

# NAGALAND - A STUDY OF HISTORY IN DEVELOPMENT

**Jogamaya Saikia**

Nagaland, the sixteenth state of Indian Union is a panoramic land with hills, ridges and valleys covered with evergreen forests. It has an area of 16,579 sq.km with a population of 7,74,930 according to the 1981 Census, with 16 major Naga tribes. For administration it is divided into 7 districts with Kohima as the state capital. Dimapur, the lone railway station and the gateway to the state lies in plains.

Nagaland is only 24 years of age with statehood. Prior to this it was a hill district only. Development was little to nil with two high Schools and Kohima as district headquarter. From this stage, it reached the zenith of development when it attained statehood. The land was declared as 'disturbed area' in the post independence period. Therefore, India's first two Five Year Plans did not see light in this land. With statehood, however, the local people and administrators have felt that time has come to think in terms of improvement in order to raise the quality of life. Developmental aspects like health, literacy, employment in government services and private enterprises, the agricultural sector, industries, communications etc. have received urgent attention in the development strategy.

While taking into account these drawbacks, this paper will try to bring out how much of developmental plans have been implemented so far. Further, it will focus on how far these developments have brought about changes in different phases of the socio-economic life of the Nagas.

## **Medical and Public Health Services**

The Public Health Department started with the

opening of a dispensary at Chumukedima in 1875. With the Japanese invasion, hospital camps were set up in and around the Naga Hills District under the charge of civil and military doctors. The Naga Hospital i.e., the Kohima Civil Hospital was established as a gift of the Government to the Nagas in the post-war period with residential buildings for the staff. At present there are 30 general hospitals with 1,242 beds, 80 dispensaries, 17 Public Health Centres, 2 T.B. hospitals with 25 beds and one Mental Hospital. They are looked after by 162 medical officers of different categories in different districts. At present a full fledged Medical Directorate takes care of Health. More than 347 villages are covered with regular drinking water supply.

### **Literacy**

Missionaries were the harbingers of western education in Nagaland. A high school in Kohima was upgraded from the Mission M.E. School and was the only high school till 1941 when it was known as Government High School, Kohima. At present, however, there is a campus of the North-Eastern Hill University (NEHU), 1 College of Education, 1 SCERT Campus, 8 Colleges, 111 Government High Schools, 303 M.E. Schools, and 1,144 Primary Schools. It is a matter of pride that now each village of Nagaland has at least one primary school and the village children do not have to go out of their village for early education.

Besides these, schools for vocational education have also been opened. There is 1 Polytechnic, 3 JTTI, 1 ITI, 560 special institutions for Adult Education, and one Law College in the state. In all these different institutions there are more than two lakh students and 10,805 teachers. Besides these, many private schools are coming up to meet the growing need.

In 1971, the literary percentage in Nagaland was 27.40% and at present it has increased to 41.99% (1981).

### **Employment**

With the increased rate of literacy, the employment opportunities have increased in different fields i.e., different departments of the Government, industry, medical, electricity, engineering, agriculture etc. Besides these, people have not given up their methods of age old agriculture. The traditional means of agriculture i.e. jhum cultivation is now being replaced by terrace cultivation with irrigation and soil conservation facilities. Agriculturists have already taken to double or triple cropping system instead of a single crop.

The present growth of employment opportunities in government and non-government sectors can be seen in Tables I & II.

The employment pattern in government services (according to the Directorate of Economics and Statistics) show a rise from 14.73% in 1965-66 to 22.78% in 1979-80.

The working force pattern in the agricultural sector occupies 72.36% of the working force compared to 40.11% in 1971 and 33.08% in 1961.

### **Communications**

For any development, the first need is improvement in the communication system. Communication includes infrastructure by constructing roads for regular transport and the railways besides airways, post and telegraph, telephone, and mass media like newspaper, AIR and T.V. Centres etc.

At the time of statehood, Nagaland had few roadways like the N.H. 39 and from Kohima to Mokukchung via Amguri. There is only one N.F. Rly station at Dimapur. At present one airport at Dimapur caters for Gauhati, Calcutta and Delhi. Now all towns and district headquarters are connected by road. AIR and T.V. Centres are functioning. Regular daily newspapers are published and well circulated. Though many interior villages are not yet touched by transport system, communications have radically improved. The Nagaland Transport Service, for instance, now covers Gauhati, Jorhat and Imphal. This inter-state transport linkage has brought Nagaland closer to the neighbouring states.

### **Effect**

This development in and around Nagaland has had its impact on the socio-economic life of the Nagas. The change is not sudden but natural, but quick in its rate. The impact of the development is estimated as below.

### **Social**

The Nagas are a mixture of 16 major tribes. they live in ethnic groups within the jurisdiction of geographical territories. Within that, each tribe has its own customs, laws, costumes and institutional practices.

Now the Naga society is a society in transition. This tradition is due to the mixing with different ethnic groups, and different people from outside the state. Salaried jobs have given them ample opportunity to have relations with the outside world in the form of tours, excursions, outing for holidays or other purposes. It has given opportunity to them to broaden their views and exchange their ideas resulting in assimilation, adoption and adjustment.

The ethnic identity is maintained, yet a mixture has peeped in. Inter-ethnic marriage has brought genetic drift, change of food habits and cultural traits, migration etc. The total outlook is now looking forward to modernity from their age-old ethnic society.

### **Economic**

Education and employment have raised the standards and quality of life. Income in terms of money economy is well understood. Now daily markets are held not only in urban areas but even in the interior parts. Transport and increased communication facilities have opened up new markets. Information about prices and products now regularly flow to the remote areas.

### **Standards of Living**

When we speak about development, it is related to standards of living of people concerned. Here, people have utilised the facilities of education and employment in the terms of quality of life. In this period of transition, we observe that traditional style & dress co-exists side by side with the western in dress, food habits, housing etc.

The Nagas are prospering fast with their statehood. Development in small scale industries has taken place side by side with establishment of big industries like paper mills, sugar mill etc., a sure sign that the Nagas can cope up with any sort of development leading towards the progress of Nagaland.

**TABLE I**  
**DISTRICT-WISE DISTRIBUTION OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES**  
**(UPTO 31 MARCH 1980)**

Sl. No.	Districts	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV	Total
1.	Kohima	354	463	8934	7767	17518
2.	Mokokchung	90	135	3512	2810	6998
3.	Wokha	14	40	1157	319	1530
4.	Zunheboto	15	57	1574	518	2164
5.	Tuensang	39	123	3023	5247	8432
6.	Phek	17	68	1703	1410	3198
7.	Mon	19	58	1431	1400	2908
Total Nagaland		548	944	21785	19471	42748

Source: State Government Employees in Nagaland, Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Nagaland, Kohima.

**TABLE II**  
**DISTRICT-WISE DISTRIBUTION OF WORKING FORCE**  
**AS PER 1981 CENSUS**

Sl.No.	Districts	Cultivators	Agricultural labourers	Household industry
1.	Kohima	62,748	2,007	782
2.	Mokokchung	29,495	277	53
3.	Wokha	18,841	48	89
4.	Zunheboto	21,683	97	103
5.	Tuensang	65,553	181	65
6.	Phek	29,688	67	50
7.	Mon	38,233	302	319
Total Nagaland		266,241	2,979	1,461