bearing on the Naga Political Issue and branded the Naga Peoples Convention as "Indian puppet master".<sup>34</sup> The NNC refused to abjure violence. Threats and intimidation continued as usual.<sup>35</sup>

In the midst of uncertainties, the church leaders decided to do something to bring peace. The Nagaland Baptist Church Council held a convention at Wokha in February 1964. This Convention unanimously resolved to request the Government of India and the Federal Government of Nagaland to form a peace mission,<sup>36</sup> to explore ways and means for the restoration of peace and normalcy in Nagaland. Accordingly, a peace mission was formed consisting of Reverend Michael Scott, BP Chaliha and JP Narayan and through their endeavors cease-fire agreement was signed on May 24, 1964. The many rounds of talks between the groups could not produce any tangible results.

The Naga Tatar Hoho (Naga Federal Parliament) wrongly blamed Kukhato Sukhai for the failure of the talks, and he subsequently resigned from the Ato Kilonser (Prime Minister) October 24, 1967.<sup>37</sup> General Kaito, who was one-

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<sup>34</sup> Horam, *opcit*, pp. 85- 86.

<sup>35</sup> Alemchiba, *opcit*, p. 202.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.* p. 202.

<sup>37</sup> Horam, M, *Facts and growth of Naga Nationalism*, (Mimeographed), p. 122.

time Defense Minister and later a member of Tatar Hoho was also ousted and Scato Swu too resigned from the post of President of the Naga Federal Government.<sup>38</sup> Thus the Angami Nagas and the Tangkhul Nagas overthrew the hegemony of Sema leadership. This led to the distancing of the Sema Nagas and the formation of the "Revolutionary Government Of Nagaland" under the leadership of Kaito Sema.<sup>39</sup> This newly formed group continued to negotiate with the Government and finally through an understanding with Hokishe Sema, the then Chief Minister of Nagaland, an arrangement was made for their surrender. Consequently on August 16, 1973, 15,00 persons surrendered along with arms at Zenebphoto in front of BK Nehru, the then Governor of Nagaland.<sup>40</sup> Again in July 1975 the entire underground 16<sup>th</sup> Battalion of the Naga army from the lower Sema area came over ground which was followed suit by Ao and Lotha tribe.<sup>41</sup> The movement was greatly weakened and many underground leaders thought that the movement was petering out and this eventually led to the signing of the Shillong Accord between the Government of India and the representatives of the Nagas (underground) on November 11, 1975. But this could not bring peace, as

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid. pp. 140- 141.

<sup>39</sup> Tajenyuba, *opcit*, p. 192.

<sup>40</sup> Wati, L, *Facts and growth of Naga Nationalism*, (Mimeographed), p. 126.

<sup>41</sup> Rammuni, *opcit*, p. 399.

those who signed the Accord did not consult Phizo, the NNC President, and other senior leaders like Isaac Chishi Swu and the General Secretary TH Muivah.<sup>42</sup> But the Shillong Accord did achieve what New Delhi was looking for decades; it sharpened shimmering differences between the groups in the underground and as a result, Muivah and Isaac Swu eventually broke away from Phizo and formed the "National Socialist Council of Nagaland" (NSCN) in 1980.<sup>43</sup>

**The NNC after AZ Phizo:** The Shillong Accord of 1975 has done a major damage to the Naga movement. After the Accord the NNC was splintered and gave birth to the NSCN. Remaining body of the NNC was under the leadership of Phizo till the early 1990s. After his death it was once again split into two groups- NNC (Adino) and NNC (Khodao) over the issue of NNC Presidentship. Later on NNC, Khudao merged with the NSCN (IM) in 1995.

**Rise of NSCN:** The NSCN was formed on February 2, 1980.<sup>44</sup> Their manifesto was based on the principle of socialism with a spiritual out look, "Nagaland for Christ".<sup>45</sup> Then they proclaimed the new Government of the Peoples' Republic

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<sup>42</sup> Tarapot, opcit, p. 112.

<sup>43</sup> Hazarika, S, *Strangers of the mist*, (Penguin Books, New Delhi, 1995), p.109.

<sup>44</sup> Wati, opcit, pp. 164- 165.

<sup>45</sup> Tajenyuba, opcit, p. 301.

of Nagaland with Isaac Swu as Chairman, SS Khaplang as Vice Chairman and TH Muivah as General Secretary. This new group has brought in a revival of the Naga national movement in the form of socialism. The main objective of the NSCN was to build up a "Sovereign Christian Socialist State of Nagaland".<sup>46</sup> But after its formation rift developed within the NSCN within a short period of years among the top leaders. It was reported that Konyaks and Tangkhul relationship was not cordial from the beginning.<sup>47</sup> The schism was created not only by the educational advancement but also by Major Hao, a Tangkhul who was the camp commander of the second NSCN battalion, high handedness of the Konyaks, and Eastern Nagas.<sup>48</sup> Tribalism was also one of the major factors for the creation of the situation.

In the midst of the crisis within the groups, Indian intelligence RAW (Research Analysis Wing) also played some role to split the NSCN on the tribal line.<sup>49</sup> It also appeared that in the name of the unity move, Chingang Konyak a pastor and Hokishe Sema the then Chief Minister of Nagaland complicated the situation by laying a trap to confuse the NSCN leaders. The offer was said to be rejected

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid. p. 301.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid. p. 304.

<sup>48</sup> Tongmeth, D. Nekong in *Nagaland Post*, Dimapur, December 2, 1996, p. 2.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid. p. 2.

but rumor widely spread that Isaac and Muivah had sold out the plan to oust Khaplang, seize arms from Konyak national workers and surrender in India.<sup>50</sup> Shortly information reached the NSCN headquarters. Soon knowing the situation the National Assembly Session was called to resolve the controversial report, but the situation could not be solved. Leaders went on their own ways and led to blood shed in the NSCN camp. On April 30, 1988 Muivah camp was attacked by SS Khaplang and Brigadier Kholi Konyak's group, killing about 140 men mostly the Tangkhul while 230 others including women and children were killed by bullets, hunger and sickness, some died at the hands of the Burmese army.<sup>51</sup> But TH Muivah with 33 others managed to escape and joined with Isaac Swu.<sup>52</sup> It was reported that Isaac Swu was away from the NSCN camp. After that incident NSCN was split into two factions,<sup>53</sup> one led by Isaac Swu and TH Muivah called NSCN- IM, and the other led by SS Khaplang called NSCN-K.

The proposal to hold peace talks with Nagas was put forward by Prime Minister PV Narshimha Rao and carried forward by his successors HD. Deve Gowda, IK. Gujaral and

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<sup>50</sup> Verghese, *India's North East resurgent: Ethnicity, insurgency, governance and development*, (Konark Publishers, Calcutta, 1995), p. 95.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid. p. 95.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid. pp. 95- 96.

<sup>53</sup> Tajenyuba, *opcit*, p. 304.

AB. Vajpayee respectively. After Deve Gowda met NSCN- IM leaders in Zurich in February 1997,<sup>54</sup> the center in July the same year announced for the first time a three- months cease fire with the group. It has been extended many times and peace talks continue till date.

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<sup>54</sup> Chaudhuri, "From cease-fire to cease-fire," Frontline, May 7, 1999, p. 33.



### Chapter III

## Peace Talks

The creation of Nagaland State could not bring about any solution to the Naga problem. Instead, the Nagas were scattered to live in different states in India and in Myanmar as well. The expected peace did not come. Underground ranks continued to swell and many overground Nagas played a double game and fully supported the guerillas.<sup>1</sup> The parallel government in Nagaland and the continuation of hostility between the Indian security forces and the Naga Federal Army brought about more grief to the common men.

On request from Phizo, Reverend Michael Scott, a British citizen, met Nehru and discussed with him to work out any possibility of cease-fire to bring peace to the Naga People.<sup>2</sup> Prior to this, Triloknath Pumeary's negotiation with the Naga leaders as an unofficial emissary of Nehru did not bear any fruit.<sup>3</sup> Concerned with the turbulent situation in Nagaland State, the Nagaland Baptist Church

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<sup>1</sup> Horam, *opcit*, p. 90.

<sup>2</sup> Nibedon, Nirmal, *Nagaland: The Nnight of the Guerillas*, (Lancers Publishers, New Delhi, 1983), pp. 55- 56.

<sup>3</sup> Alemchiba, *opcit*, p. 202.

Council held a convention at Wokha from January 31 to February 2, 1964. The convention unanimously resolved to request the Government of India and the Federal Government of Nagaland to form a peace mission. Accordingly they nominated the then Chief Minister of Assam, Shri BP Chaliha, JP Narayan, the noted Sarvodaya leader, Shanker Rao Deo and Reverend Michael Scott. Shanker Rao declined to join on health grounds. Thus the three members of the peace mission were formed and they constituted a peace center at Kohima.

The foremost task of the peace mission was to bring about the cessation of hostilities and then to the negotiation for political settlement. After two months of formidable negotiations by the peace mission a cease fire agreement was signed on 24 May 1964, at Sakrabama village by the three members of the peace mission and six members on behalf of the government of Nagaland.<sup>4</sup> The underground Nagas insisted that the cease-fire agreement be extended to all the Naga inhabited areas of Manipur i.e. Mao, Tamenglong, Ukhrul, outside the Nagaland state.<sup>5</sup> The details of the cease-fire agreement were ratified in August and the agreement came into effect on September 6, 1964.

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<sup>4</sup> Horam, opcit, p. 106.

<sup>5</sup> "Bilateral agreement on cease fire," August 14, 1964.

The cease-fire agreement was made "on the understanding that security forces of the Indian Government undertake to suspend jungle operations, searches of villages, a real actions, arrests and impositions of political fines and free labor". On the other hand "the federal Government of Nagaland also undertook to suspend, sniping and ambushing, imposition of fines, kidnapping, recruitment, sabotage, raids and firing security posts, towns and administrative centers and moving with arms in uniforms in towns, villages and administrative centers and 1000 yards away from the security posts".<sup>6</sup> It was also agreed that the Indian security forces would patrol to a depth of 3 miles as the crow flies from borderline and 100 yards on either side of the road.<sup>7</sup>

Further the underground Naga Federal Government also gave assurance that no arms would be imported from abroad during the time of cease-fire. Initially, the cease-fire agreement was for one month, but it was extended from time to time until October 15, 1965. The Peace Mission also, with the approval of the Government of India and the Federal Government of Nagaland appointed a four member Peace Observation Team, so as to coordinate and ensure

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<sup>6</sup>

Ibid.

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Rammuni, opcit, p. 104.

successful implementation of the cease-fire agreement. The team members were Shri Nabakrishna Chaudhary, Dr. M. Arom, Santi Amalprabha Das and Miss Mangorie Sykes. This team was authorized to investigate any allegation of cease-fire violations but not to investigate allegations or complaints prior to February 24, 1965.<sup>8</sup> Thus an atmosphere was created for the peace talk to begin.

**Peace Talks:** The first ever Indo- Naga peace talks began in September 23, 1964 at Chadema Peace Camp near Kohima. These Peace Talks were held in two phases; the first which were at the Governmental level had as many as seven rounds of talks; the second at the Ministerial level spreading over six rounds of talks. At the Governmental level, the Indian delegation was led by YD Gundevia, Foreign Secretary of the Government of India along with NG Suntook, a Deputy Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs, and Brigadier DM Sen. The Naga Federal Government was led by Zashie Huire, the Angh or the Governor of Japfu; along with Isak Swu, Foreign Secretary of the Government of Nagaland; and Brigadier Thinoselie M. Keyho of the Naga Army.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Aram, M, *Peace in Nagaland: Eight years story- 1966- 1974*, (Arnold Heinemann Publications, New Delhi, 1974), p. 52.

<sup>9</sup> Gundevia, *opcit*, p. 130.

While welcoming the holding of talks, Gundevia reaffirmed that the Naga problem must be solved within the framework of the Indian Constitution and asked the underground Nagas to come forward and join the national mainstream. Responding to this Zashie Huire, the underground leader pointed out that Nagaland was an "independent country" and that Nagas would never yield to the Indian Government efforts to "subjugate" their country.<sup>10</sup> He called upon India to contribute to the establishment of peace in this part of the South-East Asia.<sup>11</sup> From the beginning of the peace talk it had become a deadlocked. After five more rounds of talks, there was no concrete understanding to work out the vexed Naga problem. The reason behind the statement was the Naga Federal Government's refusal to accept "Nagaland constitution status" within the Indian union and its assertion for right to self-determination and the sovereign Nagaland State that was not acceptable to the Government of India.

To resolve the deadlock, the peace mission came out with a proposal that "the Naga Federal Government could, and on their own volition, decided to be a participant in the Union of India and mutually settle the terms and

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<sup>10</sup> Horam, *opcit*, pp. 110-111.  
<sup>11</sup> Aram, *opcit*, pp. 32-33.

conditions for that purpose. On the other hand, the Government of India could consider to what extent the pattern and the structure of the relationship between Nagaland and the Government of India should be adopted and recast so as to satisfy the political aspirations of all the sections of Naga opinion.<sup>12</sup>

The Government of India welcomed the proposal that Nagaland should agree to join the Union of India of their own volition and willingly "to consider what alternations, if any, or necessary towards the existing autonomy of the state of Nagaland to fully satisfy the aspirations of all sections of Naga opinion".<sup>13</sup> But it was not clearly mentioned to what status the Government of India would consider. The Naga Federal Government again rejected this proposal. Instead they demanded a "plebiscite" under the neutral body supervision to join the Indian Union and to decide the future according to their own volition".<sup>14</sup> But the peace mission as well as the Government of India did not accept this demand. Since there was no meeting point between the two sides, the peace mission proposal was considered by the Naga Federal Government as the basis for

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<sup>12</sup> "Peace mission proposal," para, 13.

<sup>13</sup> Gundevia, opcit, p. 149.

<sup>14</sup> Horam, opcit, p. 115.

future negotiations. The Naga Federal leaders referred the peace mission to discuss the proposal with the Tatar Hoho. However there was no proper response from the Tatar Hoho. On the other hand, they demanded the negotiation to be upgraded to the higher level. Consequently, the peace mission urged both the Government to meet at the "Prime Minister level" to bring about solution to the Naga problem.

**Ministerial talks:** The first round of Ministerial talk between the Prime minister Smt. Indira Gandhi and the Naga Federal leader led by Khugato Sema, Ato Kilonser (Prime Minister) was held in New Delhi on February 18, 1966, in the presence of Peace mission. There was as many as six rounds of talks at this level. The first round did not yield any result. They exchanged their views and discussed the grave situation of the cross violation of cease- fire by both the parties in Assam and Ukhrul district in Manipur. They agreed to continue the talks at the same level. But at this critical juncture, the peace mission was dissolved. JP Narayan had resigned on February 25, 1966, citing that he had lost the confidence of Naga leaders.<sup>15</sup> After two months, Reverend Michael Scott who was

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid. p. 125.

relentlessly working for the peace mission was ordered to leave India, blaming that he was "soft and partisans" with the Nagas. On May 3, 1966, the Indian Government ordered his deportation from the country, seized "all his recordings and papers".<sup>16</sup> The series of explosion in Assam by the Naga army made the Assam Chief Minister crestfallen and he too resigned from the peace mission on May 4, 1966. With the dismiss of peace mission the negotiation task was taken up by "Peace Observer Team" organized by the Sarvodaya Movement under the guidance of Dr. Aram based in Kohima.

The fourth round of talks was more significant than the previous one. At this meeting Smt. Indira Gandhi stated that "solution need not be found within the frame work of Indian Constitution" but within the "Indian Union" meaning "Constitution could be a mandate as a way to obtain the solution of the Naga problem".<sup>17</sup> To consider the Government of India's proposal, the NFG sought to consult the President of NNC, AZ Phizo from London. But he seemed adamant stating that "as long as the Indian talk and think in terms of *special status* for Nagaland within the Union of India we do not expect any good thing to come out. What is

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<sup>16</sup> An explosion took place in Laming Railway station on April 20, 1966 killing 54 passengers  
<sup>17</sup> Verghese, *opcit*, p. 56.



needed is third party to help both the countries".<sup>18</sup> The next two rounds of talks were futile meetings, as both the sides remained too rigid to break their stalemate. This led to the dead lock of the peace talks. Without a body like peace mission, there were no mediators for the negotiations to bring the compromising situation.

The reason for the break down of the peace talk seems to be the Naga leaders' insistence on sovereignty, which the government of India could not grant that for. But the Naga leaders would not relent on their demand for complete independence. The creation of Nagaland State through the manipulation of some few educated overground Nagas embittered the underground Nagas. They believed that it was through their efforts and the privations suffered by them in fighting against the security forces that the Government bestowed statehood to the Naga Hills.<sup>19</sup> Therefore they resented any idea of the interpretations of the NPC (Naga Peoples Convention) reaping the fruits of what they claimed to be the endeavors of the underground leaders. Thus, in the negotiating table embittered Naga leaders would have nothing to do even with the Union of India.

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<sup>18</sup>

Ibid. p. 308.

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Horam, opcit, p. 89.

The exclusion of NNC President AZ Phizo and NNC Secretary, TH Muivah in the peace talks was a mistake on the part of the Government of India. Phizo aroused the consciousness of the Nagas and turned the Naga movement into a mass movement. The Naga leaders always referred to Phizo for the final say. While the talks were on, both the President and the Secretary of the NNC were in foreign soils internationalizing the Naga issue.<sup>20</sup> Because of them the Federal Naga leaders at the negotiating table thought that they were bargaining from position of strength. Hence they would not budge an inch of their demands for complete independence. As long as these two leaders were kept out of the negotiation table, any lasting solution could not be expected.

Another reason for the failure of the peace talks on the part of the Nagas was due to the lack of strong leadership who could not unite all the tribes and keep the Naga interest above anything else. This is manifested in the event that followed after the deadlock of the peace talks.

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<sup>20</sup> Phizo went to New York on April 4, 1966 ostensibly for medical treatment of paralytic mouth, but actually to mobilize support from Washington and United Nations for the independence of Nagaland though the US did not respond positively the Naga case was made to known to many people and some even began to study the case very seriously (see Nibedon, pp. 170- 171). Muivah and few others were sent to China in May 1966 to present the Naga case and any possible assistance. They were imparted not only military training but also taken from place to place in the neighboring Communist countries for political talks and training. (A. Yonon, p. 347).

The members of the Tatar Hoho wrongly blamed Kughato Sukhai for the failure of the talks. He resigned from the Ato Kilonser on October 24, 1967 after no confidence was moved by the Tatar Hoho against his leadership.<sup>21</sup> Since then there were sudden changes in the Naga Federal Government. General Kaito Sema (erstwhile Federal Prime Minister, Kughato Sukhai and the late General Kaito were brothers while the one time Federal President Scato Swu was their brother in law) who was once Defence Minister and later became a member of Tatar Hoho was also ousted,<sup>22</sup> and Mawu Angami was made the Naga Federal army General in his place. Scato Swu resigned from the post of President. He was replaced by Mehiasiu, (incidentally General Mowu, President Mehiasiu and AZ Phizo were from the same village i.e. Khonoma) a relative of Phizo. TH Muivah was appointed as General secretary of NNC and Z Ramyo, a Tangkhul Naga, as Home Minister of the Naga Federal Government. The Angami Nagas and the Tangkhul Nagas overthrew the hegemony of Sema leadership. This trend of tribalism appeared in the Naga national movement; and in the later days it brought a major damage to the movement.

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<sup>21</sup> Horam, *opcit*, p. 140.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.* p. 140.

Herewith, General Kaito who had stronghold in the Sema territory broke away from the NFG and formed the *Revolutionary Government of Nagaland* <sup>23</sup> within a short period, General Kaito Sema, was assassinated by the Naga Army. There was strong allegation that he had links with the Indian Army, being pro establishment had developed against the interest of the NFG.<sup>24</sup> With the help of the Revolutionary Government, Indian Security Forces captured many Naga Federal armies who had just returned from China.<sup>25</sup> This was a big moral booster for the Government of India.

The split within the NFG also deeply affected the ruling NNO (Naga National Organization) Government in Nagaland State. Dissidence led by SC Jamir challenged the Chief Minister Hokishi Sema leadership for patronizing the Revolutionary Government. Soon, they defected from NNO and joined UDF (United Democratic Front) which was a pro Naga Federal Government. It was said that the Chief Minister Hokishi Sema patronized the Revolutionary groups on the understanding to settle the Naga problem with the Government of India.<sup>26</sup> At this time of political

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<sup>23</sup> Tajenyuba, *opcit*, p. 239.

<sup>24</sup> Rammuni, *opcit*, p. 174.

<sup>25</sup> General Mowu along with 165 Naga soldiers was captured and forced to surrender in 1969. Another group of 124 Naga army led by Isaac Swu was also captured but Swu managed to escape.

<sup>26</sup> Tajenyuba, *opcit*, pp. 294- 295.

uncertainties within the parties of Nagaland State, an attempt to assassinate the Chief Minister on August 8, 1972 was made by the Naga Federal Army but he escaped unhurt.

Subsequent to the incidence, the Indian Army was called back into action and the Government of India terminated the Eight Years Cease-Fire Agreement on September 1, 1972. This was followed by the enforcement of shameful (Activities Prevention) Act, 1967 in Nagaland, the Army Forces (Special Power) regulation reinstated, and the NFG, Naga Federal Army and NNC were banned as unlawful organization.<sup>27</sup> Governor also threatened the nationalist supporters of action, if any body preached secession.<sup>28</sup>

Ever since the formation of the Revolutionary Government, they struggled to win the support and confidence of the Naga people. They planned to negotiate with the Government of India, and asked for the *Protectorate Status* within the Indian Union. In fact, they wanted the *Status of Sikkim* but the Governor refused the proposal.<sup>29</sup> At last, through an understanding with Hokishi Sema, the then Chief Minister of Nagaland an arrangement

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<sup>27</sup> Rammuni, *opcit*, pp. 192-193.

<sup>28</sup> Vergese, *opcit*, p. 94.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.* p. 94.

was made for their surrender. Consequently on August 16, 1973 thousand five hundred persons along with arms surrendered before BK Nehru the then Governor of Nagaland. After this event, the situation in Nagaland deteriorated again. The Indian army launched extensive operation against the Naga underground.<sup>30</sup> The Naga Federal army also took counter measures against the Indian army.

Recruits were sent to China both for training and to bring back weapons in order "to start a fresh and more powerful violent revolution".<sup>31</sup> This had mounted more pressure on the Government of India to restrict the underground Naga activities. Thus a lot more atrocities were committed against the civilians. In account of the prevailing situation in Nagaland, the Church came into political scenario again to bring both the parties to negotiation, thus appointed a Liaison Committee to persuade the Naga underground leaders as well as the Government of India. After months of works by the Liaison Committee an understanding for peaceful negotiation was reached between the Naga underground leaders and the Government of India. To negotiate with the Government of India the President of the Naga underground Federal Government, Zashi Huire,

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<sup>30</sup> Tajenyuba, *opcit*, p. 297.

<sup>31</sup> Horam, *opcit*, p. 168.

appointed six members of Federal and NNC representatives led by Kevie Yelley. Representatives of the underground met the Government of Nagaland LP Singh to represent the Government of India, on November 10 and 11, 1975 at Raj Bhavan, Shillong. After serious discussions the two parties formally entered into an agreement on November 11, 1975 which is known as the Shillong Accord.

**The Shillong Accord:** The agreement contains the following points:

- 1) The representatives of the underground organisations decided of their own volition, to accept without condition the Constitution of India;
- 2) It was agreed that the arms, undergrounds would be brought out and deposited at appointed places. Details for giving effect to this agreement would be worked out between them and the representatives of the Government, the security forces and the members of the liaison Committee;
- 3) It was agreed that the representatives of the underground organisation should have reasonable time to formulate other issues for discussion for final settlement.

After signing the Accord, the Indian security forces halted operation, lifted curfew and released the political prisoners who accepted the Accord.<sup>32</sup> The Government of India gave reasonable time to the underground Naga to formulate the issue the final settlement. With regards to clause II of the agreement, the underground deposited their arms at the transit peace camp at Kohima, which was set up after the Shillong Accord. But clauses III and I remain unimplemented.

Although the Shillong Accord of 1975 was taken by the government of India to be a break through to the final political settlement and the end of the Naga Insurgency Movement,<sup>33</sup> nevertheless, the Naga people in general and some leaders of the NNC refused to endorse the Accord. In fact, while signing the Accord, Veeniyi Rakhu, one of the representatives undergrounds Naga refused to a party Accord.<sup>34</sup>

The president of NNC, A. Z Phizo, refused to lend support to the Accord.<sup>35</sup> Both Isaac and Th. Muivah who were on, "Good will Mission" to China<sup>36</sup> immediately "denounced

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<sup>32</sup> Wati, *opcit*, p. 142.

<sup>33</sup> Rammuni, *opcit*, p. 227.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.* p. 226.

<sup>35</sup> Tarapot, *opcit*, p. 112.

<sup>36</sup> Vergese, *opcit*, p. 95.



the Accord as treason and the signatories were declared as traitors."<sup>37</sup> Over this issue, a seven men Naga delegation from abroad urged Phizo to condemn the Accord and without delay.<sup>38</sup> They earnestly pleaded for his guidance, but he remained silent. Those who were totally opposing it considered his silence as an act of acceptance after Accord.<sup>39</sup> Eventually, Muivah on his return from China "strongly opposed the leadership of Phizo and the policy of NNC".<sup>40</sup> Muivah along with Isaac Swu and SS Khaplang broke away from NNC and formed the *Nationalist Socialist Council of Nagaland* (NSCN) on January 31, 1980.

Everything went well in the beginning in the organization (NSCN) becoming increasingly powerful because of the support it received from different quarters. In spite of the intermittent attacks on their camps by the Myanmar army on Naga activists belonging to the FGN (Federal Government of Nagaland), the NSCN emerged as the "most powerful and well knit" guerilla organization of the region.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> NSCN Publication, *A Brief Political Accounts of Nagaland*, p. 131.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid. p. 131.

<sup>39</sup> Tajenyuba, *opcit*, p. 229.

<sup>40</sup> Pashin, Khiamungan, "Partition in Eastern Nagaland," *Nagaland Post*, January 3, 1997, pp. 1-2.

<sup>41</sup> Tarapot, *opcit*, p. 113.

However, due to misunderstanding among the top leaders NSCN was divided into two groups in 1988; one led by SS Khaplang- NSCN (K) and other group led by Muivah and Isaac Swu- NSCN (IM). It became more exposed than the other groups and successfully expanded in the global arena. On January 23, 1993 the NSCN -IM became a member of the Unrepresented Peoples' Organization (UNPO)<sup>42</sup> which is based in Hague. From time to time the Naga leaders Isaac and Muivah have successfully addressed the Naga case at the United Nations Committee for Indigenous People and Human Rights.<sup>43</sup> These leaders have regularly highlighted the Naga case and the atrocities perpetrated on the Nagas by the Indian Army in the International Fora. The afore said UN Committee has accepted the rights of Nagas for self-determination. Subsequently some offices of the Naga political movement have already been opened in several cities like Bangkok, Geneva, New York and Manila. Presently, the filmish, Swiss and Belgium support the Naga case.<sup>44</sup>

The Naga problem affected not only domestic political stability but also a security threat from outside. A

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<sup>42</sup> NSCN Publication, *Cry for Justice*, p. 148.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.* p. 173. Also see p. 177, p. 191, p. 208.

<sup>44</sup> Tajenyuba, *opcit*, p. 307.

committee on the insurgency situation in the North- East, headed by Som Pal presented in Parliament in late February 1997 highlighted that "the insurgent and subversive groups are getting training in Bangladesh, Myanmar and Thailand making the entire region vulnerable from the security point of view". Further it strongly suggested that the "Government should take initiatives to bring all the groups across the table for dialogues".<sup>45</sup> The center certainly takes notes of the importance of peace talks.

The former Prime Ministers PV Narshimha Rao and Mr. HD Deve Gowda had announced the center's willingness to hold peace talks without any preconditions during their visits to the North- East in February and October respectively in 1996. Indeed, it was former Prime Minister PV Narshimha Rao who had initiated dialogue with NSCN leaders Isaac and Muivah in June 1995 in Singapore.<sup>46</sup> However, this dialogue discontinued as the Central Government did not show much interest at that time. The dialogue resumed with the formation of United Front Government at the Center. At the behest of the United Front Government, Mr. Rajesh Pilot met

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<sup>45</sup> *Telegraph, Calcutta, March 3, 1997, p. 3.*

<sup>46</sup> *Times of India, New Delhi, April 4, 1997, p. 4.*

the NSCN- IM leaders in Bangkok in November 1996 to prepare the ground for talks with the Prime Minister.<sup>47</sup>

The state Government of Nagaland played its part to help produced a conducive atmosphere by uniting all factions so as to facilitate the center - Naga Peace process for a lasting solution. The state Government declared 1996 as a year of "Peace Offensive" after its council of Ministers decided to start a political dialogue to end Naga insurgency.<sup>48</sup> The task of initiating the peace for the unification of all the factions was entrusted to the Naga elders and Church leaders. The joint Naga peace mission comprising Church leaders and Naga citizens were formed under the Chairmanship of VK Nuh, for the unification process. The joint peace mission contacted all four underground factions and urged them for a political dialogue with the Center after the unification process. This unification process of all factions is yet to be fulfilled.

Having prepared the ground for talks by Rajesh Pilot in his last meeting at Bangkok with the NSCN leaders, former Prime Minister Mr. Deve Gowda met Isaac Swu and TH Muivah

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<sup>47</sup> *Telegraph*, Calcutta, January 21, 1997, p. 3.

<sup>48</sup> *Telegraph*, Calcutta, January 7, 1997, p. 2.

on January 3, 1997 in Zurich.<sup>49</sup> At this meeting Deve Gowda disclosed Center's willingness for an unconditional dialogue with the NSCN- IM leaders. The underground leaders decided to respond positively provided "India is really sincere in its gesture".<sup>50</sup> Deve Gowda also mentioned that "all the factions including the Church have to be involved in the peace process and brought together under one platform"<sup>51</sup> for a lasting solution. The change of Prime Ministers at the Centre did not hamper the peace process. Picking up the threat of the peace process which had already begun, another meeting took place in May in Geneva between the top intelligence bureau officials and the NSCN leaders Isaac and Muivah, to prepare the groundwork for the cease fire and finally, cease fire agreement was signed on July 25 between the Government of India and the Nscn (IM). The cease fire agreement was supposed to come into effect from August 1 1997. The agreement determine the following points:

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<sup>49</sup> *Telegraph*, Calcutta, March 3, 1997, p. 3.

<sup>49</sup> *Times of India*, New Delhi, April 4, 1997, p. 4.

<sup>49</sup> *Telegraph*, Calcutta, January 21, 1997, p. 3.

<sup>49</sup> *Telegraph*, Calcutta, January 7, 1997, p. 2.

<sup>49</sup> *Telegraph*, Calcutta, March 10, 1997, p. 4.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.* p. 4.

<sup>51</sup> *The Hindu*, New Delhi, "Government awaiting NSCN reply," March 25, 1997, p. 5.

1. that there be a total suspension of armed conflict between the two sides for three months beginning on August 1, 1997.
2. that the peace talks shall be conducted at the highest level (i.e. Prime Ministerial level).
3. that the peace talks begin with no pre-conditions.
4. that the talk shall be held in a neutral third country.

In pursuance of this cease fire agreement, discussions were held between the government of India led by K. Padmanabhaish and the NSCN-IM led by V.S. Atem, to finalize the ground rules and modalities for implementation of the cease fire. The agreed ground rules were signed on December 12, 1997. According to the agreed rules "there would be no offensive operations like ambush, raid and attack leading to death or injury or damage or loss of property against the NS C N by the Indian Army, para-military force. Patrolling by the India Army, para-military forces and the police would continue to prevent infiltration of militants. However, patrolling within one km. of designated NSCN camps, decided after due consultation in the Monitoring

Mechanism, will be carried out with intimation to them".<sup>52</sup> The NSCN also agreed not to undertake offensive operations like ambush, raid, sniping and attack leading to death, injury, damage or loss of property.

Further it was agreed that any accidental encounter or violations should not be allowed to jeopardize the peace process and the effect of any such incidents should be localized through mutual consultations.

**Cease Fire Outside Nagaland:** With the declaration of the cease fire, armed confrontation between the security forces and the underground subsided. However, there was a hue and cry over the extension of cease fire area outside Nagaland especially in Manipur. Sometime back in 1994, the Nagaland state Assembly had passed a *Greater Nagaland Bill* unanimously for the integration of all Naga inherited areas. Thus, the valley people of Manipur saw or apprehended the Centre-NSCN(IM) peace talks as a threat to its territorial integrity. Since the major parts of the hill districts of Manipur are inhabited by the Nagas, Prime Minister I.K. Gujral and Home Minister Inderjit Gupta assured the state government that Manipur's territorial

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<sup>52</sup> See Appendix, "Agreed ground rules for cease fire."

integrity will not be disturbed.<sup>53</sup> At present, the Manipur State Congress is extending support to the BJP led government at the centre on the condition of maintaining Manipur's territory intact.

**The Response from NSCN (K):** the Government of India unilaterally extended to all underground groups operating in Nagaland for three months so as to bring it on par with pact made with the NSCN (IM). But NSCN (K) and NNC did not agree to the offer. After lying low for some months, the NSCN (K) attacked the Indian Army in the month of April 1998 killing 12 Army personnel.<sup>54</sup> The rival faction NSCN (IM) alleged that the attack was to stall the ongoing peace process.

Concerned with the belligerent posture of the NSCN (K) Chief-Minister S.C. Jamir appealed to all the factions to abjure by violence and join the negotiations. He demanded that all the factions should be included in the peace talks without which there could be no lasting political solution. The NSCN (K) communicated to the centre, its readiness to participate in a tripartite dialogue just before the fall of the BJP government in 1999. Later, it

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<sup>53</sup> *Frontline*, New Delhi, June 5, 1998, p. 3.

<sup>54</sup> *Frontline*, New Delhi, June, 18, 1999, p. 4.



declared a unilateral cease-fire for 6 months with effect from April 12 1999, following appeals from Naga Hoho and various social organisations.<sup>55</sup> Through the endeavors of the Naga Hoho, both the NS CN (K) and NSCN (IKM) agreed to halt armed confrontation in the greater interest of peace in the state.

**Boycott of Election:** A controversy aroused between the NSCN (IM) and Centre with the announcement of Nagaland state Assembly elections simultaneously with the Lok Sabha elections to be held on February 1998. Underground Naga leaders did not want elections to take place during the process of peace talk. They charged the Central government that *imposition of election* violates the cease fire agreement. They appealed the Naga people to boycott the elections. The Central leaders stated that conducting elections is a democratic process and hence there should be no intimation or threat to the Naga people. The Centre also warned that if the underground disrupt the election process, the centre would resume crackdown on the underground.

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<sup>55</sup> *Hindustan Times*, New Delhi, January 1, 1998, p. 3.

However the Nagas wanted "solutions not elections" this time. The Naga Hoho at its meeting in Kohima on December 18 urged the Naga people to boycott the election. It also asked the Centre for the postponement. It also called upon all the Naga MPs and MLAs to resign.<sup>56</sup>

The Opposition parties-NPC, National Democratic Movement and the State BJP- responded to the call of Naga Hoho and pressed the centre to defer the election until a final settlement was reached.<sup>57</sup> Consequently, Congress won two-third majority as 43 candidates were elected unopposed in the 60 member Assembly. The BJP and the CPI-M demanded immediate annulment of the opposition boycotted election and demanded a fresh poll.<sup>58</sup> In the Lok Sabha also the lone non-Congress Candidate Mr. A. Achumi claimed that he was abducted by armed Congress supporters and released only after the last date of withdrawal of nomination.<sup>59</sup> Thus the Naga demonstrated that solution is the need of the hour but not election.

**Peace Talks and Prospects:** The negotiation for political settlement between the Central government and NSCN (IM) is

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<sup>56</sup> *The Free Press*, Imphal, February 8, 1998, p. 2.

<sup>57</sup> *The Pioneer*, February 11, 1998, p. 3.

<sup>58</sup> *Telegraph*, Calcutta, February 11, 1998, p. 2.

<sup>59</sup> *Frontline*, New Delhi, June 5, 1998, pp. 20- 24

going at a very slow pace. Prime Minister I.K. Gujral sent his principal Secretary N.N. Vohra in 1997 to Bangkok to hold talks with the NSCN (IM) leaders Isaac and Muivah.<sup>60</sup> This meeting was supposed to assess the demands of the underground leaders. However the united front could not return to power at the next election and the negotiation process was left to the new government.

The BJP led government adopted a tough line to the insurgency problem. Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee had stated that any talks would be within the ambit of the Indian constitution, and the constitution would be amended if necessary but there would be no question of negotiating sovereignty. Home Minister L.K. Advani also, on his visit to the North-East in September 1998 reiterated similar statement that if the insurgents want talks it should be within the parameters of the Constitution as the country cannot be divided.<sup>61</sup> In spite of its strong posture against the insurgents it was committed with the negotiation process started by the United Front Government. The new Government appointed Mr. Swaraj Kausal, to conduct negotiation with NSCN- IM. Mr. Kausal met the underground leaders in Bangkok in early June 1998.

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<sup>60</sup> *The Hindu*, New Delhi, September 9, 1998, p. 3.

<sup>61</sup> *Frontline*, New Delhi, August, 14, 1998, p. 12-14

During the meeting, Isaac Swu and Muivah demanded political discussions without any conditions and in the Prime Minister's presences to be held outside India as mentioned in the cease fire agreement. Kausals package of proposals to the Naga leaders was to work out an arrangement under which the Congress I Chief Minister would step down and make way for a leader of the rebel's choice.<sup>62</sup> The Naga leaders rejected this proposal.

The next round of talks between the Prime Minister Vajpayee and NSCN IM in Paris in November 1998 did not make much headway. He only succeeded in dispelling the Naga leaders' doubts of his Government's commitment to the on going peace process. The next meeting was held in Amsterdam on March 24, 1999.<sup>63</sup> the Government was represented by Swaraj Kausa, former Governor of Mizoram in the talks with NSCN IM leaders Isaac Swu and TH Muivah. Mr. Kausal once again suggested Mizo type Accord and also conveyed Vajpayee's assurance with regard to granting adequate fund to Nagaland. Not long ago, Vice Chairman of NSCN (IM K) Yandhan, had said in London that his organisation would demand a Bhutan type protectorate status for Nagaland.<sup>64</sup> In

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<sup>62</sup> *Frontline*, New Delhi, May 7, 1999, p. 4-5.

<sup>63</sup> *Frontline*, New Delhi, June 18, 1999, pp. 12-13

<sup>64</sup> *Frontline*, New Delhi, January 7, 2000, p. 23.

the Amsterdam meeting, Mr. Kausal avoided to discuss this package of demands and as such, the NSCN IM leaders continued to stand by their earlier demand for *Sovereign Nagaland*.

After this meeting Mr. Kausal tendered resignation as he had some differences with the Central Government leadership regarding the area covered by the cease fire agreement. In his place, Home Secretary to the Government of India, K. Padmanaphaiah, was appointed as the Prime Minister's emissary and Government interlocutor.

The latest talks between the NSCN IM leaders and Padmanaphaiah was held at Hague, the Netherlands on November 24, 1999. at this meeting the Center proposed to include NSCN- k in the peace process.<sup>65</sup> The Naga leaders opposed to the participation of the rival group NSCN - K in the peace talks. Both the parties insist to their stand which led to the deadlock.

A few days after the talks, there was an attack on the Chief Minister convoy on November 29, 1999 near Kohima by unidentified gunmen killing two Security guards and injuring six others. The Chief Minister blamed on the NSCN

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<sup>65</sup> *Assam Tribune, Gauhati, December 1, 1999, p.3.*

IM cadres. In the wake of the incident, the security forces stepped up its activity and even asked the NSCN IM cease fire Monitoring cell office at Dimapur to close down.<sup>66</sup>

On the other hand, the NSCN IM leaders not only denied the charges but also alleged that it was staged attempt by SC Jamir on himself to win the sympathy of the Naga people, and avoid the dragnet of CBI from the mess of the lottery scam and also forcibly accused the NSCN of the incident thereby jeopardise the ongoing the peace process. This incidence had cast some doubt on both the parties on the ongoing peace process.

The arrest of the NSCN general secretary Th. Muivah on January 19 by the Thai Government comes a great blow to both the NSCN (IM) and the Government of India as the arrest took place just few days before the next round of talks were to begin in the Hague (Netherlands). The NSCN (IM) leaders had refused to appoint his successor and thus the peace talks had come to a standstill. However, the central Government had stated that Muivah's imprisonment would not affect the ongoing peace process.

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<sup>66</sup> *North- East Sun*, New Delhi, January 1- 14, 2000, p. 5.

Meanwhile, a new scenario is emerging after the arrest of Muivah and his subsequent imprisonment. The NSCN (K) leaders had conveyed to the centre . their willingness to participate in the tripartite peace dialogue. The centre has also invited the Jamir Government to the negotiation process which is contrary to the understanding reached between the NSCN (IM) and the Government of India before signing the ceasefire agreement. Various organisations, including Naga Hoho and the Naga People's Council, have expressed apprehension that the NSCN (IM) may back out of the process in the event of the Nagaland Government being allowed to participate in the process.

## Chapter IV

### Role of the Naga society

The Naga society is not a geographically unified entity. It is the common traits of culture and tradition that unifies the diverse tribes. Till the advent of the British in the Naga territory, the Nagas never had a unified system of administration. Their history had been a long story of long story of hostility to one another. In Naga society the village has been a republic having its own popular village government, the council of the village even today is represented by every clan of the village. Two or more clans, usually occupying its own area inhabits each village. Every Naga village was very much a world unto itself; people married, lived and died in respective villages. Naga societies were not however without strife and bloodshed: major villages tried to and control smaller ones by force, raids were carried out often, no Naga had much freedom of movement or travel outside his village. All these dangers and restrictions



compelled the villagers to live and act as one social and political unit.

Their interest and outlook broadened when they came into contact with the outside world. Once the British took control of the Naga hill, there came the Christian missionaries preaching the gospel of Christ and also modern education. The missionaries succeeded not only in the conversion of the Naga from animism to Christianity but also to gave up an old practices like head hunting which help to live more powerful lives. The spread of modern education along with religion had also a great impact on the Naga society. The modern education they received made the Naga aware of his surroundings and his ethnic identity and political rights. Thus we find the emergence of different organization and association not only within a village but which cut across villages and tribes.

From the village system, the first ever organization to form in Nagaland was the Naga Club founded in 1918, comprising of government officials and few leading headman of the surrounding Kohima and

Mokokchung sub-division. The aim of the club was both political and social in nature, and also an attempt to wean over the Nagas from their inter tribal feuds and foster solidarity amongst them. Later it was followed by the formation of the tribal council in 1923 by the Lotha tribe subsequently followed by the Aos in 1928. D. L. Pawsey converted the Naga club into Naga Hills District Tribal Council in 1945, the then Deputy Commissioner of Kohima. In 1946, this council changed into Naga National Council (NNC) which spearheaded the Naga movement. The NNC negotiated with the Interim Government of India on behalf of the Nagas regarding the future political set up of the Naga areas, and entered into an agreement, which is generally known as the *Nine points Agreements*.

As the controversy arose regarding the last clause of the agreement the NNC under the leadership of AZ Phizo, was not willing to join the Indian Union at any cost. One thing to be noted was that the Naga society was behind the NNC at that stage. It was under the charismatic leadership of AZ Phizo that the Naga movement became a mass movement. Phizo and his

supporters toured all over the Nagas areas propagating the dual cause of independence and that of Naga unification i.e. the merger of all contiguous Naga areas into a single unit and entity. The response of the Naga society was that Church leaders, even ex-servicemen, officials and teachers formed groups to help the NNC to further the Naga cause.<sup>1</sup> Even the Tribal Councils, Tribal Range and Village Councils were for the advancement of the NNC's goal.<sup>2</sup> Phizo was able to convince the people the legitimacy and rationality of the Naga demand for independence. The masses' cooperation with the NNC is further manifested in the boycott of the General elections of 1952. None of the Nagas contested and cast their vote in the Assam legislative Assembly, the District Council and the Lok Sabha, in spite elaborate arrangements made by the Government officials.<sup>3</sup> All these events along with the mass civil disobedient movement were an indication of public solidarity with NNC.

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<sup>1</sup> Horam, Op cit., p. 59.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 59.

<sup>3</sup> Op cit., p. 50.

The Indian Government could not tolerate much longer of the anti-state activities of the Nagas under the banner of NNC. The crack down on the NNC leaders began in 1953 and to deal with the situation effectively, the Assam Maintenance of Public Order (Autonomous Districts) Act was enacted in 1953 and later the Assam Disturbed Area Act, 1955 was introduced to enable the Assam Armed Police and Assam Rifles to execute their task unabated and openly, without legal constraints.

The open confrontation between the Indian Army and the Naga underground began in 1955. The bitter clashes between the two groups brought untold suffering to the Naga people. There was widespread violence, killing and atrocities such as arrests, beatings, village groupings and many villages razed to the ground.<sup>4</sup> As hostility intensified some of the Naga leaders thought that the same state of affairs should not be allowed to continue indefinitely and something would have to be done to change the course of events. The Church also condemned

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<sup>4</sup> Horam Op cit., p. 81.

violence and began appealing to the people to restore peace and order. To demonstrate their desire for peace the Aos organized first peace rally at Longching on March 22, 1957, followed by a series of peace meetings in villages, at which speakers advocated a peaceful settlement and appealed the undergrounds to give up the path of violence.<sup>5</sup> A group of leading missionaries also toured the Ao, Angami, Sema, Lotha and Chakesang areas, appealing the people to maintain peace and to persuade the underground Nagas to accept peaceful negotiation with the Government of India.<sup>6</sup> With the imposition of the Armed Forces (Special Powers) act in 1957, many villages had fled into the jungle to escape armies' atrocities and from the prevailing war like situation. Thus, peace was the need of the hour to restore normalcy to the Naga villages.

Naga Peoples Convention (NPC): under such circumstances few Naga leaders had convened a meeting called NPC in 1957 to act as a mediator between the Government of India and underground Nagas.

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<sup>5</sup> Mankekar, p. 60.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., p. 64.

Representatives attended the first meeting, which was held at Kohima from August 22- 26, from all the tribes. The main resolution of the convention advocated settlement of the Naga issue through negotiations and, pending a final political solution, the then Naga Hills districts of Assam and Tuensang Division of NEFA to be constituted into a single administration under the External Affairs Ministry. The NPC sent a delegation to the Centre and the government accepted their resolution. A new administrative unit known as Naga Hills Tuensang Area was formed on December 1 1957. It was placed under the Ministry of External Affairs.<sup>7</sup>

The NPC went beyond its role as a mediator and took upon itself to speak on behalf of the Naga People. For the first time in the history of the Naga Movement, there emerged well-defined groups of undergrounds and overground.

In the subsequent NPC Convention, the Federal Government not only kept away from it but also warned of dire consequences if the Naga villagers attended the

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p.62.

meeting. A point has to be mentioned that the Manipur Naga Council, which was formed in 1956 and merged with the NNC in 1957 also this associated with the NPC. The second NPC held at Ungma in Mokokchung on May 21, 1958 concluded with the appointment of a 'Liaison Committee' of eight members in order to contact the underground.<sup>8</sup> The NPC, supposed to bring the Indians and the underground Nagas together, then needed a body to act as a mediator between them and the underground. Obviously, the Federal government of Nagaland refused to deal with this Liaison Committee as yet another and call the NPC leaders as *renegades* and *traitors* to the parent body - the NNC.<sup>9</sup>

With the widening rift between the underground Nagas and the NPC, the NPC decided to go ahead with the negotiations. The third NPC was held at Mokokchung from October 22 - 26, 1959. Here the deliberations focused on the sixteen-point memorandum submitted by the Drafting committee relating to the future Statehood of Nagaland. There was no unanimity in this issue even

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<sup>8</sup> Horam, Op cit., p.84.

<sup>9</sup> Mankekar, Op cit., p. 64.

within the NPC. Let Kevichusa and other leaders expressed reservations against passing those resolutions, insisting that the NPC was not the right forum to adopt such resolutions.<sup>10</sup> However despite strong oppositions those resolutions were passed by voice - vote.

Vizol, vice president of the NPC, Tajen Ao and others insisted that the resolutions should be placed before the Federal government of Nagaland. And if it agrees with the resolutions it should be requested to hold talks with the government of India for finding a solution to the political problem. However, some leaders, including SC Jamir as joint secretary of the Convention brushed aside the proposals and they went ahead with those resolutions.

In the meantime, the NPC was split over the issue of adoption of the sixteen-point resolutions. One group led by Convention chairman Dr. Imkongliba went ahead to New Delhi and other group led by Vizol came back to Kohima out of this appointment.<sup>11</sup> The Central government

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<sup>10</sup> Horam, Op cit., p. 84.

<sup>11</sup> Assam Tribune, February 10, 2000.



accepted the sixteen-point resolutions and accordingly an agreement was signed between the two sides, culminating with the formation of state of Nagaland in 1963. Thus the NPC which was formed to play the role of negotiator between the underground Nagas and the Indian government landed up in actual negotiations with the Central government by itself and bringing a political settlement. However the NPC could not succeed in persuading the NNC to fall into the same line of thought. On the other hand it increased bitterness between the pro-New Delhi group and the extremists. The creation of Nagaland State fell far short of the aspiration of the Nagas. As a result, the Nagas were placed in different administrative areas and only the so-called Nagaland State was given a preferential treatment and bestowed with all the financial aids and gifts from the Centre. The conditions of the Nagas of other areas remained the same if not worse than before. Thus the centre's policy to weaken the Naga Movement through *divide and rule* ignored the sentiments and the aspirations of the Nagas to live in one administrative unit.

With the creation of statehood the underground Nagas also stepped up their activities in defiance of the agreement. The Naga army crossed the border several times for training at the foreign bases and brought in huge quantities of arms and ammunitions. The confrontation between the Indian security forces and the Naga Federal Army went on unabated. Concerned with the turbulent situation in Nagaland, the Nagaland Baptist Church held a convention at Wokha from January 31 - February 2, 1964. It was attended by more than 5,000 Naga people. This convention unanimously resolved to request the government of India and the Federal government of Nagaland to form a *Peace Mission*. Ultimately the convention nominated BP Chaliha, JP Narayan, Shankar Rao Deo and Reverend Michael Scott. Shankar Rao Deo declined the offer on health ground and thus a three member of Peace Mission was formed. Through their relentless efforts, the NNC agreed to go to the negotiating table. Several rounds of talks were held between the central government and the Naga leaders.

Though the first Naga Peace talk ended in failure, the Church leaders never gave up efforts for peace. The failure of the first Peace talks also brought about splits in the NNC into two groups. When the entire revolutionary groups surrendered to the government on August 16, 1973 it seemed as though the underground movement was dying out and peace was going to prevail at last. But it turned out to be wrong. The situation in Nagaland deteriorated again and once again the Church leaders came into the Naga political scenario. In 1974 another Peace Council called the Nagaland Peace Council comprising of the Church leaders and Sarvodaya Peace Observer was formed to bring both the underground leaders and the government of India to the negotiation table. For this purpose the Nagaland Peace Council appointed another Liaison Committee on February 5, 1975. The Committee comprised of Reverend Longeri Ao, Kenneth Kerhuo, Lungshim Shaiza, Dr. Aram and L. Lungalang. After months of work by the Liaison Committee, an understanding for peaceful negotiation was reached between the Naga underground leaders and the government of India on November 10 - 11, 1975 at

Raj Bhawan, Shillong. After serious discussions the two parties formally entered into an agreement on 11 November 1975 which is known as the *Shillong Accord*.

The post- Shillong Accord era, the NSCN under the leadership of Isaac Swu and TH. Muivah has been articulating the voice of Naga nationalism since its formation in 1980. It emerged as the most radical section of the Naga underground freedom movement. Due to differences among the leaders, the NSCN split in 1988. In recent years, the NSCN- IM is recognized as the strongest section of the militant nationalist movement in the Naga inhabited area. The NSCN- IM responded to the call for a political dialogue and entered into cease-fire agreement with the Government of India on July 25, 1997. Since then, the two parties have begun political negotiation and it continues till date.

The role of the Naga societies has undergone dramatic change in the present peace- talks. Unlike in the sixties and the seventies in which the Naga society plays a minimal role and entirely kept out of the peace

process. In the present context the Naga society is very active and has been playing a very positive role. The Naga society strongly believe that it is not just the militant groups or the present state of Nagaland; all the concerned, especially the Naga people should be taken into confidence, and all the Naga territories should be included to make the peace efforts realistic. While endorsing the peace initiative all the apex Naga bodies, like the Naga Hoho summit and other Hohos (the traditional decision making authority), Naga Mothers Association, Naga Student's Federation, United Naga Council, Manipur, Naga Women's Union, Manipur, Naga Peoples' Movement for Human Rights (hereafter the NPMHR), etc. strongly articulate these needs, else it would not be acceptable to the Naga people.<sup>12</sup> The Naga people had learnt a lesson from the past mistakes and they do not want an imposed- solution, which is against the wishes of the Nagas. There are many Naga societies taking part in the present peace process but it would be beyond my endeavor to describe the role-played by

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid. (Assam Tribune)

all of them. Some of the prominent ones will be highlighted in brief.

**Naga Hoho**: This is the traditional decision making apex body composed of all the tribes Hoho. Each tribe has its own Hoho and at the top stood this highest body. The Naga Hoho at its meeting at Mokokchung on February 26- 27, 1997 approved of the proposed talks between NSCN- IM leaders and the Central Government.<sup>13</sup> It also constituted a committee to initiate efforts at bringing the various underground groups under a common platform.<sup>14</sup> The Naga Hoho along with the support of other NGOs like NPMHR, Naga Mothers Association, the Church etc- is working relentlessly for the unification of all Naga underground groups. The liaison committee of the Hoho held several rounds of discussions with the NSCN- K and NSCN- IM leaders and had succeeded in brokering peace between the two warring factions.<sup>15</sup> The Naga Hoho is working out modalities for a formal merger of the two factions. In the past, the Central

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<sup>13</sup> Naga Peoples Movement for Human Rights vol. III, No. 6 December 1997 (New Delhi), p. 2.

<sup>14</sup> Hindustan Times March 3, 1997.

<sup>15</sup> The Asian Age May 19, 1997.

Government too advantage of the schism within the Naga society and had imposed solution detrimental to the Naga people. The Hoho is earnestly working not to repeat such history.

Taking the opportunity of cease fire agreement declared on August 1, 1997 between the Government of India and the NSCN- IM, the Naga Hoho and other NGOs had called the deferment of 1998 parliamentary and Assembly Elections in Naga areas in order to pave a way for congenial atmosphere and to facilitate the talks and thereby bear meaningful results. The various reasons given for deferment of elections are " (1) various groups/ factions will get involved which might lead to booth capturing, muscle exercise and all forms of extreme manipulations; (2) polling booths will become a battle ground for candidates to win over each other as experienced in the past; (3) which ever political party comes to power will sabotage the peace process because power and money is the ultimate goal; (4) post election will be followed by blood shed, sharp division among people and deceit which will be detrimental to the ongoing peace process; (5) to have

moral boost in the eyes of the outside world and to show that the Nagas are distinct race having rights for self-determination".<sup>16</sup>

The Naga Hoho at its meeting on December 18, 1997 decided to boycott election in case it was not deferred. It further urged all the Naga MLAs and MPs to resign. As a follow up of this resolution, a twelve-member Naga delegation submitted a memorandum to the Prime Minister of India on January 5, 1998 for deferment of election and extension of cease fire due to expire on January 31, 1998.<sup>17</sup> This was followed by launching of protest rallies in various Naga areas as well as in Delhi. The NSF submitted another memorandum to the President of India on February 14, 1998 and met His Excellency to appraise the agony and desire of the Naga people. Further, protest rallies were held in many district headquarters like Zunhebeto, Wokha, Senapati, Tamenglong, Urkhul, Chandel, Peren and Dimapur on January 27, 1998. The opposition parties in Nagaland also co-operated with the Hoho and did not contest the

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<sup>16</sup> Telegraph May 9, 1999.

<sup>17</sup> Public statement issued by Naga Hoho, undated.



election. As a result of this, forty-three candidates of the Congress-I were elected unopposed and it formed the Government.

Though the state Government had been formed in Nagaland, the Hoho and the NGOs does not want the state government to involve in the ongoing peace process. So far, the Hohos and other NGOs are earnestly working not to stall the peace process. In the past, many agreements and accords were made between the Government of India and the Naga leaders towards solving the Naga political problem. However, all attempts ended in deadlock. The Naga people do not want to end in deadlock but they wanted a concrete and lasting solution.

The peaceful negotiation between the Government of India and NSCN- IM has go to a standstill with the arrest of TH Muivah by the Thai Government and his subsequent imprisonment. The Naga Hoho has been pressuring the center to intervene for his release so that the political dialogue would continue.<sup>18</sup> As

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The 12 members representing different NGOs such as Naga Hoho, Council of Naga Baptist Churches, Naga Mothers Association, Naga G. B's Federation, Naga Peoples

mentioned in the cease- fire agreement that the talks would be at the Prime Ministerial level, his prolonged imprisonment could have a negative impact on the peace process. The central Government should not ignore TH Muivah if it is really serious about solving the Naga problem.

**The Naga National Movement for Human Rights (NPMHR):**

The NPMHR (hereafter the Movement) had its origin during the bleak days of the emergency period of 1970s. What began as an activity of a group of students in and around Delhi, especially in JNU, the Movement slowly institutionalized as a civil society, which strongly fights against atrocities committed by the agents of the Indian State, as well as against the repressive laws of the Indian State.

As codified in the " Declaration of the NPMHR", the institution takes upon itself the task of initiating organized struggle for achieving numerous, but interrelated, goals. Chief among them are *the right to life, the right to live together as a people and*

unification of all Naga lands, maximum participation of the people in making decisions affecting their lives, freedom from socioeconomic exploitation, political doctriation and military repression. The Movement also vows to struggle against anti - democratic practices and the dismantling of institutions and the social values which legitimize and perpetuate these within our society, against the practices of arbitrary arrest, detention, torture and execution, and the use of unconventional weapons, and against the imposition of undesirable, alien legal system and socio- cultural concepts and ways of life.

The creation of the Movement in 1978, which had consistently voiced the individual worth of a Naga, protection of their civil and democratic rights, filled up a civil and political vacuum, which had for long frustrated the young and old alike. The significance of this civil society lies in the fact that it had successfully won friendship and alliances with other organizations (both national and International) who also work towards the fulfillment of Human Rights claims. More importantly, the movement brought about

awareness regarding Human rights in an otherwise remote part of India. At the same time, it has been able to present the state of human rights violation of the Naga population to a wider non-Naga audience. In this regard, the activity of the Movement could be divided into four.

(1) Awareness drive: Internal to Naga society. (a) Bringing out regular journals (b) Conducting awareness meetings, seminars and rally, (c) Time to time pamphlets.

(2) Outside Naga Society: Participation in for a on Human Rights in and outside India, there by giving awareness regarding the Naga problem.

(3) Fact finding committees which investigate a particular violation (sometimes, other non- Naga organizations are invited for this task) and cases are filed against a particular party in higher Courts.

(4) Spontaneous reaction on a particular issue or incident in the form of rally, dharna and

presentation of memoranda to the concerned authorities.

The manifold tasks would not be fulfilled in the initial days of its conception. Like many other student bodies, the association suffered from financial shortcomings and arbitrary reactions from the government of India. Sometimes funds had to be collected through music concerts.<sup>19</sup> And again, the fear of government security personnel who attempted to seize the association's documents was always present. In one such incident the Delhi police ransacked a Naga student's room. Even one of the funding members, Mr. Ahu Sakhrie was put behind the bar during the emergency days.

**NPMHR's Contribution:** The first of the NPMHR's awareness drive homeward took place in Kohima from 10-15<sup>th</sup> December 1978. It was part of the observance of 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the universal declaration of human rights. The program consisted of touring various villages around Kohima and conducted public meetings to

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<sup>19</sup> Sakhrie, Ahu, "Association with the NPMHR- A brief personnel account," NPMHR, Quarterly publication, vol. III, no. 6, December 1997, pp. 8-10 and p. 20.

appraised the people of their rights and also to get first hand information of their suffering. The week concluded with a mass rally in Kohima town. The interaction program benefited both the parties. The association had first-hand experience of the people's plight, and the common man learnt about their rights from the association.

The activities of 1978 came to an end with the organization of protest rallies against violation of human rights in the Naga inhabited areas in Delhi, Shillong and Kohima simultaneously on September 24<sup>th</sup>. The rally was a by product of inquiries made by the NPMHR regarding the two students by the Assam Rifles in Phek town, the rape case of Mrs. Kuono, a sixty-five years old woman by the BSF in Kohima and the arrest of four Naga youth movement.

The year 1979 marked the beginning of awareness program beyond the Naga society. On April 23<sup>rd</sup> 1979, the NPMR arranged a public meeting in JNU. Many eminent personalities and representatives of many political

parties in India spoke on the Naga problems. "This was a moral booster to the movement".<sup>20</sup>

The movement gained momentum since 1980. Besides the usual programs, the movement began to conduct seminars, workshops, meetings etc., on social economic and political aspect of the Naga society back in Kohima as well as in Delhi. But 1982 was a watershed in the history of the movement. For the first time, government of India and the army were taken to court<sup>21</sup>. The case was regarding the army excessiveness when on February 1982; twenty-four personnel of the 21 Sikh Regiment were killed in an ambush at Namthilok by the undergrounds. The army for more than a month tortured Naga civilians after the ambush, and in some cases reports of sexual harassment and murder by the security forces were confirmed. The NPMHR sponsored fact-finding team of women in Delhi, which vouched the veracity of the NPMHR's report. The Supreme Court accepted the writ petition and the concerned authorities were summoned.

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid. p. 9.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid. p. 9.

Following suit, from 1984, many cases were filed against the security forces. 1994 to 1996 witnessed the highest number of Habeas Corpus writ petitions filed against the Union of India and the state of Nagaland in the Gauhati High Court, Kohima bench. All together there were 47 cases.<sup>22</sup>

Moving away from issues legal and civil, the NPMHR also took prime interest in tackling contemporary issues of land, environment and sustainable development. Land has been a primary concern for the indigenous population. The NPMHR took part in various indigenous population conferences conducted by the United Nations Working Group in indigenous population.<sup>23</sup> The persistent theme of the presentation was that their economy was based on their inalienable rights to their land and forest.<sup>24</sup>

**The NPMHR and Peace Talks:** The idea of grassroots participation in any peace talks, for reasons of transparency and to bring about a permanent solution to

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid. p. 9.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid. p. 9.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid. p. 10.



the Naga problem was in embryonic form since the beginning of the organization. The NPMHR checked not only the excessiveness of state repression but also extended its solidarity with other Naga associations and bodies whenever a call was given to support the cause of the Naga people.

Two incidents remained on public consciousness, when, first the NPMHR supported the mass call in 1998 to boycott the General Elections. Second, when the NPMHR organized a "peoples to people dialogue" under the theme of "A journey to Conscience" from January 28 to 31, 2000.

The first case to boycott the election sprang from the notion that in order to make cease-fire meaningful a political solution must be worked out between the Government of India and the Naga leaders.<sup>25</sup> The imposition of elections against the wishes of the people would only perpetuate violence.

Closely related with it was the interaction program initiated by the NPMHR in Delhi. In the "A

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<sup>25</sup> NPMHR, Quarterly Publication, vol. 1, no.4, July 1996, pp. 14-16.

journey to Conscience", a four daylong program, the Movement emphasized that "a genuine solution can only be arrived at through negotiation and dialogue based on mutual respect and dignity".<sup>26</sup> The highlight of the first day of the program was informal discussions and gathering with Naga seniors and elders living in Delhi. The second day focussed on informal discussions and interactions with members of Indian civil society (intellectuals, journalist, civil and democratic rights organizations and he concerned citizens). The second part of the program was a musical program. The third day was a peaceful gathering at Gandhi Samadhi, to reaffirm the Nagas struggle for peace and justice and freedom. The last day culminated with a peace march. This was a symbolic statement to the world that the Nagas are committed to a peaceful democratic solution.

**The Church:** Other than Hoho there are various other societies that are involved in the peace process. The Church and its leaders along with the Hoho endeavors to bring about lasting peace. The Church leaders having

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<sup>26</sup> "United Nations" in NPMHR, Quarterly Publication, vol. III, no.6, December 1997, pp. 30-31.

played the roles of peace brokers whenever there is a need. Through the initiative of the Church and the Naga Hoho an MOU of peace was signed on June 21, 1997, by the Chakesang underground leaders belonging to different groups, for bringing back peace in the region.<sup>27</sup> They agreed to bury the bitter past and end internecine blood shed among them.

The church leaders also tried to bring together different underground groups for reconciliation during the Atlanta peace conference on July 28, 1997.<sup>28</sup> The Baptist peace followers of North America endorsed the conference. The attempt was not successfully due to the boycott of NSCN- IM leaders.

During its 125- years of Christianity celebrations at Kohima on November 1997, the Church leaders fervently appealed to all sections of the underground armies to stop fighting among themselves so that political statement could be brought about by peaceful

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid. p. 30.

<sup>28</sup> Memorandum submitted to the PM of India on 5<sup>th</sup> January 1999, New Delhi, pp. 42-43.

means.<sup>29</sup> As both the NSCN factions had declared a truce for the peaceful celebration of that event, the Church leaders appealed not to resume hostility again.

The Naga Churches have been tirelessly working to find a lasting peace for many decades. It has been persistently voicing against any form of violence- be it committed by the Naga underground or Indian army. The Church believes that military power cannot bring any solution to political problem. The political problem must have political solution and it can be obtained only through peaceful means. The Church leaders have been constantly working towards these ends.

**Role of other societies:** There are various other bodies that are involved in the peace process. Different bodies such as the Naga Student Federation, the Naga Mothers' Association each working in their own sphere as well as under the directive of Hoho, which is the Apex body of the traditional decision making authority. In Manipur the United Naga Council (UNC, the apex body

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<sup>29</sup> "an appeal to our Fellow Nagas," a pamphlet issued on the occasion of the "A Journey to the Conscience" January 28- 31, 2000.

for Manipur only) is working so that the Manipur Naga inhabited areas would not be left out in the political settlement. The Nagas in Manipur had been demanding to extend the cease- fire agreement in Naga inhabited areas of Manipur. For this purpose, mass rally cum public meeting was held on October 7,1997 in all the four Naga inhabited districts of Manipur- Chandel, Senapati, Tamenglong and Ukhrul.<sup>30</sup> The valley people of Manipur are apprehensive of the disintregation of Manipur if a political settlement is reached between the underground Naga leaders and the Government of India. Over this issue, the hill- valley dichotomy had emerged and it is affecting their relationship.

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<sup>30</sup> Nagaland Post, October, 13, 1997.

## Conclusion

Peace talks arise in a situation where the parties concerned have come to realize the importance of bringing back normalcy. Whereas there exists a vast amount of literature on the concept of peace, the primary concern of the work has been outside the field of epistemological inquiry. What it proposed to do instead was an historico-political examination of the "Naga Peace- talks," relating at the same time; the question to sociological factors as well.

Any study, however, of a peace talk demands a deep knowledge about the history of the problem, which, in this study, is the Naga Movement that has been going on since pre - Independence days, although the beginning of direct information with the Indian State is normally dated in the early 1950's. It is also necessary to note that the use of the term "peace" assumes that there has been in the background a situation of conflict, Likewise, the term "talk" denotes the avoidance of any violent tactics as a means to bringing about the desired normative goal of "peace" while 'military means' have been evident in the movement itself as well as in the responses of the Indian State.

The study aims at understanding the non - military aspects and efforts that have been going on simultaneously to put an end to the conflict. Apart from the self - initiated talks between the Naga outfits and the government of India, the study also analyses the role of the Naga Society in making initiatives, thereby showing the urgency of bringing peace in their land. The present study should be distinguished from others in inter - relating such different dimensions.

Coming back to the nature of the Naga Movement, the knowledge of which is essential to the understanding of any peace - initiatives, two or three facts may be taken as crucial:

The demands have varied from "complete independence" from the Indian State to "a Bhutan type protectorate Status" for Nagaland, unification for all Naga inhabited areas being presumed herein.

The movement, that has origins way back in the pre - Independence days, fought for "complete Independence" of Nagas during the Freedom Struggle days, and has always maintained that the Nagas were never part of India.

The movement that far preceded the formation of the state of Nagaland as a unit of the Indian State in 1963

has been going on ever more intensely after formation of the State, too.

In the light of this background that was presented in chapters II and III, one should take note of the subtleties involved between cultural communities. In the movement, various factors have played significantly forming a web. However, it is important not to admixture all of these, which has the effect of reducing the movement to a mere ethnic problem, especially seen in the light of modernity which tends de-legitimize ethnicity. Questions of history, culture, and identity all play a crucial role in the movement. Even the geographical isolation has often been cited as one major cause. Understood as a question of identity, one is reminded of Stuart Hall's words,

*(I)dentities are about questions of using the resource of history, language, and culture in the process of becoming rather than being; not 'who we are' or 'where we come from,' so much as what might become...<sup>1</sup>*

Identity holds significance for any community in as much as it refers to "coming - to - terms with our routes" rather than a "return to roots".

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<sup>1</sup> Hall, Stuart, "Introduction: Who Needs Identity," in *Questions of Cultural Identity* S. Hall, Paul Du Gay (eds.), Sage, 1996, p. 2.



Interestingly, in this regard, during the British colonial rule in India, they hardly attempted to conquer and control over the Naga Hills. From 1879 to 1945 they could not make any agreement with the Nagas as their subject. They occupied only some parts of Naga Hills for their administrative convenience, loosely administered and treated separately the Nagas as a different ethnic stock from the plain people. This feeling of a distinct identity or a consciousness of their being different from others was largely responsible for the Naga movement.

As have been described in the second chapter, the movement is a consequence of the intermingling of ethnicity, geographical factors, history etc. the Naga Territory became bifurcated even in the history of post - Independent India. Negotiations on the political future of the Nagas took place even in the pre - Independence days. Worthy of noting is the *Nine Points Agreements*, the preamble to which stated that "the rights of the Nagas to develop themselves according to their freely expressed wishes is recognized". Failure of such negotiations started when the Constituent Assembly did not ratify the Agreement. A disappointment amongst the Nagas seems to have persisted ever since.

The participation of the civil society in the peace - making efforts manifested in evident ways when way back

in 1964 the Nagaland Baptist Church Council unanimously resolved to request the Government of India and the Federal Government of Nagaland to form a peace mission, though the many rounds of talks could not produce tangible results. It is important here to also note that such an initiative came after the formation of the state of Nagaland, particularly when the NNC refused to recognize it.

The efforts of various social and cultural organizations to help bring the parties concerned at the negotiating table did not end there. Such attempts can be traced to the Naga Club founded in 1918, comprising of Government officials and leading headmen of the villages. In 1923 was set up the Tribal Council of the Lothas. The Naga Club, which was converted into Naga Hills Districts Tribunal Council in 1945, and finally into the Naga National Council, in its long history has spearheaded the Naga movement. The Naga Peoples' Convention (NPC) was set up in 1957. It acted as a mediator between the Government of India and the underground Nagas and was instrumental in the creation of the state of Nagaland.

The eagerness of (some sections of) the Naga society to achieve a long lasting solution is evident if one notes that the Church leaders never gave up efforts for "peace" even after the first Naga Peace Talks ended up in

failure. Such enthusiasm has always existed in the Naga society. This assumes significance since one would hope a greater participation of all sections of the society for the success of any talks.

Another question that needs to be addressed is why the talks in the past did not succeed. If one recalls, the failure of the first Peace Talks caused splits in the NNC and the 16<sup>th</sup> August 1973 witnessed a mass surrendering by the Revolutionary group to the Government. Hopes were glowing that the era of unrest of violence would be over.

Following a *weakening* of the movement at that stage parallel to an- intensification on the part of the Indian army, the Shillong Accord of 1975 came about. Despite it the movement has not died down. The question looms large; why? What probably went wrong with the peace talks in the past? A realistic answer to it could be relevant for any other Peace Talks in future.

As regards the first Peace Talks (1964-67), as have been mentioned in the previous chapter, two or three points may be cited. Firstly, the leaders of the movement- the President of NNC, AZ Phizo and the General Secretary, TH Muivah were abroad while negotiations were taking place. The absence of the leaders at the negotiating table seems to have robbed away any

legitimacy to the Talks. Secondly, the Talks were characterized by the no - involvement of the civil society thereby marking the absence of a voice to articulate strong pressures and opinions of the public at large. Thirdly, differing opinions of the leaders also plagued the talks. Particularly, feuds based on tribal loyalties may be taken note of.

Coming to the second Peace Talks that took off in 1997, lessons from the past may be learnt. While implicating factors in this case are many, there are positive sides as well. As different from the first one, the presence of various sections/bodies of the Naga society can be seen in this effort. On the negative side could be cited the unpleasant factor of factionalism among the outfits. One could hope better if all the groups come together under one single platform. Initiatives from the mainstream civil society apart from the Naga society should always be a welcome pressure. But, in regard to any Naga Peace Talks is that the Nagas are scattered in four states namely- Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur and Nagaland and in Myanmar as well. Here is a double-edged problem of bigger political ramifications to be faced at any levels of talks.

If a unified territory of all Naga inhabited areas is to be worked out, there exist the difficulty of facing

objections from other (affected) states. On the other hand if peace is negotiated for the present state of Nagaland, one cannot be sure of a lasting solution to the Naga problem as a whole. Probably, the (affected) parties should also be taken into confidence for any such solution.

The fact that the formation of a new state did not bring about a solution to Naga question is reasons enough to ponder on the success of any consequent peace talks. It is also here that a deep knowledge of the Naga Society and its distinct history is called for. Various reasons and factors could be listed for the failure of the talks in the past. But, a peace talk is a way out and assumes the abandoning of the extremity of positions and conditions. As has been pointed out in the Introduction, the question of attainability of peace becomes foremost in any talks. Talks in this sense become "bargains" but for the success of the desired results, it has to be a 'mutually advantageous bargain,' especially if the future generations have to attach legitimacy to it.

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## **AGREED GROUND RULES FOR CEASE-FIRE FINALIZED BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA AND NSCN ON 12TH DECEMBER 1997**

In pursuance of the Cease-fire as originally agreed to on 25th July 1997 and its further extension on 25th October, 1997 for the period of three months, discussions were held between the representatives of the Government of India led by Shri. K. Padmanabhaiah and the National Socialist Council of Nagaland led by Mr. V S. Atem, to finalize the ground rules and modalities for the implementation of the Cease-fire with the view to ensuring continuance of an effective Cease-fire to pay the way for a peaceful and a meaningful political dialogue. After exchanging views in context of the experience of the first three months of the Cease-fire, both sides agreed to undertake steps for effective and unambiguous implementation of the Cease-fire to create a proper and conducive atmosphere for further discussions. It was mutually agreed that during the period of Cease-fire :

- (a) there would be no offensive operations like ambush, raid and attack leading to death/injuries/damage or loss of property against the NSCN by the Indian Army, Paramilitary Forces and the Police;
- (b) patrolling by the Indian Army, Paramilitary Forces and the Police would continue to prevent infiltration of Militants and Arms as hitherto. However, patrolling within one Kilometer of NSCN designated camps, decided after due consultation in the Monitoring mechanism, will be carried out with intimation to them. It is noted that no such camps are located/will be located in Urban areas, and/or near Highways;
- (c) protection of convoys and patrolling of roads would continue to be undertaken by the Indian Army, Paramilitary Forces and the Police;
- (d) the Indian Army, Paramilitary Forces and the Police would issue instructions to their formations, not to use masks to cover their faces, during the period of Cease-fire;
- (e) the NSCN would not undertake offensive operations like ambush, raid, sniping and attack leading to death/injury/damage or loss of property;
- (f) in the interest of promoting peace process, there would be no parading (either in groups or individually) of NSCN cadres in uniform and/or with arms. For the present, this would cover towns including District Headquarters, Sub-

Divisional Headquarters, Public transport, Highways and such EAC Headquarters and other areas as may be mutually agreed upon by the Joint Monitoring mechanism;

- (g) there would be no blockade of roads and communications, disruption of economic or developmental activities as well as essential services by the NSCN;
- (h) it is mutually agreed that no safe haven or sanctuary to any armed groups or elements will be provided by anyone to ensure that the Cease-fire conditions were not misutilised;
- (i) on the Government of India side, a concern was expressed that forcible collection of money or essential supplies and intimidation of individuals including government officials were taking place in the state. The NSCN representatives stated that theirs being a people's organization, they did not resort to such activities. However, in view of the concern expressed by the Government of India and in the interest of promoting the peace process, the NSCN representatives agreed that the above activities would be prevented ;
- (j) it was further agreed that implementation of these ground rules and modalities will be monitored by a group constituted for this purpose comprising of representatives of NSCN, N(K)'s and representatives nominated by the Government of India. However, it was also agreed that any accidental encounter or violation should not be allowed to jeopardize the peace process and the effect of any such incident should be localized through mutual consultations. All cases of violation of these ground rules would be referred to the Monitoring group, so that the reasons for violations are identified and steps to be taken to prevent such violations in future are suggested. Notwithstanding the above, the Army, the Paramilitary Forces and the Police will act in an impartial and unbiased manner against any group causing public disturbance or when there is imminent danger to public safety or peace;
- (K) on the Government of India side, a concern was expressed about reports of forced recruitment to armed cadres. The NSCN representatives stated that they have not and do not resort to forced recruitment. However, in the interest of promoting the peace process, it was agreed that if there are any reports of forced recruitment, they should be discussed in the Monitoring group.

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