

**NAGA NATIONALISM AND NATIONAL
SOCIALIST COUNCIL OF NAGALAND**

BY

**A. S. ATAI SHIMRAY
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**

A. Thesis.

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FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**



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Dedicated

to

my wife - Tiakhala Shimray and children - Shimreichon Shimray,
Semmi (David) Shimray and Grace Shimray (who was born in the
midst of this work)

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Grams : NEMU
phone ; 3941

North-Eastern Hill University



DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

Mayurbhanj House
Nongthymmai
Shillong-793014

Dr. Bimal J. Deb
Reader
Department of Political Science

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that Mr. A. S. Atai Shimray has worked under my supervision for the thesis entitled **NAGA NATIONALISM AND NATIONAL SOCIALIST COUNCIL OF NAGALAND**. This thesis is a record hard work done by Mr. Shimray and has not been submitted to any other University for a research degree. I recommend this thesis for submission to North-Eastern Hill University for a degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Shillong

The 2nd May, 1996

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'B.J. Deb', written in a cursive style.

(B.J. Deb)

Supervisor

PREFACE

This research work seeks to analyse Naga political movement under the National Socialist Council of Nagaland. The circumstances leading to the Shillong Accord, the enigmatic silence of A.Z. Phizo, the unresolved issues and the dimensions of the Naga political movement are highlighted with particular reference to the growth of Naga nationalism and the role of the NSCN.

This post-Shillong Accord period probably constitutes the most controversial part of Naga political history. The aftermath of the Accord has produced far-reaching consequences and brought about a complete change of the direction of the political movement. Thus, the research work seeks to analyse the emergence and the role of the NSCN in espousing national sentiments of the people as part of the Naga political movement. In defence of its stand this organisation has chalked out prospective plan of strengthening Naga unity with its anchorage on well coordinated strategy of operation. Hence, this research work covers exhaustively the NSCN set up, organizational frame and administration, ideology, programme, leadership and support base. The Thesis contain seven chapters :

Chapter One deals with the socio-political background of the Nagas in general which includes the origin, social and political organisation and the impact of colonial administration and christianity,

Chapter Two is devoted to an understanding of the conceptual framework against the background of Naga political issue. Ever since Naga declaration of independence on 14th August 1947 momentous developments had taken place affecting the destiny of

the Nagas. The movement that followed in the wake of independence declaration continued through different phases. The spread of violence, creation of statehood, army operations, maintenance of a fragile cease-fire, cleavage between a section of the Naga population and the armed nationalists had altogether cast a deep imprint on the psyche of the people.

Chapter Three deals with the controversial Shillong Accord of 1975 signed between the Government of India and the representatives of the Naga National Council and Federal Government of Nagaland. An attempt has been made to study the various circumstances leading to the signing of the Accord and to critically examine its effects on the Nagas in general and the movement in particular.

Chapter Four deals with the NSCN set up exhaustively, its organisational frame and administration, objectives, ideology, strategies, leadership and support base.

Chapter Five is devoted to the study of NSCN as a factor in Nagaland politics. An attempt has been made to understand and examine the attitude and perception of the state politicians and leaders.

Chapter Six deals with the Government of India's perception of the Naga political issue taking into account the policies adopted and followed from time to time. A critical analysis of Government of India's policy towards the Naga issue is also presented. The chapter also includes a study of international dimension of the

NSCN, particularly its international campaign and alleged involvement of some foreign powers.

Chapter Seven the concluding chapter embodies some of the major findings.

Methodology

The research work relied chiefly on primary sources covering NSCN literature such as NSCN manifesto, GPRN Constitution, leaflets, pamphlets, handouts and unpublished writings of prominent NSCN and NNC leaders. Relevant data was collected through written interview of top ranking NSCN leaders and also of the NNC leaders. The secondary sources of data for the purpose of research work covered published books, journals, newspaper reports, press notes, and Nagaland Legislative Assembly proceedings.

The scholar is grateful to the following libraries for letting him consult and utilize their facilities : Indo-Myanmar Research Centre -Patkai Christian College (Dimapur), North Eastern Hill University Library (Shillong), Indian Council of Social Science Research (Shillong), State Central Library (Shillong), North East Council library (Shillong), Rhino Library - Defence (Shillong), Jawaharlal Nehru University Library (Delhi), Nagaland state Legislative Assembly Library (Kohima).

The scholar do wish to express his gratitude to the faculty members of the Department of Political Science (NEHU) for their active cooperation and providing necessary help.

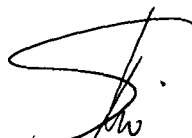
The scholar is extremely grateful to all his friends and well-wishers for their encouragement, prayer, support and valuable advice.

This research work would have remained incomplete had not my research supervisor Dr. B.J. Deb. taken keen interest and provided necessary guidelines. He was indeed a good friend and took much pain to correct my draft. I am extremely grateful to him.

The scholar is indebted to all the persons who responded to the 'written interview' conducted by him. Prominent among them are : Isak Chishi Swu, Khodao Yanthan, Ramyo Zimik, Rh. Raising, Thuingaleng Muivah, Brigadier Wungmatem, Zasio Huire and others.

The scholar is grateful to Ms. K. Goel for typing out the thesis within a limited time.

In the absence of the scholar, Tiakhala Shimray (my wife) was managing alone the whole domestic work with proficiency. I am proud of her and my children. Hence, this work is dedicated to their honour.



Awungshi Atai Shimray

Glossary of Naga Terms (used in this work)

1. Ang Village chief or headman
2. Ahza a degree which emanated from Oking (headquarters) and would bring death to traitors or anyone violating the code of conduct for its members as well as anyone under its jurisdiction.
3. Alee Command Foreign Legion (Command).
4. Ato Kilonser Prime Minister.
5. Chaplee Kilonser Finance Minister.
6. Hoho Parliament.
7. Kedahge President.
8. Keya Kilonser Defence Minister.
9. Killo Kilonser Home Minister.
10. Kilonser Minister.
11. Kuknalim long live the land or victory to Nagaland.
12. Lota Kilonser Food Minister.
13. Maran Kasa 'Feast of Honour'.
14. Morung or Longshim Youth dormitory.
15. Oking Headquarters (top-secret mobile Headquarters of the Naga nationalist).
16. Tatar Hoho members of the National Parliament.
17. Yehzabo Constitution.

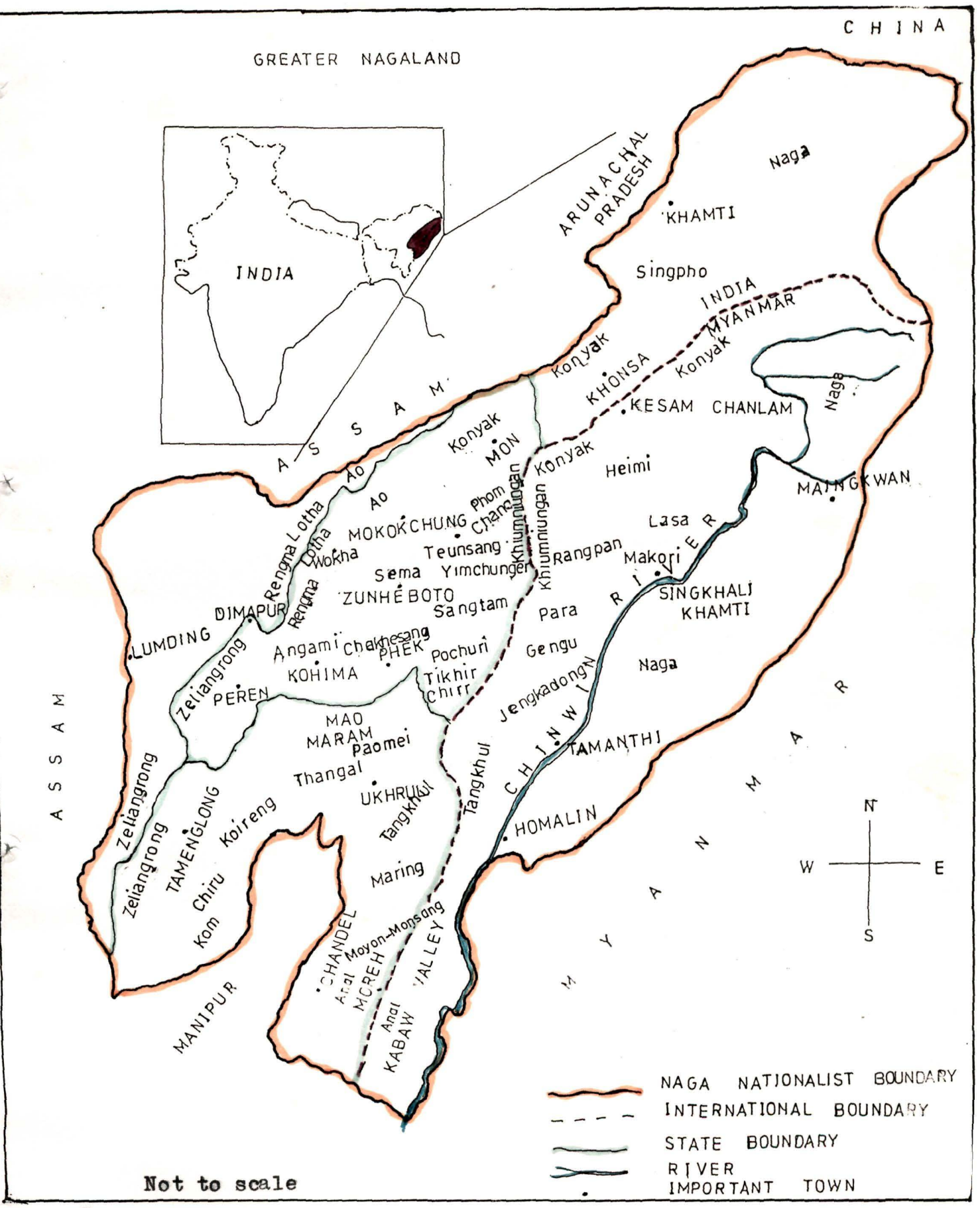
List of Abbreviated Terms

1. AC Ashiho Chaomai battalion.
2. ACFOD Asian Cultural Forum on Development.
3. AIPP Asian Indigenous Peoples Pact.
4. ALMA Achik Liberation Matgrik Army.
5. ALP Arakan Liberation Party.
6. BSF Bodo Security Force. (Now rechristened National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB))
7. CAO Central Administrative Officer.
8. CID Central Intelligence Department.
9. CLF Chin Liberation Front.
10. CNC Council of Nagaland Churches.
11. CNBC Council of Naga Baptist Churches.
12. COK Council of Khalistan.
13. DAB Democratic Alliance of Burma.
14. DLP Democratic Labour Party (a regional political party in Nagaland state).
15. DNSF Dimasa National Security Force.
16. FA Federal Army.
17. FGN Federal Government of Nagaland.
18. GPRN Government of Peoples' Republic of Nagaland.
19. HALC Hynhiewhep Achik Liberation Council.
20. HPC Hmar People's Convention (Mizoram).
21. HVT Hevuto Battalion.
22. IB Intelligence Bureau.
23. IFSU Intelligence Field Security Units.






24. IHRAAM International Human Rights Association of American Minorities.
25. ISG Internal Security Group.
26. ISI Inter Services Intelligence (Pakistan).
27. IWGIA International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs.
28. KCP Kanglepak Communist Party (Manipur state).
29. KIA Kachin Independent Army.
30. KIO Kachin Independent Organisation.
31. KNA Kuki National Army.
32. KNL Karbi National Volunteers.
33. KNU Karen National Union.
34. KWIA Flemish Supporting Group for Indigenous People.
35. KYKL Kanglei Yawol Kanna Lup (a militant organisation comprising of the KCP, UNLF and PREPAK).
36. LIC Low Intensity Conflict.
37. LU Liaison Units (army intelligence).
38. MI Military Intelligence.
39. MRG Minority Right Group (London).
40. NESO North East Student's Organisation.
41. NLFT National Liberation Front of Tripura.
42. NMSP New Mon State Party (Myanmar).
43. NNC Naga National Council.
44. NPC National People's Council (a regional political party in Nagaland state).
45. NPC Naga People's Convention (the body responsible for bringing of the statehood of Nagaland).

46. NPMHR Naga People's Movement for Human Rights.
47. NSCN National Socialist Council of Nagaland.
48. NSF Naga Student's Federation (apex students' body of all the Nagas).
49. NSW0 National Socialist Women Organisation.
50. NUFA National United Front of Arakan.
51. NVG Naga Vigil Group.
52. NYLF Nagaland Youth Liberation Front.
53. PAN People's Army of Nagaland.
54. PIB Press Information Bureau (Defence Wing)
(Indian defence propaganda wing manned by the Public Relation Officer (PRO), who is generally an Intelligence Officer).
55. PLA People's Liberation Army (Manipur).
56. PMN People's Militia of Nagaland.
57. PWG People's War Group.
58. RAW Research and Analysis Wing.
59. RPF Revolutionary People's Front.
60. STF Security Task Force (NSCN army wing).
61. TADA Terrorist and Disruptive (Prevention) Act.
62. TNV Tripura National Volunteers.
63. UFSEHR United Front of the South East Himalayan Region.
64. ULFA United Liberation Front of Asom.
65. UNLF United Liberation Front (Manipur).
66. UNPO Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organisation.

- 67. UNWGRP United Nations Working Group on Indigenous Peoples
- 68. WBA World Baptist Alliance
- 69. WNP Wa National Party (Myanmar)
- 70. ZP Zesibituo Battalion (NSCN)



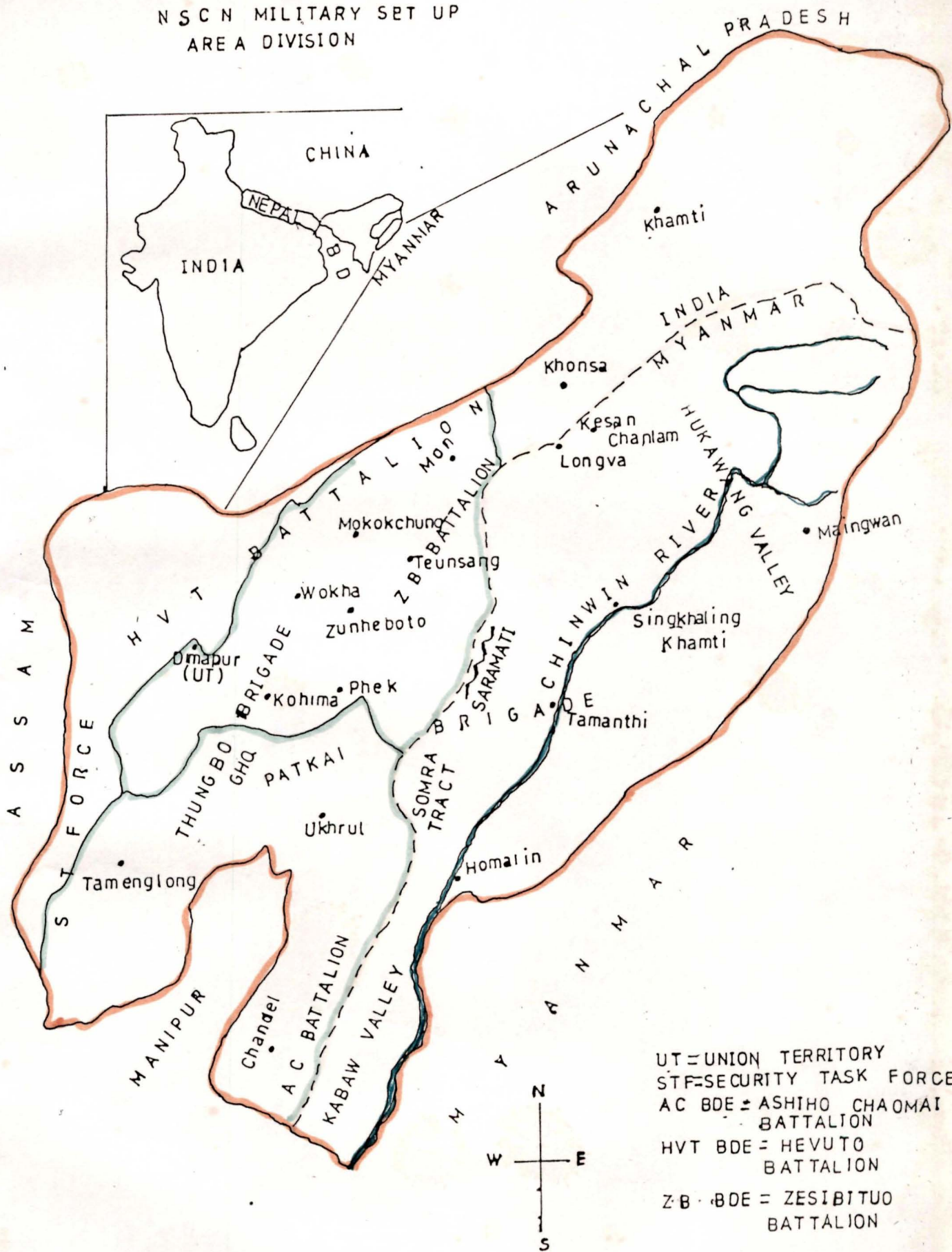
Not to scale

-  NAGA NATIONALIST BOUNDARY
-  INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY
-  STATE BOUNDARY
-  RIVER
-  IMPORTANT TOWN

MAP I

Source: For a United Naga Lim, NSF publication.

N S C N MILITARY SET UP
AREA DIVISION



MAP 11

Not to scale

Source: NSCN Free Nagaland manifesto.

CHAPTER I

SOCIO-POLITICAL BACKGROUND OF THE NAGAS

The Nagas are a freedom-loving and warlike people, a powerful race, belonging to the Sino-Mongolian family making up the population tapestry of Southeast Asian hill people. Linguistically, they have mutually unintelligible dialects from tribe to tribe, though all are derivation from the Tibeto-Burman group.¹ According to Greirson:

They took possession of the Naga hills, and became the ancestors of that confused sample-bag of tribes, whose speeches we called for convenience the Naga group. Some of these probably entered eastern Naga directly, but others entered the western Naga country from the south via Manipur.²

History does not record as to how long the Naga hills have been in the possession of the Nagas. Smith observes:

According to the annals of the Ahoms, when the Ahoms invaded Assam in 1215 A.D. the different Naga tribes were settled in their different habitats, and from all that we can gather they were the same Nagas which the British found when they took possession of Assam several centuries later.³

The earliest reference to the Nagas was made by Claudius Ptolemaius in 150 A.D. in his *Geographia* (V11,11,18) where this area is referred to as "The Realm of the Naked."⁴

Huang Tsang, the Chinese pilgrim who visited Assam during Bhaskar Varman's rule in 645 A.D. wrote :

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1. Ward, David., The Nagas Right to Survival, (Naga Vigil Group, London, 1993), p. 5.
 2. George, A. Greirson., Linguistic Survey of India, Vol. 1, Part 1 (New Delhi : Motilal Banarsidas, first edition 1927, reprint 1967), p. 42.
 3. Smith, W.C., The Ao Naga Tribe of Assam, (London, MacMillan and Co., 1925), p. XXI.
 4. Singh, K. S., (General editor) People of India Nagaland, Vol. XXXIV, (Anthropological Survey of India, Calcutta), 1994, p. 3.

"... the east of this country is bounded by a line of hills, so that there is no great city to the kingdom. The frontiers are contiguous. The frontiers are contiguous to the barbarians of south-west China. These tribes are in fact akin to those of the Man people in their customs.⁵

Therefore, the earliest inhabitants among the Nagas are believed to have settled in the Naga hills for centuries.

The Nagas belong to the Mongoloid group. By analysing the Naga legends, stories and folk songs which were verbally passed on from the earliest to the succeeding generations, we can locate the Naga origin somewhere in South East Asia. The hypothesis that the Nagas must have come from the sea coast or at least have seen some islands or the sea is strengthened by the lifestyle of the Nagas and the ornaments being used till today in many Naga villages. The Naga scholar, H. Horam's writing further reinforces the above statement. He writes thus-

There can be little doubt that at one time the Nagas must have wandered about before they found their permanent abode; from their myths and legends one gathers that there is a dim relationship with the natives of Borneo in that the two have a common traditional way of head-hunting; with the Philippines and Formosa through the common system of terrace cultivation; and with the Indonesians, as both use loin loom for weaving cloth. The embroidery on the Naga cloths resemble the kind done on Indonesian cloths.⁶

5. Watters, Thomas, On Yuan Chwang's Travel in India, (629-645), (London, 1904, reprint 1973), p. 186.

6. Horam, H., Naga Polity, (B.R. Publishing Corporation, Delhi, 1975), p. 28.

According to the Burma Census Report, successive invasions of Tibeto-Burman people came from the region of Western China, between the sources of the Yangtse-Kiang and Huang-Ho rivers.⁷

Marshall writes -

"... the early home of the people of Eastern Asia was in the upper reaches of Huang-Ho or the Yellow river of China, and that from this centre the Tibetans moved west-wards, the early tribes of Indo-China south-wards, and Chinese south-east-wards; to this view the progenitors of the Karen probably formed a part of their southward migration."⁸

Another Naga writer, R.R. Shimray gives a good account of Nagas' affinity with the indigenous peoples of South East Asia. He writes that

The Nagas being left undisturbed for such a long time, have retained the culture of the most ancient times till today. Their fondness of cowrie shells for beautifying the dress, and use of conch shells and ornaments and the fact that the Nagas have many customs and way of life very similar to that of living in the remote parts of Borneo, Sarawak, Indonesia, Malaysia etc. indicate that their ancient abode was near the sea, if not in some islands. The long war-drums hewn out of huge logs also feature very much like the canoes so common with the islanders.⁹

All these observations suggest very important solutions to two aspects, (a) origin of the Nagas and (b) the route of migration. It becomes amply clear that the Nagas came from the Mongoloid stock who migrated from China.¹⁰ The Nagas are believed

7. Burma Census Report of 1911, p. 252.

8. Ibid., p. 6.

9. Shimray, R.R., Origin and Culture of Nagas, (Published by Mrs. Pamleiphi Shimray, New Delhi, 1985), p. 13.

10. Sanyu, Visier, Nagas in History, Nagas 90, A Souvenir, (Published by Literature Committee, (In) Nagas, 90, Kohima, 1990), p. 8.

to have migrated to the present Naga Hills in two broad waves, originated from Mongolia, according to oral traditional history. Both the waves passed through Upper Burma (Myanmar) and occupied Tirap district of present Arunachal. The second wave stayed in Burma and settled down there for a considerable length of time and in course of time moved towards west to the present central Nagaland, Manipur, North Cachar Hills and Assam.¹¹

The Term Naga

The origin of the word Naga has been a source of much debate among different scholars. However, the largely accepted two view points are taken from the etymology of the word Naga and its varying connotations in the Burmese and the Assamese languages. In Burma (Myanmar), the Naga tribes are called Na-ka, which in Burmese means 'people or men or folk with pierced ear-lobes'. Piercing of the ear-lobes is a widespread practice among the Naga tribes. In fact, the piercing ceremony forms a very important initiation rite for young boys who are about to enter the manhood.¹² This argument therefore, stands quite convincing. Moreover, it was the Britishers who first came into contact with the Burmese since 1795 and with the Nagas in 1832. It is therefore, obvious that the British explorers heard about the NAKA group (pierced ears) of people from the Burmese. Hence, the Anglicized word NAGA came to stay in all the Anthropological books and official records.¹³

11. A Brief Political Account, (Government of the Peoples Republic of Nagaland, OKing, 7th May, 1992), p. 1.

12. Sema, Hokishe, Emergence of Nagaland, (Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 1986), p. 3.

13. Shimray, op.cit., p. 41.

Another prominent theory of the origin of the word Naga is ascribed to the Assamese people. In Assamese, the word Naga means 'naked'. Throughout Assamese literature and particularly historical records of Assam, called the Buranji, the word Naga is used for the primitive man living in his natural surroundings in an uncorrupted form. However, the scholar strongly believes that the Ahoms, who originally belong to Thai race, entered Assam from Burma in 1228 A.D.¹⁴ and had picked the name Noga from the Burmese. The use of the word Noga by the Ahoms in Buranjis corroborates the idea that the word Noga was quite familiar to them even before they crossed the Naga territory from Upper Burma. The first ever encounter between Nagas and Ahom King Shukapha and his army as recorded in the Buranji states ".... therefrom he (Shukapha) came to the boundary of the Naga country... Here Shukapha ordered all his chiefs to fight with the Nagas."¹⁵

It is quite obvious that the Ahoms before entering Naga Hills on their way to Assam had pre-knowledge about the Nagas, whom they were to encounter. Hence, the scholar strongly asserts (basing on the analysis of historical events) that the word Naga is of Burmese origin.

However, one fact stands clear, that until recently, the term Naga was foreign to the Nagas themselves. "They have no generic term for the whole race".¹⁶ As Nagas themselves denote

14. Ibid., p. 266.

15. Translated and edited by Barua, R.S.G., Ahom Buranji (from the earliest time to the end of Ahom Rule), (Spectrum Publication, Guwahati), p. 45.

16. Elwin, Verrier (Ed.), The Nagas in Nineteenth Century, (Oxford University Press, 1969), p. 47.

tribal groups by their names such as Konyak, Tangkhul, Angami, Sema, Lotha, Ao, Pangmei, Zeliangrong, Mao, Khiumniungan etc. Much later from the twenties of this century, the Nagas deemed it a matter of national pride to be referred to as Nagas.¹⁷

The Naga Homeland

The term "Naga" applies to all the people living in compact area between the Brahmaputra river and the Chindwin river (and beyond), i.e., in between the Longitude 93° - 97° East between the Latitude 23.5 (topic of cancer) and 28 degrees North that is in between China, India and Burma (Myanmar).¹⁸

At present the Nagas live in the State of Nagaland, in the Naga Hills of Manipur, in North Cachar and Mikir Hills, Lakhimpur, Sibsagar, Nowgong in Assam, in the North-East of Arunachal Pradesh, in the Somra tract and across the border in Burma (Myanmar).

The Nagas who live in Burma (Myanmar) occupy an area from the Patkai range in the North to the Thaungthut State in the South, and from the Nagaland State border in the West to the Chindwin river (and Beyond), in the East. Thus an international frontier arbitrarily divides the Nagas even though the nationalist Nagas* recognise neither India nor Burma's (Myanmar) sovereignty over their land.¹⁹ The size of the Naga inhabited

17. Ward, op.cit., p. 11.

18. Speech of Isak Chishi Swu, Chairman, NSCN at UNPO General Conference Hague, (30.1.93), p. 2.

* - The term refers to the activists of the political movement in Nagaland and its sympathisers.

19. A Report by IWGIA, The Naga Nation and Its Struggle Against Genocide, IWGIA Document 56, (Copenhagen, 1986), p. 6.

area is approximately 100,000 Sq. Km.²⁰ It must be understood that the nationalist Nagas are fighting for the liberation of all compact area inhabited by the Nagas (Map 1).

In fact, 'Nagaland', the name of the State incorporated under the Union of India is a fallacy, in that the notion (as many writers assume) that Nagas originate from Nagaland (State) alone is entirely incorrect.²¹ A significant number of Nagas are to be found outside Nagaland State. For instance, out of the three million population of the Nagas spread over India and Myanmar, Nagaland State has little more than a million, (12,09,546 according to 1991 Census).²² Secondly, in the present Nagaland State total area is 16,579 Sq. Km.²³, whereas the total area inhabited and claimed by the Naga nationalists is put to 100,000 Sq. Km. This is the real Nagaland - a homeland of all the Nagas which exists in the mind of the people.

It may be said here that previous western writers including almost all Indian (mainstream) writers commit gross error in numbering the Naga tribes between twelve and sixteenth. Naga sources put it upto forty tribes and more. The Government of Peoples' Republic of Nagaland (GPRN) mentioned 16 major tribes

20. The Speech of Isak Chishi Swu, Chairman, NSCN, at Geneva, UN Conference on Indigenous Peoples, (27th July, 1993), p. 2.

21. Ward, op.cit., p. 7.

22. Government of Nagaland, Statistical Handbook of Nagaland, (1991), p. 15.

23. Ibid, p. 16.

The term Nagaland as used in this research work has therefore, two distinct connotation - (a) the present state of Nagaland, a political unit of India, and (b) the entire area inhabited by the Nagas. Hence the scholar will adhere to this approach : Nagaland State and Nagaland. The first referring to a unit within India and the latter Naga homeland.

and twenty smaller tribes. However, investigation is still on to ascertain the exact number of Naga tribes.

The following is a list of Naga tribes :

Name of the tribe	Area Inhabited	Remark
1. Anal	Manipur State and Myanmar	
2. Angami	Nagaland State	
3. Ao	Nagaland State and Assam	
4. Chakhesang	Nagaland State	
5. Chang	Nagaland State	
6. Chirr	Nagaland State	
7. Chiru	Manipur State	
8. Chothe	Manipur State	
9. Heimi	Myanmar	
10. Kengu	Myanmar	
11. Kharam	Manipur State	
12. Khiumniungan	Nagaland State and Myanmar	Formerly known as Kolyo-Kenyu
13. Koireng	Manipur State	
14. Kom	Manipur State	
15. Konyak	Nagaland State, Arunachal Pradesh and Myanmar	
16. Lainung	Myanmar	
17. Lamkang	Manipur State	
18. Lotha	Nagaland State	
19. Makori	Myanmar	
20. Mao	Manipur State	
21. Maram	Manipur State	
22. Maring	Manipur State	
23. Moyon	Manipur State	
24. Mongsang	Manipur State	
25. Namshik	Myanmar	
26. Para	Myanmar	
27. Phom	Nagaland State	
28. Poamei	Manipur State	
29. Pochuri	Nagaland State	
30. Rangpan	Myanmar	
31. Rengma	Nagaland State and Assam	
32. Sangtam	Nagaland State	
33. Sema	Nagaland State	
34. Singpho	Arunachal Pradesh	
35. Tangkhul	Manipur State and Myanmar	
36. Tarao	Manipur State	
37. Thangal	Manipur State	
38. Tikhir	Nagaland State	

Name of the tribe	Area Inhabited	Remark
39. Yimchunger	Nagaland State	
40. Ziliangrong	Assam, Manipur and Nagaland State	Combination of three sub-tribes. ²⁴

Social Life

The social life of the Nagas reveals the absence of any stratification. Commenting on the Naga society Davis wrote : "Nagas have no caste, so the columns which have reference to distinction of castes presented no difficulties to the enumeration" (A.W. Davis, Census of India, 1891, Assam, Vol. I).²⁵ It must be mentioned that Naga social life was characterised by a community life. "They work in group, eat in groups, and sleep in groups ... All things are done in groups and in the full presence of the entire community."²⁶ In other words, Nagas cultivated the greatest team spirit and team work and the "individual has no existence apart from the community."²⁷

Generally, the Nagas have an instinct and love for colour, music and rhythm and they have also "a great heritage of folklore."²⁸ Commenting on Naga music, Ward writes, "The Nagas are talented singers with a good ear for music, the style in which they sing is harmony and the tone dulcet. They sing of love

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24. Sources : 1. Asoso Yonuo, The Rising Nagas
 2. Burma Gazetteer Upper chindwin (Naga Hills)
 3. Census of India 1991 (Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur and Nagaland State)
 4. M. Horam, Naga Polity
 5. Naga Students Federation Membership Vide Map 1.
25. Horam, M., Nagas : Old Ways New Trends, p. 34.
 26. Shimray, op.cit., p. 121.
 27. Ibid., p. 121.
 28. Ward, op.cit., p. 18.

and war, accompanied by the flute, gong, drum and Naga violin."²⁹

Writing on Naga colourful culture, Ward again writes :

The Naga people have a rich tapestry of culture renowned for its vibrant colour and beauty, none more splendid than the display of pageantry with which they perform their ceremonies. Intricate symbolic designs are woven into their garments, such as the customary shawl, kilt and baldrics, attesting to the status of the wearer within the community.³⁰

The Nagas have a rich cultural tradition and the younger generation are making an attempt to keep this heritage alive.

SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ORGANISATION

Family

The first and foremost social institution in Naga society is the family. A Naga family normally consists of a husband and wife, their unmarried and minor children and occasionally other relatives.³¹ The Naga society is a patriarchal one and it traces its ancestors from the father's side. It is worth mentioning here that the Nagas never had the joint family system. The scholar fully agrees with M. Horam, when he writes, "The joint family system cannot operate among the Nagas as the Nagas are very independent minded and detest depending on others for their livelihood."³² And yet the idea of a family is deeply rooted and the bond is so strong.

29. Ibid., p. 22.

30. Ward, loc. cit.

31. Horam, op. cit., p. 176.

32. Ibid., p. 177.

Clan

From family it expands to clan. It comprises a group of consanguineous families descended from a common ancestor by whose name the clan is known on the patrilineal and exogamic line.³³ A village usually comprises of three or four clans inhabiting together. Each clan plays an important role in maintaining unity and observation of the village traditions. "All the villagers belong to their respective extended families which have a common descent on the father's side. Each clan has its own chief and its inheritance is hereditary."³⁴ The main function of the chief is to sustain the unity and vigour of the members of the clan. Interestingly, it also has a mini-council where all matters pertaining to the clan are decided by the council.³⁵ It must be mentioned here that under no circumstances can a woman become the head of the clan and be a member of the mini-council. The Naga society is essentially patriarchal and there is no oral or historical evidence to assume that matriarchal system ever existed.

Therefore, it is observed that even today the importance of clan is upheld and it benefits the clan members because they have many duties towards each other at the time of marriage, death, harvest, etc.³⁶ It becomes their social and moral obligation to help one another in times of needs.

33. Yonuo, Asoso, The Rising Nagas, (Vivek Publishing House, Delhi, 1974), p. 11.

34. Horam, loc. cit.

35. Ibid., p. 178.

36. Horam, op.cit., p. 52.

Village

The Nagas live in villages. As the 'Nagas are a fighting people', their villages were located for warfare on the hill tops and crest-lines.³⁷ Ward, correctly writes that this was both advantageous for the purpose of observation and security, making it easily defensible from outside attack.³⁸ This is because the Nagas are a warlike people and in those days of inter-village feud and head-hunting, village location was obviously decided from defence point of view. Generally, the village may consist of just ten households or as many as one thousand households. In any one village, the number of clans ranges from at least two to several.³⁹ Remarkably, though the head-hunting is a thing of the past, village sites have not been shifted as the Naga loves his ancestral home intensely and cannot be made to give it up easily.

Among the Naga people the most significant and outstanding social and political institution is not the tribe, but the village. Tuisem A. Shishak's description of pristine Naga village life provides a good illustration of this unit :

In Naga society the village, not the tribe, was the sole political and social unit. Every Naga village was very much a world unto itself; people married, lived and died in their respective villages. Naga societies were not, however, without strife and bloodshed; major villages tried to control smaller ones by force; raids were carried out often; no Naga had much freedom of movement or travel outside his own village. All these dangers and

37. Maxwell, Neville, India, The Nagas and the North East, (Minority Right Group, London, 1980), p. 3.

38. Ward, op.cit., p. 12.

39. Horam, M., North East India : A Profile, (Cosmo Publication, New Delhi, 1980), p. 181.

restrictions compelled the villagers to live and act as one social and political unit. All the taboos, religious or otherwise, were meant to consolidate and solidify the village community for any eventuality. In such the individual welfare was made subordinate to the welfare of the community of which he was a part. Thus the principle of oneness or unity became the underlying motivation in all activities, group or otherwise.⁴⁰

M. Horam throws another important light on the significance of the village :

It is important to note that the Naga villager of the period up to 1900, was not aware that he was part of any greater social unit other than the village. It is to this community to which he was bound in solidarity from birth onwards. Though loyalty to his clan is a significant factor throughout his life, it is the ruling and law as set out by the Village Council of elders to which he must abide.⁴¹

Hence, a Naga village was not just a social unit, but a political unit too and more significantly so. Each village was an independent unit, with its own territory, laws, and foreign policy. Decisions were taken by the village chieftain "Ang"* in consultation with the Village Council of elders, who formulated policy to be followed by the village. This council was made up of the headman of each clan.⁴² Even today, each village has a headman or chief who is literally the patriarch of the villagers... he is responsible for matters relating to the

40. Shishak, Tuisem A., Nagas and Education (In) Nagas '90 Souvenir, (1990), p. 24.

41. Horam, M., Nagas Old and new trends, (Cosmo Publication, New Delhi), p. 72.

* Ang - this term is used by the Nagas to mean chief or headman. originally, this word comes from Konyak tribe and later with the emergence of Naga consciousness (and search for common language) it was accepted as a common term for chief or headman.

42. Ward, op.cit., p. 13.

settlement of disputes in the village, observance of festivals, rituals, cultivation and buildings.⁴³ The Nagas are republicans, and their chiefs are elected (except the Konyaks and Semas who followed hereditary chiefship). Though they often have a great influence, they are liable at any time to be displaced.

The main functions of the Village Council are to assist the headman or the chief in administering the given village. The Village Council does not allow the chief or "Ang" to become autocratic. Asoso elucidates the traditional authority of the Council and wrote :

Their decision on certain matters become the laws binding on the villagers. The council not only deals with relations with other foreign village-State but has the power to declare war and to conclude peace. It decides even civil and criminal disputes.⁴⁴

Shishak writes that "tribal politics is democracy in action. The Village Council is a system where everybody is a partner, where even the chief or headman tills the land."⁴⁵

It is now understandable as to see why many Naga scholars and writers have used the description of "sovereign village-State", as the Naga village satisfy all the criteria necessary to be termed as such.⁴⁶ For instance, R. R. Shimray wrote : "Naga village-State was an independent unit and accordingly enjoyed the right of sovereignty."⁴⁷ In Asoso's description, "The permanent political institution of the Naga society has been the sovereign

43. Horam, op.cit., p. 181.

44. Yonuo, op.cit., p. 17.

45. Shishak, op.cit., p. 25.

46. Ward, op.cit., p. 14.

47. Shimray, op.cit., p. 45.

village-State"⁴⁸ and finally the Government of the Peoples' Republic of Nagaland (GPRN) recount :

Before the advent of the British they (Nagas) remained independent of any foreign domination. Each village was a republic of its own in most of the tribes-like that of Greek City States. The Nagas have a distinct life, manner of living, laws, customs and their method of governance of the people is quite different... The Nagas have an efficient system of administration. Most of the tribes retain to a considerable degree their ancient laws and village organisation which have lasted through centuries and these form an integral part of their life. Democracy in its purest form existed among the Nagas. The basis of the Naga system is the village organisation. Every village is an independent unit in the tribe. Villages are managed by a Council of Elders and men of influence elected by the people. Such a polity, such a state of society, and democratic life is rare to be found.⁴⁹

There is no doubt that Nagas had a good sense of self-government, democracy and their village administration was unique in the tribal world.

Morung (Men)

This was another important institution in the Naga traditional society. "Morung in the real sense of the term, connotes big hall built separately for young men to sleep and keep a vigil at night against the enemies."⁵⁰ In every Naga village, "each ward or Khel"* housed at least one large building called the morung." It is primarily the youth or bachelor

48. Yonuo, op.cit., p. 15.

49. A Brief Political Account (by Government of the People's Republic of Nagaland (GPRN), May 7, 1992), p. 1.

50. Shimray, op.cit., p. 192.

* Khel - Naga village is divided into wards or Khels which are inhabited by members of the same clan.

dormitory where each Naga boy lived from puberty to marriage. The Morungs were a significant social hub within the village, serving as both school and social club."⁵¹ It was obligatory for every young Naga to become a member of the Morung.

Talking about the importance of Morung, a Naga writer writes thus :

For the Nagas, a morung was the pivot around which the social, religious, educational and cultural activities of the people revolve. The morungs ... are therefore, rightly called the Naga schools.⁵²

The Morungs were the centre of Naga social life. Hence, it is in the Morung that the boys got all the useful lessons of community living. The Morung gymnasium turned out skilful sportsmen, wrestlers and warriors. A significant role of the Morung was to provide entertainment in the form of dancing, singing or organising games at a village feast, religious gettogether or wedding. The Morungs also "exhibited the spoils of the chase and the implements of the war belonging to the community; it was further used as the village inn, in which travellers from other villages were allowed to put up."⁵³ Among the foreign writers one who gave a good account of the Nagas is Ursula Graham Bower and she writes on Morung thus :

They were more self-reliant, with common sense and better discipline and above all their loyalty and sense of service to a corporate body is well developed. They have not lost their individualism, but they have a view of the world in relation to themselves, a grasp

51. Ward, op.cit.

52. Idem.

53. Elwin, Verrier (Ed.), The Nagas in the Nineteenth Century, (Oxford University press, London, 1969), p. 101.

of mutual duties as well as rights, a way of giving a fair deal.⁵⁴

Though Morung institution as such, has almost vanished in the modern period, the youth in every village continue to play an active role in serving to the needs of the village community.

Ladies

Dormitory

Until recently just like the men folk, the Naga women too have had their own separate dormitory. In fact, 'in every village-state, there used to be at least two or three ladies dormitories.'⁵⁵ It has been recorded by T.T. Cooper that

At the age of puberty all the girls are sent from the house of their parents to one of these buildings called the house of the Virgins, and reserved entirely for the dwelling-place of unmarried women. From the time that the young girl enters this place she never sleeps anywhere else until married.... The virgins' house is sacred and no man is supposed to enter there.⁵⁶

Here the young women learnt all about 'weaving of various kinds, embroidery and the handicraft work were taught in the dormitories at night.'⁵⁷ Besides, the young girls learnt social behaviour and manners; they learnt many more things from the seniors which their parents could not tell them. Thus, it is in the dormitory the young girls were shaped and moulded as responsible and matured women.

54. Shimray, op.cit., p. 198.

55. Shimray, loc.cit.

56. Elwin, verrier (Ed.), India;s North East Frontier in the Nineteenth Century, (Oxford university Press, Madras, 1959), p. 371.

57. Shimray, op.cit.

However, with the change of time and particularly, the spread of the new religion (Christianity) the morung institution of both men and women was adversely affected. M. Horam writes that "with the banning of head-hunting and cessation of continued hostilities between villages, the morung ceased to be important as a 'guardroom' or as a building housing warriors and serving as armoury ⁵⁸.

Despite the fact that the morung institution has generally ceased to exist, to say that it has completely disappeared would not be true. In some remote regions, there still exists institution of morung in its originality.

British colonial policy against the Nagas

Before the advent of the British, the Nagas lived in permanently established village-states, much like the Greek city states, perched high above the valleys. Separated from each other by the rough terrain and psychologically by internecine warfare and feuds, they did not develop a conscious nationalism until much later.⁵⁹

The extension of British empire to the Naga Hills had profound and far-reaching effects and ushered in an era of change and transformation of the Naga people. Following the conclusion of the Anglo-Burmese War in 1824, and the signing of the Yandabo Treaty between the British and the Burmese, Assam was occupied by the British colonial power. The Hindu kingdoms in Assam and Imphal valley had by the 1820s placed themselves under the

58. Horam, M., op.cit., p. 73.

59. IWGIA, op.cit., p. 12.

British.⁶⁰ The British had no preplan to invade the Naga Hills. The opening of a direct route between Assam valley and Manipur necessitated the British contact with the independent Nagas for the first time.⁶¹ Sir James Johnstone records,

Our first acquaintance with the Nagas partially began in 1832, when Captain Jenkins and Lieutenant Pemberton escorted by Raja Ghumbeer Singh's Manipur troops (700 soldiers and 800 coolies) forced a passage through the hills with a view to ascertaining if there were a practicable route into Assam.⁶²

Their combined forces were stiffly resisted by the Nagas.

The Colonial policy towards the Nagas may be divided into three periods :

1. Control by means of punitive expedition, that is pacification through force rather than direct control (1832 to 1850);
2. A short period of non-interference (1851 to 1865);
3. Direct administrative control (1866 till 1947).

In the initial phase, British colonial power did not evolve any concrete policy as such against the turbulent Nagas. It was more of a situational interaction with a survey party in 1832. The party met with strong opposition from the Nagas and the foreigners suffered some casualties at the hands of the independent Nagas.⁶³ Eventually it compelled the British power

60. Luithui, Luingam and Haksar, Nandita, Nagaland File, A Question of Human Rights, (Lancer International, Delhi, 1984), p. 16.

61. GPRN, op.cit., p. 1.

62. Johnston, Sir James, Manipur and the Naga Hills, (Vivek Publishing House, Delhi, 1971), p. 22.

63. GPRN, op.cit., p. 1.

to adopt a low profile strategy - "military promenade"⁶⁴ (expedition with an armed escort) essentially to put an end to Naga raids. However, these raids went on as usual. It was also observed that often the British Government would employ Manipur troops to crush and occupy the Naga territory. For instance, "in 1835, at the call of the British Government, Manipur occupied Semkhor Naga village, and ravaged the Naga villages. Its troops lived on the plunders."⁶⁵ This policy proved a failure and between 1835 and 1851 no less than ten military expeditions were led against the Nagas. In Hokishe Sema's analysis, "various efforts by the British to win over the Nagas through friendship offers, threats, blockades, and destruction failed to subjugate them. The fact that the Nagas constituted numerous tribes, did not have a unified administration or a single language or a common land-mass, prevented them from being reduced to a state of vassalage."⁶⁶

This was followed by a policy of 'non-interference', so long as the Nagas confined to their own territory. This policy lasted for 15 years. Lord Dalhousie advocated this policy and stated thus :

Our possession could bring no profit to us, and would be as costly to us as it would be unproductive... advantage... be obtained by refraining from all seizure of the territory of these Nagas, and by confining ourselves to the establishment of effective means of defence on the line of our own frontier.⁶⁷

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64. Reid, Sir Robert, History of the Frontier Areas Bordering on Assam, (1883-1941), p. 102.
65. Luithui, op.cit., p. 17.
66. Sema, op.cit., p. 16.
67. Elwin (ed.), op.cit., pp. 162-163.

With the withdrawal of British forces, the situation was back to square one as the war-like Nagas began conducting raids again. Punitive expeditions for outrages were discouraged unless the punishment could be inflicted with certainty.

In an attempt to protect the subjects of the British and put an end to the Naga raids, the British Government let loose an armed group of Kuki tribes into the Naga country to destroy the Nagas and their village.⁶⁸ The British Government gave "legal rights" to the Kukis over the lands and forests they snatched from the Nagas. This policy was called "Colonel McCulloch's policy of planting Kuki settlements on exposed frontiers." Colonel McCulloch was the British political agent at Manipur in the 1840s.⁶⁹ This controversial policy of Colonel McCulloch induced the Government of Bengal to try a similar experiment, and a large colony of Kukis were settled in 1855 in the neighbourhood of Langting to act as a barrier for North Cachar against the raids of the Angami Nagas.⁷⁰ This in the word of the Court of Directors was intended to act as buffer zone between the Nagas and the relatively peaceful subjects of the British.⁷¹

More truly so, the policy of non-interference proved to be a failure. According to Mackenzie this policy proved a failure because it was too thoroughly English to be appreciated by ignorant Nagas.⁷² Undoubtedly, it resulted in serious in-fighting among the British Officers and criticism against this policy

68. Luithui and Haksar, op.cit., p. 17.

69. Luithui, loc.cit.

70. Ibid., p. 26.

71. Elwin, Loc.cit.

72. Ramunny, Murkot, The World of Nagas, (Northern Book centre, New Delhi, 1988), p. 15.

mounted. For instance, Lieutenant Gregory sounded an ultimatum (sort) to the Government and reported that "unless he was allowed to adopt more vigorous measures than were permitted to his predecessors, he could not guarantee the safety of his subdivision (North Cachar)."⁷³ M. Horam adds further and writes "the Nagas, oblivious of the honourable intentions of the British, continued their reckless raids. From 1854 to 1865, there were as many as 19 raids committed by the Nagas resulting in the loss of 232 British subjects including some officers."⁷⁴ But as the raids by the Nagas continued and became bolder and more destructive, finally in 1866 Britain turned its attention to the Nagas.⁷⁵

The Lieutenant-Governor Sir George Campbell came to the conclusion that the only satisfactory plan dealing with the Naga tribes was to bring about gradually the establishment of political control and influence over them without any assertion of actual government.⁷⁶ This forward policy as it was then known according to Lt. Governor of Bengal was aimed at asserting their authority over the Nagas.

In pursuance of the above decision, a Naga Hill District was formed with its headquarters at Samaguting⁷⁷ (now Chumukedima) in 1866, whose administrative jurisdiction covered the Angami villages. A school and dispensary were opened at the place. A road leading to the plains was constructed. Trade was encouraged. In spite of these, the Nagas continued raiding British subjects

73. Elwin, op.cit., p. 166.

74. Horam, M., Naga Polity, pp. 12-13.

75. IWGIA, op.cit., p. 13.

76. Elwin, op.cit., p. 175.

77. Yonuo, op.cit., p. 90.

and many lives were taken including that some important British officers.

With the arrival of Lord Lytton (1876-80) as the Viceroy of India, the views of the Government of India underwent a radical change. In fact, the Viceroy carried out the mandates of Lord Salisbury, the Secretary of State, of the new Cabinet under Disraeli, who favoured vigorous steps to prevent a repetition of the outrages of the Nagas.⁷⁸

During this third phase, a number of Governmental decisions and plans were carried out. The most important of these are :

Boundary Demarcation

For the Nagas, the unkindest cut of all was precisely the boundary demarcation of its territory by the British Government. Boundary lines were drawn several times by the British to satisfy their allies and each time the lines inevitably moved further inside the Naga territory.⁷⁹ Mackenzie's note corroborates to this fact that in 1833 Captain Jenkins and Pemberton "proposed to give up to Manipur definitely all the hills between the Doyeng and Dhunsiri,"⁸⁰ and in 1835 the forests between these rivers were declared to be the Manipur-Assam boundary. Still further in 1851 Manipur was given the right to extend its territory over more Naga villages. Johnstone testified:

78. Barpujari, H. K., Problems of the Hill Tribes : North East Frontier 1873-1962, (Spectrum Publication, Guwahati, 1981), p. 24.

79. Luithui, op.cit., p. 18.

80. Elwin, op.cit., p. 148.

In 1851, when utterly sick of Naga affairs, we determined on a policy of non-intervention, permission in writing was given to the Durbar (Manipur) to extend its authority over the Naga villages on our side of the border.⁸¹

Eventually by 1872, the British Government arbitrarily redivided the Naga territories who were then ignorant of what had been happening and their homeland bifurcated. Some parts went to Assam; some parts went to Manipur; some parts went to erstwhile NEFA (Arunachal); and the central part was formed as Naga Hill District. Finally, Eastern Nagas went to Burma (Myanmar) which was divided into three, with the North-East drawn into Kachin State and the South to Sagain Division, leaving the central portion as "Naga Hills". However, when general Newin came to power, his regime abolished the Naga Hills unit of administration and divided it between the Kachin state and Sagain Division without the consent of the Nagas. This policy of vivisection, old and new, victimised the Nagas beyond words. Such acts of gross-injustice shall, without question, continue to be the bone of contention, for the Nagas are now sufficiently alive to what are rightfully theirs.⁸²

Inner Line Regulation of 1873

During the period 1869-73 there was rapid cultivation along the frontier of the Naga Hills. Soon the tea trade started flourishing, indeed a great economic revolution had started and this had a great prospect for future commercial enterprise. However, when the plantation trespassed the borders of the

81. Johnstone, op.cit., p. 36.

82. GPRN, op.cit., p. 1

Nagas⁸³ the latter resented and slaughtered the intruders and caused great alarm. Even the payment of the land revenue in some cases to the Naga chiefs did not solve the problem.⁸⁴ At last, due to this friction between tea planters and the Nagas, the British Government enacted a regulation known as Inner Line regulation of 1873. In the words of the regulation :

In order to prevent the recurrence of these difficulties, power was given to the local authorities by the Inner Line regulation of 1873 to prohibit British subjects generally or those of specified classes from going beyond a certain line, laid down for the purpose, without a pass or license, issued by the Deputy Commissioner and containing such conditions as might seem necessary.⁸⁵

Thus, it was greatly hoped, would put an end to the earlier indefinite and slow advance. To this end, the Nagas were expected to manage their own affairs with only such interference politically on the part of British officers as may be considered calculated to establish a good personal influence for good among the chiefs and tribes.⁸⁶

Excluded Areas

Almost of the same nature of Inner Line Regulation was the Regulation of 1880 which classified the Naga tribes "excluded" from coming under such laws as may be complex or in any way unsuitable to them.⁸⁷ The British Government realized that the tribal areas... needed a special kind of administration and this

83. Yonuo, op.cit., p. 90.

84. Idem.

85. Horam, op.cit., p. 13.

86. Barpujari, op.cit., p. 10.

87. Horam, op.cit., p. 15.

was more so in case of hill area. The hill tribes were simple and unsophisticated and needed a delicate handling. And the advantage was that the Nagas had traditional laws to guide their conduct and village courts to deal with crimes both civil and criminal. These were effective enough and the British Government did not seek to make a change. Undoubtedly this policy was enacted keeping in mind to protect their areas from possible economic exploitation by the plain men.

It is certainly worth noting that regulation of 1880 was formerly instituted and specified in the Government of India Act 1935 and it is interesting to note that for purposes of administration, the Naga Hills were always separate from the rest of Assam. This was the consistent policy of the British till they left the subcontinent.⁸⁸

Annexation

In pursuance of its forward policy and in order to strengthen the annexation process, in 1877 the Secretary of State gave his consent that the headquarters should be moved into the interior of the Hills and Kohima was made the chief administrative centre.⁸⁹

The Nagas, fearing full invasion, put up a tough resistance and fought with all the weapons they had. Of all, Kohima defence was certainly the most significant and fiery.

For the first time several naga villages united against the common enemy. Thirteen Angami Naga villages joined Khonoma in

88. Idem.

89. GPRN, loc.cit.

the uprising'. A full scale war was waged on Khonoma village and its surrounding areas. It is observed that as many as 2358* soldiers attacked Khonoma and subsequently the surrounding villages. The message was clear that the British authorities were prepared for the first time that the Nagas were 'taught a lesson'. But the British forces suffered heavy casualties.⁹⁰

Indeed it was the severest fighting the Naga hills were to know for many long years. W. Robinson reported on Nagas' war strategy (A descriptive Account of Assam 1841, pp. 390-4) thus

Even in their hottest and active wars, they proceed wholly by stratagem and ambuscade. They place not their glory in attacking their enemies with open force. To surprise and destroy is the greatest merit of a commander, and the highest pride for his followers... the military operations of the Nagas more resemble those of nations. They openly defy their enemies to the combat, engage in regular battles, and maintain the conflict with that desperate ferocity which is natural to men who having no idea of war but that of extermination, never give or take quarter.⁹¹

However, by the end of the nineteenth century almost all the Naga tribes came under British rule except some tribes in Tuensang, Arunachal and Burma which remained out of British domain.⁹² Naga nationalists referred to these areas as Free Naga Territory and even today they claim the Naga areas in Upper Myanmar as a part of Free Nagaland. The Government of the People's Republic of Nagaland (GPRN) writes thus, concerning this matter

* Calculated by the scholar as recorded in Nagas in the Nineteenth Century, Ed. by Verrier Elwin, pp. 183-187.

90. Elwin, Loc.cit.

91. Elwin, op.cit., pp. 538-39.

92. Sanyu, Visier, Nagas in History, Nagas' 90 Souvenir, p. 9.

The British could take over and control only the South Eastern part of Naga territory during the period 1832-1880 which came to be known as the British District. But the North and Eastern part which formed the larger part of the Naga territory, was left uncontrolled and unoccupied by the British. This uncontrolled part of Nagaland, the "Free Naga Territory" remained almost unvisited, entirely self governing and completely independent even when India obtained her independence from Great Britain in 1947.⁹³

From historical point of view the above statement bears truth in it. Though all the Naga areas are administered (except Tuensang area) in Indian side, Naga areas in Upper Myanmar remained unadministered till today except periodic military operation carried out, purportedly against the Naga nationalists. Such is the state of affairs in Myanmar.

British Rule

In February 1881 Naga Hills came to be an area under political control. It became a settled district under the Deputy commissioner administered in accordance with defined rules.⁹⁴ The Nagas as well as the British slowly settled down. It is worth noting that throughout the British rule, the Nagas lived by and large on their own and continued their social and political activities. The British did not also interfere with the traditions, customs and village administration. The British, writes Luithui and Haksar, did not extend more than a shadow of state apparatus to the Naga areas. There hardly was a time when more than five officials were posted from outside the area. Even

93. GPRN, of.cit., p. 2.

94. Barpujari, op.cit., p. 70.

these officials had to work in close consultation with the Naga elders.⁹⁵ Alemchiba, a Naga senior research officer argues thus

One of the main reasons why the British could establish a stable administration in an area of hilly jungles populated by uncivilised head-hunters and why the new administration became popular day by day was their intimate knowledge and interest of the native people.⁹⁶

Thus the controlled Nagas found their world changed with the advent of the British. Village chiefs and elders were encouraged to look after the welfare and civic needs of the villages. Inter-village feuds came to an end and head-hunting became a thing of the past within Naga Hills District boundaries. As a result the Naga accepted what life offered, lived their own life in their own mountain villages, happy and content, peaceful and romantic.⁹⁷

Before discussing the advent of Christianity in Nagaland, it is important to discuss first the traditional religion or belief of the Nagas. Religion or belief system, whether in its earliest form of animism or in a modern form of Christianity, has played a vital role in the history of the Nagas.

Naga Animism

The Nagas were animists who aspired to live in harmony with the spirit world that existed alongside them.⁹⁸ Nida and Smalley writes that "the precise or technical definition of animism is a belief in spirits, including the spirits of dead

95. Luithui, op.cit., p. 20.

96. Alemchiba, M., A Brief Historical Account of Nagaland, (Naga Institute of Culture, Kohima, Nagaland, 1970), p. 132.

97. GPRN, Loc.cit.

98. Ward, op.cit., p. 15.

people as well as those that have no human origin."⁹⁹ The Naga animists were superstitious by nature because of the kind of religion they had, and John Butler expressed similar observation when he said, "intense superstition of course was only the natural corollary to this kind of belief in a god in every hill and valley, a devil in every grave and stream."¹⁰⁰

Naga animists were extremely fearful of the evil spirits and throughout their life time this fear made them superstitious. Hence, they believed that any calamity, be it suffering, sickness, misfortune or death etc. was caused by evil spirits and hence appeasement was a necessity by way of offering fowl, pig, dog, eggs, and other domesticated animals.

The Nagas gave due importance to religious observances and tried their best to placate the angry spirits to ward off the evil ones and please the ones that could be, as per their belief, pleased by rituals, offerings, prayers and sacrifices.¹⁰¹ Hence, besides the malevolent spirits, the Nagas believed that there were also benevolent spirits to protect the village from all dangers and outside attack by enemies.¹⁰²

But an important aspect of Naga animism is that the Nagas are not idolaters or idol worshipers. Admittedly, M. Horam wrote, "in the Naga village, as a rule, neither idols nor places of

99. Nida, Eugene A. and Smalley, William A., Introducing Animism, (Friendship Press, N. York), p. 5.

100. Butler, John, Rough Notes on the Angami Nagas, from The Nagas in the Nineteenth Century, (Oxford University Press, 1969), p. 505.

101. Horam, op.cit., p. 120.

102. Epao, Veprari, From Naga Animism to Christianity, (Published by the Author, Outreach Leadership Training Centre, Dimapur, Nagaland, 1993), p. 23.

worship are to be found."¹⁰³ W. Robinson, described that "the Nagas have no established form of worship; they have no temples erected in honour of their deities, and no ministers particularly consecrated to their service."¹⁰⁴ Hence, idol worship is completely absent among the Nagas.

An interesting peculiarity of the Naga religion is the belief in the existence of one Supreme God, a God of goodness and humility invisible and powerful being.

The Advent of Christianity

The conversion of the Nagas to Christianity was a revolution in Naga history-more significant than the British colonization. Arnold Toynbee called the English conversion really the beginning of all things in English history. "Likewise the message of the Gospel was the beginning of all things in Naga history."¹⁰⁵ This reminds us of a passage in the Bible

Therefore if any men be in Christ, he is a new creature : old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.¹⁰⁶

The GPRN account strongly emphasise this fact and writes:

The propagation of Christianity by the American Missionaries along with the imparting of education by opening missionary schools gave the greatest contribution to the rising of the Naga society. It was through them that the heathen Nagas learned of the existence of the Absolute Reality and the better way of living. Nagas could comprehend meaning life has and they won't anymore part with it. They now felt blessed though endless hurdles

103. Robinson, W., Invisible and Powerful Beings, Ed. Elwin Verrier, The Nagas in the Nineteenth Century, (Oxford University Press, Bombay, 1969), p. 502.

104. Horam, op.cit., p. 191.

105. Sanyu, Loc.cit.

106. 11 Corinthians 5 : 17, King James Version.

remained. Nagas would be forever grateful to them.¹⁰⁷

It is observed that the first Christian work among the Nagas was done before the Nagas were brought under direct British administration. The first group of American Baptist Missionaries, Rev. & Mrs. Nathan and Rev. & Mrs. O.T. Cutter made their appearance in the Naga area in 1836.¹⁰⁸ But their mission was terminated when Khamti Nagas raided the place. Second attempt was made in 1840 to open mission field among Namsang Nagas (now in Tirap district.) This too was abandoned.

The reopening of the Naga mission field was the work of two men-Godhula Brown (Assamese) and E.W. Clark who opened the first successful mission field in Ao Naga area in 1872. Henceforth, there was no turning back. Many other mission fields were opened at different important places like Kohima, Wokha, Ukhrul, Zunheboto etc.

Initially, the attitude of the Nagas towards the missionaries was very hostile. Those who got converted to Christianity were persecuted or excommunicated by their Naga brethren from their clan or village.¹⁰⁹ Sema, remarked,

Many problems arose between those who still held the faith of their forefathers and the new converts. All new converts had been strictly forbidden to touch alcohol in any form... Christians were asked to drink only tea.... The non-Christians insisted that everybody belonging to the village must observe the ceremony and nobody should violate the ceremony by leaving the village on that day. Again regarding village subscriptions,

107. GPRN, Loc.cit.

108. Downs, F. S., The Mighty Works of God, (Christian Literature Centre, Guwahati, Assam, 1971), p. 18.

109. Sanyu, op.cit., p. 10.

the Christians refused to subscribe for the sacrifices done for the propitiation of spirit.¹¹⁰

Therefore, there emerged two opposing trends in the lifestyle and beliefs. Christians refused to participate in village festivals that involved drinking and sacrifices. Interestingly, the presence of certain British civil servants who did not get along with the missionaries impeded the process of conversion to some extent.

This further led to another subject of controversy with the allegation or assumption that the Christian missionaries were the agents of the British imperialist and that it was the British imperialist policy of 'divide and rule' that kept the Nagas isolated from the mainstream of Hindu culture and religious traditions.¹¹¹ However, it is observed that, the assumption or allegation is totally wrong. The Christian missionaries went into Naga areas (all by themselves) not with the support or patronage of the British Government.¹¹² Their primary objective was to preach the gospel, 'the love of Christ and his saving knowledge' to the Naga tribes. In fact, the British Government were quite strict in giving permission to missionaries to operate in these areas for certain reasons. For instance, until 1917 only one missionary family was permitted in Manipur, and after that only two.¹¹³ The British Government possibly opposed the mission on the ground that it was destroying traditional Naga culture.¹¹⁴ In a way, early missionaries were not usually sympathetic towards

110. Sema op.cit., p. 50.

111. Luithui, op.cit., p. 19.

112. Ramunny, op.cit., p. 17.

traditional cultural patterns-even those that in no way interfered with Christian practice. In fact there are many writers today who are critical of the missionary activities.

Though much criticism has been made against the Christian missionaries in the Naga Hills for having no sympathy for Naga culture, we may conclude by saying that such accusation could be unjust, since the circumstance and the conditions in which the missionaries worked could hardly have yielded any better result.

The behaviour of the missionaries mattered a lot in their decision to become Christians. "In fact, all missionaries impressed the Nagas. They found them simple, humble, and prepared to live with them in the villages...the Naga had at last found some friends, who treated them as human beings, children of one God. For centuries they had met only people who had either harassed them or despised them."¹¹⁵

Once the missionaries won the confidence of the Nagas, many in hundreds and thousands came forward and embraced Christianity. Thus during the last days of British rule, the number of Naga Christians rose tremendously. And in a short span of time Christianity became the religion of the people.

Apart from spreading the teaching of Christ, which was their primary object, the missionaries initiated the Nagas into the elements of education.¹¹⁶

Hokishe Sema sums up the achievements of the Christian missionaries in these words-

113. Downs, op.cit., p. 80.

114. Ibid., p. 128.

115. Ramunny, op.cit., p. 18.

116. Ramunny, Loc.cit.

The Nagas indeed are indebted to the pioneering missionaries for their work in the field of education, medical services, humanitarian work and above all in providing enlightenment.¹¹⁷

Christianity indeed has been the single most dynamic factor in modernising the Naga society. It has opened the door for the Nagas to think in a global context and brought them into the fold of a world family. The spirit of change invaded every aspect of Naga village life. The Christian missionaries and the British Indian administration proved themselves to be the vehicle of change in the Naga context.

The term Nagaland as used in this research work has therefore, two distinct connotation - (a) the present state of Nagaland, a political unit of India, and (b) the entire area inhabited by the Nagas. Hence the scholar will adhere to this approach : Nagaland State and Nagaland. The first referring to a unit within India and the latter Naga homeland.

Impact of British Administration and Christianity

The British administration and the advent of Christianity had a great deal of impact on the social, economic, cultural and political aspects of the Nagas. Above all, it had the positive impact of integrating the unorganised Naga tribes politically and emotionally. It was only under the aegis of the British administration that interaction of the Naga tribes and their assertion as an ethnic group of people began.

The emergence and formation of the Naga Club in 1918 and subsequently of the Naga National Council (NNC) in 1946 were a

117. Sema, op.cit., p. 54.

marked manifestation of their socio-political consciousness. Besides, the individual Naga tribes respectively developed their own Councils or Hohos*. This consciousness clearly developed from their contact with the British administration and Christian Missionaries and it naturally promoted Naga nationalism as a unifying force among the Nagas.

The introduction of western education as a whole brought about overwhelming transformation. Education had a revolutionary impact on every facet of Naga society-habits, customs, living standard, cultural ethos and world outlook. In this sense modern education 'played the role of renaissance' in the Naga society. No doubt, the formation of the Naga Club, Tribal Council and the Naga National Council were spearheaded by the educated Nagas.

Another significant impact of Christianity and the British administration on the Nagas was the introduction of a new lifestyle-hygienic living, freedom from evil spirits and superstitions. The maintenance of law and order and inculcation of Christian values created a peaceful state of affairs among the villages. Head-hunting and village feuds became things of the past.

Thus, with the dawn of peace and order the Nagas could settle down the peaceful agricultural production. Trade and commerce (though in a limited form) also received impetus. The Nagas traded with the Meiteis, Burmese (now Myanmarese), Assamese and other plainmen. Besides, the enactment of the 'Inner Line Regulation in 1873' preventing possible socio-economic

* Hoho - Naga traditional term for organisation or Union.

exploitation of the Nagas by the plain people and the introduction of 'Regulation of 1880' which classified the Naga areas as 'excluded Areas' did give them certain advantages in promoting their distinct ethnic identity.

However, one cannot overlook the fact that the colonial policy of bifurcating the Naga homeland had the effect of undermining their cohesion. The signing of the 'Treaty of Yandabo' in 1826 without the knowledge of Nagas divided their homeland between the British India and Burma. Their land under the former was further ramified according to administrative convenience.¹¹⁸

118. A Brief Political Account, op.cit., p. 16.

CHAPTER II

NAGA NATIONALISM AND INSURGENCY

Nationalism has been the most powerful political idea of the past several hundred years. The fact remains that nationalism is an idea powerful enough to have induced millions to willingly die in its name. It represents the union of a political phenomenon with the identity of the human being and hence it is a frame of reference for individuals and their societies.¹

NATION

In order to understand what nationalism is, one has to examine the concept of nation. We find that it is the nation or the idea of a nation that usually generates nationalism. Indeed, the concept of a nation is more social than political. Therefore, a nation can even exist even though it is not contained within a particular or served by a given government. It has been generally acknowledged that the most common feature around which a nation is united is ethnic in nature. No wonder, one's nationality can also be expressed in terms of ethnic background rather than citizenship. The reason behind this is that nationalism gives the individual an identity and 'extends that identity into something greater than the self.'

Against this background, any definition of a nation must also take into account the claim of a people living together within a territory, that they are a separate unit and 'seeking a control over their own way of life under the banner of a common organisation.'²

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1. Baradat, Leon P., Political Ideologies, their origins and impact. New Jersey, 1979, p. 45.
 2. Chavan, R. S., Nationalism in Asia, Sterling Publishers Pvt., Ltd. New Delhi, 1973, p. 5.

The word 'nation' is derived from the Latin word 'natio' meaning birth or descent. In its etymological sense, the word 'nation' therefore refers to a group of people descended from the same stock. In later usage the term came to embrace such other variables as territory, culture, language, history and so on. It is possible, however that no nation has ever possessed all of these criteria.³ Convincingly, Isaacs discussed the question of the 'nation' and quoting Carlton Hayes wrote;

In one form or another, the strong identification and feeling of loyalty attached to the idea of the 'nation' has always been present in human affairs. "It has been a mark of nature if not nurture," wrote Carlton Hayes, "for human beings since the dawn of history to possess some consciousness of nationality, some feeling that the linguistic, historical, and cultural peculiarities of a group make its members akin among themselves and alien from all other groups."⁴

The term 'nation' has been used to denote a human group with the following characteristics:

- (1) The idea of a common government whether as a reality in the present or past, or as an aspiration of the future.
- (2) A certain size and closeness of contact between all its individual members.
- (3) A more or less defined territory.
- (4) A certain characteristic (of which the most frequent is language or dialects of a common language) clearly

3. Christenson, Reo. M. et al. Ideologies and modern politics (Dodd, Mead & Company, New York, 1975), p. 24.

4. Issacs, H. R., Nationality : "End of the road" ? (In) Foreign Affairs, An American quaterly Review, Vol. 53, No.2, pp. 432-433.

distinguishing the nation from other nations and non-national groups.

(5) Certain interests common to the individual members.

(6) A certain degree of common feeling or will, associated with a picture of the nation in the minds of the individual members.⁵

This description is only intended to convey the essentials of the many images of the nation held by the nationalists everywhere. 'Any group which does not possess one or more of these features is not a complete nation.'⁶ The Unrepresented Nations and People's Organisation (UNPO) covenant defines a nation or people as

A group of human beings which possesses the will to be identified as a nation or people and determine its common destiny as a nation or people, and is bound by a common heritage which can be historical, racial, ethnic, linguistic, cultural, religious, or territorial.⁷

This definition stresses the element of self identification i.e. the need for a nation or people to regard itself a people or nation and be regarded as such by others.

Thus, every writer has his own list of parts that go into the making of a nation. On closer examination, it seems, no single part could be shown to be unique or indispensable to nationhood, except perhaps for some version of the idea of a

5. Desai, A.R., Social background of Indian nationalism (Popular prakashan, Bombay, 1976), p. 2.

6. Smith, Anthony., Theories of nationalism (Gerald Duckworth & Co. Ltd. London, 1971), p. 175.

7. The Naga Independence Issue : A question of self-determination (Published by the Naga Scholars Society, Dimapur 1993), p. 12.

shared past and a shared common will. Rupert Emerson concludes that "the simplest statement that can be made about a nation is that it is a body of people who feel that they are a nation; and it may be that when all the fine-spun analysis is concluded, this will be the ultimate state as well."⁸

C.J. Hayes identifies a nation with 'a sovereign political state'. In this view every state forms a nation and every citizen is a member of the nation. This definition, of course, is an exclusively legal one, and like many other declarations of legal equality disregards factual inequalities. Many states were or are composed of different nations or nationalities. The Scots and Welsh regard themselves as nation, though they live in a common state with the English.⁹ However, it must be noted that the concept of a nation is more social than political. As Anthony Smith puts it this way that "the idea of the nation by contrast is fundamentally cultural and social"¹⁰ However, nationalism is also a means by which consciousness is construed and cultural is made congruent with the political.

Another scholar, Motyl described nation as a self-conscious cultural community.¹¹ Subscribing to the same view, Akzin holds that 'nations' are simply large, delocalised and politicised ethnic groups.¹² This is rightly intended to suggest that

8. Isaacs, op. cit., p. 434.

9. Hertz, Frederick., Nationality in history and politics (Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., London, 1944), p. 7.

10. Smith, Anthony., Nationality identity and the idea of European unity The Journal of Internal Affairs, 1992, p. 61.

11. Motyl, Alexander J., The modernity of nationalist, The Journal of Internal Affairs, Vol.45, No. 2, 1992, p.64.

12. Smith, op. cit., p. 187.

political consciousness is a necessity for evolving of a nation. However, though, on the score of size it is generally plausible assumption that the nation involves societies of substantial magnitude, but since nations range from a million or so people to hundreds of millions nothing approaching precision is possible. Thus this element should not be over-emphasised because for the simple reason that it is meaningless and will lead to further complication.

A number of scholars give a conventional or etymological definition of a nation. One such writer defined nation "as a relatively large group of people who feel that they belong together by virtue of sharing one or more of such traits as a common race, a common language, a common culture, a common history, a common set of customs or traditions."¹³ A renowned writer on this subject, Rupert Emerson gives a simple yet widely accepted definition of a nation and writes thus-

The nation is a community of people who feel that they belong together in the double sense that they share deeply significant elements of a common heritage and that they have a common destiny for the future.¹⁴

Thus almost all writers and scholars do agree on certain essential elements of a nation, usually meaning shared culture, history, tradition, language, etc. Admittedly, Smith writes, "there is a remarkable similarity in the concept of the nation in

13. Christenson, et al., op. cit., p. 24.

14. Emerson, Rupert., From Empire to State, (Scientific book agency, Calcutta, 1960), p. 95.

its general features in most nationalist thinking."¹⁵ This leads us to reflect on the ideal model of the nation, even though no such nation ever existed in total purity, as a single people, traditionally fixed on a well defined territory. speaking the same language and preferably a language all its own, possessing a distinctive culture, and shaped to a common mold by many generations of shared historical experience.¹⁶ This is in line with the etymological meaning of a nation. Durgess, adhering to the etymological meaning, defines a nation as " a population of an ethnic unity, inhabiting a territory of a geographic unity."¹⁷ A French publicist Pradier-Fodere likewise conceived nation to be primarily an ethnic rather than a politically united aggregation. "Affinity of race, community of language, of habits, of customs and religion, are," he said, "the elements which constitute the nation."¹⁸ Calvo, in his work on "International Law" held substantially the same opinion, emphasizing the fact that the idea of the nation is associated with the origin or birth, community of race, community of language, etc.¹⁹

A nation, Anderson argues, is an imagined political community and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign. It is imagined because the members of even the smallest nations will never know most of their fellow members, meet them or even

15. Roy, Ajit., Nationalism and the National Question in India (In) Nationality Question in India, (Training for development scholarship society, Pune, 1987), p. 7.

16. Emerson, of. cit., p. 103.

17. Harris, Peter B., Foundations of Political Science (Hutchinson & Co. Ltd. London, 1976), p. 277.

18. Ibid., p. 103.

19. Garner, J. W., Political Science and Government (The World Press Ltd. Calcutta, 1951), p. 107.

hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives an image of their community.²⁰ Anderson's definition emphasises the central role played by the image of a nation in creating a national reality. In constructing the image of a nation there are other attributes such as culture, language, history and national consciousness. An imagined community is however not to be confused with imaginary one.

The Nagas living in geographical contiguity, broadly speaking belong to the Mongoloid stock. They also share a common faith and their dialects spring from the Tibeto-Burman group. Udayon Misra admittedly wrote, "if a deep attachment to one's native soil, to local traditions and to established territorial authority can be accepted as marks of nationalism, then the Nagas qualify on all counts."²¹ Another person who understood the Nagas and their political struggle was Jayaprakash Narayan (a member of the Peace Mission in Nagaland) who stated that "The Naga people are unquestionably a nation."²² Anthony Smith, an outstanding theoretician on 'nationalism' classified Nagas as a nation while listing the 'current' movements of other ethnic groups like that of the Kurds, Pan-Arabists, Austrian Tyrolese, Quebecois and Palestinians.²³

There is no Naga nation in the sense that there is, say a Chinese, or a French nation. Their homeland is divided between

20. Benedict, Anderson., Imagined Communities (2nd Ed. London, 1991), p. 6.

21. Misra, Udayon., North East India Quest for identity (Omsons publication) New Delhi.

22. Narayan, Jayaprakash., Nation building in India, (Ed.) Brahmanand (Published by Brahmanand Navchetna Prakashan, Varanasi), p. 339.

23. Smith, op. cit., p. 214.

two sovereign countries-India and Burma (Myanmar). The state of Nagaland, as part of India, has a merely political connotation as it only consists of those living west of Saramati range. The real Nagaland-a homeland of all the Nagas exists in the mind of the people.²⁴ In fact, it is also essential to the notion of a nation that it be imagined. "Members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow members...yet in the mind of each lives the image of their community."²⁵ Acknowledging this fact, A.R. Desai also mentions in reference to the notion of nation that "a certain degree of common feeling or will associated with a picture of the nation in the minds of the individual members"²⁶ is always there.

The Study Group of the Royal Institute of International Affairs in its report spells out the ingredients of the nation as follows :

- (a) The idea of common government whether as a reality in the present or past or an aspiration of the future.
- (b) A certain size and closeness of contact between all individual members.
- (c) A more or less defined character.
- (d) A certain degree of common feelings or will associated with a picture of a nation in the minds of the individual members.²⁷

24. Horam, M., Naga Insurgency, (Cosmo Publication, New Delhi, 1988), p. 33.

25. Anderson, Benedict., The Nation : A state of mind (In) Book Review by Rod Benson, Journal of International Affairs, Vol. 45, No. 2, Winter, 1992.

26. Desai, A.R., loc. cit.

27. Sarhadi, Ajit Singh., Nationalisms in India, The problem (Heritage Publishers Delhi, n.d.), pp. 74-75.

The Nagas have more or less fulfilled all these criteria and it is in this context that the Naga National Council (NNC), the political wing of the Federal Government of Nagaland (FGN) and now the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN) consistently maintained that the Nagas constituted a separate and independent nation. At the UNPO General Conference, Isak Chishi Swu reasserted this fact and stated :

Nagas have their history and it does not admit of any attempts at distortion. Nagas as a distinct nation remains unconquered, unadministered and independent from time immemorial, though this reality is hardly known to the outside world.²⁸

In the final analysis, the scholar agrees with Harold R. Isaacs that the formula whereby a "tribe" or a "people" do or do not become or remain a "nation"* depends mainly on the conditions of power or the lack of it, and the given political circumstances of the time.²⁹ Hence,

No formula, only particular conditions and relations of power and interest, could explain why in the decades following 1945 little Gambia and the tiny islands of Fiji, Nauru, and Grenada could become "nation" while big Biafra could not; why Pakistan, a patchwork of Punjabis, Sindis, Pathans, Buluchis, etc. could become a nation while 'Nagaland',* with its patchwork of separate tribes, could not; Why the Pathans of Pakistan could not have their own Pushtoonistan, at least not yet, while the Bengalis could, after a bloody amputation finally create their own Bangladesh. Tiny Abu Dhabi could become a

28. Speech of Isak Chishi Swu, Chairman, NSCN at the General Conference UNPO, January 30, 1993, The Netherlands. Emphasis by the Scholar.

29. Isaacs, op. cit., p. 435.

* Here Issacs uses the term 'nation' meaning 'nation-state' and not nation in a social sense.

* Emphasis given by the scholar.

"nation" but the Kurds must still fight on to establish their own Kurdistan. The Filipinos, Indonesians, Burmese, all acquired sovereignties of their own, but not the Muslims of Mindanao and Jolo, the Achinese of Sumatra, or the Kachins, Shans, or other peoples living on lands they held long before there was a "Burma."³⁰

Thus by some unkind fate, all claimants to nationhood or nation-state who are unsuccessful in winning sovereignty for themselves have to remain a mere 'nation' in a social sense or an ethnic group. This fate, it should be clear, has nothing to do with whether they are indeed "nation-state" by this or that definition. It has to do only with the fact that at the given time they lack the power or other fortuitous conditions.

NATIONALISM

Before taking up the course of events leading to the assertion of Naga nationalism, it is necessary to survey briefly the concept of Nationalism in general.

Like all social phenomena, nationalism is a historical category. It emerged in the social world at a certain stage of evolution of the life of the community when certain socio-historical conditions both objective and subjective, matured.³¹ Modern nationalism originated in Europe in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In the nineteenth century, it became a general European movement,³² and in the twentieth, it has become

30. Isaacs, op. cit., p. 436.

31. Desai, A.R., loc. cit.

32. Kohn, Hans., Prophets and Peoples, New York, (The MacMillan Co., 1946), p. 3.

one of the most explosive political philosophies that rules the world today.

Nationalism emerged in the West as a result of the decline of the Papacy and the rise of sovereign secular states in the early modern period. The old myth of Christendom lost its relevance and a new consciousness dawned that informed a person to feel first an Englishman, or an a French and a member of the universal Christian community afterwards.³³ England was the first country in which the feeling of nationalism strongly developed and it was the first 'to attain the full stature of organized and conscious nationhood'.³⁴ Likewise in Spain and Portugal the national spirit was kindled by various causes and at the opening of the modern age these two countries emerged as fully consolidated nation-states. Garner locates the influence of education and general enlightenment, together with the development of political consciousness and the love of liberty.³⁵ Thus, he rightly remarked, "the Poles were divided among the aggressors, but they remained a nation, if not a state and the flame which the partition kindled was destined never to be extinguished."³⁶

However, nationalism received great impetus after the French Revolution of 1789 that unleashed the forces of unification. Thus, G.P. Gooch could well take nationalism as "a child of the French Revolution."³⁷ The idea that patriotism is identifiable

33. Johari, J. C., Principles of modern Political Science
(Sterling publishers, New Delhi, Reprint 1992), p. 610.

34. Garner, of. cit., p. 115.

35. Idem.

36. Idem.

37. Johari, loc. cit.

with devotion to the nation spread widely and became popular in Western Europe only towards the end of the eighteenth century during the era of the French Revolution. It is with reference to this era that the term 'nationalism' can accurately be used for the first time. It is in this context that Rupert Emerson admittedly writes, thus, "for the first time the idea that nation has a natural right of its own and that it is the nation which legitimizes the state began to put forward in the nineteenth century as a proposition of universal validity."³⁸ In short, the French Revolution spread the idea that the nation has a right and identity of its own.

Soon after the French Revolution, the phenomenon of nationalism flourished throughout the continent. In Italy, Germany, Spain, Russia, and elsewhere, nationalism became a consuming force. Inspired by the French example, the people of Europe began to look upon nationalism as a blessing to be enjoyed by all men.³⁹

Nationalism now took the form of a political principle or doctrine, that is, it became the basis of a theory that every people who constitute a nation have a right to be independent and to organise themselves as a separate state of their own creation.

But defining nationalism obviously permits no definitive solution as it is an essentially contested concept. Meanings will vary from person to person and from context to context. No scientific definition of nationalism can thus be devised.

38. Emerson, op. cit., p. 190.

39. Christenson, et al., op. cit., p. 32.

As we would expect, the meanings assigned to nationalism is much scholarship and most political discourse revealed more about the users of the term than about the phenomenon. Of late the emphasis is being shifted from the universal design theories of nationalism to the situationally designed theories of nationalism. The focus is now on the unique elements of particular nationalism in specific periods and territories.⁴⁰

Generally, nationalism is seen as a political doctrine which holds that humanity is naturally divided into culturally distinct nations, and that only legitimate form of government is national self government within the nation state.⁴¹

The power of nationalism, argues Smith, should be attributed to the fact that membership in a nation provides "a powerful means of defining and locating individual selves in the world through the prism of the collective personality and its distinctive culture."⁴² The power of nationalism, according to him can be attributed to the following four features :

1. Membership in a nation promises individuals redemption from personal oblivion.
2. Identification with a nation gives individuals hope of personal renewal through national regeneration.
3. Membership in a nation offers rescue from alienation, solitude and anonymity.

40. De, Soumitra., Nationalism and Separatism in Bengal A Study of India's partition, (Vikas publishing House Ltd. 1992), p. 12.

41. Idem.

42. Anthony, D. Smith., National Identity, (Las Vegas, 1991), p.17.

4. National membership assures individuals that as members they enjoy equal status.

NAGA NATIONALISM

Nationalism is a product of the growth of social and intellectual factors at a certain stage of history. Nationalism is first and foremost 'a state of mind', an 'act of consciousness'.⁴³ It stands for all cases where a group of people affirms their rights as separate group.

In the light of the above discussion, the Naga search for political recognition may be an inseparable part of Naga nationalism. "Even if we accept nationality as basically a cultural phenomenon we must concede that in the modern world all nationalities perceive some national rights and view themselves as political group".⁴⁴ Nagas have in course of their political struggle extraordinarily displayed this sentiment. A number of scholars like Udayon Misra, M. Horam, Alemchiba etc., a host of foreign writers and scholars and the Peace Mission (a neutral body recognised by the Government of India) explicitly maintained the stand that 'the Naga people are unquestionably a nation' even in modern sense of the term, essentially because of its distinctiveness in all spheres which marked it off from other groups. In fact, 'in most European languages the Nation refers very specifically to the ethnic group'.⁴⁵ Thus, it is not wrong to

43. Kohn, Hans., The idea of nationalism, (N.Y. 1951), p: 4.

44. Baruah, A.K., Social tension in Assam, (Gauhati, 1991), p. 4.

45. Glazer, Nathan., Religion and Ethnic nationalism (In) Steven L. Spiegel At Issues Politics in the world arena (St. Martin's Press, N.Y. 1981), p. 66.

use the term 'Naga nationalism' in the context of the Naga struggle for recognition of their right.

There is no doubt that Naga struggle is true nationalism with deep popular roots. Admittedly, Horald Lasswell stated "genuinely nationalist movement are not to be confused with separatist demands."⁴⁶ Even Lt. Col. Anand (whose writing is known for his biased military view concerning the Naga movement) concluded that the Naga movement developed into a people's movement. Thus he wrote, "for the first time, the Nagas...joined hands to attain independence. The development of such a unanimous voice in one of the most inhospitable areas of the world was not a mean achievement."⁴⁷ Colin Johnson went further reaffirming it and wrote, "the Naga people have developed a strong sense of nationalism which is shared even by those seeking some accommodation with India."⁴⁸ The movement is ardently supported by the Nagas in India as well as in Myanmar.

Now the follow-up query is whether in the changed situation the term 'Naga nationalism' is still valid or not. No doubt, there has been several changes in terms of organisational set up, leadership, strategy or modus operandi etc. but one thing stands clear is that the Naga movement which commenced in the pre-independence era still continues. As M. Horam rightly remarked

46. Emerson, op. cit., p. 216.

47. Anand, Lt.Co. V.K., Conflict in Nagaland, A study of Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency (Chanakya Publication, Delhi, 1980), p. 70.

Vide On slippery slope in Nagaland by Manekar, p. 58.
Insurgency and counter-insurgency by B. Varma, p. 58.

48. IWGIA Document 56, The Naga nation and its struggle against genocide (Published by International Work Group for Indigenous Affair, Copenhagen, 1986), p. 36.

"thirty years is a long time for a small people to hold out against a far stronger opponent."⁴⁹ Naga leaders like Th. Muivah succinctly stated

Is the presence of more than two hundred thousand troops of India for so long time a sign of peoples' acceptance of Indian Constitution? Is it a manifestation of peoples' commitment to India? Is it not a sign of peoples' support to the cause? What organisation can stand against such heavy odds for 47 years without the support of the people?⁵⁰

In other words, Naga nationalism is still alive if not strengthened. However, one has to admit that in any movement there are ups and down. It is also true that the situation has completely changed but not the fundamental political stand of the Naga nationalists. Since 1975, the main group which denounced the Shillong Accord represents the 'hardcore' section of Naga nationalists. The resurgence of Naga nationalism today is essentially the work of the NSCN under the leadership of Isak Swu and Th. Muivah. Yet there is no fundamental change in the political stand earlier upheld by the NNC.

For understanding the contents and direction of Naga nationalism, one may categorise it under the variety called ethnic nationalism. The ethnic sources of Naga nationalism are unquestionable. It derives the force from the inner and dormant resources of the Nagas being an ethnic community and the perceptions and sentiments they aspire. In ethnic nationalism the

49. Horam, op. cit., p. 37.

50. Muivah, Th., A rejoinder to the Indian propaganda stunt : 'Does violence get a mandate' submitted to the Secretary General, UNPO, Oking 6th June, 1994, p. 5.

focus primarily is on the collective level of identity and community. Here lies the key to the explosive power of nationalism. This particular identity is the ethnie or ethnic community which refers to a "named human population with a myth of common ancestry, shared memories and cultural elements, a link with an historic territory or homeland and a measure of solidarity."⁵¹

The belief of common identity has provided the Nagas a plank for self and other identification. Ethnicity is not about blood or genes as such but about myths and beliefs in common origin.⁵² The importance of historical memories is always highlighted in ethnic nationalism and in the case of the Nagas, selective reference of the historical fact of some areas never forming an effective part of the British administration has no doubt fostered a sense of collectivity. A nationalist movement selectively draws from history to legitimate its own hegemonistic interpretation of the nation.⁵³ A shared culture is equally important. The cultural components which have promoted nationalism among the Nagas include dress, food, music and craft as well as customs and mode of village administration. The absence of a Naga language has not however impeded the growth of a common consciousness. Language, often important, is not the key criterion of ethnicity. Max Muller came to realize it a century ago when he pointed out that it was dangerous and misleading to

51. Anthony, D. Smith., The Ethnic sources of nationalism Survival, Spring 1993, p. 49.

52. Ibid., p. 50.

53. Johnston, R. J. et al. Nationalism, Self-determination and Political Geography, (London, 1988), p. 22.

equate language with ethnic origins. ⁵⁴ Religion undoubtedly acted as the most common shared cultural element for the Nagas as embodied in the generally accepted ideal 'Nagaland for Christ'. The overwhelming majority of the Nagas in the Nagaland state, hill districts of Manipur, and Assam-Nagaland border areas are Christians by faith and in Myanmar the NSCN initiative has resulted in large scale conversion of the Naga tribes from traditional animistic belief to Christianity. No wonder, the NSCN ideology of 'Christian socialisms' is directed towards strengthening the ethnic unity of the Naga tribes.

What is vital for ethnicity is the sense of attachment to a particular land, otherwise known as 'homeland', which carries with it a sense of sanctification and embodies a sense of fulfilment. The homeland is seen as a cradle of the people.⁵⁵ In the case of the Nagas attachment to the territory is real and not imaginary. The contiguity of land held by them in India and Myanmar has contributed towards the sense of mutual belonging. Nationalist ideologies have sought to interpret the importance of the occupation and control of space, both in the past and as a plan for the future.⁵⁶ The demand for greater Nagaland, as advocated by the Nagas is clearly a plan for the future. Territory is the means by which consciousness is structured. Nationalists desirous of matching their distinctive group identity with the claimed or held territory would accept the contention that "territory...is space to which identity is

54. Smith, loc. cit.

55. Armstrong, J., Nations before nationalism (North Carolina, 1982), p. 14.

56. Johnston, et al. op. cit., p. 3.

attached by a distinctive group who held or covet that territory and who desire to have full control over it for the group's benefit."⁵⁷

The compactness of the held and projected territory in the case of the Nagas has only crystallised Naga nationalism. Similar occupation of a compact territory by one ethnic group is not always found. Thus it has been estimated that only in about a quarter of the states in the world (out of almost 190 states) does over 95 per cent of the population comprise of one ethnic group.⁵⁸ Territory is bounded space, that is, 'a very substantial, material, measurable and concrete entity' although 'it is also the product and indeed the expression of the psychological features of human groups'.⁵⁹ Nationalism is also a means of imposing cultural homogeneity within the bounds of a given territory. Ethnic nationalism is clearly a form of social and political movement firmly rooted in territory, in place and space. Nationalism generally defines people as belonging/not belonging to a territory and culture, rather than in terms of class or status divisions and it seeks to play down internal divisions and conflicts by externalising the supposed source of problems.⁶⁰

57. Knight, D.B., Identity and territory, Annals of the Association of American Geographies 1982, p. 526.

58. Nielsson, G., States and Nation-groups-a global taxonomy, (In) E. Tiryakian and R. Rogowski (Ed). New Nationalism of the developed west (Winchester, 1985), pp. 30-31.

59. Gottman, J., The Significance of Territory (Virginia 1973), p. 15.

60. Anderson, James., Nationalist Ideology and Territory (In) Johnston, op. cit., p. 24.

The element of solidarity also constitutes another dimension of ethnic nationalism. However, "not all the members of a given ethnie feel an equal sense of belonging to the community."⁶¹ To foster it is however one of the self-appointed tasks of nationalists. This can be done through a well defined ideology by the movement leaders. "The ideology propagated by them should be clearly understandable, highly motivating and should have a universal appeal which can be internalised by the masses."⁶² In fact, ethnic nationalism has an advantage over territorial and civic nationalism-that of building the nation, as it were, out of pre-existing ethnic ties. The Naga nationalism under the NSCN has been able to arouse and ignite collective ties and sentiments among the Nagas.

No doubt Naga nationalism has displayed signs of ethnocentrism which amounts to

the view of things in which one's own group is the centre of everything, and all others are scaled with reference to it....Each group nourishes its own pride and vanity, boasts itself superior, exalts its own divinities and looks with contempt on outsiders.⁶³

The FGN has persistently maintained that 'the Nagas are not Indians and have nothing to do with India'.⁶⁴ The NSCN view 'anything Indian or Burmese' as 'detestable'.⁶⁵ The Naga

61. Smith, op. cit., p. 24.

62. Borgohain, R. and Deb, B.J., State, Ideology and Insurgency in Nagaland National Seminar on Insurgency, NEICSSR, July, 1995.

63. Swartz, Marc J., Negative ethnocentrism (In) Crisis and Continuity in World Politics, p. 97.

64. FGN Document A Brief Political background of Naga Independence (Oking 21 May, 1968), p. 36.

65. NSCN Free Nagaland Manifesto (Oking January 31, 1980, 2nd Edition, 1993), p. 19.

nationalists' attitude of hostility towards India and Indians is guided by two apparent considerations. On the one hand, this attitude legitimizes their political struggle and unites the people against a common enemy. On the other hand, it structures a defensive mechanism against the might of the Indian state, flagrant and systematic violation of human rights and the sweeping powers of the army permissible under special laws in operation. An account of the violation of human rights in the sixties is vividly given in the Rev. Michael Scott's report to the Prime Minister of India (1966), Luingam Luithui and Nandita Haksar Nagaland File, Mar Atsongchanger's - Unforgettable memories from Nagaland etc. Again, the communication sent by the NSCN office to the UN Secretary General * on 10 August 1995 reveals that in the past three years, more than 1,000 innocent Nagas have been killed. Over 100 villages were incinerated, thousands uprooted and rendered homeless.⁶⁶

The Naga nationalist sentiment is based on the fact that the Nagas are 'different from Indians and Burmese (Myanmarese)'. The Naga leaders of all camps have always projected these differences.⁶⁷ The FGN has stated that Nagaland has always been an independent territory adjoining territories of India and Burma (Myanmar).⁶⁸ Purely from historical perspective, the scholar will

* - The UN Secretary General accepted the case submitted by the Naga leaders (NSCN) through the Society for Threatened People on 10 August, 1995.

66. UN Document on Economic and Social Council, Agenda item 6, 10 August, 1995, p. 2.

67. Horam, Naga Insurgency, op. cit., p. 37.

68. Baboo, Balgovind, The Naga National Movement - An Analysis Third World Unity (Journal) (See Jaya Prakash Narayan's Nation Building in India, p. 357), Jan.-April, 1970, p. 42.

agree with Balgovind Baboo that "historical and legal documents show that before British rule, 'Nagaland' was in no way a part of India." He further elucidated : 'ethnically, culturally and linguistically the Nagas are not Indians as the Rajanthis, Assamese or Keralites are'.⁶⁹

It is on this account that the Naga leaders of all camps consider India as an 'occupation force'. The Peace Mission's proposal No.5 amply unveiled the political stand of the Naga nationalists :

The Nagaland Federal Delegation have claimed that the Nagas had been never conquered by the Indian Army or ruled by an Indian Government, although their territory had been forcibly annexed by the British Army and British Government about a century ago. Nevertheless, their right of self-determination, they claim, belongs to them separately as a people from the sovereign Independent state of India, and they are now demanding recognition of their independence, which as they say, India herself demanded and heroically struggled for under the historic slogan of Swaraj.⁷⁰

On the other hand, the Government of India's position is that Nagaland formed an integral part of India before 1947 and that with the transfer of power to India by the British Parliament, Nagaland became part of India in the same way as all other states in India.⁷¹ But the Peace Mission questioned India's first claim and stated that India's claim had no historical basis.⁷²

69. Baboo, loc.cit.

70. Peace Mission's Proposal, No. 5, 20th December, 1964 (In) Naga Insurgency by M. Horam, p. 263.

71. Horam, loc.cit.

72. Narayan, Jayaprakash, op.cit., p. 357.

The FGN in an attempt to espouse the cause of the Naga political struggle underlined the emerging unity and stated :

Today, the Nagas wherever they may be, have developed a spiritual longing to be together. The longing to draw close together by themselves also at the same time develop a longing to live as a distinct nation. In other words, Naga nationalism has fired the minds of men and women everywhere to constitute the Naga people into a free and independent nation. The sooner India recognises this Naga nationalism the better it will be. If India does not respect the right of the Nagas to the same liberty and independence for which they themselves had fought who can be respected to do so ?⁷³

It is one of the characteristic features of modern nationalism that most people who constitute a nationality aspire either to be independent and to live under a political organisation of their own choice and creation, or at least to be accorded a larger political autonomy. In other words, it treats as a natural right of the people of a particular nationality to determine their political destiny. Put differently, it implies "in every case was the insistence that the dominion on one nation was politically inexpedient and morally wrong."⁷⁴ It also implies that the disintegration of a multi-national state should be regarded as a natural and logical consequence.⁷⁵ In this sense 'nationalism' is a vision of the future which restores to man his

73. FGN Document, op.cit., p. 68.

74. Laski, Harold J., op.cit., p. 222.

See Smith, op.cit., p. 221 'is interpreted by nationalists as contrary to nature'.

75. Johari, op.cit., p. 618.

See contemporary Nationalism and World Order by C.P. Romulo, p. 22.

'essence', his basic pattern of living and being, which was once his undisputed birthright.⁷⁶

INSURGENCY

The Naga political movement can hardly be regarded as insurgent movement. Firstly, the Naga movement had commenced even before the independence of India. To be precise, on January 10, 1929, a memorandum was submitted to the Simon Commission (by the Naga Club body) stating that "Nagas should be left alone should the British leave India."⁷⁷ Hence the question of 'uprising against constituted Government' does not arise as free Indian State had not there been established.

Secondly, one cannot overlook the contention of the Nagas that the Nagas are a 'distinct nation' and the Naga nationalists stated : "We are not asking India to grant us independence. We are simply asking India to recognise our independence which is our birthright."⁷⁸ In seeking to justify the stand, A.Z. Phizo emphatically asserted the stand of the NNC and said, "historically, Nagaland has no connection with India, and even the part of Nagaland which was for a time came under British administration was kept separate from British India."⁷⁹

Thirdly, another circumstantial factor acting as a counterpoise in applying the term 'insurgency' in Naga case is that the movement is not just confined to India alone but extends

76. Smith, *op.cit.*, p. 22.

77. Horam, *op.cit.*, p. 38.

78. FGN Document, *op.cit.*, p. 70.

79. Nibedon, Nirmal, Nagaland The Night of the Guerrillas, (Lancer Publishers, Delhi, 1978), p. 29.

to Myanmar as well where a sizeable Naga population inhabit. Thus, be it NNC or the NSCN, the Nagas of the North-West of Myanmar (Eastern Nagaland), unquestionably are a decisive factor as they contribute bulk of the fighting force. The Naga leaders of all camps, therefore, are persistent on the issue of merger all the Naga areas in India as well as in Myanmar. The ardent desire to unify the people was obvious when the NNC appealed to Sir Akbar Hydari to bring all the Naga tribes together, for they all naturally desire to be together.⁸⁰ In this sense, Naga nationalism has certain elements of 'irredentism'. No wonder, Anthony Smith admittedly writes that 'many movement have, in addition to their separatist aims, the opposite drive to unification of all co-nationals in one state.'⁸¹

Lastly, several Indian political leaders directly or indirectly maintained the unique character of the Nagas. Mahatma Gandhi, when met by a Naga delegation in the third week of July, 1947 at Bhangi colony in Delhi told :

Nagas have every right to be independent. We do not want to live under the dominion of the British and they are now leaving us. I want you to feel that India is yours. I feel that the Naga Hills are mine just as much as they are yours, but if you say, it is mine then the matter must stop there. I believe in the brotherhood of men, but I do not believe in force or forced Union. If you do not wish to join the Union of India nobody will force you to do that. The Congress Government will not do that.⁸²

80. FGN Document, of.cit., p. 11.

81. Smith, of.cit., p. 222.

82. FGN Document, of.cit., p. 14.

Vide The World of Nagas by M. Rumunny, pp. 41-42.

Jawaharlal Nehru (seems to be spelling out the status of Naga Hills) when reacting to the proposed British constitutional proposals is said to have stated on August 19, 1946 that "The tribal Areas are defined as being those long frontier of India which are neither part of India nor Burma (Myanmar), nor of Indian states nor of any foreign power."⁸³ This stand was well expressed when the former Prime Minister, in a letter to the NNC leader wrote

The Naga areas when India is independent, as it is bound to be soon, it will not be possible for the British Government to hold on the Naga territory or any part of it. This strip of land will be left isolated between India and China. Inevitably, therefore, this Naga territory must form part of India and of Assam.⁸⁴

Later Nehru stated :

It is obvious that the Naga territory in Eastern Assam is much too small to stand by itself politically or economically. It lies between two huge countries, India and China, and part of it consists of rather backward people who who require considerable help. When India is independent, it will not be possible for the for the British Government to hold on to the Naga territory or any part of it. The world be isolated there between India and China. Inevitably, therefore, this Naga territory must form part of India and of Assam with which it has developed such close association.⁸⁵

Some years later, in November 28, 1949 in Shillong, C. Rajagopalachari, the then Government General of free India reportedly told a Naga delegation that

83. Phizo's Letter to Rajiv Gandhi, Prime Minister of India, May 10, 1986.

84. Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru Second Series, Vol. 1, (Published by the Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Fund, Teen Murti House, New Delhi, 1984), p. 604.

85. Ramunny, op.cit., p. 32.

India wanted to be friendly with you. India does not want to deprive the Nagas of their land. Nagas are at full liberty to do as they like, either to become part of India or be separated if it would be best for their interest to be isolated.⁸⁶

When the Naga political movement was at the peak, the Peace Mission was formed to find an 'honourable solution' to the political problem. The Peace Mission from its inception maintained the stand that 'the Naga struggle' could not be regarded as a 'problem of law and order'. It was certainly a struggle for national freedom. In its opinion, it may not aim at over throwing a government, but it certainly aims at throwing out a government-the Government of India which according to them, is established in Nagaland by force.⁸⁷

Here, the Peace Mission has indicated a significant point which, obviously does not fit into the definition of insurgency' precisely meaning 'uprising against rightfully constituted government'. Therefore, the Peace Mission did not regard the Naga movement as 'rebellion or secession'.⁸⁸ Even the Naga nationalists have always been quite vocal enough in stating that Naga case is neither a question of 'separation' nor 'secession' from India. Separation or Secession in their view comes only when there is a union. Nagaland was and is never part of India and as such, Naga independence to them is neither a question of separation nor secession from India.⁸⁹

86. FGN Document, op.cit., pp. 16-17.

87. Narayan, loc.cit.

88. Ngareophung, Ng., Legacy of R. Suisa (Published by Ng. Ngareophung, Ukhrul, 1976), p. 24.

89. FGN Document, op.cit., p. 71.

Against this background, it is somewhat difficult to view Naga nationalism as 'insurgency'. Taking into account, the historical reality and facts, Naga struggle for recognition of their rights cannot be term as an 'insurgency movement'. Unfortunately, there is a strong tendency among academicians, politicians, civil and military administrators, journalists etc. to use the term 'insurgency' and apply it to all types of contemporary political movements. In other words, they explicitly deny the existence of genuine national movement as if the era of nationalism has already had its closing ceremony. Further, social science literature reveals the absence of uniform understanding of the term insurgency, let alone any conceptualization of the term. A review of literature shows that the term 'insurgency' has been 'scarcely used in the typology of social movements'.⁹⁰ The casual treatment the term received led an eminent scholar to remark that even the 'accommodation of insurgency under the broad category of social movement serves little purpose as long as the differentiating attributes are not well settled.'⁹¹ Insurgency in such literature has been viewed 'more as a means rather than ends'.

Naga National Movement : Main Events

It is generally agreed among the historians and writers that the groundwork of Naga nationalism was laid down during the last days of the British reign. In 1918, a 'Naga Club' was set up at

90. Misra, B. P., Insurgency or What ? The fusion of realism and instrumentalism in political discourse, National Seminar on Insurgency, NEICSSR, July, 1995.

91. Idem.

Kohima with government officials, educated men and a few village headmen. This became a discussion forum on various Naga affairs.⁹² This club was the first Naga organisation to submit a memorandum to the Simon Commission on 10th January, 1929. The memorandum inter alia stated : "We Nagas should not be thrust to the mercy of the people (Indian) who could never have conquered us themselves, and to whom we were never subjected, but to leave us alone to determine for ourselves as in ancient times".⁹³ This was the first sign of Naga expression of their political aspiration. The Government of the People's Republic of Nagaland estimated that 'this is the first written document in which the Nagas had expressed their national longing and political aspirations to regain their independence'.⁹⁴

The Emergence of Naga National Council

However, the Naga struggle took a direction with the formation of Naga National Council in 1946. It is this 'organisation which expressed and modulated' the Naga sense of nationhood.⁹⁵ This could be considered to be the beginning of the modern phase of Naga movement.

In April, 1946, the British Government sent a Cabinet Mission to India to study the political situation in the country. The NNC informed the Cabinet Mission that the Naga future will not be bound by any arbitrary decision of the British Government,

92. Baboo, op.cit., p. 43.

93. FGN Document, op.cit., p. 5.

94. FGN Document, A Brief Political Account., p. 3.

95. Maxwell; op.cit. p. 6.

and that no recommendation will be accepted without consultation'.⁹⁶

On February 20, 1947, the Naga National Council requested His Majesty's Government to appoint India to act as guardian power over Nagaland for a period of 10 years, at the end of which it was proposed that the question of the political future would be left to the Naga people themselves to decide.⁹⁷ This request was embodied in a Memorandum submitted to the last Viceroy of India, Lord Louis Mountbatten. The Memorandum's subject was self-explanatory. It reads : Memorandum of the case of the Naga people for self-determination and an APPEAL to H.M.G. and the Government of India.⁹⁸

On May 19, 1947, the Naga National Council submitted a second Memorandum to His Majesty's Government. Here the NNC was explicit enough in spelling out the proposed 10 year 'Interim Government' for the Naga people with full legislative, judicial and executive powers except defence after which they would choose their own Government.⁹⁹

On 20th MAY, 1947, when a sub-committee of the Advisory Committee on aboriginal tribes visited Kohima, the Naga leaders reiterated the same view.¹⁰⁰ In fact, events were moving fast in the subcontinent that the Naga leaders realised that if it did not spell out its demands in unequivocal terms, the Naga political aspiration would suffer a setback.

96. FGN, op.cit., p. 6.

97. FGN, loc.cit.

98. Ibid., p. 7.

99. Tribal movements in India (Ed) K.S. Singh, Vol.I, 1992 (Ramesh Jain Manohar Publication, Delhi), p. 44.

100. Aram, Dr. M., Gandhian Dialectic, (Gandhigram Rural Institute (Deemed University, Gandhigram, 1979), p. 10.

For the Nagas, the British Government did not act favourably and though it was discussed at the highest level, no concrete decision was taken; perhaps, the British Government did not want to delay the transfer of power to free India just because of the 'Naga case'. Secondly, in their perception the Naga National Council was not a fully representative body of the Nagas. This is evident from Lord Pethick Lawrence, the Secretary of State correspondence with Admiral Viscount Mountbatten.¹⁰¹

With the approach of India's independence, the question of the Naga's future got sharpened. The British and especially those who had spent much of their lives among the Nagas-hoped to find means to perpetuate the protective insulation especially from the domination of the plans, and mooted various plans for the purpose. One such idea was that the tribal areas in the north-east should be cut out from India and set up as a British Crown colony. Another approach suggested a tripartite guarantee of the integrity and autonomy of the Naga areas by Britain, India and Burma (Myanmar).¹⁰² The NNC leadership unmindfully* opposed this proposal and the Indian National Congress was too happy to follow suit and declared that the 'British must quit Naga hills when they quit India'.¹⁰³ Verrier Elwin (a friend of India) stated

101. Mansergh, Nicholas., The Transfer of Power, 1942-47, Vol. X (Her Majesty's Stationary Office, London, 1981), p.219.

102. Maxwell, loc. cit.

103. Das, N.K., (In) Tribal movements in India, of. cit.,. p. 44. Unmindful - in the sense that had Nagas accepted the plan they would have been independent today for the withdrawal of British power was a matter of time, e.g., Basutoland and Swaziland in South Africa. The NNC in June 1946 took a resolution at Wokha opposing the 'Crown Colony' scheme (Hill Politics in North-East India by S. Chaube, Orient Longman, New Delhi, 1973, p.69).

that 'there is not doubt that if the Nagas had lent the slightest support or encouragement to the scheme, the colony might well have been a reality'.¹⁰⁴

The 9 Point Agreement

In June, 1947, the Governor of Assam, Akbar Hydari negotiated an agreement with the Naga National Council and this came to be known as 'the 9 point agreement'. This understanding was significant on the one hand for it acknowledged the NNC's right of control over all spheres of Naga life ranging from prevalent tribal laws to the ownership of land and taxation. On the other, it gave hope to the them government to break the prevailing deadlock. But the ninth point was the most controversial and gave rise to another deadlock. It reads as follows :

9. Period of Agreement The Governor of Assam as the Agent of the Government of Indian Union will have a special responsibility for a period of ten years to ensure the due observation of this Agreement; at the end of this period, the Naga National Council will be asked whether they require the above Agreement to be extended for a further period or a new agreement regarding the future of the Naga people arrived at.¹⁰⁵

The NNC claimed that it ensured the Nagas the right to complete independence on the expiry of the 10 year period. The NNC leaders believe that it guaranteed their right to self-determination because the Governor himself had proposed (in

104. Ramunny, op. cit., p. 35.

105. Gundevia, Y.D., War and Peace in Nagaland, (Palit and Palit publishers, N.Delhi, 1975), p. 61.

course of their negotiation) on the last point that "at the end of 10 years the Nagas will be free to oppose any form of government provided they do not join Pakistan or Burma (Myanmar)".¹⁰⁶ Unfortunately, this proposal on the 9 point was rejected by the NNC members and instead they agreed on the modified version (as it is in the agreement).

Secondly, the stand taken by Jawaharlal Nehru in support of self-determination in 1944, coincide with the 9th provision. He stated :

...it may be desirable to fix a period of say ten years later after the establishment of free Indian state, at the end of which the right to secede may be exercised through proper constitutional process and in accordance with the clearly expressed will of the inhabitants of the area concerned.¹⁰⁷

No wonder, Naga National Council leaders persistently struck to their interpretation of the 9 clause, meaning a 'clear promise of self-determination' and to that end 'they had been given this assurance.'¹⁰⁸

Some years later, on November 9, 1949 a 'three man delegation of the Naga National Council met the representative of the Government of India. The delegation was bluntly told that there was no Agreement made with the Nagas. According to the NNC sources Gopinath Bordoloi (Prime Minister of Assam) himself

106. Imti, T. Aliba., Reminiscence Impur to Naga National Council (Published by the writer, Mokokchung, 1988), p. 67.

Mr. T. Aliba was a Joint Secretary of the NNC, the time when 9 Point Agreement was negotiated and signed.

107. Nehru, Jawaharlal., The discovery of India, (Delhi, 1972), p. 534.

108. Mullik, B.N., May years with Nehru 1948-1964, (Allied Publishers New Delhi, 1972), p. 298.

sorrowfully admitted to the Nagas...that the Agreement was no longer considered to exist by the Indian Government.¹⁰⁹ Imti remarked that 'it was the misfortune of the Nagas that the Governor belonged to a minority community a Muslim.'¹¹⁰ In fact, the Government of India unilaterally withdrew from the Agreement.

Meeting with Mahatma Gandhi

On July 17th, 1947, a Naga delegation under the leadership of A.Z. Phizo met Jinnah and told him that they intended to make a unilateral declaration of independence on 14 August which was also to be Pakistan's independence day'.¹¹¹ Two days later (19th July) they met Gandhi who reportedly stated : (recorded by Pyarelal, his associate)-

Nagas have every right to be independent. We do not want to live under the domination of the British and they are now leaving us....if you do not wish to join the Union of India nobody will force you to do that.¹¹²

Unfortunately for the Nagas, Gandhi did not live to carry out his promise and the new leadership in the Congress did not share his perception on the issue. As no understanding or agreement was reached between the Naga nationalists and the Government of India, the former declared themselves independent on 14th August 1947¹¹³ According to the NNC document, 'the Government of India and the United Nations was informed by cable

109. Imti, op. cit., p. 69.

110. Idem.

111. Maxwell, loc. cit.

112. Idem.

113. Aram, op. cit., p. 11.

to which the UNO was kind enough to send an acknowledgment.¹¹⁴ Thus a unique situation arose where in India which just became independent found itself confronted with the Nagas who wanted their rights to be recognised. Henceforth, the situation turned for the worse. Besides, the Government of India did not follow a consistent policy and at times there were discrepancy in the statements of the leaders in India. For instance, Neville Maxwell writes, following newspaper reports, that the Governor General, C. Rajagopalacharia told a Naga delegation in November 1949 that 'they were at full liberty to do as they liked.'¹¹⁵ On the other hand, Jawaharlal Nehru was willing to give complete autonomy but never independence.¹¹⁶ Nehru was then speaking under the shadow of uncertainty about the intention of the Nizam of Hyderabad and other rulers of princely states.

On January 24, 1950, the Naga nationalists under the banner of the NNC informed the Government of India, the United Nations and all the foreign ambassadors in New Delhi that Nagas did not accept the Indian Constitution.¹¹⁷

Plebiscite

The Naga National Council organised a General Naga Conference for three days-in 1950 at Kohima. This conference was unique for two reasons. Firstly, the Nagas of different tribes were well represented in a big way. Secondly, this conference

114. FGN Document, op. cit., p. 14.

115. Maxwell, op. cit., p. 5.

116. loc. cit.

117. GPRN Document, A brief political account, p. 9.

passed an important resolution. The Intelligence Bureau's Deputy Director, S.M. Dutt reported having seen a 'remarkable' thing :

Various Naga tribes had come together, were staying together, messing together and talking together - a thing which had never happened before in Naga history. Amongst the tribals who had gathered were some who were bitter enemies of each other. A miracle did happen for the first time in the history of the Nagas; there were remarkable unanimity amongst all the tribals.¹¹⁸

The conference resolves to hold a plebiscite on the issue of the Naga independence as early as possible. It was decided to inform New Delhi about the holding of the plebiscite three months in advance.¹¹⁹ Later on, the Government of India was requested to send its representatives and observes to Nagaland to witness the holding of plebiscite vide NNC letters dated March 30, and April 11, 1951.¹²⁰

Therefore, to legitimize the Naga position, and to demonstrate that it spoke for all the Nagas, the NNC conducted a plebiscite. Voting by thumb print (because of widespread illiteracy and it was thought this would prevent fraud) the Nagas gave a massive, indeed nearly unanimous vote (99.9 per cent) in favour of independence from India.¹²¹ Nevertheless this result was ignored by the Government of India.

The success of the Naga nationalists is quite evident because of the 'wrong assessment' and 'conflicting views' from the government side. The Assam Government, for instance, did not

118. Mullik, op. cit., p. 302.

119. Ramunny, op. cit., p. 57.

120. FGN Document, op. cit., p. 18.

121. Maxwell, loc. cit.

take this matter seriously because they were of the view that Phizo had no influence and that the divisive forces among the tribals would prevent them from coming together and Phizo was in no position to create any trouble.¹²² On the other hand, the Intelligence Bureau took this development quite seriously. As confessed by Mullik "we informed the Prime Minister about this development" and S.M. Dutt himself had spoken to Pandit Nehru at Shillong and

suggested that measures should be taken to prevent the holding of this conference. He also mentioned that there was a strong feeling amongst the Nagas that they had been betrayed, as the agreement signed by them with Hydari and Bordoloi (the 9 point agreement) had not been respected by the framers of the Indian Constitution, and so they were no longer bound by the Indian Constitution.¹²³

Unfortunately, Dutt failed to carry conviction with the Prime Minister who naturally at that time had more regard for the views of the Assam Government. Mullik further enlightened on the issue and thus writes, "up to this time it must be said to the credit of the Nagas that they were not thinking of any violent movement. They were hoping that the result of the plebiscite would sufficiently influence the authorities to give a dispensation in their favour".¹²⁴

Boycott of Election

The Government of India went ahead with the preparation for the first general election to the Indian Parliament (1952). The

122. Mullik, op. cit., pp. 300-301.

123. Mullik, loc. cit.

124. Ibid.; p. 302.

NNC organised a total boycott of the general election.¹²⁵ (for the second general election in 1957, the Government of India did not even prepare for election nominations in most parts of Naga areas).¹²⁶ According to the Naga Nationalist sources, Bimala Prasad Chaliha, the then President of the Assam Pradesh Congress, who toured the interior of the Naga country in September, 1953, observed that

apart from the plebiscite, the boycott of the general elections were sufficient proof of the unanimity of the Naga Hills people for independence and their singleness of purpose.¹²⁷

This obviously nullifies the allegations that the movement was led by a few 'misguided elements' and only 'a harmful of supporters'. The boycott of elections was simultaneously followed by a civil disobedience movement resulting in the mass resignation of school teachers, boycott of all Government of India functions, and refusal to pay taxes. Through these moves, each more successful than the other, the NNC proved beyond any shadow of doubt that it was the spokesman of all the Naga tribes and that the verdict of the Naga people was in favour of independence.¹²⁸

To thwart the emergence of a powerful Naga nationalism, there was joint programme by the Prime Minister of the India and Myanmar on March 30, 1953, to visit both the Naga territories in

125. Misra, op. cit., p. 9

"See" Y.D. Gundevia, War and Peace in Nagaland, p. 69.

126. Luithui, Luingam and Haskar, Nandita., Nagaland File. (Lancer publishers, Delhi, 1984), p. 24.

127. FGN Document, op. cit., p. 20.

128. Misra, op. cit., p. 9.

India and in Myanmar.¹²⁹ When they reached Kohima, 'a most unfortunate incident occurred during the public meeting'. The Nagas, demanded to read out the statement asking for the acceptance of their desire for political self-determination.¹³⁰ When denied the right to speak their mind to the Prime Minister, the Nagas decided that they would not hear the Prime Minister. Every Naga present walked off the stage and from the meeting some smacked their buttocks, a gesture unmistakably conveying insult and total rejection.¹³¹

'Nehru never forgot this insult',¹³² which most unfortunately took place in the presence of the Burmese (Myanmarese) Prime Minister, U Nu.

The Start of the Fighting (Undeclared War)

Unable to check the trend of events in the Naga Hills, the Government of India decided to crack down on the NNC. Almost the entire NNC set-up went underground.¹³³ The Government of India, sent a joint force of armed Police and Assam Rifles to began operations to restore (what they called) Indian authority.¹³⁴ Shortly, there were raids, seizure of arms, strengthening of Police force and more Police outposts were set up in the Naga Hills.¹³⁵ Meanwhile, in September, 1953, Bimala Prasad Chaliha, the President of the Assam Congress Committee, toured Naga Hills

129. Mullik, op. cit., p. 303.

130. Hcram, Naga Insurgency, op. cit., p. 51.

131. Horam, loc. cit.

132. Nibedon, The Ethnic Explosion, op. cit., p. 25.

133. Misra, loc. cit.

134. Maxwell, loc. cit.

135. Baboo, op. cit., p. 45.

(District).¹³⁶ Chaliha in his report to the Congress Committee informed that the

‘NNC workers were very loyal to the organisation. His impression was that the demand for independence was sincere and popular ... He found the Naga mind was so surcharged with the sentiment for independence that it was not in a receptive mood to hear anything else.’¹³⁷

In 1954, the formation of the Hongkin Government was announced. It was called Khunak Kautang Ngeukhuma - that is the ‘People's Sovereign Republic of Free Nagaland’.¹³⁸ This was the political wing of the NNC to direct and monitor its activities mainly in Eastern Nagaland. In the following year, on 22nd March, 1956, the NNC formed the Naga Federal Government (NFG) (later changed it to Federal Government of Nagaland (FGN)). It presented a Federal Nagaland Constitution which was later amended in 1968.¹³⁹ Along with it, its armed wing was also formed known as ‘Naga Home Guard’; later on it changed into ‘Naga Army’.¹⁴⁰

In the same year, the Indian troops were sent into the Naga Hills, and nearly a division of Indian troops were battling the Naga guerrillas.¹⁴¹ The Government of India officially announced the dispatch of Army into the Naga Hills. By that time, Nehru decided that it would have to be dealt with military rather than

136. Ramunny, op. cit., p. 65.

137. Ibid., p. 67.

138. Das, N.K., The Naga movement (In) Tribal movements in India, p. 45.

139. Horam, Naga Insurgency, op. cit., p. 12.

140. FGN Document, op. cit., p. 28.

141. Nibedon, op. cit., p. 28.

writes that the then "Chief of Army Staff, General K.S. Thimayya, had a rather long meeting with the Prime Minister. He told Nehru candidly that it required political wisdom rather than military might to solve the Naga problem.¹⁴³ However, General Thimayya did what he was expected to do. Jawaharlal Nehru was not alone on politically.¹⁴² Concerning this shift of policy, Nirmal Nibedon this line of thinking, even Rajendra Prasad, the then President of India recommended such step. Thus he observed :

The Naga problem is formidable even now, but then it will become more or less beyond our capacity to control unless we are prepared to be ruthless, and it is doubtful if even then we could suppress them.¹⁴⁴

Since then terrible conflict and fighting spread fast in the Naga hills. More units of Army were deployed. According to the Government sources, nearly two divisions of the Army and thirty-five battalions of Assam Rifles or Armed police were in operation in the Naga areas,¹⁴⁵ and as stated by B.N. Mullik, "there was nearly one security troop for every adult male Naga in the Naga Hills Tuensang area, but there never was a time when it could be claimed that the Naga guerrillas had been broken into submission. They (Naga) had few odd varieties of arms, muzzle-loaders, for instance, they suffered privation and casualties but did not give in."¹⁴⁶ Thus, it is particularly true that in Nagaland "war

142. Akbar, M. J., Nehru the making of India, (published by Penguin group London, 1988), p. 517.

143. Nibedon, loc. cit.

144. Valmiki, Choudhary., (Ed) ., Dr. Rajendra Prasad Corresspon-
dence and Select Documents, (Allied Publishers,
Ltd., 1992), p. 249.

145. Mullik, op. cit., p. 312.

146. Ibid., pp. 313-314.

theatre' the Government had sufficient troops `but was baffled by the nature of the terrain. Frustrated by elusive guerrillas, the Army more than once clamped down hard on innocent villagers'.¹⁴⁷

In the process of large-scale operations, the Naga civilian suffered immensely. India Today (Magazine) articulated the bitter truth thus

Nowhere has the experience of insurgency been longer and greater than in Nagaland, and nowhere else in the North-East human suffering been more painful and protracted. Nagaland was the laboratory in which the Indian Army, new to counter-insurgency, committed its biggest errors.¹⁴⁸

The NSCN leaders described intensely the situation of that period in these lines :

The behaviour of the Indian troops was beastly and horrible. There was no human compunction in them. Whatever they did, they did with sadism. They gloated over acts of cruelty wherever and whenever they performed. Mass arrests of men, women and children were done all over the country. They were mercilessly beaten, herded into concentration camps, where thousands died of starvation, tortures and diseases. All able-bodies were used as labour force to construct camps, carry supplies ... torturing to death through ruthless beating, thrusting stick into the rectum of private parts of men and women, hanging upside down were daily phenomenon Some villages were burnt down twenty times even. Besides, a large number of villages were uprooted from one place to another causing sufferings beyond words. Granaries were burnt to ashes without exception. Standing crops were destroyed. Schools and Churches were raged to the ground. Scorch-earth policies were applied in every part of the land.¹⁴⁹

147. Nibedon, op.cit., p. 75.

148. Ice in the soul (In) India Today, Oct. 31, 1982, p. 91.

149. GPRN Document, op.cit., p. 18.

In facing the natinalist movement, insurgencies or secessionist movements, there are three options for solutions. The first is the use of force. The second is the use of political process. And the third is the willingness to concede the basic demand. Phadnis writes 'the Nagas who never felt a part of India asked for independence, and got the Indian Army instead.'¹⁵⁰ She also added that 'the army used methods that were brutal and even uncivilised. But because Kohima was so far cut off from the rest of the world, New Delhi got away with it.'¹⁵¹

Indeed, India was facing problem of such magnitude for the first time and the serious allegations against the security forces were true in most cases. In Delhi, the Lok Sabha heard a member accusing the Indian army and other security forces of having indulged in 'an orgy of murder'.¹⁵² Dessan Tagore, a strong critic of the Government of India's policy on the Naga issue wrote condemntiously :

Nagaland has seen the worst horrible form of the state terrorism - women are raped, men and children tortured, and people moved into concentration camps. The Nagas have no recourse to civic justice. All this persecution is to force the Naga people to surrender to India and to accept the Indian rulers as their masters. The Nagas never will.¹⁵³

Nehru undoubtedly was quite disturbed as is evident from his letter to Assam Chief Minister B.R. Medhi :

150. Phadnis, Aditi, The Third Option (In) Sunday magazine, 7-13 November, 1993, p. 33.

151. Phadnis, loc.cit.

152. Maxwel, loc.cit.

153. Tagore, Dessan, Israel in India, (Published by the Author, 1986), p. 1.

we know that the Nagas are tough people and are very disciplined. It is therefore, conceivable that even when we have succeeded completely in a military sense, small scale guerrilla tactics may continue giving us continuous headaches, apart from affecting our reputation both in India and abroad. How then are we to face this situation?¹⁵⁴

This note certainly reflects the psyche of the leadership. By then the Government of India had already adopted the infamous 'village grouping' technique pioneered by the Japanese in Manchuria.¹⁵⁵ According to B.N. Mullik, the plan was to break the supply and intelligence system of the rebels, who, being a guerrilla force, depended for their supplies and information on the villagers.¹⁵⁶ However, he admitted that this grouping of villages had also a telling effect on the Naga civilian population.¹⁵⁷ Thus writing on the period of the mid 1950s some ten years later, Charles Pawsey after a visit to Nagaland said that 'the India Army's behaviour will never be forgotten or forgiven by the Nagas and the hatred engendered in that first Indian attempt to crush Naga resistance has been revived and intensified by every new attempt since then'.¹⁵⁸ Even Jayaprakash Narayan, a member of the Peace Commission could not seal the factual account of Indian Army atrocities and he confessed : "many atrocities were perpetuated by the Indian security forces, of which every descent Indian I am sure is ashamed."¹⁵⁹

154. Nehru's personal letter (secret & personal) to B.R. Medhi Chief Minister of Assam, May 13, 1956 (Tribal Area Department Correspondence, 1956, Assam Secretariat).

155. Maxwell, op. cit., p. 7.

156. Mullik, op. cit., p. 313.

157. Idem.

158. Maxwell, loc. cit.

159. Narayan, op. cit., p. 362.

It is true that the Indian security forces' high handedness filled many peace loving Nagas with a burning resentment against India and the Indians. Several Naga leaders went underground as did their followers and other Naga youths whose families or relatives or who themselves have been victims of repression by army operations. Thus, M. Horam remarked, "It is ironic but true that the very same army which was in the Naga Hills to prevent insurgency drove so many Nagas to insurgency and rebellion.... Naga nationalism, hitherto an embryonic concept, now became the obsession of almost every Naga.¹⁶⁰

Naga People's Convention and Statehood

In the late 1950s the idea surfaced in Nagaland that statehood within the Indian Union might provide an answer to the demand for independence. This became a proposal, especially associated with a new organisation called the Naga People's Convention (NPC),¹⁶¹ formed as an 'overground'* organisation to act as intermediary between the Government of India and the Federal Government of Nagaland.

There were altogether three conventions held. The first was in 1957 at Kohima from August 22 to 26th under the chairmanship of Imkongliba Ao. The convention recommended that 'the Naga Hills

160. Horam, op. cit., p. 52.

161. Maxwell, loc. cit.

* Overground - and underground - It was the NPC who without actually realising it, created the first noticeable cleavage among the Nagas into clear defined groups 'Underground' and 'Overground'. The latter refers to the civilians, non-combattants and the former refers to the Naga guerrillas. These terms were widely used in Nagaland conflict.

District and the Tuensang Area should be amalgamated and a new unit called 'Naga Hills and Tuensang Area (NHTA) should be formed.'¹⁶² This arrangement came into effect in December, 1957 and was placed under the Ministry of External Affairs. The second convention was held on May 21, 1958, in the Ao village of Ungma.¹⁶³ This convention set up a liaison committee to contact the Federal Government of Nagaland with a view to bringing about a political settlement. However, the FGN instead termed them as "renegades" and "traitors".¹⁶⁴ Hence, the NPC decided to strike yet other bargain with the Government of India which seemed eager enough to comply.¹⁶⁵

In October, 1959, the Third Naga People's Convention was held and it was decided to propose that 'Nagaland might be made into a separate State within the Indian Union'.¹⁶⁶ It was here that the 16 point memorandum was endorsed by NPC and later approved by the Government of India.

From the very outset NPC was suspected by the FGN and its sympathisers that the idea of statehood had been conceived by the Government to divide and delude the Nagas and explicit confirmation that the Indian Intelligence Bureau (IB) was behind the organising of NPC as well as its various demands including the statehood movement is to be found in the memoirs of that Bureau's then Director, B.N. Mullik. Thus the GPRN estimated Dutt (Deputy Director, IB) 'didn't lose time to hatch a process

162. Das, loc. cit.

163. Horam, loc. cit.

164. Das, op. cit., p. 46.

165. Horam, Naga Insurgency, p. 84.

166. Idem.

for the formation of a puppet state of Nagaland by collecting a few Naga officials who were in the pay of the Indian Government.¹⁶⁷ The participation of Intelligence Bureau in setting up and working behind NPC was conclusive. As S.M. Dutt explained :

While the separation of Naga Hills from Assam should be accepted in principle, no unilateral decision should be announced and that the request for the separation should formally come from a representative Naga convention and the Government of India should generously accept it as a token of their good faith towards the Nagas.¹⁶⁸

Thus precisely, it was meant to be used as a 'bargaining chip' vis-a-vis the demand of the Nagas. Significantly B.N. Mullik confessed : "we in the IB were also quite clear that in our minds that the Naga partisan guerrillas could not be defeated by purely military action."¹⁶⁹ Hence, 'to divide and delude' the Nagas seemed to have been a workable strategy and no wonder the IB carried out the plan with such precision that it worked absolutely splendid.

As per the agreement reached on 16 point in 1962, the Parliament of India passed the 13th Amendment Act and thereby created Nagaland State within the Union of India. Ironically, the formation of the Nagaland state did not cause any major abatement in the nationalist movement. So all those wishfully expecting the collapse of the movement found themselves to be wrong for this did not happen. On the contrary, there was an even greater

167. GPRN Document, op. cit., p. 117.

168. Mullik, op. cit., p. 314.

169. Idem.

explosion on Naga nationalist sentiment which predictably resulted in more determined and organised military action.¹⁷⁰ As a matter of fact, "a large number of Nagas viewed statehood as only an 'interim solution'".¹⁷¹ Of course, the majority of the Nagas were outside this arrangement of 'Nagaland State', who obviously more determined to fight on.

Meanwhile Colonel V.K. Anand estimated that the strength of the Federal Army had gone up to 9,000 approximately and 500,000 Nagas were actively involved as helpers.¹⁷² However, Naga nationalist sources greatly differed as, for instance, Th. Muivah stated that "Naga Army went up to 40,000 and the arms which they captured and brought from Pakistan came up to nearly 15,000 to 18,000."¹⁷³

A.Z. Phizo in London and International Press

According to the NNC sources, A.Z. Phizo, President of the NNC arrived in London on June 12, 1960 to place the Naga case before the bar of world opinion.¹⁷⁴ Significantly, in the same year (in December) for the first time, the Government of India permitted international press into the Naga areas which included the New York Times, Neue Zurcher Zeitung and The Times. The journalists' perception of the situation as reported to The Times at the end of the brief tour in Nagaland revealed :

170. Horam, op. cit., p. 12.

171. Nibedon, The Ethnic Explosion, op. cit., p. 33.

172. Anand, op. cit., p. 109.

173. Interview of Thuingaleng Muivah by Deepak Dewan Chief of Bureau NE SUN, magazine December 18-24, 1993, p. 10.

174. FGN Document, op. cit., p. 33.

The Naga people desire the greatest possible degree of independence from India - or from any one else. Some have now been convinced that sovereignty for this little land is simply not feasible.... Others and many more than are actually under arms-have still not been convinced and remained determine to obtain sovereignty. The difference between the two groups is essentially one of degree and of means, but it has been widened by the savageries of a guerrilla campaign....¹⁷⁵

Neville Maxwell further supplemented and writes :

None of the foreign correspondents doubted that, given a choice, the great mass of the Nagas would opt for total independence from India : those who had accepted statehood had done so as the lesser of two evils, the other being indefinite continuation of guerrilla war and all the miseries consequent upon it.¹⁷⁶

In 1961, Gavin Young, a journalist of The Observer, London secretly visited the fighting areas and brought out his report in a booklet form. 'The Nagas : An Unknown War'. Reporting on the intensity of the fighting he writes, thus :

Indian Air Force aircraft, including Jets, regularly petrol the area. I saw relics of Indian Air attacks - fragments of bombs and 20mm cannon shells and heard the sound of heavy firing farther north, probably from mortars.¹⁷⁷

In fact, in 1963 the Government admitted aerial bombing and strafing of suspected guerrilla areas.¹⁷⁸ Thus, the Government of India applied 'scorch-earth method' to crush the Naga nationalists as a last resort.¹⁷⁹ That is how the Nagaland state

175. Maxwell, loc. cit.

176. Maxwell, loc. cit.

177. Young, Kavin., The Nagas an unknown war India's threat to peace (Published by the Naga National Council, London, 1962).

178. Jacobs, Julian., The Nagas (THames and Hudson Inc., 500 Fifth Avenue, New York, 1990), p. 1159.

179. Phadnis, loc. cit.

came into being essentially a by-product of the Naga resistance. Nevertheless, in spite of the settlement, the fighting between the Indian security forces and the Naga nationalists went on unabated.

The Three-Man Peace Commission

Unmistakably, the establishment of a three man Peace Commission : two of the members of this commission were Indians - B.P. Chaliha, the then Chief Minister of Assam, J.P. Narayan, an active Gandhian, widely respected in India and abroad and the third was Rev. Michael Scott¹⁸⁰ who had worked for the Indians in South Africa.

It is important to note the stand of the Peace Commission in understanding the nature of the conflict between the two parties i.e. the Government of India and the Federal Government of Nagaland. The Peace Commission appreciated 'the desire of the Nagas for self-determination' and their struggle for the preservation of their way of life. It also admitted that the Nagas never formed a part of the Indian mainstream and that 'the Federal Government of Nagaland could on their own volition decide to be a participant in the union of India.'¹⁸¹ The first achievement of the Peace Commission was to successfully negotiate for a 'cease-fire' between the Government of India and the Federal Government of Nagaland.

180. Maxwell, op. cit., p. 8.

181. Misra, op. cit., p. 10.

For the Naga nationalists and its government, 'Ceasefire' was a tremendous moral booster for two reasons. Firstly, inclusion of Rev. Michael Scott was considered as having an 'international observer'. Secondly, (as they demanded), the Government of India and Federal Government of Nagaland were treated on equal footing* Further as Horam remarked : "the use of the term 'ceasefire' was either a misnomer or the Government of India's recognition of the sovereignty of the Nagas was implicit in it as according to international law, the term 'ceasefire' could only be used between two nations in the true sense of the word".¹⁸² For the Indian Government, on the other hand, the ceasefire was no more than an opportunity for those who favoured peace in Nagaland to persuade the Federal Nagas¹⁸³ to arrive to a solution within the 'Indian Union'.¹⁸⁴ Though the 'ceasefire' was a shortlived one' it marked the end of one era and the beginning of another.

The main objective of signing the 'Ceasefire Agreement' is to create a congenial atmosphere whereby final solution to the problem could process. The 'peace talks' had two phases : the first was at the governmental level and as many as seven round of talks were held; the second was at prime ministerial level spreading over six rounds of talks.

* equal footing - Throughout their work, the Peace Commission treated the matter as conflict between two parties. Thus in all their dealings, they were treated on equal footing.

182. Horam, op. cit., p. 108.

183. Maxwell, loc. cit.

184. Aram, M., Peace in Nagaland, (Arnold-Heinemann publishers, Delhi, 1974), p. 38.

Meanwhile the Peace Commission (Mission) evolved its own proposal to consideration by both the parties-the Government of India and the Federal Government of Nagaland. The main thrust of the Peace Commission which is contained in the 13 the Para, thus suggested that

On the one hand, the Naga Federal Government on their own volition, decide to be a participant in the Union of India and mutually settle the terms and conditions for that purpose. On the other hand, the Government of India could consider to what extent the pattern and structure of the relationship between Nagaland and the Government of India should be adapted and recast.¹⁸⁵

However, both the representatives of the Government of India and the Federal Government of Nagaland could not come into any meaningful settlement. Instead both the parties brought out their own perception and reservation against some of the paras of the proposal. Phizo declined to come to India saying that the time was not yet 'ripe' for him at that stage to join the political dialogue.¹⁸⁶

The first round of Ministerial talks was held on February 18, 1966, between the Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi and Naga leaders led by Kukhato Ato Kiloner.¹⁸⁷ But the series of peace talks unfortunately failed to arrive at any tangible solution of the problem. Hence, the Naga issue was destined to drag on and seek 'unknown destiny'.

Inspite of this complete breakdown in the search for a political settlement, the ceasefire at first continued, though

185. Ramunny, op. cit., p. 375.

186. Horam, op. cit., p. 116.

187. Ibid., p. 122.

breaches were reported with increasing frequency, each side, of course, accusing the other of causing them.¹⁸⁸ By 1966, the Peace Commission was winding up its mission and when the External Affairs Minister, Dinesh Singh announced in the Rajya Sabha on 3rd May that Rev. Michael Scott had been served orders to leave the country immediately,¹⁸⁹ it finally sealed the fate of the Peace Commission as well. Cyril Dunn (The observer, London) writing from New Delhi, gave an account of how Rev. Scott was once hailed by the Indians as a hero and noted : "Rev. Scott now (has been) transformed by the course of Indian history into a meddling intruder".¹⁹⁰

The Naga nationalists now started making several trips to East Pakistan (Bangladesh) for training and to procure arms. They were preparing, obviously for another war.

Significantly, the Alee Command* under Th. Muivah, plenipotentiary and 'Brigadier' Thinoselie M. Keyho had successfully made contacts with the Chinese Government in 1967.¹⁹¹ This was a great achievement indeed for China link was sure to play a crucial role in aiding and abetting the Naga resistance force.

The following year, drastic changes took in the Federal Government of Nagaland set up. These changes were sudden, far reaching and definitely for the worse as far as the Nagas were

188. Maxwell, loc. cit.

189. Aram, op. cit., p. 113.

190. Ibid., p. 114.

* Alee Command - A term used by the Naga nationalists which specific reference to any foreign command or foreign legion of its force.

191. Maxwell, loc. cit.

192. Horam, op. cit., p. 146.

concerned. The first serious crack developed in the solidarity of the Nagas with the formation of the Council of Naga People (CNP) and its government christened as Revolutionary Government and joining hands with the Indian security force and sleuthing for the capture of Federal Army.¹⁹² As noted by M. Horam, "the Nagas were succumbing to their most potent enemy-tribalism and never before had they presented such a vulnerable front to the Indian authorities."¹⁹³

More worse to come to the movement was the conversion of East Pakistan into Bangladesh. The Naga nationalists suffered a severe setback with the loss of the sanctuaries it had enjoyed in the East Pakistan and the Indian Army heavily reinforced the Naga areas to make that advantage decisive. Along with it, the Government of India on 1st October, 1972 unilaterally terminated the ceasefire agreement and banned the Naga National Council, the Federal Government of Nagaland and the Naga Federal Army.¹⁹⁴ That was indicative enough of the fact that the Naga nationalists remained determined to continue their struggle for recognition of this rights.

193. Ibid., p. 139.

194. Aram, op. cit., p. 33.

CHAPTER III

SHILLONG ACCORD : GENESIS AND EFFECTS

The Shillong Accord constitutes an watershed in the Naga aspiration of a separate nationhood. The Accord expressed the acceptance of military defeat by a key section of the Naga nationalist leadership. Here it should be noted that the Shillong Accord is not an instantaneous sprout but parturition of a steady development since the breakdown of the 'peace talks' between the Government of India and the Federal Government of Nagaland. Hence a brief analysis of the sequence of circumstances leading to the Shillong Accord is of paramount importance for proper understanding in the right perspective.

The scholar has identified the following as the factors responsible for the ultimate signing of the accord:

1. Waning of the Federal Government of Nagaland

For the first time in the history of the Naga struggle for 'self-determination', a crack developed in the hitherto intact Federal Government of Nagaland. This was the effect of the failed 'peace talks' and was notably interlard with sensitive politics of Naga tribalism.

Suspicion developed in the rank and file of the FGN set up. This was evident as when the talks reached a deadlock, the Tatar Hoho (National Parliament), had its heated session from 14th to 16th October, 1967 at Shapoumaram in Mao subdivision of Manipur.¹ The members accused Kughato Sukhai of failure in achieving any political gains despite prolonged negotiation.² To add to his discomfiture Kughato's younger brother 'General' Kaito Sema

1. Aram, M., Peace in Nagaland, (Arnold Heineman Publishers Institute Ltd., New Delhi, 1979), p. 137.

2. Yonuo, Asoso, The Rising Nagas, (Vivek Publishing House, Delhi, 1974), p. 294.

staged a revolt against the Angami leadership.³ 'General Kaito who was then Keya Kilonser (Defence Minister) of the federal Army presumably was one not satisfied with the ongoings in the various fronts. Particularly, he was not happy with headquarter for letting the Angamis dominate the show in reference to the Chinese connection. Groups after groups were sent to China without his alleged approval and 'General' Kaito was furious that he was being 'bypassed deliberately'.⁴ Secondly, 'General' Kaito did not favour the long and dreary negotiations with New Delhi because in his views, 'inaction would make his fighters lethargic and cause them to lose sight of the objective.'⁵ The Keya Kilonser was correct in a way. Admittedly, Nirmal Nibedon wrote that "if the guerrillas were having their fair share of rest, the Indians were consolidating magnificently."⁶ The Naga nationalists were being subordinated strategically and tactically by the Indian security forces under the cover of cease-fire. Nibedon thus refers that the Indian Army was "well-entrenched now with a hundred times more manpower than them."⁷ It is in this context that Th. Muivah admitted that "one of the greatest failures (NNC) was the absence of correct tactics and strategy. The importance of a strategy in dealing with the opponent of superior power was never stressed. They simply waited impatiently for solution."⁸ Thirdly, 'General' Kaito had been sore with the ouster of Scato Swu, the

3. Dev, S.C., Nagaland, The Untold Story, (Published by Mrs.Gouri Dev, Regent Estate, Calcutta, 1988), p. 82.

4. Nibedon, Nagaland, The Night of the Guerrillas, (Lancer Publisher, New. Deli, 1978), p. 167.

5. Idem.

6. Ibid., p. 168.

7. Nibedon, loc.cit.

then President of the FGN and appointment of Rev. G. Mhiasiu instead it is believed was a brilliant move from London.⁹ Added to this grievous situation, 'General' Zuheto, another senior Sema officer was ignored and 'General' Mowu Angami was appointed chief of the Federal Army instead. Meanwhile, in view of heated criticism, Khughato Sukhai resigned from the Prime Ministership of the Federal Government on 23rd October¹⁰ just as his brother-in-law Scato Swu was also pressurized to resign from Presidentship of the FGN. Then, the new President Rev. G. Mhiasiu got the support of the Tatar Hoho to adopt a Presidential form of government in lieu of Parliamentary form. Soon after on October 26, 1967, Rev. G. Mhiasiu suspended Khughato's Parliamentary government and the Tatar Hoho, to assume the supreme executive powers and appointed a consultative committee¹¹ of five persons including Khughato Sukhai, Z. Ramyo, Chumbemo Murry, Maken and Tselise. Ramyo Zimik was made the Ex-officio Secretary.¹² Thus, the first round had been won temporarily by the Phizoites*. In a way, tribalism was getting intertwined with Federal Government set up. Thuingaleng Muivah, rightly remarked that "internal contradictions emanating from pettyism... often overtook most of the leaders."¹³ It is true that Nagas became the fatal enemy of themselves. This danger of self-defeat was imminent and according

8. Written interview with Th. Muivah General Secretary, NSCN (conducted by the scholar, 29th August, 1994), p. 10.

9. Nibedon, op.cit., p. 155. (Since 1967 till 1980, Th. Muivah served as the General Secretary of the NNC).

10. Yonuo, op.cit., p. 294.

11. Idem.

12. Aram, op.cit., p. 138.

* Phizoites - a term usually used to mean Phizo's close associates particularly his ardent supporters.

13. Written interview of Th. Muivah, op.cit., p. 11.

to Th. Muivah's reading this 'internal contradiction' was an eventual outcome of wrong policy of the NNC. Thus he stated:

There was no tribalism as such before among the Nagas. Things were never conducted on tribal basis. Even fightings in olden days were between villages, not between tribes. But NNC's set-up of the administrative and the military systems was purely tribe-wise. The eventual outcome was that tribal loyalty outweighed at times national allegiance. Such orientation drove, particularly, the major tribes into unhealthy parochial competition which in turn generated contradictions of national magnitude. Things and issues were looked at more from tribal perspectives. There was no thirst in the leadership for higher values of a nation and the world.¹⁴

Eventually, 'General' Kaito was all set to blaze his own trails. He overran the Federal Army head-quarter at Gaziphema and took away arms and ammunition, besides sizeable amount of money.¹⁵ Soon on 3rd August, 1968 General Kaito Sema was assassinated in Kohima perceivably (though denied) at the instance of the Federal Army. Thus, the crack which developed in the mid 1960s was inevitably bringing into being the 'great divide' of the Federal Government set up. Rev. G. Mhiasi and Ramyo Zimik were whisked away by General Zuheto Sema and placed under arrest. On 1st November 1968 to be precise, the Sema group announced the formation of a new political organisation christened Council of the Naga People (CNP) and issued a six point statement declaring the Federal Government and its army as

14. Ibid., p. 10.

15. Dev, loc.cit.

closed in view of the alleged failure of the NNC to bring about a negotiated settlement of the Naga political problem.¹⁶

On 2nd November 1968, CNP met and a new government called "the Revolutionary Government of Nagaland was formed".¹⁷ The form of Government was to be a Parliamentary one. Scato Swu was unanimously elected the Prime Minister of the Revolutionary Government. In fact, the whole set up and their declaration was in a way a reaction and an antithesis of the NNC and FGN. It was not a nuance but ultimate division of the Naga nationalists. Before long, in 1969 a powerful China-returned group of 565 soldiers under the command of 'general' Mowu was waylaid and captured by 'General' Zuheto men.¹⁸ Thus the second round had been won by the Revolutionary Government. They also reinforced their force by successfully persuading Hopong Yimchunger and Thungti Chang to join the Revolutionary Government.¹⁹

As per their declaration, the Revolutionary Government attempted for a political settlement of the Naga problem. According to Tajenyuba's account:

In 1972, Scato asked for a status of protectorate like Sikkim but the Government of India did not listen him (sic). In August 1973, the Revolutionary leaders had an interview with Mrs. Indira Gandhi in New Delhi. On their return they decided to surrender before the Governor which took place with surrender of about 1,500 men at Zunheboto on 16th August, 1973.²⁰

16. Aram, *op.cit.*, p. 187.

17. Horam, Naga Insurgency, (Cosmo Publication, New Delhi, 1988), p. 143.

18. Ao, Tajenyuba, British Occupation of Naga Country, (Published by Naga Literature Society, Mokokchung, 1993), p. 295.

19. Ramunny, Murkot, The World of Nagas, (Northern Book Centre, New Delhi, 1988), p. 281.

20. Ao, *op.cit.*, p. 295.

The Revolutionary cadres were directly recruited in Border Security Force (BSF) with Zuheto as commander and Zekiyhe as Deputy Commander and Scato Swu was nominated as a member of the Rajya Sabha. Thus, a large fraction of the Naga nationalist force had surrendered weakening significantly the Federal Army set up. It was a great setback indeed for the Naga movement. M. Horam in his scholarly work rightly remarked: "Naga politics was ruined by the disposition of tribal politics."²¹

2. The role of the church

Since majority of the Nagas are Christian by faith, a great number of the leaders as well as rank and file of the NNC, FGN and FA are Christians and obviously the church would play an important role in Naga politics. It was through the initiative of the Church that 'Peace Mission' was set up which arranged the 'ceasefire' between the Government of India and the Federal Government of Nagaland. The Naga nationalists were all in favour of praise for the constructive role of the church in this regard. However, the nationalists became very critical of the church's role in relation to the signing of the Shillong Accord which according to them, overstepped their responsibility. Thus, from the Naga people's point of view, the church has been involved in all the undertaking, be it the ceasefire, move for peace or signing of the Shillong Accord.

In the process of the signing of the Shillong Accord in 1975, the church is believed to have played the most

21. Horam, op.cit., p. 210.

controversial role and an attempt will be made to analyse it through objective study. It is in this context that the role of the Church can be assessed from the time when the nationalist Nagas under the leadership of Thuingaleng Muivah, made contact with the Chinese in 1967²². The Church particularly became critical about it. Rev. Longri Ao who then was the Executive Secretary of the Nagaland Baptist Church Council (NBCC) took the leading role in this campaign and sent a circular to all the field Directors in May, 1968 warning them of the danger posed by communism by highlighting communist hostility to the Church and the totalitarian nature of the state.²³

In fact, the Church was quite vocal against the Chinese connection. But it was the Government of India which also sounded the alarm and the Intelligence Bureau (IB) exploited meticulously the sentiment of the Nagas (particularly of the Church) without leaving any stone unturned. As Isak Chishi Swu stated: "the Church leaders and few traitors became the instruments of the enemy (India)."²⁴ The I.B's success in setting up the Naga Peoples Convention was a pointer in this direction. S.C. Dev, the Nagaland Government Commissioner's admission is vital in this context. He writes: "No guerrilla insurgency can be suppressed without a good intelligence network.... All those who were concerned with "Intelligence" will gratefully remember the services rendered by the officers of the Subsidiary Intelligence

22. Maxwell, Neville, India, The Nagas and the North-East, (Published by the Minority House, London, 1980), p. 11.

23. Rao, O.M., Longri Ao A Biography, (Published by Christian Literature Centre, Gauhati, 1986), pp. 88-89.

24. Written Interview of Isak Chishi Swu (conducted by the scholar, January, 1994), p. 5.

Bureau. They will have to remain in the background for obvious reasons."²⁵ This statement is further corroborated by Maj. General Palit who stated: "Fortunately, Intelligence gathering was greatly facilitated by the fact that not only did the vast majority of the Naga people support the Government but for the first time, so did a significant section of the underground".²⁶ M. Aram also admitted having utilised state machinery in order to contain and weaken (which he termed-strengthening the force of peace) Naga nationalism. Thus, he writes, "other programmes were also devised to promote a climate of peace in Nagaland. Increasing participation by the public peace activities was encouraged. Also the services of the communication media such as newspaper and radio were enlisted."²⁷ Thus, there was an integrated network of the Government to win over the public and at the same isolating the Naga guerrillas. The aforesaid statement and writings amply highlight the significant role played by the intelligence network in Nagaland. Though there is no direct statement or official record concerning the church body having been utilised by the intelligence agency, there are evidences to this effect. Their alleged tacit understanding with the Government exposed them seriously damaging their locus standi.

25. Dev, op.cit., p. 143.

26. Palit, Major General, Sentinels of the North-East, (Published by Palit and Palit, Shanti Niketan, Delhi, 1984), p. 301.

27. Aram, op.cit., p. 21.

It was the Nagaland state Government, which equally sounded the alarm expressed through a resolution passed in the Assembly condemning A.Z. Phizo and the FGN. The resolution reads:

This desperate attempt on the part of Mr. Phizo and his friends to throw Nagaland and its people to the Satanic hands of communist China is an act of treachery. This is a serious threat to democracy, political freedom and liberty, the Naga way of life, and the church.²⁸

Thereafter, the Church took the leading role in condemning and mobilising people's opinion against the hard-core of the Naga Nationalists. For instance, Rev. L. Kijung Ao sent an official information to the Governor L.P. Singh wherein he wrote:

I warned the pastors of the border areas not to yield to such propaganda (China to aid the Nagas) and told them that China is a communist country...I called a meeting of all the field Directors in Mon and Tuensang Districts and discussed and warned them of the danger ...and decided that any Pastor found collaborating with such propaganda will be removed from the post.²⁹

But the substance of the information is mentioned in another para (given below) which obviously uncovered the tacit understanding between the Church and the Government during the decisive pre-Accord period.

Under the President's rule and with your wisdom and firm hand in dealing with the Naga political problem, I am sure major problem will be solved...and victory is not far away, I think, the team work between the army and

28. Silver Jubilee Souvenir, 25 Years of Nagaland Legislative Assembly, (Ed.) Zhangulie, (Published by Assembly Secretariate, Nagaland, Kohima, 1989, p. 155.

29. Imchen, Panger, L. Kijung Ao, the Longest Night (Biography), (Published by the Naga Scholars Society, Dimapur, Nagaland, 1992), pp. 77-78.

the civil authority continue as they are doing now. I think more people are coming with change of mind.³⁰

No wonder, the ardent Naga nationalists are very critical of the role of the Church. Affirmingly, 'General' T. K. Keyho of the FGN wrote:

They (church leaders) were afraid to speak the truth. They fear men more than God. They want to please and obey men than to serve and obey God..This is the history of the church in the past, in NagalandAnd through the NBCC Nagaland Peace Council (NPC) was born. They said that this body of NPC was a neutral body, just a go between...etc...But later on they have fallen into the hands of the Government of India and her agent and become their tool.³¹

Later the NSCN leadership in a press hand out lucidly expressed their point of view in the matter of Nagas forging link with communist China:

Our national salvation lies in our heroic struggle supported by correct foreign policy. It may be red or white it doesn't matter, so long it serves our purposes. We need diplomatic relation with other countries, but the point is that we do not purchase friendship at the cost of national principle nor do we barter Christ for a few barrels of gun. Friendship based on the solid rock of mutual recognition of rights is the friendship we seek for.³²

While repudiating the Church's role in opposing the Chinese linkage, Rh. Raising, the then Killo Kilonser (Home Minister) of

30. Idem.

31. Keyho, General T.K., Where does the Nagaland Church Leaders are Leading Us to ? Hill Express, (Kohima) February 18, 1992.

32. Raising, Rh., On National Policy, (Oking, January 12, 1988), p. 4.

the Government of the People'ss Republic of Nagaland (GPRN) stated :

You preacher, we would like to be reminded of David, the anointed king of Israel. Didn't he take political shelter in Philistine a country of the traditional enemy of the Israelites when he was being chased by Saul the then King of Israel ? Were not the Philistines idolaters ? Could you please help yourselves by recalling how a harlot Rahab was used as an indispensable instrument by the chosen race to help reach their promised land ?³³

The church would have been right had they strictly campaigned against the Naga nationalists for allegedly bringing communism to Nagaland without involving in politics. On the contrary, 'General' Mowu Gwizan in his testimony revealed the accommodative spirit of Chinese leadership towards the Naga nationalists.

As we were (sic) NAGALAND FOR CHRIST, the communist Chinese had to build a CHURCH for us. Perhaps this was the first CHURCH built in China after the Chinese Revolution and the first church planted by 'Nagaland for Christ' in foreign land. Many Chinese came forward secretly to know about god and we were glad to proclaim His name to them.³⁴

The NSCN leaders later lamented and repudiated the accusation that they are 'communists'.³⁵ In fact, to be precise, the Chinese had not indoctrinated the Nagas even (as alleged by church leaders) in the ideological sense. They had merely injected the Nagas with a dose of Maoism vis-a-vis guerrilla-type

33. Raising, loc. cit.

34. Gwizan, General Mowu, A Brief Testimony of Nagaland for Christ (Published by the Writer, Nagaland, 1981), p. 8.

35. Statement of the National Socialist Council of Nagaland, (Oking, 3rd January 1984), p. 10.

warfare to strengthen the will and determination of the fighters.³⁶ However, for the Nagaland Baptist Church Council (NBCC) and its sponsored body, the Nagaland Peace Council (NPC) seeking of military hardware from China was synonymous with flirting with Marxism and Maoism.³⁷ M. Horam rightly pointed out the fact that, "the venerable church leaders had ... lost the confidence of the nationalists".³⁸ The FGN in a pamphlet "Nagaland and Church" hit out at the church. It read :

It is impossible to believe, but we have just witnessed it. Why does the church which calls itself an organ of peace in the world help the aggressors as they deliberately open a wound that will make peace impossible or at very least put it off a very long way ? With the anti-communist falsehood and propaganda that the Indian press and radio are pouring forth every now and then, Nagaland is turned to-day to witness another theatre of war.³⁹

Yet on the other hand, the church leaders never gave up their tenacious campaign against those seeking aid from China. Thus, if faith had been a factor in promoting Naga nationalism, it is equally true that the Government of India meticulously utilised the slogan of Christian faith in danger to neutralize the Naga rapport with the Chinese. Though there was no far reaching effect on their operational schemes the church antagonism created a situation by which the Federal Government of Nagaland became vulnerable and the public opinion grew in favour of immediate peace.⁴⁰

36. Nibedon, *loc.cit.*

37. Horam, *op.cit.*, p. 147.

38. *Ibid.*, p. 62.

39. Horam, *loc.cit.*

40. Aram, M., *Gandhian Dialectic*, Gandhigram Rural Institute, (Deemed University, 1983), p. 21.

The church in an attempt to bring peace in Nagaland war-torn region, initiated through the Nagaland Peace Council a Liaison Committee consisting of the following persons :

1. Rev. Longri Ao (President)
2. Kenneth Kerhuo (Secretary)
3. M. Aram (Sarvodaya leader)
4. L. Lungalang
5. Lungshim Shaiza⁴¹

Some of the church leaders along with the newly formed Liaison Committee put bitterest pressure on the Naga nationalists in the midst of heavy army operation to hammer out a solution through dialogue with the Government of India. The meticulous campaign by the church along with the Liaison Committee gradually bore fruit when the representative of the Federal Government of Nagaland and the Naga National Council accepted to negotiate. However, the NNC and the FGN were quite annoyed and became skeptical of the Liaison Committee allegedly because of the former's dubious role and this is evident from the then Killo Kilonser of the FGN B.M. Keyho's letter to Rev. Longri Ao wherein he charged :

In one hand you have justified your mission as just a mission of go-between and on the other hand you have a firm stand to involve (sic) or bind us. Which I quote : 1. the integrity of India cannot be jeopardised, 2. NPC will oppose any secessionist move.⁴²

41. Rao, op.cit., p. 96.

42. Kouzakete, Whither the Nagaland Peace Council, (Compiled and published by Kouzakete, Kohima, 1991), p. 12.

Thus, the manner and nature of their approach to the problem raised serious doubt about the honesty of the Liaison Committee as a go-between. That is why, the Naga nationalists were quite skeptical of their role. But eventually, the talk was processed. The heart of the matter was that majority of the Nagas are Christians and therefore, the domination of the church was almost absolute a fact which the Naga nationalists could not ignore for long. Interestingly, B. Varma pointed out that "in an insurgency (or any other movement) the battle is for the heart and mind of the population."⁴³ Rightly, so, the Government of India was apparently successful in winning over the heart and mind of the Nagas through the church and the Liaison Committee's support to the 'peace move'. Thus, the final outcome of the peace talk was the Shillong Accord which the church meticulously campaigned for.

3. Successful Policy of the Government of India

Effectually, the whole political scenario was quite favourable for the Government of India. Never before the Naga nationalists were a badly divided house. The formation of Revolutionary Council had the effect of weakening them. Secondly, the Naga resistance suffered a serious setback with the loss of the sanctuaries it had enjoyed in East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) Thirdly, in 1972, the Government of India unitarily withdrew the 'cease-fire' and the Naga National Council, Federal Government of Nagaland and the Federal Army were banned by invoking the Un

43. Varma, B., Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency, (Utpal Publishing House, New Delhi, 1985), p. 90.

Activities (Prevention) Act.⁴⁴ A number of other stringent laws were also applied. Meanwhile, a historic event almost went unnoticed. According to an order from the Government of India, Nagaland affairs went to the Home Ministry from the Ministry of External Affairs.⁴⁵ Last but not the least was that the general people were weary of the long drawn bitter struggle as it was always that the civilian suffered immensely. The church leaders being fully behind the 'peace movement' along with their unmitigated campaign against China connection there came an opportune moment for the Government of India to make a decisive move. It was a retrogression, on the other hand, for the Naga nationalists as a whole.

The Government of India, thus, finding the Nagaland situation so favourable (for the first time) took the crucial decision to launch 'mop-up' operations against the hard-core Naga nationalists. Effectually, the Indian army heavily reinforced the Naga areas to make that advantage decisive.⁴⁶ In reality, the Indian Army was adopting 'scorched earth' measures as it tried in 1957-58 : villages suspected of supporting the nationalists were burnt with their standing crops and granaries; and villagers beaten, tortured and raped.⁴⁷ Describing the situation of that time, Ramyo Zimik who had important position in the NNC hierarchy remarked :

44. Baboo, Balgovind, The Naga National Movement - An Analysis, Third World Unity (Journal) (Jan.-Apr., 1970), p. 47.

45. Ramunny, op.cit., p. 307.

46. Maxwell, loc.cit.

47. Maxwell, op.cit., p. 9.

Red flag hoisted on the rooftop of the houses belonging to the unlawful associations and curfew clamped down for days together all over Nagaland to deny food and villagers from outside the village were to be shot at sight.⁴⁸

Indeed, the Naga villagers suffered immensely. Even the man who took the lead in this campaign admitted that "Nagas had suffered considerably".⁴⁹ One of the reasons being that the "para-military forces and the army cannot distinguished a black from the white. To them every tribal is an insurgent."⁵⁰

One important factor which also helped the Government of India considerably was the ruling political party - Naga Nationalist Organisation (NNO)* in Nagaland State. This political party consistently worked for Nagas' integration into the mainstream of India. For instance, Hokishe Sema (NNO) the Chief Minister of Nagaland State warned in a broadcast, the villagers protecting and supporting the guerrillas (whom he called anti-social elements) and cautioned them against regrettable results.⁵¹ Thus, Neville Maxwell rightly concluded :

There could hardly be a plainer evidence that the Indian and Naga State authorities were making the villagers their main target, in lieu of the elusive Federal forces, in an attempt to cut the latter off from the 'sea' of popular support which alone can sustain armed nationalist movement.⁵²

48. Written Interview of Ramyo Zimik, Foreign Minister, FGN, (conducted by the scholar, 14 August, 1993), p. 4.

49. Dev, op.cit., p. 137.

50. Ibid., p. 179.

* NNO - a Political Party within the Constitution of India which consistently worked for Nagas' integration into the mainstream of India.

51. Maxwell, loc.cit

52. Idem.

The Indian security forces' 'all out' offensive was mooted immediately following the Bangladesh liberation war of 1971. For the first time, the whole 'counter-insurgency' operation was placed under a 'Unified Command'. This idea was first mooted by B.K. Nehru, the Governor of Nagaland after he returned from one of his tours abroad.⁵³ It was learnt that the Governor sought the advice of General Templar (who fought the insurgents in Malaya) for effective tackling of the Naga issue. The general advised B.K. Nehru to have a 'United Command' of Army, Police and the Subsidiary Intelligence Bureau.⁵⁴ Hence, under this strategy exhaustive scheme was evolved entitled 'Joint Director for Counter-Nationalist Operation in Nagaland.'⁵⁵ As a result, there was a close co-operation between the Army, Civil Administration, the Police, and the Intelligence set up.⁵⁶

Meanwhile, in the early part of 1975, President's Rule was declared in Nagaland State and hence the army was given a free hand to tackle the Naga guerrillas. The Commissioner of Nagaland State S.C. Dev revealed that the large scale jungle operations were directed to bring the hostiles to the negotiating table for surrender.

Meanwhile, national emergency was also declared and that made things easier for the security forces. The Nagaland Government Commissioner emphatically acknowledged that "in the altered circumstances ... the possibilities afforded by the

53. Sumi, Huska, General Templar and the Shillong Accord (In) The Weekly Journal, (Kohima), September 5, 1990.

54. Idem.

55. Nuh, Rev. V.K., Nagaland Church and Politics, (Published by V. Nuh and bro., Kohima, 1986), p. 136.

56. Ramunny, op.cit., p. 327.

situation were excellent, and thereby, we could reap rich harvest out of it."⁵⁷ It was then the army adopted questionable measures allegedly against the Naga nationalists but in reality the innocent public and villagers bore the brunt of the operation. A journalist rightly reported that "the army used methods that were brutal and even uncivilised. But because Kohima (Nagaland) was so cut off from the rest of the world, New Delhi got away with it."⁵⁸ Even S.C. Dev, the man responsible for plan of action admitted having used ruthless measures.⁵⁹ Nevertheless, this 'scorched earth' measures brought about a sea-change in the situation compelling the Naga nationalists to go for peace. Thus, Adite Phadnis rightly put it that "finally, when an entire generation of Nagas had wearied of the battle, India was able to restore the political process with the new generation."⁶⁰

In fact, the military offensive along with other measures adopted by the Government was a great success. Eventually a number of hardcore Naga nationalists had to surrender one after another. Rightly so, the view in New Delhi was that the 'iron hand' approach was paying off, and that it should be continued until the nationalist surrendered or were wiped out.⁶¹ Significantly, Ramyo Zimik testified saying :

Prior to the signing of the Shillong Accord, we would do well to remember the military might exerted by India for the purpose of physical suppression. Freedom fighters from the regions of Konyak, Phom, Ao, Sangtam,

57. Ibid., p. 122.

58. Phadnis, Adite, The Third Solution, Sunday, (November 1993), p. 33.

59. Dev, op.cit., p. 103.

60. Phadnis, loc.cit.

61. Maxwell, loc.cit.

Yimchunger, Sema, Lotha and Rengma were forced to surrender en masse, leaving only the Angami, Chakhesang, Shepoumaranth, Wung (Tangkhul) and Zeliangrong regions in the field.⁶²

It is precisely against this background that Neville Maxwell considered the Shillong Accord as an expression of the acceptance of military defeat by a key group of the Naga leadership.⁶³

Thus, the aforesaid factors are the causes that led to the signing of the Shillong Accord, 1975. However, it will be incomplete without a brief analysis of the inherent failures of the Naga nationalist organization and its leadership. As mentioned in Chapter II, the strategy of operation, the system of organization set up, wrong policy and lack of able leadership etc. brought together almost a total collapse of the movement.

First of all, the disadvantage of having a loose system of organization of the FGN and the Federal Army was well exhibited. M. Horam rightly pointed out "the lack of good guerrilla organization" and "a well-knit and unified movement acting in accordance with a mature plan of action."⁶⁴ There was a complete breakdown of command, lack of coordination between the FGN and the Federal Army coupled with lack of control over the different army units. This is evident from the way several Federal Army units one after another surrendered on their own decision. This chain of surrender first emanated from Sema region, followed by Lotha, Ao, Konyak, Phom, Sangtam, Yimchunger, Rengma and Chakhesang (though not complete). Each regional army unit took

62. Written Interview of Ramyo Zimik, op.cit., pp. 3-4.

63. Maxwell, loc.cit.

64. Horam, op.cit., p. 209.

its own decision and surrendered substantially. Thus, there was a complete breakdown of command.

Secondly, failure to evolve good strategy vis-a-vis the given situation and the absence of able leadership prompted the situation to deteriorate beyond repair. The NNC and its government (FGN) did not have a well defined policy or strategy and no clear directions were given to the fighting units. The cadres were simply directed to fight relentlessly which would not sustain them without a sound policy and a good strategy. In this context, Mao Tse Tung's words become so relevant. He said: "when conditions change, tactics must change accordingly. The making and changing of tactical campaign and strategic plans in accordance with scope and circumstances is a key factor in directing a war."⁶⁵ Thuingaleng Muivah, of the NSCN, writing on the failures of the NNC stated: "The greatest failure was the absence of correct tactics and strategy. The importance of strategy in dealing with the opponent of superior power was never stressed. They simply waited impatiently for solution...The questions: What India could do and could not do ? What Nagas could and could not ?-were never assessed."⁶⁶ Thus, the Nagas were found wanting on this crucial factor in the midst of their struggle.

Over and above, the NNC leadership is particularly responsible for the downfall of the nationalist movement. A.Z.

65. Girling, J. C. S., People's War, The Conditions and its Consequences in China and in South East Asia, (George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1969), p. 53.

66. Written Interview of Th. Muivah, General Secretary, NSCN, (conducted by the scholar, 1994), p. 11.

Phizo's prolonged absence was a setback for the movement. His lack of objective perception of the underlying 'trend' of the events and inability to change the course of action accordingly severely affected the Naga movement. In the assessment of M. Horam, "Phizo, in his continued absence has displayed an uncharacteristic lack of acumen and tenacity-the latter being perhaps the greatest quality."⁶⁷ No doubt, the President's prolonged absence was the greatest handicap for the movement particularly in times of crisis such as during the late 60s and in the post Shillong Accord period. Over and above, the Yehzabo (Constitution) of the Federal Government of Nagaland empowers only the President to issue directions, planning and execution, pertaining to national crisis. As a matter of fact, Article 30 of the FGN Yehzabo reads:

The President shall be supreme Commander of armed forces of Nagaland, and in exercise of his powers as Supreme Commander, the President shall have power to issue directives for disposition of Armed forces, for planning and execution of military campaigns, to deal with emergencies like foreign invasion and any matter appertaining to the conduct of war.⁶⁸

Further, the NNC leadership failed to rise to the occasion when the situation so warranted. In fact, in any organization or movement like that of the Nagas, it is during the time of crisis, war and resistance that the leadership qualities can be decisive. In fact, the ability to evolve change of tactical campaign and strategic plans and successful manoeuvre out of the crisis constitute the hallmark of a good leadership. In the case

67. Horam, op.cit., p. 208.

68. Horam, op.cit., p. 273.

of the Nagas too, political requirement demanded of the Federal Government clear cut directions to the Federal Army along with appropriate initiatives. But as mentioned, the NNC leadership totally lacked the ability to discern and act upon the vital issues at the decisive moment.

Hence, the whole situation in the Naga hills was favourable for Government of India to strike any deal with the Naga. For the first time, in nearly three decades of 'Naga resistance', the Government of India was placed in an advantageous position when she could deliberately dictate terms to the Naga nationalists.

The Shillong Accord

It is against this background that the controversial Shillong Accord of 1975 was signed, which marked an important event in the history of the Naga people and specially of the Naga struggle for recognition of their right.

A facade of negotiation was carried out by the representatives of the NNC and the FGN and the Government of India. They were assisted by the Liaison Committee of the Nagaland Peace Council formed on February 5, 1975. The members were Rev. Longri Ao, Kenneth Kerhuo, Lungshim Shaiza, Dr. Aram, and L. Lungalang.⁶⁹ At the initiative of the Liaison Committee, in May, 1975. Kevi Yally (younger brother of A.Z. Phizo) came out as a "contactman."⁷⁰

69. Ramunny, op.cit., p. 330.

70. Kouzakete, op.cit., p. 2

On the side of the Federal Government of Nagaland and Naga National Council, the first list of representatives as sent by Biseto Medom Keyho Killo Kilonser (Home Minister) included :

B.N. Keyho	Representing Federal Body
Maj. Gen. J. Saney	do
N. Chumbemo Murry	Representing the NNC
Z. Ramyo	do
S. Darhu	do
Longom Phom	do
Veeniyi Rakhu	do
Tangmei Konyak	do
I. temjenba as Secretary	
Kevi yallay as interpreter ⁷¹	

On 15 September 1975, in a letter to Rev. Longri Ao, President, NPC, Zashie Huire, President of Federal Government of Nagaland sent a final list of NNC and FGN representatives:

1. 'Maj.' Gen. M. Asa
2. Z. Ramyo
3. S. Dahru
4. Kevi Yalley
5. Veeniyi Rakhu
6. I. Temjenba⁷²

They were allegedly delegated full power to talk with the Government of India.

However, unlike, the "peace talks" held between the Government of India and the federal Government of Nagaland in 1966-67, the negotiation in 1975 was a one sided affair. Right from the beginning, the Government of India dominated the scene leaving no room for the NNC and FGN representatives to manoeuvre. The Government of India knew well that they were negotiating from a position of strength which was a great tool in any political

71. Ibid., pp. 19-20.

72. NSCN Polarisation, (Published by the GPRN, Oking, 7th February, 1985), p. 5.

bargaining. Murkot Ramunny had advised the Government that "talks could be successful only if they were held from a position of strength."⁷³

Remarkably, even the Liaison Committee was utilised for the interests of the Government of India. Though in principle, they were strictly supposed to be neutral and act as a 'go-between', in reality it was not so. Rightly so, Rev. Longri Ao's letter to the Federal Government of Nagaland is obviously a clear evidence of Liaison Committee's pro-India stand unlike that of a neutral third party as such. In his letter, Rev. Longri Ao had written "(1) the integrity of India cannot be jeopardised. (2) NPC will oppose any secessionist move."⁷⁴ In fact, Rev. Longri Ao even stated that "Solution had to be within the Indian Constitution."⁷⁵ The minutes of the meeting of the Governor with the members of the Liaison Committee at Raj Bhawan, Shillong on 5th September 1975 seriously exposed the controversy over the locus standi of the said Committee. Over and above, it unveiled the latter's tacit support to the Government of India. Even S.C. Dev (one of the men behind the Shillong Accord) in his book confessed that Lungshim Shaiza and L. Lungalang (both Liaison Committee member) were the moving spirits behind them. Both of them confided to him that the settlement had to be within the Constitution of India and this 'sincerity' was used to the 'advantage' of the Government of India.⁷⁶ Another close associate

73. Ramunny, Murkot, Lessons from Dealing with the rebels (In) The Hindu, (Madras) January 15, 1992.

74. Kouzakete, op.cit., p. 12.

75. Ibid., p. 21.

76. Dev, op.cit., p. 117.

the Governor L.P. Singh with appreciation hoping that "victory is not far away."⁷⁷

It may however, be noted that in the changed environment brought about by the internal conflict within the Naga nationalist organization and specially by the Indian army's established dominance, the Liaison Committee's room for any bold stand was awfully limited. It was against this background that the Governor threatened the Liaison Committee a number of times that "delaying the talks between the Liaison Committee and the underground could not be allowed"⁷⁸ Further the NNC and the FGN had to convey their commitment to accept the Constitution of India also under a threat.⁷⁹ Ramyo Zimik, the main spokesman in the Shillong negotiation also admitted : "the members of the Nagaland Peace Council (liaison Committee) were threatened by L.P. Singh on a few occasions."⁸⁰

The Governor and his associates by then realised that the NNC and its Government i.e. FGN was a 'spent force' and hence, their attempt would be to put (in their words) "a political seal (a political finish to the whole problem) on the plan."⁸¹

The representatives of the NNC and the FGN entered into discussions with both the Liaison Committee and the two advisers in Kohima and held five meetings beginning from 31 August, 1975.⁸² These were the preliminary rounds working out the modalities for final settlement with the Governor. However, it

77. Supra Imchen, Panger.

78. Kouzakete, op.cit., p. 25.

79. Dev, op.cit., p. 116.

80. Written Interview of Ramyo, Zimik, loc.cit.

81. Dev, op.cit., p. 113.

82. Idem.

turned out to be insignificant because the groundwork was already laid by the Government of India team. Dev succinctly writes :

Both the Liaison Committee and the 'underground' leaders have fully realised that the game is over and they are willing to sign anything that the Governor might like them to. They however, wanted to make it appear that insurgency in Nagaland has been stopped and settlement arrived at only after prolonged discussion with the Government of India...the leaders would want to make it appear that negotiation preceded the settlement. Whatever it be, for their own face saving, they wanted to create an impression in the minds of the public that so called Federal Government are negotiating with the Government of India on equal footing.⁸³

This confidential note of the Commissioner of Nagaland seems to reflect the events meticulously shaped by the government side. The Governor through his two advisors compelled the Liaison Committee to secure a clear mandate from Zashie Hurie, President of the FGN and from Veyallie Metha Chief of the Federal Army that they would support any settlement arrived at by both the parties.⁸⁴

The Governor also secured the commitment from the representatives of the NNC and FGN that 'Independence' as a subject matter will not come up for discussion in the proposed talks along with the indication that their willingness to participate in the Indian Union was in keeping with the spirit of the Peace Mission's proposal of 1964.⁸⁵

The Governor tactfully secured the confirmation from the NNC and FGN leaders that 'they were competent authority to take

83. *Idem*.

84. *Ibid.*, p. 115.

85. Ramunny, *op.cit*, p. 346.

decisions' and 'whatever decisions taken will be honoured by the Federal Government.'⁸⁶ This was done precisely to avoid possible backing out in the future by the representatives of the NNC and FGN. Thus, the circle of domination was complete. The Governor and his associates had successfully clinched at least in principle the fundamental issue before actually commencing the talk with the Governor. Notably in all conscience, Rev. Longri Ao made it known that they would accept every thing and anything.⁸⁷

Having obtained all the necessary commitments and assurances from the representatives of the NNC and FGN, the Government of India subtly accepted the proposals of the Liaison Committee to continue the talks basing on the following principles : (which was never honoured in fact)

1. The solution should be acceptable to both sides.
2. It should be honourable to both sides and to which a basis was agreed upon, that there shall be no precondition for talks.⁸⁸

Though seemingly it was considered to be the real negotiation involving the Governor, it was more or less confirmed what the outcome would be. Thus, it turned out to be what S.C.Dev confided to the Governor that "their main predicament is that unless they show that they have negotiated with the Government on two or three occasions before they reached an agreement, their image before the public would suffer."⁸⁹

86. Ibid., p. 349.

Ramyo Zimik's Statement and temjenba's letter to Rev. Longri explicitly conveyed this commitment vide Ramunny's book, p. 349.

87. Ibid., p. 353.

88. Ibid., p. 340.

89. Dev; op.cit., p. 118.

The Governor after his meeting with the NNC and FGN representatives responded and said "I found your assessment perfectly correct."⁹⁰ Consequently, the Government of India carried out the operation so smoothly and proficiently and on the other hand exposing the helplessness of the NNC and FGN representatives.

Eventually, the representatives of the NNC and FGN along with the Liaison Committee met the Governor at the Raj Bhawan, Shillong on the appointed day. The talks continued for three days⁹¹ and there was a series of four discussions. Some of the discussions were held with the Governor alone; at others, the Governor was assisted by the two advisors M. Ramunny and H. Zopianga, and M.L. Kampani, Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Home Affairs. All the five members of the Liaison Committee participated in the discussions.⁹² The following points were brought up for discussion :

1. Integration of all contiguous Naga territories, retransfer of all reserved forests and other areas transferred out of erstwhile Naga Hills to other neighbouring States.
2. Administration and judicial pattern and structure.
3. Release of all political prisoners, collection of Federal weapons and stoppage of security operations, etc., etc.
4. Election system;
5. Structural arrangement of Governmental machineries;
6. Re-appraisal and re-orientation of customary practices and cultural institutions.⁹³

90. Idem.

91. Rao, op.cit., p. 98.

92. Ramunny, op.cit., p. 355.

93. Ibid., p. 350.

However, the Governor and his close associates tactfully shelved most of the issues on the pretext that those issues could be raised through normal constitutional means,⁹⁴ which implied that the Nagas could take up these issues through the Nagaland State Government. The other assumption is that these issues were deferred and supposed to have allusion to 'other issues for discussion for final settlement' (as provided in the third clause of the Shillong Accord).

Having actually deliberated for two days, i.e., 10th, 11th November, 1975, they came up with the following agreement :

1. The representative of the underground organisations conveyed their decision, of their own volition to accept, without condition the Constitution of India;
2. It was agreed that the arms, now underground would be brought out and deposited at appointed places. Details for giving effect to this agreement will be worked out between them and representatives of the Government, the security forces, and members of the Liaison Committee;
3. It was agreed that the representatives of the underground organisations should have reasonable time to formulate other issues for discussion for final settlement.⁹⁵

Follow up of the Agreement

After signing the Agreement, the NNC brought out its weapons and deposited them in a special armoury constructed at Chedema, guarded by volunteers under the auspices of the Nagaland Peace Council.⁹⁶ The rank and file of the NNC and FGN were put up in special camps set up by the Committee. Altogether ten 'peace

94. *Ibid.*, p. 347.

95. *Idem.*

96. Dev, *op.cit.*, p. 123.

Camps' were set up. Seven of them were in Nagaland state and three in Manipur.⁹⁷

On the other hand, the Government of India returned collective fines imposed and collected from the villages. The Government also released all political prisoners numbering about six hundred personnel.⁹⁸ Many of the political Prisoners from Shillong (Mawlai) special jail, Nowgong Central jail and from Nagaland Central and District Jails were rehabilitated⁹⁹ as per the operational effect of the Shillong Accord.

Finally, the Government of India suspended the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act¹⁰⁰ which resulted in halting of combing operations of villages and towns by the Indian security forces and curfew imposed on villages was lifted.¹⁰¹

Thus, the Shillong Accord brought the bitter hostilities and fightings that had ravaged the Naga Hill for so long to another apparent end. The peace that was established did not last long enough because the very nature of the accord did not facilitate a permanent peace; it was rather an euphoria. It is a paradoxical truth that the Shillong Accord which brought about a temporary peace in the Naga Hills also contained the seed of another bitter conflict which is in operation till date. The Shillong Accord was no better than a 'dictated peace'. Right from the beginning till the signing of the Shillong Accord it was altogether an one sided

97. Ao, Rev. Longri's Speech at the Conference of Naga Public Leaders, (at Kohima, July 7, 1976).

98. Kerhuo, Kenneth, The Nagaland Peace Council Its Role in the Indo-Naga Peace Talks (In) The Weekly Journal, (November 7, 1990).

99. Idem.

100. Horam, op.cit., p. 178.

101. Kerhuo; loc.cit.

affair. The representatives of the Government of India often threatened to call off the meeting and even the representatives of the NNC and FGN were 'informed from time to time' that the safe conduct issued to them would be withdrawn at the end of this or that month and that they would have to make up their minds to go back to the jungle if they failed to accept the Government of India's term.¹⁰² Hence, under such conditions lasting peace was not possible to be ensured.

Effects

The effects of the Shillong Accord were equally significant. The dramatic change brought about by this accord caused drastic changes in the Naga nationalist organization. Such changes were sudden, far-reaching and definitely for the worse as far as the Nagas were concerned. It is in this context that the Shillong Accord was a turning point in Naga political history. The accord left a powerful section of the Naga leadership disgruntled consistent with their commitment to espouse the cause of Naga nationalism.

Sharp Division Developed

A resolution was adopted by the Federal Government of Nagaland emergency meeting held at Dihoma (Kohima District) on 2nd December 1975 endorsing the Shillong Accord and forwarding the same to A.Z. Phizo, President of the Naga National Council

102. Written Interview of Ramyo Zimik Foreign Secretary, FGN, op.cit., p. 6.

for his consent.¹⁰³ The President unfortunately did not officially endorse and accept the Shillong Accord. However, there never was an explicit statement from his own condemning the accord either in spite of mounting pressure to do it. Eventually, the enigmatic silence of A.Z. Phizo brought much confusion among the Nagas.

Significantly, Th. Muivah, Isak Swu and Alee (foreign) Command* officials earnestly asked for A.Z. Phizo's guidance and directives, at least three times in that particular year alone.¹⁰⁴ But nothing was forthcoming and on the other hand Muivah and other leaders were gasping for life because of the military pressures and intrigues from within. Since then many leaders became disillusioned with A.Z. Phizo's leadership.

The foremost condemnation against the Accord came from the 'Wung' (Tangkhul) Region of the Naga nationalists¹⁰⁵ and a seven-men delegation went abroad only to urge A.Z. Phizo to condemn the Accord unreservedly and without delay.¹⁰⁶ The leaders of the Alee Command reacted sharply (this was what the pro-accord leaders were afraid of) on November 21, 1975. The signatories to the condemnation paper were Alee Command leading lights-Thuingaleng Muivah, Isak Chishi Swu, Lorho, Venuh, Moire, and Pamrei. They

103. Statement of Zashie Huire on the Shillong Accord, (30th December, 1975).

* The Alee (Foreign) Command of Federal Government under Th. Muivah took the leading initiative in mobilising Public Opinion against the Shillong Accord and its possible consequences on Naga aspirations.

104. Statement of NSCN, (Oking, 3 January, 1984), p. 4.

105. Interview of Th. Muivah, General Secretary, NSCN, by Bertil Linter Far East Economic Review, (Published by GPRN, Oking, December, 1987), p. 15.

106. Shillong Accord and the Patriot (In) A Brief Political Account by GPRN, (Oking, 7th May, 1992), p. 20.

dubbed the representatives of Zashie Huire as 'traitors'. In a six point note to Zashie Huire and other leaders of NNC and FGN, . They declared that in spite of "the bitterest pressure they have been subjected to, the Nagas will forever hold their own."¹⁰⁷ It was a clear rejection of the Shillong Accord. It pointed out that "no one in whatever name or capacity has the authority to settle the Indo-Naga issue within the Indian Union." The signatories called upon the Nagas to resist "any covert or overt" act of subjugating them and pledged anew to fight against invasion of any kind through to the end.¹⁰⁸ Hence, to them an outright official condemnation became indispensable as the sovereign rights of the Nagas were to be safeguarded and kept intact for all time to come.¹⁰⁹ For reinforcing the condemnation the National Assembly of the NNC was held at Suphao (North West of Myanmar bordering India) on the 15th-17th August, 1976.¹¹⁰ The Assembly had two main objectives in mind-to condemn the Shillong Accord by treating the work of Zashie Hurie Ministry as high treason and to regroup the already disorganized NNC and FGN.

The National Assembly reaffirmed the Naga decision arrived at in a plebiscite conducted in 1951.¹¹¹ The Naga nationalist leaders like Th. Muivah, Isak Chishi and others referred to the

107. Nibedon, op.cit., p. 341.

108. Idem.

109. A Brief political Account (Published by the Government of the People's Republic of Nagaland (GPRN), Oking, 7th May, 1992), p. 33.

110. Idem.

111. Who Murders NNC ?, (leaflet) (Published by the Government of the People's Republic of Nagaland (GPRN), Oking, 27 September, 1988), p. 1.

Shillong Accord as 'the most ignominious sell-out made in the history of Naga people'.¹¹²

The Assembly as expected condemned Zashie Huire Ministry for the high treason.¹¹³ Further, it cautioned A.Z. Phizo stating that they would take him to be a party to the capitulation accord if he would not condemn it.¹¹⁴ The Assembly significantly decided to reorganize the NNC and FGN and remove any doubt concerning their unflinching support to the NNC leadership. It reaffirmed the post of the NNC Presidentship to A.Z. Phizo and elected Isak Chishi Swu as Vice President of the NNC (a vacancy caused by the arrest and ill health of Imkong Meren).¹¹⁵ Over and above, the Assembly passed a resolution calling upon A.Z. Phizo in London either to come and provide leadership at home or give his advice and guideline to the 'Home Government' so that the problem confronting them would be tackled.¹¹⁶ Undoubtedly, this reorganization initiative was a 'significant step'. A leaflet of the NSCN later stated that "the revolutionary patriots had not only saved the nation from capitulation, but they had also strengthened the position of the President A.Z. Phizo."¹¹⁷

A Naga Delegation to London

A three member delegation comprising of Kevi Yalley (brother of A.Z. Phizo), Ramyo Zimik and Pekrove accompanied by Kenneth

112. NSCN Manifesto, (Published by the Government of the People's Republic of Nagaland (GPRN), Oking, January 31, 1980), p.4.

113. A Brief Political Account, loc.cit.

114. Statement of NSCN, op.cit., p. 4.

115. GPRN, Who Murdered NNC? loc.cit.

116. Written Interview of Th. Muivah, loc.cit.

117. A Brief Political Account, op.cit., p. 2.

Kerhuo, a member of the Nagaland Peace Council (as conditioned by the Government of India)¹¹⁸ went to London to persuade A.Z. Phizo to accept the Shillong Accord¹¹⁹ and as per provision of the third clause of the Shillong Accord it was expected that the representatives of the underground organisations should have reasonable time to formulate other issues for discussions for a final settlement. Apparently, the Federal Government of Nagaland had named A.Z. Phizo to lead the delegation for talks with the Government of India.¹²⁰ This delegation had a series of meetings and discussions with the President of the NNC. The official meeting were chaired by Khodao Yanthan an executive member of the NNC then staying with A.Z. Phizo. However, it was learnt that the meeting was not go well and A.Z. Phizo was upset with them. Khodao Yanthan admittedly stated that "Mr. Phizo reprimanded all of them saying 'they should know what they are doing', the NPC (Nagaland Peace Council) is a 'killer Council' and so on."¹²¹

Kenneth Kerhuo tried to convince Phizo claiming that the majority of the Nagas, including the church had accepted the Shillong Accord and from the time the Accord was signed, the violent conflict had ceased, Regulations and Acts relaxed and the political prisoners released.¹²² But it was evident that Phizo was not convinced. Ironically, Phizo did not officially or

118. Chief Secretary (Nagaland State) Letter to Rev. Longri Ao
(Confidential), (16th October, 1976).

119. Idem.

120. Nibedon, op.cit., p. 349.

121. Written Interview of Mr. Khodao Yanthan, President NNC (K)
(4th July, 1993, conducted by the scholar).

122. Kenneth Kerhuo's Letter to Mr. Phizo, 8th February, 1977,
Waldert Hotel, London. Mr. Kevi Yalley Stayed with his brother Phizo and others put up in a hotel arranged by the Indian High Commission.

publicly denounce the Accord. M. Vakha, of the NNC remarked: "Phizo miserably failed to denounce the Accord"¹²³ and gave room for much misunderstanding among the nationalists at home with 'terrible' consequences. Khodao Yanthan disclosed that "Ramyo and Yalley had private meetings with Phizo which I didn't know what they had secret understandings between. But it was obvious that they had." He further claimed: "I had a strong feeling that Mr. Yalley had convinced somewhat Phizo privately, because he did not abrogate the Accord despite my strong pressure on him to do so."¹²⁴ Secondly, Khodao also asserted saying that when Ramyo and Yalley reached home they talked 'President Phizo did not object to the Accord and so on.'¹²⁵ Against this the leaders of the NSCN later retorted : "Countrymen, how can total capitulation to the Indian Constitution be a process to safeguard the sovereignty of Nagaland ? How could the burial of a man deep into the earth be a process to bring him back to life ?"¹²⁶

At one time Phizo was inclined to treat the Shillong Accord of 1975 as another blunder committed by the Federal Government of Nagaland just as the Naga People's Convention had signed the 16 Point Agreement and secured an Indian State.¹²⁷ But Phizo for reasons best known to him decided to be silent publicly as far as this issue was concerned. Tajenyuba Ao emphatically stated that

 123. Vakha, M., Naga National Political Issues: A Brief Diagnosis
 (In) The Weekly Journal, August 9, 1989.

124. Written Interview of Mr. Khodao Yanthan, President NNC (K),
loc. cit.

125. Idem.

126. NSCN Polarisation, (Published by GPRN, Oking, 7 February,
 1985), pp. 6-7.

127. Phizo's Letter to National Workers, March 3, 1982, (London)
 (as Circulated in Nagaland).

"had Phizo uttered a word of direction and guidelines, Naga unity and political movement would have taken a positive turn."¹²⁸ But still the worst (according to Naga nationalists) was that Phizo took into confidence the Shillong Accord group only conspicuously ignoring the true national workers all these years.¹²⁹ Thus, Phizo chose to remain a controversial leader till the end.

Meanwhile, the pro-Shillong Accord group (which by now was clearly visible) of the NNC and FGN had convened another National Assembly on their own somewhere in North-East of Myanmar obviously to counter the previous National Assembly held at Suphao and endorse the Shillong Accord.¹³⁰ Thus a clear polarisation was developing between the pro-Accord and anti-Accord NNC. In fact, it was an attempt by the pro-accord group of the NNC to isolate Th. Muivah, Isak Swu and their close associates who made total rejection of the Shillong Accord.

The strategy of the Government of India was quite explicit concerning the Alee Command or the 'China returning group'. The manner in which the Shillong Accord was expeditiously negotiated and signed was essentially because of keeping the China group at bay. The Government of India wanted definitely to strike a deal particularly to disarm the Naga nationalists before the China group (Alee Command) returned. This approach was quite apparent in all the dealings of the Government of India vis-a-vis the representatives of the NNC and FGN, and of course, the Liaison Committee. Explicitly enough, the Governor L.P. Singh even warned

128. Ao, Tajenyuba, op.cit., p. 299.

129. Vakha, loc.cit.

130. NSCN, Who Murders NNC ? op. cit., p. 2.

the Liaison Committee and said, "delaying the talk between the Liaison Committee and the underground could not be allowed. There was the risk of the China gang returning."¹³¹ Thus, the urgency in their approach was indiscreetly glaring for anyone to perceive.

Hence, when the Shillong Accord was signed with certain key members of the NNC and FGN, the Government of India categorically targetted on Th. Muivah and his Alee Command.

The strategy of isolating or liquidating the Alee Command became pertinent when the Shillong Accord was dubbed by this group as total sell-out to India and termed the signatories of the Accord as 'traitors'. As a result what the Government of India feared most was the revival of Naga nationalism under Th. Muivah's leadership and lingering of the Naga problem without arriving at a solution. To this end the new Chief Minister Vizol was obviously pressurised to produce definite result. This is evident from the way Murkot Ramunny made this statement : "It is this group that the new Chief Minister has to tackle first. reports indicate that he has already initiated action."¹³² The Governor of the State, L.P. Singh, while addressing the first Nagaland State Legislative Assembly after thirty two months of President's Rule in Nagaland State spoke this in reference to the group which repudiated the Shillong Accord :

131. Minutes of the Meeting of the Governor with the Liaison Committee (at Raj Bhawan, Shillong on 5th September, 1975. (In) Whither the Nagaland Peace Council ? by Kouzakete), p. 25.

132. Ramunny, op.cit., p. 363.

It is my hope that misguided* underground Nagas across the Burma (Myanmar) border will see the reality of the situation and come to join the rest of the Naga people in building up the State of Nagaland.... A strict vigilance in being maintained all along the Indo-Burma (Myanmar) border to intercept this group.¹³³

Even the Prime Minister of India Morarji Desai's statement bluntly revealed the fact of India's concern to crush the radical section of the Naga nationalists. Thus, he said, "I will exterminate all the Naga rebels. There will be no mercy."¹³⁴ As a matter of fact, there never was an abatement in the Indian security operations against the belligerent Nagas. With help from the Myanmarese Government, the Government intensified military operations in North-West of its border. Admittedly, Morarji Desai, stated in the Parliament on July 20, 1977 that "all possible precautions have been taken against any attempts by such persons to create any trouble." He further added saying, "we have every hope that the Government of Burma (Myanmar) will take effective measures to prevent such activities by Naga... hostiles

* Misguided Underground - This term first used by L.P. Singh was hotly debated in the Assembly. T.A. Ngullie (Cong.) stated : "The very name 'misguided' is not official word. It is humiliating to the underground Nagas who have been given a place as a group of the people fighting with certain ideology and spirit. Similarly, J.B. Jasokie (Cong) retorted, " this word 'misguided' should be deleted. If we called them misguided... then it is very wrong because one time or the other we all are involved in the issue (the Speaker was a prominent member of the NNC at one time). (Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly, Ibid, p. 91).

133. Official Report Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly. First Session (Fourth Assembly), 29th November, 1977, (published by the Assembly Secretariat, Nagaland).

134. Desai-Phizo Talk, June 14, 1977, (London) (In) Naga Insurgency by H. Horam, p. 290.

on their territory. On our part we have extended full co-operation to Burma (Myanmar)."¹³⁵

Later Atal Behari Vajpayee, the Foreign Minister of India paid a special visit to Myanmar to work out a detail plan to tackle the Naga tangle. Immediately, Myanmarese troops intensified operation in upland Myanmar.¹³⁶ Thus, Th. Muivah and his men were facing the mountain troops of Yangoon. The NSCN while recalling their success wrote: "the battle they fought at Langnok village in the month of March 1979 in which two Majors and one Lieutenant with other 56 Myanmarese troops were wiped out by Naga nationalists with all the arms captured marked again the beginning of a new chapter of stout resistance in the East."¹³⁷

Meanwhile, an attempt by the Nagas from the Indian side to contact Naga nationalists camping across the border was sabotaged by the Government for reasons best known to them. A 22 member team sent by the Nagaland Peace Council (with prior notice to the Government) to establish contact with Th, Muivah, Isak Swu and their men camping in upland Myanmar was attacked at Melon village in Meluri and one Captain Ashino was killed and the rest were arrested. This happened on March 18, 1978.¹³⁸ Hence, the strategy of the Government glaringly revealed the urgency of isolating the radical Naga nationalists and creating a division among the Nagas.

135. Asian Recorder, Attitude to Naga Rebels, (September 3-9, 1977).

136. Nibedon, op.cit., p. 363.

137. A Brief Political Account, op.cit., p. 6.

138. Murder at Melon, Economic and Political Weekly, (April 1, 1978), p. 562.

In July, 1978 the Nagaland Legislative Assembly witnessed a great deal of commotion in which the ruling party had to face criticism from the opposition who found fault with the state government policy in dealing with the Naga nationalists. T.A. Nguillie (Congress) questioned the discriminatory policy of the government in allowing the NNC meeting at Khonoma while banning the proposed NNC meeting at Khensa in Mokokchung. The Chief Minister Vizol in his reply admitted that fact that such meeting would have gone contrary to the understanding between the Nagaland Peace Council and the Government of India.¹³⁹ Further, he added that the Government being "so keen to preserve the hard won peace, cannot allow any attempts being made by any quarters for the revival of insurgency or to disturb the peace."¹⁴⁰ Huska Sumi who was also an MLA belonging to the ruling party later made fantastic disclosure and stated:

the Accordists were lucky to have some overground political leaders in their support. These leaders were bent upon implementing the Accord, and considered leaders like Thuingaleng Muivah and Isak Swu as the stumbling block to the effective implementation of the Accord. With a view to eliminating Muivah and Isak from the political scene, a group of young educated Nagas were sent across the border.¹⁴¹

Though he did not specify who sent these young educated Nagas, the reality of that conspiracy was self explanatory. This

139. Official Report Proceedings of the Nagaland Legislative Assembly, op.cit., p. 119.

140. Ibid., p. 123.

141. Sumi, Huska, What is the Future of the Shillong Accord ? (Press Handout, New Delhi), p. 4.

revelation was further corroborated by Tajenyuba Ao an ex. MLA who writes:

According to my information since Isak, Muivah and their followers...did not agree to Shillong Accord; a plan was hatched at Kohima to send more persons to penetrate into NNC-Federal headquarter and attempt to capture powerIn execution of the plan, Meyanger and some...boys were given Rs. two lakhs by some ministers and they were dropped by late Noklu, MLA in a Government vehicle in upper Konyak.¹⁴²

The ground reality was described by 'Brig', V.S. Atem, Chief of the Army (COTA) Naga Army, GPRN, who then was a Lieutenant in the Federal Army and personally witnessed all the political developments. He narrated:

In order to deal with the people in the East they (pro-accordists) bought over some reckless youngsters like Mr. Meyanger Ao and friends. Mr. Veni Rakhu was also too glad to be their pawn in this game. These people tread their way into the East and joined with lakhs of money given by the traitors with the generous help of the state puppet politicians. With the help of their money they won over very quickly a substantial number of army officers and civil as well. Meyanger and Veni Rakhu started speaking very openly that Shillong Accord was never wrong. President Phizo had never condemned it nor would he ever do it and therefore condemning the Accord by Isak and Muivah amounts to denouncing the leadership of Phizo. They started claiming that they were loyalists of Phizo and those opponents of the Accord were anti-Phizoites. Phizo loyalists stated that they would abide by the decision of their leader whether right or wrong.¹⁴³

142. Ao, Tajenyuba, op.cit., pp. 300-301.

143. Written Interview of 'Brig.' V.S. Atem, Chief of the Army, GHQ, Naga Army, Government of the Peoples' Republic of Nagaland by the Scholar, (11 October, 1994), p. 11.

Thus, the sharp division had reached a catastrophic state which could have been given a different turn with the active involvement and precise guideline by the NNC President but unfortunately his conspicuous silence was fully exploited by the pro-accord activists. In fact, the essence of the accordists' argument was that leaders like Muivah and Isak had no business to condemn the Shillong Accord which Phizo, the President of the NNC did not. In other words, they meant to imply that Phizo did not object to the Accord but were rather worried of the opposition from Muivah, Isak and their associates.

Martial Law Declaration

A fierce controversy raged the rank and file of the NNC and the followers of the Government of India. According to 'Brig.' V.S. Atem,

Signatories without a slight hesitation convened NNC Hoho (Assembly) at Khonoma in April 1978. Its impact on the East (Eastern Nagaland) was immense. Two schools of thought were heading towards collision as to 'who is the NNC' ? Chaos and confusion prevailed everywhere in the East. Rank and file naturally were demoralised.¹⁴⁴

Meanwhile, the pro-accord group made frantic efforts to convince the people about the efficacy of the Shillong Accord but could not succeed.¹⁴⁵ Soon after, the Nagaland Peace Council sponsored another major people's conference to express 'deep appreciation of the representatives of the NNC and the FGN and the Government of India for ushering in an era of peace through

144. Ibid., p. 12.

145. Sumi, loc.cit.

the Shillong Accord (but it was alleged that only 30 hands out of 600 delegates did raise in support of the resolution).¹⁴⁶ However, that did not alter the fact that a significant section of Naga opinion had begun to look on the Alee Command as the standard bearer.¹⁴⁷ Thus, while the Shillong Accord signalled that the Naga nationalist forces fighting inside Nagaland state had conceded the operational victory to the Indian security forces and that the political wing had made fundamental concessions in order to survive, the group under Th. Muivah's leadership remained intact, if displaced, and committed to continuing the armed struggle.¹⁴⁸ Undoubtedly the Alee Command was becoming a new centre of gravity for the Naga movement. Nevertheless, the Naga political struggle was taking a different dimension. Significantly, at this stage, 'Lt. Col.' Visacho, 'Captain' Vilato and 'Lt.' Japo deserted the Headquarters of the Naga Army with a huge caches of arms and ammunitions and in collusion with the pro-Accord group they made a declaration stating that "all the men of A.Z. Phizo should come to us, but all who support Isak-Muivah may go to them."¹⁴⁹ Thus, as anticipated, by and by, the Shillong Accordists were consolidating their forces for two reasons : Firstly, in order to pressurise the Alee Command to accept the Shillong Accord, and secondly to isolate Th. Muivah, Isak and their men. But things

146. Naga Public Conference ends in a Fiasco, Nagaland Times, (Dimapur) May 24, 1978.

147. Maxwell, loc.cit.

148. Idem.

149. Written Interview of Rh. Raising, Killo and Chaplee Kilonser (Home and Finance Minister), GPRN Conducted by the Scholar, (4th December, 1992), p. 1.

did not happen as anticipated and they then resorted to extreme methods to achieve their scheme. 'Brig.' V.S. Atem explained the background of this development and said:

Yes, they had well premeditated to take over the Government because that was the only sure way to materialize their dreams of handing over Nagaland to India on a plater. All power mongers and all opportunists entered into marriage of convenience.¹⁵⁰

Eventually, the worst thing occurred, when all the Naga leaders had gathered at Sector 2 HQ camp for holding Central Executive Council meeting, 'Lt. Col.' Subong Ao, the Commanding Officer, and the pro-Accord cadres staged a military takeover* and declared 'martial law' as part of their strategy to contain opposition to the Accord on 30th August 1978.¹⁵¹ As per the Martial Law declaration all offices of the NNC (no exception of Phizo and others in London) and that of the Federal Government of Nagaland were seized by the Naga Army and this was to remain in force till further orders. It was duly signed by 'Lt. Col.' Subong Ao. Another notification followed suit which made it known that anyone who criticised Phizo and the Shillong Accord would be condemned by firing squad.¹⁵² The NSCN publication, 'Polarisation' reveals that the 'Martial Law' declaration was followed by the 'supreme' proclamation which reads as "all powers Shillong Accord and Angami Zapu Phizo shall be totally of both

150. Written Interview of 'Brig.' V.S. Atem, loc.cit.

* Military Takeover - This development is referred to in both NNC and NSCN circle as Coup de'tat.

150. Polarisation, (published by GPRN, Oking, 7th February, 1985), p. 10.

151. Written Interview of 'Brig.' V.S. Atem, loc.cit.

152. GPRN Polarisation, loc.cit.

NNC and Federal are in our hand...whoever will oppose crushed."¹⁵³ Th. Muivah, Isak Chishi Swu and all their subordinate officers and Cabinet Ministers were arrested on the same day when the 'Martial Law' was declared at 5:30 P.M. They were kept under the army custody at Hasik village.¹⁵⁴

To Muivah and his close associates, 'Martial Law' declaration was conspired pure and simple by the 'traitors' (Shillong Accord signatories and state politicians) and the Indian intelligence.¹⁵⁵ Another important functionary of the NSCN also emphatically stated: "These agents ('Lt. col.' Subong and others) of the traitors were being guided by their masters from the West (Indian side). In the name of the NNC, traitors were freely working in the interest of the enemy."¹⁵⁶ Thus, the NSCN leaders strongly believed that all the malicious campaign against them including their military upper hand were actually directed from across the border in India by the Shillong Accord signatories, along with some state politicians and the Indian intelligence. In fact, the overall observation of the whole scenario apparently seems to support this claim. Besides, the all out offensive against those who opposed the Shillong Accord by the Government of India is well indicative of its policy to isolate the hardcore section of Naga nationalists. Thus, certainly one can not rule out the involvement of even the Indian intelligence in an attempt to flush out the uncompromising

153. Ramkathing, Maj., A Brief Account of Martial Law, (Okning, 8th October, 1993), p. 1.

154. Written Interview of Th. Muivah, op.cit., p. 5.

155. Written Interview of 'Brig.' V.S. Atem, loc.cit.

156. Written Interview of 'Brig.' V.S. Atem, loc.cit.

section of the Nagas and pave way for smooth settlement of the Naga issue within the Constitution of India.

Meanwhile, an emergency meeting of the Naga national workers were convened in September at sector 2 HQ by the Military Council extending 'martial law' administration in 'Eastern Nagaland' and the same order (which was declared when the Martial Law was first declared) was read out again. This emergency meeting made another declaration which clearly revealed their compromising attitude. It stated:

Phizo had been elected* NNC President for life'. What ever Phizo says or does Nagas will accept' said the Martial Law administrator. If Phizo would agree to accept even District council his words were to be final.¹⁵⁷

The NSCN Polarisation also writes vividly the whole account and recalled:

Stealthily they started creating waves of anti-national propaganda saying, 'do not criticise Shillong Accord; we should cooperate with them, Phizo did not condemn it; why you people condemn it ?!... they also began to utter openly... 'the people of Nagaland will go wherever Phizo goes, even to India.'¹⁵⁸

Such propaganda and political stand of the pro-agreementists was too much to digest for leaders like Th. Muivah, Isak Swu and others. To these leaders, it was nothing but a mockery of what they stood for. In their estimate every action was sought to be justified in Phizo's name. As NSCN stated:

* The word 'elected' was a misnomer as it was only a strategical decision of the 'Military Council'.

157. Polarisation, op.cit., p. 9.

158. Ibid., p. 10.

The precious national principles were thus thrown aside; prudent reasoning insulted; every high treason of their commitment justified all in Phizo's name. `Phizo, Phizo and... Phizo, is their political ideology.¹⁵⁹

They also succinctly challenged the pro-accordists and stated:

We are constrained to tell you to understand along with us the truth that reality is never weighed in terms of personality; It is measured but only in terms of its abiding value. Nagaland will exist but only for the eternal meaning that life has.¹⁶⁰

Against this background, one could clearly perceive that the NSCN leaders are seriously against personality cult and could comprehend the danger in it at the signing of the Shillong Accord. Their view in this regard had been written in great detail.

Meanwhile, a conspicuous plot to execute the leaders who led the denunciation of the Shillong Accord ran aground. It is evidently clear beyond any shadow of doubt that the accordists actually planned to eliminate Th. Muivah, Isak Chishi Swu and some others, particularly the former two leaders who according to them were the stumbling block to the effective implementation of the Accord.¹⁶¹ However, "the group" (accordists) in the opinion of Huska Sumi, who then was a Minister in Nagaland State Assembly writes, "did not have the courage to execute the two leaders.¹⁶² and other officers for some obvious reasons. Hence, they asked for 'shoot order' two times (so that they could not be held

159. Ibid., p. 11.

160. Sumi, loc.cit.

161. Idem.

162. Ramkathing, loc.cit.

directly responsible for it) from the then Chief Administrator 'Col'. Kholi, (it was alleged that the Military Council 'forcibly made 'Col'. Kholi the chief Administrator of 'Martial Law' who in fact was not an ardent supporter of it but was appointed as a part of the policy of the accordists that if any killing was done and mistake committed, they could escape any charges) but he flatly refused saying that "our enemies are India and Burma (Myanmar) and not among ourselves. Any differences among us could be solved amicably." he further added saying:

Though I may not deserve to be the Chief Administrator, yet you have made me as the Chief Administrator of 'Martial Law'. You had assured me your fullest co-operation and as such during my tenure no bloodshed would be done.¹⁶³

Thus, the plot to eliminate the leaders was disapproved by 'Col'. Kholi. S.S. Khaplang's statement further corroborate the above incident when he made it known that "the lives of Isak and Muivah were almost eliminated by some reactionaries at Hasik village in Eastern Nagaland."¹⁶⁴ In an interview, Thuingaleng Muivah said: "Truth is that Martial Law-people dug three times our-graves and those of our fellow patriots at three different places. But a sharp rift arose among themselves over power-wielding and that led them to a state of virtual split. So much weakened as they were then that they could not go straight-away with their intention of dumping us into the graves."¹⁶⁵ Thus,

163. Statement of Khaplang (Issued by the Ministry of Information and Publicity The Nagaland Journal, Kohima, February 23, 1994).

164. Written Interview of Th. Muivah, op.cit., p. 5.

165. Idem.

when these attempts failed miserably, the next step the pro-Accord group intended to hand over Th. Muivah and their associates to the Indian Army brigade Headquarters at Mokokchung for which a blue-print arrangement was made.¹⁶⁶ According to Th. Muivah. "there also a sharp difference of opinion cropped up. The Ao group insisted on our safe handing over to the Indian officers, whereas the Tenimia party (Angami-Chakhesang tribes) held uncompromisingly to the idea of despatching us on the way on the pretext that we attempted to run away. Who can deny all these fact ?."¹⁶⁷ Hence, 'Brig.' V. S. Atem of the NSCN writes : "Finally, out of desperation and frustration the two leaders were put on mock trial and expelled from the national workers for the rest of their life."¹⁶⁸ However, by then, a number of anti-agreementists had been reportedly killed by the pro-agreement group. The NSCN leaders alleged that about two dozen of their men were murdered by them-among them 'Maj.' Nihokhu Chishi Swu, 'Lt. Col.' Khutovi, 'Maj.' Satnam etc. were the prominent ones.¹⁶⁹ Thirteen of their men who were sent in two batches to Khiumniungan area for discussion and understanding were all murdered. Moreover, troops who were stationed in that region and others who came from the West altogether about fifteen of them were all killed.¹⁷⁰

166. Idem.

167. Written Interview of 'Brig.' V.S. Atem, loc.cit.

168. Passim Isak and Muivah's interviews conducted by the Scholar

169. Idem.

170. Chief Minister's Statement (Vizol) Official Report, op.cit., p. 19.

Martial Law declaration was followed by another important course of development i.e. Pangsha* Peace Talk. This was organised by the Nagaland Peace Council and the Shillong Accord signatories. The objective of this talk was precisely to persuade the Naga leaders across the border (who condemned the Shillong Accord as a total sell-out to India) to accept it and bring peace in Nagaland.¹⁷¹ However, NSCN sources totally negate the aforesaid account and related:

Right after the national leaders had been arrested and Martial Law declared, the Military junta wrote to the traitors in the West (in India) inviting them for a meeting. Traitors like Kevi Yalley and Ramyo Zimik were overjoyed to learn the news of the coup and therefore rushed to the East (upper Chindwin).¹⁷²

Just as the NSCN leaders considered the 'martial law' as an extension of the Shillong Accord,¹⁷³ the Pangsha peace talk is also nothing less than that. It is another counter-plot, a stratagem of the signatories, the Nagaland peace Council, the Indian intelligence and the pro-agreementists. Th.Muivah and others who condemned the Shillong Accord were obviously kept out of these talks which were held at two different places at different timings. The first meeting was held at Sulow village (inside Myanmar) from 21st to 22nd October 1978 and the second meeting at Kiangphu (a village on the Indo-Myanmar border) in the month of

* Pangsha - A village in Tuengsang District near the International Border. Talks were held around this village where one peace camp was set up. Meetings were held in two separate villages. First at Sulow and second at Kiangphu respectively.

171. Written Interview of 'Brig.' V.S. Atem, loc.cit.

172. Written Interview of RH. Raising, loc.cit.

173. Passim Written Interview of 'Brig.' V.S. Atem.

January 1979.¹⁷⁴ From the Indian border side, the NNC and FGN delegation was led by Zashie Huire, President of the FGN along with members of the Nagaland Peace council like Kenneth Kerhuo, Rev. V.K. Nuh, Rev. Imtiluen Ao, Angnal Anal, Kave Yalley and Ramyo Zimik accompanied FGN President. From the Myanmar side. 'Lt. Col.' Yamstong of the Military Council led the delegation. Significantly, the delegation from the west was accompanied by an Indian officer as an observer.¹⁷⁵ What transpired between the two groups was obviously not made known to the public and if one is to believe the account given from the NSCN sources, the tacit understanding arrived at subtly under the cover of 'peace talk' will never be known. But according to 'brig.' V.S. Atem, who was then the medical Officer and Adjutant Commander of the Sector 11 HQ in the Eastern side testified saying:

In the course of the meeting the national arch traitors mesmerized their lackeys in the East that Phizo had no objection to the Shillong Accord to be the basis for further negotiation except that he was worried for opposition from the East under the leadership of Isak and Muivah. At this instigation some of the so-called Phizoites started scheming to finish off Isak and Muivah. Many attempts were made to eliminate them physically. But thanks to the good God who had saved them from such criminals.¹⁷⁶

On the other hand, the Government of India meticulously took steps to neutralize any element of anti-national during the Pangsha peace talks. For instance, the Government of India imposed a number of conditions before the team trekked to the

174. Written Interview of Zashi Huire, President of FGN (Adino faction) by the Scholar, (September 11, 1994).

175. Written Interview of 'Brig.' V.S. Atem, loc.cit.

176. The Pangsha Rendezvous (Editorial), Ura Mail, August 2, 1978

border. The conditions were not made public for obvious reasons.¹⁷⁷ Sarcastically, the Ura Mail Editor writes: "What is known is that all discussions should be held in Hindi in the presence of intelligence officer is not one of the conditions."¹⁷⁸

Against this background one could get definite clues to some of the vital questions concerning this imbroglio. Some of the vital questions are: first, who was behind the idea of staging a military take over and declaration of martial law which resulted in the ouster of Th.Muivah, Isak Chishi Swu and their comrades from the NNC and Federal hierarchy ? Secondly, what was the motive behind it ? Thirdly, was it because of tacit understanding between the 'accordists' and the Government of India ? Fourthly, did the 'Military Council' achieve its goal ?

To the Nagas in general, the military take over within the NNC and the Martial Law declaration are till date strange episodes and perhaps, the people who masterminded such operations will never admit facts but rather attempt to distort it or leave it to the unknown fate. The reason is that the Nagas in general have been critical of the Accord ever since the political failure became apparent. In fact, the 'Military Council' could not prolong the Martial Law because of severe Naga public pressure against them to hand over the power within the organisation immediately to a civilian authority.¹⁷⁹

177. Idem.

178. Ramkathing, loc.cit.

179. Written Interview of RH. Raising, loc.cit.

A close scrutiny of the happenings reveal that the military take over and the subsequent 'martial law' declaration which usurped the office of the NNC and the Federal Government of Nagaland were the outcome of the Shillong Accord. It is in this context that Rh. Raising, an important functionary of the NSCN remarked: "It (Martial Law) was an extension of the Shillong Accord."¹⁸⁰

Further, the involvement of the Shillong Accord signatories, and other elements from the West (Indian border side) in the military take over, the Martial Law declaration and the attempted killing of Muivah, Isak and their close associates cannot be ruled out easily.¹⁸¹ To corroborate it from the NSCN sources one can for instance quote the Chief of the Naga Army, 'Brig.' V.S. Atem who emphatically stated: "The traitors were being guided by their masters from the West."¹⁸² Another important leader of the NSCN also affirmingly said: "The declaration of Martial Law was the brainchild of Kave Yalley and Z. Ramyo, the architects of the Shillong Accord."¹⁸³ Besides, the over-all campaign and rhetoric of the pro-Shillong Accordists based on the Eastern side conspicuously indicate the underlying tacit understanding between them and the signatories. Th. Muivah, in an interview, while pointing out the mistakes of A.Z. Phizo and the follow up of Shillong Accordists, stated that right after their return from London Kave Yalley and Ramyo Zimik sent agents to do away all those who were opposing the Shillong

180. Sumi, loc.cit.

181. Written Interview of 'Brig.' V.S. Atem, loc.cit.

182. Written Interview of Rh. Raising, loc.cit.

183. Interview of Bertil Lintner with Th. Muivah, loc.cit.

Accord and consequently military 'coup' and the Martial Law were declared.¹⁸⁴ Thus, Thuingaleng Muivah declared : "We became the chief target of NNC and the Indian Government on grounds of the unsparing condemnation of it.¹⁸⁵ Most probably the military takeover and the subsequent martial law declaration were done as a last resort by the Shillong Accord signatories and the pro-Accord members (in the eastern side) to flush out the extremists en masse from the NNC and FGN set up as a whole to pave the way for a speedy end to the problem.¹⁸⁶ Thus, the Pangsha peace talks could also be understood in the light of this campaign. For instance, 'Brig.' V.S. Atem's statement in reference to the Pangsha peace talk explicitly indicate that under the cover of peace talks, the Shillong Accord signatories were misrepresenting the facts in order to convince them that Muivah, Issak and their supporters were the stumbling blocks to the peace process. Thus, apparently, Pangsha peace talks were organised to arrive at an understanding with Th. Muivah and the Alee Command cadres but in reality it was found to be a move to purge all those who opposed the Shillong Accord from the NNC and FGN set up and in defending the fragile peace process. Evidently, the pro-accordists succinctly declared :

Naga people would go with President Phizo wherever he goes, whether he joins the Indian Union or elsewhere and that the Nagas have to take a short-cut we should no more fight but settle the problem by peaceful means.¹⁸⁷

184. Written Interview of Th. Muivah, op.cit., p. 7.

185. Federal Politics take Strange Turn : Military Council wound up, Ura Mail, (Dimapur), March 21, 1979.

186. Declaration of the Federal President SS. Khaplang (later published) The Nagaland Journal, June 23, 1994.

187. Supra, Economic and Political Weekly, April 1, 1978.

This perception along with the statement that "if Phizo would agree to accept even District Council his words were to be final." All this glaringly exposed their total submission to expediency and shortsightedness. Thus, it is quite clear that the Government of India pressed for total isolation of the Naga forces who denounced the Accord. Evidently, any effort for understanding between the Shillong Accord signatories and pro-Accord group on the one hand and those who did not accept it on the other were outrightly thwarted by the Government machinery. In the first instance, a member of the 'high power' peace delegation to contact Isak Swu, Th. Muivah and their comrades was killed and the rest of the team were arrested at Melon.¹⁸⁸ In the second instance, three of Muivah's men were nabbed by security forces near Pangsha on September 1978 while coming with a message for Kave Yalley and Ramyo Zimik.¹⁸⁹ Further, the Pangsha peace talks were closely monitored by the Intelligence Bureau.¹⁹⁰ However, by then, the Government of India was fortunate to have a group supporting the Shillong Accord from across the border.

It is to be noted that a full scale military offensive was already on (under an 'integrated command'). It was, as Nirmal Nibedon wrote, "the offensive known as the four 'cuts' principle-isolating insurgent line, isolating guerrillas from common people, shutting off food and ration supplies, and of course, assassination of rebel chiefs."¹⁹¹ Thus, the attempts of the lives of Th. Muivah, Isak Chishi Swu and their close associates

188. Nibedon, op.cit., p. 376.

189. Ura Mail, loc.cit.

190. Nibedon, The ethnic explosion, op.cit., p. 102.

by the pro-Accord elements can be seen in the light of the afore-said policies.

Military Council wound up

The Martial Law proclaimed by the Military Council lasted for six months and finally on 9th March 1979,¹⁹² it was lifted and civil authority of the NNC/FGN was reinstated. One of the main reasons for switching over to the civilian government was because of severe criticism and pressure from the Naga public. Consequently, the Military Council convened a national assembly at Lao in Lainong Region on the 9th March 1979 which wound up the martial law and made an attempt to re-constitute a new government by subtly superseding the critics. The Lao national assembly arrived at the following decisions:

1. Phizo would continue to be the life time President of the NNC.
2. The National Assembly held at Suphao village under the leadership of Th. Muivah should be condemned.
3. The Constitution of 1972 should be accepted.
4. Isak and Muivah would never be a member of 'national' workers; they should remain (lifetime) as a mere Naga citizens.¹⁹³

Th. Muivah, Isak Chishi Swu and some others were still under house arrest and there was no sign of their release. Instead the conspiracy to decimate them had worsened. Th. Muivah acknowledging this fact lamented:

191. Heimi, W. Sdapwon, Report of Naga Political Affairs from 1978 to 1981, (published by Federal Government of Nagaland, New Delhi), p. 6.

192. Ramkathing, op.cit., p. 3.

193. Interview of Bertil Lintner with Th. Muivah, op.cit., pp.7-8.

All our desperate efforts to thrash out misunderstanding were brushed aside. Everything was driven beyond forbearance. The impossibility for unity became the hard fact of the day. Surely no identity exists between the reactionary traitors and the revolutionary patriots. Yes, any truth other than Phizo's whim was suppressed at gun point.¹⁹⁴

Unfortunately, for Th. Muivah, Isak Swu and their men, the so called 'reactionary traitors' were looking for instructions from across the border from India. Huska Sumi ex. MLA testified this stating, "the accordists did not have the courage to execute the two leaders and sent message across asking for instructions."¹⁹⁵ Thus, the allegation that the pro-accordists based in 'Eastern Nagaland' (upper Chindwin) were mesmerized and guided by their masters from across the border in India is well established by a few vital evidences.

It is ironic but not surprising that the Lao national assembly was held right after one month of the 2nd Pangsha peace talk¹⁹⁶ where the two main signatories of the Shillong Accord - Kave Yalley and Ramyo Zimik represented. Over and above, the statement of Kenneth Kerhuo (who by then was working very closely with the Shillong Accord signatories) conspicuously throws light on the alleged tacit understanding between them and the pro-Accord elements across the border. Referring to the reorganisation of the NNC and FGN he stated: "the new move might lead to a more appreciative reappraisal of the current peace talks in its true perspective...something good is expected only

194. Supra, What is the Future of the Shillong Accord ?

195. New Civil set-up of Underground Nagas, The Assam Tribune, (Guwahati), March 26, 1979.

196. Idem.

after their reconstruction is over."¹⁹⁷ This explicitly suggests the good rapport they maintained with the pro-Accord group across the border in Myanmar. No wonder, the first news about the new move was announced in Kohima by Kave Yalley and Ramyo Zimik after their return from Pangsha talk.¹⁹⁸

Meanwhile, the Lao national assembly elected S.S. Khaplang as the President, Thepuse Venuh Chakhesang as the Vice President of the FGN. 'Brig.' Thungbo became the chief of the Naga Army and a few others were elected as Kiloners (Ministers) and Tatars (Members of the Parliament).¹⁹⁹ Thus, the reconstitution of the NNC and FGN was a calculated attempt by the pro-Accordists to flush out en masse all opposition to the Shillong Accord. But that never happened. Instead, as soon as S. S. Khaplang assumed the office of the President of the FGN, he came to meet Th. Muivah and Isak Swu and the former gave a detailed explanation of the possible peril from the Accord and the conspiracy of the martial law viewing it as an attempt to eliminate the true nationalists and surrender to India. When S.S. Khaplang was thoroughly convinced of the whole issue, he accused the national assembly of the NNC/FGN of dictating terms and considered the Government formed as altogether illegal and unconstitutional as it did not carry the mandate of the people.²⁰⁰ Then later, after the formation of the National Socialist Council of Nagaland

197. Idem.

198. Heimi, op.cit., p. 6.

Vide 'Maj.' Ramkathing, p. 2.

199. The Nagaland Journal, June 23, 1994.

200. President Federal Government Declaration Oking, January 29, 1980 (later published) The Nagaland Journal, June 23, 1994.

(NSCN), S. S. Khaplang clarified why he accepted the
Presidentship saying:

If you (people), however, ask me why I participated in the meeting and accepted the office of the President, I must say that before me there is always the freedom of my Nagaland and the cause of my people. I must save them from the unscrupulously dangerous state of affairs. Therefore to save the situation, I ventured and participated in the proceedings of the meeting and accepted the position they offered me.²⁰¹

Counter measures

When S.S. Khaplang realised that he had been deceived, he parted company with the Accord group. Then as a President of the FGN, he issued an order to eliminate all those responsible for imposition of martial law and the Shillong Accordists for their rapacity to impose the Shillong Accord on the Nagas.²⁰² Eventually, the counter move was mounted under S. S. Khaplang's order and 'Brig.' Thungbo was authorized to execute the plan. As per the directive, several persons including civil officers, army officers and JCOs were executed. Some of them were given forced discharge.²⁰³ When all this happened, Th. Muivah and Isak Swu were still under arrest. Hence, the much publicised allegation that it was Th. Muivah who gave the order to eliminate the NNC/FGN leaders (Accord group) is proved wrong. Admittedly, Th. Muivah said: "the counter-crop was mounted by Khaplang and in the process all the execution of the ring leaders were carried out,

201. Ramkathing, loc.cit.

202. Written Interview of Th. Muivah, loc.cit.

Vide 'Maj.' Ramkathing, A Brief Account of Martial Law.

203. Idem.

that is, before we were released from the custody."²⁰⁴ However, the counter measures were later endorsed by Isak Swu and Th. Muivah under NNC office. To the anti-Accord group, the accordists were nothing less than 'reactionary traitors' and hence "all of them have committed national apostasy and have come short of the glory of Nagaland."²⁰⁵

When the anti-Accord group learnt concretely that the Accord group had actually decided to physically liquidate them and surrender to the Government of India for which a blue-print arrangement was made,²⁰⁶ the counter move became inevitable since the question was one of 'do-or-die'. Thus, the People' Council of Nagaland (Tatar Hoho) stated: "In spite of long forbearance and forgiveness of them by the national leaders, whose lives they took for mere stuff, this clique relentlessly attempted to force a total capitulation on the nation. Patriots could not wait to be slaughtered; they had to strike first and do so to the finish."²⁰⁷

The in-fighting which commenced with the staging of the military takeover developed into a full-scale conflict. It was a fiery situation where Nagas were hunting for Nagas and both sides suffered immensely. Though militarily, the hard-core section was successful in checkmating the pro-Accord group, it was done through immense sacrifice. On the other hand, the Accord group was doing better in propaganda and winning people's support (initially) because of its tacit understanding and support of the

204. Polarisation, op.cit., p. 20.

205. Written Interview of Th. Muivah, loc.cit.

206. Statement of the Peoples' Council of Nagaland, The Nagaland Journal, June 23, 1994.

207. Polarisation, op.cit., p. 19.

Government of India, the Nagaland state government, and the Nagaland Peace Council. As a matter of fact, they collectively became one consolidated force within the framework of the Constitution of India as against the determined lots of the Naga nationalists who were committed to continue the struggle inspite of bitterest pressures. Evidently, the press reportings were in most cases biased, tilting in favour of the Accord group. The NSCN statement alleged that "all local propaganda machineries like the Ura Mail, Nagaland Times, Oking Times have also been set in motion to carry the unrestrained malicious view against (them)".²⁰⁸ Likewise, "all the Christian leaders were also employed in collusion with the NNC, to whip up the public into a frenzy against us."²⁰⁹

It is in this context that the hard-core section of the Naga nationalists who denounced the Shillong Accord were branded 'Communists' (a term considered as an anti-dote to Christianity particularly in Nagaland), with the ostensible purpose of fanning emotion among the Nagas, majority of whom were Christians by faith and in fact it was found to be so effective in mesmerizing Naga public. For instance, the Ura Mail used terms such as 'terror troops of Muivah-Isak group', 'communist militiamen' etc.²¹⁰ To this the NSCN leaders retorted : "they called us criminals' and branded as, 'Communists' and organized 'Christ soldiers' to eliminate the patriots who were indeed for Christ."²¹¹ The worst was in Khiumniungan area where the public

208. Written Interview of Th. Muivah, op.cit., p. 6.

209. Ura Mail, September 10, 1980.

210. Statement of the NSCN, op.cit., p. 9.

211. Written Interview of Isak Chishi Swu, loc.cit.

were allegedly misinformed by the propaganda of the Shillong Accord group that Isak-Muivah group had become 'Communist.' It was here that a number of about two dozen Isak-Muivah supporters were massacred by the accordists along with the public. They were shouted down with the slogan 'Communists are coming'. The Church leaders in this area too worked hard in spreading this false rumour.²¹²

The Shillong Accord group also brought out (in a booklet form) a list of atrocities allegedly committed by anti-Accord group (as part of the campaign against them) including killing of pastor and burning down of churches. The document reported that later group carried out 'an operation of man slaughter, pillage and plunder...in the Khiumniungan country.'²¹³ Isak Chishi Swu totally negate the allegations and gave a detailed explanation and reiterated that the killing was started by the Accord group. He writes:

Major Nihokhu Chishi Swu, who was serving at Thenungan village with his wife as teacher and Pastor was murdered in cold blood. Lt. Col. Khutovi Swu and his boys who were coming from the West were also murdered by Thenungan village. They also killed Major Satnam and his boys and Sergeant Tokhai and his boys in the month of December 1979. But these incidents were not known to us. So in the month of January, 1980, Lt. Colonel Ihoshe Tuccu was sent to Khiangan (sic) region to call their regional authorities to come to attend the National Assembly. At that time the Accordists along with the Kiamniungan public attacked Lt. Colonel Ihoshe Tuccu's command party at Choke village shouting 'communists are coming' branding us communists and spreading much rumours through the Church leaders at Noklak Khamniungan Mission field. On hearing the

212. Report of Naga Political Affairs, op.cit., p. 8.

213. Written Interview of Isak Chishi Swu, loc.cit.

killings of so many of our people, action party was sent to punish the culprit under the command of Brigadier Thumbo and action was taken upon few villages like Thenungan, Chouke and Heikum. When the whole village was burnt, three churches caught fire and burnt. Action was also taken upon the killers. But no Pastor was killed. Action was taken upon one assistant Pastor of Than village who became the enemy agent. One travelling pastor Mr. Khumung by name was killed by Burmese troops at Chinkiu village while he was on preaching tour, but the Accord markers put the blame on us. 214

Similarly. Mr. Th. Muivah's statement concerning this matter endorsed the aforesaid statement of Mr. Isak Chishi Swu. Th. Muivah stated:

The Naga army and the people living by then in Khiamniungan area at once identified themselves openly with the accordists in spite of their steadfast claim to the national principles. In this connection, it is good to know the Khiumniungans of the time. They were good natured but raw. Most of them were simpleton. they were easily deceived with lie for truth. They simply didn't consider the probable consequences of their irresponsibility. Thirteen of our men were sent in two batches to call those Khiumniungans and other national workers who were there in the Khiumniungan region for discussion and understanding. But all of them were butchered which we did not know until a month after. Moreover, all our men without exception who were stationed with them and those who came from the West, were slaughtered, about fifteen of them. After that it was also discovered that Maj. Yamsuthung was already won over by Yalley and Ramyo on the promise that he would be favoured with the position of a battalion commander in "Naga Regiment" if he could manage to come out with substantial amount of boys and arms. To that treacherous end Yamsuthung was busy collecting arms and boys which Khiumniungans in the service did not know at all. He was done away with in time. That was taken for an act of hatred. They reacted with a vengeance against anyone

214. Written Interview of Th. Muivah, loc.cit.

belonging to our fold. Driven beyond forebearance an operation party was despatched. Our men were shouted at as traitors and communists. They were completely brainwashed with false concoction about us.²¹⁵

The NSCN document in a strongly worded statement later accused the Accord group for starting the killing of their cadres in collaboration with the Government of India and the Myanmarese troops. Thus they stated:

"Phizo's ... troops taking protection from both the Indian and Burmese (Myanmarese) troops at once started killing loyal Nagas, chopping off heads. Surely, Phizo and his fellow-traitors have sown already the seed of hatred and massacre."²¹⁶

As a result, there was to be no meeting point between the two and the impossibility for unity became the hard fact for the Naga nationalists.

Solemn declaration of the merger of the ENNC and NNC

Shortly, the inevitable did happen. Till then, there were two Naga nationalist organizations functioning parallel to each other i.e. the Eastern Naga National Council headed by SS.Khaplang and the Naga National Council headed by A.Z. Phizo. Thus, significantly, a solemn declaration of merger was made on 29th January, 1980 between the ENNC under SS Khaplang and NNC under the leadership of Isak and Muivah. The declaration reads:

Whereas, the inseparable oneness and the single-whole entity solemnly declared on this historic day, the 29th day of January 1980

215. Statement of the NSCN, op.cit., p. 19.

216. Solemn Declaration of the Merger of the Eastern Naga National Council with the Naga National Council, The Nagaland Journal, June 23, 1994.

anno domini, that the Eastern Naga National Council, is merged with the Naga National Council, the only authentic political Council of the people of the whole Nagaland.²¹⁷

This development was of great significance indeed for the nationalists and of course for the Nagas in general. It is significant for two reasons. firstly, it fulfilled the long awaited historic merger of the two premier organisations of Naga homeland on either side of the international border. Secondly, the effort of Thuingaleng Muivah, Isak Chishi Swu and their close associates for reorganizing and strengthening the NNC and FGN was realised. It is worth noting that hitherto, though Muivah and Isak and their supporters did criticize the wrong policies of A.Z. Phizo and his enigmatic silence, they did not move to depose him from the Presidentship. This fact is evident from the document of the merger declaration and other allied documents.

This merger was however a prelude to the formation of a separate organisation to channelise public opinion against the Shillong Accord to fight against the inertia and defeatist mentality of the NNC leadership and to promote the cause of Naga nationalism. Tajenyuba Ao writes, "Since 1975, Isak and Muivah waited patiently for five long years, inspite of grave situation and being subjected to all kinds of dangers and when every sensible approach made for reconciliation was rejected"²¹⁸, they formed 'National Socialist Council of Nagaland' (NSCN) on 31st January, 1980.²¹⁹ This was followed by the declaration of the

217. Ao, op.cit., p. 301.

218. Free Nagaland Manifesto, op.cit., (Preface).

219. Declaration of the Interim Government of the People's Republic of Nagaland (later published), The Nagaland Journal, June 23, 1994.

interim Government of the Peoples' Republic of Nagaland (GPRN) in February 2, 1980.²²⁰ The leaders of the combined Naga forces across India's frontiers cryptically declared: "The Naga National Council has failed."²²¹

Following the formation of the National Socialist Council of Nagaland in 1980, the NNC (Accord group) launched the biggest assault against the former on 27th September 1980.²²² According to the NSCN sources the NNC in collaboration with the Indian-Myanmarese forces launched a joint attack on the Naga Army operation Headquarters at Langnok killing many Naga national workers.²²³ Throwing more light on this attack, Th. Muivah detailed:

They attacked our post at Langnok in which we suffered heavy casualties. NNC of all shades gloated over it including those who were slain just before the operation and those who felt victim to the Langnok incident. We lost 72 with almost the same casualties on their side. We could have crushed them a great deal had it not been by the Indian and Burmese operations during the time against us.²²⁴

Meanwhile in the early eighties the Accord group made another attempt to decimate the newly established NSCN by forming a local militia called 'People's Militia of Nagaland (PMN) in tacit understanding with the Government of India. This time, the nature of their understanding and collaboration with the Indian

220. Free Nagaland Manifesto, op.cit., p. 1.

221. Who Murder NNC ? (Pamphlet) (Published by GPRN, Oking, 27th September, 1988), p. 2.

222. Idem.

223. Written Interview of Th. Muivah, loc.cit.

224. NSCN Activities and Counter Activities (In) Naga National Rights and its Movement, (Published by the Publicity and Information Department, Naga National Council (Khodao), 1993), p. 20.

security forces was more overt and glaring without any attempt to conceal it. Thus for the first time, the Accord group were openly identifying with the security forces at least in its offensive against the hard-core section of the Naga nationalists. It was strongly alleged that Ramyo Zimik, Phanitphang Mung and P. T. Kavichusa were the main persons who organised this militia. Even the involvement of Vamuzo former Chief Minister of Nagaland state was also alleged.²²⁵

This outfit for quite some years, spread terror among the villagers in Ukhrul region under the watchful eye of the Government of India. Heavy taxes were levied specially in the area which had pronounced pro-NSCN stand. Thus it was aimed at discouraging the villagers from close identification with the NSCN.²²⁶ The HQ of the militia was Leimakhong and Jakhama which was also Brigade HQ of the Mountain Division of the Indian Army.

A Critical Analysis of Shillong Accord

The signing of the Shillong Accord did bring about normalcy for a brief period. The political prisoners were released unconditionally and most of them were rehabilitated. The Nagas in general enjoyed peace after a series of fierce fighting and suffering. The Government of India suspended some of the Unlawful Activities Act and many Naga leaders were allowed to move freely to convince the Naga public and the Naga army and civilian cadres who were still in the jungle hide-outs. Later the Federal

225. Tarunkumar, Th., New Rebel Outfit Extorting Taxes from Villages, The Telegraph, 14 November, 1985.

226. Horam, Naga Insurgency, op.cit., p. 179.

Government of Nagaland convened an emergency meeting at Dihoma, where other members, the President of the FGN, Zashi Huire, Home Minister Biseto Medom and the Chief of the Army Staff "Lt. General" Vijalie Metha, were present. Meetings were held in camera and they endorsed the agreement reached in Shillong.²²⁷ Unfortunately, in spite of the frantic effort, the Accord group could not convince many Nagas about the efficacy of the Shillong Accord. Eventually, criticism and condemnation poured in against the Shillong Accord making it a controversial agreement.

As a matter of fact, right from the beginning, the fate of the Shillong Accord was uncertain and was destined to be controversial. When the NNC and FGN representatives signed the Shillong Accord, Veniyi Rakhu (a representative) refused to sign in spite of the attempt to persuade him. He walked out stating that he would have nothing to do with this agreement until Phizo gave the clearance from London or Muivah from across the border.²²⁸

In a way that reaction from one of the representatives was not a good start. Hence as a precautionary step, the details of the Shillong Accord were withheld from the public for about twenty days. Thus, the secrecy with which the entire accord was

227. Nibedon, op.cit, p. 339.

However, when the NNC were distinctively separated into two groups, i.e., anti accord and pro accord group, he (Phizo) openly identified with the latter group. Perhaps, the silence of Phizo which was propagated by the accord group as Phizo not objecting it deceived him too. (Written Interview of 'Brig.' V.S. Atem, p. 11).

228. Ibid., p. 240.

effected left many doubts in Naga minds. Many in the underground ranks were unhappy at the swift nature of the accord.²²⁹

Before taking up the general critical analysis of the Shillong Accord, it will be worth studying first of all the NSCN appraisal of the Accord which will indeed help one to understand and study the matter objectively.

NSCN Appraisal of the Shillong Accord

The NSCN leadership considered Shillong Accord as a 'total capitulation'. They did not agree with the other NNC leaders that 'it was a kind of process'²³⁰ and retorted: "How could total capitulation to the Indian Government be a process to safeguard the sovereignty of Nagaland? How could the burial of a man deep into the earth be a process to bring him back to life?"²³¹

The NSCN leaders did not agree with the NNC and FGN leaders that it was impossible to resist 'the colossal invading might of India and Burma (Myanmar), and that some sort of settlement by peaceful means should be arrived at. To them the issue was not a contest of strength but was that of upholding our historical right against the aggressive forces.'²³² At the same time, referring to the NNC leaders and particularly the signatories of the Accord, they stated:

They always over estimated the enemy in spite of his (India) practical inability to crush us in the past twenty five years and made fear-ridden overtures here and there which

229. NSCN Polarisation, op.cit., p. 6.

Vide Yanthan's Interview, p. 2.

230. Idem.

231. Free Nagaland Manifesto, op.cit., pp. 8-9.

232. Idem.

they considered expedient at the time when Nagas were worst situated. This nature of unrealistic and ill-timed approaches exposed our helplessness to the adversary. He had got

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what he wanted.

The NSCN leadership is particularly critical of the perception of the NNC leaders and those who signed the Shillong Accord. They strongly believed that the signatories of the Accord had ill intentions. As Th. Muivah said: "high handedness and self-inflation carried them away." The Free Nagaland Manifesto

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vehemently stated: "your philosophy is that-let it be, even though everything of the nation is lost, I am saved."

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Referring to the short sightedness of their action the NSCN raised the question that "if they were concerned about national fate...they should have waited for us before the commitment, for they knew that we were returning by the same winter(1975)."

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Th. Muivah also writes that the Shillong Accord could have been averted had the signatories exercised slight restraint. Thus, he writes, "It would have been far more prudent if they closed down themselves without jumping into that kind of commitment. In that case history won't have blamed them and the nation would have been spared from the shame of the Accord."

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To the NSCN the Accord was in a sense a blessing in disguise in that 'imposters, casuists, demagogues, opportunists, the destroyer of the integrity of Nagaland and unity of the people are sidelined from the national trust.'

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This has given them

233. Free Nagaland Manifesto, op.cit., p. 113.

234. Written Interview of Th. Muivah, op.cit., p. 1.

235. Free Nagaland manifesto, loc.cit.

236. Written Interview of Th. Muivah, op.cit., p. 14.

237. Idem.

238. Ibid., p. 2.

strength and confidence and made them firm in their belief that 'the graves and the Accord are not end of the world of Nagas.'²³⁹

The NSCN leaders thus, considered the Shillong Accord as nothing less than 'total capitulation', from 'Kuknalim'* to 'Jaihind'.²⁴⁰ However, as a matter of fact, the NSCN has successfully outmanoeuvred their opponents so far and managed to keep the Naga issue alive for a right settlement.

Dictated Peace

The manner in which the accord was negotiated, seriously limited the degree of good faith and capacity to negotiate the terms honourably. Right from the commencement of the talk, it was an one sided affair. As already stated, many a time, the NNC and FGN representatives were threatened that the 'safe conduct' issued by the Government would be withdrawn on this or that account. M. Aram a member of the Liaison Committee even felt that the period of safe conduct given, renewing every one week was not adequate.²⁴¹

Secondly, the negotiation was carried out hastily without giving any time for the Naga representatives to consult their rank and file. Later Ramyo Zimik one of the signatories to the Accord lamentedly admitted that "they were not even allowed to

239. Idem.

* Kuknalim - means 'long live the land'. This is Naga nationalist mode of greeting each other and is used by all camps as epigraph in any official communication.

240. Free Nagaland Manifesto, loc.cit.

241. Ramunny, op.cit, p. 347.

(Zopianga, Advisor to the Governor, warned the NNC/FGN representatives at one time that 20th October, 1975 would be the last date for 'safe conduct').

communicate with their colleagues,"²⁴² The reason was quite apparent. The Government of India wanted to handle the problem before the return of the Alee Command. There was also the apprehension that the Nagas flirting with China could exacerbate the already strained relationship between the Chinese and the Indian Government,²⁴³ a fact echoed in the Governor's assessment which ruled out delaying the talks between the Liaison Committee and the NNC/FGN representatives stating that "There was a risk of China gang returning.... It was not a matter of weeks, it was a matter of days for them to decide."²⁴⁴ And of course, there was the fear that the Naga struggle could spread discontentment in sensitive areas of entire North-East region.

Lastly, even after having the Accord signed between the two parties, the tendency to dictate the terms continued. At the first instance, when arrangement was made by the Liaison Committee along with the NNC/FGN officers to send a delegation comprising of the Naga leaders Ramyo Zimik and Kave Yalley and a representative of the Nagaland Peace Council Kenneth Kerhuo to visit London to appraise A.Z. Phizo of the Shillong Accord and to persuade him to accept the same, the Government of India laid down five specific conditions. They are :

- (1) The ex-underground leaders confirm in writing that the Delegation would be going with the purpose of persuading Phizo to accept the Shillong Agreement.
- (2) The Phizo can be permitted to return to India only after he explicitly accepts the Shillong Agreement, and wishes to return as an Indian citizen.

242. Written Interview of Ramyo Zimik, loc.cit.

243. Horam, op.cit., p. 180.

244. Kouzakete, loc.cit.

Vide Ramunny, The World of Nagas, pp. 343-344.

- (3) That if Phizo does not accept the Shillong Agreement explicitly, in writing, the ex-underground leaders would proceed to formulate the issues under Clause 111.
- (4) That...if the delegation failed in its mission, it would be given wide publicity.
- (5) The Delegation's stay in London should not exceed two weeks²⁴⁵

Herein the element of dictation was explicitly apparent. In the second instance, the same nature of dictation was repeated. The 'Pangsha Peace talks' was arranged by the signatories of the Shillong Accord in collaboration with the Nagaland Peace Council to appraise the Naga forces across the border of the changed political situation and persuade them to accept the Shillong Accord. Here the Government of India laid down some specific conditions which were not made known to the public.²⁴⁶

Over and above, the worse was still the incidents where even a peace emissary was killed by the Indian Security forces. In the first incident, a 22 member group sent by the Nagaland Peace Council (with prior information to the Authorities) to establish contact with the Naga nationalists camping across the border was ambushed and one of its member was killed by the Indian security force and the rest were arrested.²⁴⁷

The second incident involved Th. Muivah's men. Nirmal Nibedon reported that three of Muivah's men were nabbed by the Indian security forces near Pangsha on September 26, 1979 while coming with messages for Kave Yalley and Ramyo Zimik.²⁴⁸ The

 245. Chief Secretary's letter to Rev. Longri Ao, Liaison Committee (Confidential) (In) Whither the Nagaland Peace Council ? by Kouzakete, op.cit., pp. 50-51.

246. Ura Mail, August 2, 1978 (Editorial).

247. Economic and Political Weekly, (April 1, 1978), p. 562.

248. Nibedon; loc.cit.

Government of India's policy was to divide and weaken the Naga nationalists and the Accord did achieve this and sharpened the differences in the NNC/FGN. Even the Naga political leaders openly admitted the success of the Government of India, while analysing the failure of the Naga movement during the NNC time. For Government of India, it was "a splendid catch hauled ashore."²⁴⁹

Against this background, the Shillong Accord certainly was a dictated agreement. Thus, two human rights activists write : "The Accord was signed by those Naga leaders who were virtually prisoners of the Government"²⁵⁰ of India. In the same line, a prominent ex.MLA, Huska Sumi also affirmingly said: "The representative of the underground organisations were virtually made to sign on the dotted lines."²⁵¹

A Short Term Solution

Another visible loophole of the Shillong Accord was that it was not meant for ensuring any permanent (long term) solution of the problem. This is evident from the following points:

First of all, the representatives of the Government of India were more worried about the immediate disarming of the federal Army rather than rightly settling the problem. The Governor, L.P. Singh cautioned the Liaison Committee and representatives of the Government of India that "the bringing over of arms should be

249. Free Nagaland Manifesto, loc.cit.

250. Luithui, Luingam and Haksar, Nandita, Nagaland File, A Question of Human Rights, (Lancer International, Delhi, 1984), p. 37.

251. Sumi, loc.cit.

handled with great speed."²⁵² This was further corroborated by S.C. Dev, who wrote : "We continued...with our strategy to get the maximum possible surrender of men with arms and ammunitions."²⁵³

Thus, the subject of disarming or laying down of arms by the Nagas was topmost in the mindset agenda of the representatives of the Government of India. In fact, the Government wanted to work out this 'surrendering' of arms even if the talk failed. This was well indicated in his instruction to both the advisers.²⁵⁴

Secondly, the Shillong Accord obviously was signed keeping in view the Alee Command under Th.Muivah. though it may not be the sole factor, yet certainly it was a moving factor. The Governor's own words admitted this fact. Later systematic public campaign against the Alee Command was carried out for its connection with Communist China and Th. Muivah and Isak Chishi Swu were suspected of trying to inject communism to the Nagas. The Government of India subtly and meticulously utilized the services of the Nagaland Peace Council in this endeavour. Even M. Aram informed Government that "they (NPC) had mobilised public opinion"²⁵⁵ against the China group. Longri Ao president of the NPC as well as the Executive Secretary of Nagaland Baptist Church Council (CBCC) came quite handy specially in their campaign

252. Minutes of the Meeting of the Governor with the members of the Liaison Committee at Raj Bhawan, Shillong on 5th September, 1975. (In) Whither the Nagaland Peace Council ? by Kouzakete.

253. Dev, op.cit., p. 112.

254. Ramunny, op.cit., p. 352.

255. Ibid., p. 23.

against the Chinese connection. Thus, even after the Accord the church became quite vocal against Nagas seeking Chinese aid.

Thirdly, it was quite obvious that the Shillong Accord could never be the final solution because it did not satisfy the Nagas except providing a temporary relief. The essence of the Shillong Accord is a climb-down from the 'Peace Mission' proposals where the Nagas could decide to be a participant in the Union of India and mutually settle the terms and conditions for that purpose. but quite contrary to that, the Shillong Accord explicitly pre-conditioned the Naga acceptance of the Constitution of India and settlement within it. Over and above, the representatives of the NNC and FGN were not permitted to consult the people and the main leaders of the movement.

Thus, within no time after the signing of the Accord reaction against it poured in. Th. Muivah and the Alee Command repudiated the Accord in a strong term.²⁵⁶ they were particularly bitter because the signatories knew that the Alee Command was returning that very winter and could have waited for them. Then Wung (Tangkhul) region of the FGN also condemned it²⁵⁷ followed by Konyak and Khiamniungan regions, respectively.²⁵⁸ Over and above, the President of the NNC A.Z. Phizo avoided direct comment on the Accord and termed the NPC as a 'Killer Council'.²⁵⁹ Within a short span of time there were several attempts to infiltrate and join the Naga forces across the border under Th. Muivah's command. For instance, a good number of Tangkhul Naga graduates

256. Maxwell, loc.cit.

257. Interview of Bertil Lintner with Th. Muivah, loc.cit.

258. Written Interview of 'Brig.' V.S. Atem, op.cit., p. 6.

259. Written Interview of Khodao Yanthan, op.cit., p. 2.

crossed the border to fortify Th.Muivah's group.²⁶⁰ Another group of educated Nagas from Nagaland secretly made a trip to Lhasa to seek foreign aid.²⁶¹ Since then the fate of the Shillong Accord was hanging in the balance and hence future settlement of the Naga issue also could not take place as per the provisions of the Accord.

A Controversial Accord

The Shillong Accord can also be rightly characterized as the most controversial Accord ever signed between the Government of India and the Nagas. In fact, the Accord is so controversial that till date some of its mysteries are not solved. Therefore, a brief highlight of certain points will amply help one to conclude that the Shillong Accord could hardly be free from controversy.

Firstly, the locus standi of the Liaison Committee as a neutral body or as a third party comes under heavy criticism. The Liaison Committee was formed by the churches in Nagaland with a view to bringing the two warring parties i.e. the Government of India and the Federal Government of Nagaland to a peaceful and meaningful dialogue for settlement of the Naga problem. However, the political stand taken by them raised some doubts about their bonafide. The Liaison Committee even issued white paper underlying:

1. The integrity of India cannot be jeopardized;
2. The NPC shall oppose any secessionist move; and

260. Nibedon, op.cit., p. 347.

261. Ibid., p. 345.

3. Whatever the demand of the Nagas, they should not be upto that stand.²⁶²

The Liaison Committee's eagerness to cooperate with the Governor was clear from the fact that on September 5, 1975 they expressed a desire to go to the border and fight the returning Chinese trained Naga armies so that 'Federal' officials at home were 'cowed down' and did not speak 'Independence' anymore.²⁶³ Over and above, in a special meeting with the Governor, L. Lungalang, a member of the Liaison Committee suggested a number of times that "if the talks did not proceed properly it should be called off."²⁶⁴

Hence, such evidences unfortunately undermined their credibility as a neutral or impartial body which is a general rule everywhere concerning the mediator or the third party.

Secondly, the manner in which the Accord was negotiated and implemented did create an impression among many of the Nagas that it was not an agreement as such but a 'surrender document'. For any critic of the Accord, the representatives of the NNC and FGN 'were virtually prisoners of the Government'. It is true that the Government of India did carry out the negotiation in a stealth and hush-hush manner. The provisions of the Accord were not made public until the surrender of arms by the Federal Armymen was well secured.

262. Vakha, M., NPC and the Indo-Naga Political Problem, The Nagaland Post, (Dimapur), September 10, 1993.

263. Vakha, loc.cit.
Vide Kouzakete, Whither the Nagaland Peace Council ?
loc.cit.

264. Kouzakete, loc.cit.

Thirdly, another controversy of the Accord is connected with the wording of the Accord itself. Though the Government of India deliberately used the term 'representatives of the underground organisations' (meaning to imply that the Government of India does not recognise the NNC, FGN or Federal Army)²⁶⁵, it turned out to be a matter of debate and gave room to the NNC to make an attempt to back out of the Accord (having realised people's antipathy only) campaigning that NNC, FGN or FA are not underground organisations and hence they are not committed legally to the Accord. Thus, the NNC General Secretary P. T. Kevichusa declared at the funeral service of late A.Z. Phizo : "Besides the cease-fire agreement of 1964, there is no other Agreement, Treaty or Accord entered into between the Government of India and the Federal Government of Nagaland."²⁶⁶ Then the pertinent question arises : Was the NNC really not involved in the Accord as pointed out by the NNC and FGN leaders? Absolutely not. The representatives of the NNC and FGN signed the Accord as they were duly authorised by the President of the FGN²⁶⁷ Zashi Huire. As a matter of fact, the representatives of the NNC-FGN had given a commitment in writing prior to the signing of the Accord that "they have the authority and their decision will be

265. Ramunny, Murkot, (Rejoinder), The Shillong Accord Impasse (In) The Nagaland Journal, September, 1991.

266. Phizo Souvenir Published by the Funeral Organising Committee of A.Z. Phizo, April, 1991, p. 17.

However, it must be noted here that NNC's stand on the Accord and its subtle shift of policy was made known only in the later part of the 80s. Earlier NNC and FGN totally stood by the Accord which led to a lot of bloodshed and the emergence of the NSCN.

267. Ramunny, op.cit., p. 352.

accepted by their organisation."²⁶⁸ Over and above, Zashi Huire, the President of the FGN and Viyalli Metha, Chief of the Naga Army gave in writing that they would support any settlement arrived at by both the parties. Further, Rev. L. Souhie Mahsi writes, "But all of the NNC and Federal leaders were involved in its implementation." Even Khodao Yanthan, an important Executive Council Member of the NNC and a long time associate of A.Z. Phizo in London, divulged hard facts about the Accord and stated that NNC was involved through Zashie Huire, President of the FGN. On the other hand, Zashi Huire, President of the FGN (now Adino faction) in an interview explicitly maintained that "the Accord did not include the NNC. It is holding (sic) by the Federal Naga Army only."²⁷¹ Phizo was somewhat inclined, though not officially, to shift the blame of the Accord from the NNC. This is evident from his private letter to some national workers. He wrote : "Shillong Accord is the word of Federal."²⁷² It must be noted that when the NNC and FGN signed the Accord accepting the Constitution of India and when its armed wing completely laid down arms and were rehabilitated by the Government of India, it is absurd to say that the NNC or the FGN was not involved. One cannot separate the NNC and the FGN. They are parts of the same national organisation. In fact, the President, the Vice-President the Ministers, other Federal representatives, Regional

268. Mhasi, Rev. L.S., A Perspective of Naga India Political Affair (In) Nagaland Times, April 6, 1994.

269. Dev, loc.cit.

270. Written Interview of Khodao Yanthan, loc.cit.

271. Written Interview of Zashi Huire, President FGN (Adino Faction), (conducted by the Scholar, August 11, 1983).

272. Phizo's Letter to the Naga National Workers, March 3, 1983.

authorities etc. of the FGN constitute the NNC. There could be no NNC without FGN. Hence, the question of NNC not being involved in the Accord is baseless.

Finally, perhaps, the controversy relating to the Shillong Accord has to do with the quiescence repose of A.Z. Phizo. His silence over the whole issue sparked off a major controversy among the rank and file of the Naga nationalist and did cause terrible bloodshed. F.G. Bailey rightly pointed out that "He (leader) must decide about the consequences of action or no-action upon his political credit. The price of no-action might be an escalating dispute within his own team, which will eventually destroy it, or it might be destruction by an enemy or by some natural force, if steps are not taken to avoid this fate."²⁷³

A.Z. Phizo's precise reason for his refusal to either confirm or to condemn the Accord perhaps will never be known. Until his last, he evaded the main issue. However, much later (more than a decade after the signing of the Accord) in view of the mounting public pressure Phizo who still then was the President of the NNC issued a statement in a casual manner which did not imply holding any definite stand. He stated that "I have nothing to do with the Accord"²⁷⁴ and "It is a useless thing" and in the same breath he also said : "If they (people) understand it they will not talk about Shillong Accord. Why are people so worried about the Shillong Accord? The Shillong Accord should not have taken place. But what happened, happened. I don't need to

273. Bailey, F. G., Stratagems and Spoils, A Social Anthropology of Politics, (Oxford, basil Blackwell, UK, 1970), p. 70.

274. The Naga National Rights and Movement, op.cit, p. 242.

know further."²⁷⁵ Thus, one could clearly see inconsistency and lack of leadership in A.Z. Phizo's manner of handling the controversial issue. No wonder, the Accord group of the NNC took full advantage of this. Whatever they did against Muivah, Isak and their men like military takeover, martial law declaration, arresting prominent leaders, harassment or even live attempts on them were all done in the name of A.Z. Phizo. Thus, Th. Muivah stated: "The challenge was dangerous since there was a clear attempt to justify in the name of Phizo and NNC."²⁷⁶ To the anti-Accord group it was the most painful state of affairs where they were caught in between Phizo's lack of leadership and the Accord group (at home) justifying everything they did in Phizo's name. Over and above, A.Z. Phizo failure to give direction (despite repeated request) during the critical period aggravated the situation.

Criticism also poured in even from the NNC activists. For instance M. Vakha vehemently stated:

Phizo miserably failed to denounce the Accord. His telling "I have nothing to do with the Accord" is not enough while the world is watching us closely. Besides, his meeting with the Shillong Accord signatories without the slightest hesitation appears to be very ugly before the world.²⁷⁷

275. Phizo's tape recorded message, Nagaland Observer Weekly, (Kohima), February 12, 1987 (An editorial write-up remarked : Unfortunately it amounts to a case of having a lot of limbs without being able to recognise the body).

276. Written Interview of Th. Muivah, loc.cit.

277. The Naga National Right and Movement, loc.cit.

Another strong critic of Phizo, Wheha Kesen, former Ato Kilonser (Prime Minister) of Federal Government of Nagaland in a strongly worded letter to Phizo wrote:

We have taken the lives of so many people who proposed to accept the Indian Yehzabo (Constitution). but this time you did not condemn the Shillong Accord of 1975 which accepted the Indian Constitution. The world did not hear from you even a single word denouncing the Accord...Besides, you have been cooperating with the Shillong Accord group, understandably and refused the true national workers...Have you changed to another Phizo when the Shillong Accord was signed ?²⁷⁸

According to Khodao Yanthan who stayed in London with Phizo till his death, the refusal to condemn the Shillong Accord was because of Phizo's tacit understanding with Ramyo Zimik and Kave Valley (Phizo's younger brother).²⁷⁹ On the other hand, according to Ramyo Zimik, a close associate of Phizo and a signatory to the Accord, the reason of the latter's refusal to condemn the Accord was "I (Phizo) have been lying in a low profile for so long in order not to embarrass the Indian Government, the gesture of which should be understood by the Indian politicians that I am the best friend of India."²⁸⁰ This lack of any clear perspective was also questioned by the Chief of the Naga Army, GPRN, 'Brig.' V.S. Atem, thus writes:

In the past (Phizo) used to shout down or denounce in the strongest term whenever anyone deviated from the official stand of the NNC. For instance, Theyu Sakhrie and clique, Ms. Gaandinliu and gang, General Kaito and the Revolutionary Government of Nagaland and even R. Suisa for his proposal.²⁸¹

278. Ibid., p. 245.

279. Written Interview of Khodao Yanthan, loc.cit.

280. Written Interview of Zimik Ramyo, op.cit., p. 5.

281. Written Interview of 'Brig.' V.S. Atem, loc.cit.

The chief concluded saying, "This schizophrenic behaviour of Phizo had caused a lot of confusion"²⁸² among the rank and file of NNC/FGN.

Thus, it will not be far fetched to conclude that the Shillong Accord was indeed a controversial one. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, even the so-called ardent believers in the Accord slowly attempted to back out of it by explaining away. For instance, a prominent signatory to the Accord Ramyo Zimik who later escaped to US and campaigned against the Government of India in one of his campaign tour reiterated the stand of the Nagas and stated: "Nagaland is not a part of India. It has never been part of India-it will never be a part of India. Nagas will continue to defend their country to the last man."²⁸³ When the NNC was divided into two groups following the death of A.Z. Phizo, one NNC group led by Khodao Yanthan* immediately announced their abrogation of the Shillong Accord at Wokha meeting.²⁸⁴ On the other hand, the other NNC (Adino faction) group also claimed that they had nothing to do with the Accord. Thus, at present no group is left supporting or identifying with the controversial Accord. Even the Nagaland Peace Council which maintained stiff pro-Accord and pro-establishment throughout those periods now attempted to back out. This is evident from the statement made by the President of the NPC:

282. Idem.

283. He wages Nation's fight for freedom, Ford Morgan, Colo Times (US) December 16, 1988.

* Khodao Yanthan - He joined the SNCN on 23rd January, 1995, and now serve as the Vice-Chairman of the organisation.

284. NNC Abrogates Shillong Accord, Nagaland Times, (Dimapur), 30 August, 1990.

As Shillong Accord is only between the Government of India and Underground organisations, it does not act as an impediment for future dialogues between the Government of India or any other Naga political bodies desiring to have peace with the Government of India.²⁸⁵

Therefore, the only possible explanation as to why all the different Naga nationalist camps had denounced the Accord or in some way disassociated with it is that the Shillong Accord had come short of the desire and political aspiration of the Nagas. It is a fact that the Naga nationalist sentiment continued to influence the people (even after the signing of the Accord) and the void in this front caused by the Accord was quickly filled by the formation of the National Socialist Council of Nagaland.

285. The Weekly Journal, (Kohima), November 7, 1990.

CHAPTER IV

NSCN : FORMATION, IDEOLOGY, OBJECTIVES, STRATEGIES AND LEADERSHIP

1. FORMATION

Following the signing of the controversial Shillong Accord between the representatives of the NNC-FGN and the Government of India, a powerful section of the Naga political leadership consistent with their commitment to espouse the cause of Naga nationalism, made attempts to reorganize and consolidate its remaining forces. Th. Muivah, the then General Secretary of the NNC convened a National Assembly at Suphao on 16th October 1976. This Assembly condemned the Accord (for the second time) and sought direction and guideline from A.Z. Phizo, the President of the NNC. They requested him to come back home and lead the movement. They also elected Isak Chishi Swu as the Vice-President due the vacancy created by the arrest and physical inability of Imkongmeren.¹ Thus, the Assembly reorganized the Federal Government of Nagaland in an attempt to consolidate the nationalist forces. Admittedly, Government of the People's Republic of Nagaland (GPRN) leaflet stated : "In fact, the revolutionary patriots had not only saved the nation from capitulation, but they had also strengthened the position of the President, A. Z. Phizo."²

A.Z. Phizo on the other hand, for reasons best known to him, refused to condemn the Accord saying: "I have nothing to do with the Accord".³ Over and above, he not only failed to give

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1. GPRN A Brief Political Account, Government of the People's Republic of Nagaland, (Oking 7 May, 1992), p. 20.
 2. GPRN Who Murders NNC ? (published by the Government of the People's Republic of Nagaland, 27 Sept., 1988).
 3. Vakha, M., Naga National Political Crisis : A Brief Diagonosis, The Naga National Rights and movement, (published by publicity and Information Department, NNC, 1993), p.42.

directions or guidelines to the Naga nationalists (under Th. Muivah's command), but took into confidence the Shillong Accord signatories and the Shillong Accord group. As already stated this created misunderstanding and confusion among the rank and file. Meanwhile, the pro-accord elements took upper-hand and declared martial law. Th. Muivah, Isak Chishi Swu, Brig. Vidai and their close associates were arrested. As already stated several plans were made to liquidate Th. Muivah and Isak Swu but they were saved providentially.⁴ However, they were treated in a brutal manner, for instance, the accord group dug three times, at different places, the graves of opponents and hurled so many insulting words like "who ever would oppose A.Z. phizo and Shillong Accord shall be totally crushed", and "the people of Nagaland will go wherever Phizo goes, even to India."⁵

In fact, Th. Muivah and others (anti-accord group) were pushed to the extreme. Th. Muivah and his associates write :

Thrashing them (pro-accord elements) out with reason...and every sensible approach made for reconciliation was spitefully rejected. Every truth was suppressed in Phizo's name.... Surely, things had gone past compromise. Only the correct decision could save the nation. Capitulation or fight to a finish for one's Nation's freedom was the only choice left.⁶

Later, the accord group announced the end of martial law and tactfully reorganized the Federal Government of Nagaland inducting mostly those who supported the Shillong Accord and deliberately keeping out Th. Muivah. Isak Swu and all those who

4. Statement of the NSCN, (Oking, 3rd January, 1984), p.

5. Polarisation, (published by the Government of the People's Republic of Nagaland, Oking 1985), p. 9.

6. GPRN : A brief Political Account, loc. cit.

opposed the Accord. Further, they passed a resolution placing a stipulation that Th. Muivah and Isak Swu could never be a member of national workers.⁷ For Muivah and others "everything was driven beyond forbearance. The impossibility for unity became the hard fact of the day."⁸ Though, the Accord group were planning to do away with Th. Muivah and Isak Swu, the opinion was divided i.e. one group advocated to hand them over to India and surrender en masse, and the other opinion insisted that they should be killed.⁹ Meantime, S.S. Khaplang (who was then convinced by Th. Muivah about the true nature of the Accord as a surrender agreement) ordered for immediate arrest of all of those who conspired to impose martial law.¹⁰

Thus, the emergence of a new nationalist organization was inevitable. Eventually, the formation of National Socialist Council of Nagaland was announced from across the border (what is known as 'Eastern Nagaland' on January 31, 1980.¹¹ What one intelligence officer described as the 'mother of the northeastern insurgencies' was thus born.¹² The NSCN leadership resolutely declared : "To us the Sovereign existence of our country, the salvation of our people in Socialism with their spiritual

7. Ramkathing, Maj., A brief account of martial law, (Oking, 8th October, 1993), p. 3.

8. Interview of Bertil Lintner with Th. Muviah, (published by GPRN, Oking, December, 1987), p. 14.

9. Written Interview of Th. Muviah (conducted by the scholar. 29th August, 1994), p. 2.

10. Ramkathing, loc. cit.

11. NSCN Manifesto (Preface) (Published by GPRN, Oking, January 31, 1980).

12. Hazarika, Sanjoy., Strangers of the Mist Tales of war and peace from India's North-east, (Viking Penguin Books Ltd., New Delhi, 1994), p. 110.

salvation in Christ are eternal and unquestionable."¹³ They also emphatically ruled out the illusion of saving Nagaland through peaceful means.¹⁴ Hence, the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN) represented the vocal section of Naga nationalists. In this research work, the focus is primarily on NSCN under Isak Chishi Swu and Th. Muivah's leadership and it is for various reasons*. Although, the media has prominently projected two NSCN i.e. NSCN (I.M) and NSCN (K) as fighting for the cause of the Nagas, the ground reality differs. The NSCN under Khaplang is believed to be an intelligence sponsored group to counter the NSCN under Isak and Muivah. As a matter of fact, the former group has openly declared of their intention to checkmate the NSCN. They have never attacked the Indian army and their nexus with the Indian security forces cannot be easily side lined. They have carried out a number of activities which are a complete negation of Naga nationalism. Therefore, the force that is committed to espouse the cause of Naga people is only the NSCN. Hence, the focus on this organisation.

A. Political organisation

In most cases, revolutionaries or any other liberation struggle will have to start from nothing. Starting from nothing specially requires organization.¹⁵ The fact is every nationalist force or revolutionary movement essentially requires an

13. NSCN Manifesto, op. cit., p. 52.

14. Ibid., p. 54.

* - Refer to the end of this Chapter for detail information.

15. McCuen, John J., The art of Counter-Revolutionary War, (Stackpole Co. Pennsylvania, 1965), p. 30.

organisation to make it effective and thereby organize into a force to reckon with. Regis Debray asserted:

As a general rule, a guerrilla centre cannot survive without an organized means...This is not merely to assure political contacts but also to guarantee a supply of arms, funds, fresh recruits...foodstuffs and so on.¹⁶

It is true that in most cases as D.B. Vought and Michael A. Babb (US Army) write, a nationalist movement "is not a spontaneous popular upheaval nor a jacquerie; it requires organized effort."¹⁷ Thus, the necessity of forming organization is explicit. S. C. S. Gurling points out how profitable it was in the case of Chinese communists.¹⁸

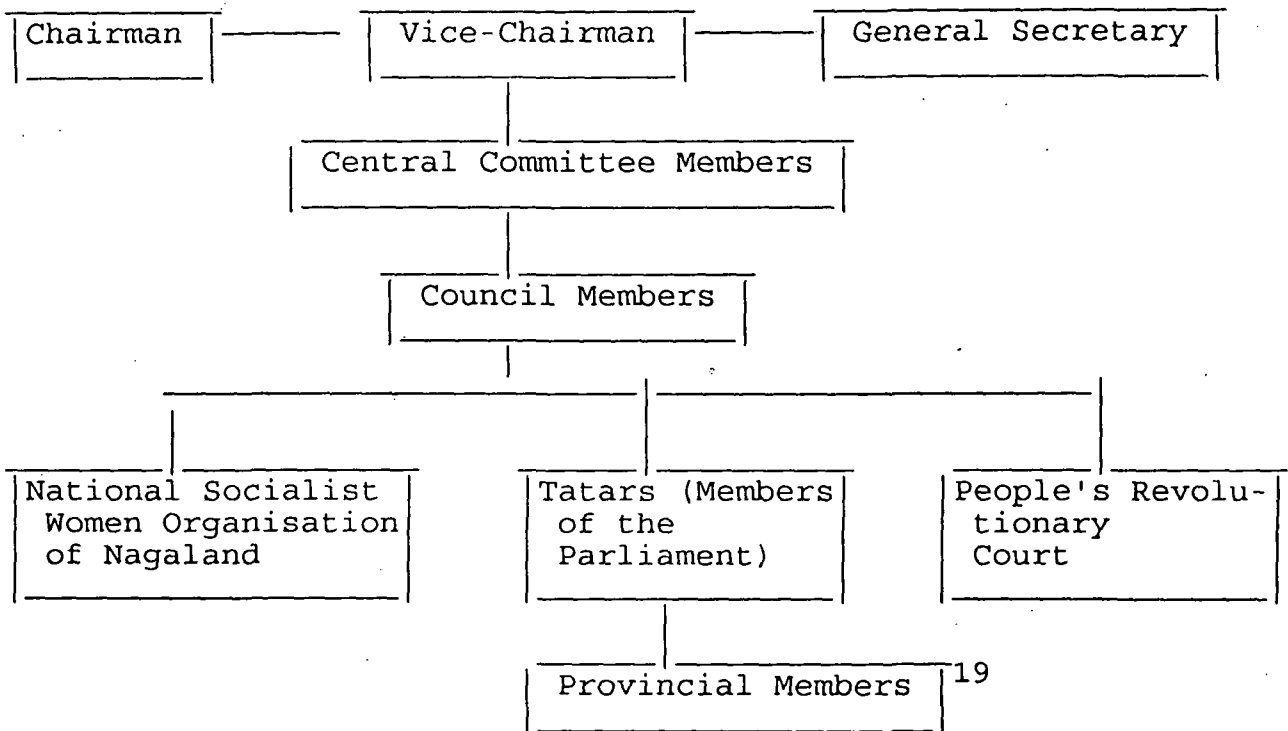
The vocal section of the Naga nationalists formed a new organization, christened-National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN) with its government called Government of the Peoples' Republic of Nagaland (GPRN). The organizational structure of the two are given:

16. Debray, Regis., Strategy for Revolution, (Penguin Books Ltd. England, 1970), p. 65.

17. Vought, Lt. Col., et al. "Support for insurgencies Nike or Nemesis ? Military Review, (January, 1990), p. 18.

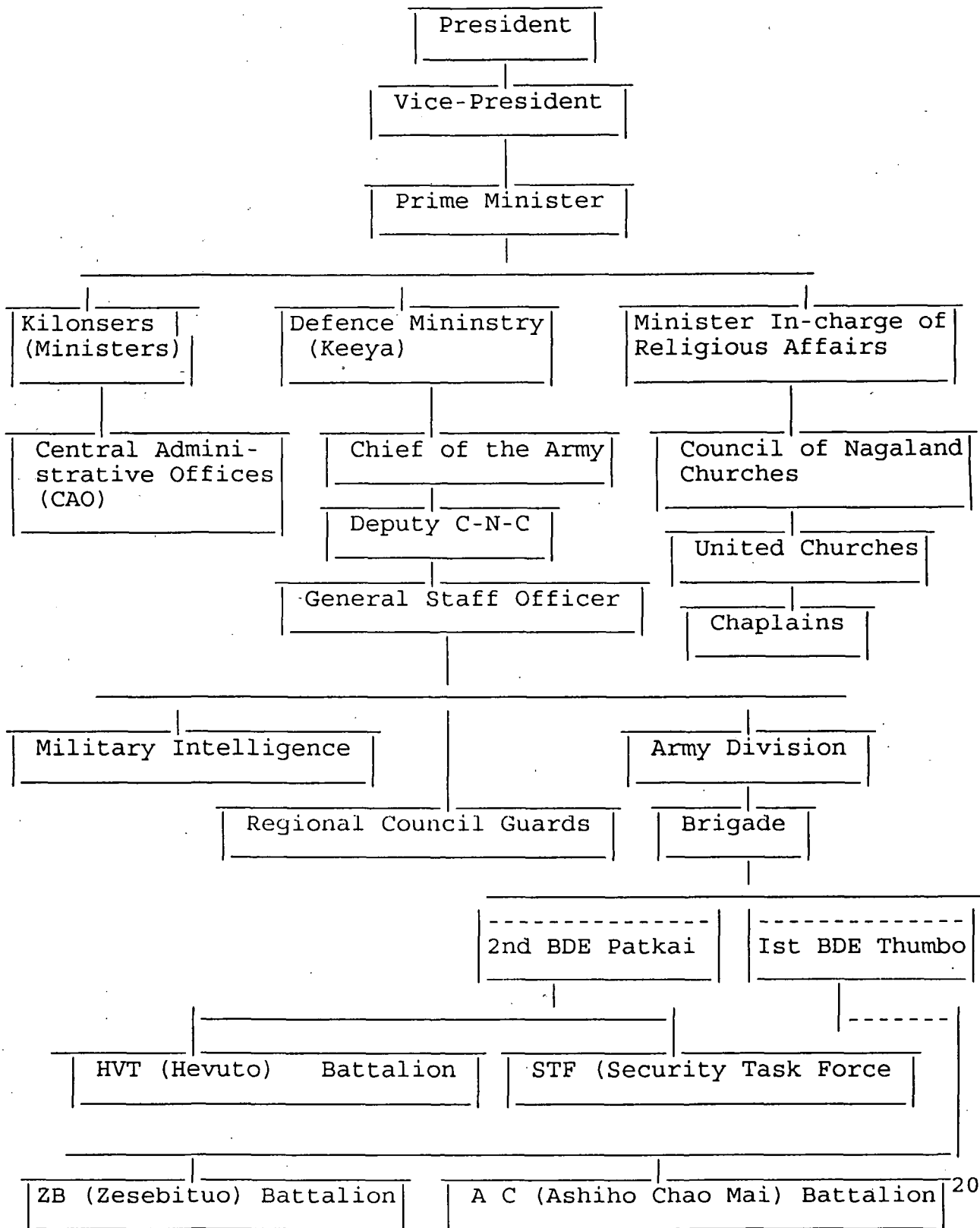
18. Gurling, J. C. S., People's War, The Conditions and Consequences in China and in South East Asia, (George Allen and Unwin Ltd. London 1969), p. 54.

National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN)



19. Sketch provided by 'Maj.' A.S. Ningkhan along with the written Interview (conducted by the scholar, 7th July, 1993).

Government of the People's Republic of Nagaland (GPRN)



20. Sketch provided by 'Brig.' V.S. Atem, Chief of the Naga Army, along with the written interview (conducted by the scholar, 11th October, 1994).

Thus, unlike other political organizations operating outside the Constitution of India in the North East, the NSCN political organisation is a well-knit one. Moreover they have their Constitution (Yehzabo) by which their Government (GPRN) functions and is run. The army formation is equally noteworthy. The NSCN leadership has made certain radical changes in its organization arising out of their perception of (with they say) 'wrong policies of the NNC'. They are:

(1) Centralised System

unlike the NNC/FGN which practised decentralisation, the NSCN leaders strongly advocated a centralized system in the organization. For they were convinced that decentralization was fomenting tribalism among the Nagas. As Th. Muivah points that "tribalism, the most malignant bacteria that corroded the solidarity of the Naga people started emanating from the NNC policy."²¹

The NSCN leaders believed that this tribalism emanated from erroneous NNC policy. Thus, Th. Muivah emphatically stated:

The NNC created Tribal units according to which every tribe had its administration, its army generals, officers and accumulation of arms and ammunition for itself. As a matter of fact, struggle in some way or other specially among the major tribes for supremacy and sphere of influence started beyond easy control. Land disputes among tribes, riding rough-shod over the weaker became common practice. Hatred that stemmed up from such state of affairs often exceeded even the hatred Nagas in general had against the

21. Interview of Mr. John Hamilton (alias Bertil Lintner) with Th. Muivah, General Secretary of the NSCN, (Published by GPRN, Oking, December, 1987), p. 3.

Indians. Nagas became the fatal enemy of themselves. This danger of self-defeat was imminent and Indians lost no time to exploit it. It is a pity, NNC never evolved policy to avert such dangerous self-defeat.²²

The Chairman of the NSCN, Isak Chishi Swu reinforcing Th. Muivah's statement writes:

The conduct of national affairs on tribal line such as creation of tribal Ahungs, Generals, Councils put the nation into stagnation. Putting the tribe and family above nation and people became quite visible before the eye of the public. No attempt was made to reorient the organization and the Nation was led on the whim of the leadership alone. Eventually, it degenerated down to the signing of Shillong Accord.²³

The serious attempt by the NSCN leadership to check tribalism with a correct policy does not come as a surprise because all along, particularly with special reference to the political struggle of the Nagas, tribalism has been the greatest factor for rivalry, inter tribal killing etc. contributing much to the weakening of the movement. Thus, the NSCN Central Council while laying down rules resolved (reference to Tribalism) that "whoever is found inciting and propagating tribalism...shall be first admonished and if he/she persists...shall be penalized."²⁴ Even, Markot Rumunny the official actively involved in outwitting the Naga nationalists admittedly wrote: "Inter tribal rivalry contributed much to the final failure (Shillong Accord) of the armed insurrection."²⁵ M. Horam, a Naga scholar too

22. Ibid, p. 4.

23. Written interview of Mr. Isak Chishi Swu (conducted by the scholar, January, 1994), p. 1.

24. Proceedings of the Central Council Meetings (held on 1st March, 1990 and 15th January, 1991, GPRN), p. 2.

25. Rumunny, Markot., The World of Nagas, (Northern Books Ltd., New Delhi, 1988), p. 359.

identified 'tribalism' as a single factor that weakened the Naga movement. Thus, he writes:

This (tribalism) has been one of the main sources of tension and instability and in fact, has led to inter-tribal rivalry and killing in Nagaland during the past 30 years....If anything of the movement for Naga independence has during many a crisis, boldly accentuated the disunity of the Nagas and the recent rapid developments in its disintegrating ranks are ample proof of this.²⁶

Thus, the new line of policy and strategy of the NSCN leadership is essentially to contain Naga tribalism and hence the whole exercise is to convey the message to the Nagas that defeat of the Nagas will not come from India's military might but from within the Nagas and that is certainly the greatest danger. Tribalism or inter-tribal conflict is indeed a defying factor against Naga aspiration. Throughout the political movement of the Nagas, inter-tribal conflict has undoubtedly been the cause of its setback. How this evil 'ism' penetrated into the Naga society is an important query to pose. The Nagas by tradition did not experience tribalism, it emerged only after modernization stepped in. For instance, a Naga's first attachment is his village and not the tribe. The practice of 'headhunting' was between villages and not between one tribe versus another tribe. Therefore, it was inherently the colonial administrative system which demarcated different tribes into different administrative set ups. Thus, important administration Headquarters sprang up - Kohima (Angami), Mokokchung (Ao), Ukhrul (Tangkul), Wokha (Lotha), etc.

26. Horam, M., Naga Insurgency, (Cosmo Publication, New Delhi, 1988), p. 23.

Besides, representation in the Government was done purely on tribal basis. Subsequently different tribal Hohos (organisations) were born and this generated the feeling of 'thine and mine' in the Naga society.

(2) Collective Leadership

Another distinctiveness, in the functioning of the NSCN is the system of 'Collective Leadership'. In all matters of policy and programme, collective decision of the Central Committee members is necessary. 'Major' Ningkhan Shimray relates that "the main power lies in the collective leadership. Any step or policy is to be decided collectively by them. The organization, Government and Army are all controlled by them."²⁷ It is quite obvious that this new system is adopted as part of NSCN's overall corrective step vis-a-vis the NNC style of functioning. To recapitulate, the NSCN leaders had persistently resented the personality cult during the movement of the NNC.²⁸ The NSCN professes to apply 'collective leadership' both at the centre and at the regional levels²⁹ so as to make their governing or functioning more democratic and stint any element of autocratic outlook. Moreover, it also seeks to avoid any credulous error of a leader.

27. Written Interview of Major Ningkhan Shimray, Coordinator Foreign Affairs, NSCN, (conducted by the scholar, 14th August, 1993).

28. Passim Polarisation and statement of the NSCN.

29. Proceedings of the Central Committee, op. cit., p. 2.

B. Administration

The NSCN with its Government namely the Government of the Peoples' Republic of Nagaland (GPRN) functions as a parallel Government. The Central Committee headed by the Chairman and the General Secretary of the NSCN are responsible for the over-all administration of the organisation as well as of the areas under their control. At the regional level, the Central Administrative Officer (CAO) exercises his/her power along with the regional Chairman, or vice-Chairman and Secretary in administering the different regions. Administrative functions relating to the organisation are as follows:

(1) Discipline of the members

Every party member of the NSCN must abide by the prescribed conduct. The organization maintains two categories of membership. The bulk of the members form the fighting unit and are known as Peoples' Army of Nagaland (PAN). The second group is the political wing otherwise known as the 'civil set up'. However, all the members, both army and civil shall undergo compulsory military training and service for a full term of two years.³⁰

On the observance of discipline. Evidently, refer the Peoples' Army of Nagaland Rules and Regulation says:

Every senior officer in the Peoples' Army should be the pattern for learning of good discipline and be the institution of imparting national responsibility to the junior. They should also help to inculcate mutual love and cooperation among the soldiers. Not saluting one's superior, smoking in their presence, showing disrespect in any form either in word

30. Resolution No. 6 of the Central Council Meeting. *op.cit.*, p.3.

or misdemeanour and encouraging tribalism, groupism, parochialism that may be detrimental to the integrity of army are subject to severe disciplinary action.³¹

Thus, the desire of the Naga nationalist leadership to train up committed, seasoned and disciplined members is implicit per se.

The NSCN leaders strongly emphasise on establishing a Christian state with the theme: "Nagaland for Christ". Consequently, they also prescribe a high moral discipline among its members in addition to the conventional army discipline. The NSCN rules and regulation thus emphasize : "Molesting women, drunkenness, stealing and quarreling shall be dealt with appropriate disciplinary action."³²

The rules specifically state:

- (a) Fornication is punishable by disciplinary action with one year demotion of rank or suspension for one year from service. A case of corporal punishment shall be meted out for undergoing one month of hard labour.
- (b) Adultery is punishable by disciplinary action with demotion of rank or suspension for one year from service. Raping is liable to the extent of court-martial. Infanticide and murder are punishable to the extent of death penalty. Eloping without proper or court marriage shall be punished with double demotion in the case of Lt. Colonel and above and one demotion in the case of other ranks and corporal punishment by undergoing two months of hard labour in the case of private soldier.³³

Quite recently, the NSCN Central Committee meeting further updated the moral code of conduct by adding that "NSCN views

31. Peoples' Army of Nagaland (PAN) Rules and Regulations, (Published by GPRN, Oking, 1981), p. 8.

32. Ibid., (No. 18 clause 4), p. 9.

33. Idem.

prostitution, drug peddling and drug abuse most deadly social crimes which sap the sanctity and life of society."³⁴

So when cadres or members of the NSCN (Civil or army) violate Ahza* or code of conduct, on the merits of each case, appropriate disciplinary measures, such as warning, serious warning, removal from posts or rank-down, expulsion from the organization or even upto the extent of 'shoot order' in extreme cases are carried out.³⁵ It is observed that the NSCN is quite uncompromising regarding members violating their strict code of conduct, For instance, members indulging in extortion, or branded as traitors or deserters are right away given capital punishment.³⁶

Reinforcing the aforesaid rules and regulations or the moral code of conduct of the NSCN, the leadership resolved in 1987 stating that

- (a) Hence forth national workers shall abstain from smoking tobacco and from taking all kinds of narcotic stimulants,
- (b) drinking alcohol is prohibited,
- (c) stealing, misappropriation and defalcation of government funds are strictly forbidden;
- (d) immorality in sex is prohibited.³⁷

34. Proceedings of the Central Committee, of. cit., p. 4.

* - Ahza is a Naga nationalist term for a decree which emanated from Oking (Headquarters) and could bring death to traitors or any one violating the code of conduct for its members as well as anyone under their jurisdiction.

35. Passim Central Committee Meeting.

36. Passim Often reported in the Nagaland local papers.

37. The Joint statement of Isak Chishi Swu and Th. Muviah, (7th July, Oking, 1989), pp. 21-22.

The NSCN leaders also decided that the four stipulations ought to be first applied to the leadership. The triumvirate (Chairman, Vice-Chairman and General Secretary) and Kiloners (Ministers) are under obligation to confess every year in the Tatar Hoho (Parliament) at its Budget Session what they had done with regard to the four points.³⁸ This clearly manifests the total commitment of the NSCN leadership to do away with immorality, corruption etc. so as to set a good trend for the Naga people in general and particularly its cadres so essential for 'building a nation of higher order.'

It is against this background that one finds corroboration to the remark that the NSCN cadres are composed 'of men imbued with a sense of mission'. Significantly, Donald B. Vought and M.A. Babb of US Army writes :

Insurgent leaders must also demonstrate their ability to control the movement. Internal discipline is important to the insurgency as to the traditional military force ... insurgencies where discipline fails generally deteriorate to war lordism or banditry.³⁹

Similarly, the NSCN literature also claims:

Every NSCN is a practical man who works hard to temper and cultivate himself in every respect...He is a man who subordinates his personal interests to the party. The supremacy of the party's interests is the highest principle that governs the thinking and actions of every member of NSCN...Hence, every member of NSCN is a historical force to be reckoned with.⁴⁰

38. Idem.

39. Vought, Lt. Colonel D.B., et al op. cit., p. 25.

40. The Two world outlook (NSCN press handout) (By the Publicity department, GPRN, Oking, 6th June, 1990), p. 6.

(2) Religion Affairs

The fact that majority of the Nagas are Christians by faith is glaringly seen even in the Naga nationalist organization such as the NSCN. The impact of Christianity on the latter is overwhelming. This can be seen in the functioning pattern of the organization, as well as in the individual attitude. Evidently, the Free Nagaland manifesto declared: "We stand for the faith in God and the salvation of mankind in Jesus Christ, alone, that is Nagaland for Christ."⁴¹ In a way, they are prescribing precisely the salvation of mankind, particularly the Naga people, in Jesus Christ alone.)

Thuingaleng Muivah, of the NSCN amply unfolded the fundamental reasons why Christ had to come in their movement. he says thus:

It is because a people simply cannot be unrelated to the unseen reality...Nationalism without a commitment to the cause of the truth is naive and destructive in itself. But truth is not man-made, it exists by itself without bounds because it is not subject to change. Therefore, apart from the question of worldly salvation (independence), a nation must exist for the realization of the eternal truth, for the search of mankind is salvation, not destruction.⁴²

No wonder, the NSCN has a separate independent ministry of Religious Affairs and a separate Council called the 'Council of Nagaland Churches' (CNC).⁴³ This Ministry is responsible for all matters pertaining to spiritual or religious affairs within their

41. Free Nagaland Manifesto, of. cit., p. 38.

42. Written interview of Th. Muivah, of. cit., p. 12.

43. Annual Report of 1992-1993, Council of Nagaland Churches, (Published by Nagaland for Christ, Council of Nagaland Churches, Oking, 3th June, 1993).

area of control. They establish unit churches and provide chaplains. They also carry out missionary assignments-preaching, of the Gospel (as they have practically done in a massive scale in North West of upper Myanmar). Besides, they do donate money and also in kind to needy persons particularly among its members. At times, they administered marriage ceremonies (of members) and administered "believers' baptism". etc.⁴⁴

The NSCN leadership seeks to uphold the principle that one "needs to be committed more than being a mere patriot."⁴⁵ To this end, Th. Muivah, the General Secretary of the NSCN in a Republic speech admonished the Nagas, saying: "It is wickedness that causes God's abomination upon a people. What, then, must we realize ? It is sin and it shall inevitably be our own sin that will bring about the downfall of our nation because there is curse in sin and in the curse destruction."⁴⁶ Therefore, to the NSCN leadership, salvation of a nation is secured if there is spiritual soundness of its citizens. The NSCN leadership, hence, is of the view that national independence is not the end in itself but rather a means for the realisation of goals of life.

(3) Administering their control areas

Following the formation of the NSCN, the leaders first tried to find a safe base area where they could organize themselves into a force. The solution was quickly found as Th. Muivah

44. Idem Annual Report.

45. Written interview of Th. Muviah, op. cit., p. 8:

46. Republic Day speech, 21st March, 1989, Th. Muviah, General Secretary of the NSCN.

47. Interview of Bertil Lintner with Th. Muviah, op. cit., p. 5.

stated: "It was unquestionably the eastern side (North West of Upper Myanmar) where we could create safe base area and consolidate ourselves there and retain in our hand the initiative of guerrilla offensive everywhere."⁴⁷

By the early 1980s, a sizable portion of these areas inhabited by the Nagas were brought under the virtual control of the NSCN. It is here that the Naga nationalists were able to control and administer bringing about radical transformation in the socio-economic lives of the Nagas in Myanmar. Indeed, it was a great achievement.⁴⁸ The NSCN embarked on a number of measures to mobilise public opinion.

Series of cadres were trained. Massive mobilisation was done among the people and progress was swift though ignorance of the public of the areas was still the major factor that stood in the way. Some important tasks like giving both political and primary education, propagation of Christianity, teaching terrace cultivation, sanitation, stoppage of poppy plantation, opium taking and selling were successfully carried out.⁴⁹

The NSCN activities are described in further details.

(1) Preaching Gospel

It is a fact that when the NSCN established control over the areas, there was hardly any Christian among the 'Eastern Nagas'. The impact of outside world was virtually nil. Head-chopping was held high as a manly honour until early 1980, when NSCN totally stopped it as a savage practice.⁵⁰

48. The Joint statement of Isak Chishi Swu and Th. Muviah, op.cit., p. 17.

49. A brief account of free Nagaland, op. cit., p. 38.

50. Idem.

The animist Nagas earlier lived there isolated in their own world untouched by civilization. The NSCN described in their own words that "they were superstitious but simple, narrow but sincere, savage but zealous. There were no people to teach them the better world which they did not know. The swift feet of God's alien messengers were forbidden to teach them."⁵¹

As stated by the NSCN, "In the circumstances we felt called upon to preach the Gospel in that darkest part left behind by the world gone ahead of us. With missionary zeal we took the historic responsibility upon ourselves."⁵² Bertil Lintner, a free lance writer who visited the NSCN Headquarters remarked: "I was astonished at the manner in which the NSCN has Christianised the eastern hills."⁵³ The NSCN organised volunteer Gospel Teams and preached the gospel everywhere with armed guards as they occasionally had to encounter the Myanmar forces. Besides through prayers and divine revelation, a number of incurable disease were believed to have been healed. By 1985, the converts reached around 40,000.⁵⁴

According to the account of Isak Chishi Swu, the Chairman of the NSCN, two mission centres were opened at Iphai and Tamkhe villages. The national workers were made pastors of the newly established churches, converting more than fifty villages.⁵⁵ Corroborating this fact, the 'Eastern Naga students' wrote "By 1985, the Christian church membership had gone upto around 40,000

51. Ibid., p. 44.

52. Idem.

53. Lintner, Bertil., Land of jade A journey through insurgen Burma, (Kiscadale publications, London, 1990), p. 86.

54. The Joint statement, Op. cit., p. 18.

55. Written interview of Isak Chishi Swu, loc. cit.

and several schools were established..... The first ever mission centre was established in Keishan Challam village, christened as Nagaland for Christ Mission Centre.

This great conversion brought about tremendous changes in the lifestyle of the people. If Christianity indeed has been the single most dynamic factor in modernising the Naga society in India, it is undoubtedly equally true for the eastern Nagas also. As Isak Chishi Swu exclaimed : "God was so gracious to the people that they could open their eyes and see the new light."⁵⁷ Remarkably, head-hunting was totally stopped, poppy plantations, opium consumption and trade were strictly prohibited. Immoral practices were discouraged and harmful traditions gradually given up through education.⁵⁸ It is here that the Naga nationalists essentially differed from other revolutionary groups in any part of the world. The NSCN, leadership firmly believed that "spiritual salvation in Christ is eternal and unquestionable."⁵⁹ This is where the NSCN is firmly rooted.

(2) Establishment of Schools

The conversion of eastern Nagas to Christianity was coupled with the introduction of education for the first time in that region. It is a matter of fact that till date, the administrative control of Myanmar government has not reached the areas, particularly inhabited by the Nagas. Practically, there is no

56. The Eastern Nagaland (A representation to the World Baptist Alliance) by the Eastern Naga students. (24th July, 1995), p. 4.

57. Written interview of Mr. Isak Chishi Swu, loc. cit.

58. The Joint statement, loc. cit.

59. Free Nagaland manifesto, loc. cit.

administration.⁶⁰ It is only during military operation that the area is visited by the Myanmarese troops.

It is in this situation that the NSCN acts as an agency for social change and reformation. According to the NSCN sources, the Ministry of Education of the Government of the People's Republic of Nagaland (GPRN) took up extensive programme to impart education.⁶¹ Thus, education for the first time was brought into this remote areas by the members of National Socialist Council of Nagaland. It was learnt that fifteen primary schools were established and some hundred students were soon brought up within few years' time.⁶²

Naga nationalist leaders claim their success in their endeavour to impart education in that region. hence, they write:

The progress of the pupils were by our standard considerable. Conferences were organized for the welfare of the students. Campaigns were conducted from village to village which importantly contributed to the well-being of the people...NSCN could get things moving towards something real and higher. Its achievements were considerable. It was popular with the masses. The people understood the fact that NSCN alone cared for them and hence they reposed their trust in them.⁶³

However, these programmes were often halted and threatened by the military operations of the Myanmarese troops. Thus NSCN sources reveal "things had to face the brutal might of the Burmese (Myanmareses) troops time and again. Indiscriminate shooting, incineration of the villages, schools, churches and

60. Pakem, B., India-Burma Relations, (Omsons Publications, New Delhi 1992), p. 120.

61. Written interview of Mr. Isak Chishi Swu, op. cit., p. 3.

62. Eastern Nagaland, loc. cit.

63. The Joint statement, loc. cit.

destruction of crops were ruthlessly carried out every time they launched operation."⁶⁴

The NSCN also taught the eastern Nagas about terrace cultivation wherever it was feasible.⁶⁵ The eastern Nagas earlier depended on primitive method of shifting cultivation which could hardly generate sufficient foodgrain for the year round.

The crux of the problem lies with the unconcerned attitude of Myanmar Government. This part of eastern Nagaland (North West of Upper Myanmar) is completely cut-off from civilisation and developmental activities. As Bertil Lintner vividly narrated:

The total neglect of the Rangoon Government was probably the most appalling aspect of the imbroglio; absolutely nothing had been done to improve the living conditions of those people. And it was this neglect that had enabled the NSCN to build up its base here in these remote mountains which are part of Burma (Myanmar) in name only on official maps.⁶⁶

(4) Finance

Financial matters of the organization are looked after by the Finance Minister. But in reality, it is the Finance Secretary who is responsible for management of funds, including its disposal. No liberation movement can be a success unless backed by a sound financial support. Thus, the Finance Department of the Government of the People's Republic of Nagaland (GPRN) significantly plays a key role in the NSCN set up.

The amount of revenue collection is determined according to the size of their operational area. Today, the NSCN practically

64. A brief political account, op. cit., p. 40.

65. Idem.

66. Lintner, op. cit., p. 89.

covers Nagaland state, Manipur, North Cachar Hills besides their operational link with insurgent groups in Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, Arunachal and Mizoram.⁶⁷ It is from these areas that the NSCN fund flows in.

There are specifically two broad categories of NSCN financial resources: First of all, there is the income from various 'tax' collection and secondly, there is another category which the NSCN calls 'windfall income' covering 'donation and gifts', booties and bank capture'.⁶⁸

Accordingly, in the areas under their control, the NSCN compulsorily imposed 'house tax' which each Naga household or non-Naga households in Naga areas have to pay amounting to Rs. 100 per annum.⁶⁹ While commenting on peoples' support Rh. Raising, a prominent political leader of the NSCN remarked: "Our people are our bank."⁷⁰ All the non-Nagas, whom the NSCN term 'foreigners sojourning in Nagaland', are also to pay 'sojourning tax' of various categories, ranging from Rupees one hundred to one lakh.

They are as follow:

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------|-----------------|
| 1. First class business men | Rs. 1,00,000 | per annum |
| 2. Second " " " | Rs. 50,000 | " |
| 3. Third " " " | Rs. 10,000 | " |
| 4. Workers and tailors | Rs. 100 | " ⁷¹ |

67. Ray, Tapas, Fatal confusion Military and growing worries (in) Frontline, September 9, 1994. p. 28.

68. Central Council Meeting op. cit., p. 5.

69. Idem.

70. Written interview of Rh. Raising (conducted by the scholar Killo (Home) & Chapee (Finance), 4th December, 1992), Kilonser (Minister). P. 5.

71. Central Committee, loc. cit.

Besides, there is 'loyalty tax' which brings in a sizable fund to the NSCN exchequer. For instance, under 'loyalty tax' there are (1) income tax, (2) transport tax, (3) entertainment tax, (4) tax on forest product, (5) enterprise tax etc.⁷²

It has been observed that the NSCN tax collection is quite systematic and successful. As a reporter of a regional paper tells us, "The whole system of tax collection is highly systematic."⁷³ The "tax payers" never let anything slip from their lips even when asked by the Indian security forces which shows the fear and loyalty the NSCN commands.⁷⁴ The modus operandi of such tax collection follows a skilful technique. The NSCN leaders normally do not go openly and personally to the various villages or government departments to serve notices and collect the money. First a notice is sent to the village headman or the businessman or a government department, as the case may be. The headman then collects the 'tax' from people of his village, while the accountants of the government department deduct the 'tax' from salaries of the employees, all according to the rates fixed by the GPRN. On completion of the collection, the 'taxes' are deposited at an appointed place on a particular date. Generally, they also issue receipts for such payments.⁷⁵

It is in this context, besides other things, that one comes to the conclusion that the NSCN is running parallel government in Nagaland state and Manipur, a fact confessed by even the top

72. Passim Resolutions of the Central Committee Meeting.

73. The Sentinel 28 December 1993

74. Majumdar, Jaideep., Rebels retain upper hand in NE Amrita Bazar Patrika, December 29, 1993.

75. Idem. (The newspaper reports find corroboration in the statements of the NSCN leaders)

level Army officers. Interestingly, it was also learnt that even the state police departments in Manipur and Nagaland state pay these taxes⁷⁶ including officers⁷⁷. It is quite conceivable that they pay these taxes out of fear although some do it voluntarily.

On the other hand, those who refuse to pay the taxes do face severe consequences particularly those belonging to state establishment. For instance, the State Bank of India Regional Office at Dimapur (a town in Nagaland state) at one time decided to quit their operation in Nagaland state owing to inability to pay a whopping demand of Rs. 10 lakhs by the NSCN⁷⁸ (of course, this decision was withheld owing to assurances from the state Chief Minister, including the Union Finance Minister). But not so fortunate case had been the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) which under orders from the NSCN and following damage to equipments, ultimately had to cease operation in Nagaland state indefinitely.⁷⁹ Though it was reported that the NSCN had demanded huge sums of money, vehicles, arms, explosives etc. from the ONGC, the main objective of the NSCN is essentially to stop the exploration of Oil which according to them 'legitimately' belongs to the Nagas and are regarded as 'national wealth' to be exploited only when the 'Naga issue' is settled rightly. In fact, Isak Chishi Swu, in his speech at Geneva UN Conference on

76. Idem.

77. The Sentinel July 3, 1993.

78. Hussain, Wasbir., SBI resumes functioning in Nagaland The Telegraph Jult 3, 1993.

79. The Sentinel September 20, 1993.

Indigenous Peoples complained of 'mineral resources being tapped in a massive scale by the Government of India'.⁸⁰

Another disturbing trend for the Government of India is the expansion of NSCN operational areas particularly in Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya and even Tripura. The NSCN operational link with several North East militant groups also fetch a handsome amount from joint raids in banks or capturing of convoys carrying bank remittances. For instance, an activist of Hynhiewtrep Achik Liberation Council (HALC) who was arrested by the police confessed that 'out of the loot, HALC had to give out 70 per cent to the NSCN'.⁸¹ Though this percentage given out to the NSCN may be exaggerated, the fact that they do receive a large slice of any successful joint raid cannot be ruled out. Till date, the NSCN made several successful raids on banks and ambushed convoys carrying bank remittances, sometimes jointly with other groups.

Lastly, the NSCN financial support also comes from some friendly countries or agencies. Admittedly, Rh. Raising stated: "many revolutionary people of the world are extending moral as well as material support to us."⁸² This is further corroborated by the alleged statement of Khayao Huray, one time finance secretary of the GPRN. When arrested by the security force he allegedly confessed that "Pakistan has provided 1.7 million U.S. dollars to the NSCN to procure arms in four instalments."⁸³

80. Isak Chishi Swu's speech at Genva UN Conference on Indigenous Peoples on 27th July, 1994.

81. HALC Exposed (In) Eastern Panorama, December 1993, p. 15.

82. Written interview of Mr. RH. Raising, loc. cit.

83. Aiding Ultras Pak style, North East sun, August 27th - September 2, 1994, p. 16.

Besides, 'Nagaland' becoming a full fledged member of the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization (UNPO) amidst much global publicity, and earning at the same time international recognition of their political struggle, has indeed opened window of opportunity for the NSCN to seek friendly support, including fund from around the world. Rightly so, within a short time the NSCN has already established good contact with the Asian Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP), KWIA a Belgium based Flemish Support Group for Indigenous People and others.⁸⁴

The NSCN have their own Constitution and the government i.e. Government of the People's Republic of Nagaland (GPRN) which act under it. Thus, they claim that they have constitutional right even to levy taxes. However, everyone does not agree with them. Obviously, in the purview of the Government of India such taxation is nothing but extortion. The media in India as a result use that term. In a way, the Government of India is at a fix because the NSCN system of taxation is seriously eroding the administrative machinery and its effectiveness in maintaining law and order. Some central agencies like the OIL and Natural Gas Commission (ONGC) has already withdrawn from Nagaland due to, inability to pay the exorbitant taxes to the NSCN. Even the State Bank of India based at Dimapur nearly followed the ONGC path. However, it must be noted that substantial Naga population pay those 'taxes' willingly as part of their identification with the movement.

84. NSCN leaders address UN meet (In) The Telegraph 31 August, 1994.

C. Manpower and Weaponry

On the query 'Why do the Nagas need national army?', the NSCN publicity department elucidates that it is needed "to defend their national territorial integrity and interests."⁸⁵ The NSCN members comprise of broadly two categories - the People's Army of Nagaland (PAN) and the members of the political wing, the civilian set up.

The Naga nationalists claim that Nagaland is a sovereign state and consider the stationing of Indian and Myanmar troops as an occupation force and an act of invasion of 'free Nagaland'. It is on this ground that they justify setting up their own national standing army called the People's Army of Nagaland (PAN).⁸⁶ In spite of the fact that the NSCN adopt 'protracted struggle' and 'guerrilla strategy' as opposed to conventional warfare or full-scale warfare, their fighting force is purely organized on the pattern of independent state army like that of India, Pakistan, China etc. The army organisation pattern of the NSCN is quite remarkable, in the sense, that they fulfilled all the prerequisites of any regular army formation. The 'Peoples Army' have their distinctive army formation, oath administration, office administration, general administration and jurisdiction, defined service rules and regulations, rank and promotion, gallantry awards and the rewards, etc.⁸⁷ Perhaps, the only distinction we can draw with the national army of other states is

85. The two world outlook, (Published by Publicity Department, GPRN, Oking 6th June, 1990), p. 2.

86. People's Army of Nagaland (Rules and Regulations), (GPRN, 1981, p. 1.

87. Passim, Peoples Army of Nagaland.

that the cadres of PAN are not paid soldiers and of course, they have to operate as a clandestine organisation.

The People's Army of Nagaland is divided into five commands which covers all the Naga inhabited areas. They are : Eastern Command (E/C), Western Command (W/C), Central Command (C/C), Northern Command (N/C), and the Southern Command (S/C).⁸⁸ Till date, these five commands are manned by one Division, two Brigades having four battalions only. The four battalions are Security Task Force (STF), Zasibituo (ZB), Hevuto (HVT), Ashiho Chaomai (AC).⁸⁹

The Yehzabo (Constitution) of Nagaland provides that the Chairman (NSCN) shall be the Supreme Commander of the armed forces of Nagaland.⁹⁰ However, since the NSCN functions on the principle of 'collective leadership', the constitution says :

He shall in consultation with the executive members, in exercising his power as supreme commander, have the power to issue directives for disposition of armed forces, for planning and execution of military campaigns, to deal with emergencies like foreign invasion and any matters appertaining to the conduct of war.⁹¹

Another distinctive feature of the People's Army of Nagaland is its distinctive religious bent. The 'Constitution of Nagaland' gives provision to each battalion to have a chaplain.⁹² According to the annual report of the Church Ministry of Council of Nagaland Churches, there were nine well established unit churches

88. Ibid., p. 12.

89. Written interview of Brig. V.S. Atem, (conducted by the scholar, 11th October, 1994), p. 16.

90. The Yehzabo, op. cit., p. 4.

91. Idem.

92. Ibid., p. 11.

and thirteen committed chaplains.⁹³ Thus, the Naga nationalist slogan of 'Nagaland for Christ' is not an empty rhetoric but is laden with a sense of commitment. Evidently, a statement released by the publicity wing of the GPRN clearly stated : "One of the main objectives of our revolution is to make our land for Christ and in order to construct a Christian state it needs army who trust in the Lord.... Nagaland for Christ shall be built by those soldiers who trust in Him."⁹⁴

Thus, PAN members are simply not just a fighting force alone, they are to play vital and constructive role as true revolutionary patriots. The NSCN claims :

Believe us, each and every member of NSCN is a man of parts. In times of national war, he is a national army. In times of class war, he is a people's army. In times of holy war, he is a faithful soldier of Christ. In times of political crisis, he is a politician. And in every battle-field, he is a general.⁹⁵

The NSCN manpower (comprising all the army and civil set up) is put around 3000 strong.⁹⁶ Th. Muivah, the NSCN supremo put the figure between '3000-4000 armed soldiers'.⁹⁷ Thus one cannot accurately point out the number simply because of the secrecy maintained over the matter. However, according to Th. Muivah, "Nagas could not sustain such a big force"⁹⁸ and perhaps due to the change of strategy vis-a-vis the NNC period, he explicitly

93. Annual Report of 1992-1993 Church Ministry, of. cit., p. 5.

94. The two world outlook, of. cit., p. 5.

95. Ibid., p. 6.

96. Dasgupta, Gautam, Muviah North East Guerrilla Supremo (In) The NE Sun, (December 12th, 1987), p. 9.

97. Bhaumik, Subir., Brothers in Aram (Special Report) Sunday, (14-20th June, 1987), p. 25.

98. Interview with Th. Muviah by Deepak Dewan NE Sun, (December 18-24th, 1993), p. 10.

maintained that "the whole of Nagaland can be manned by a 3000 strong army well equipped and smart. Only three thousand."⁹⁹ Thus, in the opinion of the NSCN leadership, in a protracted and guerrilla warfare, a big force is not required partly because of the supposed inability to sustain it. Therefore, the NSCN's main thrust of the issue is stated "to have very very precise assessment."¹⁰⁰ In other words, the NSCN leadership favours to have a precise number say around 3000 well equipped men imbued with a sense of mission. Rh. Raising, a hard-core leader of the NSCN, however, put it in another way, saying : "NSCN is as strong as 3 million (estimated Naga population) population. NSCN is the embodiment of 3 million Naga population, which has international support as well as moral sanction from the church."¹⁰¹

The NSCN members are a highly motivated force. This is evident from the manner in which they operate and carry out ambushes and capture security forces' camps without even marginal casualties to the cadres.¹⁰² As Subir Bhaumik who tracked the NSCN Headquarters honestly confessed:"Battalions after battalions may be pressed into service in the hills of Nagaland and Manipur, but that will fail to crush the spirit of the brave Naga fighters."¹⁰³ Even the Indian army, particularly its units serving in the Naga areas, have begun to respect the ingenuity

99. Ibid., p. 25.

100. Idem.

101. Written interview of Mr. RH. Raising, loc. cit.

102. Bhaumik, Subir., NSCN rampage worries New Delhi (In) Eastern Panorama, (September, 1993), p. 13.

103. Ibid., p. 14.

and staying power of the NSCN.¹⁰⁴ For instance, Brigadier Upinder Kumar confessed saying, " those boys (of the NSCN) are good."¹⁰⁵

Concerning the NSCN weaponry, even the Government of India openly admitted that they possessed sophisticated arms. In a special report to the Secretary General of the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples organisation (UNPO), the Government of India admittedly wrote:

The NSCN (1) has built up a formidable arsenal of weapons including AK-47, M-16, G-3 rifles, LMG, Russian built RPG-7 Rocket launchers, Grenade firing rifles, 2 inch mortars, handgrenades in addition to a large number of other assorted weapons and ammunition.¹⁰⁶

Thus the fact of NSCN possessing sophisticated weaponry leaves no one in doubt. 'Major' Ningkhan Shimray of the NSCN who reportedly masterminded both 'operation Red Sea' and 'Operation Jordan'¹⁰⁷ listed down the types of weapon in the possession of the NSCN:

AK-47,56 (sub. machine gun)

M-16 (US origin and modified one)

Carbine Assault Rifles-4

G-2,3 and 4

M-12 (semi auto rifle)

M-23 LMG

M-203 (M-16 attached with grenade launcher)

104. Bhaumik, loc. cit.

105. Gupta, Rabin., Law of the jungle, Sunday, (7-13 November, 1993), p. 47.

106. Does Violence Get a Mandate ? Government of India representation to the Secretary General, UNPO, New Delhi, 1994, p. 5.

107. Written interview of 'Major' Ningkhan Shimray, op.cit., p.3. Vide Written interview of Isak Chishi Swu.

RPG-2,5 and 7

Grenade launcher

60 mm mortar

40 mm mortar and 2 inch mortar

US sten carbine

SLR (mostly captured from Indian security forces)

303 -do-

LMG -do-

M-20

Luger

9 mm (both US and Chinese origin)

38 special US revolver

Steel mine

TNT

RDX 108

While relating Pakistan's alleged arms supply to the NSCN, a correspondent made sensational disclosure with corroboration from Intelligence Bureau (IB) and intelligence officials that the ISI recently supplied, a substantial consignment of weapons, including rocket launchers and anti-aircraft stinger missiles, to the NSCN.¹⁰⁹ However, it is yet to be proved whether the NSCN possess stinger missiles or not. Only time will tell the veracity of the disclosure. But for a formidable force like the NSCN, such a weapon may not be out of reach for too long even if it may be missing in their present armoury.

108. Written interview of 'Major' Ningkhan Shimray, op. cit., p. 5.

109. ISI seen supplying arms to NSCN guerrillas, Business Standard, September 28th, 1993.

On the other hand, the NSCN leaders do not totally rely on the weapons that they possess. Thus, NSCN literature claims:

The type of weapon we hold and the size of army do not matter much, but what really matters is the political significance in the bullet we fire. Every barrel of gun that belongs to the nation has the spirit of Naga nationalism and it is such a sort of gun that shall liberate the nation.¹¹⁰

Rh. Raising more specifically says, "it is not arms but the spirit that fights. We inculcate fighting revolutionary spirit in every Naga Army. That is our best weapon."¹¹¹

Thus, the aforesaid statements explicitly reveal that the NSCN leadership does not believe that the weapons at their disposal are a deciding factor. The emphasis is rather on a clear-cut political objective. It is in this context that the NSCN leadership repeatedly emphasises on discipline of its cadres and demand one's best service to the national cause.

D. NSCN as a progressive force

With the emergence of the NSCN as a vocal nationalist force it is generally acknowledged as the most widely supported Naga resistance movement¹¹². Thus, the birth of NSCN in 1980 was like turning a new leaf altogether in the Naga political movement from the not so well organized to a clearly defined concrete political programme. Thus, the NSCN declared: "Sons and daughters of Nagaland, we the National Socialist Council of Nagaland have

110. The Two World Outlook, loc. cit.

111. Written interview of Rh. Raising, loc. cit.

112. Morris, Glenn T., Nagaland still fighting after all these years (In) Fourth World Bulletin, April, 1994, p. 15.

chosen for you this salvation line. Here is the call for you, lovers of nation, lovers of the truth of life, to come along and fight a good fight."¹¹³ Nirmal Nibedon, referred to Th. Muivah as the chief protagonist of the new ethnic philosophy.¹¹⁴

(1) NSCN on NNC

The NSCN leadership took censorious and critical view of the NNC- its policy, programme and leadership and brought out some of the erroneous views upheld by the NNC leadership.

The NSCN leaders asserted that "the defeat of a people is not always brought about by the superiority of the adversary in strength but through incorrect leadership and pursuit of unfounded policy."¹¹⁵ To put it other way, they write. "a people that fail to admit the maxim that national victory is impossible without correct policy and correct leadership is doomed to ultimate fiasco."¹¹⁶ There is no doubt that correct policy is the 'lifeline' in any movement particularly in resistance movement such as that of the Nagas. The NSCN leaders emphatically asserted that NNC leadership miserably failed to evolve a sound and realistic policy at a time when it was most needed. Moreover, the NNC did not wrestle for initiative and the significance of initiative to be in their hands was not at all grasped.¹¹⁷ As Th. Muivah elucidates:

113. Polarisation, op. cit., p. 48.

114. Nibedon, Nirmal., North East India - The Ethnic Explosion, Lancer Publishers, New Delhi, 1981, p. 190.

115. Free Nagaland Manifesto, op. cit., p. 5.

116. Idem.

117. Written interview of Mr. Th. Muviah, loc. cit.

When the force of nationalism was not backed by correct policy and philosophical grounds it died down and dangers cropped up with loss of confidence in oneself and in the people. Thus, actuation with raw nationalism and selfish opportunism could not lead them anywhere.¹¹⁸

Thus, NNC/FGN was not only faced with internal chaotic condition, baseless approach to problem, self isolation and self-antagonism also characterized policy.¹¹⁹ When the Government of India came to know the precarious conditions they were in, it went right away on the offensive and got Shillong Accord signed.¹²⁰ It is in this context that the NSCN leaders in an attempt to rectify the previous mistakes asserted:

Policy could be realistic when it is based on the actual conditions of the people concerned and their enemy, and the world in general.... Leadership should have correct assessment of any situation.¹²¹

The NSCN did not even spare the NNC President, A.Z. Phizo for his alleged outright failure to provide correct leadership specially during the critical period in total isolation from the people by staying in a foreign land. The NSCN leaders being disgusted with the whole style of NNC/FGN functioning lamented, "Nagas were made to see a strange centre of power, being created out of the family and relatives of the leadership and a few others with whom he had apparently formed an aristocratic circle above the government."¹²²

118. Idem.

119. Interview of Bertil Lintner, op. cit., p. 5.

120. Idem.

121. Free Nagaland Manifesto, loc. cit.

122. Ibid., p. 7.

Thus, the NSCN were quite bitter about the manner in which the NNC was functioning without any direction, strategy and vision. It is against this backdrop that the NSCN Manifesto assessed:

It is high time to sum up past and make a concrete approach to the confronting problems. Nagaland has got to be liberated from prejudices, injustices, and from all sorts of aristocratic snobbery.¹²³

However, Phizo's failure to condemn the Shillong Accord the architect of which was his younger brother and the unfortunate lack of communication from his end received scathing attack from various corners. In fact, it is generally acknowledged by all camps that A.Z. Phizo's failure to officially condemn the Shillong Accord was his greatest setback. Eventually, even his close associates broke away in 1990 on this issue and formed a parallel NNC (K). As a result, division of NNC rank and file caused by the emergence of the NSCN now got accentuated.

The NSCN leaders also did not agree with the NNC leaders that it was impossible to resist "the colossal invading might of India and Myanmar" To them the issue was not a contest of strength but one of upholding the historical right against the aggressive forces.¹²⁴ They retortedly asked: "Are the Nagas finished? Are there no more now? Have they (Indians) won the war?" Th. Muivah painfully admitted in an interview and said: "The inability of the enemy to crush us in the past decades was

123. Ibid., p. 8.

124. Free Nagaland Manifesto, loc. cit.

not taken into consideration."¹²⁵ As a result, writes Th. Muivah, "the nation-wide movement came to a standstill letting pessimism to pervade many a corner."¹²⁶

(2) NSCN on the Government of India and Myanmar.

The NSCN consider India and Myanmar as occupation forces particularly for unleashing acts of invasion against the Nagas. Very recently, Isak Chishi Swu addressed the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organisation (UNPO) General Conference and stated: "India deliberately...launched unscrupulous massive invasion on Nagaland with the sole view to exterminating the Nagas and their nation."¹²⁷ The NSCN also alleged that India not only invaded their homeland but subtly carried on Indianization process unrelentlessly. The NSCN manifesto earlier stated : "We are not only confronted with a war of physical force but also with more dangerous insidious war of assimilation."¹²⁸ They also said that since Nagas are a distinct nation with distinctive culture and ethos, the Indian or Myanmarese process of assimilation will not come that easy but has to undergo tough course of time.¹²⁹

The manifesto of the NSCN gives one the impression that the NSCN have chosen the path of 'armed struggle' against the Government of India and Myanmar. In the manifesto, they declared:

125. Ibid., p. 10.

126. Interview of Mr. Bertil Lintner with Th. Muviah, of. cit., p. 9.

127. Written interview of Th. Muviah, loc. cit.

128. Speech of Isak Chishi Swu, Chairman of the NSCN at UNPO General Conference on 30th January, 1993 at Hague, Netherland.

129. Free Nagaland Manifesto, of. cit., p. 18.

To break a stone, we use hammer, to reap a field we use sickle and to deliver Nagaland from the preposterous occupation of Indian and Burma (Myanmar) might, we need arms.¹³⁰

The NSCN leaders reiterated from time to time that the Naga issue was basically political and it required a political solution. But since India and Myanmar sought military solution "Our freedom is forced into the battle field; we have to pick it up with a gun."¹³¹ Hence, they rule out peaceful means in defending their freedom or independence. The Manifesto thus stated : "We shall in no case meet invasion of our country with non-violence..."

Then coming to the question of holding talks or negotiation for settlement of the issue, the NSCN has been quite skeptical of India's sincerity because of what they called 'past experiences'. Admittedly, Th. Muviah in an interview said : "We have had enough of India's way of dealing with us."¹³² Further he said :

If India cannot have a realistic approach to the problem, it is futile to expect the Nagas to come out and hold some sort of negotiation. The problem is that the Indians are never prepared to understand the true nature of the issue. So long as there is no preparedness from the Indian side, one cannot expect a solution.¹³³

Lately, a new dimension has taken place following the Naga struggle getting international attention as a result of NSCN leader's massive campaign. Nagaland became a member of the the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples organisation (UNPO) and

130. Ibid., p. 17.

131. Ibid., p. 25.

132. Idem.

133. Interview with Th. Muviah by Deepak Dewan, op. cit., p. 7.

subsequently UNPO made a declaration on Nagaland.¹³⁴ This has dramatically affected the NSCN leadership's assessment of their policy. In an interview with the Hindu in Geneva, Isak Chishi Swu and Th. Muivah affirmingly stated: "We do not trust India and we will have negotiation only in the presence of a third party."¹³⁵ Though, they did not spell out who the third party would be, one could safely assume the possible involvement of UNPO representative if any negotiation is to take place in the near future.

11. Ideology

The emergence of the NSCN as a vocal force had added a new ideological dimension to the Naga movement. In fact, all political movements adhere to some form of ideology. According to J.Y. Calvez, "ideology is...a sign of development; strictly traditional societies are unaware of ideologies, and live instead on continuity and tradition."¹³⁶ The writer is emphasising the fact that ideology is a sign of modernization and indication of growth.

Social scientists defined ideology as "an integrated set of belief about the social and political environment."¹³⁷ Padelford and Lincoln define ideology as "a body ideas concerning economic, social and political values and goals with positive action

134. Idem.

135. UNPO's support for Nagaland, Nagaland Post, February 1, 1995.

136. Abraham, Thomas., NSCN faction not for talks now, The Hindu, (July 30, 1994).

137. Calvez, Jean-Yves., Politics and Society in the Third World, (Orbis Books, N.Y., 1971), p. 291.

programmes for attaining those goals."¹³⁸ Thus, it purports to tell us how the system is organized, which desired goals can be promoted, what agencies and channels can most effectively be employed to forward the goals in the given setting.

A study group at Dakar on on African socialism defined ideology from Third World perspective as : "a projection of a system of solutions, co-ordinated with a value system to which a human community adheres as it faces its destiny and masters its situation."¹³⁹ Thus, without going into its complication, the scholar would confine to this understanding, particularly the Third World perspective. The need for an ideology for national development is often explicitly felt in the developing countries¹⁴⁰ and where political movements for liberation are going on.

In this context, the NSCN leaders too unmistakably seem to adhere that ideology is essential for a political movement like that of the Nagas. Evidently, the NSCN writes :

We Nagas must be established on the safe foundation. Every Naga must know that it is not the shout for or against anyone but the correct line that will save Nagaland. Therefore, until and unless our people are settled down the line that protects the sovereignty, and to the line that removes the exploitation system from our society, there will be no salvation whatsoever.¹⁴¹

138. Connolly, William, Political Theory Modernity, (Oxford Blackwell, 1989, Reprinted 1991).

139. Palmer, N.D. et al., International Relations, (3rd Edition), (CBS Publishers & Distributors, Delhi, 1985), p. 73.

140. Calvez, loc. cit

141. Ibid., p. 291.

While explaining, Th. Muivah stated that "in this world of ideological forces love for one's nation can no more be independent of the line that can ensure the salvation of the people in politics, economy and religion.¹⁴² Coming down to the social level, Th. Muivah also asserts :

One needs to be committed to be more than being a mere patriot, for what is independence if the country is exploited by a few people or is owned by some rich families ? What is independence if nation is lost in vain philosophies ? What is independence if society is lost in corruption ?¹⁴³

In its search for a new ideology the NSCN leaders issued a caution in the context of the Nagas by stating that "mad dogmatism should be discarded."¹⁴⁴ In this sense, the NSCN did not accept Marxism or Socialism of any brand, but picked up the good parts and discarded the rest which does not suit the Naga condition. In fact, the NSCN kind of socialism can be at best designated as 'Naga Socialism' implying application of socialist principles to suit Naga local conditions. This is also directed to remove the myth that the NSCN are ardent communists as alleged in certain corners. For instance, during the late 1970s and early 1980s, the NSCN were branded as 'communists' by the pro-accord NNC and the Government of India in order to win the support of the church and the Naga public and this propaganda was a great success initially.

142. Polarisation, op. cit., p. 42.

143. Written interview of Th. Muivah, op.cit., p. 13.

144. Ibid., p. 8.

A. NSCN Brand of Ideology : Naga Socialism

The NSCN manifesto declared : "We stand for socialism because it is the only social and economic system that does away with exploitation and ensure fair equality to all the people."¹⁴⁵ However, the manifesto also stated that "we shall not struggle for the stage of perfect equality simply for the factual reason of impossibility."¹⁴⁶

It should be noted first of all that the NSCN brand of socialism is not compatible with Chinese or Russian socialism. This is corroborated by the statement of Isak Chishi Swu who said: "Our socialism has got nothing to do with Marxism and Leninism. It is never an inportation but of indigenous origin."¹⁴⁷ Thus, the distinctiveness of NSCN brand of ideology is clearly spelled out in the assertion that 'socialism is purely national in orientation'.¹⁴⁸ The NSCN in its manifesto explains as to why this particular ideology was adopted.

In the traditional Naga society the right of every family to maintain ownership of land was not unfettered. The existence of community land had also restrained the unhealthy practice of concentration of landed interests. The practice of community possessions, common sharing, absence of social discrimination, social obligation towards the poor, inculcation of social responsibility through morungs, recognition of individual contribution to the community and even the idea of equal

145. Polarisation, op. cit., p. 43.

146. NSCN Manifesto, op. cit., p.41.

147. Ibid., p. 48.

148. Written interview of Mr. Isak Chishi Swu, loc. cit.

distribution of commodities had the effect of preventing exploitation at social and economic levels.¹⁴⁹

Thus, the NSCN leadership advance their reasoning that Naga socialism is not something new but rather an attempt to reinforce the traditional systems. In this sense, the NSCN ideology is certainly not delinking people from tradition but rather retaining and conserving it in a better way. It also strikes an important note when they say that "The reposition of confidence in this guarantee makes his life worth its while which in turn promotes his sense of responsibility towards the society."¹⁵⁰ In their assessment "for centuries such system enabled the Nagas to live virtually free from evil of the ruthless exploitation and domination found in the world of other societies. Fair distribution of wealth and the sanction of security to a great extent solved the law and order problem which the modern governments every where face."¹⁵¹

However, the NSCN leaders observed that the commencement of the 'naked armed invasion by India and Burma (Myanmar)' marked the beginning of enormous influx of Indian capital and its prominent role in Naga society has created wild condition. The concentration of capital in a few hands and its constant investment for acquiring more capital "has set the whole society on tremendous swing of exploitation of the Nagas by Nagas and the

149. Written interview of Mr. Th. Muviah, loc. cit.

150. Free Nagaland Manifesto, op. cit., pp. 79-80.

The brief write-up by the NSCN is an account based on historical and anthropological evidences. To corroborate it, writings of Verrier Elwin, Alemchiba, M. Horam, R.R. Shimray, etc. are of much use.

151. Idem.

Indian parasites."¹⁵² The Naga nationalist leaders also sound a grave apprehension of massive scale of exploitation by external forces. Thus, they write :

Today, our society and its institutions are in a serious challenge of being overwhelmed with exploitation, domination and assimilation. Backed by military and monetary powers, the process of the exploitation and domination of the puppets are in full swing. Substantial community lands are encroached upon, forests are exploited, mineral resources are appropriated, alien are brought in, in thousands to serve their interests. The rich are all the more fattened with the masses being marginalised. Who can deny now the existence of class antagonism ? How to go about it ? Where is the force to check it ? This is a reality created in the main by the alien occupation.¹⁵³

It is in this context that the NSCN would be sharing the view of William E. Connolly who writes : "Thus ideologies develop when there is a felt social need for ideas and beliefs to guide political action."¹⁵⁴ It is in the same token that the NSCN leaders bring out two pressing considerations. In the first place, the free existence of Nagaland is a must for the salvation of the people. Further, the abolition of exploitation of the people is imperative if the people are to be assured themselves of their future.¹⁵⁵ Then on the question of emancipation the NSCN asserted : "To us, it is definitely SOCIALISM basically of our national brand that alone can assure the fairest to the community

152. Ibid., p. 81.

153. Ibid., p. 33.

154. Free Nagaland Manifesto, loc. cit.

155. Connolly, op.cit., p. 54.

as a whole as it is the only social and economic system that does away with exploitation and oppression."¹⁵⁶

The NSCN advocate a via media between total privatization and total collectivization in their professed belief to do away with inherent contradictions of both.¹⁵⁷ In particular, they point out that "total abolition of private property ownership system destroys all the elements of incentive for growth."¹⁵⁸ At the same time, "the incentive stimulated by the idea of community ownership is not perennial."¹⁵⁹ By this, they precisely meant to emphasise that individualism to a certain level must be promoted. This has to do with man's nature that needs to be reckoned with. Therefore, they argued saying "Any social system that does not take this point into consideration as the prime factor is bound to fail."¹⁶⁰ Elaborating further they stated : "Man's freedom and his fundamental rights are inalienable. Yet the nature of his freedom is by no means unlimited; he is conditioned within the bounds required by sensible society."¹⁶¹

The NSCN leadership totally negate the negative attitude of the communist governments vis-a-vis the national aspiration of the nationalists. Thus they emphatically stated :

Disregard of the forces of national aspiration for the so-called larger interest of the communist revolutionary ends was a flagrant denial of the in-alienable right to self-determination of peoples. This force is stubborn despite being dominant now and then.

156. Free Nagaland Manifesto, op. cit., p. 34.

157. Idem.

158. Written interview of Th. Muviah, loc. cit.

159. Free Nagaland Manifesto, op. cit., p. 83.

160. Idem.

161. Idem.

It has cost them the price they still cannot pay.¹⁶²

They are in fact, critical of the denial of the right of self-determination to various nationalities forcefully integrated into the erstwhile Soviet empire.

Finally, another point of bitter disagreement of the NSCN with the communist world is on the issue of faith. Thus, the NSCN stated : "The consolation they sought in the 'ism' of their persuasion, dismissing the power of faith in the absolute eternal reality apparently could not lead them anywhere."¹⁶³ Here in lies the fundamental difference of the Naga nationalists with others and particularly the communist world who consider religion as the 'opium of the people'. Further in reference to the communist world, the NSCN manifesto stated :

Hopes were belied and the inner contentment they preached in materialism could not be attained at any stage. Disillusionment one after the other overtook them and at last the despised still Voice of Life that says : 'Man does not live by bread alone', could not be questioned any longer. The profound spiritual reality that lies far beyond the purview of science was perceived.¹⁶⁴

The NSCN adherence to Christian faith is implicit in their manifesto which says "spiritual salvation in Christ ... (is) eternal and unquestionable."¹⁶⁵ It is precisely because of their commitment to the Christian faith that Bertil Lintner (who paid a visit to the NSCN operational areas) remarked that NSCN ideology

162. Idem.

163. Ibid., p. 84.

164. Idem.

165. Idem.

can best be "described as a mixture of evangelical Christianity and revolutionary socialism."¹⁶⁶

However, NSCN leadership underlined that "the choice is no more between the capitalist and the communist economy The soundness of a society necessitated a mixed system of economy, the safe-guarding of the fundamental rights and the equal opportunity of the citizens to the extent the security - both economical and political - of the people."¹⁶⁷ Thus in a final analysis, what matters to the NSCN is the kind of ideology which is workable, practicable and which promotes and can best safeguard the interests of the Naga society. Hence, they do not advance any dogmatic ideology but favours a mild form of socialism, a mixed economy with both individual and common property rights.

B. NSCN Ideology Vis-a-Vis the Naga People

In the initial stage, when the NSCN was formed, they were grossly misrepresented for their ideological stand. The NSCN were branded as Communists' Th. Muivah was seen as attempting to "inject Marxism into the Naga movement."¹⁶⁸ Nothing can be more untrue than these allegations.

As a matter of fact, this term was used by the Accord group and the Government of India for a specific purpose, i.e., to garner the support of the Churches in Nagaland and the Naga public (who obviously were adverse to communism or marxism) for

166. Supra Free Nagaland manifesto.

167. Lintner, op. cit., p. 82.

168. Free Nagaland manifesto. loc. cit.

isolating and neutralizing the hard-core NNC, the Alee Command. This stratagem of the accord group and the Government of India was a subtle move indeed and was a great success initially in winning over the powerful Church organisation as well as the gullible Naga public. The group under the command of Th. Muivah camping across the border in Myanmar had to receive the wrath of those who supported the Shillong Accord and the Government of India as they were considered a stumbling block to the peace process. Th. Muivah recalls :

Our men were shouted at as traitors and communists. They (public) were completely brainwashed with false concoction about us. But they (accord group) could not face the situation. For long they had to be on the run. But all the accord forces were closed up and reinforced, equipped and directly assisted by the Indian army. All the Christian leaders were also employed in collusion with the NNC, to whip up the public into a frezy against us.¹⁶⁹

The Government of India and the Accord group meticulously exploited the situation. The fact that majority of the Nagas are Christians by faith and at a time when the 'red world' was strongly suspected of having persecuted the Christians, it was for the accord group and the church body to say so by propagating that the NSCN were bringing 'communism' into Nagaland. Though it worked for sometime, it turned out to be a mere propaganda. Very soon, the NSCN gained ground and emerged as a strong nationalist movement in the region. Significantly, the NSCN came to be

169. Nibedon, Nirmal., North East India, The Ethnic explosion op. cit., p. 68.

generally acknowledged as the most widely supported Naga political movement.¹⁷⁰

III. Objectives

The primary objective of the National Socialist Council of Nagaland has been clearly spelled out in its manifesto as :

We stand for the unquestionable Sovereign right of the Naga people over every inch of Nagaland; wherever it may be, it does admit of no other existence whatever.¹⁷¹

Thus, the NSCN's primary political objective is to establish a 'Sovereign Christian Socialist country'.¹⁷² An important functionary of the NSCN stated : "We are fighting for the international recognition of our national right (even by India and Myanmar)."¹⁷³

They declared: "Nagas have their own history and every aspect of it does not admit of distortion."¹⁷⁴ The Nagas also claimed that History was on their side.¹⁷⁵

The Naga nationalists are unanimous as far as this issue is concerned. Thus, they stated:

Historically and legally Nagaland was/is never an integral part of India. The claim that Nagaland is an integral part of India is not based on facts.¹⁷⁶

170. Written interview of Th. Muivah, Loc. cit.

171. Morris, Glenn T., Nagaland Still Fighting After all These Years, (Fourth World Bulletin, Denver USA April 1994), p. 15.

172. Free Nagaland Manifesto, loc. cit.

173. Written interview of Mr. Rh. Raising (a top ranking officer of NSCN) by Mr. W. Hussain, 2nd week of August, 1988, (in) Hill Express, September 6, 1988.

174. Idem.

175. Free Nagaland Manifesto, op. cit., p. 41.

176. Ibid., p. 42.

Further they advance the argument that "recognition of Naga independence by India is neither a question of 'separation' nor 'secession' from India. Separation or secession in their view comes only when there is a union. Nagaland was never a part of India and as such, Naga independence is neither a question of separation nor secession from India.¹⁷⁷ In the same line, the NSCN leaders seriously challenged the stand of India. They stated:

The truth we hold is supported by historical facts which India dare not face except taking recourse to the boundless vain argument that India has inherited Nagaland from the British Imperialists, and the brazen claim made after 18 years that Naga "accepted Indian Constitution" by installing a puppet state in 1963 under sheer force of well above two hundred thousand armed forces using a few traitors who were also in the pay of the Indian government.¹⁷⁸

Therefore, they strongly argued that Nagaland remains independent - a status which cannot be altered, nor could it be distorted.

(A) Policy

Objectives and policy were so closely related that they cannot be separated. Objectives without a sound and pragmatic policy will always remain unachieved goals. Thus, a failure or success of one's organisational objectives will be determined by the type of policy formulated and put into effect.

177. Federal Government of Nagaland - A brief historical background of Naga independence, (Oking, 1968), p. 67.

178. Ibid., p. 71.

Articulating on policy, the NSCN leaders quoting Mao stated: "Policy is the life-line."¹⁷⁹ According to the NSCN leaders, "The defeat of a people is not always brought about by the superiority of the adversary in strength but through incorrect leadership and pursuit and unfounded policy."¹⁸⁰ They also point out that "it is policy that decides the outcome of any contest apart from strength."¹⁸¹ Thus, the NSCN emphasise on the importance of evolving sound policy is explicit.

(1) The Policy of United Front

The NSCN leaders borrowed this idea from the Chinese at least in principle but the content is entirely different. The NSCN has reshaped it to suit local conditions. In the words of Lin Piao, "United front is defined as to hold aloft the banner of national liberation, unite with all the forces that could be united to form a broad national united front."¹⁸² In the case of the Naga nationalists, the NSCN perception of 'united front' is to forge unity among the various nationalists or with all the revolutionary forces (in their words) in and outside India. That is the basic difference with the Chinese application of 'united front'. The NSCN united front policy has both national and international dimension.

In Th. Muviah's words, "United front is an effective strategy in confronting the adversary of superior power."¹⁸³

179. Free Nagaland Manifesto, loc. cit.

180. Supra Free Nagaland Manifesto.

181. Ibid., p. 5.

182. Idem.

183. Girling, op. cit., pp. 52-53.

Admitting India to be a superior power, the NSCN leaders are of the opinion that she needs to be confronted on all fronts so as to scatter her force to weaken it and deprive the advantages of being superior in strength." We should also penetrate his line and wreck him from within."¹⁸⁴ "Therefore, the question of the strategy of united front with all the forces that could be united with some way or other cannot be dispensed with"¹⁸⁵ writes the NSCN manifesto.

Significantly, the NSCN have changed the old style of fighting single-handed like a bull¹⁸⁶ which according to the NSCN leadership is strategically wrong and unreliable. The NSCN policy of 'united front' is born out of Naga's practical experiences. The NSCN leadership believed that one of the reasons of Naga's defeat (Shillong Accord) was essentially because of the lack of allies and for fighting alone and without any strategy. The NSCN leaders severely criticised the former leadership for their lack of acumen in reading the minds of the enemy and lack of evolving an effective policy in confronting the adversary of superior force. Thus, in their manifesto, the NSCN leaders points out these problems :

It is pity that the leadership persistently harps and counts on the tantalized boon of some particular imperialist country and bosses and the sensibleness of the adversary by making antagonistic pronouncements against the countries which are sympathetically sharing with us the weal and woe (China and Pakistan).... Unfaithfulness to our friends in the critical times (1962 and 1972 wars) have done much damage to the mutual confidence.

184. Written interview of Th. Muviah, loc. cit.

185. Idem.

186. Free Nagaland Manifesto, loc. cit.

When war broke out between our friends and our adversary, the leadership betrayed cooperation for the wanton purpose of winning the favour of the adversary. The two faced policy of the enemy was often miscalculated. Wounds caused by such perfidy are not easily healed. Every friend is wounded; the adversary is gladdened and strengthen against us.¹⁸⁷

This clearly unfolds the actual picture of their relationship with China and Pakistan. That shows that everything was not well in the relationship between the Nagas and the two supporting countries. This account can be considered as true because it was Th. Muviah who went to China as a plenipotentiary and who coordinated the whole affair. Therefore, if the Chinese were bitter against A.Z. Phizo for the aforesaid reason, Th. Muviah would know indeed.

For the ardent Naga nationalists there is readiness to unite with all the forces, "God-fearing and Godless, that can be united with and fight against the monster."¹⁸⁸ Thus, the main thrust of the united front policy is as Th. Muviah writes :

To be realistic he must be confronted from all sides. Until that we can hardly claim to cope with him. But that can be best done only when a United Front is forged against the common enemy. Yes, to fight in the packs against the enemy is most commended. We have been on that job.¹⁸⁹

Of late, the NSCN has expanded its area of operation to the entire North East region and helped establishment of a number of 'revolutionary groups' in addition to tie-up with other groups of

187. Idem.

188. Ibid., p. 30.

189. Idem.

the region and beyond. 'Brig'. V.S. Atem, chief of the Naga army, GPRN succinctly acknowledged saying :

Yes, it is a fact that we (NSCN) have been helping quite a few revolutionary brothers of the North East. But the general notion that the NSCN has been trying to create unrest in this part of the world by just inciting or abetting and helping the so called people of the North East to take up arms and fight with India is wrong. Our leadership is very pragmatic and realistic in approach to any problems and we know that revolution is not like a commodity that can be put on sale in the market.¹⁹⁰

Thus according to Brig. V.S. Atem's the NSCN came forward to assist the 'revolutionary groups' only when "our neighbours have now realised of their folly to have joined India"¹⁹¹ or in the words of Th. Muviah when "more and more minority sects are feeling exploited."¹⁹²

As of now, the NSCN is able to extend help to the Bodo Security Force (BSF) in Assam, United Liberation Front (UNLF), People's Liberation Army (PLA). Kanglepak Communist Part (KCP), Prepak in Manipur, National Liberation Front of Tripura (NLFT) in Tripura, United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA) in Assam, Achik Liberation Matgrik Army (ALMA) in Garo hills of Meghalaya, Hynniewtrep Achik Liberation Council (HALC) in Khasi hills of Meghalaya, Hmar People's Convention (HPC) in Mizoram,¹⁹³ the Dimasa National Security Force (DNSF),¹⁹⁴ and lately, the NSCN also maintained link with the Council of Khalistan (COK).¹⁹⁵

190. Written interview of Th. Muviah, loc. cit.

191. Written interview of Brig. V.S. Atem, loc. cit.

192. Idem.

193. Subir Bhaumik interview with Th. Muviah, op. cit., p. 25.

194. Written interview of Brig. V.S. Atem, loc. cit.

195. Sunday Magazine, 20-26 November, 1994, p. 93.

Then of course, the most significant step taken by the NSCN in realising the united front is the decision to form a common front called the Self Defence United Front of the South East Himalayan Region for political and military cooperation and coordination in combating the Indian Force.¹⁹⁶ Besides, the NSCN also maintained operational link with other 'revolutionary groups' outside India like Arakan Liberation Party (ALP), New Mon State Party (NMSP), National United Front of Arakan (NUFA), Wa National Party (WNP), Karen National Union (KNU) and Chin Liberation Front (CLF) and "many other ethnic revolutionary forces have been promoted a clear understanding of recognising each other's right and to extend help whenever needed."¹⁹⁷

Thus, the NSCN successfully developed a close network of relations with a number of 'revolutionary groups' and continually stressed on close cooperation and increasing coordination with other groups in the North East region and beyond. This greatly enhanced the expanding strike radius of the Naga nationalists that is 'giving mandarins in the capital's corridors of power sleepless nights.'¹⁹⁸ This development has helped the NSCN in two ways : (1) It has greatly enhanced the strength of the NSCN in spreading out its influence in almost all these areas giving more space for military manoeuvring and other advantages, (2) It has

196. Khalistanis back Naga rebel groups, The Telegraph, April 24, 1993.

In a letter signed by the President of the Council of Khalistan Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh urged all sikh soldiers soldiers in the Indian army serving in Nagaland to cease oppression of the Nagas and support their freedom. (This was widely circulated in Nagaland).

197. Sunil, Oinam., Another Front, North-East Sun, January 14-20, 1995.

198. Written interview of 'Major' Ningkhan Shimray, op.cit., p. 3.

fostered greater coordination and built up a relationship making it a powerful force. This has particularly helped in foreign related mission such as shipment of arms.

Thus, NSCN leadership harping on 'victory' writes :

Yes, India could not crush the Nagas even when the latter were alone. Will India do better when all the revolutionaries in the South East Asia are firmly behind us and those of India convulsing into a force? It will be too far-fetched a logic if anyone thinks India will...Time will bear out whether Nagaland will first disappear or India becomes ten.¹⁹⁹

Recounting the success of the NSCN policy and strategy, Subir Bhaumik observed: "The Indian army is already suffering from overstretch fatigue."²⁰⁰ Bhaumik was the first Indian reporter who trekked to upper Myanmar, the General Headquarters of the NSCN and personally interviewed Th. Muivah and other officers. He also said: "Like Che (Guevara), the NSCN is trying to light more prairie fires than New Delhi can extinguish."²⁰¹ This is precisely the present ground reality in Nagaland and in the North East from security point of view. Thus, admittedly, Maj General A.K. Sengupta, the General Officer Commanding (GOC) of the Indian army's 57 Mountain Division stated: "We believe that the military can only contain insurgency and not solve it. Our efforts would be wasted if it is not backed by a political settlement."²⁰²

199. Bhaumik, Subir., NSCN rampage worries New Delhi, Eastern Panorama, September, 1994, p. 14.

200. Polarisation, op. cit., p. 24.

201. Bhaumik, loc. cit.

202. Bhaumik, Subir., NSCN Rejuvenation or last flicker? (In) Eastern Panorama, (November, 1992), p. 13.

In this context Th. Muivah, the General Secretary of the NSCN clearly stated:

Now Indian forces are fighting not in free Nagaland alone, they are being deployed in various parts to fight and they have been fighting without any clear-cut success anywhere. Indians are now no longer strong enough to be decisive in any confrontation. The danger of a single-combat is thus averted.²⁰³

It is observed that one of the ultimate objectives of the NSCN is to defeat the Government's will to fight and thereby forcing it come to a rightful settlement of the issues.

(2) Policy of establishing safe base area

Another important policy of the NSCN leadership is the necessity of establishing a safe base area. Yet establishing a safe base area in a remote or inaccessible region, was not so much a condition of victory as of survival. Thus, according to Th. Muivah, there is "danger of being wiped out if their forces continued to fight in the area where the adversaries would do better and already there and to make a shift in this respect is no less imperative for their survival."²⁰⁴ Therefore, the leadership of the NSCN stated: "This compelled us to have concrete examination of the enemy's weakest point. It was unquestionably the eastern side (Naga territory in Myanmar) where we could create safe base areas and consolidate ourselves there."²⁰⁵ In this way, the NSCN leadership were convinced that

203. Phanjoubam, Pradip., Army clarifies its stand (In) NE Sun, (October 23-29, 1993), p. 16.

204. Written interview of Th. Muivah, loc. cit.

205. Interview of Bertil Lintner with Th. Muivah, loc. cit.

fighting initiative will be always retained by them and can go for offensive everywhere outside the base area.²⁰⁶

As a matter of fact, it was here that the NSCN built up their forces, mobilised the public, gave comprehensive political teaching both to the cadres as well as to public and commands were also sent out from time to time. It was here that the Government of the People's Republic of Nagaland (GPRN) directly administered these inhospitable terrain and professed to work as 'true revolutionary patriots for bringing socio-economic and religious reformation in a big scale.'²⁰⁷ Thus, what Lin Biao said of the Chinese base area was also true of the Nagas. He said: "Our base areas were in fact a state in miniature...(and) became the springboard for the people's war of liberation."²⁰⁸ It is a fact that the NSCN were quite successful in establishing a strong 'impregnable jungle fortress' around Challam, Tongyu, Longkai area in upper Myanmar which they strategically considered the weak spot of both the Indian and the Myanmarese armies. Thus, they did achieve something significant which the NNC and the Federal Government of Nagaland failed to realise. They completely failed to grasp the decisive significance of the base area so as to retain the initiative always in their hand.²⁰⁹ The impact of having a safe base area on the NSCN cadres was glaringly narrated by GPRN document which says: "They had been better trained militarily, better established politically, ideologically and

206. Idem.

207. Idem.

208. Passim, A brief political account of Free Nagaland.

209. Girling, op. cit., p. 74.

even morally."²¹⁰ Besides, batch after batch belonging to ULFA, UNLF etc. were trained in that base area and stayed with the NSCN.²¹¹

However, when the tragic incident took place in 1988, when S.S. khaplang and his associates created internal dissensions the core of the NSCN forces had to abandon the base area and shift temporarily to the borders of Nagaland state.

(3) Policy of Self Reliance

The NSCN adoption of the policy of 'self reliance' is novel at any rate. By this, the leadership of the NSCN desires to make political struggle more realistic and self assuring to face any eventuality.* To them it is the practice of relying on oneself that gives reality to one's existence.

Pointing out the past mistakes that made the political movement lose its strength and initiative, the NSCN writes:

The most dangerous harm affecting our politics today is that right from the start the people were made to believe in foreign help for their survival. This policy of letting the people on the hope of external help weakens the initiative to save themselves. Such policy is opportunist and treacherous in that the people are driven to despair and capitulation when things would not turn out as they expected.²¹²

210. Interview of Bertil Lintner with Th. Muviah, op. cit., p. 6.

211. GPRN A brief political account of Free Nagaland, op. cit., p. 41.

* To them it is the practice of relying on oneself that gives reality to one's existence.

212. Bhaumik, Subir., Brothers in arms (Special Report) Sunday, 14-20 June, 1987, p. 22.

By this, the NSCN is not ruling out foreign aid, but what concerned them is the 'false hope' detrimental to promoting self-reliance and initiative. Thus, the essence of NSCN policy of self-reliance is evidently the enlightenment of the people in that their own effort is the determining factor to change the course of events.

(4) Policy Against Social Evil

The NSCN's uncompromising campaign against social evils is second to none. In fact, their successful endeavour in this area has been well acknowledged by all including the Indian army circle. Admittedly, a high ranking Indian army officer stated: "The support of the people is entirely with the NSCN because they deal most effectively with the evil practices in the society and the anti-social elements."²¹³ Similarly, a newspaper correspondent reported: "It goes to the credit of the NSCN leaders that the number of drug addicts and the like is very low among the Naga tribes."²¹⁴ Significantly, the same reporter acknowledged that "elected representatives (MLAs) and all those persons who want to see a better society in Manipur are happy with these campaigns."²¹⁵ In reality "It is the NSCN which has been policing these four districts (Ukhrul, Tamenglong, Senapati and Chandel). Drug addicts, habitual drunkards, womanizers, women of easy virtue and other petty criminals are rounded up and then

213. Free Nagaland Manifesto, op. cit., p. 27.

213. Th. Muviah, General Secretary, NSCN, A rejoinder to the Indian propaganda stunt : Does violence get a mandate, (Oking, 6 June, 1994), p. 14.

214. The Sentinel, 26 April, 1991.

215. Idem.

beaten."²¹⁶ Interestingly, a regional reporter writes : "Today, one cannot find peg of liquor for love or money at Ukhrul district headquarter, the stronghold of the NSCN. Similarly, drug-traffickers are on the run in the district."²¹⁷ One local newspaper in Nagaland gave a fascinating report that, "the campaign has left the local police here (Ukhrul) quite satisfied about the positive effects on the law and order problems as crimes have almost disappeared over night."²¹⁸

Since the inception of the NSCN, their stand against social evils is quite indicative. For instance, the disciplinary rule of the NSCN emphatically caution all concerned including Central Council members against indulging in immorality or social evils. Isak Chishi Swu and Th. Muivah in a joint statement stated:

Yes, dirt must be swept out starting right from the topmost room (leader) because revolutionaries believe more in the practical values...The Chinese saying, 'clean your compound and the whole village will be clean' has an undying value to us. After several years of strenuous efforts, most of the national workers were persuaded of the danger of being indulgent in immorality and wickedness.²¹⁹

Reaffirming their earlier stand, the Central Council meeting passed a significant resolution. It says: "NSCN views prostitution, drug peddling and drug abuse as most deadly social crimes which sap the sanctity and life of society. We shall continue our all-out commitment to combat against them through to

216. Sentinel, 7 June, 1992.

217. Eastern Clarion, April 7, 1995.

218. NSCN strikes against all addicts, whores in Ukhrul Nagaland Post, May 15, 1991.

219. Minutes of the Central Council meeting, loc. cit.

the end."²²⁰ In the same way, the women wing of the NSCN called the National Socialist Women Organisation (NSWO) warned and cautioned the Naga girls indulging in immoral activities and other social evils.²²¹ In this connection, the NSCN has from time to time chastised many and some were executed in extreme cases (as per their judgement). These included the killing of Biju Sahni alias Kalia, accused of being a ring leader in drug trafficking in North Eastern region²²² and the execution of four NSCN members allegedly involved in extortion.²²³ To this end, the NSCN openly admit of having awarded capital punishment to many.²²⁴

It may be recalled here that most of the national press and particularly the Government of India squarely accuse the NSCN of drug trafficking though without any substantial evidence. For instance, both have suggested that the NSCN considers the town of Moreh crucial to its operations because of its being a lucrative centre for smuggling. It was also alleged that the NSCN uses Moreh as a centre for regional drug trafficking so as to project it as no more than a druglord terrorist organisation.²²⁵ Th. Muivah has emphatically countered the allegation as baseless. The NSCN has condemned drug trafficking in Nagaland and has reportedly taken measures against Nagas and non-Nagas alike who

220. Proceeding of the Central Concil Meeting, op. cit., p. 4.

221. An Appeal Issued by the National Socialist Women Organisation (NSWO) 7 August, 1987.

222. Heroin supply hit, The Nagaland Journal November 17, 1994.

223. The Nagaland Journal, September 11, 1991.

Vide Nagaland Post May 23, 1994.

224. Press Release by the publicity wing, GPRN, (Oking, 26 Jan., 1994).

225. Morris, loc.cit.

deal in drug in their areas.²²⁶ In a rejoinder submitted to the Secretary General of the UNPO against the allegation of the Government of India, Th. Muivah stated:

The problem of drug addiction often went out of hand in Nagaland especially in urban areas. Our (NSCN's) relentless campaign against drug peddling and abuses alone has saved the society a great deal...To us, a society that is succumbed to sex, drug, money and wine is the weakest of all. We will never allow under any circumstances our society to be given up to such vanities and frailties.²²⁷

Th. Muivah also did not spare the Government of India and other groups for alleged involvement in drug dealing. Thus, while refuting the blame he stated:

But to the great hurt of our conscience, many responsible army officers, a number of Kachin officers, the Kukis, the NNC traitors and some puppet Ministers are found involved in such unhallowed deals. But brazenly enough Indian mass media took the luxury of blaming us that NSCN wrestled for the benefit of drug business. What an unscrupulous mentality to tell such a lie ! We have done away with a good number of drug peddlers. We are serious and we simply can't spare them for the salvation of society.²²⁸

Similarly, when asked by a journalist to comment on some news report that the Naga-Kuki fight is for the 'drug traffic control', Muivah explicitly denied saying: "We are not interested in drugs. You know the Nagas, particularly NSCN, they value the sanctity of society, they value the importance of young

226. Th. Muivah's rejoinder to the Indian Propaganda Stunt, loc. cit.

227. Ibid., p. 14.

228. Idem.

generation... We, the NSCN are quite critical of those things, deadly against drug menance."²²⁹

It is an established fact that the NSCN has earned for themselves the admiration of many in the campaign against drug menance and for sense of duty towards the society.

Lately, the NSCN has also embarked on the mission of checking corruption in Nagaland. In a strongly worded statement, they observed "what is independence if the country is exploited or is owned by some rich families?"²³⁰ Hence, rooting out corruption becomes inevitable according to their assessment. The present Naga society in NSCN view is plagued with injustice, corruption, exploitation, power struggle, religious apostasy, hypocrisy etc.²³¹

The NSCN is fighting in two fronts i.e. with the internal enemies like social evils and the external enemies which include Governments of India and Myanmar. Admittedly, the Central Council meeting points out that "the main objective of the Naga army is to continue fighting with external as well as internal enemies."²³²

IV STRATEGIES

The emergence of the NSCN witnessed a significant shift in Naga nationalists' military strategies vis-a-vis the Government of India and the Government of Myanmar. According to Oxford

229. Interview with Th. Muivah by Deepak Dewan, op. cit., p. 9.

230. Written interview of Th. Muivah, loc. cit.

231. Speech of Rh. Raising Killo and Chaplee Kilonser (Home and Finance Minister) on NSCN Day, 31st January, 1991.

232. Proceedings of the Central Council meeting, loc. cit.

Dictionary, strategy is defined as "the art of war; management of an army or armies in a campaign." In our context, therefore, strategy can be understood to mean the art of conducting a campaign and manoeuvring an army.

The NSCN's major shift in strategy arose from the military defeat of the NNC. The setback of the movement led to serious re-evaluation and analysis and finally they evolved a new strategy of continuing the resistance war against (what they termed) 'naked invasion of Nagaland' by India and Myanmar. The NSCN strategist, Th. Muivah declared:

Our tactical line is based on Mao Ze Dung's concept of guerrilla warfare, protracted in form and revolutionary in content. I do not believe in the flashy brilliance of one or two successful encounters with the enemy and which is endowed with greater resources. On this revolutionary war, we have to survive. Survival is more important. If we stay in the fight, we will get the chance to go on the offensive when India starts disintegrating.²³³

Thus, the NSCN military strategy is clearly spelt out as being a low cost offensive posture, avoiding direct confrontation with the strongly armed Indian Army and preferring guerrilla warfare to a set pitch battle.²³⁴ This new idea of strategic fight is borne out of its own experience of three decade long resistance against Indian and Myanmarese Governments. Recapitulating the past error, the NSCN manifesto opined: "persistent fighting, as it was done in the past, in the area

233. Interview Th. Muivah, Gen. Secretary, NSCN by Subir Bhaumik Special report Sunday, 14-20 June 1987, p. 25.

Subir Bhaumik became the first Indian journalist to visit the NSCN GHQ in 'Eastern Nagaland'.

234. Ibid., p. 22.

where the enemy could do better should be discouraged. In this way, we can wrestle and have initiative almost all the time in our hand in dealing with the enemy however superior he might be."²³⁵

By this, the new leadership of Naga nationalists implicitly conveyed the message that the NNC's failure was precisely due to wrong policy and strategy. Therefore, the NSCN writing on the wall clearly called upon Nagas to be realistic and instead of being swayed by bombastic assurances.²³⁶ Moreover, the NSCN manifesto also stated that upholding the principle and shouting that Nagaland belonged to the Nagas alone would not ensure any concrete result.²³⁷ The NSCN leadership is optimistic and believe that initiative is in their hand. Thus, Th. Muivah writes:

Nagas will no longer suffer from the mistake of over estimation nor underestimation of the opponents and ourselves. We can deal with them in the way objectivity requires. We are no more alone, besides, we have plenty of guts to hold out in any circumstances. We have seized the initiative on all fronts.²³⁸

A. Protracted Struggle

As stated earlier, the NSCN leadership having studied the security environment opted for 'protracted struggle'. According to NSCN manifesto. "The enemy is superior, therefore, our war will have to be a protracted one."²³⁹ Thus, Gautam Dasgupta

235. Free Nagaland manifesto, op. cit., p. 28.

236. Interview of Mr. Bertil Lintner with Th. Muivah, loc. cit.
For instance, NNC in the post Shillong Accord period propagated that 'Nagaland will soon become a member of UNO' which turned out to be untrue.

237. Free Nagaland manifesto, loc. cit.

238. Written interview of Th. Muivah, loc. cit.

239. Ibid., p. 2.

writing exclusively on Th. Muivah relates: "Almost sounding like slain Pakistani Premier Zulfikar Bhutto (who promised a thousand years' war with India), Th. Muivah talked of a long protracted struggle against New Delhi."²⁴⁰ Subir Bhaumik (who personally interviewed Th. Muivah) remembers Th. Muivah drawing a parallel between the Vietcong's struggle against the mighty American forces and his little bushwar against vastly superior Indian forces.²⁴¹

Hence, their vision of Naga resistance war would be protracted in form and revolutionary in content. It must be noted here that it was Mao who developed the strategy and tactics of protracted war-the way in which the weak could defeat the strong. It was to wear out the enemy by guerrilla warfare, rather than risking defeat in a head-on clash. But it was also the way to built up strength to be ready to strike when the opportunity came.²⁴²

As Lin Piao, pointed out in his report on People's war, "Guerrilla warfare is the only way to mobilise and apply the whole strength of the people against the enemy, the only way to expand our forces in the course of the war...gradually changes the balance of forces between the enemy and ourselves...switch from guerrilla to mobile warfare and finally defeat the enemy."²⁴³

General Giap's famous passage with reference to 'guerrilla warfare' writes: "There was no clearly defined front in this war.

240. Dasgupta, Gautam., Muivah North East's Guerrilla Supremo The North East Sun, December 12, 1987, p. 6.

241. Idem.

242. Girling, op. cit., p. 65.

243. Girling, op. cit., p. 77.

It was there where the enemy was. The front was nowhere, it was everywhere."²⁴⁴ In the same line, as Mao Tse Tung had explained years before, the absence of fixed battle lines as one of the 'outstanding characteristics' of Red Army operations. "In a revolutionary civil war, he wrote in December 1936, there cannot be fixed battle lines...Our base areas are constantly expanding and contracting, and often as one base area falls, another rises."²⁴⁵ Thus it becomes a vicious circle.

Mao Tse Tung also declared; "We must adapt our thinking and our work to the circumstances ... our strong point, and our means of defeating the enemy. Fight when you can win, move away when you can't win."²⁴⁶ It is in this context that Mao postulates the general rule of fighting a guerrilla warfare. Thus, he writes :

The enemy advances, we retreat;
The enemy camps, we harass;
The enemy tires, we attack;
The enemy retreats, we pursue.²⁴⁷

On the effectiveness of the strategy Mao Tse Tung stated: "guerrilla warfare behind the enemy lines cripples the enemy, pins him down, disrupts his supply lines and inspires the regular forces...The aim is the 'accumulation of many minor victories to make a major victory.'"²⁴⁸

In this context, the NSCN have sought to apply this strategy with slight variation from the Chinese or Viet Cong pattern. In fact, the NSCN has carried out a number of successful raids,

244. Giap, op. cit., p. 21.

245. Girling, loc. cit.

246. Ibid., p. 78.

247. Idem.

248. Ibid., p. 81

attacks and capturing of camps without any significant loss on their side. The following are some of the successful operations against the Indian security forces:

- (1) On 19th February, 1982, under the command of 'Captain' Wungmatem 21 Sikh Regiment jawans were killed and many injured in an ambush. One light machine gun, one sten gun and five SLRs with a huge amount of ammunition were captured by the NSCN.
- (2) On 4th November, 1984, under the command of 'Sgt. Maj.' Ramkathing, ambushed a convoy of Mahar Regiment at Pfutsero killing 14 jawans and injuring 8 others.
- (3) A convoy of 8 Granadiers was completely liquidated in an ambush laid under the command of '2/Lt.' Stone at Nambisha on the 18th February 1985, killing 15 soldiers and captured 4 sten guns, 8 SLRs, 1 LMG, a set of walkie talkie.
- (4) On 13th August, 1985 a convoy of Mahar Regiment was ambushed killing 7 soldiers, including one Major, one Lieutenant, two Sergeants while 7 were seriously injured.
- (5) On 6th May, 1986, in an ambush, 10 BSF men were killed on the spot and many reportedly injured. The ambush was carried out under the command of Lt. Mark.
- (6) On the 12th November, 1986 under the command of '2/Lt.' Ramkathing captured a sum of one crore fifty one lakh and twenty thousand besides seven 303 riles, 1 sten gun, and 1 revolver were recovered from the deceased jawans. This ambush took place in Phek district.

- (7) On the 23rd April, 1987, the NSCN cadres under the command of 'Captain' Mark successfully captured the VVF camp at Kamjong in Ukhrul district. All the VVF personnel were captured alive along with their sixteen 303 rifles with 665 rounds of ammunition.
- (8) On the 23rd April, 1987, the NSCN commander '2/Lt.' Ramkathing attacked with his men, the VVF post at Paorei, Ukhrul district and captured it along with all the arms.
- (9) The NSCN killed about 17 jawans of the Assam Rifles at Nungou on the 7th May, 1987.
- (10) On the 9th July, 1987, the NSCN under the command of 'Captain' Mark assisted by 2/Lt. Ramkathing attacked the D/Coy Hq. of the 21 Assam Rifles at Oinam in Senapati district killing 9 soldiers and injured 3 others. It was here the NSCN captured a huge arms and ammunition. It included : 90 SLRs, 10 LMG, 20 carbine stens, 2 barrels of 2/1/2 inch mortar with 8 shells, 500 hand grenades, 30,000 rounds of ammunitions etc.
- (11) On June 4, 1988, the NSCN ambushed an Assam Rifles column in Kiphire area killing 8 jawans including a JCO.
- (12) On 7th July, 1988, the NSCN gun down two Army Majors and a jawan in the heart of Ukhrul town.
- (13) In October 1990, Battalion Commander 'Lt. Col.' Hanshi and his comrades liquidated a section of BSF at Khudengthabi in Manipur and captured a dozen of sophisticated arms with a huge quantity of ammunition.
- (14) Since 1991, the NSCN (Alee Command) procured sophisticated military hardware from international sources and brought

them back home. These operations were code named - 'Operation Red Sea' and 'Operation Jordan' (significant Biblical events) successfully carried out under the command of 'Major' Ningkhan and his associates.

- (15) On 9th December, 1991, NSCN cadres under the command of Lt. Col. Hanshi liquidated a convoy of CRPF cash remittance party at Lokchao and captured 1 LMG, 11 SLRs and 3 carbine stens. A sum of Rs. 52 lakhs was also captured from them.
- (16) On 14th February, 1992, NSCN cadres under the command of 'Lt. Col.' Stone ambushed a treasury convoy at Aghunato and captured 1 LMG, and nine 303 rifles along Rs. 45 lakhs.
- (17) On 12th June 1992, a convoy carrying 15 Gorkha Regiment with its Brigade Commander, '2I/C Adjutant' and other officers were ambushed near Layni, Manipur-Nagaland border by NSCN under the command of 'Captain' Phungthing Shimrah. 14 soldiers including three officers were killed and 10 seriously injured. They captured one 2" mortar, one LMG, two sten carbine, and seven SLRs along with a sizable amount of ammunition.
- (18) In a daring raid, the NSCN under the command of 'Captain' Phungthing Shimrah captured the Manipur Rifles Post at Tengnoupal in Chandel district on 17th January 1992. The whole army personnel were captured alive and disarmed. The seized arms includes two 2" mortars, 2 LMGs, one sten gun, twenty seven 303 rifles, one revolver and two wireless sets.
- (19) In a daring ambush, NSCN members masquerading as innocent tribal youths waylaid a police party accompanied by 80 BSF

jawans and ambushed them killing 7 security men and fatally wounded many. This happened at Mahu, North Cachar Hills on 5th August, 1992. The same group also shot to death an army Colonel and his body-guards that year.

- (20) On 29th June, 1993, the NSCN commandos ambushed 15 Assam Regiment column killing 26 jawans in Manipur's Chandel district. It was reported that 20 jawans were seriously injured.
- (21) A company Hq. of B. Coy 6 Battalion NAP at New Beisumpui was stormed by NSCN forces on 16 November, 1993. All the 150 disarmed personnel were set free but all the arms and ammunition were carried away which included two 2" mortars, 14 Rifles, 2 GF rifles, 5 LMGs, 2 pistols, 2 sten carbines, 3 walkie-talkie sets and 7000 rounds of ammunition.
- (22) On 20th December, 1993 in Mokokchung district, the NSCN commandos under the command of 'Maj.' Ramkathing ambushed 40 strong column of the 16th Maratha Light Infantry killing 15 army men including the C.O. Col. Nayar and one JCO. It is to be noted that Col. Nayar was awarded the highest military award during peace time Ashok Chakra posthumously.
- (23) On 14th March, 1994, the NSCN in a daring ambush killed 2 army men including the C.O. of the 16th Assam Rifles Col. Ajit Singh and seriously injured 8 others in Dimapur area.
- (24) On 18th August, 1994, in one of the biggest ambush, at least 23 Assam Rifles jawans including some officers were gunned down and 13 others seriously injured. This ambush took place near Yangkhullen in Manipur bordering Nagaland State.

(25) In Manipur's Chandel district, the NSCN guerillas killed 8 Assam Rifles jawans in an ambush on 5th September, 1994.²⁴⁹

The NSCN successes have earned them praise from the media as well as the Indian Army Officers. Admittedly, a well known journalist Subir Bhaumik (who said : the ability of the NSCN calls for praise) quoting a statement of an Army officer with long experience of North-Eastern theatre writes : "The Naga rebel really knows fighting. He knows how to consolidate an ambush, which cannot be said of other over-publicised groups like the ULFA."²⁵⁰ Rabin Gupta, another journalist writes : "There seems to be some grudging respect for the NSCN as a fighting force."²⁵¹ He also quoted the statement of Brig. Upinder Kumar, C.O. Assam Rifles who said : "Those boys (NSCN) : they are good."²⁵² Thus, Lt. Gen. O.P. Kaushik, Chief of Staff, Eastern Command which is fighting one of the largest 'low intensity conflicts' in the North Eastern Region admittedly made this observation and stated: "The J & K militant is a much more wary person, but the North-Eastern tribal is very arrogant. If a North-Eastern tribal lays an ambush, only God can save you. It is because of this characteristic that casualties in the insurgency-ridden areas are much higher than that in Kashmir."²⁵³ And of course, Major

249. Passim News paper reporting, Government of India report to the General Secretary, UNPO, Progress reports, Ministry of Home Affairs-GPRN 1988-1993, General reports on the assignment in the Southern Nagaland and the war diary of the Southern Command, 1980-1987. however, this list does not include their military campaign in Myanmar.

250. Bhaumik, Subir., NSCN rejuvenation or last flicker? loc.cit.

251. Gupta, Rabin., Law of the jungle (In) Sunday 7-13 November, 1993 p. 47.

252. Idem.

253. NE insurgency worse than J & K : General The Telegraph 16 Feb., 1995.

General A.K. Sen Gupta the General Officer Commanding (GOC) of the Army's 57 Mountain Division plainly admitted:

Everything is to the militants' advantage. Villagers are forced to help them out of fear. The terrain is friendly to the insurgents and they can choose the time and place of any encounter with security men. After all, they have been involved in jungle warfare for 40 years.²⁵⁴

Thus, it will be right to say that the radical Naga nationalists are not like conventional army of professional soldiers but men imbued with a sense of mission.

The NSCN in its integrated strategy of weakening the grip of the Indian state in Nagaland have resorted to taxing banks and transports, employees and businessmen. In fact, all government establishments now have to pay various forms of taxes to the GPRN. The intention is very clear (according to NSCN statement) i.e. "to drive out the enemy and all her occupation forces from Nagaland. To this end, we are bound to destroy all her establishments and make India's occupation of Nagaland a costly affair....India must pay dearly for occupying our land."²⁵⁵ This statement is implicitly seeking to justify imposition of forcible taxation on what they called 'occupation force' and all their establishments.

It comes not as a surprise when even top Indian army officers admit that the NSCN virtually runs parallel government in Nagaland and Manipur state.²⁵⁶ However, still worse situation

254. Gupta, loc. cit.

255. Government of the Peoples' Republic of Nagaland (GPRN) Statement (In) The Nagaland Journal August 18, 1993.

256. Majumdar, Jaideep., Rebels retain upper hand in NE (In) Amrita Bazar Patrika, December 29, 1993.

is the reported news that "state police departments of Nagaland and Manipur pay those taxes."²⁵⁷

According to NSCN leadership, the Nagas under the NNC did suffer from pessimism. This is what Th. Muivah termed as "the crisis of losing confidence in themselves, in the people and in the cause."²⁵⁸ According to the NSCN leadership, the NNC fought without the strategy and calculation to make the opponent realise the formidability of the Nagas.

On the other hand, the NSCN have made the Government of India including defence Officers realize the futility of military solution and favouring instead a political solution of the issue. Evidently, Major General A.K. Sen Gupta, the General Officer Commanding (GOC) of the army 57 Mountain Division admitted: "We believe that the military can only contain insurgency and not solve it. Our efforts would be wasted if it is not backed by a political settlement."²⁵⁹ On the same line, Lt. General K. Chiman Singh, GOC, Eastern Command stated in reference to the NSCN: "We believe that there should be a political solution that can be achieved through a constant dialogue."²⁶⁰

It is not a secret that the Prime Minister of India, P.V. Narasimha Rao had offered a unconditional peace negotiation with the NSCN though the latter spurned the same.²⁶¹ The former Union Minister of State for Home, Rajesh Pilot who with a keen approach to the problem of the Nagas emphatically stated: "It is a

257. The Sentinel 28 December, 1993.

258. Written interview of Th. Muivah, loc. cit.

259. Phanjoubam, Pradip., Army clarifies its stand, loc.cit.

260. Amrita Bazar Patrika 14 December, 1984.

261. Ghosh, Santanu., NSCN spurns PM's offer of peace talks, The Telegraph 24 February, 1993.

political problem, we understand; stick is not the solution. We have to open our hearts. We (centre) have an open house with open approach."²⁶² Thus, the aforesaid statements clearly indicate a shift in the Government of India's policy towards the Naga issue from military solution to a political approach. The statement of the Governor of Nagaland O.N. Shrivastava further reinforced this changed perception. In an interview with a local daily, he made it implicit that the Government of India was willing to open 'unconditional talk' with the Naga nationalists.²⁶³ The apparent seriousness of the Government of India was indicated when the Union Minister of state for Home M. Kamson who was officially deputed from the Prime Minister's Office to convey its willingness to hold an unconditional talk with the NSCN.²⁶⁴ The same was repeated by Syed Sibte Razi, Minister of State for Home Affairs.²⁶⁵ Even P. V. Narasimha Rao reiterated his earlier commitment that the Government of India was prepared to hold talk without any pre-condition.²⁶⁶ Thus, the changed perception explicitly speaks for itself. This is precisely what the NSCN leadership seek to achieve to impose a psychological win over the government of India. As Th. Muivah said: "I think it is not a small point; it is an achievement indeed. Indian bosses are now gradually realizing the futility of military solution though not reconciled yet."²⁶⁷

262. North East Unrest Rajesh Pilot for total review of Constitution North East Sun July 16-22, 1994, p. 18.

263. The Naga Banner November 26, 1994.

264. The Eastern Clarion, November 5, 1995.

265. Times of India, February 15, 1996.

266. Nagaland Post, February 23, 1996.

Vide The Telegraph, 23 February, 1996.

267. Written interview of Th. Muivah, loc. cit.

It is evident (from the NSCN literatures and the Constitution) that directive is passed on to the Chief of the Naga army (military related matters) and subsequently to all the 'field commanders'. The field commanders have the liberty to decide as to how best they could be carried out. Directive of political nature and others matters are handed down to the respective ministries i.e. External, Home etc. Concerning the regional affairs, the regional Chairman or Central Administrative officer (CAO) can issue directive relating to the regional affairs (of course within the over all framework of policy and guideline).²⁶⁸

The modus operandi of the NSCN's armed wing is "to use one 'section' of Nagas against one battalion of Indian armed forces."²⁶⁹ Bhaumik reportedly said: "Muivah's men were striking at hard targets like security forces in batches of 15/20 guerrillas over a vast expanse of territory covering Nagaland, Manipur and Assam."²⁷⁰

It is under the NSCN spell of success that an army 'position paper' supposedly points to brilliant tactical manoeuvring by the Naga nationalists. The position paper prepared by one of the security agencies monitoring the developments in Nagaland points out the following steps (carried out by the NSCN) as tactically brilliant.

268. Passim general report on the political assignments in the southern Nagaland and the war diary of the Southern Command (1980-1987), Nagaland Yehzabo (Constitution).

269. Interview of Th. Muivah with Deepak Dewan, op.cit., p. 25.

270. Bhaumik, op. cit., p. 12.

- * Going for smaller outposts in jungle instead of big ones.
- * The shifting of the 'Oking' (NSCN Political Headquarters) and training schools to Bangladesh from "unfriendly" Burma (Myanmar).
- * The expansion of its "striking radius" by spreading out in the outlying areas of Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh and North Cachar Hills in Assam.
- * The enforcement of a vigorous population and resource control programme.
- * The disruption of the economy of the North-East to undermine the administration.
- * The internationalisation of the Naga secessionist cause.²⁷¹

Besides, one of the vital strategies of the NSCN is the procurement of sophisticated arms and ammunitions from undisclosed sources. It is a fact that China and Pakistan were the main weapon suppliers to the Naga nationalists but since late 1970s the free flow of arms ceased even from China. As a result, the NSCN sought arms from international arms dealers and friendly countries and successfully shipped all these arms safely to their bases.²⁷² Over and above, the NSCN has also shown their proficiency in arms capturing from their enemy. In fact during 1987, 1993 and 1994 there had been the highest armed capturing carried out by the NSCN.²⁷³ Even the Chief of Staff, Eastern Command, Lt. General O.P. Kaushik admitted that the NSCN captured

 271. Ghosh, Santanu., Striking moves Sunday 3-9 October, 1993, p.16.

272. Gupta, loc. cit.

273. Passim Newspaper's reporting.

around 227 weapons from Nagaland Armed Police alone around 1993 and 1994.²⁷⁴ One only recalls what Mao Tse Tung said: "The Red Army gets almost all its supplies from the enemy."²⁷⁵ thus, the saying (in guerrilla warfare situation) that 'your enemy is your quarter master' is not without basis.

A critical step in preparation for the active phase of a armed struggle is the formation of an intelligence network. An effective intelligence network is important for several reasons. The network will increase security for the nationalist movement by providing early warning of enemy government operations. A faulty assumption made by the Malayan Communists in the 1950s was that security could be provided by the jungle alone. When the British deployed experienced jungle troops the insurgents became insecure in their own jungle.²⁷⁶ As equally important function of the intelligence network is to facilitate the nationalists' assessment of their own programme(s) of what positions, on what issues and what tactics are generating support for which groups and is as important as knowing what the Government is doing. Once military operation begins, the intelligence network can expand its role, selecting targets for operational units and providing damage assessments.²⁷⁷

In regard to NSCN intelligence network, the whole affairs have been closely guarded and top secrecy is always maintained. As a result, it becomes an impossible task to write on its set-

274. The Telegraph, 25 June, 1995.

275. Girling, op. cit., p. 81.

276. Vought, Lt. Colonel Donald et al., Support for insurgencies Nike or Nemesis ? (In) Military Review, January 1980, p. 24.

277. Idem.

up, mode of operation etc. The only conclusion one can draw, having observed their over-all performance, is that they seem to have an excellent network of intelligence without which no movement can be so successful. Subir Bhaumik in his review observed: "their system of intelligence and command structure is far better than our army silverbrass can imagine."²⁷⁸

V. LEADERSHIP

A 'dictionary of politics' defined leadership as "a quality which in theory signifies the ability of a person or (more really) a group of persons to persuade others to act by inspiring them and making them believe that a proposed course of action is the correct one."²⁷⁹ Many recent sociological studies have attempted to explain some related facts of leadership. Some argue that leadership results from charisma. Others now reject attempts to explain leadership in terms of the personal characteristics of the leader and prefer to see leadership as a relation dependent upon social context, so that those who are leaders in one situation may not be leader in another.²⁸⁰ Thus, debate on this issue can go on unabated but what is implicit is that leadership is a necessity, and this is more truly so in the case of any political movement such as that of Nagas. Thus, the Nagaland Free manifesto of the NSCN declared: "The defeat of a people is not always

278. Dasgupta, op. cit., p. 10.

279. Robertson, David., Dictionary of politics (Published by Penguin Group, London, 1975), p. 180.

280. Secreton, Roger., A Dictionary of political thought, (Pam Book Ltd., London 1982), p. 260.

brought about by the superiority of the adversary in strength but through incorrect leadership and pursuit of unfounded policy.²⁸¹

A. Naga nationalists' perception on leadership

The NSCN perception of leadership can be understood from their over-all criticism of leadership under the NNC. The NSCN's antipathy of the NNC leadership is explicit particularly in its criticism targeted against 'aristocratic outlook' and 'aristocratic circle' created out of the family and relative of the leadership and reinforced by personality cult. Isak Chishi Swu, Chairman of the NSCN as well as the President of the GPRN lamented the inevitable consequence of the absence of any clear cut ideology of the NNC. As a result, "putting the tribe and family above nation and people became quite visible before the eye of the public. No attempt was made to reorient the organization and the nation was led on the whim of the leadership alone."²⁸² Th. Muivah, the General Secretary of the NSCN and the Prime Minister of the GPRN echoes the impression and finds fault with the chauvinism of the leadership, leading to a sacrifice of the 'higher values of a nation'.²⁸³

Besides, 'Brigadier' V.S. Wungmatem, Chief of the Naga Army and one who had witnessed the Naga war theatre since the early period of the Naga movement, emphatically repudiated the NNC style of leadership. In his view,

281. Free Nagaland Manifesto, loc. cit.

282. Written interview of Isak Chishi Swu, loc. cit.

283. Written interview of Th. Muivah, loc. cit.

When NNC was formed our people were extremely fired with Naga nationalism but the leadership failed to orient it properly by imparting political education to form a strong patriotic revolutionary force. Leadership had no clear cut ideology and therefore no correct policy and programme. War strategy and tactics was never taught to the rank and file. Leadership was not bothered in the least to built revolutionary cadres.

Describing NNC as a house of cards, he stated :

Persons at the helms of affairs were only after power and they were preoccupied in only personality cult building. Individuals were placed above the party and the people's government. At times national interest was made to play secondary role to satisfy a few.²⁸⁴

Thus, in consideration of the aforesaid statements made by some of the top leaders of the NSCN, one can vividly evolve a Naga nationalist perception of leadership. Hence, the following fact on leadership can be pointed out from the NSCN perspective :

(1) A leader must be objective and down to earth.

The NSCN does declare their view on leadership when they stated : "We are revolutionaries; we do not believe in fantasy and absurdity; neither could we ever be persuaded to be the talisman of any helpless leadership. We shall not fly in the air, we shall walk on the ground and work with the people."²⁸⁵ Th. Muviah in an interview with Bertil Lintner confided : "Indulging in giving false hope to the people is in no sense a good politics."²⁸⁶ Th. Muviah was referring to the NNC propaganda in Nagaland that "the UNO will intervene in Nagaland case and

284. Written interview of Brig. V.S. Atem, Op. cit., p. 1.

285. Free Nagaland Manifesto, loc. cit.

286. Interview of Bertil Lintner with Th. Muviah, loc. cit.

Nagaland will soon become a member of the UNO'. Rather he said, "we shall choose to enlighten the people with the actuality of problems around us and have them established on concrete foundation with us."²⁸⁷

Corroborating the other NSCN statements, 'Brigadier' V.S. Wungmatem, Chief of the Naga Army writes :

Nagas took him (Phizo) for granted in everything. Yes, they were fed from time to time with false hopes of the magnanimity and power of the West. People were taken for a ride and they were fed with false information that UN was going to take up our case very shortly and that our national travail was coming to end soon.²⁸⁸

The NSCN leadership vehemently emphasize that leaders must be objective in their policy programme etc. The NSCN manifesto openly declared : "any policy that is independent of the objective condition is without basis and as such, is bound to suffer failure."²⁸⁹ Th. Muivah, thus, admitted and said : "They (NNC leadership) loved Nagaland but the way to save it was not prepared in any sense. The fate of nation was made to hang on the availability of external assistance."²⁹⁰ Th. Muviah in another interview further pointed out the main thrust of his postulate and stated : "In many respects they (NNC) completely failed to understand India and Nagaland. As already stated the questions :

287. Ibid., p. 11.

288. Written interview of Brig. V.S. Atem, op. cit., p. 2.

Vide Written interview with Khodao Yantha. To the question of Nagaland securing membership of the UN he said : "Phizo might have said that to encourage the Nagas or to bluff the simple Nagas."

289. Free Nagaland Manifesto, loc. cit.

290. Interview of Bertil Lintner with Th. Muviah, loc. cit.

What India could and could not do ? What Nagas could and could not do ? were never assessed."²⁹¹

2. A leader must be above tribalism and petty politics

As earlier stated, 'tribalism' has played the most destructive role in the Naga movement. Time again and again it, proved to be the main stumbling block against strengthening Naga nationalism. The NSCN leaders squarely blame the NNC policy as the root cause of 'tribalism'. In the words of Th. Muviah, "Nagas became the fatal enemy of themselves. This danger of self-defeat was imminent."²⁹²

Accordingly, when the NSCN was formed, its leadership took care to oppose the politics of any family or tribe and resolved to do away with parochialism of any form. the laws of the GPRN provide for adequate safeguards in this regard.

(3) A leader must be home based

From their experience, the NSCN strongly advocated that leaders must not stay from the home base, particularly during national crisis. They believed that one could not have objective and precise assessment of the given situation when staying away from the homeland.

In its view, a leader should be around the centre of situation, that is, he has to be with the masses, mobilizing and working in close association, to lead them through all the critical stages with policy that is warranted by the conditions.

291. Written interview of Th. Muviah, loc. cit.

292. Interview of Bertil Lintner with Th. Muviah, loc. cit., p. 3.

It is in this way that the people could appreciate the wisdom of the leadership and his concern for the nation.²⁹³

They also deplored that in the past the leadership acted completely independent of the actual conditions and in total isolation from the people.²⁹⁴ The NNC President stayed away thousands of miles away from home; he could not take corrective assessment of the objective situation at home.²⁹⁵

(4) A good leader must evolve a clear perception of the underlying trend of event and change course accordingly.

Mao Tse Tung rightly observed when he stated :

When condition change, tactics must change accordingly. The making and changing of tactical campaign and strategic plans in accordance with scope and circumstances is a key factor in directing a war.²⁹⁶

J. Filella writing on leadership observed that all the basic qualities of a leader "may come to naught, if the leader himself is not endowed with sensitivity to changing conditions and flexibility to adapt oneself to the process of change in the society."²⁹⁷ She further elucidates and writes "The unique behaviour of leaders over all situations and tasks as concerned with (a) analysing the situation and (b) initiating action required."²⁹⁸

293. Idem.

294. Idem.

295. Written interview of Brig. V.S. Atem, loc. cit.

296. Girling, loc. cit.

297. Airan, J. W. (Ed) The Nature of Leadership A practical Approach, (Lalwani Publishing House, Bombay, 1969), p.59.

298. Idem.

Unfortunately, the NNC leadership miserably failed to objectively analyse the situation and change course accordingly. The worst moment of the Nagas was during the late 1960s and early 1970s when massive military operations were conducted and several Naga resistance forces started surrendering one after another. Referring to that period, Th. Muviah writes : "They fought without the strategy and calculation."²⁹⁹ Consequently, ultimate defeat was imminent and "leadership at home also started losing faith and confidence in themselves... Thus, NNC ended up in capitulation and ignominy."³⁰⁰ Evidently, the letter of 'Major General' J. Saney Ao, GOC. Northern Command, Naga Army to Major General M. Asa, GOC. Northern Command, Naga Army clearly indicate the total disarray and disillusionment among the top military leaders resulting in lack of direction. Thus, he wrote :

ultimately not getting any direction from the Headquarters; I decided to come overground along with my command In view of the prevailing situation, I appeal to you that the time has come that you should come overground with your friends and colleagues to join the mainstream.³⁰¹

The Split

In 1988, eight years after the formation of the NSCN and the GPRN, certain incidents occurred within the organisation. S.S. Khaplang, the Vice Chairman along with Brigadier Khole attempted to capture power and in the process killed over two hundred NSCN cadres including top military and political officers. Among them

299. Written interview of Th. Muviah, loc. cit.

300. Written interview of Brig. V.S. Atem, loc. cit.

301. Wati, L., Fact and Growth of Naga Nationalism, (Published by the author, Mokokchung, 1993), pp. 127-128.

were Hanong (Minister), Angam (Minister), Beyau (Minister), 'Col'. Prunning, General, Staff Officer commanding, 'Col'. Ashiho Chaomai, Deputy Chief Naga Army, and 'Lt.Col'. Luita, Council Commander.³⁰² However, Th. Muivah and other leaders miraculously escaped. The move was considered a failure since it could not dislodge the leadership and capture political power as schemed. As a matter of fact, the NSCN organisation remained intact under Isak Chishi Swu and Th. Muivah's leadership.

As a follow-up, the NSCN held a National Assembly at 'Jordan Camp' on 7th November 1989 and condemned SS Khaplang as national criminal and expelled him from the organisation once and for all. The Assembly on the other hand reaffirmed the leadership of Isak Chishi Swu and Th. Muivah.³⁰³

Meanwhile, S.S. Khaplang and others formed their own group using the same organisation name (NSCN), adopting same Manifesto, organisational frame and system of government. S.S. Khaplang became the Chairman, Dally Mungro the General Secretary and Brigadier Khole was made the Chief of their Army. Thus, the motive of their attempt was to create a parallel NSCN organisation.

As a matter of fact, the conspiracy organised by S.S. Khaplang and his supporters was seen more as the work of the intelligence services of India to checkmate the NSCN. Admittedly, Tajenyuba Ao Ex-MLA and a veteran political leader of Nagaland said : "It was a conspiracy engineered by the Intelligence

302. The joint statement of Isak Chishi Swu and Th. Muivah (7th July, 1989, GPRN), p. 12.

303. Ao., Tajenyuba., British occupation of Naga country, (Mokokchung, 1993), p. 306.

Bureau."³⁰⁴ Although the latter's activities are shunted from public purview, the indirect involvement of the Intelligence Bureau (IB) is understandable. As evidences in this context, the following points can be cited :

- (1) S.S. Khaplang's allegations against Th. Muivah, Isak Chishi Swu and others were never consistent; rather it appeared that they were his own concoction and that he was being used by some forces. For instance, his primary charge was that Th. Muivah and Isak Swu were conspiring to surrender to India. But when he was confronted by the Executive Council members on the issue, he immediately dropped the first allegation and seven fresh charges were brought up. Besides, Khaplang (inspite of repeated request) adamantly refused to come to the Central Executive Council meeting to settle the issue.³⁰⁵ Th. muivah and others on the other hand strongly refuted the misinformation campaign and termed it as "total lies and canard."³⁰⁶ They were convinced by then that some external forces had been working to wreck the organisation from within.³⁰⁷ As a matter of fact, S.S. Khaplang's wild accusations, his dogged resolution not to face the Central Executive Council members (highest Executive body of GPRN) but stick to his scheme, etc. indicated that there was an "unseen force" determined to divide the Naga nationalists.

304. _____ Massacre of Muivah's Group (NSCN) Nagaland Post, March 29, 1994.

305. Joint statement, loc. cit., p. 13.

306. Tarapot, Phanjoubam., Insurgency movement in North Eastern India (Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd. New Delhi, 1993), p. 118.

307. Idem.

- (2) Interestingly, in early 1989 sensational news item appeared in the front pages of two leading Indian national dailies (The Telegraph and The Hindu) that Th. Muivah General Secretary, Angelus Shimrah, Foreign Secretary and Rh. Raising Political cum Regional Chairman of the NSCN were flown to Delhi reportedly for a few rounds of discussion with senior Union Ministry officials.³⁰⁸ Later, it was learnt that the story was planted by the Press Information Bureau (Defence Wing). Thus, the motive was clear. It was purported to give credence to S.S. Khaplang's allegation.
- (3) Following the violent incidents of killing, the Home Ministry and the Intelligence Bureau (IB) invited S.S. Khaplang to Delhi and started secret parleys with them. 'Brig.' Khole Konyak was secretly flown to Delhi for talk.³⁰⁹ Thus, one national paper sarcastically remarked saying "It is ironical that Khaplang and his men, who parted company with Muivah in April 1988 after accusing the latter of trying to set up a peace deal with the centre, themselves became available for talk."³¹⁰ However, if one is to accept

308. Baruah, Subhajt, Guerrillas after 1975 Accord
Nagaland Post, March 15, 1994

Vide The Telegraph 7 April, 1993

Frontiline, September 25, 1992, p. 42.

309. Baruah, Subhajt, Guerrillas after 1975 Accord
Nagaland Post, March 15, 1994

Vide The Telegraph 7 April, 1993

Frontiline, September 25, 1992, p. 42.

CPI(M-L), Nationalities on War Path, (Vanguard publications, 1996), p. 11, which writes : "The Khaplang group visited Delehi in November 1992 and is said to have struck a secret deal with the Government of India by agreeing to act as scouts and trackers against the NSCN led by Muivah."

310. The Telegraph, 7 May, 1993.

the alleged tacit relation between the Government of India (through the Intelligence Bureau) and the Khaplang group, there is no ambiguity. Although no one can tell precisely what transpired between the two parties, one thing is sure that no major political concession was offered to the group because New Delhi 'only wanted to use them against the ardent nationalists under Isak Chishi Swu and Thuingaleng Muivah'.³¹¹

The involvement of the Intelligence Bureau (IB) is nothing new in Nagaland. Not very long ago, in the 1960s, the IB was behind the formation of Nagaland People's Convention (NPC) and its various demands including the statehood were basically intended to divide and delude the Nagas.³¹²

It must be admitted that although the attempted seizure of power proved to be an abortive one, it caused general setback to the NSCN/GPRN. The major loss was its base which they enjoyed in 'Eastern Nagaland' (upper Chindwin), which was finally given up and secondly Khaplang's supporters succeeded in projecting another breakaway NSCN organisation. Hence, the media started using two distinct terms i.e. NSCN (I-M) meaning Isak-Muivah and NSCN (K) to mean Khaplang. However, it must be also noted that NSCN (K) have come to be known more as a force within the Constitution of India primarily to checkmate the NSCN under Isak Chishi Swu and Thuingaleng Muivah and their commitment to the Naga cause is open to serious question. The following points further throw light on this line :

311. Baruah, loc.cit.

312. GPRN Document, A Brief Political Account, op.cit., p. 17..

- (1) The NSCN (K) made an official declaration directing all its cadres that they were not at war with the Indian security force, Nagaland Police or the Accord (Shillong) group. Their prime duty would be to take on the NSCN.³¹³ Thus, the NSCN (K) group's objective is to checkmate the hardcore NSCN. It is a well known fact that they had never ambushed Indian army convoy or attacked any camp.
- (2) The NSCN (K) landed themselves in a major controversy and for which a lot of noise was made by the Naga public following its active collaboration with the Nagaland state Chief Minister S.C. Jamir. In fact, the latter has been accused of patronising the Khaplang group by no less than the former Governor, Lt. General V.K. Nayar (Retd).³¹⁴ Kuldip Nayar, the former Indian High Commissioner of India to the U.K., concisely points out the tacit relationship between the NSCN (K) and the state Chief Minister S.C. Jamir and the Central Government. He noted, "Mr. S.C. Jamir, has been blessed to stay in touch with the other Naga faction (NSCN K). The Government openly finances it from the exchequer, which is liberally compensated by the centre."³¹⁵

The Government of India's strategy in this connection may stem from the fact that most of the international experts on nationalist movements had stated that nationalist movement could

313. Passim Nagaland Journal, April, 1993.

N. Khetovi's Interview with Nagaland Journal, October 28, 1992.

Nagaland Post, April 8, 1994.

314. Report of Manipur Governor (to Secy. to the President of India) Nagaland Post, March 29, 1994.

315. Nayar, Kuldip, Defiance by Respective Nagas The Eastern Clarion, March 8, 1995.

be ultimately countered by the local people and more so if it could be executed within the nationalist organisation itself.

No wonder, the NSCN maintain consistently the allegation that NSCN (K) is nothing but an agent of the government of India. Thus, Th. Muivah in his report to the Secretary General of the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organisation (UNPO) writes : "The so-called NSCN (K) is a criminal organisation sustained by the India Government to counter the only authentic organisation of the people of Nagaland, the NSCN."³¹⁶ The allegation is serious because it comes not only from the NSCN but from a diverse section of people including prominent political leaders like Tajenyuba Ao, Vizol, P. Vamuzo etc.³¹⁷ In fact, it is truism in Nagaland that the other faction has been instigated by forces (unknown to the public eye) to wage war on the NSCN in an attempt to neutralise the organisation.³¹⁸ However the "Khaplang group (allegedly hobnobbing with the Indian intelligence services through the active involvement of Nagaland state Chief Minister S.C. Jamir)... proved unimpressive and unconvincing, fading away into oblivion without much public support."³¹⁹

Here, it is important to take note of the confession of C. Alemla, a close associate of Dally Mungro (General secretary of Khaplang group) who parted company with the Khaplang group. The

316. Muivah, Thuingaleng., A rejoinder to the Indian propaganda sunt, Submitted to the Secretary General of UNPO, Hague, The Netherlands, Oking, 6th June, 1994.

317. Ao. Tajenyuba., loc. cit.
Vide Nagaland Post, September 14, 1993.
Nagaland Times, October 18, 1993.

318. Nagaland Journal, April 30, 1994.

319. Indo-Naga Issue, Press Review and Comment (by Naga Interest Group Delhi, 1994), p.

scholar was able to interview her and her statements made it abundantly clear that Khaplang group and the Indian security forces were in close coordination. For instance, she confessed that she was arrested with others by the Indian security forces but when identified, they were soon released. In the same manner, several of their men too were arrested and all got released. Secondly, she also confided that Khetovi (defence secretary of NSCN-K) admitted of having received financial help from S. C. Jamir. Thirdly, the Khaplang group generally provides security to S. C. Jamir whenever he comes to Mokokchung. Fourthly, whenever, big officers of the Khaplang group comes to Mokokchung, they are always given shelter in the official quarters of top police officers of the state. Finally, she disclosed the fact of Khaplang group having trained and armed over a hundred of Kuki National Front (KNF) members in 'eastern Nagaland'.³²⁰

C. Alemla's confession is further corroborated by the confessional statement of one Longna Chishuhu Konyak, Commander Konyak region of Khaplang group. In his disclosure :

Chief Minister S.C. Jamir donated a sum of Rs. 30,0000 (three lakhs) and handed over to Gen. Secretary Dally Mungro during 1993 election time. Another Rs. one crore along with 5 AK 47 rifles and a jeep load of ammunition were donated...These special donations were made to fight against NSCN in 1994. In 1994 (alone) eighty KNF were trained, imparted arms training course...and later issued arms and ammunitions to them.³²¹

320. Written interview of Ms. C. Alemla, Sergeant in NSCN (K). She hailed from Chuchuyimlang village and was a close associate of Dally Mungro before she left the group. 20th April, 1995.

Vide Hill Express, February 28, 1995.

321. Longna Chishuhu confessed statement published by Nagaland Post, May 6, 1995.

And if doubt may have existed on S C Jamir's patronising the Khaplang group, the disclosure made in the report of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) categorically confirmed it beyond doubt.³²² The report stated that Khaplang group had been operating freely and with impunity as it enjoyed the patronage of the Chief Minister S.C. Jamir. The report also revealed that the Khaplang group helped the Chief Minister during the election.³²³ Thus, the confessions made by C.Alemla and Longna Chishuhu including the NHRC report fully corroborate several charges and allegations of Khaplang group's tacit relation with the Government of India and the involvement of S.C. Jamir in the scheme to decimate the NSCN sideline.

The allegation of patronising Khaplang group became a public controversy following the formation of Nagaland Youth Liberation Front (NYLF). According to the NSCN sources, the NYLF was essentially formed as another conspiracy of S.C. Jamir to counter them. Thus, they write :

Being unable to assassinate Isak and Muivah, the so-called Nagaland Youth Liberation Front (NYLF) was formed by SS Khaplang in connivance with Mr. S.C. Jamir, the then Chief Minister of the so-called Nagaland state, purely with an eye to pull back the wheels of the legitimate government headed by Isak and Muivah...The interrogations of the arrested members of NYLF revealed that many of them were from the CID (Central Intelligence Department) of Nagaland Armed Police (NAP) whereas the rest were from Khaplang's party. Mr. Ashu Rengma, District Commander of the

322. The Times of India, 26 April, 1995. (The report of the NHRC) is supposed to be guarded secret but somehow it was leaked to the press).

323. Idem.

NYLF was an SI (Sub. Inspector) CID of the
NAP.³²⁴

In another sensational press release, Neingulie Angami named several Nagaland state top leaders including S.C. Jamir and bureaucrats as 'brain' behind the formation of the NYLF.³²⁵ According to the former, this information was given by one Limatoshi, President of the NYLF.³²⁶ Although, S.C. Jamir and others (whose names figured in the alleged confession) strongly refuted the allegations, the NSCN's (K) tacit understanding with the state government as well as the Government of India stands out as a public issue. It is the scholar's observation that the Khaplang group's primary objective is to decimate the NSCN under Isak and Muivah's leadership. They sufficiently made it glaring in all their statements and interviews. Ostensibly, they also claimed to be Naga nationalists but their words and deeds ironically impede Naga nationalism. For instances, when the Nagas in general were jubilant over the NSCN (IM) achievement in getting membership of Nagaland in the Unrepresented Nations and People's Organisation (UNPO), the Khaplang group commented on the futility of it.³²⁷ It is also admitted by 'eastern Naga students' that NSCN (K) have re-introduced narcotic and opium taking and permitted everyone to freely cultivate opium plantation. Churches and schools were closed down and instead encouraged animist

324. Speech made by Rh. Raising Kilo (Home) and Chaplee Kilonser (Finance Minister) on NSCN Day the 31st January, 1991.

325. Dynamite Circulation (In) Nagaland Journal, June 27, 1990.

326. Idem.

327. Nagaland Post, December 15, 1995.

worshipping."³²⁸ In fact, Naga nationalism received the greatest threat from the Khaplang group. For instance, adverse situation was created when they issued 'quit notice' against the Tangkhuls in Mokokchung district³²⁹ and again the same quit notice was served against the Semas and Tikhirs in Kiphire area³³⁰ and lately Tangkhuls were asked to leave Kohima.³³¹ It was indeed a sinister plot trying to divide the Nagas on tribal line. The Khaplang group (Angami region) with an evil intent singled out the 'Tangkhuls' and several Tangkhul lives were taken.³³² They even termed the on-going Naga-Kuki clash as Tangkhul-Kuki.³³³ Lately, they resorted to the stratagem of imposing blockade on certain district like Zunheboto, Tuensang on the alleged ground that such areas happened to be the strong support base of NSCN.³³⁴ Thus, one cannot deny the fact that certain forces are behind the Khaplang group committed to destroy Naga nationalism at all cost.

In spite of bitterest pressure, the NSCN under Isak and Muivah has emerged as the strongest ethnic nationalist organisation in the North East and its operational area is ever expanding. Today, the NSCN operation covers almost all the Naga areas stretching from Chandel and Tamenglong districts (south) to Tuensang and Mokokchung (north) and from North Cachar Hills (west) to Somra tract (east). Almost all the Naga tribes are well

328. The Eastern Nagaland A representation submitted to the World Baptist Alliance by Eastern Naga Students, 24 July, 1995, p. 7.

329. Nagaland Times, September 20, 1993.

330. Hill Express, November 9, 1993.

331. Nagaland Post, October 26, 1995.

332. Nagaland Journal, September 27, 1995.

represented in the organisation. Even substantial Angamis and Chakhesangs (who for long were in the NNC) are joining the organisation.³³⁵

In recent times, there are cases of desertions from Khaplang group to NSCN. For instance, the entire region of Sema and Lotha joined the NSCN. The same is also true of NNC. The whole Lotha and Chang Region Command of NNC joined the NSCN claiming it to be: "the only authentic political body of the Nagas" and joining "national mainstream politics".³³⁶ It is important to note the way NSCN was strengthened due to series of groups joining it. The following well indicate this trend :

In 1993, in a significant development in the field of Naga political struggle, the entire Yimchunger region of NNC decided to join the NSCN under Isak and Muivah's leadership holding that, "the NSCN is the only dynamic political organisation for the Nagas."³³⁷

In 1994, there were a number of defections from other groups joining the NSCN. In Phom-Chang region seven members of the Khaplang group joined the NSCN in February 1994³³⁸. In another development, almost the entire Sema region Command of Khaplang group defected to the NSCN, which included one Central Council Member (CCM) and one action Commander.³³⁹ A substantial number of the NNC (Khodao) including its General Secretary also joined the

333. Sentinel, 28 December, 1995.

334. Nagaland Post, Jan. 25, 1996, Feb. 17, 1996.

335. Nagaland Post, June 4, 1994.

336. Passim, Nagaland Journal, Februray 9, 1994.

Nagaland Post, 19 April, 1994.

_____, 5 October, 1994.

_____, 25 November, 1994.

337. Nagaland Post, October 13, 1993.

338. Nagaland Post, February 9, 1994.

339. Hill Express, June 28, 1994.

NSCN.³⁴⁰ In the same month of June 1994, 31 members of the NNC (K) defected to NSCN.³⁴¹ The entire Sangtam Regional Council and the rank and file of the 19th Battalion of Federal Government of Nagaland (FGN), Adino faction led by 'Col. Yanpongse' joined the NSCN with all its personnel including arms and ammunition.³⁴² In November, the Khaplang group led by Loveto (CCM) Sema region along with his supporters joined the NSCN.³⁴³

This trend of consolidating the NSCN continued unabated even in 1995. Thus, a prominent editor of a local paper writes : "In addition to their awesome weaponry backed by a disciplined and well trained armed wing, today, as things stand, the NSCN (I-M) has managed to wrest control of almost the entire districts in Nagaland.³⁴⁴ It is worth noting here the support given by the NNC Executive Council to the NSCN. In a joint statement they expressed :

heartfelt gratitude and support to the achievements of NSCN leaders Isak Chishi Swu and Thuingaleng Muivah at the international arena for the cause of Naga sovereignty and urged upon all people to unite immediately in order to strengthen the mission of both these leaders for fulfilling the long felt aspirations of the Nagas as a distinct people.³⁴⁵

340. Nagaland Post, July 23, 1994.

341. Nagaland Times, June 25, 1994.

342. Nagaland Post, October 17, 1994.

343. Nagaland Post, November 25, 1994.

344. Nagaland Post, January 14, 1995.

Vide Nagaland Post, November 24, 1994.

345. NNC lauds Isak and Muivah, The Nagaland Post, October 1, 1993.

(The release was signed by Gen. Merentoba, M. Chumbemo Murry, Kolhule Nagi, Samphu Yimchunger, all members of the NNC Executive Council).

The support from the NNC was significant and crucial for the NSCN in consolidating the unity of the Nagas for a common cause. In 1995, Khodao Yanthan, the President of the NNC and a close associate of Phizo took the decision of joining the NSCN. Thus, he issued an open statement from the Hague, Netherlands :

The undaunted Naga People, and the patriots in the forefront led by Isak Chishi Swu and Th. Muivah, with the unflinching support of the people, that has safeguarded the sovereignty of Nagaland from the unprecedented challenge of the perils since 1975.... I declare my association with, and full support for the National Socialist Council of Nagaland. There is no time for anyone to waver and to remain confused.³⁴⁶

It is because of the aforesaid reality that the scholar holds that the NSCN is the most widely supported and represented national organisation of the Nagas at present.

346. Open statement of Mr. Khodao Yanthan, President of the Naga National Council, 23rd January 1995, The Hague (The Netherlands). (as distributed in Nagaland).

CHAPTER V

NSCN AS A FACTOR IN NAGALAND STATE POLITICS

In a state where politicians and the Naga nationalists enjoy a symbiotic relationship, the NSCN's unsettling effect in Nagaland state politics is but a natural phenomenon.

Though the Naga nationalists considered the granting of statehood to the Nagas as a ploy to 'divide and rule' the Naga people by the Government of India,¹ they subsequently but unofficially utilised the service of the state apparatus to further Naga aspiration. Overtly and covertly, the course of Nagaland state politics is being determined by the state of Naga political movement as spearheaded by the Naga nationalists. It is in this context that the NSCN is taken as a factor in Nagaland state politics.

The symbiotic relationship between the Nagaland state politicians and the Naga nationalists is a paradoxical one, yet it is not undecipherable. In order to understand this phenomenon, one must know the peculiar political processes that brought about the emergence of statehood. The Nagas unlike other states in India secured statehood after much bloodshed and sacrifice and the granting of statehood to the Nagas has much to do with the political struggle of the Naga nationalists. To the Government of India, the granting of statehood to the Nagas was considered synonymous with solution of Naga political problem.² It is in the light of this, that the former President. S. Radhakrishnan speaking on the inauguration Day of Nagaland state said:

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1. A brief political account, (published by GPRN, Oking, 7 May, 1992), p. 27.
 2. Mullik, B.N., My years with Nehru (Allied Publishers, Calcutta, 1972), p. 30.

Let all past rancour and misunderstanding be forgotten and let a new chapter of progress, prosperity and goodwill be written on the page which opens today.³

Radhakrishnan also extended an invitation to the Naga nationalists who were still not reconciled to statehood to come forward and play positive and meaningful role in the development of Nagaland state.⁴ However, the Indian policy planners were forgetting that fact that their arrangement of a separate statehood conspicuously sidelined many Naga tribes in Manipur, Assam and Arunachal. Thus, their appeal to the Naga nationalists to 'come forward and play a positive role' do not sound rational and practical following the questionable means of tackling the Naga political question. As Neville Maxwell writes :

From the outset it was suspected by members(NNC) and supporters of the latter that the idea of statehood had been conceived by the Indians to divide and delude the Nagas; and explicit confirmation that the Indian Intelligence Bureau was behind the statehood movement is to be found in the memoirs of that Bureau's then Director, B.N. Mullick.⁵

The NSCN leadership reiterated the NNC stand and further explained why the Government of India had to resort to such a strategy. Thus, the NSCN document says :

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3. Singh, Prakash., Nagaland (National Book Trust New Delhi, 1972), p. 113.
 4. Sema Hokishe., Emergence of Nagaland (Vikas Publishing House, Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 1986), p. 96.
 5. Maxwell, Neville., India, the Nagas and the North East (Published by the Minority Right Group, London, New Edition 1980), p. 6.

Vide Written interview of Isak Swu, wherein he stated : "The very formation of so-called state of Nagaland is the political offensive taken by the Government of India to keep the Nagas divided... The NSCN takes it as a puppet state. And it is simply 'white elephant gift'.

Delhi bosses realized the fact that counting headlong on military brute force alone was a folly, it needed somehow gradual heading off for a time until suitable pretext to support it was established. India really floundered for a moment without the alternative in sight. To wreck the solidarity from within was the only way left to be explored for possible achievement of their set goal. For this job Mr. Dutta, an intelligence Bureau officer was employed. Dutta didn't lose time to hatch a process for the formation of a puppet state of Nagaland by collecting a few Naga officials who were in the pay of the Indian Government.⁶

As a matter of fact, the creation of statehood led to the first major division among the Nagas. Although the nationalist organisation remained intact, a significant section of NNC workers and their supporters joined the services of the new state as politicians, bureaucrats and general state employees. But the worst effect of the new state was a deliberate attempt to keep the other Nagas within India outside the jurisdiction of it. Although the Government of India conceded all the other demands of the Naga People's Convention (NPC), it made no commitment about the proposed merger of contiguous Naga areas to the new state.⁷ According to the Government of India, it was not possible to make any commitment in this regard at that stage.⁸ The Government of India perhaps realized that the NPC delegation (which comprised only Nagas from Nagaland state) was not enthusiastic enough on the matter.⁹ So it was shelved to be reopened only when a possible opportunity arises for final settlement between the Government of India and the Nagas.¹⁰

6. A brief political account, op. cit., p. 27.

7. Mullik, op. cit., pp. 330-331.

8. Singh, op. cit., p. 109.

9. Yonuo, Asoso., The Rising Nagas (Vivek Publishing House, Delhi, 1974), p. 223.

10. Idem.

The creation of Nagaland state was a welcome sign to many Nagas; for other Nagas like Tangkhuls, Mao-Poumai, Zeliangrongs, Anals etc. and Nagas in Assam and Arunachal it was a great setback, for they realized that this political division will further wane their emotional unity and lead to backwardness. As a matter of fact, this division of the Nagas subsequently developed into another disturbing trend of Naga nationalism as regional feeling gained momentum. But many Naga intellectuals are of the opinion that the surreptitious policy of the Government would flounder on the rock of Naga aspiration. T.A. Shishak, an educationist stated :

All the contiguous Naga areas in Assam, Arunachal Pradesh (Tirap), Manipur, Myanmar and of course, the whole of Nagaland state should be merged together before the end of this century to form one Nagaland. Until all the Naga territories of Indo-Myanmar are re-integrated, peace is merely wishful thinking...The Nagas must live together under one political umbrella.¹¹

The emergence of Nagaland state was a turning point because by then a significant section of the NNC cadres had surrendered¹² and a substantial number was overtly determined to involve actively in state politics. It is in this context that Udayan Misra observed : "New Delhi had succeeded in driving a wedge into the Naga movement and ... towards finally winning over the moderates through the formation of the state of Nagaland."¹³

11. Shishak, Tuisem A., Speech at the Naga Students Federation General Conference held in Ukhrul, Feb. 2-6, 1993.

12. Singh, Chandrika., Political evolution of Nagaland (Lancers Publishers, New Delhi, 1981), p. 82.

13. Misra, Udayan, North-East India, Quest for identity (Cosmo Publication, Delhi), p. 10.

However, it must be noted that many of them had the perception then (and even now) that "the granting of statehood itself was accepted as but the first step towards autonomy and independence."¹⁴ Thus, in the changed political environment, the moderate nationalists gave in to continue the struggle through peaceful means and use the state apparatus for the benefit of the Nagas. According to Major K. Kumar's account, the group of defence (related) experts had argued :

that coming of an extremist 'underground' overground does not necessarily suggest that he has turned into a moderate one if not a loyal one. They argued that a vast majority of the Nagas still hesitate to call themselves Indians....They point out to the various events and activities of the underground which give a caution if not an indication of the worst to follow.¹⁵

It is against this background that one can understand the symbiotic relationship between the Naga nationalists and the state politicians and bureaucrats. As a matter of fact, out of the 42 Interim Body members constituted to function during the transitional period, ten were prominent members of the NNC.¹⁶ Even today, several Nagaland state politicians are people who were in one way or other, connected with the Naga political movement. For instance, politicians like Dalle Namu, K. Hollohon, J.B. Jasokie, Vizol, Mhalie Peseyie, K. Vitsonei, K. Yeshito, Mhondemo Kithan, Tajenyuba Ao, Anden Konyak etc. were all closely

14. Horam, Naga Insurgency (Cosmo Publications, New Delhi, 1988), p. 87.

15. Sharma, Lt.Col. Gautam, et al (Ed) India's Northern Security, Including China, Nepal and Bhutan (S.K. Bhatia Reliance Publishing House, New Delhi, 1986), p. 228.

16. Who's who in Interim Body, Nagaland, (Published by Assembly Secretariat, Kohima, Nagaland, 1963).

associated with the NNC.¹⁷ Over and above, several politicians in Nagaland state are alleged to have link with the Naga nationalist. As one newspaper reporter remarked : "Of course it is truism in Nagaland politics that hardly any politician worthy of his name can disclaim link with one or the other faction of the insurgents."¹⁸ Although one cannot accept such a sensational reporting as the whole truth, one may certainly conclude that several politicians and bureaucrats have tacit understanding with the Naga nationalists for several reasons. For instance, T. Sentichuba Ao, Ex-Minister disclosed why leaders like Kavichusa, Tikasosang, Vizol and Tajenyuba etc. took part in Indian election. He writes thus :

Their main purpose to fight the election was to put an end to all the suffering of the Nagas under the hands of the Armed Forces and to bring peace and settlement of the long standing Naga political problem by letting the underground leaders initiate the moves.¹⁹

He also writes that many of these leaders were arrested and put in jail.²⁰ This is one group among the state politicians who are honestly committed to the nationalist cause and think that statehood is only an interim arrangement. There is also another group who are neither pro-Government, nor pro-Naga nationalist but enjoy benefit from both end. This is what M. Horam precisely called 'playing a double game' by the state politicians.²¹ As a matter of fact, both these groups indulged in dual allegiance

17. Idem.

18. The Hindu, October 27, 1988.

19. Ao T. Sentichuba (Ex-Minister), The Naga Political scene (In) The Nagaland Journal October 21, 1992.

20. Idem.

21. Horam, op. cit., p. 90.

i.e. to the Constitution of India as well as to the cause of the Naga aspiration.

Since the signing of the Shillong Accord in 1975 and the subsequent formation of the NSCN, the NNC was on the wane and the NSCN dramatically gained ground, ultimately emerging as a widely supported nationalist group in Nagaland.²² Currently, the NSCN has outweighed and surpassed all their opponents including the Shillong Accord group of the NNC. However, even in the changed political environment, the nature of the aforesaid relationship remains unchanged.

It is the intent of this research work in this chapter to study and analyse NSCN as a factor in Nagaland state politics and to find out why it is so. Over and above, it seeks to review the tacit relationship between the state politicians, bureaucrats etc. and the Naga nationalists.

It is an established fact that there exists some tacit understanding between the Naga nationalist organization and several state politicians, bureaucrats and other unspecified groups. This fact is well known even by the highest government sources. Evidently, the intelligence report of the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) which was submitted to the Union Home Ministry maintained that "some influential leaders of the ruling party in Nagaland (state) are providing shelter and support to both factions of the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN)"²³ The Indian Defence establishment is particularly quite

22. Morris, Glenn T., Nagaland Still Fighting After All These Years (In) Fourth World Bulletin, April, 1994, p. 14.

23. The Telegraph October 26, 1994.

vocal in asserting this allegation. For instance, recently, the Chief of Staff, Eastern Command, Lt. General O.P. Kaushik maintained that the NSCN were getting help from civil officials and the business community.²⁴ They also alleged that a large quantum of government funds was flowing into the hands of the Naga nationalists.²⁵ It is indeed true in most cases that there is tacit understanding between the Nationalist organization and Nagaland state politicians or bureaucrats and the latter do not hesitate to extend help in material or otherwise. After all it is sentiment and a feeling of oneness that bring them closer.

After having been sworn-in under the Constitution of India (upholding the sovereignty and integrity of India) the act of extending help (aiding and supporting) to the Naga nationalists amounts to committing a crime of the highest degree. One could possibly face the severest degree of punishment under the law of the land for directly violating the Constitution of India and a breach of one's oath taken. It is in this context that White Paper issued by the Government of Nagaland strongly cautioned :

Our members of the Nagaland Legislature have taken their Oath in the name of God to bear not only true faith and allegiance to the Constitution of India but also to upheld the sovereignty and integrity of India. our M. L. A.'s will be tantamount to betrayal Collaboration with the underground by some of the Oath taken... Therefore, they are reminded that as elected members of the Nagaland Legislative Assembly they have both moral obligations and Constitutional responsibility in this regard and to prove their unquestionable royalty and whole hearted devotion to

24. The Telegraph, June 25, 1995.

25. Idem.

the Constitution and the sovereignty and integrity of India.²⁶

But why on earth are the politicians or bureaucrats unmoved in their relationship if not sympathetic to the Nationalist cause? There are only two possible answers to this intriguing question i.e., those politicians or bureaucrats of the state government are also ardent believers that the Nagas constitute a nation and share the same aspiration of the Nagas engaged in struggle. They differ more in approach to the goal. Secondly, there are those who seemingly appear nationalist but in reality are political opportunist* who indulge in double game in order to place themselves comfortably in a convenient position at the opportune moment. Thus, we have nationalists in Nagaland state establishment who seemingly enjoy the benefits of the Government, yet in their mind and soul they still desire to serve the cause of the Naga people for political self-determination and for such people the statehood is only a stepping stone to reach the ultimate goal.²⁷ Admittedly, Vizol, the Former Chief Minister of Nagaland state, lucidly pointed out saying :

26. White Paper issued by the Government of Nagaland, August 31, 1972 (In) Appendix War and Peace in Nagaland Y.D. Gundevia, (Palit and Palit, Dehradun, 1975).

* Political Opportunist or Opportunism : Dictionary meaning - Allowing of due or undue weight to circumstances of the time in determining policy, grasping of opportunities when they occur; putting of expediency before principle. In Nagaland Politics this group consistently works against Naga nationalist aspiration.

27. Nibedon, Nirmal., Nagaland Night of the Guerrillas (Lancers publishers, Delhi, 1978), p. 33. Wherein he wrote : "a large number of Nagas viewed statehood as only an interim solution."

For those of us who are participating in Indian Union with the belief that under the Federal Constitution of India, Nagaland would get the opportunity to feel the glow of Independence in Indian Union, we are mistaken.²⁸

On the other hand, there are people who practice political opportunism. For this group of people everything is assessed with remunerative outlook and obviously political conviction is of secondary importance. In this context, the letter of S.C. Jamir* to his colleague Shilu Ao (Chief Executive Counsellor of interim Nagaland Government) throws light concerning the attitude of the aforesaid group. Jamir strongly emphasis :

You might have read Prime Minister's statement in the Lok Sabha on the 19th about his willingness to meet Phizo.... I believe you have not given consent to his meeting with Phizo, and if you give, this is a political blunder on our part... I am prepared to come back because there is no use sitting here to be only a laughing stock. I believe that, we are also quite capable to create more troubles than the hostiles could do.²⁹

Thus, one could possibly locate two findings when faced with the intriguing question as to 'why do state politicians and bureaucrats etc. aid and support the Naga nationalists ?' Firstly, the pro-nationalist element in the state establishment is glaringly visible. Secondly, those who do not have any political conviction, indulge in shifting loyalty now and then

28. Interview with Vizol (In) Nagaland Times October 18, 1993.

* S C Jamir is a veteran state politician of Nagaland state. He actively involved in Nagaland politics since the 1950s. He also served as Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs during 1963.

29. Atsongchanger, Mar., Unforgettable Memories from Nagaland (Tribal Communications & Research Centre, Mokokchung, 1994), p. 114.

essentially to gain advantages. They can be broadly grouped as political opportunists.

Against this background the question of examining NSCN as a factor in Nagaland state politics can be analysed. As a matter of fact, the NSCN operation has affected almost all the 'seven sisters' states, but the degree and nature of its influence in Nagaland state politics is unmatched. Nagaland state politics is unthinkable without linking it to Naga political struggle. It is truism in Nagaland that every Naga household has a share in contributing atleast one or two members in the Naga political movement at one time or the other. It is true that there are not much literature on this affair due to the nature of its secret dealing. However, the various political party manifestoes, party stand on political issues relating to the NSCN, newspapers reporting etc. will amply throw much light and certainly one could have a fairly correct assessment of the subject matter.

A. ELECTION MANIFESTOES

First of all, the Question : 'Has the NSCN, as the main nationalist group struggling for Naga aspiration made any impact on Nagaland state politics ?', can be partially explained with the help of election manifestoes issued during the last Nagaland Assembly election.

(1) The Nagaland Pradesh Congress (I)

1993 Election Manifesto conveyed the stand taken by them on Naga political issue. It declared :

The Congress recognises that the underground problem is political needing political approach punctuated by love, sympathy and understanding. It also recognises that any meaningful dialogue with the Government of India could be fruitful when the issue is presented with one voice. The party therefore shall mobilise all possible and constructive forces to bring unity and mutual understanding among different groups of the underground set up. The party is sanguine that all the Nagas belonging to one family and having brotherly feelings for one another, a compassionate approach would unite them at one forum and resolve their differences with a spirit of give and take. This issue shall be listed in our party agenda having the top priority.³⁰

In another pamphlet of the NPCC (I) it reiterated their stand : "The Congress I Party is irrevocably committed to the open door policy of settling all outstanding problems through peaceful means and negotiations and it maintained that the underground Nagas are an inalienable part of the Naga society and they must have a say in settlement of the Naga political problem."³¹

From the above statements, the following points are vividly reflected that the Nagaland Pradesh Congress (I) in principle uphold :

- (1) that Naga problem is purely a political issue and not socio-economic problem (as it is often highlighted) and it requires an honourable political solution.
- (2) that the NPCC (I) is committed to peaceful approach to the issue, specifically, its 'open door policy' is given much emphasis.

30. Nagaland Pradesh Congress (I) Election Manifesto State Election 1993, (Published by the All India Congress Committee (I) New Delhi, 1993), pp. 6-7.

31. Lest we forget (Published by NPCC (I), 1993).

- (3) that the NPCC (I) is also committed (as part of their 'open door policy) to bring all the different groups of the Naga nationalists under a common organization or forum.
- (4) Finally, the NPCC (I) declared that the Indian National Congress being a national party will serve as a bridge between the Central Government and the Naga nationalists and render all possible assistance to bring the two parties to a negotiating table.³²

A brief study of the NPCC (I) election manifesto on 'Naga issue' is amply revealing. At least in principle, even the Naga nationalists cannot expect a better deal than what the party assures.

However, one must note that this declaration came at the time when the NSCN's strength and achievement were both impressive. Thus, the NPCC (I) declaration is more of expediency than of any real political conviction. It is seen more as an appeasement policy, to keep the party in the good book of the NSCN and also to win the votes. So when the Congress (I) party came to power and S. C. Jamir took over the reigns of government, the same party was found inadequate as it could not evolve any substantive policy (as promised in their manifesto). More than anything, the party leaders were haunted by their alleged involvement in conspiracy to break the NSCN from within³³ (which actually took place in 1988 when hundreds of NSCN cadres were

32. NPC (I) loc. cit.

33. Ao, Tajenyuba., British Occupation of Naga country (Published by Naga Literature Society, Mokokchung, 1993), p. 304.

Vide Let the people judge it press handout issued by Southern Command, GPRN, 30th May, 1988.

murdered by Khaplang's men) by sponsoring Khaplang group in an attempt to decimate the NSCN under Isak and Muivah.³⁴ Their alleged role in banning the NSCN³⁵ in 1991 seriously undermined the credibility of the party's stand. Finally, a prominent leader of the Congress (I) party was alleged to have played primary role in raising the 'Nagaland Youth Liberation Front (NYLF)' a local militia group which let loose unpleasant deeds for a short span of time. The NSCN considered S.C. Jamir as the man behind the organization. Thus, the Ministry of Home Affairs of GPRN reported:

The so-called Nagaland Youth Liberation Front (NYLF) was the brainchild of the reactionaries created solely to counter the surging popular waves of NSCN. The operation and execution of its obtrusive policies and programme were financed by SC Jamir's ministry.³⁶

No wonder, the NSCN top brass are exceptionally critical of him. For instances, they recall :

Since the installation of an Indian puppet government in Nagaland, the stooges who run this government have always been repressive and hostile to our national cause.³⁷

34. Open letter to S. C. Jamir issued by Brig. V.S. Wungmatem, Chief of the Naga Army (In) The Freedom, December 22, 1993.

Vide Governor V. K. Nayar's report and recommendation to the President of India (In) NE SUN, April 9-15, 1994.

Vide Ex. C.M. Mr. Vizol's interview (In) Nagaland Times, October 18, 1993.

35. Ban on NSCN : Not conducive to peace : Vamuzo (In) Nagaland Times, December 5, 1990.

Vide Speech made by Rh. Raising Killo and Chaplee kilonser (Home and Finance Minister) on NSCN Day, 31st January, 1991.

36. Progress Report, Ministry of Home Affairs, GPRN, 1988-93, p.11.

37. Ibid., p. 14.

In such a situation, the Congress (I) political assurance vis-a-vis the Naga issue is a complete negation of it when it comes to practical aspect of it. Thus, in the final analysis, specially with reference to Nagaland situation, its election manifesto declarations are nothing but cheap propoganda stunt and are merely directed to catch the vote bank.

(2) Nagaland People's Council (NPC)

The NPC formed a strong regional party in Nagaland state and its political stand on the Naga issue is worth examining. The election manifesto of the NPC in 1993 declared :

The NPC continues to give topmost priority to the search for lasting peace by means of a peaceful and amicable solution to the Naga political problem through the policy of reconciliation. In pursuit of this declared policy, the NPC shall continue to strive to bring together the various underground organization to a common platform in order to set the stage ready for negotiated political settlement with the Government of India....

Towards this end, the NPC shall continue to urge upon the central leadership to lift the ban on NSCN so as to create confidence in them for a positive response to this genuine call for lasting peace.³⁸

From the above statement one could detect three main emphasis:

- (1) ultimate peace only through amicable solution of the Naga political problem.
- (2) to bring together all the nationalist groups to a common platform; and

38. Manifesto of Nagaland People's Council, Eight General Election 1993.

(3) need to urge upon the central government to lift the ban on NSCN.

The NPC's election manifesto of 1989 had strongly emphasised on the same issue. It says :

The search for lasting peace in the Naga homeland by means of a final negotiated settlement of the Naga political problem between the Government of India and the Naga underground shall remain the first priority of the NPC.³⁹

Accordingly, certain attempts were made by Nagaland state government under Vamuzo's leadership to bring all the nationalist groups to a common platform⁴⁰ but without any tangible result. Of course, that was the first time that the Naga politicians have tried to unite the warring Naga patriots. On another occasion, the Nagaland People's Council demanded of the central Government separate Cabinet panel at the national level to solve Naga political issue.⁴¹ This was indeed remarkable keeping in view the long standing unsolved political problem of the Nagas.

(3) Democratic Labour Party (DLP)

Among the few political parties in Nagaland state, Democratic Labour Party is exceptionally nationalist in outlook and declaration. If there is any possibility of achieving the goal of the Nagas through peaceful means and to reorient the Naga society within the perceived Naga nationalist outlook, then

39. NPC's election manifesto, 1989 (In) Ura Mail, January 4, 1989.

40. Efforts on to unite Naga factions (In) The Hindu, 7 March, 1992.

41. NPC wanted to solve Naga political issue (In) Hill Express December 19, 1989.

certainly it is DLP which can also carry its weight. Its manifesto explicitly states these facts :

DLP is, therefore, founded on the remaining solid rock of Naga nationalism to further the cultural struggle aimed at preserving Naga pride as our national asset. Thirty years is a long time not only in the life of an individual but even in the life of a small developing country as Nagaland for anybody with conscience to learn.⁴²

Significantly, the party also declared its intention to

integrate all contiguous Naga areas under the umbrella of one administrative unit, and to assist in any possible manner on any approach for a peaceful resolution of the Indo-Naga political issue if such assistance is desired.⁴³

The nationalist outlook is implicit in it and for the first time that a political party emerged in Nagaland state with a clear perception to espouse the Naga political aspiration. Nonetheless, the real credibility of the party is yet to be tested and only time will tell more about its commitment.

Thus, as mentioned earlier, one can clearly observe the presence of Naga nationalists among the Naga politicians. At the same time, there are politicians who indulge in shifting loyalties and they form another significant group. It is this group that causes serious concern both to the Government of India as well as the Naga nationalists.

42. Manifesto : Democratic Labour Party, Nagaland 1993, p. 2.

43. Ibid., p. 4.

B. NSCN BAN ISSUE

When the NSCN threatened the Nagaland state legislators to either resign from their seats in the Assembly in protest against the ban on it by the centre or face death,⁴⁴ the ministers were really at a fix. Consequently, the ban on the NSCN became the key poll issue in Nagaland state and this had some unsettling effect as well. For instance, the then Chief Minister of Nagaland state, Vamuzo categorically stated that "the government of India continuing to ban the NSCN shall not be conducive to the process of reconciliation now being adopted by the state government... urge the government of India to review and revoke its decision."⁴⁵ Vamuzo vehemently denied his involvement (as alleged by S.C. Jamir) in banning the NSCN and instead alleged that it was at the behest of S.C. Jamir that the central government had banned the NSCN.⁴⁶

The NPC leaders had also deputed a minister Kihoto Hollohon to Delhi to talk with the central leaders and persuade them to lift the ban on the NSCN.⁴⁷ On the other hand, the Congress (I) party refuting the charges, demanded the resignation of Vamuzo and the Nagaland Pradesh Congress Committee in a meeting passed a resolution urging upon the Government of India to lift the ban on the NSCN to create a conducive atmosphere for political dialogue.⁴⁸

44. NSCN Warns Hill Express, February 19, 1991.

45. Nagaland Times, December 5, 1990.

46. Jamir Asks Vamuzo to Step Down, Nagaland Times, January 16, 1991.

47. Hill Express, loc. cit.

48. Lift ban on NSCN Nagaland Times, July 15, 1992.

Thus, apparently the call for lifting the ban on the NSCN can be seen as an attempt to appease the NSCN, because in reality ban or no ban the NSCN continues to thrive as a clandestine organization. To-day all the political parties in Nagaland state stand for withdrawal of the ban on the NSCN.

C. PARALLEL GOVERNMENT

The Naga nationalist attempt to run and manage their own government is glaringly evident. According to Th. Muivah, 'the Prime Minister' of the GPRN, "We have our Constitution and our Government. We act by that. Our problem is not the law and order question of India. We also levy taxes because we are the only authentic authority of the country."⁴⁹ Thus, Th. Muivah justifies running a parallel Government and executing several action plans including revenue collection, prohibition orders, awarding punishment against non-compliance etc. Notably, although the NSCN do not support the policy of attacking civilians, they have been known to have killed those accused of being 'informers' as well as politicians supposed to have betrayed the Naga cause."⁵⁰

The GPRN in a published statement on taxation made it clear that minimum taxes ought to be levied on the Naga public, symbolizing people's participation in the national cause.

49. Muivah, Th., A rejoinder to the Indian propaganda stunt Submitted to the General Secretary of the UNPO, Hague, 6th June, Oking, 1994, p. 11.

Vide Nagaland Times March 30, 1996. The ruling Cong I Government passed two resolutions : (i) Revocation of the imposition of the Disturbed Area Act and (ii) Lifting of ban on NSCN in 1991.

50. India "Operation Bluebird" A case study of torture and extra-judicial executions in Manipur, Amnesty International, London, UK, October 1990, p. 77.

Secondly, another objective of their taxation on government establishment and institutions or agencies is to make India 'pay dearly' and make what they call 'occupation of Nagaland' a costly affair.⁵¹ Thus, the ultimate objective is to "drive out the enemy and all her occupation forces from Nagaland... We are bound to destroy all her establishments."⁵² It is in this context that the NSCN "with a strong hand forced the ONGC unit in Nagaland to quit operations."⁵³ Interestingly, the order to stop oil extraction work came from the Nagaland state government ⁵⁴ who obviously acted under pressure from the NSCN and the Naga Students' Federation (NSF).

The NSCN's policy on exploration of natural resources in Naga inhabited area is explicit and is intended to protect and conserve them until Nagas could exploit them by themselves. This is evident from the Ahza* issued by Angelus P. Shimrah, Secretary, External Affairs, GPRN, which decreed :

But it is a sad reality that the adversary in collusion with economic exploiters of this land, is daily robbing and systematically devastating our homeland with no end in sight... In light of the circumstances, with an eye to save our save our mineral resources and forest products for our nation...pass this Ahza... No individual, clan or village is entitled to export mineral products (such as...Uranium, petrol, gold, cromite etc.) and

51. GPRN statement issued by Information and Publicity Cell, GPRN, 30th July 1993, The Nagaland Journal August 18, 1993.

52. Idem.

53. ONGC's Nagaland Operation to Stop The Meghalaya Guardian, Oct. 25, 1994.

54. ONGC ordered to stop work at Champang, The Eastern Clarion, May 11, 1994.

Ahza* A decree which emanates from Oking (HQ) and could bring death to violaters.

forest products (such as...aghar, timber etc.)
to other countries.⁵⁵

Thus, exploration and exploitation of natural resources of Nagaland by the ONGC or any other agencies in future is ruled out when one knows that the NSCN will sabotage any attempt, to do so.

Almost of the same nature like the ONGC, the State Bank of India (SBI) in Nagaland state closed down its business temporarily and this shut-down, would have become a permanent one had a third party not been involved. Sometime in early May 1993, the NSCN sent a demand note of Rs. ten lakhs to the State Bank of India regional Office at Dimapur or close down permanently all SBI branches in Nagaland.⁵⁶ The issue became so intense that the SBI could resume only after strong pressure from the Union Finance Ministry with the state Government assuring round the clock security.⁵⁷

It is unbelievable but true that the NSCN is running a parallel government which is even admitted by the top brass of the Indian Defence Forces.⁵⁸ It is generally known today that the NSCN success in running a parallel government is because they enjoy good support from the state ministers, state officers, business community, contractors etc. and of course, there is also the people's loyalty to the cause in both Nagaland and Manipur state. it is in this context that the security forces alleged

55. GPRN Ahza Issued by Angelus P. Shimrah, Secretary, External Affairs cum Organiser, Southern Nagaland, Oking, 3rd Jan, 1988.

56. SBI in Nagaland told to pay up or pack up (A special report) The Shillong Times, July 3, 1993.

57. SBI Resumes functioning in Nagaland, The Telegraph July 3, 1993.

58. Rebels retain upper hand in NE, Amrita Bazar Patrika, December 29, 1993.

that Ministers in both Nagaland and Manipur state are in hand-in-glove with the Naga nationalists and government vehicles were used to transport men and arms. Thus the feeling remains "the army is helpless as in the North-East, Ministers carry a big stick".⁵⁹ This reflects the ground situation in the NSCN operating areas both in Nagaland and Manipur states. It is but true that the NSCN writs run smooth in these areas. The NSCN control all the hill districts of Manipur-Chandel, Senapati, Tamenglong and Ukhurul and in Nagaland state they have stronghold in Dimapur, Kohima, Paren, Mokokchung, Phek, Tuensang, Wokha except Mon. For tactical reason they are avoiding Mon area for time being. As they are obstinate with 'greater Nagaland' concept, areas such as North Cachar, Somra tract in upper Myanmar are now actively brought within their area of operation.⁶⁰

It is in these areas where the NSCN could without much opposition carry on their parallel government. This is where the Indian security forces are losing so many of their soldiers and officers from time to time in the ongoing low intensity conflict. Amidst heavy concentration of crack Indian army (Mountain Division) fighting troops including its elite paratroopers, Rashtriya Rifles, Special Commandos etc.,⁶¹ along with all the Intelligence units-Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), Intelligence Bureau (IB), Central Intelligence Department (CID), Military Intelligence (MI) etc.⁶² operating in the NSCN affected areas, it

59. Gupta, Rabin, Bank with a bang, SUNDAY 26 Septembet-2 October, 1993.

60. Passim Various local papers reporting.

61. Passim Progress Report, Ministry of Home Affairs-GPRN, 1988-1993, SUNDAY, 3-9 October, 1993, News paper reportings.

62. Nagaland Post February 6, 1995.

is frequently displaying its authority through systematic taxation, issuing of Ahzas, directives, settlement of disputes in the villages apart from undertaking successful raids and ambushes on the security forces. This is why several journalists who visited these areas came to the conclusion that "there are now two governments running the show : One headed by the Governor (head of the state) and the other, underground."⁶³

The NSCN's systematic collection of taxes received praise even from the security forces.⁶⁴ According to an Army Officer, the 'taxes' are paid both out of fear and voluntarily⁶⁵ which shows the loyalty and fear of the NSCN command. This ground situation brings us to a possible conclusion that in any nationalist or insurgency movement, what the latter control, the Government has lost.⁶⁶ A nationalist movement may be materially aided from external sources, but unless it succeeds in mobilizing from within, it cannot prevail.⁶⁷ Amazingly, the NSCN has prevailed over its counter-part in this sphere.

Another significant display of the NSCN authority is in the form of issuing Ahza (degree or command). For instance, the GPRN banning the 'export' of mineral and forest products is one such.⁶⁸ It is in the same line that the GPRN decision to monitor

63. Chibber, Lt. General (retd M.L.), Indian Low Intensity Conflict (In) The Shillong Times Sept. 4, 1994.

Vide Hazarika, Sanjoy., Strangers of the Mist, (Viking, Penguin Books Ltd., New Delhi, 1994, p. 199), p. 279.

64. Ganguly, Tapash., Hill of discontent, (In) The Week, December 11, 1994, p. 15.

65. The Sentinel 28 December, 1993.

66. Idem.

67. Hunt, Lt. Col. John B (US Army), Hostilities short of war Military Review, March 1993, p. 42.

68. GPRN Ahza, loc. cit.

operation of transporting timbers within Nagaland arises significance. It had also decreed that the logging business would be allowed till 30th April, 1995 until further order was issued to that effect.⁶⁹

A notable achievement of the NSCN was its successful campaign against the Nagaland Youth Liberation Front (NYLF) an urban militia group allegedly formed by state politicians and bureaucrats in connivance with a section of Naga militant group in November 1990. The NSCN directed the local press that all publications and press releases issued by the group be stopped and cautioned the Naga public not to do anything with it as they perceived 'deep conspiracy against the national interests'.⁷⁰ Several of the leaders were arrested and some put to death. Hence, within a month's time, the NYLF voluntarily disbanded on December 19, 1990⁷¹ due to insurmountable pressure from the NSCN.

On October 27, 1993, the Nagaland state Pradesh Congress Committee (I) planned a massive peace rally. But when the NSCN issued order banning it,⁷² the NPCC (I) tactically postponed the rally indefinitely.⁷³

Another occasion, of a similar nature occurred on December 5, 1994. The Congress (I) Party had proposed to organise a massive Youth Rally in Dimapur on the 5th December, 1994 where Mahinder Singh Bitta, President, India Youth Congress (I) was highlighted to be the Chief Guest. But on the 4th December, a day

69. GPRN relaxes ban, Nagaland Post January 6, 1995.

70. NSCN outlaws NYLF, The Weekly Journal, November 7, 1990.

71. NYLF bids good-bye, Hill Express, January 3, 1991.

72. NSCN bans rally, Nagaland Post, October 27, 1993.

73. Congress (I) Posponed rally Nagaland Post, October 29, 1993.

before the proposed rally, the GPRN in a release issued by the Information and Publicity Cell prohibited holding of the Youth Rally as they deemed this to be "one of the many policies of the Indian Government to Indianise Naga Youths."⁷⁴ Consequently, that rally never took place and as a face saving course, the rally was postponed indefinitely.⁷⁵ But the postponement of the rally came as a major setback for the Youth Congress I.

The Nagas boycotting the Independence Day of India is a yearly phenomenon. However, in the recent years, the boycott is getting momentum. One such successful complete boycott was on 15 August, 1994. It was the call given by the North East Students' Organization (NESO) to observe bandh on 15 August and the Naga Students' Federation (NSF) as one of the member bodies resolved to observe it.⁷⁶ Meanwhile, the GPRN came out openly with an appeal to the Naga general public to stay away from Independence Day celebration.⁷⁷

The state government on its failure to dissuade the NSF, stringently came out with an order, asking all the government employees (state and Central) of all grades to compulsorily attend the celebration of Independence Day with the stipulation that they shall be held responsible for non-participation.⁷⁸ Despite the steps taken, the celebration was a total failure with "only a skeleton gathering."⁷⁹ As a local paper reported,

74. GPRN prohibits Rally, Nagaland Post, December 5, 1994.

75. Youth Rally postponed, Nagaland Post, December 5, 1994.

76. NSF to enforce NE bandh, Nagaland Post, August 12, 1994.

77. The tussle between Government and NSF, Hill Express, August 16, 1994.

78. Order to attend 1-D function, Nagaland Post, August 12, 1994.

79. ID Celebration, Hill Express, August 16, 1994.

"streets were taken a deserted look, vehicles and even the pedestrians were off the road."⁸⁰

In a significant move, the NSCN issued a directive asking all the Naga MLA's in Manipur state to resign as a protest against the partisan role of the Indian government vis-a-vis the Naga-Kuki issue and on their utter failure to protect the lives of the Nagas.⁸¹ They were asked to step down on or before the 31st December 1993. Strangely, the President's Rule was declared under Article 356 in Manipur on the 31st December 1993.⁸² Whether one likes it or not, it was considered to have been done under the pressure of the NSCN.

Last but not the least, the Nagaland state legislative Assembly unanimously passed a resolution proposing integration of contiguous Naga inhabited areas under a single administrative unit on September 16, 1994⁸³. Interestingly, this had come at a time when NSCN's power and strength was formidable. The fact is that the same government of S.C. Jamir had earlier rejected a private bill (by Huska Sumi)⁸⁴ having similar content. But this time, without any interruption, Vanuzo's private bill was unanimously passed. The reason may not be too far to seek. Both Vamuzo and Chubatoshi Jamir were accused of involvement in banning the NSCN, though both of them out-rightly rejected such accusation. Then S. C. Jamir was particularly accused of aiding and abeting

80. NSF victory, Hill Express, August 16, 1994.

81. Sharma, H. Priyokumar., President's rule A new year gift to Manipur Eastern Panorama, February 1994, p. 4.

82. Idem.

83. Sunil, Oinam., Vamuzo's Naga Bill, NE SUN, January 14-20, 1995, p. 5.

84. Assembly rejects private member's resolution, Naga Banner, July 16, 1993.

Khaplang group to decimate the NSCN and the charge was made by none other than the Chief of the Naga Army, Brig. V.S. Wungmatem.⁸⁵ Hence, under these circumstances, one cannot rule out NSCN influence as a moving spirit behind the Assembly's resolution and it can also be seen as a good gesture or as an appeasement policy towards the Naga nationalists.

It is against such background that one can vividly assess the NSCN impact on Nagaland state politics. This is more truly so because of the symbiotic relationship believed to exist between the Naga nationalists and the Nagaland politicians and even bureaucrats.

Over and above, the existence and working of non-governmental organisations such as the Naga Student's Federation (NSF), Naga People's Movement for Human Rights (NPMHR) etc. directly or indirectly helped the NSCN in espousing the cause of Naga unity. Both of the NSF and the NPMHR are organisations which are out and out nationalist in their stand and they made no pretention about it in their written statements. This cannot however be said of the Church bodies in Nagaland. Evidently, the motto of the NSF is "for a greater Lim (land of the Nagas) and glory of the Nagas."⁸⁶ Thus, rightly so, a journalist reported that NSF "is considered the overground organisation to further

85. Wungmatem, Brig. V.S., Open letter to S C Jamir, Nagaland Post, December 15, 1993.

Vide Lt. General (retd.) V.K. Nayar, Governor of Manipur to the President of India, (In) Nagaland Post, 29, 1994.

86. NSF Constituion.

the cause of the Naga nationalists."⁸⁷ Their nationalist bent is also seen from the two broad objectives of the NSF i.e. :

(1) NSF stand for complete integration of all the contiguous areas of the Nagas in India and Burma (Myanmar).

(2) NSF stand for honourable solution of the Indo-Naga problem which would allow the Nagas their rightful place-free Nagaland.⁸⁸

The NSF representation submitted to the Prime Minister, United Kingdom is self explanatory, which says :

We (Nagas) are the people who are independent. However, we are now a divided nation under forced occupation and military seige. We are fighting these occupational forces and under no circumstances will we accept the division of our land and people. Once again, we say "the occupational forces (of Myanmar and India) must go and our rights respected."⁸⁹

Another important NGO is the Naga People's Movement for Human Rights (NPMHR) which was formed on 9th September 1978 in response to the Naga People's long felt need for an organised movement to protect and further their human rights.⁹⁰ The NPMHR's report submitted to the United Nations Working Group on Indigenous People (UNWGIP), Geneva glaringly bring to light the basic stand of the organisation. Thus, it stated :

The Indian state not only denies the right of the Naga people to political self-determination, it also denies the right of the people of North-East including the Nagas to

87. Hussain, Wasbir., No end in sight to Naga bush war, The Telegraph, 29 July, 1988.

88. NSF Constitution, loc. cit.

89. NSF representation submitted to the Prime Minister, UK, 10 Downing Street, London, UK, 9th April, 1994.

90. Naga People's Movement for Human Rights (pamphlet), JNU Campus, Delhi, 1978.

their culture, language, history and economic developments. The struggle of the Naga people has been the recorection of their history, to stop political and military domination of the Naga territory by India and Burma (Myanmar), against the naked exploitation, and the systematic and sustained annihilation of the Naga people and society by the Indian and Burmese (Myanmarese) state.⁹¹

It is because of the persistent campaign of the NPMHR in international forum that the Asian Indigenous People's Pact (a forum for Indigenous People's movement in Asia) passed a resolution on India and stated :

We also take serious note of the ongoing large-scale atrocities committed by the Indian Army on the Naga people and demand an immediate withdrawal of the military from the area, and the fulfilment of the legitimate aspirations of the Naga people for genuine self-government.⁹²

Thus, the efforts of the NSF and NPMHR are consolidating the unity of the Nagas on the plank of human rights violation by the security forces and as a result of their international campaign for the right of self-determination as indigenous people. No wonder, the NSCN document writes :

Nagas are greatly indebted to the Human Rights Organisation for the unique service they rendered in this part of the world. Their unrivalled courage against inhuman cruelties of the notorious Burmese (Myanmarese) and Indian armed forces deserved the highest praise.⁹³

91. Submission of the NPMHR at the 12th Session of UNWIP, Geneva, July 25-29, 1994.

92. Towards Self Determination Report of the Indigenous People's Forum, Chiangmai, Thailand, August 1988, (Published by IAPP, Bombay, India, July, 1989).

93. Free Nagaland manifesto, p. 66.

Thus, one can observe the complete concordance on the issue of human rights between the nationalist armed group (the NSCN) and the NSF and the NPMHR mainly because they share the same cause. Therefore, now or even in the future, the collusion of these three cannot be ruled out in espousing the Naga political aspiration.

The following observations seek to strengthen the core point of the NSCN influence in Nagaland state politics.

Firstly, there is undoubtedly a close link between several state politicians and bureaucrats with the armed nationalist group. This link or collusion will remain as long as the Naga issue remains unresolved and until a right settlement is brought about. This predicament is very pronounced because the Naga cause is shared both by the Nagas in general and the political activists. In other words, there is a strong nationalist element among the general civilians, politicians and bureaucrats. Of late, there have been too many incidents of Naga police personnel deserting their units and joining the Naga armed nationalist group. For instance, a Company HQ of B. Coy. 6 Battalion NAP at New Beisumpi was taken by the NSCN without firing a single shot followed by capture of all the 150 personnel on 16th November, 1993. It was found out that the raid was carried in connivance with the Asst. Commander and three others (who joined the NSCN armed unit).⁹⁴ Such incidents are occurring quite frequently.

Secondly, as already stated there is another equally sizable group of politicians who indulge in shifting royalties (between

94. Nagaland Post, 17 November, 1993.

the Government of India and the NSCN) and at best can be term as political opportunists'. It is this group of politicians who are more bent on appropriating the best of government benefits, swindling government funds and attempting to keep the Naga nationalists in good term. In this context, Fazal Mehmood writes: "Since 1980, every successive government had made Nagaland a paradise for corruption...the people in power in Nagaland saw the state as their personal fiefdom."⁹⁵ This development is due to callous attitude of the Central Government who believe only in "pumping in money to the state and kept the local politicians happy ."⁹⁶ As a consequence, for such politicians and bureaucrats political movement should continue as it only benefits them. For some politicians and bureaucrats in the Nagaland state, the line of thinking is that nationalist movement or insurgency has been of considerable weight in getting more share of central resources for the region.⁹⁷ This policy of some state politicians and bureaucrats to keep alive the 'movement' for their selfish benefit or otherwise is in tune with New Delhi's short sighted policy. Admittedly, M.J. Akbar, a journalist pointing out the serious aspect of the problem writes : "Peace with the extremist, is being deliberately sabotaged by the Chief Minister (S.C. Jamir) who would like the insurgency to continue since that is the best cover he can hope for..."⁹⁸ Indeed, this element is

95. Mehmood, Fazal., Corruption and Insurgency go together The Shillong Times, February 10, 1994.

96. Idem.

Vide Sonwalkar, Prasun., Underground Industry NE SUN, October 8-14, 1994.

97. Sonwalkar, loc. cit.

98. Akbar, M. J., Corruption and vested interest in insurgency (In) The Telegraph, 17 April, 1985.

quite strong in Nagaland state politics and no wonder, all these years, the nationalists of all camps are distinctly critical of this particular group of politicians and bureaucrats. In the words of Isak Chishi Swu : "Their sole intention is to win the election and to continue to survive as money maker without serving any cause."⁹⁹ Thus, corroborating Isak's statement M.J. Akbar rightly writes :

The state government has clearly developed a vested interest in insurgency. The demand for central funds keeps escalating on the plea that this is the only way to woo the young and stop them from joining the ranks of the extremist leader Muivah.¹⁰⁰

Such is the subtleness and irony of state politics in Nagaland state. But the worst consequence is the creation of a corrupt system in Nagaland state which Delhi has ostensibly left unattended. There is no monitoring as to how the huge funds under Five Year Plans are being utilized and executed. As a result, most of the funds ends up in the pockets of politicians, contractors and the omnipresent traders and businessmen."¹⁰¹ And the fact is that the Nagas in general literally blame the central government for corrupting the Naga society.¹⁰² Thus, Delhi is losing on both the counts i.e., by remaining unable to contain the movement and alienating the Naga people as well. Admittedly,

99. Written interview of Isak Chishi Swu conducted by the scholar, p. 4.

100. Akbar, loc. cit.

101. Akbar, loc. cit.

102. Singh; Prakashan., (Former Director-General of NSF) Kohima to Kashmir, Must the Indian state repeat the same mistake ? Indian Express, 24 June, 1993.

a Naga journalist writing on the ground situation in Nagaland state and the faulty policy of the Government of India, stated :

Money was poured in, ostensibly for development purposes, which infact found their way to the personal coffers of a privileged few. No investigations are ever held because the government is only interested in containing the insurgency problem. Cases of fraud and corruption has mushroomed overnight and millionaires created. Vested interests grew and became entrenched. A privileged class has been floated.¹⁰³

It is in this context the report of Women's Fact Finding Team from Delhi comes handy (although here the case study is confined to the Tangkhul Naga tribe in Manipur state yet the nature of their problem is the same). This women team had come to Ukhrul district in Manipur to investigate into the reports of army harassment of Naga people, specially women. However, the team was shocked to learn many other dimensions of the problem including under development and rampant corruption. The report thus stated :

The backward of the area...reveal the sharp contrast between the development of the valley and the complete lack of it in the hills.... There is no proper public transport... There is no water or electricity supply. None of the villages we visited were electrified. Even the District Headquarter (Ukhrul) does not have regular supply. The rampant corruption we were told prevents the proper channelization of funds.¹⁰⁴

103. Chasie, Charles., Naga problem and the solution, The North East Sun, June 11, 1988, p. 26.

Vide Kuldip Nayar, Corruption and Insurgency, The scene in Nagaland Indian Express, 25 december, 1995. Nayar reported : "Nagaland beat the rest of India in corrupt practices. Every tier of the administration reels with graft. The Government is not above suspicion."

104. Report of Women's Fact finding Team, Delhi, October 1982, pp. 22-23.

Thus, one is not surprised that large-scale corruption and misuse of funds have also been noticed by the high power delegation led by the Union Home Secretary K. Padmanabhaiah who visited Kohima last year.¹⁰⁵ The alarming diversion of funds have not only affected all developmental work but even deprived the state police force of its requisite financial allocation.¹⁰⁶

The NSCN finds it easy to make its presence felt in Nagaland politics in view of the prevalent consensus on certain issues affecting some permanent interests of the Nagas, brought to the fore by the Naga nationalist movement which currently under the NSCN leadership offer the possibility of fullest measure of political freedom. Large scale violation of human rights in Nagaland over the past four decades have created suspicion and hatred towards the promoters of state power and its hegemony. Today, there is no accusing finger in Nagaland state politics towards the NSCN, which even in the ruling Cong (I) Party circle is regarded as inalienable part of the Naga society. At the same time, there is no one who would openly defend the Shillong Accord either. All the political parties and the movement leadership equally advocate unification of Naga areas, end of atrocities and stoppage of mineral exploitation. In addition, total absence of developmental activities and large scale corruption¹⁰⁷ have also put a question mark against the nature of legitimate politics.

105. Chowdhary, Suvendu Roy., What ails Nagaland ? NE SUN March 25-31, 1995, p. 12.

106. Idem.

107. Interview with Kuldip Nayar (In) Grassroots Options North-East image of Indian Democracy, (April, 1996), p. 34.

CHAPTER VI

NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL DIMENSION

The 'Naga issue' is not a new phenomenon, rather 'Naga resistance' has confronted the Government of India more or less since the dawn of Indian independence. It was here in Nagaland that the Indian army learnt its first lesson of low intensity conflict and the Government of India experimented with all the available strategies without evolving any consistent policy. Much later the Government of India faced several problems like that of the Mizos following the footsteps of the Nagas and the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) adopting separatist slogan. All this compelled the evolution of a policy on secessionist movements whose central tenet was : Never give in.¹

The Government of India's policy towards the Naga problem can be characterized as 'inconsistent and muddled. Sanjoy Hazarika a writer from the North-East region observed saying, "the intractability of the problems of the North-East and Delhi's piecemeal, adhoc policies toward its people have complicated an already difficult situation."² This writer broadly outlined three methods in dealing with problem like that of the Nagas. He writes:

Policies toward the Nagas and other pro-independence groups seemed to revolve around three factors: brute force to crush the physical capacity to resist, a flood of funds to soften the resolve of indigenous groups and a fierce campaign to portray them as renegades 'misguided' elements who would see sense if only they were given a chance.³

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1. Phadnis, Aditi., The third solution (In) Sunday (Calcutta) 7-13 November 1993, p. 35.
 2. Hazarika, Sanjoy., Strangers of the mist, (Viking Penguin Books Ltd. Delhi, 1994), p. 249.
 3. Idem.

It was a 'trial and error' period when military excesses were committed and political blunders were made. M.J. Akbar writes: "Delhi engaged in a carrot-and-stick approach the civilian commissioner set about winning hearts, while the armed forces concentrated on breaking heads. It was a messy deadlock."⁴

Initially, the policy planners in India sought a political solution as an option. The 'Nine Point Agreement' was the outgrowth of such political processes which recognized the 'right of the Nagas to develop themselves according to their freely expressed wishes'.⁵ Unfortunately, the Government of India unilaterally withdrew herself from this commitment for reasons best known to her.⁶

Subsequently, military option had replaced political approach. Thus, the then Prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru decided that it would have to be dealt with a military rather than a political approach.⁷ The same line of thinking was shared by the then President Rajendra Prasad. The latter in a note to the Government of India recommended:

The problem is formidable even now, but then it will become more or less beyond our capacity to control unless we are prepared to be ruthless, and it is doubtful if even then we could suppress them.⁸

4. Akbar, M.J., Nehru the making of India, (published by Penguin group London, 1988), p. 517.

5. Nine-Point Agreement (In) Nagaland by Prakash Singh, (National Book Trust, New Delhi, 1972), p. 209.

6. A brief political account, (published by GPRN Oking, May 1992), pp. 13-14.

7. Idem.

8. Choudhary, Valmiki (ED) Dr. Rajendra Prasad : Correspondence and Selected documents Presidency period Vol. 18 January 1957-December 1957, (Allied publishers Ltd. New Delhi, 1992), p. 249.

Thus, emphasis on military option was implicit from the above statements of Jawaharlal Nehru and of Rajendra Prasad who rationalized it on prestige issue and for halting the growing strength of the Naga movement. Hence, Jawaharlal Nehru amply made it clear that "there can be no doubt that armed revolt has to be met by force and suppression...We shall set about it as efficiently as effectively as possible."⁹ However, there was much apprehension in the minds of the leadership which is quite glaringly revealed in Nehru's letter to Assam Chief Minister B.R. Medhi. he writes:

We know that the Nagas are tough people and are very disciplined. It is therefore conceivable that even when we have succeeded completely in a military sense, small scale guerrilla tactics may continue giving us continuous headache,...affecting our reputation both in India and abroad. How then are we to face this situation?¹⁰

A. MILITARY OPTION

The military campaign against the Naga nationalists commenced when "troops moved into Tuensang by October 1955 and the war with Nagas started from then."¹¹ No doubt full scale military offensive and official pronouncement to this effect came only by 1955, but it would be wholly a mistake to conclude that there was no military operation before. As a matter of fact, in 1953, the Government of India had already launched security raids against the NNC and its alleged sympathizers soon after the joint visit of Nehru and U Nu to Naga areas both in India and

9. Hazarika, loc. cit.

10. Idem.

11. Mullik, B.N., My years with Nehru (Allied Publishers, Calcutta, 1972). p. 308.

Myanmar.¹² It was at Kohima that the Naga public numbering 10,000 boycotted Nehru's speech and this insult the latter never forgot.¹³ By the middle of 1954, security forces raided and bombarded Chingmei, Chemong, villages committing wanton destruction and causing unknown number of deaths.¹⁴ Then on November 15, 1954 security forces raided on the village of Yengpang and killed 60 (sixty) men, women and children as alleged by the Naga nationalists.¹⁵ This operation was a response to the rapid development of unfavorable events in the central Naga Hills so as to restore Government's authority. Unfortunately, because of inability to arrest the situation, the Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru took the fateful decision to send in full-scale military operation in order to check-mate Naga nationalists.

This political decision was rebuffed by the Chief of Army Staff, General L.S. Thimayya and the latter's meeting with the Prime Minister was a heated one because of differences in approach. The General seemed to have candidly told Nehru that it required political wisdom rather than military might to solve the Naga issue.¹⁶ However, the General did what he was expected to do. According to B.N. Mullik, the intelligence officer "nearly two Divisions of the Army and thirty five battalions of Assam

12. Idem.

13. Nibedon, Nirmal., The Ethnic Explosion, (Lancer Publishers, New Delhi, 1981), p. 25.

Vide A Brief historical background of Naga Independence (published by FGN, 1968), p. 21.

14. Ibid, p. 26.

Vide A brief political account (published by GPRN, Oking May 7, 1992).

15. Idem.

Vide Submission of the NPMHR at the 12th Session of UNWGIP, (Geneva, July 25-29, 1994).

16. Nibedon, op. cit., p. 28.

Rifles and Assam Police were in operation in the Naga Hills."¹⁷

Thus, in the words of Nari Rustomji, an administrator who understood the heart of the Naga problem, "The military applied themselves with full-blooded vigour to the business of 'softening up' the recalcitrant Naga."¹⁸ Indeed, the Army built up was enormous that B.N. Mullik noted : "There was nearly one security troop for every adult male in the Naga Hills...but there was never a time when it could be claimed that the Naga guerrillas had been broken into submission."¹⁹ In spite of this large increase in the security forces, the Naga nationalists fought on with determination. There were many ugly incidents; serious casualties were inflicted on both the sides; no quarter was given or asked for. The security forces exerted the maximum of pressure, but this was not enough to force the Naga nationalists to surrender.²⁰ 'It was a matter of doubt as to who was softening up whom'. Frustrated by elusive Naga nationalists, the army more than once clamped down hard on innocent villages.²¹ Admittedly, Mhiesizokho Zinyu, an acquaintance of A.Z. Phizo writes :

The Indian armed forces on their part always retaliated by burning houses in the villages, clamping round-the-clock curfew, imposing fines and arresting all suspects. Many Nagas irrespect of underground or overground were taken to concentration camps and tortured in diverse manners...the Indian armed forces went to the extent of taking revenge on the innocent villagers for the hardships and sufferings they always received from the

17. Mullik, op. cit., p. 312.

18. Rustomji, Nari., Imperilled Frontiers India's North-Eastern Borderlands, (Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 1983), p. 31.

19. Mullik, loc. cit.

20. Idem.

21. Nibedon, op. cit., p. 75.

underground guerrillas. They often blindly fired automatic rifles, machine guns and sten guns upon villages at night and many were killed in such incidents.²²

Indeed, the Naga civilians suffered terribly under the Indian military campaign. But still the Government of India took decision to apply the strategy of 'grouping the villages' - a technique pioneered by the Japanese in Manchuria in the 1930s and later tried by the British Army in their campaign against the communist guerrillas in Malaya.²³ For the Government of India 'village grouping' or 'grouping of villages' was an attempt of severing the contact between the Naga nationalists and the Naga civilians and thereby isolate the former and deny their sources of sustenance. Consequently, village after village were uprooted and shifted to new locations - called 'village grouping area'.²⁴

Murkot Ramunny a responsible man in the echelon of power during that period confessed later the suffering and misery the Naga public had to undergo because of 'village grouping system'.²⁵ Side by side, the army was freely operating in the jungle in full-scale. The Indian Air Force was brought into action in a tactical role, bombing and strafing rebel positions.²⁶

22. Zinyu, Mhiesizokho., Phizo and the Naga problem (Published by the author, Dimapur, Kohima, 1979), p. 42.

23. Mankekar, D. R., On the slippery slope of Nagaland (P.C. Manaktala and Sons Ltd. Bombay, 1967), p. 52.

24. Luithui, et al., Nagaland File : A question of Human Rights (Lancer International, Delhi, 1984), p. 28.

25. Ramunny, Murkot., The world of Nagas, (Northern Book Centre New Delhi, 1988), pp. 28-29.

26. Palit, Major General., Sentinels of the North-East (Palit and Palit Shanti Niketan, New Delhi, 1984), p. 224.

Another important strategy applied by the Government of India was the raising of force of Naga militia - 'Village Volunteer Force' and 'Village Guards',²⁷ trained and armed by the government to take on Naga nationalists.²⁸ For the Government of India considered that raising a local militia was essential because regular army suffered from structural and attitudinal inhibitions when fighting irregular wars and local militia (Village Volunteer Force and Village Guards) were able to collect information and intelligence.²⁹ However, the overall scorch-earth policies had a telling effect and the irony was the terrible suffering, hardship and human misery the Naga civilian underwent. It was not simply that the Naga civilians were caught in the cross-fire between the Naga resistance and the Indian Army but more so because of the army getting frustrated by elusive Naga nationalists the civilians became the target.³⁰ Even Jayaprakash Narayan who personally studied the ground reality in Nagaland admitted saying : "Many atrocities were perpetrated by the Indian security forces, of which every decent Indian I am sure is ashamed."³¹ The Naga nationalists vindicatingly points out and writes :

Life was indeed precarious; it was completely at the mercy of the ruthless invaders. Side by side thousands of villages were incinerated across the country. Some villages were burnt

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27. Kalkat, Major General, O.S., The far flung frontiers (Allied publishers Pvt. Ltd., Bombay, 1983), p. 94.
28. Banerjee, Utpal K., Operational Analysis and Indian Defence (Concept Publishing Co. New Delhi, 1980), p. 65.
29. Ibid., p. 227.
30. Nibedon, loc. cit.
31. Narayan, Jaya Prakash., Nation Building in India (Published by Brahmenand, Navacketne Prakashan, Varanasi, n.d.), p. 362.

down more than twenty times even. Besides, a large number of villages were uprooted from one place to another causing suffering beyond words. Granaries burnt to ashes without exception. Standing crops were destroyed. Schools and churches were raged to the ground.³²

As a matter of fact, the war caused severe economic crisis as all their crops were destroyed in the operations. Admittedly, Udayon Misra noted :

Even a rather cursory study of the role of the Indian Army in Nagaland would reveal that, under cover of fighting the insurgents, the entire economic pattern of the Naga people has been attempted to be disrupted...to have far-reaching consequences.³³

All the officials however did not support the massive military campaign launched against the Nagas. People like Nari Rustomji or General L.S. Thimayya rather advocated more human approach to solve the Naga tangle. Subsequently, by the early 1960s, the Government of India also realized that ultimate solution had to be found through political processes. This view was also shared by the Intelligence Bureau (IB).³⁴

B. POLITICAL OPTION

The change of mind in the decision-making body opting for political settlement did not imply that military offensive was entirely to be replaced by political process, rather it meant that side by side with military pressure, political process too was to be kept open whenever opportunity arose.

32. A brief political account, op. cit., p. 20.

33. Misra, Udayon., North-East India Quest for Identity (Omsons Publications, New Delhi, 1988), p. 13.

34. Mullik, op. cit., p. 314.

Significantly, according to the former Director of Intelligence Bureau (IB) B.N. Mullik's own admission, the Nagas were solidly behind the Federal Government of Nagaland.³⁵ The Government had therefore, to give some political concession to a section of the Nagas to break the Naga solidarity.³⁶ In other words to be more precise, plans were drawn up 'to divide and delude' the Nagas. The enactment of Naga Hills and Tuensang Area (NHTA) as autonomous district and the signing of the 16 Point Agreement and the creation of the state of Nagaland are cases in point. However, explicit confirmation that the Intelligence Bureau (IB) was behind the Autonomous District and statehood movements are to be found in the memoirs of B.N. Mullik. This startling revelation displays the important role the intelligence wing played and continues to play in Nagaland as well as the entire North-East.

It is an irony that the Government of India while sponsoring Naga People's Convention (NPC) under intelligence patronage was attempting to settle the issue without taking into consideration the Naga nationalist view point. In fact, the NPC was nothing but a conglomeration of Naga civil servants, pro-government elements and those who opted for peaceful means to the solution of the problem and were also called the moderates. Therefore, leaders like A.Z. Phizo considered granting of autonomous district a political 'manoeuvre' of India³⁷ and the nationalists generally described the new unit as a 'bribe to the moderates'.³⁸ Thus, in

35. Mullik, loc. cit.

36. Luithui, et al, of. cit., p. 2

37. Phizo's memorandum to UNO (In) A brief historical background of Naga Independence, of. cit., p. 36.

these circumstances, it was bound to be a failure since substantial number of Nagas were in support of the 'Naga cause' i.e., to be a free nation.

Meanwhile, the idea of granting a statehood was first mooted when confronted with Phizo's escape to London and attempt to internationalize the Naga cause. Earlier it was the IB who originated the idea of autonomous district. This time, it was the Prime Minister who first mooted and saw that the "solution lay in recognizing Nagaland as a separate state, Jawaharlal Nehru realised that there was no other way out..."³⁹ Thus, when the third Naga People's Convention passed a sixteen-point resolution the main thrust was to have a separate statehood for the Nagas and the same when forwarded to the Prime Minister was readily accepted.⁴⁰ Eventually, the Parliament of India passed a bill and the state of Nagaland was formally inaugurated on 1st December, 1963.⁴¹

The creation of Nagaland state was significant for it brought about certain advantages to the Government of India in dealing with the Naga nationalists. For the first time, a severe crack developed in the Naga movement and the grant of statehood resulted in pronounced difference between the hard-core and the moderate nationalists.⁴² Thus, if the Government of India attempted to divide the Nagas, she certainly achieved what she

38. Yonuo, Asoso, The Rising Nagas, (Vivek Publishing House, Delhi, 1974), p. 228.

39. Mullik, op. cit., p. 330.

40. Ramunny, op. cit., p. 140.

41. Ibid., p. 160.

42. Horam, M., Naga Insurgency, (Cosmo publication, New Delhi, 1988), p. 90.

had sought. However, if the government had planned it to be the final seal to the Naga political problem, it was awfully wrong because the hardcore nationalists did have serious differences with the moderates and the pro-government faction. But still the worse was that the granting of statehood was basically limited to the Nagas residing in west of greater Nagaland (Naga Hills District). Hence, the Nagas of Arunachal Pradesh (Tirap District), Manipur, Assam, were kept out of this arrangement.

Meanwhile, the government had enacted several draconian laws as part of its campaign to contain the Naga movement. Already, between 1953 and 1955 Assam government had enacted two special Acts, namely the Assam Maintenance of Public Order (Autonomous District) Act 1953 and the Assam Disturbed Areas Act 1955. This was followed by the promulgation of (a) The Armed Forces (special powers) Regulations 1958; (b) The Armed Forces (Assam and Manipur) special powers ordinance 1958 later converted into an act, and (c) the Nagaland Security Regulation Act of 1962. The special powers Ordinance of 1958 was converted into an act in September, as the Armed Forces (Assam and Manipur) Special Powers Act 1958, later amended as the Armed Forces Special Powers Act 1972 to make it applicable to all the states and union territories in the North-East.⁴³ In addition, another act, meant specially for Nagaland, came into force in 1962. It was called 'The Nagaland Security Regulation Act of 1962'.⁴⁴ In addition to these draconian laws, the Government of India has in the recent

43. Luithui, *et al*, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

44. The Nagaland Security Regulation Act (1962) (In) Nagaland File by Luithui and Haksar.

times, imposed the Punjab Security of State Act, 1953 in the state of Manipur and Nagaland.⁴⁵ Besides, other general laws like the National Security Act (NSA) and Terrorist and Disruptive (prevention) Act (TADA) are too in operation.

According to the Human Rights activists "the singular purpose of introducing the special laws is to equip the government and its armed forces with extensive power, putting themselves beyond the limits set by the Constitution"⁴⁶ of India.

Indeed, all these special acts operating in Nagaland, Manipur and also in the rest of the North-Eastern states was first purported to crush the Naga political movement and subsequently extended to deal with other movements in the region. Thus, the enactment of the special Armed Forces (special powers) Act was justified by the Government of India on the ground of extraordinary political situation in the North-East region.⁴⁷ In fact, the Armed Forces (special powers) Act is outstanding because of the extensive powers given to the armed forces. For instance, clause 4 (a) of this act provided that the army personnel down to the rank of a non-commissioned officer had the power to shoot and kill, to enter and search and arrest without warrant any person against whom reasonable suspicion existed that he had committed or was likely to commit a cognizable offence.⁴⁸

45. Press statement on the implication of Punjab Security of State act, 1953 (In) Know your rights, (published by NPMHR June, 1993, Manipur).

46. Idem.

47. Statement of Mr. Ramaswamy, Attorney General of India at UN Human Rights Committee meeting held on March 1991, New York (in) NPMHR goes to UN (published by NPMHR (Manipur Sector) 1991), pp. 6-7.

48. Ibid., p. 23.

The Regulation gave the Armed Forces legal immunity to commit any crime against the people. It is no wonder that the Nagas and other tribes and communities in the North-East have vehemently opposed and demanded the withdrawal of so called 'black laws'.⁴⁹

It is worth noting that the Manipur Human Rights Forum and the Naga People's Movement for Human Rights (NPMHR) filed a petition in the Supreme Court giving details of atrocities committed by the armed forces in Manipur and Nagaland. It challenged the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act. The petition is pending before the Constitutional bench.⁵⁰ In the words of V.K. Krishna Iyer former judge of the Supreme Court :

The stark and tragic fact remains that Army excesses under the guise of Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act are taking place, the military stationed in that area is menacing the common people's life and liberty...it becomes the compelling duty of every Indian to protest against such gross violence. Even judicial remedies are becoming futile on account of Army indifference to court orders.⁵¹

It is an irony that the armed forces sent to Nagaland and the North-east Region to contain Naga movement or 'insurgency' has been accused of committing excesses and severe violation of human rights. Admittedly, Luithui and Haksar writes :

With almost indefinite freedom in their hands the heavily armed Indian personnel went around devastating life and property of the Nagas.

49. Crop for Justice NE Sun, Feb 11-17, 1995, p. 18.

50. The struggle in court: A background (In) A question of Human Rights, (published by NPMHR, 1990), p. 14.

51. Message given to the Solidarity Group in support of the Civil and Democratic Rights in the North East. (In) A question of Human Rights, p. 15.

There was no law at all. The only law that was followed was the whims and fancies of these strangers in Indian army uniform with guns.⁵²

The Amnesty International pointed out :

The broad provisions of the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act not only facilitate human rights violation but can also encourage violations because those responsible need not fear they will be held accountable for any action taken under its provisions. The security forces operating in the North East appear to be aware that they will enjoy such immunity from prosecution.⁵³

It was therefore, the singular purpose of the Naga People's Movement for Human Rights to go to the United Nations Human Rights Committee* to pressurise the Government of India to bring about a changed attitude vis-a-vis the Armed Forces Special Powers Act. This move was significant because for the first time, the plight of the Naga people, various violations of human rights and arbitrariness of Armed Forces Special Powers Act were heard by the UN Human Rights Committee.⁵⁴ A general observation one can make out from the UN Human Rights Committee proceedings is that

52. Luithui, et al. op. cit., p. 32.

53. India "Operation Bluebird' A Case Study of Torture and Extra-judicial Execution in Manipur", Published by Amnesty International, London, 1990, p. 60.

* United Nation Human Rights Committee - This is the most prestigious human rights forum consisting of 18 experts from all over the world, chosen for their commitment to the cause of human rights, their legal expertise and high moral character. The UN Human Rights Committee has been constituted to monitor the implementation of the provisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. This covenant was passed by the UN and it came into force on 23rd of March 1976. Every country which ratifies it or accedes to it is bound to follow the provisions of the covenant under International Law. India acceded to the covenant on the 10th of April, 1979.

54. NPMHR goes to United Nations (published by NPMHR, Imphal : November 1991) p. 2. (the whole proceedings of the UN Human Rights Committee is also published by NPMHR).

the Committee expressed their deep concern about the Government of India's refusal to recognise the right to self-determination. The members also expressed their concern about the violation of human rights of the people of North East by the Indian Security Force operation under the Armed Forces Special Powers Act.⁵⁵

Historically speaking, the formation of the 'Peace Mission' and appointment of Rev. Michael Scott (a foreigner) as one of the members was outstanding and it is to the credit of the Government of India that this time they were serious about rightly solving the Naga issue. Unfortunately, the 'Peace Mission Commission' could bring about no settlement, as the premises from which the principal parties (i.e. the Federal Government of Nagaland and the Government of India) set out were at diametrically opposite extremes.⁵⁶ Even the much publicized 'peace talks' arranged by the Peace Mission Commissioners between the Prime Minister late Indira Gandhi and the delegation from FGN could not yield any positive result. Thus, it is in this deadlock situation, R. Suisa, a prominent leader of the NNC and FGN brought out his proposal for solving the 'Indo-Naga political conflict' which stressed on permanent link between India and Nagaland after allowing the latter to be sovereign 'on all account.'⁵⁷ R. Suisa's proposal was indeed a workable formula which could satisfy the aspirations of the Naga people while at the same time

55. Passim. PNMHR goes to UN.

56. Rustomji. op. cit., pp. 66-67.

57. Ngareophung, NG., (Compiled) Legacy of R. Suisa (Published by NG. Ngareophung, Ukhrul, 1979) pp. 54-55.

(R. Suisa was an MP at one time, later he joined the Naga political movement and served as an advisor to the NNC/FGN until his last).

it took note of the defence needs of India. Certainly it would have been a splendid catch for the Nagas had it not been the short sightedness of the NNC leadership. According to R. Suisa's own admission, Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and U.N. Debar, the then Congress President, took three months to come to an understanding concerning his proposal.⁵⁸ When the matter was put forward to A.Z. Phizo, the President of the NNC by R. Suisa (himself) and Vizol in London, the former was bluntly reminded "Do you know the fate of T. Sakhrie."⁵⁹ No wonder coming back home, Vizol and his Democratic Party stated: "they doubted the sincerity of both the groups, the Government of India as well as the Federal Government in their attempt to find a solution to the festering problem of the Nagas."⁶⁰

It is true that the Peace Mission failed in solving the principal issue but it did achieve something hitherto found missing. For the first time, the Naga issue was studied in the right perspective with due weightage to the arguments from the Government of India and Federal Government of Nagaland. Significantly, for the first time, the Peace Mission succeeded in bringing the two-warring groups to a negotiating table and initiated real peace process which culminated with the signing of the 'cease-fire'. Thus, Jaya Prakash Narayan, a member of the

58. Ibid., p. 68.

* T. Sakhrie - He served as the General Secretary of the NNC but was brutally assassinated by the NNC because he seems to have deviated from the NNC political stand and for other differences with the NNC leadership.

59. Written interview of 'Brig.' V.S. Wungmatem, Chief of the Naga Army, NNCN (conducted by the scholar), p. 15.
Vide Night of the Guerrillas, pp. 171-172.

60. Nibedon, op. cit., p. 171.

Peace Mission stated that a notable achievement of the Peace Mission was the ability to help realize both the parties "to renounce the use of armed forces for the solution of the political conflict between them, and instead shall pursue the means of reason and peaceful political action."⁶¹

It is a fact that the Government of India and the Naga nationalists got the opportunity of settling the issue when the Peace talk was raised to the Prime Ministerial level. Unfortunately, because of rigid stand from both sides there was no breakthrough from the deadlock.⁶²

The course of events in Nagaland in the following years was such that the cease-fire remained operative only on paper and there were serious allegations and counter-allegations of violations from both the parties.⁶³ Meanwhile, on August 8, 1972, the Chief Minister, Hokishe Sema was ambushed which killed two jawans and his driver.⁶⁴ There was immediate reaction. The Government of India banned NNC, FGN and FA⁶⁵ and the 'cease-fire' agreement was terminated since then.⁶⁶

Thereafter, the Indian army unleashed full thrust to render a final blow to the defiant Nagas. The major offensive against the Naga nationalists came at a time when the NNC, FGN and Federal Army were thoroughly disorganized. The NNC was marred by

61. Narayan, Jaya Prakash., Nation Building in India (Edited by Bramanand), published by Brahmanand, Navachetna, Prakashan Varanasi, n. d. p. 325

62. Horam, op. cit., p. 153.

63. Singh, Chandrika., Political Evolution of Nagaland, (Lancer Publishers, New Delhi, 1981), p. 133.

64. Horam, op. cit., p. 161

65. Idem.

66. Singh, loc. cit.

infighting and internal dissensions.⁶⁷ As a matter of fact, there was a complete breakdown of the chain of command affecting the rank and file of the NNC coupled with complete absence of leadership guideline at that crucial moment. Over and above, the political environment was totally against them. For instance, state emergency was proclaimed and the security forces were given a free hand; the Naga nationalists lost their important base and supply line when East Pakistan was liberated with help from the Indian Army; the Indian Army was reinforced and reorganized having a 'unified command'; and finally, the ruling party in Nagaland state persistently worked for Nagas' integration into the mainstream of India.⁶⁸ Thus, it was glaringly visible that the Naga nationalists were in a precarious condition. Subsequently, when the military offensive commenced the Nagas could not withstand and consequently capitulated with the signing of the Shillong Accord.

The signing of the Accord was indeed an absolute gain for India and the worst debacle for the Naga nationalists. Through 'arm twisting' and diplomatic manoeuvring, the Government was able to obtain their commitment to the Constitution of India and arms surrender from the NNC.⁶⁹ Moreover, the effects of the accord was equally advantageous for India. The accord virtually divided the Naga nationalists as pro-accord group and anti-accord group.

67. Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 139.

68. *Passim* Rev. V.K. Nuh : Nagaland Church and Politics, p. 136.
Neville Maxwell, India, the Nagas and the North-East,
p. 8. SC, Dev, Nagaland, the untold story, pp. 98-99.

69. See Clause 1 and 11 of Shillong Accord, 1975.

Later when all the desperate attempts to reorganize the NNC failed there was no other option for the anti-Accord group except to form a new organization to salvage the cause. Hence, the leadership of Th. Muviah and Isak Swu formed the Nationalist Socialist Council of Nagaland in 1980 (five years after signing the accord). An intelligence officer rightly seemed to have said: "Mother of the North eastern insurgencies had been born."⁷⁰ It was the regrouping of the hardcore Naga nationalists under the leadership of Th. Muviah and Isak Swu. But it is also true the Naga resistant forces were battered by the attempts to decimate them in the post accord period. Thus, when the NSCN was formed, they had to literally start from a zero-point with so many odds against them. The most formidable of which were the Indo-Myanmar joint offensive and the efforts of the accord group to push it through.

C. GOVERNMENT POLICY AND STRATEGY VIS-A-VIS THE NSCN

The change in the security environment in Nagaland after the signing of the Shillong Accord and the emergence of the NSCN as a distinct force resulted in governmental formulation of new policy and strategy, the nature which was considerably different from one in the pre-accord period (within Nagaland). With the NSCN coming to the forefront of the Naga movement the Government of India was confronted with new dimensions like ideological factor, centralized administration, forging of united front, new tactic

70. Hazarika, op. cit., p. 110.

of challenging India and Myanmar in several fronts, rendering assistance to other ethnic nationalities in the North East as well as beyond India.

However, it must be noted that the fundamental policy i.e. military offensive and political initiative remained intact if not intensified. The change in perception leading to new policy and strategy can be better understood when we discuss them one after another. They are as follows :

(1) Military Offensive

The emergence of the NSCN came to replace the NNC virtually in espousing the cause of Naga nationalism and it did cause the Government of India to evolve a military strategy to decimate and a political process as well to isolate the vocal section of the Naga nationalists. It was in this context, the Nagaland state Commissioner admitted that it was not to take any rest until the anti-accord group was checkmated.⁷¹ Indeed, the Naga nationalist group under Th. Muivah and Isak Swu which survived the onslaught of the Government forces hitherto was bitterly battling for life against the collective forces-the Indian security forces, Myanmarese troops and the pro-accord NNC group. Precisely six months after the formation of the NSCN, a joint force of the aforesaid launched an attack on the NSCN operational Headquarters at Langnuk (Naga territory in Upper Myanmar) on 27th September 1980 which killed about seventy of its cadres.⁷² Since then

71. Dev. S. C., Nagaland : The untold story (Published by Mrs. Gouri Dev, Calcutta, 1988), p. 123.

72. Who murders NNC ? (published by NSCN, Oking, 27th September, 1988), p. 1.

series of military campaigns by the Myanmarese troops were launched and at times joint operations (India and Myanmar) carried out.

Meanwhile the accord group of the NNC formed a local militia (most probably with full knowledge and consent of the Government of India) calling themselves as 'Peoples' Militia of Nagaland' (PMN). The same strategy as carried out by the Government of India in the 1960s by forming 'village guards' in Nagaland state and 'village volunteer force' in Manipur state to checkmate the NNC was now repeated to stall the NSCN in the 1980s. The tacit understanding between the PMN and security forces was quite visible to every common man. The PMN were paid, armed and sheltered in the army camps in all their operations against the NSCN.⁷³ But despite all these, over the course of time, the NSCN prevailed and edged out all their opponents and the notorious* PMN was marginalised permanently. Indeed, the NSCN leadership was consistently calling upon their comrades and the Nagas in general to face the challenges boldly. Thus to inspire the Nagas, it stated:

The time has come for you and for us either to
shrink back or prove through. God wants us

73. Raising, Rh., A letter to Naga public, Oking, 21 April, 1989. The cooperation between the security forces and PMN was an open affair and every common man particularly in Manipur hill districts knew about it. Even after the PMN was mauled by the NSCN, one of its main leaders Mr. Phantiphang is being looked after and lodged in at Leimakhong a Divisional Headquarters of the Indian Army Manipur sector.

* Notorious (PMN) - The Naga villagers suffered immensely at the hands of the PMN men. They were exorbitantly taxed and inflicted physical torture suspecting them to be NSCN sympathisers. It was in fact, a 'reign of terror' although for a short time.

right now to stand for him. Now is the time to hold firm our ground with Christ and face the stick and carrot policy and persecutions of all Indian type.⁷⁴

This strategy of using militants against nationalists is not an isolated issue. Just as in Nagaland, the Government of India had been extensively utilising "cat system" during the post 1991 anti-terrorism drive in Punjab. It is said that these 'cats' are actually militants turned undercover police or army agents.⁷⁵ They are called 'cats' because of the stealthy existence; renegade terrorists help the security forces in undercover operations against terrorists. 'Cats' are used for varying tasks. One is to use them as spotters. Another is to make them infiltrate the insurgent group and provide information about their strength, hide-outs and modus operandi. Yet another and deadly category of 'cats' who are armed and operate independently in the guise of insurgents, tracking down wanted persons and knocking them off.⁷⁶

The NSCN ambush at Namthilok (Ukhrul region) in 1982 killing all the 21 men traveling in three trucks belonging to 21 Sikh Regiment which had undergone vigorous 'low intensity conflict' training at Vairengte in Mizoram,⁷⁷ marked the beginning of the NSCN expansion. The problem with the Indian security forces was whenever any ambush occurred it was generally reciprocated by torturing innocent civilians and this created instead a

74. Free Nagaland Manifesto, (Oking, January, 1980, 2nd Edition. 22nd November, 1993), p. 19.

75. Vinayak, Ramesh., Prowling for the living, India Today, December 15, 1995, p. 100.

76. Ibid., p. 101.

77. Kalbag, Chaitanya., Death's wing, India Today October 31, 1992, p. 82.

favourable ground for Naga nationalists. Corroboratingly, Gautam Dasgupta writes, "Revenge-hungry securitymen, torturing villagers, have given Muivah a steady stream of recruits from the Naga village youth. It has been the same vicious circle again and again."⁷⁸ Thus, the army sent to Nagaland and Manipur to contain the Naga movement are ironically driving many youth to join the movement because of the ongoing atrocities on Naga families. According to Wasbir Hussain, the chronic problem with the Indian Army is "the serious failure to educate the soldiers on demands made by the region's ground realities."⁷⁹ Hence, he suggested that in order to stop villagers from supporting the Naga nationalist cause, "security forces must be made to be seen as protectors and not aggressors."⁸⁰

(2) Intelligence Network and Propaganda

Like many other governments facing 'ethnic nationalist movements', the Government of India have elaborately if not meticulously worked out intelligence network and propaganda machinery. As a matter of fact, the then Commissioner of Nagaland state admitted that no political movement like that of the Nagas can be suppressed without a good intelligence network and propaganda machinery.⁸¹ Admittedly, Shekhar Gupta writes, "sound intelligence and clever propaganda was vital tools of the counter insurgency."⁸² However, this particular investigation is

78. Dasgupta, Gautam., Muivah North East guerrilla supremo, The NS SUN, December 12, 1987, p. 10.

79. Hussain, Wasbir., Killing them softly, The Telegraph, 14 November, 1995.

80. Idem.

81. Dev, op. cit., p. 143.

82. Gupta, Shekhar., Guarding the North-east - 11, COordination is the casualty, Indian Express, 14 December, 1982.

obviously handicapped by complete sealing of information relating to the subject. Therefore, the analysis of this role relies on secondary sources.

The magnitude of the Naga problem is manifested by the sheer presence of all the intelligence agencies in the region. At present, the Government of India is deploying the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), Intelligence Bureau (IB), Subsidiary Intelligence Bureau (SBI), Central Intelligence Department (CID), Military Intelligence (MI), etc.⁸³ Recently, the Army has set up what is known as Internal Security Group (ISG) and their task is to keep the army ready for any eventuality.⁸⁴ This is besides, Liaison Units (LU) and Intelligence and Field Security Units (AFSU) which are responsible for counter-intelligence and gathering external intelligence on behalf of the army.⁸⁵ Moreover, the BSF, CRPF, the Assam Rifles all have their respective intelligence set up.

All these different intelligence agencies were operating independently and quite apparently it was one of the reasons why none of them could be decisive.⁸⁶ Admittedly, pointing out the crux of the problem in the intelligence department, Shekhar Gupta writes : "with no agency knowing where its jurisdiction begins or ends there is total confusion which benefits the insurgents.... The intelligence agencies are all the time busy ensuring that

83. Chibber, Lt. General (ret'd.) ML., India's Low Intensity Civil War, The Shillong Times, September 4, 1994.

Vide Strangers of the Mist, p. 191.

84. Gokhale, Nitin A., Keeping Vigil, Sunday (Calcutta) 5-11 June, 1994, p. 88.

85. Ibid., p. 89.

86. Chibber, loc. cit.

they are the first to report to Delhi any news happening."⁸⁷ Currently, there is serious effort to integrate intelligence network in the North East region and place them under an unified command.⁸⁸ Already, the intelligence agencies are having frequent high level consultation in order to upgrade intelligence network in the region. Such meetings have been held in Shillong, Gauhati, Agartala etc.⁸⁹ It is true that the nature and strategy of the NSCN operation spreading out in almost all the seven states in the North-East is causing equally hectic intelligence activities in the region. The situation is further aggravated now because of the alleged Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) infiltration in the region and the agency's growing involvement in aiding ethnic nationalist movements in the region including the Nagas.⁹⁰

Although at present, one cannot be precise about the success or failure of the intelligence operation, the same agencies have been very successful in Nagaland in putting forth their plans effectively in the past. But for obvious reason, their work achievements are to remain shunted from public preview.⁹¹

One of the notable achievements of the intelligence agencies was to bring a split within the NSCN organisation. This happened in 1988 as stated earlier in Chapter IV. The IB using SS Khaplang and others, attempted to do away with leaders like Th. Muviah and

87. Gupta, loc. cit.

88. The Telegraph, 9 June, 1994.

89. Intelligence Chiefs meet in Tripura, The Sentinel, 1 May, 1993.

90. Ray, Tapas., Seven sisters in strife Insurgency and the ISI Frontline, March 11, 1994, p. 39.

91. Dev, op. cit., p. 143.

Isak Chishi Swu to enable the former to come to the forefront. As a result, SS Khaplang and his group killed more than two hundred cadres of the NSCN.⁹² Although, the plan failed to topple the leadership, it brought about a division in the NSCN organisation. Thereafter, the Khaplang group came to be known more as a force to counter the NSCN under Isak Chishi Swu and Th. Muivah. Their tacit understanding with the Government of India through the IB and the State Government of Nagaland state became a knowledgeable fact. It is important to note that the Government of India meticulously utilized the services of the Khaplang group in checkmating the NSCN and in adopting measures to counter Naga political aspiration.⁹³

Another common tactic the intelligence agencies adopt against the NSCN is resorting to disinformation as part of their propaganda campaign. The common method is to plant propaganda stories to the press of both local and national through the Press Information Bureau (defence wing) issued by the Public Relation Officer (PRO), who is generally an Intelligence Officer.⁹⁴ It is because of this, that a number of times prolific journalists were put in embarrassing position. In this context, Deepak Dewan, Chief of Bureau (NE.SUN) clarify says : "Now the army PRO has

92. Ao, Tajenyuba, Massacre of Muivah's Group (NSCN), Nagaland Post (Dimapur), March 29, 1994.

93. Passim, Newspaper reportings, interviews, statements from the group. Kindly refer to Chapter IV for detail.

Vide CPI(M-L), Nationalities on War Path, A Selection of Vanguard essays, (Vanguard Publications, India, 1996), p. 15. Writes : "Since the late 1980's the Indian Government had tried to use the Naga group of S.S. Khaplang to launch attacks against the entire fighting forces led by NSCN."

94. Gupta, Shekhar., loc. cit.

been sending directly to the editors of regional and national papers. In most cases, the editors show their immaturity and irresponsibility by not disclosing the source of the news item."⁹⁵ This sort of game is so frequently used in the conflict torn region perhaps with a dual objectives : to shun people's support to the cause and secondly to create instability within the nationalist organisation (as it was successfully done in the past). This has worked well in a few cases but had failed in most cases by becoming counter-productive. We can examine a few cases with special reference to the NSCN.

It was the Alee (foreign) Command under Th. Muivah and Isak Chishi Swu who outrightly denounced the Shillong Accord as 'total capitulation' and earned the wrath of both the pro-agreement NNC and the Government of India who considered Th. Muivah and others as a disturbing force to the peace process.⁹⁶ In the given circumstances, the intelligence wing found 'Communism' to be the best bait to convince the Naga Christian population against them. Thus, a massive programme was undertaken for getting the support of the Church body in this campaign. It was too glaring that the Government of India and its intelligence agencies were taking advantages of the Nagas being Christians. Evidently, in this context, General Rawat, GOC of the Eastern Command cautioned the Naga congregation in Phek district asking : "How Nagaland, where the majority were Christians, could seek help from an atheistic

95. Dewan, Deepak., Army handout creates furore (In) NE SUN
December 1, 1990.

96. Sumi, Huska., What is the future of the Shillong Accord ?
Press handout, p. 4.

country like China ?."97 The Government of India's strategy was to let the Naga population correlate military aid from China with importing communism to Nagaland along with the propaganda that accepting communism will destroy their religion (Animism or Christianity). It is in this context that they accused Th. Muivah and others as hardcore communists.98 As indicated in Chapter III and IV, branding them 'communists' was far from the truth and was even misleading. Both Th. Muivah and Isak Chishi Swu are ardent evangelical Christians and what they advocated was some form of socialism which was never akin to communism as propagated.

The second case is the common phrase that is usually resorted to by military and political leaders alike, viz., 'Insurgency under control. It is because they assess things only from statistical point of view and not from the ground reality. Here lies the serious error in correctly assessing the situation in Nagaland. It is believed that both military and political leaders are advised not to report Nagaland situation as threatening the security of India. 'Insurgency under control' is a common phrase frequently used in projecting the situation in Nagaland. For instance, in reply to a question, the Minister of state for Home assured members of the Lower House that situation in the entire North-East was under control.99 Opinion from the defence wing is no different. Lt. General J.K. Puri, GOC in-chief, Eastern Commander said : "security forces had brought the

97. Rao, O. M., Longri Ao A Biography, (Christian Literature Centre Panbazar, Gauhati, 1986), p. 88.

98. Dev, op. cit., p. 140.

99. NE Insurgency under control (In) The Telegraph, March 28, 1985.

insurgency under reasonable control in the last 30 years, particularly in Nagaland."¹⁰⁰ In a similar tone, Lt. Gen. V. Madan, GOC Nagaland stated : "NSCN was at a low intensity in Nagaland."¹⁰¹ The reports from the Home Ministry, particularly of the North-East is quite misleading when they say 'everything is under control'.¹⁰² Major. General Ashok K. Mehta being critical of army style of projecting the situation in Nagaland also quoted General Roy Choudhary's (Chief of the Army) statement "The situation has been conveyed wrongly to the rest of the country even by the media."¹⁰³ As a matter of fact, Lt. General O.P. Kaushik, Chief of the Staff, Eastern Command admits that situation in the North-East is worst than Jammu and Kashmir.¹⁰⁴ Thus, it is only now that military perception of the region has changed. It must be noted that conveying a wrong picture than the one dictated by the actual ground reality is a dangerous trend, in that it would seriously effect policy making or planning and result.

Another brutal disinformation from the intelligence was the story about Angelus Shimrah, the 'Foreign Secretary' of the NSCN. In a newspaper it was reported that Angelus Shimrah had broken away from the NSCN and formed Government of the People's Republic of Nagaland.¹⁰⁵ The former immediately issued a clarification

 100. Insurgency under control in NE (In) Times of India, June 10, 1986.

101. Insurgency dormant in Nagaland (In) The Assam Tribune, January 14, 1989.

102. Report 1992-93 Government of India. Ministry of Home Affairs, (New Delhi, India), p. 16.

103. Mehta, Maj. Gen. Ashok K., NE insurgency worse than J & K. The Telegraph, 16th Feb, 1995.

104. Idem.

terming the story as "baseless propaganda...and coming forth from the traitors and the adversary."¹⁰⁶ In this case, even though, the intelligence might have had an intention, it was rather poorly planted and too cheap to be taken seriously because Angelus Shimrah is a well educated leader and an ardent nationalist forming the core of the NSCN organisation.

Then certain misinformation about Th. Muivah was also spread around the early part of 1987 by the intelligence agency. They put a story through a national wire service that Th. Muivah, the General Secretary of the NSCN was missing since February with possibilities of his having been drowned in Chindwin river, or immobilised after the accident in Chindwin river having been under treatment in Assam.¹⁰⁷ To this, Subir Bhaumik sharply reacted and said: "I can vouch they are all cock-and bull stories, as I met him much after February."¹⁰⁸

Another possibility discussed in the wire service story was just ludicrous. It reported that Muivah was under 'house arrest' in Kachin Independent Army Headquarters after he tried to use the Burmese Communist Party to contact China. According to Subir Bhaumik:

The intelligence is lending Muivah an aura of mystery by spreading such stories about him. These stories will certainly not confuse the underground, if they are so intended, because the rebels know what is happening in their organisation.¹⁰⁹

105. The Telegraph, 28th October, 1985.

106. Angelus Clarifies Split Story (In) Ura Mail, October 30, 1985.

107. Dasgupta, Gautam., op. cit., p. 10.

108. Idem.

109. Gupta, loc. cit.

But soon again, the intelligence Information planted another fabricated story through the Press Information Bureau (PIB) Defence Wing and the same was published in national papers under the caption "Secret talks with NSCN in Delhi"¹¹⁰ According to the news report, Th. Muivah, Angelus Shimrah and Rh. Raising of NSCN were flown to Delhi for a few rounds of discussions with senior Home Ministry officials.¹¹¹ In Nagaland, this was SS Khaplang's Primary accusation against Th. Muivah, Isak Swu and others that they were preparing to surrender to India and this report in the national paper was explicitly intended to corroborate Khaplang's allegation. The report was sensational and skilfully framed so as to make the readers believe in it, specially in Nagaland. Evidently in this context, Captain W. Shimray, Liaison Officer, GPRN disclosed that Khaplang's men were going around in the villages and military camps displaying the very report (secret talks with NSCN in Delhi) as confirmation of their allegation and found many taking their story.¹¹² Thus, it was a successful operation subtly carried out. Nevertheless, despite having suffered serious damage within the organisation, the NSCN leadership remained committed to the cause of the Nagas and thus Isak Swu and Th. Muivah reiterated their stand stating: "every Naga must know that our policy is to fight eternally if India and Burma (Myanmar) do not keep their hands off Nagaland.

110. Hussain, Wasbir., Secret talks with NSCN in Delhi The Telegraph, 6 March, 1989.

111. Idem.

112. Written interview with Captain W. Shimray, Liaison Officer GPRN, conducted by the scholar, 17 August, 1993.

We shall be all out in our support to all the revolutionaries in Burma and India."¹¹³

In 1990, the intelligence planted another serious damaging story through the PIB defence wing (Imphal) as part of their disinformation and propaganda under the headline "NSCN callously exploiting Non-Tangkhuls"¹¹⁴ The army handout which was published by the Assam Tribune dated October 13, 1990 conspicuously intended to divide the Nagas on tribal line and drive a wedge between the Naga nationalists.

(3) Neutralising NSCN

Despite all out military offensive against the NSCN, both the political and military leaders do not rule out talk with the NSCN for final settlement.¹¹⁵ Even the military (Defence) whose main thrust was military solution for long time have now realized the necessity of holding talk with the NSCN.¹¹⁶ Thus, an apparent willingness to settle the Naga issue through dialogue and negotiation is explicit in both the political leadership and Defence Ministry.

However, the Government of India is determined to hold the negotiation only after neutralising the NSCN. This is evident from the several action plans it had effected. The strategy of

113. The Joint Statement, op. cit., p. 32.

114. The Assam Tribune, October 13, 1990.

115. Passim The Telegraph, 24, February, 1993.

The Naga banner, November 26, 1994.

Times of India, April 28, 1992.

116. Amrita Bazar Patrika, 14 December, 1984.

Vide The Times of India, April 28, 1992.

The Shillong Times, June 22, 1995.

117. Ramunny, Marcot., Lessons from dealing with rebels The Hindu, January 25, 1992.

neutralising the NSCN stems from the reasoning that one should never negotiate from a position of weakness but of strength.¹¹⁷

It is in the light of this that the government of India took recourse to neutralising all the forces or ethnic nationalist groups aligning with the NSCN although without any success. Thus, the spate of signing accord with several aforesaid groups such as the Tripura National Volunteer (TNV), Hmar People's Convention (HPC), Bodo Peoples' Action Committee (BPAC), Dimasa National Security Force (DNSF), Achik Liberation Matgrik Army (ALMA) can be understood in the light of this strategy. This strategy of neutralising all the groups close to the NSCN and finally isolating it tactically sounds quite brilliant and convincing. However, such a strategy requires a long period to take effect and it is doubtful whether one could really achieve the scheme because the settlement with one group could lead to emergence of another group and this is exactly happening in the North-East today. For instance, the Government of India with much publicity signed accord with TNV, Bodos or even DNSF and ALMA but within no time, National Liberation Front of Tripura (NLFT) was formed in Tripura, Bodo Security Force (BSF) was strengthened and DNSF regrouped with the help of the NSCN.¹¹⁸

The Government of India's policy or strategy sprang directly as a counterpoise against the NSCN's military strategy of expanding their area of influence and dispersal of their forces and thus effectively expanding the striking radius in the entire

118. Ghosh, Santanu., A never ending problem, Sunday, 20-26 November, 1994.

Vide The Telegraph 10 November, 1992.

North East region.¹¹⁹ Thus, one of the primary military objectives of 'united front' is, according to Th. Muivah to "make the mighty Indian armed forces run back and forth."¹²⁰ The NSCN strategy is essentially to face the mighty Indian army on several fronts not just confining to Nagaland alone. It is, on the other hand, the assessment of the Government of India to confront the Naga nationalists on a single front and hence the strategy of neutralising the forces friendly to the NSCN. Unfortunately, for the Government of India, this strategy has not worked so well as indicated aforesaid.

(4) Sponsoring forces to checkmate the NSCN

Though for obvious reasons, the Government of India outrightly denied having sponsored forces like the Kuki National Army (KNA)* or Khaplang-Dally group to checkmate the NSCN, the allegations are quite strong and the modus operandi of these two organisations seriously question the denial of the government of India.

Not very long ago, the Government of India was found hobnobbing with the LTTE and imparting training which of course the Government of India was vehemently denying until its role was unveiled.¹²¹ The Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) received

119. Bhaumik, Subit., NSCN rampage worries New Delhi Eastern Panorama, September 1994, p. 14.

120. Interview with Th. Muivah by Deepak Dewan, (In) NE SUN, December 25-31, 1993.

* KNA - One must not confuse with Kuki National Assembly. Kuki National Army is not a legal political organisation under the constitution of India and is a militant group.

121. Subramaniam, T.S., A role unveiled, Frontline, January 17, 1992, p. 84.

the green signal from Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister of India to recruit as many Sri Lankan Tamil youths as possible and give them training in arms.¹²²

Later the LTTE loosened from the grip of the RAW and even refused to surrender its arms after the Indo-Sri Lankan accord in 1987; the Government of India deliberately encouraged the Eelam Peoples' Revolutionary Liberation Front in order to neutralise the LTTE. However, history is a proof as to how miserably the strategy failed.¹²³

Today, the same Intelligence Services are alleged to have sponsored Ikhwan-ul-Muslimoon (a militant group in Kashmir) and this group is known to be playing a central role for the Government of India by taking on the pro-Pakistan outfits.¹²⁴ Thus, one senior official in Srinagar admittedly believed to have stated "Irrespective of which agency is using him (Koka Parray, chief of the group), he is playing a very useful role by taking on the pro-Pakistan outfits."¹²⁵

It is in the same way that the Government of India is seen purposely inciting the Kuki National Army (KNA) as a counterweight against the NSCN.¹²⁶ Several Non-Governmental Organisations like the Manipur Naga Baptist Church Leaders Forum; All Naga Students' Association, Manipur; Naga Peoples' Movement for Human Rights; and Naga Students' Federation have come out

122. Idem.

123. Thomas, C. Joshua., Ethnic cleansing by dirty politics, The Telegraph, 28 January, 1994.

124. Baweja, Harinder., (Special Report) Proping up the enemy's enemy India Today, December 15, 1995, p. 58.

125. Idem.

126. Nayar, Kuldip., Defiance by restive Nagas, The Eastern Clarion, (Jorhat) March 8, 1995.

openly accusing the Government of India for purposely fanning the ethnic clash between the Nagas and the Kukis and subtly sponsoring the Kuki militia with cash and weapon to fight the NSCN.¹²⁷ Evidently in this context, the NPMHR sees the Naga-Kuki clash as nothing but Government of India's 'divide and Rule' policy. Thus, it writes:

The issue today is a synchronized act of the national oppressions and the few opportunistic elements. The Indian Government has failed to meet the challenge of self-determination for the Indigenous people, which is clearly a political question. The opportunistic elements among the Kukis have resorted to historical back-projection whereby sanction is sought from the past to justify the present....The turmoil today is the root of national oppression through the policy of divide and rule by the Indian state and the few opportunists for the perpetuation of dominance and misrule. The Question of nationalism cannot be solved by instigating narrow tribal conflicts and militarising the region.¹²⁸

Similarly, the NSCN leadership has consistently maintain the stand that the Naga-Kuki conflict represented a 'new phase of Indian State terrorism' and accused the Government of India of training, arming, sheltering and financing the Kukis to fight a 'proxy-war' for India against the 'stubborn freedom loving Nagas' in general and the NSCN in particular on a 'secret promise' in return to create a 'homeland for the Kukis' in the territory of the Nagas.¹²⁹

127. Passim Moreh National Oppression by NPMHR, Imphal, August, 1992.

Vide Memorandum to Prime Minister submitted by Manipur Naga Baptist Church Leader's Forum, 1993.

128. Moreh : National Oppression, op. cit. (Introduction).

129. Muivah, Th., A rejoinder to the Indian propaganda stunt, op. cit., p. 9.

Several national papers do admit that the Government of India is sponsoring the Kukis for their interest. As a matter of fact, The Telegraph writes, "In the present conflict, the centre is trying to use the Kuki National Army (KNA) to check the National Socialist Council of Nagaland. The government is trying to take advantage of a traditional enmity that existed between the two tribes."¹³⁰ On the other hand, The Times of India published a report supporting government policy of helping the Kukis. Thus, it writes, "The Indian Defence Forces were not adept at counter-insurgency and would need the help of outfits like KNA, who know every inch of the territory and could tackle NSCN far more effectively with the full backing and logistic support of the army, RAW and other intelligence agencies."¹³¹ Here it is observed that the tactical design of the central government is to antagonise KNA against NSCN in order to offset and divert the latter's striking power.¹³²

Going by the reports of the Kuki militia, it is not surprising that the former is working in tandem with the Indian Security Force. Though one cannot rule out the possibility of discord between the two (just like the LTTE and RAW) in the future, at present there seems to be good understanding. As a matter of fact, the President of the Kuki National Army (KNA), Hanglen openly admitted that he had met the them Army Chief Gen. S.F. Rodrigues in Delhi on December 24, 1992¹³³ and also confided

130. The Telegraph, 30 March, 1993.

131. The Times of India, 22nd March, 1993.

132. Choudhary, Jyoti Lal., Ominous Portend of NSCN-UNPO hook Up
Eastern Panorama, June 1993, p. 22.

133. The Telegraph, 30 March, 1993.

that they were in touch with Army cantonments at Leimakhong (Manipur Sector) and Jakhama (Nagaland Sector).¹³⁴ According to the news story published in Hindustan Times, the Kuki National Army (KNA) is supposed to have asked for about Rs. 7 crores as financial assistance from the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), the counter espionage organisation of the Government of India. Moreover, the KNA asked for the arms and material support from Indian Army to undertake a 'fight to the finish war with the NSCN'.¹³⁵

Besides, a damaging nexus between the Kukis and the Government of Manipur is strongly alleged with well documented facts. Evidently in this context, the Manipur Naga Baptist Church leader's Forum, Naga People's Movement for Human Rights and All Naga Student's Association, Manipur etc. accused the Manipur Government of being partisan to the Kukis and neglecting the Nagas. The previous two ministries in Manipur headed by R.K. Ranbir Singh in general and that of R.K. Dorendra Singh in particular conspicuously displayed their bias and prejudices against the Nagas.¹³⁶ For instance, the Nagas alleged that "Mr. R. K. Dorendra Singh is openly siding and encouraging Kukis

134. Hanglen, President KNO interview with Pradip Phanjoubam (In) The Naga Banner, April 16, 1993.

Hanglen alias Sokhatinmang Haokip was later killed by his men in 1995 because of the disclosures he made, (Indian Recorder, April 23-29, 1995), p. 1102.

Leimakhong and Jakhama are both Indian Army Divisional Headquarters coordinating 'Low Intensity Conflict'.

135. The Hindustan Times, July 22, 1993.

136. On Naga-Kuki conflict submitted to the world Baptist Alliance (WBA) Kathmandu, 1994 prepared by the Manipur Naga Baptist Church Leader's Forum, Imphal, September 19, 1994.

atrocities on the Nagas."¹³⁷ As it was alleged, the then Government of R.K. Dorendra Singh did precious little to safeguard the Naga victims. Even the church body points out the evil intent of the state government and recounts : "the Kuki villagers are given shelter by the security forces but not the Nagas, and while the Kuki victims were given compensation and immediate attention and Naga plights are not sympathetically considered."¹³⁸ The Nagas in general and all the Non-governmental organisations were of the view that the Manipur government under R.K. Dorendra Singh in collusion with the Kuki ministers and the security forces were carrying out a well calculated game of suppressing the Naga movement.¹³⁹

The nexus between the Kuki militia and some ministers of Manipur Government was unearthed from documents seized from the Kuki militia leaders. The documents explicitly disclosed that R.K. Dorendra Singh, the then Chief Minister of Manipur donated Rs. 1,00,000, while the Finance Minister, C. Doungel Kuki also donated Rs. 2,00,000 to the Kuki militia organisation.¹⁴⁰ According to one NGO source, further updating the allegation :

R.K. Dorendra Singh's right hand man, Mr. C. Doungel Kuki...alleged to have given not only Rs. 2 lakhs mentioned above, but according to the letter of T. Thanglem Kuki Chief Commander, Chin-Kuki Revolutionary Front, dated 30.5-1991 Mr. C. Doungel had paid Rs. 2 lakhs on 27.5 1991. Again, he paid another instalment of Rs. 3 lakhs (as per Mr. D. Nethang, President, Kuki Federal Council, dated 30. 9. 1990). According to the letter of

137. Memorandum to Prime Minister, loc. cit.

138. Idem.

139. On Naga-Kuki conflict, op. cit., p. 15.

140. Ibid., p. 16.

Vide The Telegraph, October 27, 1992.

Mr. K. Athnang Kuki (chief)...C. Doungel promised to contribute Rs. 25 lakhs by instalment for the formation of his underground outfit.¹⁴¹

Besides the confirmation of some ministers aiding and abetting the Kuki militia to take on the NSCN, the partisan attitude of Dorendra Singh' ministry is also quite evident from the notification of August 1993 to confiscate licensed arms from Ukhrul district (predominantly inhabited by the Tangkhul Nagas) and the Kukis were spared from it.¹⁴²

But still the more serious allegations pertaining to the nexus between the Kuki militia and the Indian security forces are corroborated by the following incidents. The following evidences speak eloquently of the collusion of the two forces vis-a-vis the NSCN.

On 21.4. 1993 Noon Assam Regiment and Kuki National Army set ablaze all the houses of Kamhang Khullen village of Chandel district numbering 25 and same number of granary.

On 22.4. 1993 at around 11 A.M. the combined forces of 15 Assam Regiment and KNA rounded up Leibi village and burnt down 64 houses.

On 15.5. 1993 15 Assam Regiment in collusion with Kuki volunteers set ablaze 24 houses and granaries of Laipham village (Maring).

On May 10, 1993 at around 12 Noon the KNA with 24 Assam Rifles of New Cannan Post attacked Thawai and Riha villages.¹⁴³

141. The Manipur Naga Baptist Church Leader's Forum, loc. cit.

142. Ibid., op. cit., p. 17.

143. Naga-Kuki Conflict submitted to WBA, op. cit., pp. 18-19.

It is in this context that the NSCN termed the whole development as 'Indian state terrorism'¹⁴⁴ and 'national oppression'¹⁴⁵ by NPMHR. According to the NSCN leadership, using third party such as the Kukis against the NSCN has twofold objectives:

First, to justify the induction of two fresh Divisions of troops into Nagaland which is already saturated with military presence. Second, to put the blame of all the excesses committed in these communal clashes squarely on the NSCN with a view to project them as terrorists in the eye of the world.¹⁴⁶

As a matter of fact, the Government of India's representation to the Secretary General, Unrepresented Nations and People's Organisation (UNPO) squarely blamed the NSCN for the Naga-Kuki clash and for all the killing that had taken place. Thus, it termed the NSCN as a terrorist organisation and demanded NSCN dismembership from UNPO which is committed to peaceful approach.¹⁴⁷ The same tone was also used by Indian Government's mission to the UN office in 1993 and 1994 in their protest against the NSCN delegation participating in the Working Group on Indigenous Population in Geneva.¹⁴⁸ Therefore, the NSCN

144. The New phase of Indian state terrorism in Nagaland Statement of the NSCN, 18 September, 1993, p. 4.

145. Moreh, National Oppression NPMHR, loc. cit.

146. The new phase of Indian state terrorism, loc. cit.

147. Passim Government of India's representation to the Secretary General, UNPO, 1994.

148. Passim Permanent Mission of India to the UN Office, Geneva Statement by Debashish Chakravarti on behalf of the Indian delegation to the Working Group on Indigenous Population, Geneva, 29th July, 1993.

----- Working Group on Indigenous Populations of the Sub. Commission on Prevention of discrimination and protection of Minorities, 28th July, 1994.

allegation that the Government of India desires to project them as a terrorist group appears true as indicated aforesaid.

Coming back to the allegations of the existence of tacit understanding between the Kukis and Indian security forces, the latter has refuted it. For instance, both Maj. Gen. Sen Gupta and Maj. Gen Satish Chander Chopra has said that the security forces adopted a non-partisan attitude in tackling the ethnic problems and in fighting insurgency and of course they admitted that they have been confronting the NSCN more than KNA because of the former's area of operation.¹⁴⁹ However, the allegation concerning the Government of India fanning the ethnic clash and patronising the Kukis or Kuki militia to checkmate the NSCN are too well founded to be easily dismissed. The self confession of the key KNA leadership and documents seized from the KNA members, the strong charges made by Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and the operation of the Indian security forces in collusion with KNA substantiate the allegations. In this case, the appeal by a neutral group such as the Kanglei Yawol Kanna Lup (a militant organisation comprising Kanglepak Communist Party, United Liberation Front and PREPAK of Manipur) to Kukis is quite revealing. It cautioned the Kukis against becoming pawns "of imperialist India and her lackey" and to 'erase' the suspicion that Kuki leaders are being used by India to work against revolutionaries of the region.¹⁵⁰

149. Passim Army deny KNA links Nagaland Post April 13, 1993.

Maj. Gen. Sen. Gupta interview with NE SUN, Oct. 23-29, 1993.

150. Nagaland Post, February 7, 1995.

The other group involved in the game-plan of the Government of India to counter the NSCN is the Khaplang group (the press called it the NSCN -K) as indicated earlier. Now it is clear that both these groups were covertly utilised, one from the North and the other from the South to decimate the NSCN and strategically it is sound indeed.

By now, it is also glaringly evident that several Kuki militia men were trained by the Khaplang group in the North-West of upper Myanmar ¹⁵¹ and this fact has amply substantiated the alleged nexus of Khaplang group with the Indian security forces. Other wise, there is no logic why Khaplang group should cooperate with the Kuki militia when the latter is in conflict with the Nagas. Thus, the primary objective is precisely to counter the NSCN.

The point is this, that the strategy of patronising groups like the Kukis or Khaplang group comes in handy only for a short term as tactical gain but certainly not the solution of the key issue. Ironically, so far, the Naga nationalists are engaged in one of the longest bush-wars in Asia and is yet to show any sign of weakening, both in morale and armed strength.

D. DEFENCE COORDINATION

Since the time of NSCN securing international recognition by becoming member of the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organisation (UNPO) in January 1993,¹⁵² and the alleged

151. Passim Interview of C. Alemla.

Confession of Longna Chishuhu.

Open Letter to SC Jamir by 'Brig.' V.S. Atem.

152. Nayar, loc. cit.

involvement of Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) in aiding the Naga nationalists and other North East insurgents,¹⁵³ the Government of India has no reason but to feel perturbed. Thus, for the first time defence coordination among different defence related agencies of the state was given prominent emphasis. This new defence coordination was evolved significantly because of the Naga political movement assuming a new dimension.

Lately, there had been a flurry of seemingly purposeful activity on the turbulent North-East region as well as at the international diplomatic level. For the first time, the Government of India conspicuously has shown some seriousness in dealing with the problem. Evidently in this context, the Prime minister of India, Narasimha Rao has constituted a special Committee under the Chairmanship of S.B. Chavan, the Home Minister with other members of the Committee such as Margaret Alva, Santosh Mohan Dev and P.A. Sangma.¹⁵⁴ The Committee is to monitor the political movement or insurgency scenario and advise the Prime Minister for taking effective steps.¹⁵⁵ Thus, in the words of Santosh Mohan Dev: "The centre in close coordination with the North Eastern states and is committed to end insurgency."¹⁵⁶

It is against this backdrop that the Union Home Minister S.B. Chavan called for integrated, comprehensive plan involving the North-Eastern states to tackle the political problem of the

153. The Sentinel, 21 July, 1993.

154. Interview of Santosh Mohan Dev, Union Minister for Steel with Jyoti Lal Chowdhary of Eastern Panorama, June 1994, p.13.

155. Idem.

156. Idem.

region.¹⁵⁷ Hence, the intention is to tackle the ethnic nationalist movement on a war-footing which now appears to be sitting on the edge of a volcano.

With directive from the Union Home Ministry, North-East Regional Security Coordination Cell has been set up.¹⁵⁸ The members comprise of Chief Ministers of the region, Chief Secretaries, DGPs and high Army officers.¹⁵⁹ The whole thrust is for total coordination among the seven states and facilitate a cohesive approach to the political problems in the region. Such security coordination is dictated by the proliferation of NSCN operation covering all the North-East region. Thus, the Government have chalked out a multi-pronged strategy essentially for containing the NSCN activities. The strategy involves coordination among intelligence agencies operating in the region:¹⁶⁰, setting up of a unified command of all the security forces under operation; ¹⁶¹ setting up of a common intelligence data bank in Shillong and a 'hot line' with all the state capitals from Shillong for better sharing of information and coordination of low intensity conflict.¹⁶² Then inter alia, the strategy include the declaration of the most seriously affected areas as 'disturbed areas', notification of certain militant groups as 'unlawful associations'; deployment of additional units

157. The Eastern Clarion (Jorhat) September 11, 1992.

158. Anti-Insurgency operations in state (In) The Eastern Clarion (Jorhat) May 1, 1995.

159. Centre open to talks with NE insurgents The Eastern Clarion (Jorhat) May 1, 1995.

160. Sentinel 1 May, 1993.

161. THE Naga Banner, June 10, 1994.

162. Eastern Clarion, May 5, 1995.

Vide The Telegraph 28 June, 1993.

of the Army and the central para military forces, financial assistance to the North-Eastern states for modernization and upgradation of state police forces, raising of Indian reserve battalions.¹⁶³ But still one of the most important decisions is to set up a special standing monitoring mechanism comprising representatives of the Ministry of Finance, the Planning Commission and the Ministry of Home Affairs.¹⁶⁴ They will monitor how the funds are being utilised by the various state government in the North-East. This is a significant step indeed in a region infested with corruption and other ills.

Thus, it is a massive and comprehensive plan chalked out by the Government of India covering the entire region of the North-East. The objective of such plan is quite conceivable i.e. on the one hand to commit an all out offensive against the NSCN under Isak Swu and Th. Muivah's leadership and bring the Naga movement to a considerably low level if not 'totally decimate them'. On the other hand, the Government is resolute to woo the general civilians and moderates by adopting appeasement programme such as steps for economic development, particularly with a view to improving the basic infrastructure and employment opportunities.¹⁶⁵ The Government of India also removed the 'bamboo curtain' by lifting 'Restricted Area Permits' for foreigners visiting the area from three states i.e. Assam,

163. Idem.

164. Chowdhary, Rajib., Special Cell for North-East NE SUN April 9-15, 1994, p. 16.

165. Idem.

Vide Union Ministers moot steps to woo NE tribals The Eastern Clarion, May 4, 1995.

Meghalaya and Tripura.¹⁶⁶ Another significant step was the government's decision to revert back to the pre-1989 policy wherein non-plan expenses were borne by the Central Government.¹⁶⁷ In other words, it seeks to place Nagaland state and other North-Eastern states under 'Special category states'. This is besides full reimbursement of expenditure incurred on deployment of central para-military forces by the Central Government.¹⁶⁸ Over and above, the government is keeping the door open for political dialogue with the NSCN.¹⁶⁹

Another notable decision is that the various agencies like the state's bureaucracy, district civil administration, police, para-military forces and the Army would give a special attention to social welfare activities, especially in rural areas, to ensure greater interaction with the common people and earn their goodwill.¹⁷⁰ Admittedly, Maj. Gen. B.S. Randhawa, Commandant of the counter-Insurgency and Jungle Warfare School (CIJWS) at Vairengte stated that "getting the people on our side is an important part of all counter insurgency operations."¹⁷¹ Major Gautam Deb, an intelligence officer of the CIJWS offers more detail about the social welfare activities and said: "We...slowly try to win them over by providing them with medical aid, subsidised rations, education and other social services."¹⁷² It

166. Aphira, 25 October, 1995.

167. Chowdhary, Suvendu Roy., What ails Nagaland ? NE SUN March 25-31, 1995, p. 10.

Vide The Telegraph, 20 July, 1994.

168. Anti-Insurgency operation in state, Eastern Clarion May 1, 1995.

169. The Telegraph, 9 April, 1995.

170. New Strategy to fight Naga ultras, Eastern Clarion March 4, 1995.

171. Sarkar, Arindam., The Dogs of war Sunday 5-11 June, 1994.

172. Idem.

is true that winning over the hearts and minds of the local people is an integral part of low intensity conflict operations or in containing political movement such as that of the Nagas.

E. CRITICAL ANALYSIS

Hitherto, the policy (if at all there was a policy) on Nagaland or on the Naga political issue, has been predominantly to contain it rather than rightly solving the issue. Admittedly Nirmal Nibedon, points out correctly some years back that the centre generally deploy armed forces in order to checkmate the Naga nationalists but by itself, it has not solved the problem rather compounded it'.¹⁷³ Thus, it is in this perception that the scholar observed some flaw in the Government policy vis-a-vis the Naga issue, particularly against the NSCN. They are :

(1) Policy lacked consistency

Government of India's policy against the Nagas and their problem for the last forty years or so can be considered as inconsistent and lacking genuine commitment. This is borne out of the many experiences and observations made on her policy and mode of operation.

One such discrepancy is the abrupt unilateral withdrawal of the Nine - Point Agreement by the Government of India.¹⁷⁴ Such was literally termed as 'betrayal of the Agreement by India' by the nationalist leadership in Nagaland.¹⁷⁵ Another case of almost

173. Nibedon, *op. cit.*, p. XIV (preface).

174. A brief political account, *op. cit.*, p. 9 (for detail refer Chapter II).

175. *Idem.*

similar nature was the unilateral abrogation of 'Cease-fire Agreement' in 1972.¹⁷⁶

This inconsistency was also observed by the members of the 'Peace Mission'. Thus, Jaya Prakash Narayan made this observation that Gundevia (who headed the delegation of the Government of India in the talk with the Nagas) made blatantly contradictory statements on India's stand concerning the Peace Mission proposal. For instance, Gundevia's letter of January 21 and statement of April 4 and 5 contradict each other.¹⁷⁷ According to Narayan, this 'deepened the suspicious of FGN about Government of India's motive and was believed to be the main reason of FGN's refusal to accept the Peace Mission's proposals.¹⁷⁸

The element of inconsistency is also seen in the manner in which arrangements arrived at, are not being observed or executed. Evidently in this context, several points of 'Sixteen Point Agreement' signed with the Naga People's Convention in 1960 is yet to be fulfilled. In fact, "Nehru had assured the Nagas in 1960 that the question of Naga boundaries and forests would be examined and settled."¹⁷⁹ The same is true of the controversial Shillong Accord. Although as guiding principle for the solution of the Naga problem, both the parties i.e., the Government of India and the FGN and NNC representatives agreed that (1) solution should be honourable to all concerned and (2) solution should be acceptable to both sides,¹⁸⁰ the end result (Shillong

176. Ibid., p. 18.

177. Narayan, op. cit., p. 345.

178. Idem.

179. Rustomji, Nari., Imperilled Frontiers India's North-Eastern Borderlands (Oxford University Press, Delhi 1983), p. 70.

180. Ramunny, loc. cit.

Accord) was the Government's complete domination resulting in an imposed Agreement.¹⁸¹ As a matter of fact clause III of the Shillong Accord explicitly provided room for further negotiation for final settlement but when the government realised that the Naga nationalists were neutralised (according to their assessment) any follow-up talk was shelved. For instance, according to the NSCN sources, because of the repeated approaches of the Government of India as many as seven times to 'hold talks without any precondition', the NSCN agreed and the proposed talk was fixed on 15th July, 1985 at Tuensang town. The government delegation failed to turn up and the talk was postponed indefinitely¹⁸² which of course never took place.

Thus, lack of consistency in the Government of India's approach and policy and secondly, lack of genuine commitment to find a rightful settlement are quite glaring. The Government of India seem to have a piecemeal approach of the issue. The government seems to be satisfied with their situational approach of keeping the situation under acceptable level which does not pose a serious threat to the security of India. Hence, the problem with the policy of Indian Government is not seeking a permanent solution but containment of the movement which she thinks she had achieved it.¹⁸³

181. Luithui, et al., *op.cit.*, p.37 (see Chapter III for details).

182. Interview of Bertil Lintner with Th. Muivah, (published by the GPRN December 1985), p. 18.

183. It is truism of all the ruling political leaders and Army officers that 'everything is under control' is the accepted conventional statement.

(2) Political Process Outweighed by Military Approach

Another disturbing trend in the Government of India's policy is the pre-eminence of the military option in handling the delicate Naga issue. Since the time, the Government of India took the onus of handling the Naga issue from the British Government, military approach had remained a predominantly accepted measure to the solution of the problem. The reasons behind such move are as follows :

Firstly, the strategical placement of Nagaland at the trijunction of India, China and Myanmar is an important factor. The region is strategically vital for India's defence.¹⁸⁴ Thus, Ramaswamy, Attorney General of India argued at the International Human Rights Committee, New York by amply reflecting this point. The latter justified giving extraordinary power to the Army in the North-East region because of being 'border areas' and live with political movements.¹⁸⁵

Secondly, the administration (decision makers) has a peculiar reading of the Naga problem. Nari Rustomji (a distinguished administrator) rightly observed :

It was generally assumed, during the earlier years of Independence that the British technique (using brute military force) of dealing with a situation was necessarily the correct technique, forgetting that the circumstances of the situation might be entirely different and necessitate a totally different approach.¹⁸⁶

184. Abraham, A.S., North-Eastern Discontentments Some unresolved Dilemmas, Times of India, February 25, 1992.

185. Summary record of the UN Human Rights Committee (held at Headquarters, New York, 26 March, 1991), p. 13.

186. Rustomji, op. cit., p. 32.

This perception conspicuously unchallenged, resulted to unprecedented human tragedy¹⁸⁷ and played a considerable part in sharpening and aggravating discontentment.¹⁸⁸

Thus, the whole perception was security oriented. Moreover, the Government's policy is seen from the manner of sending mostly retired Army Officers as Governors of the state. Both Gen. K.V. Krishna Rao and Lt. Gen. V.K. Nayar are retired army officers and O.N. Srivastava came from the police service. This practice was severely opposed by the Chief Minister of Manipur, Rishang Keishing.¹⁸⁹

INTERNATIONAL DIMENSION

As a matter of fact, Naga territory is almost equally divided between India and Myanmar. This peculiar geographical setting of Naga inhabited areas by itself could not have confined the 'Naga political movement' just within India. Right from the 1950s onwards, the Nagas inhabiting North-West of Myanmar (Naga nationalists refer to as 'Eastern Nagaland') have substantially contributed manpower to the cause of the Nagas. However, right now, we are specifically concerned with the NSCN leadership seeking to internationalise Naga case and thereby attempt to put pressure on the Government of India.¹⁹⁰ Thus, as of now, the Naga political movement has given entirely a new international dimension.

187. *Ibid.*, p. 7.

188. *Ibid.*, p. 33.

189. Seram, Kishore., Governor is playing politics NE SUN April 9-15, 1994, p. 16.

190. Gokhale, Nitin., Going global Sunday (Calcutta) 2-6 January, 1994.

Thus, it is quite conceivable that the NSCN has embarked upon a two prolonged strategy of confronting the Government of India and Myanmar. One is to continue the armed resistance with the Indian troops and to a lesser extent with Myanmar, while the other and more important task is to internationalise Naga case in a big way.

The study of international dimension with reference to the NSCN will be of two-fold. Firstly, the study will highlight the Naga nationalists' international campaign with special reference to Nagaland securing membership to Unpresented Nations and People's Organisation (UNPO), the NSCN work at UNO, NSCN garnering support of several Non-Governmental Organisations and finally the NSCN Alee Command forging friendship with other foreign 'Revolutionary Groups' or ethnic nationalist organisations. Secondly, the study will involve India's relationship with her neighbouring states vis-a-vis the Naga issue and examine the strong allegation of foreign powers assisting and supporting the Naga nationalists.

A. NAGALAND'S MEMBERSHIP OF UNPO

The abortive attempt of SS Khaplang in 1988 to dislodge Muivah and a subsequent holding of a National Assembly at 'Jordan Camp' on 7th November 1989 marked a turning point in the history of the Naga movement. The National Assembly condemned SS Khaplang as 'national criminal' and expelled him from the organisation

once and for all. The Hoho (Assembly) on the other hand, reaffirmed the leadership of Isak Swu and Th. Muivah.¹⁹¹

Thereafter, following the National, Hoho Isak Swu and Th. Muivah went out for foreign mission to internationalise Naga case and garner international support.

Meanwhile, the NSCN military wing significantly achieved a success when its Alee Command under the leadership of 'Maj.' Ningkhan Shimray and his associates had successfully carried out two seaborne military operations under the code name 'Operation Red Sea' followed by 'Operation Jordan' bringing in sophisticated arms from friendly countries after crossing the Indian ocean. It was significant because for the first time in the history of the Naga struggle for freedom that the importance of sea-route was felt.¹⁹² Moreover, the NSCN cadres were able to successfully manoeuvre from Chittagong Hill tracts to Nagaland without being seen and ambushed by the Indian security forces.¹⁹³ As a matter of fact, this marked the crescendo of NSCN military strength.

On the diplomatic front Th. Muivah and Isak Swu worked hard to enlist Nagaland as a member of the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organisation (UNPO) and significantly within a short-span of time.¹⁹⁴ It is a global forum of nations and peoples not

191. Ao, Tajenyuba., British occupation of Naga country (published by the Naga Literature Society, Mokokchung, 1993), p. 306.

192. Idem.
Vide Written interview of Isak Swu (conducted by the scholar January, 1994), p. 5.

193. Report of Manipur Governor, loc. cit.

194. The Telegraph 31 August, 1994.

adequately represented in the international community.¹⁹⁵ Thus, the NSCN succinctly declared:

The Third general Assembly of the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organisation (UNPO) admitted the Naga nation into its membership on January 23, 1993. This is a historic achievement of the National Socialist Council of Nagaland towards safeguarding their free existence against the invasion of their country by India and Burma (Myanmar).¹⁹⁶

The acceptance of Nagaland's membership in the UNPO was announced by Enkin Alptekin, the Chairman of the UNPO at the Hague UNPO Third General Assembly, following which the national flag of free Nagaland was hoisted among the flags of other nations for the first time in the history of the Nagas.¹⁹⁷ In response, Isak Chishi Swu thanked the UNPO and presented "Nagaland for Christ" banner to the Chairman, UNPO. According to NSCN, the banner bears three meaning: the free existence of Nagaland, the expression of Naga national faith in Christ and the symbol of hope to use Nagaland for World peace Centre.¹⁹⁸ Isak Chishi Swu, Chairman of the NSCN addressed the Assembly and made serious charges against India and Myanmar. Thus, Isak Swu complained of the "untold sufferings and the bitter state of affairs Naga people have been subjected to in the past forty years on account of the preposterous occupation of their homeland

195. UNPO (Brochure Hague, (Netherland, 1991), p. 2.

196. NSCN Press Statement : Free Nagaland Admitted into UNPO (The Hague, January 26, 1993).

Vide Time Magazine, February 1, 1993.

197. Idem.

198. Idem.

by the Indian and Burmese (Myanmarese) armed forces."¹⁹⁹ Isak Swu also reiterated the Naga nationalist stand saying:

Nagas have their history and it does not admit of any attempts at distortion. Nagas as a distinct nation remains unconquered, unadministered and independent from time immemorial.²⁰⁰

Swu also made serious charges of human rights violation by India and Myanmar. Thus he stated:

Destruction and suffering inflicted upon the Nagas in the past forty years are beyond description. Losses in terms of life and property are immeasurable - thousands were indiscriminately killed, thousands tortured to death, thousands died of starvation and diseases in concentration camps and jails. Raping of women were daily phenomenon. Burning down of villages, destruction of crops were time and again carried out-of all which outside world knows virtually nothing.²⁰¹

The NSCN leadership explicitly considered Nagaland as a free nation but sandwiched between two other nations-India in the West and Myanmar in the East and cautioned the UNPO Assembly that 'there is limit to tolerance and it is simply no good to wait for reappraisals for forty years of patience is enough.'²⁰²

The meeting in the Hague was graced and addressed by the following outstanding dignitaries : Lord Amnals, member of the British House of Lords and former British Minister of Foreign Affairs and Defence; H. S. H. Prince Adam II of Liechtenstein;

199. The Speech of Isak Swu, Chairman, NSCN (at the General Assembly of UNPO, 30th January, 1993).

200. Idem.

201. Idem.

202. Idem.

Ireland's Nobel Prize Laureate MS.M. Carrigem Magnire, President of the Peace People, Belfast and many others.²⁰³

There is no doubt that the Naga nationalists pulled off a major diplomatic victory inspite of the opposition from the External Affairs Ministry of the Government of India. For the NSCN, becoming a member of the UNPO conspicuously opened a number of excellent avenues for internationalising its cause and struggle for sovereignty. Evidently, the UNPO provides a range of services for its members. For instances, its mission is to provide inter-alia unique international forum for nations and people whose voices are not being heard at the United Nations and other international organisations. It also provides services and trainings for representatives of the UNPO members to enhance their effectiveness in pursuing diplomatic and other non-violent strategies and conflict resolution.²⁰⁴

In Nagaland, the declaration of Nagaland becoming a full-fledged member of the UNPO was well received. According to a handout issued by the GPRN 25th March 1993 was declared as 'Thanks Giving Day'.²⁰⁵ Among the jubilant group included the NNC (K) who in a press statement lauded the NSCN for its great achievement. The release was signed by 'Gen'. Merentoba, M. Chumbemo Murry, Kolhule Nagi, Samphu Yimchunger, all members of the NNC Executive Council on behalf of the NNC. Thus, it stated that they :

203. NSCN Press Statement, loc. cit. 204. UNPO, op. cit., p. 4.
205. Hill Express, March 16, 1993.

expressed heartfelt gratitude and support to the achievements of NSCN leaders Isak Chishi Swu and Thuingaleng Muivah at the international arena for the cause of Naga sovereignty and urge upon all people to unite immediately in order to strengthen the mission of both these leaders for fulfilling the long felt aspirations of the Nagas as a distinct people.²⁰⁶

On the part of the Government of India, its effort to block the NSCN moves to join UNPO on the plea that Nagaland state has been a legitimate and adequately represented state for almost 30 years was an argument that found few takers.²⁰⁷ Moreover India's effort to send a Naga politician to the Hague to counter the NSCN stand also did not materialise, instead it created a controversy in Nagaland state. It all started with an alleged interview of Shikiho Sema with a Delhi based paper (Eastern Recorder) and republished in 'Nagaland Observer' wherein Shikiho, Minister for Higher and Technical Education was alleged to have attended the UNPO General Assembly to counter the NSCN propaganda.²⁰⁸

Shikiho immediately called a press conference and denied that he had ever gone to the Hague to attend the UNPO Assembly or given any press interview.²⁰⁹ However, he admitted that he was hand-picked by the centre to attend the Hague Conference but owing to certain technical difficulties, the trip could not materialise.²¹⁰ An Editor of a local newspaper observed :

206. NNC lauds Isak and Muivah The Nagaland Post (Dimapur) October 1, 1993.

207. Modak, loc. cit.

208. Shikiho Denies UNPO issue Nagaland observer (Kohima) April 17, 1993.

Vide The Telegraph 26 April, 1995.

209. Shikiho denies Hague visit, Nagaland Post, April 30, 1995.

The reaction of the South Block over the matter of UNPO is not a new phenomenon as it had done the same thing with the Naga issue in UN by sending some Naga VVIP than as the head of the delegation.²¹¹

Significantly, the Former Chief Minister of the Nagaland state, Hokishe Sema was a member of the Indian delegation to the 27th UN General Assembly²¹² primarily to convince the western press and UN delegations about the 'baseless claims' of the Naga nationalists.

There is no doubt that for the Government of India Nagaland's membership of the UNPO is a serious matter. In the same year (1993), the Government of India despite of the fact that the UNPO is not officially recognised by her till date, submitted a representation addressed to the Secretary General of the UNPO demanding suspension of the NSCN from UNPO membership as it did not meet any of UNPO conditions but openly and flagrantly violated all the objectives.²¹³ The main thrust of the Government of India's argument was that the NSCN being an outrightly armed military organisation believed in armed struggle alone and hence did not match with the UNPO's non-violence principles. However, one does not know how the UNPO office responded but this much is clear that Government's effort had failed since the NSCN continued to retain her membership. Moreover, the NSCN General Secretary sharply countered the Government of India's representation to the Secretary General, UNPO, (Hague, 1993), p. 36.

210. Idem.

211. The visit that never was (An editorial column) Nagaland Post May 1, 1995.

212. Yonuo, op.cit., pp. 373-374.

213. Does violence get a mandate ? Government of India's representation to the Secretary General, UNPO, (Hague, 1993), p. 36.

tation by submitting a rejoinder to the same which totally negated India's allegation and rather accused the Government of India of initiating 'bloodshed in Nagaland'. Thus, Th. Muivah writes :

We are urged to speak out what we are and UNPO will do well if we are understood once again in our reality. We believe in peaceful political solution. Let no one drive us away from it. But India does not. Indians count on military solutions and this is the crux of the problem.²¹⁴

Th. Muivah also charged the Government of India of taking "advantage of Naga's sincerity and sustained tolerance."²¹⁵ Pointing how war and conflict started and why Nagas had to pick up arms, Th. Muivah writes :

When Nagas refused to accept the Indian Constitution Nehru's government despatched thousands of Indian armed forces into Nagaland.... The horror of hell started with no one to stop it. Thousands were massacred, thousands imprisoned and tortured beyond description, hundreds of villages burnt down, crops destroyed, women raped without number...should they (Nagas) not defend themselves and their national rights ? They had to because they did not believe in passivity and capitulation.²¹⁶

The General Secretary of the NSCN believed that to India Nagaland's membership in the UNPO was like a bolt from the blue. It is clear that the Government of India's effort to dislodge the NSCN from UNPO membership has failed if not abandoned. Thus, in this matter, the NSCN has edged out the Government of India and the latter's utter diplomatic failure was quite explicit.

214. Muivah, Th., A rejoinder to the Indian propaganda stunt, op. cit., p. 4.

215. Ibid., p. 3.

216. Ibid., pp. 3-4.

Nagaland's admission into UNPO as a full-fledged member significantly created a deep impact in Nagaland and helped the NSCN immensely in consolidating their strength. In course of time, there has been unabated desertion from other camps to the NSCN under Isak Chishi Swu and Th. Muivah's leadership. In this context, the joining of the entire group of the NNC (K) in Yimchunger region can be cited. They declared, 'NSCN is the only authentic organisation for the Nagas'.²¹⁷ It is worthy to mention here that even Khodao Yanthan, the then President of the NNC (K) himself had joined NSCN recently. In the press statement issued from the Hague, he stated thus :

They (Isak Chishi Swu and Th. Muivah) thus saved the nation from the tragedy thereof and from the dead-end of the NNC's leadership, ushering thereby in the hope and certainty of the National destiny. Had it not been for the National Socialist Council of Nagaland, the history of the Nagas would have been one of the humiliation. It is the NSCN, with the unflinching support of the people, that has safeguarded the sovereignty of Nagaland from the unprecedented challenge of the peril since 1975.²¹⁸

The NSCN expansion and consolidation can be seen not only in the home front but also in the international front. Admission into UNPO has helped the NSCN forge friendship and linkages with the number of non-governmental organisations. Thus, a journalist reportedly writes: "Using his contacts in the UNPO - like Michael Van Walt, its Secretary General, and Mr. Lody Gyari, a Tibetan leader in exile - Muivah established link with the Asian

217. NSCN gains support, Nagaland Post, October 13, 1993.

218: Open statement of Mr. Khodao Yanthan former President of the Naga National Council, 23rd January, 1995. The Hague (The Netherlands).

Asian Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP) and the Belgium based Flemish support for Indigenous people."²¹⁹ The AIPP sympathising is quite conspicuous from its declaration on Nagaland :

We...take serious note of the ongoing large-scale atrocities committed by the Indian Army on the Naga people and demand an immediate withdrawal of the military from the area, and the fulfilment of the legitimate aspiration of the Naga people for genuine self-government.²²⁰

Another notable link the Naga nationalists established is with the KWIA a powerful Non-Governmental Organisation in Belgium which is held much in great esteem by both the governments and the NGO groups in Europe. It is the only support group in Belgium for the Indigenous Peoples all over the world. It is quite conceivable that the NSCN is working closely with the KWIA and is being supported by this group in their international campaign. Significantly, KWIA have made a declaration on Nagaland strongly demanding restoration of Naga national rights by India and Myanmar. Thus, it declares :

KWIA, the Flemish support inherent group for Indigenous Peoples, commends itself to support the right of the Naga people to self-determination and Independence....We appeal to the Indian Government to stop the atrocities towards the Naga people. to stop the killing of innocent Naga citizens, and to stop the strategies set up to divide the Naga communities and organizations....We respect and support the Naga resistance by all legal means, including armed resistance, as authorized by international law.²²¹

219. NSCN leaders address UN meet in Geneva, The Telegraph, 31 August, 1994.

220. Indigenous Peoples in Asia towards Self-Determination (Published by Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact, Bombay, 1989), p. 44.

221. KWIA declaration on Nagaland (Geneva, July 30, 1993).

Other NGO groups supporting the Naga cause and the NSCN organisation include the Justice and Peace Centre, South Boston, International Human Rights Association of American Minorities (IHRAAM), World Baptist Alliance, Asian Cultural Forum on Development (ACFOD), Minority Right Group (MRG), Naga Vigil Group (London), International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA), Society for Threatened Peoples etc.²²² This developments taking place certainly reflects the proliferation of the NSCN international network. These link-ups and friendship have placed the NSCN on a higher pedestal in their campaign for international support.

Thus, it can be noted that the NSCN have been receiving a lot of international publicity and exposure in furthering their political struggle. The Swiss state national TV made 'coverage on the history of the Nagas, their resistance to the forcible military occupation of their land by India and Myanmar'.²²³ Then De Standaard (a Belgian newspaper) in Brussels on July 8, 1993 carried a picture of Isak Swu and Th. Muivah and published the latter's full statement of their cause.²²⁴ A Swiss magazine 'Monde' of 19th July, 1993 carried a full story 'Forgotten Peoples' as narrated by Isak Swu and Th. Muivah²²⁵.

It is observed that one of the reasons of the NSCN gaining more publicity is the UN General Assembly's declaration of 1993 as the 'International year of the Indigenous Peoples'. This generated a lot of activities globally and even in Nagaland NGO

222. Passim From different sources (printed matter).

223. Information from AIPP Secretariat, (Bangkok, 1993).

224. De Standaard July 8, 1993 (Reproduced by AIPP Secretariat).

225. Monde 19 July, 1993 (Reproduced by AIPP Secretariat).

groups such as the Naga Peoples' Movement for Human Rights (NPMHR) and Naga Students Federation (NSF) took the leading role in organising consultation meetings and drafting of the proposed UN declaration on the rights of Indigenous people. The NSF and NPMHR jointly organised the celebration of 'NAGA WEEK' in commemoration of the UN declaration of International Year of the World's Indigenous Peoples.²²⁶

Thus fortunately for the NSCN, their international campaign to garner friendly support from world community started in accordance with the UN declaration. Remarkably, the NSCN has been actively participating in the International affairs, particularly with the UN Working Group on Indigenous people. For instance, the NSCN sent its representatives Zingmi Shimray alias 'Maj'. Ningkhan Shimray to the second Summit of the Indigenous Peoples at Mexico held on October 4-8, 1993.²²⁷ Then the NSCN made a breakthrough when Isak Swu and Th. Muivah went to participate in the UN Conference of the Working Group on the Draft Declaration on the rights of the Indigenous Peoples at Geneva from July 19th to 30th 1993. Significantly, Isak Chishi Swu, Chairman, NSCN also delivered a speech at the Conference attended by more than 500 delegates.²²⁸ Isak Chishi Swu speaking on behalf of the Nagas said :

226. Naga Week December 1-5, 1993 Towards our rightful place through the healing our spirit (Published by the publicity Committee Naga Week, Naga Club Building, Kohima, 1993).

227. Statement presented by Zingmi Shimray alias 'Major'.Ningkhan Shimray (at the Second Summit of the Indigenous Peoples Mexico October 4.8, 1993).

228. Un Conference at Geneva (Press Handout by AIPP Secretariat, August 18, 1993).

Nagas have been invariably confronted with the real war of massive military operations, massive political suppressions, massive economic exploitation and endless assimilation processes. Ceaseless influx of alien people has reached alarming proportions. Our land is grabbed from all the sides, mineral resources exploited. Forests are cut down solely for selfish ends. Most of the countryside are left barren; ruthless exploitation in the past decades by the colonial agents has dangerously tilted the ecological balance of our beautiful richly gifted land.²²⁹

The Permanent Mission of India to the United Nations Office, Geneva strongly protested against the participation of the NSCN delegation. Thus, Debashish Chakravarti on behalf of the Indian Delegation to the Working group stated :

We object to the appearance in this forum of persons heading armed groups that spread terror. We are astonished that the so-called National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN) has spoken at this forum. This illegal armed group is openly secessionist.²³⁰

However, the fact that Isak Swu and Th. Muivah attended the UN Conference on Indigenous Peoples the following year again i.e. 25-29 July, 1994 at Geneva and the Chairman of the NSCN speaking at the Conference²³¹ explicitly outweighed diplomatically their opponent. Even in the UN Conference the NSCN leadership did not spare India and Myanmar. Thus, Isak Swu empathetically stated :

Nagas are all for peace and non-violence, but sadly enough we see nothing of non-violence and peace in the Indian and Burmese

229. The speech of Mr. Isak Chishi Swu, Chairman, NSCN at Geneva UN Conference on Indigenous Peoples (on 27th July, 1993).

230. Statement of Mr. Debashish Chakravarti on behalf of the Indian delegation to the Working Group on Indigenous Peoples-Agenda, item No. 5. (Geneva, 29th July, 1993). p. 2.

231. The Telegraph, loc. cit.

(Myanmarese) leadership. Our effort for peaceful solution since 1947 was brushed aside. Therefore, let it be known to the world that the crux of the problem is the military solution which both India and Burma have been speaking relentlessly over the Nagas over the decades.²³²

Thus, the NSCN leadership have used such international forums meticulously exploiting the opportune time in publicizing the plight of the Naga people as a persecuted nationality and garner international support for its cause.

The NSCN leadership have also engaged themselves in pressurizing India and Myanmar on Human Rights Issue. It is on this issue that the role played by Naga People's Movement for Human Rights (NPMHR), Naga Student's Federation (NSF) and other non-governmental organisations in Nagaland in voicing against human rights violations by the Indian security forces comes quite handy. In a way, indirectly, they are corroborating the NSCN international campaign on gross human rights violations in Nagaland.

Here, it is important to note the major role played by the NPMHR in this field. This is the only human rights group of the Naga people established in 1978²³³ and has carried out consistent struggle of protecting human rights and voicing against human rights violation in Nagaland. Since its inception, the NPMHR has taken up several 'public interest litigation' in the Supreme Court of India.²³⁴ In 1982, the NPMHR successfully organised a women fact finding team from New Delhi to go to Ukhrul District

232. The speech of Mr. Isak Chishi Swu, *loc. cit.*

233. Report of the Human Rights Week in Nagaland 10-15 December 1978, (published by NPMHR, Delhi 1978), p. 1.

234. NPMHR (Brochure) New Delhi.

in Manipur state and investigate into the reported cases of army atrocities of the civilian Nagas.²³⁵ The Amnesty International special reporting (86 pages book) on torture and extrajudicial executions in Senapati district, Manipur is essentially the work of the NPMHR.²³⁶ In 1991, NPMHR made a breakthrough, when they went to UN Human Rights Committee and gave a first hand report to army atrocities.²³⁷

The NPMHR also participated at Geneva United Nations Conference on Indigenous Peoples from July 25-29, 1994. It made serious charges against the Government of India, stating :

Democratic and peaceful means of struggle to regain our freedom, and liberty was ignored by India, a country that has just attained her independence through Ahimsa and democratic means. India responded by sending in her army.... It is now over forty years and more that the Nagas have been resisting the Indian occupational forces, who have been responsible for committing every offence listed in the Indian Penal Code. Yet they go unpunished because the Indian Parliament has given them extra-constitutional powers to crush the Naga national movement. Under the Armed Forces (special powers) Act of 1958, amended in 1972, the Indian powerful instrument of immunity, the Indian security forces have been unleashing a reign of terror in the Naga areas.²³⁸

It is against such background that the NSCN literature highly praised the NPMHR. Thus writes, "The Nagas are greatly

235. Report of Women's fact finding team, Delhi, October 1982, p. 1.

236. INDIA Operation Bluebird A case study of torture and extrajudicial execution in Manipur, (Amnesty International, London, October, 1990).

237. NPMHR Goes to United Nations, (Imphal : November 1991), p.1.

238. Chara, Shelley (NPMHR)., Speech at UN Conference on Indigenous Peoples (Geneva, July 27, 1994).

indebted to the human rights organisation for the unique service they rendered in this part of the world."²³⁹

It is clear that the main focus of the NSCN international lobby is on the issue of human rights violations in Nagaland by the Indian security forces. Thus, when the NSCN delegation Isak Chishi Swu and Thuingaleng Muivah attended the 51st Session of the United Nations Commission on the Human Rights, the former spoke about the flagrant human rights violation in Nagaland and their unreserved faith in the Universal Declaration.²³⁹ The Naga leaders' main demand in that session was to press for a fact finding mission to Nagaland to review the seriousness of the issue at the earliest time possible.

The issue of sending an international fact finding team to Nagaland was equally emphasised by the UNPO. The latter demanded of both the Government of India and Myanmar to allow international observers, the international human rights community and media to investigate the situation in Nagaland. Significantly, the General Assembly at UNPO also agreed to send a fact-finding human rights mission to Nagaland vowed to support Nagaland and its people.²⁴⁰ To this end, it is worth noting that at its Fourth UNPO General Assembly's second session held in the Hague from 20th-26th January, 1995, it was resolved to :

recognise the historical sovereignty of the Naga people over their territory to determine their own government and the illegality of the invasion and continued occupation by the Indian and Myanmarese armed forces.²⁴¹

239. Speech of Isak Chishi Swu, Chairman, NSCN at 51st Session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, (February 7, 1995), p. 3.

240. UNPO's support for Nagaland, Nagaland Post, February 1, 1995.

Thus, it is against such a background that the Naga nationalist leaders have within a short span of time achieved significant diplomatic victory by propagating their cause in various forums.

B. POLITICAL NEXUS WITH OTHER REVOLUTIONARY GROUP

The immediate impact of Nagaland obtaining membership in the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organisation (UNPO) and thereby receiving international recognition was of forging link with Council of Khalistan.²⁴² No wonder, Gurmit Singh Aulakh, President of Council of Khalistan issued an appeal to Sikh soldiers and officers in Nagaland which calls for cessation of oppression of the Nagas. Thus, he writes :

I therefore, strongly urge all Sikh soldiers in the Indian Army serving in Nagaland to cease oppression of the Nagas and support their freedom as you support the freedom of your own people....It is your duty, then, to (Council of Khalistan, New York, February 26, 1993): support the Nagas in their struggle of freedom and not assist in their brutal suppression by the Indian Army.²⁴³

The NSCN leadership have explicitly made clear their policy and strategy of united front which emphasised on winning friends from within and without in confronting a superior force.²⁴⁴ The NSCN leadership does have a clear perception on the need of aligning their movement with other like minded revolutionaries.

241. Idem.

242. Khalistanis back Naga rebel group, The Telegraph 24 April, 1993.

243. Cease Oppression of Nagas respect all who seek freedom, 244. Free Nagaland manifesto, op cit., p. 29.

Besides forging operational link with the ethnic nationalist groups in the North-East region, the NSCN have successfully established rapport with a number of revolutionary groups in South East Asia. This has immensely helped the NSCN Alee Command in procuring and transporting the military hardware to their destination. This is evident from the 'Command reports' of Alee Command.²⁴⁵

By now, one can clearly perceive the two-prolong strategy. The first group headed by Swu and Muivah took the onus of international campaign in Europe with special reference to the UNPO. It is worth noting that Isak and Muivah's work was reinforced by two other top ranking officers of the NSCN Viz., Angelus Shimrah and Rh. Raising in the United States as part of their international campaign.²⁴⁶ The third group conspicuously under 'Major' Ningkhan Shimray of the Alee Command engaged itself in procuring military related hardware from international market as well as from friendly states. However, 'Major' Ningkhan Shimray, Co-ordinator Foreign Affairs, NSCN is not simply confined to arms procurement; his assignment also includes diplomatic task specially with the various revolutionary groups in South East Asia.²⁴⁷ It was this officer of the NSCN who did most of the groundwork in forging link with a number of revolutionary groups. The Ministry of Home Affairs, GPRN in a progress report writes that 'Major' Ningkhan

245. Command Report Alee Command, Major Ningkhan Shimray (Co-ordinator Foreign Affairs NSCN).

246. Shimrah, Angelus & Raising, Rh., Story of Nagaland: Cry for justice (Pamphlet) (New York, June 9, 1994).

247. Command Report, loc. cit.

was sent abroad to contact with progressive revolutionary parties in South East Asia and explore venues for purchase of military wares. Through sheer will power and selfless dedication to the cause, he ploughed a lonely furrow for a number of years. It was in 1990 that he got a glimmer of hope when he managed to procure an outlet into the international political arena.²⁴⁸

The first contact was made with the Karen National Union (KNU). In the words of 'Major' Ningkhan Shimray "following my first diplomatic contact with Karen National Union's President Gen. Bo Mya and Botho Ba Thein Prime Minister, KNU a friendly bilateral relation was established."²⁴⁹ Here, it is important to note that KNU is the strongest in terms of manpower and military strength among the nationalist movements in Myanmar.

Thereafter, the Naga nationalists forged operational link with Arakan Liberation Party (ALP), New Mon State Party (NMSP), National United Front of Arakan (NUFA), Wa National Party (WNP), National Democratic Front (NDF), and Democratic Alliance of Burma (DAB).²⁵⁰ Besides, the NSCN also established cooperation with Chin Liberation Front (CLF).²⁵¹ The report of the Alee Command indicated well how the various organisation assisted them in making 'operation Red sea' and 'operation Jordan' a complete success story.²⁵² It even noted that about 200 Mon Army and some 50 porters were contributed for the operation and thus, actually

248. progress Reports Ministry of Home Affairs GPRN 1988-1993

Prepared by Rh. Raising Killo & Chaplee Kilonser (Home and Finance Minister) Oking 29th March 1993, p. 9.

249. Command report, op. cit., p. 2.

250. Ibid, p. 3.

251. Written interview with John, president, Chin Liberation Front (conducted by the scholar, 1993).

252. Command report, op. cit., p. 5

a combined force of Mon, Arakan and the NSCN participated in 'operation Jordan'.²⁵³

Thus, the NSCN's friendship with the aforesaid groups comes quite useful and remunerative. This network of alliances among the various ethnic nationalist groups in South East Asia is aimed at boosting the NSCN operation.

Then it brings us to the much publicised subject and the ignorance of journalists on the matter-link with the Kachin Independent Organisation (KIO) and Kachin Independent Army (KIA). The story that all the insurgency groups including the NSCN are receiving arms and training from the KIA²⁵⁴ all along, ostensibly seems to maintain that once these aids and training cease, insurgents or nationalist groups will wither away seems to be quite prominent opinion among the press in India.²⁵⁵ But this is far from the truth as far as the NSCN is concerned.

Nonetheless, it must be admitted that the first ethnic nationalist group the Nagas contacted was the Kachins. As, Nirmal Nibedon writes : "Muivah pulled off an agreement with the leaders of the Naga tribesmen of Burma."²⁵⁶ This took place when Th. Muivah with a strong contingent of Naga Army marched out to China in 1966. However, the Naga nationalist leaders sufficiently made it clear that Nagas never received aids nor training from the Kachins. This fact is stated by no other than Th. Muivah. In a response to a query he replied : "We didn't take training from

253. Idem.

254. Bhaumik, Subir., Out in the cold Sunday 28 June-4th July 1992.

255. Dasgupta, loc. cit.

256. Nibedon, op. cit., p. 51.

Kachins. We Nagas were much ahead of them before also.²⁵⁷ Rather, the NSCN leadership is quite critical of the Kachins. Th. Muivah thus stated: "The Kachins were not happy with us because we did not like their involvement in the drug business. So they shifted their policy and aligned with the Shillong Accord group...How can we be happy with the Kachins ?²⁵⁸ Isak Swu corroborated Th. Muivah's statement when he said :

They (Kachins) had understanding with Accord makers and started drug business with them through Indian Military officers. Then they entered into close relationship with the Government of India at our expense.²⁵⁹

It is true that other ethnic nationalist groups like the ULFA, PLA etc. received arms and training from the KIO and KIA, But the Naga nationalists since the NNC time till the NSCN, have not received any arms or ammunitions or training. Rather the Naga nationalists are of the view that Kachins have been quite obstructive at times. Evidently in this context, from every shipment of arms and ammunitions from China, considerable commissions were taken out by them.²⁶⁰ For instance, 'Major' A. S. Ayo Shimray, an important member of the China bound team of 1973 testified that KIO authorities insisted on sharing half-half of every military materials brought from China for the service rendered to the Nagas (free passage, food, shelter etc.). Thus, in 1973 the Kachins took away 1,20,000 rounds of ammunitions, a

257. Interview with Th. Muivah gen. Secy, NSCN by Deepak Dewan, loc.cit.

258. Ibid, p. 9.

259. Written interview with Isak (conducted by the scholar) p. 4.

260. Written interview with Major A.S. Ayo Shimray (conducted by the scholar, 4th June, 1995).

few numbers of rocket shells, hand grenades, including some explosive materials.²⁶¹ 'Major' Shimray also confided that the Chinese authorities were not happy with the Kachins because of this and cautioned them not to deduct commissions from the Nagas.²⁶² A functionary of the NSCN also alleged that a sizeable amount of arms and ammunition belonging to the NSCN (shipment from China) is still held up by the Kachins and yet to be returned to the Nagas.²⁶³

Thus, the aforesaid points glaringly exposed the myth of Kachins arming and training the Nagas. Outside this frame the Naga relationship with the Kachins was generally cordial.

C. FOREIGN POWERS ALLEGED INVOLVEMENT IN AIDING AND SUPPORTING NAGA MOVEMENT

1. MYANMAR

Geographically, Myanmar is India's immediate neighbour in South East Asia. Historically too, these two countries had a very long period of mutual contact with each other in the realm of trade, commerce, religion, law and culture.²⁶⁴ Moreover, in the modern period too Myanmar (formerly Burma) is important to India for more established reasons. For a long time, India had no strategic problem on her eastern flank. However, Japanese blitzkrieg sweeping through Burma (now Myanmar) in 1942 posed a direct threat to India. This reminded the Government of India

261. Idem.

262. Idem.

263. Written interview with Major Ningkhan Shimray loc. cit.

264. Pakem, B., India-Burma Relations (Omsons Publication, New Delhi, 1992), p. 1.

that a hostile power in control of Myanmar could threaten India's security from land, sea and the air.²⁶⁵ Secondly, from the strategic point, Myanmar controls one of the most important land routes from China Southwards. In case of Sino-Indian conflict, an invasion of Myanmar would be prelude to the invasion to India.²⁶⁶ Thirdly, the border area of India and Myanmar is inhabited by Nagas, Mizos, Meiteis etc. who have been a source of troubles to the Indian Government. Hence, specifically for the suppression of the Naga nationalists (whose movement has been the strongest), the cooperation, or atleast the neutrality of the Government of Myanmar, was necessary. A Myanmarese Government hostile to India would be the most damaging for India's interest.

Two other factors further contributed to augment India's perception. On the one hand, there is Pakistan, a state whose hostility towards India posed an important security problem on India's western borders. Hence, the existence of a friendly state on her eastern borders to counter balance this threat perception or to avoid being flanked by two hostile states, could not be neglected by India. Finally, the emergence of a powerful nuclear state neighbour in the North transformed India's North Eastern borders from a 'forgotten' into a live frontier.

It is against such backdrop that the Government of India has consistently maintained a policy of restraint if not appeasement against Myanmar. Friendship with Myanmar is vital for India and

265. Thien, Ton Tack., India and the South East Asia 1947-1960 A study of India's policy towards the South East Asian countries (Libraririe Droz, Geneva, 1963), p. 151.

266. Idem.

hence good relationship with Myanmar at all cost seems to be the officially accepted dictum of India.

In the case of Myanmar, there is no hard evidences to suggest that she supported or assisted the Naga nationalists in their struggle against the Government of India. However, it must be admitted that Myanmar Government's policy against the Nagas, was of 'non-interference' initially. Admittedly, on July 25, 1957, The Nation (editorial) stated that "the Burmese relation with the unadminstered Naga tribesmen remained perfectly correct and based on the policy of leaving them very much alone."²⁶⁷ This policy was indeed the official policy of the Myanmarese Government for quite some time. The reason behind such policy was because Myanmar was heavily engaged with the civil war and secondly, there was practically no administration in the area inhabited by the Nagas.²⁶⁸ No wonder, even the declaration of Hongkin Government as sovereign People's Republic of free Nagaland in 1954 went unnoticed.²⁶⁹

Therefore, in such a situation, the Nagas have utilised Myanmar territory as part of their operational area. Of course, as indicated in the Chapter II, the Nagas of both sides of the border shared the same political aspiration and their ultimate political goal is the merger of all Naga areas into one single political entity.²⁷⁰ It is learnt that until 1961 the Nagas were freely utilising Myanmar territory in their military manouevering

267. Pakem, op. cit., p. 121.

268. Ibid., p. 120.

269. Pakem, loc. cit.

270. Misra, Udayon., North-East India Quest for Identity (Osmons Publications, New Delhi, 1988), p. 7.

and as a passage to East Pakistan (Bangladesh). This is evident from the statement of the Prime Minister U Nu and a communique issued by the Foreign Affairs in Rangoon. When asked by the newsman in Calcutta, if the Naga nationalists were maintaining contact with the outside world through Myanmar, the Prime Minister replied : "I do not think it is possible. Being friendly with India we will not allow such activities."²⁷¹ Earlier to this, a communique was issued by the Foreign Office in Rangoon (Yangon) on 16th May, 1961 which said that Myanmar government would take "every measure open to them to deal with the hostile Nagas from India reported to be operating from Burmese territory."²⁷² In both these statement, the phrase 'we will not' and 'would take any measure' explicitly referred to future course of action and not ongoing measures. Admittedly, Asoso Yonuo writes thus, "The Burmese government, till early 1960's did not intercept the Nagas moving through the Burmese territory on the understanding that they should not disturb the Burmese law and order situation by their traffic."²⁷³

Thus, the Naga nationalists had taken advantage of the security lull in North West of Myanmar precisely because of Myanmar's policy of 'non-interference in Naga Affairs'. This however, does not imply that Myanmar supported or assisted the Naga cause. To the Naga nationalists, Myanmar was important for two reasons : Firstly, there are large parts of Naga territory (Eastern Nagaland) and the active participation of the Nagas from

271. The Hindu, August 28, 1961.

272. Asian Recorder, Vol 7, 1961, June 11-17, 1961, p. 3993.

273. Yonuo, op. cit., p. 329.

that region was also needed in the movement. Secondly, it is impossible not to use Myanmar territory because of their operational convenience. Its territory is used for passage to China and East Pakistan (now Bangladesh). Thus, Myanmar factor is vital for the Nagas even today.

However, if the Myanmarese Government had maintained neutrality against the Naga political affair, it was only till 1961. Myanmar under Gen. Ne Win brought about a change in the policy in dealing with the nationalist forces including the Nagas. Though General Ne Win took over the power in a bloodless coup in 1962, the changed perception in the Government's approach was glaringly evident by 1961 when the Myanmar Government had instructed officials in the Naga areas concerned to take strict measures against the Naga nationalists.²⁷⁴ Thus at that time official indications were that Myanmarese Government was determined to take every possible action against the Naga nationalists.

This changed perception emanated not entirely from Myanmar Government but mostly because of severe pressure from the Government of India who by then was facing hostility from the Naga nationalists.²⁷⁵ However, India's proposed joint Military offensive against the Naga²⁷⁶ could not materialise because of uncertain political situation.

274. Singh Uma Shankar., Burma and India 1948-1962 (A case study in the foreign policies of Burma and India and Burma's policy towards India (Oxford & IBH publishing Co. New Delhi, 1978), p. 78.

275. Idem.

276. The Hindustan Times, September 29, 1961.

Thus, the feasibility of joint operations against the Naga nationalists could reopen only during Foreign Minister Swaran Singh's three day visit to Myanmar from 2 September 1964.²⁷⁷ This was reciprocated with the visit of General Ne Win's week-long from 5 September 1965.²⁷⁸ The Joint Communique issued on 12 February was particularly noteworthy. This communique was issued keeping the rising Naga nationalist activities in the backdrop which needed to be tackled realistically. Moreover, the growing deterioration of relations between Myanmar and China, particularly the latter's support of the White Flag movement²⁷⁹ may have placed new pressures on Myanmar. In fact, relation between India and Myanmar seemed to be shifting from that of cooperation influenced by 'sentiment' to that of cooperation arising from mutual necessity.

On 21 February, 1966, the Indian Defence Minister, Y.B. Chavan informed the Lok Sabha that the Burmese Government had responded favourably to the proposed for joint patrolling of the Indo-Myanmar border to control Naga and Mizo nationalist activities and prevent their transit through Myanmarese territory to, or from China or the then East Pakistan.²⁸⁰

Joint Military Operation

Joint effort to curb the activities of the Naga nationalist on a major scale was arrived at when the Prime Minister of India

277. Appadorai, A., et al., India's Foreign Policy and Relations (South Asian Publishers Pvt. Ltd. New Delhi), p. 185.

278. Ibid., p. 186.

279. Pakem, op. cit., p. 109.

280. Appodorai, et al., loc. cit.

Indira Gandhi paid a visit to Myanmar between 27-30 March, 1969.²⁸¹ However, by then, both the Governments were continuing with joint patrolling of the border and sharing of intelligence information on Naga nationalist movement on either side of the border.²⁸² Admittedly Nibedon writes thus :

New Delhi and Rangoon had been freely exchanging notes on the fiery situation prevailing in their common frontiers. Tremendous pressure was being exerted on Rangoon, for the Naga guerrillas were using Burmese territory for launching operations against India. Troops of both had coordinated operations against the elusive guerrillas. India had helped the Burmese in setting up frontier out-posts all along the border ... In fact, many of these military posts had been built by the Indian and literally gifted to the Burmese.²⁸³

It is observed that the first result of their joint effort was, when Dusoi Chakhesang together with seventy six Naga army were apprehended by the Myanmarese troops on April 11, 1969 and were immediately handed over to the Indian Army authorities at Moreh.²⁸⁴

By late 1968, the two countries contemplated launching massive joint operations against the Naga nationalists but this could materialize only by late 1970s in the post Shillong Accord scenario. Since much secrecy is maintained relating to joint military operation by both the two governments, the only way out is to know when the actual operation was carried into effect.

281. Ibid., p. 187.

282. Nibedon, Nirmal., Nagaland The Night of the Guerrillas (Lancers publications, New Delhi, 1978), p. 194.

283. Idem.

284. Singh, Prakash., Nagaland (National Book Trust, New Delhi, 1972), p. 133.

Thus the NSCN recounted that they fought a big battle in the month of March 1976 at Langnok village in which two Majors and one Lieutenant with 56 other were wiped out with all the arms captured by Federal Army.²⁸⁵ When the formulation of the NSCN was declared both the troops belonging to Myanmar and India carried out massive army joint operation side by side, one after another in their attempt to nip the NSCN in the bud.²⁸⁶ The operations was of no avail. The official note concerning the joint military operations were made known only when the then Foreign Minister of Myanmar paid a visit to New Delhi in the mid 1984. R. Venkataraman, the then Defence Minister whole heartedly approved of the deal (for the joint military operation).²⁸⁷ Thus, once again, in Upper Myanmar (Naga territory), major Military operation was launched by the Myanmarese 5th Regiment on NSCN General Headquarters, reportedly using jet fighters and helicopters and gunship causing heavy casualty on the NSCN side.²⁸⁸

Then in 1985 to strengthen bilateral relation between the two countries and update and joint military operations, the then External Affairs Ministers Khurshid Alam Khan visited Myanmar.²⁸⁹ The leadership in New Delhi were by now convinced of Chinese severance of relation with the Naga nationalists and felt that this was the right moment to launch an Indo-Myanmar military

285. A brief political account, op. cit., p. 25.

286. Idem.

287. Ghosh, Santanu., A battle of nerves SUNDAY 10-16 January 1988, p. 57.

288. Summer Offensive against NSCN Nagaland Times July 11, 1984.

289. Idem.

offensive.²⁹⁰ Evidently, on 19th December 1985 General Headquarters of the NSCN was attacked by the crack 52 Battalion based at Singkhaling Hkamti. This attack came at the time when Bertil Lintner a free lance writer based in Hong Kong was a guest of the NSCN with his wife and child.²⁹¹ The battle went on for twelve days, a fiercely-fought encounter in which the possession of the camp changed hands four times. The Myanmarese finally retreated after their commander Lieutenant Colonel Tankhaling died with a bullet in his head. An NSCN 'Colonel' Thanmi also felt.²⁹²

Then another, perhaps, the biggest joint military operation was launched on 26th April, 1986 when they attacked the NSCN General Headquarters.²⁹³ The fierce fighting continued till first week of June 1986. During this operation, the Indian Chief of the Army, Gen. Krishnaswamy Sundarji made a flying visit to Rangoon on 27th May 1986 to monitor the ongoing campaign.²⁹⁴ General Sunderji happened to be the first Indian Army Chief who visited Myanmar after Myanmar's independence. Unfortunately, for Myanmar and India, they suffered heavy casualties and ultimately had to withdraw. The NSCN believed that the whole operation in terms of funds and materials were financed by the Government of

290. Idem.

291. Lintner, Bertil., Land of Jade A Journey through insurgent Burma (Published by Kiscade Publications, Scotland 1990), pp. 77-101.

291. Dasgupta, loc. cit.

292. Burma-India Joint Operation (Published by GPRN Oking, 3 May 1986).

293. Idem.

294. Ibid., p. 2.

India.²⁹⁵ It was reported that in this campaign Myanmar side lost forty personnel including two Majors and more than thirty were injured. On the NSCN side six were killed, two wounded and two captured.²⁹⁶ The casualty on the Indian side was not known.

It was followed by the Indian External Affairs Minister N.D. Tiwari on a goodwill visit to Myanmar on December 23, 1986. A joint statement was issued in Yangon and New Delhi which did mention that "India and Burma have been co-operating over the years in dealing with problems in insurgency in border areas on both sides. The Burmese Army has been exchanging information with the Indian Defence forces about the movement of extremists through Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram, which have been very valuable in intercepting them."²⁹⁷

Next, in the sequel, the biggest ever offensive was launched in May, 1987, when nearly 10,000 Myanmar troops were involved in an operation to flush out the Kachin Independent Army (KIA). The two week-long operation had the KIA fighters on the run, as the troops took control of four of its strongholds in Kachinland bordering China.²⁹⁸ Simultaneously, the Indian Army trekked 24 Km inside Myanmar territory and attacked one of the NSCN bases near Thalie village.²⁹⁹ The casualty was not known.

It is conspicuous that the Government of India was constantly pressing Yangon government to initiate joint operations against the NSCN bases as New Delhi realise that this

295. Idem.

296. Idem.

297. Asian Recorder February 5-11, 1987, p. 19305.

298. Ghosh, loc. cit.

299. Idem.

Headquarters are becoming a rallying ground of other insurgent groups.³⁰⁰ This is also evident from the frequency of visit to Myanmar by Indian political leaders. The Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, visited Myanmar on December 15, 1987 on a two day visit.³⁰¹ The outcome of the visit was a 'Maritime Boundary Agreement between India and Myanmar.'³⁰² Besides other things, significantly, the two governments agreed to intensify cooperation in fighting trans-border insurgency, a problem which is being tackled jointly.³⁰³

However, despite persistent effort particularly from the Government of India's side, relationship between the two countries was not always cordial and this time the relationship deteriorated with the rise of 'Democratic Movement in Myanmar' led by Aung Sang Suu Kyi.

The worst was the Myanmarese government suspicion that the Indian government was involved in certain action which is directly against her interest. Evidently in this context, the disclosure made by Captain German, the Secretary (finance) of the Revolutionary Peoples' Front (RPF) to the state police of Manipur³⁰⁴ unfolded the attitude of the Myanmarese Governments. It was reported that the Myanmarese government had agreed to patronize their revolutionary front with all the forces under their command to revolt against the Indian government. The same sources also hinted that the Myanmarese authorities thought that

300. Dasgupta, loc. cit.

301. Asian Recorder January 15-21, 1988, p. 19827.

302. Idem.

303. Idem.

304. Conspiracy to destabilize country (In) The Sentinel, January 13, 1991.

the Indian government had circulated fake currency note inside the territory of Myanmar in large scale as a result of which the economy of the Myanmarese government was adversely affected.³⁰⁵ Secondly, Indian government was also accused of patronizing the ZORO (Zomi Reunification Organisation) within the territory of Myanmar to revolt against the Myanmar government.³⁰⁶

This alleged confession of a RPF member holds some weight. Admittedly, the statement made by Tint Swe, who was elected from the Pale II Constituency on a National League for Democracy (NLD) corroborated the former disclosure. Tint Swe stated that the Myanmarese army men deployed near the international border were providing shelter and imparting arms training to insurgent groups such as ULFA, PLA and NSCN.³⁰⁷ Tint Swe also said : "Probably, the Burmese government is sheltering and training Indian insurgents as a retaliation to India providing refuge to several prodemocracy activities and MPs."³⁰⁸ Although one cannot precisely indicate the whole detail of it, this much is clear that suspicion had developed between the government of Myanmar and India for quite some time.

Unfortunately, many unexpected developments were taking place in South East Asia political theatre bringing far reaching consequences. Around the same time, the Kachin Independent Organisation (KIO) which had been a host to several ethnic nationalists groups in the North-East in India for long, decided

305. Idem.

306. Idem.

307. Sonwalkar, Prasun., Myanmar aiding insurgency in NE The Times of India, February 1, 1992.

308. Idem.

to turn to India for help.³⁰⁹ The KIO Chairman Brangsein wrote to the Indian Prime Minister, P.V. Narasimha Rao, asking for support to "fight the war for survival" against the "blood thirsty rulers of Myanmar."³¹⁰ Thus, KIO turning its back on the insurgents in India is quite significant in view of being a prominent constituent member of the Democratic Alliance of Burma. Writing on this development, Stanley Ongching observed : "It is true that the KIO had already struck a deal with the Government of India. The Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) office has already established at the General Headquarters of the KIA. The Government of India is believed to have promised to provide political support and also supply arms, ammunitions and even hard currency in their struggle against the military junta of Myanmar ... on the condition that the Kachin Independents organisation on its part draw its sword against all the nationalists groups to leave Kachinland."³¹¹ In one way, this may ostensibly be seen as a positive development for India. Yet on the other hand, it is a germ which could worsen the already saturated situation.

Meanwhile, Myanmar was getting closer to China. In fact, Myanmar's position is quite sensitive. She being a small power had to maintain good relationship with both India and China. As a matter of fact, Myanmar's close relationship with China is essentially in her interest to survive as a small nation. India

309. Bhaumik, Subir., Out in the cold, SUNDAY, 28 June-4 July, 1992, p. 88.

310. Idem.

311. Ongching, Stanley., Nagaland war theatre Hill Express (Kohima) March 10, 1992.

Vide Myanmar Army build up, The Times of India Feb. 21, 1992.

has however, a big stake in Myanmar in view of the NSCN's ever expanding area of operation and its policy of 'United Front' with several ethnic political armed groups in the North East of India and South East Asia.

2. CHINA

The Chinese government supporting the Naga nationalist cause openly and extending help by imparting training, arming etc. is a well established fact. In fact the Chinese government's involvement in the Naga case is not a secret one. Besides training and supplying arms, the Chinese government helped the Nagas in publicity and garnering international support by using its state machinery (e.g, Radio services) for espousing the Naga cause.

The Naga nationalists' connection with the Chinese Government date back to the 1960s. It was precisely on 5 May, 1966, the Federal Government of Nagaland sent a powerful team, the Alee Command (Foreign Mission) led by NNC General Secretary, Thuingaleng Muivah, and 'Brig.' Thinoselie M. Keyho (from the army) with 300 men.³¹² They carried a letter from the Kedhage (President) of the FGN to the President of the Peoples Republic of China which says :

I am sending a few persons with Th. Muivah, Plenipotentiary and Brigadier M. Keyho...from our Government to your Excellency with the hope that your Excellency will seriously look into our present difficulties. That as a small nation it was never our intention to do anything which will offend our great

312. Maxwell, Neville., India, the Nagas and the North-East Minority Right Group, London, 1980), p. 13.

neighbour. That is why inspite of being suppressed to the extreme we have been trying to persuade the Government of India to recognise our right to regain our sovereignty after the British left us; yet the Government of India till today have not given place to reason; and as it has become impossible for us to resist unaided the military might of Indian armed forces, we have to look to your government and your people for any possible assistance in any form so that we may properly safeguard our sovereignty through the liberal hand of your people.³¹³

Thus, the practical execution of the mission to establish relation with the Chinese government was left in the hands of Th. Muivah, the General Secretary of the NNC and his associates. Fortunately enough, the FGN had chosen the right man for the right mission. Th. Muivah a post graduate from Gauhati University was not only bright in studies but also skilled in the art of diplomacy and negotiation.³¹⁴ Above all, he was an ardent nationalist, committed and honest.³¹⁵

The Chinese connection, at first intended only as a diversion and auxiliary source of training and arms, became the 'lifeline' after the loss of the 'Pakistan connection' following the conversion of East Pakistan into Bangladesh in 1972.³¹⁶

It came to be known that, Th. Muivah's Alee Command on reaching China "were received with a red carpet welcome and placed in the military training camps, particularly at Eu-Kung about 10 miles of Teng Chung."³¹⁷ Later Th. Muivah went to North Korea and North Vietnam where he met leaders of the respective

313. Nibedon, op. cit., p. 149.

314. Hazarika, op. cit., p. 105.

315. Nibedon, op. cit., p. 382.

316. Idem.

317. Yonuo, op. cit., p. 347.

Communist parties and watched their training programmes in sabotage, infiltration, local intelligence and guerrilla wars.³¹⁸ The Chinese government had reportedly assured the Naga nationalists of its support, asking them to send in thousands of young and educated persons having unshaken conviction in the ideal of Nagaland's sovereignty for training, arms and ammunition and to coordinate their activities with the Meiteis in Manipur, Mizos in Assam and East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) and Shans, Kachins and Karens in Burma.³¹⁹ Thus China's policy of supporting the Naga political aspiration was significant because for the first time a big power in Asia had understood the Nagas and that was a significant achievement. It was the Moscow radio which first broadcast that Chinese personnel were taking part in Naga guerrilla movement.³²⁰

Another significant achievement of the Alee Command under Thuingaleng Muivah was forging of link with the Kachin Independent Organisation (KIO). The latter with its armed wing-Kachin Independent Army (KIA) had already been fighting for freedom from Myanmar's yoke for more than twenty years.³²¹ That early contact between Th. Muivah and the Kachins held good for many years and especially for Manipuri and Assamese groups in the 1970s and 1980s.³²²

318. Hazarika, loc. cit.

319. Patterson, G. N., Delhi and the Nagas Far Eastern Economic Review, Hong Kong, October 31, 1968, p. 240.

320. Moscow Radio, July 21, 1961 (In) Yonuo, Asoso., The rising Nagas loc. cit.

321. Hazarika, op. cit., p. 103.

322. Ibid., p. 104.

Meanwhile in China, the Nagas were undergoing intensive training programme and China because of its strained relation with India embarked on helping the Naga nationalists on a bigger scale. In fact, the Chinese government visualized the following arrangement :

- (1) The government in exile would be based at a suitable point in China territory contiguous to the Indian border;
- (2) The Chinese would openly support the Naga cause on the pattern of their support to the other governments in exile;
- (3) The Chinese would guide the foreign relations of the Naga government in exile;
- (4) The Chinese would help in other ways, such as setting up a radio station and permitting use of their propaganda machinery.³²³

This was a scheme specially negotiated by the Alee Command but the FGN authorities did not give consent and the NSCN President A.Z. Phizo failed to approve it either.³²⁴ Perhaps, the FGN and the NNC leadership were pinning their hope more on the Western powers as their campaign was generally restricted to the west.

Meanwhile, the first batch of Chinese trained Naga were sent home under 'Brigadier' Thinusillie and a small contingent had been held back under Th. Muivah for a special assignment.³²⁵ The Chinese authorities had also instructed the Kachins not to come between them and the Nagas. The Nagas were to be given a free

323. Singh, Prakash., Nagaland, op. cit., pp. 131-132.

324. Idem.

325. Nibedon, op. cit., p. 187.

passage.³²⁶ But it was reported that the Kachins (KIA) usually demanded huge commission from the Nagas and wanted to share with them whatever arms and ammunitions they brought from China.³²⁷ Later, the Kachins were told bluntly by the Chinese authorities in Yunnan Province not to obstruct the Nagas with an assurance that whatever commission they ought to get their services rendered to the Nagas would be realised from the Chinese.³²⁸

Then in the month of December, 1967 when the sixth and the last round of talk with the Indian Prime Minister broke down, the second batch under 'General' Mowu and Isak Chishi Swu, the Foreign Minister of the FGN was flaged off in China.³²⁹ The second batch did not face much problem on the way because Th. Muivah had already laid the ground work so well, particularly with the KIO.³³⁰ In a way, the Kachins under the leadership of Zawtu and Zasein helped the Nagas immensely, they usually escorted the Naga army till the Chinese territory and also the team coming from China upto Hukwang valley.³³¹

However, the route to Yunnan was not an easy one. It generally takes three months from Nagaland to reach China. Thus all of them were not lucky, some of them got through; others were ambushed and lost their heads to their 'eastern cousins' (Nagas in Myanmar), who had no ideas what these Nagas from the West were upto, but saw them as intruders. Still some were trapped by

326. Ibid., p. 186.

327. Written interview of 'Major' A.S. Ayo Shimray conducted by the scholar, 1995.

328. Idem.

329. Nibedon, op. cit., p. 348.

330. Ibid., p. 185.

331. Ibid., p. 186.

Myanmarese troops, arrested and put in jail in Mandalay before being extradited to India.³³² Nonetheless, once they reached China, they were practically accorded the status of a foreign delegation. Besides, military training, they were taken for sightseeing tour.³³³ Th. Muivah narrated that the Nagas also participated in mass rallies during the cultural revolution.³³⁴ Remarkably, the Chinese also constructed a Church for the Christian Nagas.³³⁵ Thus, the Chinese government in no way attempted to impose their ideology (as alleged) but gave complete freedom concerning their faith.

The Federal Government was getting disorganised and a major crack was developing. 'General'. Kaito with Kughato and Scato Swu had walked out of the movement and were operating under the aegis of New Delhi.³³⁶ Now from their strongholds in Satakha in the heart of Sema region, they were making it clear that they had not only quit the movement but were against link with Peking itself. This was a great blow to the Naga movement.³³⁷

Meanwhile on June 7, 1968 the Indian security forces discovered a Naga encampment at Jotsoma, only a mile away from its Divisional headquarters. The security forces bombarded for three hours and attacked the well laid up camp of China-returned Naga nationalists.³³⁸ This was undoubtedly the biggest ever battle (another was where about 800 Indian security lost their

332. Lintner, op. cit., pp. 82-83.

333. Gwizan, Gen. Mowu., A brief testimony of Nagaland for Christ (Published by the author, 1981), p. 9.

334. Lintner, loc. cit.

335. Gwizan, loc. cit.

336. Nibedon, op. cit., p. 197.

337. Ibid., p. 199.

338. Yonuo, op. cit., p. 351.

live in a severe battle at Paosaidrung in Ukhurul region) fought between the Indian security forces and the Naga nationalists. The latter claimed that 1000 Indian soldiers were killed³³⁹ but government sources put the figure at 90.³⁴⁰ In that battle, the Nagas used all the weapons brought from China including AK 47 automatic rifles, Soviet made 7.62 SKS carbines, US made carbines, medium machine guns, 60 mm mortars and grenades.³⁴¹

That year, (1968), 'General' Mowu and Isak Chishi Swu arrived in Nagaland from China. 'Gen.' Mowu's group was dramatically intercepted by 'Gen.' Kaito's men and handed them over to Indian security force.³⁴² Isak Chishi Swu's group too was intercepted and 90 of them were captured and three killed. However, Swu managed to escape.³⁴³ A statement placed in the Lok Sabha on the arms and ammunition captured from 'Gen.' Mowu included 4 60 mm mortars, 1 rocket launcher, 11 7.62 light machine guns, 89 semi-automatic rifles, 42 sub-machine guns and 6 pistols. The haul from Isak's group was sixty weapons.³⁴⁴ In April 1968 Dusoi Chakhesang led another batch to China. However, he lost his tract and was arrested by the Myanmarese troops. Later on April 11, 1969 Dusoi together with 76 Nagas was handed over by the Myanmarese government to the India army authorities at Moreh.³⁴⁵ Thus, the capture of 'General' Mowu's group and the dissipation and dispersal of Isak Chishi Swu and the arrest of

339. Lintner, op. cit., p. 85.

340. Yonuo, loc. cit.

341. Idem.

342. Gwizan, op. cit., p. 10.

343. Singh, op. cit., p. 135.

344. Idem.

345. Ibid., p. 133.

Vide Nibedon, op. cit., p. 196.

Dusoi Chakhesang's group greatly demoralised the nationalist Nagas. Besides, the Semas had formed 'Revolutionary Government' on their own seriously affecting the movement.

Swaran Singh, Defence Minister of India, claimed in the Lok Sabha on April 1, 1969 that the Government had been able to "break the backbone" of the Nagas.³⁴⁶

Nonetheless, the Naga nationalists determined with their conviction continued their journey to China one after another. In China, some of the Nagas were sent to North Vietnam to study for themselves on the spot as to how the brave Vietcongs were fighting the Americans. In Hanoi, the North Vietnamese government committed itself to support the cause of the Naga people and "extend whatever possible help within their ability for the liberation of the Nagas from the reactionary Indian government."³⁴⁷ Thus, a pamphlet captioned 'The US Imperialist propaganda' brought out by the Foreign Languages Publishing House, Hanoi in 1967 said :

The Naga peoples have benefited from the teachings of the Kao Dong Party and learnt from the experience of the Vietnamese struggle for independence. They have received instruction in the techniques of the sabotage, ambush, assassination and lightning raid. Naga leaders, during recent fraternal discussions in Hanoi, have expressed their thanks for the technical advice and guidance given to them in their fight against the reactionary Indian government by the heroes of the People's Army of North Vietnam.³⁴⁸

346. Nibedon, loc. cit.

347. Yonuo, op. cit., p. 358.

348. Singh, op. cit., p. 132.

Meanwhile Chinese aid to the Nagas was brought up in the UN General Assembly by Taiwan's Foreign Minister Wei Tao-Ming on October 22, 1968 stating that People's Republic of China was training thousands of Naga nationalists in Yunnan and sending them back to India to fight against the Government of India.³⁴⁹ On the similar line, severe criticism came from Soviet Union against the Chinese Government for its alleged divide and rule policy in South Asia. Evidently in this context, the Soviet Journal (Asia and Africa Today), Far-East Analyst S. Leonidov, accused China of having colonial designs in Asia, especially in the Indian sub-continent. He further pointed out that within India "the Naga uprising and Naxalbari armed revolt were aided and abetted by the Chinese clandestinely."³⁵⁰ Again the capture of Chinese made weapons by the Indian Government troops from the Naga fighters were widely reported in Moscow, supporting the Soviet charges against China of crude interference in the affairs of neighbouring countries.³⁵¹ Besides, on earlier occasion, Moscow radio in March 1969 ridiculed Peking's support to the Nagas by imparting Mao guerrilla training in China and providing arms and ammunition, even to the extent of monetary help.³⁵²

By the end of 1970, Th. Muivah, the 'Plenipotentiary' and the General Secretary of the NNC returned home after completing four years mission in China.³⁵³

349. Singh., *op. cit.*, p. 133.

350. *Times of India*, November 28, 1973.

351. *Indian Express*, April 19, 1973.

352. *Times of India*, January 16, ml 1974.

353. Wati, L., *Fact and Growth of Naga Nationalism*, (Published by the Author, Mokokchung, 1993), p. 167.

In the years that followed two developments became very evident. On the one hand, the Indian security forces acquired ascendancy in Nagaland, on the other hand, the leadership spearheading the movement was drifting in the absence of what Th. Muivah called 'correct tactics and strategy. As a result, the spirit of resistance showed signs of evaporation. At this stage, Th. Muivah, the General Secretary of the NNC was asked for the second time to go on a 'goodwill mission' to China.³⁵⁴ Before leaving Muivah convened the National Assembly in the absence of A.Z. Phizo (away in London) and Imkong Meren, bed ridden in the jungle due to ill health, on 4th of September 1974 at Un Sethy (a place between Touphima [Northern Angami] and Lazami and Iganumi of Pogobuto). There was the general apprehension that the then leadership could enter into a deal with the Government of India. This led the National Assembly to resolve that "every patriotic Naga will have the right to condemn any accord/agreement entered into that entails loss of sovereign right of Nagaland"³⁵⁵ and "that Nagas would fight to the last drop of their blood if India refuses to leave Nagaland."³⁵⁶

It came to be known that Th. Muivah's group on hearing the news of the accord rushed homeward from China. After reaching Naga territory in upper Myanmar, the Alee Command sent its condemnation of the Shillong Accord as 'total capitulation'.³⁵⁷

Hearing the news of the Shillong Accord, the Chinese authorities were certainly hurt. A broadcast from Peking radio

354. Written interview of Th. Muivah, loc. cit.

355. Written interview of Brig. V.S. Wungmatem, op. cit., p. 6.

356. Ibid., p. 8.

357. Polarisation, published by GPRN, p. 6.

said : "neither armed suppression nor political deception can curb the development of the armed struggle of the Nagas." And further it added that "their cause is just one..."³⁵⁸

Th. Muivah having re-organised the NNC in Upper Myanmar, marched off to China again (his third trip) at the end of the year in 1976 along with 400 Naga fighters with an intention to contact Phizo as well as procure more arms. After reaching China, several letters were despatched to Phizo with the help of the Chinese.³⁵⁹ Receiving no response from the NNC President, the Foreign delegation came back home (upper Myanmar). Perhaps, this was the last trip to China by the Naga nationalists. Even if they carried out further trip to China, it was not known to the public.

The question, 'when did the Chinese exactly stop helping the Nagas ?' is hard to know. Th. Muivah in an interview with Bertil Lintner responded saying : "Our relationship with China is as before; It has not changed except that we give more attention to the practice of self-reliance as declared in our manifesto."³⁶⁰ Indeed, according to NSCN sources, a few trips were attempted to procure arms from China³⁶¹ but the result of such trip are not known. But one thing is clear that the Shillong Accord and the arms surrender of Chinese arms to India were not taken lightly by the Chinese but the change of leadership in China ultimately sealed the China trail. As a matter of fact, even the former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi expressed his confidence that

358. Yonuo, op. cit., p. 354.

359. Written interview of Brig. V.S. Wungmatem, loc. cit.

360. Interview of Bertil Lintner with Th. Muivah, op. cit., p.22.

361. Joint statement of Isak Chishi Swu and Th. Muivah, loc. cit.

"China is no longer helping anti-Indian element in the North-East... We do not have any complaints now in the North-East."³⁶² This was the statement made following his visit to China in December, 1988. Recently, the Chief of Army Staff, Gen. S. Roy Chowdhary, also affirmingly stated that the NSCN were no longer getting support from China.³⁶³ Thus, this much is clear that the China-Naga connection stands disconnected at present. However, in view of an apparent move from China to strengthen its naval power in the Bay of Bengal and its open arms sale to Pakistan and Myanmar directly hurting the vital security interest of India and at a time when the NSCN is making attempts both national and international to strengthen its power, it will not be a surprise if the NSCN re-establish China connection.

3. PAKISTAN

The Government of Pakistan's decision to train arm and support the Nagas came as no surprise when the relationship between India and Pakistan was at a low ebb. The main issue of contention between the two powers is the 'Kashmir' imbroglio. Already two successive wars have been fought between them first in 1948 followed by 1965 on the issue of 'Kashmir'. Since then, relationship between the two has never been a smooth one.

The Naga contact with the Pakistanese authority started with A.Z. Phizo's arrival in Dhaka on December 6, 1956 on his way to London.³⁶⁴ Phizo's object of going via East Pakistan was to seek

362. China is not aiding rebels The Telegraph 22 December, 1988.

363. China border peaceful says army chief The Telegraph 7 February, 1995.

364. Nibedon, op. cit., p. 84.

arms aid from that country and to mobilise support for raising the Naga issue in various international forums. For Pakistan, they were much willing to support the Nagas. Thus, an understanding was arrived at whereby Pakistan agreed to supply arms and ammunition to the Nagas.³⁶⁵ A.Z. Phizo's visit paved the way for others to follow suit. Zhekuto Sema, Director of Intelligence of the FGN, Thungti Chang ex-chief of Naga Home Guards, and Mowu then a Naga Youth leader went to Pakistan in 1957. Mowu was arrested on August 10, 1957 at Damchua (North Cachar) while returning. On October 20, 1957 he was released on the declaration of amnesty. Zhekuto Sema was actually killed in an encounter and Thungti Chang was arrested.³⁶⁶

On the part of the Government of Pakistan, the Naga issue was treated as of paramount importance along with the Mizo problem. Consequently, a special liaison cell was set up by the Government of Pakistan for contact and giving encouragement to the Naga and Mizo nationalists.³⁶⁷ Apart from training imparted, political briefing was also given to the Naga nationalists by Pakistani Ministers and high officials.³⁶⁸

The first group for advanced training and bringing arms was flagged off in April 1962. This group was led by Gen. Kaito and Mowu, Khodao Yanthan and Yankong. They reached Pakistan (now Bangladesh) safely.³⁶⁹ From there the four leaders proceeded to London to meet the President of the NNC, A.Z. Phizo. All of them

365. Singh, op. cit., p. 114.

366. Idem.

367. Singh, op. cit., p. 117.

368. Ibid., pp. 116-117.

369. Gwizan, op. cit., p. 6.

went on Pakistani paper.³⁷⁰ Gen. Mowu Gwizan recounted that the "Indian government tried its best and strongly requested the British Government to arrest us and surrender to its (India) government. But the British government refused to do so on the ground that we (Nagas) are not Indians."³⁷¹ Afterwards which Gen. Kaito and Gen. Mowu returned to East Pakistan. Then along with the trained Naga army they marched back to Nagaland with full arms and ammunitions. They reached Nagaland safely in March, 1963.³⁷²

The Pakistan authorities set up training camps at Rangamati, Ruma, Bandarban, Rankhiang forest area, Slikadam and other places in the Chittagong Hill tracts. The emphasis was on training in handling of bombs, firing 2" mortars, handling explosives for sabotage, jungle warfare and night operation.³⁷³ The whole operation was a meticulous planning of a high level. The Pakistani radio broadcasts and its press propaganda also played an equally active role.

Meanwhile a few months after the arrival of Gen. Kaito's group, another formidable group of about 500 Naga army escaped to Pakistan in October 1963 under the leadership of Dusoi Chakhesang. This group was given, apart from military hardware, Rs. 30,000 in Indian currency by Pakistan. They returned in May 1964.³⁷⁴ While the group was still on its way back, another contingent, about 300 strong, led by Yeveto Sema reached

370. Idem.

371. Idem.

372. Singh, op. cit., p. 118.

373. Ibid., p. 115.

374. Yonuo, op. cit., p. 118.

Pakistan. But the biggest and the most successful expedition to Pakistan was led by Zuheto Sema. He took with him about 1000 men. It received training on the modern line in Pakistan and returned to Nagaland in 1965.³⁷⁵ Thus, the trip to Pakistan went on unabated. However all were not lucky. For instance, Gen. Mowu Gwizan mission failed. He took 400 men to East Pakistan in November 1965. Unfortunately, the group was intercepted and forced to re-enter India in Manipur sector. Prakash Singh thus writes : "It was an ignominious failure for Mowu Angami who had otherwise a towering stature in the Naga Army."³⁷⁶

Attempts were made again in December 1965 by the Nagas to send another batch to Pakistan through the Churachandpur area of Manipur, but the expedition failed. In June 1966 Nedelie Angami was able to conduct a group of 200 Nagas to Pakistan and the same returned in November 1966 via Churachandpur and Tamenglong Subdivisions of Manipur.³⁷⁷

Though Pakistan's help to the Mizo National Front (MNF) was at a bigger scale because of geographical contiguity,³⁷⁸ the former's aid to the Naga too was formidable. Perhaps, the Nagas received more compact assistance than the Mizos in one sense. They not only received training and arms but also financial assistance to the tune of Rs. 5 lakhs.³⁷⁹ They used East Pakistan as a spring board to go to foreign countries.³⁸⁰

375. Ibid., p. 119.

376. Idem.

377. Idem.

378. Idem.

379. Nibedon, op. cit., p. 382.

380. Yonuo, op. cit., p. 305.

Pakistan Government's strategy in extending assistance to the Nagas and Mizos in the North East probably would appear to have three objectives :

- (1) to disintegrate the unity of the country.
- (2) to strain the country's economy; and
- (3) to tie down a number of Mountain Divisions, of the Indian Army in these areas.

Unfortunately, the war between India and Pakistan in 1971 for the liberation of Bangladesh brought an abrupt end to the Naga's connection with East Pakistan. An important gain incident following the liberation of Bangladesh was the rounding up of the Naga Army top brass at Dhaka. 'Commander-in-Chief' Thinuselie Angami and 'Brigadier' Nedelie Angami were taken into custody by the Indian Army on December 22, 1971.³⁸¹ Thus, the Naga nationalists suffered a severe setback with the loss of the sanctuary it had enjoyed in East Pakistan. Hence, Naga-Pakistan connection was kept dormant for a long time.

The Naga-Pakistan relationship was re-established only in the 1990s after a gap of twenty years. However, this time, the modus operandi of its relationship will be through the Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) of Pakistan equivalent of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and Indian's Research and Analysis Wing (RAW).³⁸² Thus, the operation is now in a subtle form and it is difficult to accurately pin-point the nature of this tacit understanding.

381. Singh, op. cit., p. 123.

382. Hazarika, op. cit., p. 170.

Most probably, the alleged NSCN link with Pakistan's ISI commenced from 1990 when NSCN Alee Command made contact with the ISI officials in Dhaka.³⁸³ It was of the same time that the United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA) was also active. The alleged ISI and other foreign powers aiding the North-East ethnic armed groups came to light when the confession of one Captain German (belonging to the Revolutionary People's Front (RPF)) to the Manipur police was published. The RPF cadre reportedly confessed that Pakistan Government have already agreed to extend all kinds of support to the NE ethnic armed groups.³⁸⁴

In this context, the Director General of Border Security Force (BSF), T. Arantachari in a press conference in Agartala said :

Pakistan was out to foment destabilisation, communal riots and violence through extremists in the North Eastern region, while in some cases they were aiding and abetting the extremists through the neighbouring Bangladesh, in other cases they were helping them directly.³⁸⁵

The Assam Chief Minister, Hiteswar Saikia, and many other leaders of the North-Eastern region had made similar allegations against Pakistan. Most prominently, the 44-page General Secretary's report of the North Eastern Congress (I) Coordination Committee special Conference held at Dispur on June 22, 1993 alerted the nation against the nexus between Bangladesh and

383. Confession of Khayao, Hurey Finance Secretary, GPRN The Hindustan Times, June 13, 1994.

384. Conspiracy to destabilize country (in) The Sentinel January 13, 1991.

385. Pakistan involved in insurgency in NE Economic Times, 12 August, 1992.

Pakistan on one hand and forces within the region on the other to destabilise the North-Eastern region.³⁸⁶

A confirmation of these allegations came following the arrest of Khayao Hurey, the then Finance Secretary of the NSCN and his sensational confession running into 126 pages. He categorically admitted that Pakistan, particularly the ISI had been direct involved in assisting the Nagas. He confessed that Pakistan authorities had made available to the NSCN a sum of 1.7 million US dollars in three instalments to enable the NSCN to procure arms from South East Asia.³⁸⁷ Further he confessed that apart from the Pakistan Embassy in Dhaka, the Pakistan Embassy in Kathmandu also had begun to play a major role in aiding NSCN.³⁸⁸ This startling revelation had provided immense help to the Government of India, particularly the policy planners of the region. One can also affirmingly state that until the Naga issue and other problems in the entire North-East region are settled rightly, the involvement of foreign powers or agencies cannot be contained, for the simple reason that this region is strategically located.

4. BANGLADESH

It was a historical event in 1971 that the Government of India sent in its defence forces to liberate Bangladesh from the yoke of Pakistan. It was also a fact that the Government of India did render a number of humanitarian services to the new nation-

386. Pak-Bangladesh nexus to destabilize North East. Eastern Panorama, August, 1993, p. 4.

387. The Hindustan Times, loc. cit.

388. Idem.

state of Bangladesh. Yet today, the relationship between the two neighbouring countries can never be said to be cordial and stable.

A study of the Indo-Bangladesh relations indicates that the problems between the two countries are largely geo-political in character. Some of these problems are the influx of illegal immigrants, boundary dispute, New Moore island controversy and above all the issue of use and distribution of Ganga waters at Farakha. Of all these problems, it is certainly the question of the sharing of the river waters which has acquired the most serious proportion.³⁸⁹ Indeed it has become the measure of the relationship existing between the two. In the midst of these problems, the anti-India campaign is very strong in Bangladesh.

Thus, keeping this in the backdrop, the Bangladeshi helped to the NSCN to set up training camps in Chittagong Hill tract and NSCN leaders allegedly operating in Dhaka comes not to so much of a surprise.

In fact, the NSCN establishing a base area in Bangladesh's Chittagong Hill tract and the news of its cadres operating from Cox Bazar is now confirmed. It is now clear that this tract is vital for the NSCN to act as a transit base. Both the shipment from 'operation red sea' and 'operation Jordan' landed in this area and subsequently flagged off to Nagaland from there.³⁹⁰

389. Singh, Kuldeep., India and Bangladesh (Published by Anmol publications, New Loyalpur, Ext.Delhi, 1987), Forward XII.

390. Passim Command Report Alee Command of Major Ningkhan Shimray, loc. cit.

As reported, the top brass of the Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) have been personally supervising the training and other aspects of some insurgent' camps, which are being run in consultation with the Pakistani Inter Services Intelligence (ISI). Dhaka has also been directly encouraging the China-trained Th. Muivah and Isak Chishi Swu of the NSCN to form an umbrella body with the active participation of the other insurgent groups. Th. Muivah's group of NSCN, is reliably learnt, has been able to establish contact with almost all the militant groups operating in the North-East. It is believed to be running the largest training camp in the Chittagong Hill tracts of Bangladesh.³⁹¹ No wonder, the Home Minister S.B. Chavan explicitly maintained that the involvement of the Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) of Pakistan with the help of Bangladesh in the insurgency of North Eastern region, was a fact and cautioned that this would only embitter the good neighbourly relations. Chavan made it clear that his Ministry was in possession of full details of ISI operations in the North-East including training, funding and sheltering of the militants by Pakistan elements with the base in Bangladesh.³⁹²

Though Bangladesh had often denied such report on ISI, the Home Minister is believed to have got enough evidence to substantiate its charges. Bangladesh had also been provided with such evidence by India.³⁹³ It is in this context that the Chief of Staff, Eastern Command Lieutenant General, O.P. Kaushik said

391. Pak-Bangladesh nexus to help NE Ultras North East Times, 12 August, 1992.

392. Asian Recorder, February 12-18, 1994, p. 23745.

393. Idem.

that the situation in the North-East insurgency is worse than Jammu and Kashmir.³⁹⁴

It is possible that the Bangladesh government could be using insurgency or the NSCN as a bargaining factor vis-a-vis the Government of India in order to secure as much concession (in matters related to Tin Bigha, Farakha barrage etc.) as possible from India. Thus, the arrest and handing over of People's Liberation Army (PLA) members of Manipur by the Bangladesh government to the Government of India³⁹⁵ can be understood in the aforesaid context. This happened after India's decision to hand over 'Tin Bigha' to Bangladesh.³⁹⁶ Though it may ostensibly appear coincidental, the timing was too close to be ignored.

Again when the government of Bangladesh was fully informed by the Government of India about the various insurgent groups including the NSCN, she remained unmoved. There may be one good explanation that the Government of Bangladesh could use the NSCN to counter balance the Shanti Bahini militants allegedly receiving help from India.

Finally, if Pakistan and Bangladesh have shared similar perception on aiding the NSCN there is no reason why they will not cooperate even in this line. Both are Muslim countries and there are still a significant section of Bangladeshi population who nurture pro-Pakistan feeling. Thus, in this environment, the

394. The Telegraph, 16 February, 1995.

This change in the security environment in the North East region has demanded of governmental activities at the highest level leading to the formulation of steps to contain and counter what they called 'ISI menace'.

395. Data India, May 3-9, 1992, p. 379.

396. _____ May 24-30, 1992, p. 432.

ISI could easily carry out its plan without much hindrances even from within Bangladesh.

In conclusion it can be stated that the involvement of Pakistan or Bangladesh in aiding and patronizing the NSCN or the insurgent groups in the North East will continue until the neighbourly relationship among them is favourably re-established in the future.

CONCLUSION

In this concluding chapter, some of the important observations and findings of the research work are summarised.

The Naga political issue which confronted the Government of India since independence has evaded any permanent settlement. For this development, both the parties i.e. the Government of India and the Federal Government of Nagaland are equally to blame. To any keen observer of the issue, sincerity (of the two parties) to arrive at a settlement was found lacking. Today, the issue has compounded further and has taken a new dimension. Hence, it demands an 'all out effort' and wisdom of political leaders from both sides to find the right solution to the problem.

A nation, Anderson argues, 'is an imagined political community'. It is imagined as the members of even the smallest nations will never know most of their fellow members and 'yet in the minds of each lives an image of their fellow community'. This nullifies Ernest Gellner's claim that nationalism invents nations where they do not exist. Anderson's explanation is important because it takes into account the central role played by the image of a nation in creating 'collective personality' or 'identity'. It is no doubt true that collective consciousness and action are facilitated by a range of other attributes like sharing a historic territory, common cultural traits, myths and religion, geographic isolation, colonial policies, bureaucratic decision and the like. The paramount common denominator of all nations is a consciousness fostering a feeling of belongingness, distinctiveness and even exclusivity. Liah Greenfeld also argues that national identity is fundamentally 'a matter of dignity

which give people reason to be proud'.

It is the nation or the idea of a nation that normally generates nationalism. The concept of a nation has social connotation as well. Therefore, a nation can exist even though it is not contained within a particular state or served by a given government. Nationalism has been the most powerful political force of the twentieth century and as projected by William Pfaff it is 'likely to prove the most powerful of the twenty-first as well'. The message that it carries is that every nation should have its own state accompanied by the corollary that one ethnic or cultural group should not collectively rule over another. As early as in 1870 the Swiss international lawyer Johann Caspar Bluntschli pleaded that 'the world should be split into as many states as humanity is divided into nations.' He wrote : "Each nation a state, each state a national being." Nationalism gives the individual an identity and 'extends that identity into something greater than the self'. The power of nationalism argues Anthony Smith, should be attributed to the fact that membership in a nation provides "a powerful means of defining and locating individual selves in the world through the prism of collective personality and its distinctive culture."

The Nagas living in geographical contiguity comprise of over forty tribes with a population around three millions. Majority of them also share a common faith and their dialects spring from the Tibeto-Burman group. They have inherited a common cultural heritage but their historic land is divided between two sovereign states - Indian and Myanmar. The state of Nagaland only

°consists of people living West of Saramati range. The state of Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh and Assam also incorporate Naga inhabited areas. The real Nagaland - 'a homeland of all the Nagas exists in the minds of the people'. An important factor in promoting collective consciousness among the Nagas has been their attachment to the historic land. Naga nationalist sentiment also arises out of the assertion that the Nagas are 'different from the Indians'. The Naga leaders of all camps have always projected these differences.

Naga nationalism could be regarded as 'ethnic nationalism' the force of which has become particularly pronounced in the past two and a half decades from the creation of Bangladesh to the breakup of former Yugoslavia. In the international sphere Woodrow Wilson's 14 Points clearly incorporated the principle of ethnic nationalism. As enunciated by Anthony Smith the focus of ethnic nationalism is on the collective level of cultural identity and community. As explained by Smith the dimensions and powers of collective identity and community eventually become much more important than the disposition of its particular members. This particular collective cultural identity is the 'ethnic community' which contains the properties of the explosive power of nationalism. A working definition of ethnic community, as given by Smith, implies a named human population with the myth of common ancestry, cultural elements, a link with an historic territory or homeland and a measure of solidarity. Homeland is however seen as a cradle of the people. Naga nationalism clearly incorporates this criteria and the political struggle led by the

National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN) is directive towards nurturing the belief in common origin and a shared culture and this fact has also fostered a feeling of consciousness among the Nagas. The components of a shared culture include dress, music, crafts and architecture as well as customs and village polity. Ethnic consolidation takes place through a tradition of struggle and warfare and Naga nationalism has been receiving its sustaining power from the continuing struggle first under the NNC and later in the post Accord period under the NSCN.

The genesis of the Naga political struggle could be traced back to the formation of the Naga Club and its memorandum to the Simon Commission. It was the first expression of Naga political aspiration. In 1946 the NNC replaced the Naga Club and for the first time almost all the Nagas were represented in the new organisational set up. Ever since the Naga declaration of independence on 14th August 1947 momentous developments had taken place affecting the destiny of the Nagas. The movement that followed in the wake of independence declaration continued through different phases. The spread of violence, creation of statehood, Indian security force operations, maintenance of a fragile cease-fire, cleavage between some section of Naga population and armed nationalists had altogether cast a deep imprint on the psyche of the people.

The Shillong Accord can be considered as an expression of the acceptance of military defeat by a key section of Naga leadership. Although relatively it brought about general relief to the severely affected Naga population including the fighting

units of the Federal Government of Nagaland, it was a short lived one. Very soon a powerful group of Naga nationalists denounced the Accord and expressed their commitment to espouse the cause of Naga nationalism. Following the Accord, there took place unusual developments within the organisation such as the military takeover, declaration of 'martial law', arrest and attempt to do away with Th. Muivah, Isak Chishi Swu and others (who denounced the Accord). It also led to the reorganisation of the NNC and FGN with the objective of flushing out the anti-Accord group. Interestingly, reassertion of strength by the anti-Accord group and the formation of the NSCN in 1980 brought about a radical change in the movement.

The formation of the NSCN was the direct result of the Accord and the events that followed. The emergence of the NSCN was a new beginning for the Nagas. The NSCN built up remodelled the organisation ushering in two main changes - centralisation and collective leadership. Unlike the NNC, they have evolved close-knit organisation with well defined policies and strategies. They advocate an ideology called 'national socialism' which is different from the Chinese or the Soviet brand of socialism. It professes to be more in tune with the socio-economic tradition of the Nagas. To the NSCN, independence is not the end but an indispensable condition of the ideals of life. They consistently denounce personality cult that had plagued the NNC and do not advocate the method of interpreting the correctness of policy in terms of personality. Their brand of socialism calls for freedom from the fear of economic exploitation and political domination

and suppression and yet it turns out to be location specific by claiming to be distinctively Naga and not inconsistent either with Christian principles.

The rejection of the Shillong Accord by various political camps including the Naga public; the resurgence of Naga nationalism in the post Accord period; the change of political perception (from military to political solution) of the Government of India etc. are important achievements of the NSCN under the leadership of Isak Chishi Swu and Th. Muivah. Besides, they succeeded against heavy odds in emerging as a strong and widely supported group committed to espouse the Naga struggle.

There is in Nagaland a close relationship between the Naga nationalists and the state politicians and bureaucrats. This link or collusion will remain as long as Naga political issue remains unresolved. The general feeling is that the Naga nationalists constitute an inalienable part of the Naga society. It was found that several Naga nationalists had joined the state government as politicians and bureaucrats keeping in view that statehood was only an interim solution. It is in this perspective that the NSCN certainly is an important factor in Nagaland state politics. For instance, all the political parties in Nagaland accord primacy in their manifestoes to the issue of 'lifting the ban on the NSCN'. The fact that the NSCN is able to run a parallel government in Nagaland is precisely because of their strong foothold. However, the nature of their relationship is complicated because political opportunists remained obstinate against finding any solution to the Naga political problem. For this group of politicians and

bureaucrats, the political movement is giving ample opportunity to amass wealth and in squandering government fund.

Clearly the policy adopted by the Government of India vis-a-vis the Naga political issue was 'inconsistent and muddled'. It is in Nagaland that the Government of India experienced the first lesson of 'low intensity conflict' and adopted hard measures in an attempt to crush the political movement but there was never a time when it could claim that the hardcore Naga nationalists had been broken into submission. On the other hand, the Naga civilians suffered immensely under the full-blooded vigour of Indian army operation. The Indian Air Force was also brought into action in a tactical role, bombing and strafing causing several civilian casualties and destruction of property. Earlier, when the Nagas were wearied of the long drawn war, the Government of India through the creation of Nagaland state significantly succeeded in the process of the dividing and deluding the Nagas. Consequently, a severe crack developed in the movement between the hardcore and the moderate nationalists. But the real gain for the Government of India was the signing of the Shillong Accord which brought about the ultimate split in the movement, a worst debacle for the hardcore nationalists.

But the emergence of the NSCN as a powerful force compelled the Government to adopt measures such as upgrading intelligence network and propaganda. Besides, they have taken the steps of patronising certain militia groups to counter the NSCN. The split of NSCN in 1988 was one such instance. Nevertheless, the NSCN under Isak and Muivah succeeded in leading the movement. The

resurgence of Naga nationalism; the membership of Nagaland in the UNPO and the NSCN policy of securing a United Front with other ethnic groups have together projected the Naga political movement in the forefront of public attention.

Important observations and findings of the research work are:

1. One of the general findings of the research work is that most writers including research scholars commit a mistake while numbering the Naga tribes or in locating the Naga homeland. Generally, they take the conventional approach holding that the Nagas are to be found only in Nagaland state while literally overlooking the substantial number of Nagas settled outside Nagaland state. Thus, they bluntly commit two errors; first, they fail to realise the fact that there are more than forty Naga tribes and instead rest content only with sixteen tribes found in the present Nagaland state; and secondly, due to this misconception, they commit another error in comprehending the Naga territory. Thus, a serious flaw remained in their studies in portraying the Nagas in the proper perspective.
2. No doubt the socio-economic and political developments of the Nagas, started with the advent of British administration but it was the Christian missionaries and their work of evangelising and introduction of primary education among the simple Nagas that really transformed their lives and society. Indeed the missionary activities were the vehicle of change which revolutionized the various facets of Naga society. It is true, as F. Harbison and C.A. Meyers writes:

"Education is the key that unlocks the door to modernization". The introduction of primary education in the Naga hills was a tremendous boost in their orientation.

3. The Naga political movement which initially began under the banner of the Naga National Council (NNC) with a low key turned out to be a powerful people's movement from the 1950s onwards. The evidences in this context are the plebiscite, the total boycott of the first General Election of India, and the successful Civil Disobedience Movement against the Government' clearly nullifying the allegations that the movement was led by a few 'misguided elements' and only 'a handful of supporters' etc. As a matter of fact, the movement sustaining itself for over forty years against heavy odds speaks volume in favour of its support base.

4. In the 1950 the idea surfaced in Nagaland that statehood within the Indian Union could provide an answer to the demand for independence. This proposal was associated with Naga People's Convention (NPC). Subsequently, Nagaland state came into being but all those wishfully expecting the collapse of the movement found themselves to be wrong for this did not happen. Similarly, the Government of India expecting a solution by the granting of statehood awfully committed a blunder when a substantial part of the Naga population were deliberately kept out of this new arrangement. As a matter of fact, the Federal Government of Nagaland (FGN) and its sympathisers suspected all along that the idea of statehood had been conceived by the Government of India to 'divide and delude' the Nagas and

explicit confirmation that the Indian Intelligence Bureau (IB) was behind the organising of NPC as well as its various demands including the statehood movement came in no uncertain terms in the years that followed. As far as the policy of 'divide and delude', it was carried out with such a precision that the first division among the Naga nationalists developed and this rift got further accentuated in course of time.

5. A good overall survey of the Naga political movement in the pre-Shillong Accord period reflects lack of far sightedness among the leadership particularly in exploiting the given circumstances in their favour. For the Nagas an opportune moment came when the 'Peace Mission' successfully negotiated to open political talk between the Government of India and the Federal Government of Nagaland after signing the 'ceasefire'. As a result, the two parties had as many as seven rounds of talks while the second phase of talk was at the Prime Ministerial level spreading over six rounds.

However, no tangible solution of the issue was in sight. The FGN/NNC failed to initiate any concrete proposal. But the greatest failure - a political blunder of the NNC/FGN was reflected in the rejecting of the practical proposal of R. Suisa. The proposal of R. Suisa was indeed an workable idea and closest to the demands of the Nagas and something which would have brought mutual benefits to both India and Nagaland. Thus, he proposed (which was believed to have been accepted by Jawarlal Nehru and the then Congress President- Un Dehbar) and arrived at an understanding with Nehru and U.N. Dehbar that in all matters Nagaland would

manage its own affairs with a sovereign status. But India and Nagaland were to maintain permanent link. It fulfilled the aspirations of the Nagas including return and integration of all portion of Nagaland territory etc. But significantly, A.Z. Phizo denounced R. Suisa and the latter was literally ousted from the Federal Organisation. Ironically the people who denounced him had to accept later the 'Shillong Accord' which promised little , if anything, to the Nagas. It was a major political blunder arising out of lack of far- sightedness on the part of the NNC leadership.

A close observation on the NNC/FGN activities revealed their adherence to some principles in their dealings with the Government . The Naga leaders were honest and simple in applying these principles. To cite an evidence in this context, the Nagas did not lift a finger to help the Chinese Army in 1962 and exploit India's disadvantage. Rather A.Z. Phizo, the then NNC President proposed to the Government of India to let the Nagas fight along with the Indian Army against the Chinese. On another occasion in 1971 war with Pakistan, the Nagas 'stand aloof' although the security implications were stupendously enormous. In a way, it also revealed that the Naga nationalist leadership had no clear strategy or direction which was its greatest handicap. Their failure to act at the decisive moment brought about a total collapse of the movement. Consequently, the Naga nationalist organisation had to pay dearly. It suffered a severe setback because of this war. It also lost her safe sanctuary which

acted as the 'lifeline' for many years.

The Naga political struggle spearheaded by the NNC/FGN no doubt created a powerful movement. It was not a mean achievement. However, the NNC/FGN leadership was not able to exploit the given advantages and instead committed major mistakes and pursued wrong policies unworthy of a nationalist organisation and because of which it had to succumb to utter defeat at the hands of the Government of India. Thus, the declining trend of the NNC/FGN would be glaringly seen and it never recovered until the formation of the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN).

6. The Shillong Accord of 1975 was not a sudden development but was the result of a series of events preceding it. The scholar observed that the following factors could be attributed to it :

- (a) waning of the NNC/FGN following the failure of the 'Peace Talks' and inter-tribal suspicion arising out of it;
 - (b) controversial role of the church emanating from their pro-establishment role and their criticism mounted against the Naga nationalists for China link;
 - (c) lack of far-sightedness in the NNC/FGN leadership coupled with lack of strategy and policy brought about complete chaos and confusion in the rank and file; and
 - (d) prevalence of conditions in favour of the Government of India.
- (7) The Shillong Accord turned out to be the most controversial as it left unsettled several key questions. Today, no group

openly identifies with the Accord and even those who were adamant in enforcing it have backed out. The Liaison Committee's role is open to criticism, for it sided more the Government of India than playing an impartial role. Certain 'words' used in the Accord have become the cause of discord. The enigmatic silence of A.Z. Phizo on the Accord is considered to be a setback for the nationalists.

- (8) The authoritarian attitude of the pre-Accord group led to fratricidal warfare and brought about a political divide in the Naga society. The killing of several members of the anti-Accord group and armed conflicts within the nationalist rank created bitterness and mutual distrust.
- (9) The formation of the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN) and the Government of the People's Republic of Nagaland (GPRN) in 1980 was the direct consequences of the Shillong Accord. The NSCN political organisation and its government is a well knit one. Unlike its predecessor, the NSCN/GPRN style of functioning is guided by a definite programme of action. They have established a centralised system of organisation being been convinced that decentralisation was responsible for inter-tribal conflicts. They also adopted 'collective leadership' in all matters of policy and programme both at the central and at the regional levels so as to make their functioning appear more democratic. Though the objective of sovereign Nagaland remains the same as with the former NNC/FGN, they have evolved new policy and strategy of confronting their opponents - India and Myanmar.

10. The alleged Kachin connection of the NSCN in the matter of training and supply of arms so highlighted in the media over the years is found to be incorrect. The NSCN leadership has also disapproved the drug peddling carried out by the Kachins.
11. It was remarkably the NSCN who initiated the first Christian Mission work among the 'eastern Nagas'. The first Mission Field was established at Hazik Iphai. The NSCN succeeded in converting about 40,000 'eastern Nagas' to Christianity and thus brought about complete transformation of the socio-economic status of the people. If Christianity had been the single most dynamic factor in modernising the Nagas in India, undoubtedly, it is equally true for those across the border.
12. The NSCN leaders have a sense of involvement in organising and leading the movement in a relatively better way. Even the bitterest critics of the NSCN would admit that on the organisational plane it has registered rapid progress all the time. In the international sphere, its achievement is equally significant involving the gaining of international public attention.
13. It is observed that the NSCN leadership took a censorious and critical view of NNC-policy, programme and leadership to guard against committing the same mistakes again. The NSCN leadership consistently maintained that the defeat of a people was not always brought about by the superiority of the adversary in strength but through incorrect leadership

and pursuit of unfounded policy. The waning of the NNC/FGN beginning from late 1960s and the signing of the Shillong Accord in 1975 were a direct result of the NNC leadership's failure. Thus, when the movement was not backed by correct policy and ideology it suffered a setback resulting in the loss of self confidence. The NSCN leaders were particularly critical of personality cult and aristocratic circle created out of the family and relatives of the leadership and having a status above the nationalist organisation. But above all, the attitude of the NNC President particularly in the post Shillong Accord period comes under heavy criticism from the NSCN and NNC alike.

14. The enigmatic silence and inactivity of late A.Z. Phizo in the post Shillong Accord cost the Nagas dearly and much damage to the movement. Despite repeated persuasion from leaders like Th. Muivah, Isak Chishi Swu and others to condemn the Shillong Accord and give new direction (during the confused state) by virtue of being the President of NNC, Phizo remained obstinate. It was not only a failure to respond to the call but the Naga nationalists were ignored out and out. And the irony was the President's outwardly intimate link with the pro-Accord group. Indeed, until his last, A.Z. Phizo refused to condemn the Shillong Accord or issue any official statement in its favour. There are possibly two reasons : Firstly, the Shillong Accord signatories and their supporters partly convinced him by misrepresenting the situation at home; secondly, Phizo's own

brother Keve Yalley was a signatory. Whatever may be the case, the consequence was terrible for the Nagas - it resulted in a split in the NNC/FGN causing two distinct camps, i.e., pro-Accord and anti-Accord groups. Subsequently, the anti-Accord members formed the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN) in 1980. Thus, a failure of the leadership could be disastrous in any nationalist struggle.

15. The emergence of the NSCN witnessed a significant shift in Naga nationalist's military strategies vis-a-vis the Government of India and Myanmar. The NSCN military strategy is in favour of having a low cost offensive posture, avoiding direct confrontation with the stronger opponents and preferring guerrilla warfare to a set pitch battle. The most significant initiative was the strategy of 'united front' an attempt to bring all the ethnic groups together in the North East region for co-ordination and mutual help and also to extend co-operation to other fighting groups in the sub-continent. Thus, the aim of military strategy of the NSCN/GPRN is three-fold in nature : (a) to weaken the grip of Indian Government on Nagaland; (b) to impose a psychological win over the Government of India; and (c) to wait for an opportune moment to go for offensive when India and Myanmar are at their worst of state.
16. The two fold strategy of confronting the Government of India and Myanmar through armed resistance on the one hand and

ensuring international publicity on the other have strengthened its image and the cause of Naga nationalism as well, from within and without.

17. The NSCN brand of socialism is not compatible with the Chinese or Soviet socialism. It is essentially a Naga brand of socialism which aims at retaining the traditional classless society and doing away with the growing class division in the Naga society. The much publicised allegation that the NSCN is 'bringing communism' to Nagaland holds no water. In fact, it was a scheme of propaganda launched by their opponents to discredit them in the eye of the majority Naga Christians. In fact, the NSCN leadership have been quite vocal in condemning the communist world and its ideology. Their manifesto points out to pertinent defects of communism which they regard as 'irreconcilable' to the Naga way of living.

18. Two achievements of the NSCN stand prominent : one is the fact that they have succeeded in imposing a psychological win over their opponents - the top military Commanders of the Government of India have realised that military option is not the solution to the Naga problem and that it requires a political breakthrough.

But the most significant achievement of the NSCN was its success in securing membership of the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples organisation (UNPO) based in Hague, Netherlands and the subsequent UNPO declaration on Nagaland making the international

recognition of the Nagas political struggle. Thus, its international campaign has been a great success which they achieved remarkably within a short period of time.

19. It was here in Nagaland that the Government of India and its defence forces experienced the first 'ethnic nationalist movement' and was seen applying all available methods and strategies though without any success. At times, extreme and unethical methods were adopted such as 'village grouping system', raising a Naga militia group, enacting several draconian laws etc. The military applied with full-blooded vigour the business of 'softening up' the Nagas but there was never a time when it could claim that helped the Naga nationalists had been broken into submission.

20. In the operation in Nagaland, one finds the overwhelming role of the intelligence agencies. It is also because of the magnitude of the Naga issue that all the intelligence agencies are found deployed in Nagaland and the Intelligence Bureau (IB) seems to be the over-all incharge in Nagaland affairs. The Prime Minister's Office (PMO) directly deals with the IB and all the major decisions of PMO on Nagaland is based on the 'confidential reports' of the IB. The granting of 'autonomous district' and 'statehood' are the examples. The IB is also known to have played a leading role in bringing about a split of the NSCN in 1988. Another serious allegation against the IB has been that of sponsoring of counter groups to checkmate the NSCN under Isak Chishi Swu and Th. Muivah. Thus, there is no doubt that

the key role in containing the Naga movement is being played by the Intelligence Bureau.

21. The NSCN is the most widely supported group among the Nagas as it has been persistently promoting Naga consciousness by keeping alive the movement for an independent homeland of all the Nagas. Its national and international campaign is directed towards furthering the collective ethnic identity of the Nagas. The NSCN is also ideologically better organised than the NNC.
22. Another important finding of this research work is related to foreign powers involvement in aiding and supporting the Naga movement. Although several countries are alleged to have interfered in Naga situation, China and Pakistan remain outstanding examples. East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) was the 'lifeline' of the Nagas until 1971. The Chinese involvement started since 1966 in a massive scale and seems to have ended by early 1980s. Once again, Bangladesh remains the crucial support base of the NSCN in the wake of ISI activities in the North East Region.
23. Naga nationalism is alive if not emboldened. It is entirely incorrect to pronounce that Naga nationalism does not exist anymore. As a matter of fact, lately we are witnessing significant resurgence of Naga nationalism and definitely the NSCN has promoted this trend. There are several reasons why Naga nationalism continues to be a force to reckon with. First, the enormous support both direct and tacit for the cause under the banner of the NSCN is a reality.

Besides, the Naga National Council is still functioning by remaining committed to the same objective and principles. Secondly, Nagas contribution to the Indian nation building is only marginal. Experts do admit that national integration has failed as far as the Nagas are concerned. Thirdly, Nagas generally reflect on 'Coupland Plan' and 'Crown Colony' and 'Suisa's proposal' with regret. Fourthly, most of the Nagas are paying annual household tax to GPRN and some to FGN as a mark of their loyalty.

In addition, the activities of the Naga Student's Federation (NSF) and Naga People's Movement for Human Rights (NPMHR) are distinctively nationalist in outlook and content. The main focus of these organisations hinges on the issue of total integration of all Naga territory under a single political roof and recognition of Naga political aspiration. In the religious sphere, all the Nagas have come together under Council of Naga Baptist Churches Council (CNBC). This Church body is working to bring all the different organisations together under one banner. Finally, the boycott of India's Independence Day is a regular feature in Nagaland.

Recently, Naga people experienced four great events :

- (1) In the funeral of A.Z. Phizo in Kohima a massive number of Naga population gathered and pledged to continue the political struggle;
- (2) In one of the largest Naga public gatherings, 'NAGAS 90' the

programme chalked out was significant which only promoted emotional and spiritual integration of the Nagas;

- (3) The Nagas again celebrated 'NAGA WEEK' in 1993 in commemoration of the UN declaration of 'Year of the Indigenous Peoples' with the theme 'For our rightful place'. The spontaneous display of solidarity reminded even the skeptics that Naga nationalism was alive; and
- (4) The most significant event of all was the achievement of Naga leaders in securing Nagaland's membership's in the Unrepresented Nation's and Peoples Organisation (UNPO).

Thus, all these different events stand in support of endeavour of the NSCN to espouse nationalist sentiments on the plank of unity of all the Naga tribes settles in areas falling on both sides of the 'artificially drawn' border. Today, Naga unity is no more a political myth and the NSCN draws its strength from this reality.

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