Chapter VI

SHILLONG ACCORD - 1975

The deadlock of the peace talks between the underground Nagas and the Government of India, resulted in the resumption of neo-hostile activities though officially the Cease-Fire was still operative since 6 September, 1964. The underground Nagas resumed hostilities for two reasons. Firstly, the indifferent treatment given to the underground leaders after the last round of talks which had irritated them very much. In moments of their irritation they tried to achieve their goal of a sovereign independent Nagaland through armed struggle. They wanted to terrorise the people as well as the government so that their demand might be conceded. Their calculation, however, soon proved to be wrong. The rebel Nagas no doubt stepped up their hostile activities, but still the desired goal was not in sight. This led to not only a sense of despondency among a section of the rebels but also caused a serious rift in their camp which weakened their capacity to pressurize the government. The harassed and weakened rebels could not withstand the mounting pressure from the Naga nationalists and liberal Nagas who had all along been working for an end to hostile activities and for the establishment of lasting peace in Nagaland. Their efforts succeeded in 1975, with the conclusion of the Shillong Accord between
the Governor of Nagaland and the underground Naga leaders. This Accord nearly brought an end to hostilities in this strife torn land of the Nagas.

The failure of the peace talks in New Delhi in October 1967, was a great set back for the rebels as it led to fighting and internal dissension in the Naga Federal Government. Kughato Sukhai, the then Prime Minister of the underground Federal Government who had failed to achieve the desired goal of an Independent Nagaland despite prolong negotiations was accused by the Naga extremists of mismanaging the whole Naga political affairs. At this very moment General Kaito Sema, a self-styled rebel Naga General and brother of Kughato Sukhai, revolted against the Angami-Naga hegemony over the Naga Federal Government and the underground movement. With the help of his close associates he ransacked the underground Naga Army Headquarters at Gaziphema and looted the arms, ammunition and money which were kept there.³ This incident undermined the authority of Kughato Sukhai very much as he was accused of assisting his fiery brother, Kaito Sema, in the loot. In the face of mounting criticism Kughato Sukhai resigned from the Prime Ministership of the Federal Government of Nagaland on 23 October 1967.³ Phizo, though living in exile in London and about this time, on 25th October, 1967 said in London to the Times correspondent;
"The Indians are trying to confuse the issue. We are not demanding Independence. We are defending our country. Nagaland was never been Indian territory. The Nagas are not Indians even by race. The Indians have no historical or legal right to occupy our country." (3B)

Chester Bowles, U.S. Ambassador to India, said - Nagaland is an inseparable part of Indian Union just as Illinois is a part of the U.S.A. 3C Thereafter Mr. Mhiasieu, a desperate rebel Naga underground extremist and also a close associate of Phizo, declared himself the Supreme Head of the rebel Naga Government. 4 He soon dissolved the Tatar HoHo and formed in its place consultative committee of five members to assist him in formulating the further plan of the rebel Nagas. The dissolution of the Tatar HoHo marked the end of the parliamentary character of the so-called Naga Federal Government. With the complete assumption of executive power Mhiasieu became all-powerful in the Rebel Naga Camp. 5 These drastic changes in the character and the composition of the rebel Naga Government sowed the seeds of dissension and disunity in the underground Camp. The first major dissenting voice was raised by Thongdi Chang (Thungti Chang) who was till recently the self-styled Governor of Tuensang in Mhiasieu's Government. Thongdi Chang also announced the secession of his group from the rebel Camp itself from 14 April, 1968, 6 and formed Hongkin Government. While breaking away from Mhiasieu's rebel Camp/Government he said that his under-
new unit would have no connection with the so-called Federal Government of Nagaland until there is a peaceful political settlement with the Indian Union and illegal contacts with the foreign powers were stopped.

The unity of the underground Nagas was further put to strain relations when another section of the hostile Nagas in Tuensang area came out with a resolution that the solution of the Naga problem had to be found within the framework of the Indian Union. In May 1968, they openly condemned the rebel Government's hobnobbing with Communist China. The severest blow to the unity of the underground Naga Camp was inflicted by Kaito Sema, who chalked out a separate course for achieving the desired ends for his own end. Kaito along with his associates broke away from the Angami-Naga-dominated rebel Government which had fallen in the hands of Phizo Group. Kaito Sema soon strengthened his position and became rallying point of all those who were opposed to the rebel Government of Phizoists. This naturally threatened the position of Mhasieiu's rebel Government who was lenient to the Phizo Group. But the Angami Naga dominated group led by Mhasieiu's rebel Government was aware of the new camp of Kaito's emergence. Kaito had to be eliminated and so he was killed in the main market of Kohima on 3 August 1968. The murderer/killer could not be arrested as he had managed to escape and flee. There could be two
possibilities so far as his murder was concerned. Either the Phizo group or some one from the Indian army could have killed him. But since Kaito Sema earlier had staged a coup against the Phizoist Naga Federal Government, it appears more logical in assuming that they had a hand in the murder. However, the manner in which he was shot suggests that this was the act of his personal rivals. The Indian army personnel did not have the authority to shoot even the known enemy in the main market of a city/town like Kohima. In fact the Indian army personnel carried him to the hospital for medical aid before he succumbed to his bullet injuries.

After his death, Kaito's group took revenge by abducting Mhiasieu and his Home Minister, Ramyo and kept them in confinement for about eight months. It is alleged that the Phizo group had killed Kaito Sema in the hope of eliminating those who were opposed to them. But contrary to their expectations almost all the anti-Phizo groups combined together under the leadership of the Semas in a meeting on November 1, 1968. They announced the formation of the Revolutionary Government of Nagaland. A political wing known as the Council of Naga People was also created in that very meeting. These newly formed bodies, the Revolutionary Government of Nagaland (R.G.N.) and the Council of Naga People (C.N.P.) were considered to be parallel to the Federal Government of Nagaland (F.G.N.)
and the Naga National Council (N.N.C.). Thus the underground Nagas were split into rival groups in 1968, which very much weakened their capacity to put pressure on the Indian Government for their common goal.

While Thongdi Chang's group wanted a peaceful political settlement of the Naga issue and denied the move to seek help from China. The Phizo group believed that through Chinese assistance and armed struggle the desired goal of Independent Nagaland could be achieved. The Revolutionary Government of Nagaland with whom Kughato Sukhai (former Prime Minister of the Federal Government of Nagaland) was associated wanted the independence of Nagaland, no doubt but it still believed in a negotiated settlement of the issue. It is because of this that Kughato Sukhai sent again a telegram to the Prime Minister of India in March 1969, requesting her to re-open the peace talks. Smt. Indira Gandhi appreciated Kughato Kukhai's move for a new resumption of peace talks. Indira Gandhi, however, politely declined the offer and suggested to Kughato Sukhai to discuss the matter with the Governor of Nagaland.

Here a pertinent question may arise as to why the rift and disunity crept into the underground Naga Camp. This may be attributed to two factors. Firstly, the underground leaders quarrelled for the sake of power and position among themselves not for the common cause. It
was alleged that General Kaito Sema broke away from the Phizo's group because he was not given his due in the Naga Federal Government. In fact, he was very much frustrated over his own political oblivion. Secondly, the seed of disunity was sown when the underground leaders started leaning heavily towards Communist China for massive assistance to achieve their goal for the independence of Nagaland. However, the Naga people in general were Christians. And Chinese is anti-Christians. Hence their religious background prevented them from going along with those who were in favour of Communist China. A section of the underground Nagas of Tuensang area even declared in May 1968, that they shall stand unitedly against any move for contacting Communist China for a settlement of the Naga political issue.11

**Fresh Fighting Began in Nagaland**

While faction-infighting was going on in the underground Naga Camp, some of the rebels mostly of the Phizo group went to China towards the end of 1967, for receiving military training, arms and ammunitions.12 This was due to the fact that the peace talks had failed in Delhi in October 1967. And the extremists decided to resolve the Naga problem through armed struggle. At this juncture, a rebel Naga group led by General Mowu and Lochive etc. had returned to Nagaland on March 7, 1969 with a huge stock of
arms and ammunition supplied by China to fight the Indian army in Nagaland. They also carried with them a Chinese message that China would render all possible help and support to the cause of Naga Freedom movement. They even reported to the Phizoist Naga Federal Government that the Chinese were prepared to host the setting-up of the underground Naga Federal Government in exile on its territory. The Chinese were reported to have expressed their willingness to guide the external relations of the rebel Government and also to help in setting up a Rebel Radio Station on Chinese territory for propaganda purposes.

These recent hostile activities and the spread of anti-India feeling in Nagaland compelled the Government of India to handle the political situation tactfully and firmly. Indian security forces were firmly instructed to keep strict vigilance on the Naga rebels crossing the international borders. Consequently, there were frequent clashes between the Indian troops and Naga underground army near the borders. While pursuing the rebels, the Indian troops came across on 1 February, 1968, their regional underground headquarters at Tulloi, in the Ukhrul area of Manipur. The Indian army immediately captured the place and seized some of the very important Naga underground documents there. These documents made it clear that a section of the underground Nagas were again
contemplating the resumption of hostilities. This was substantiated by the fact that on 9 March, 1968, a heavy exchange of fire took place between the hostile Nagas and the Indian army in the Kohima area.\(^{17}\) Indira Gandhi stated in the Lok Sabha on 3 April, 1968, that the Indian Government was making all efforts to seal the borders and to curb hostile activities.\(^{18}\)

Thus even while the Cease-Fire was still officially operative hostilities were again resumed by some of the underground Nagas. This naturally disturbed the peace loving and nationalist-liberal people in Nagaland. They started thinking of exploring further avenues to bring peace in Nagaland. They decided to convene a joint conference of the representatives of the underground Nagas, the Peace Observers Team, the Nagaland State Government and the Indian Government. The proposed joint public conference was held on 20 April, 1968, at Dimapur.\(^{19}\) It was decided in the conference that both the parties should desist from violating the Cease-Fire, which was periodically extended. The representatives of the underground Nagas as well as the Indian Government gave an assurance that they would faithfully observe the Cease-Fire agreement.\(^{19a}\) However, the representatives of the Nagaland State Government raised the issue of the import of arms and ammunitions from abroad by the underground Nagas which had an adverse effect on the peace of Nagaland. Underground delegation
again objected to this. Kughato Sukhai, one of the members of the underground delegation, gave the argument that if India could win freedom with outside support, there was no harm if the Naga people sought help from other friendly foreign countries. He emphatically said that the Nagas have every right to seek support from outside in their struggle for freedom against India. At the end of the deliberations it was agreed that a Peace Centre should be established for the Naga inhabited areas of Manipur for the restoration of peace and status quo there. This was the only agreement that could be reached. Though the rebel Nagas had given the assurance to observe the Cease-Fire faithfully, yet the hostile activities went on as usual. Phizo's group kept going to both Pakistan and China for receiving military training in guerrilla warfare. The rebel Nagas used to cross the international borders in small groups and tactfully, in order to avoid detection.

Here one may question as to why the hostile activities did not stop even after the representatives of the underground Nagas repeatedly gave the assurance in the joint conference held in April, 1968, to observe the Cease-Fire faithfully. The reason is quite obvious. After the failure of the peace talks in October, 1967, the underground Naga Camp in 1968, was naturally a divided house and there were conflicting political and militant
views regarding the solution of the Naga problem. While Kaito's group who had defected from the Phizoists dominated Federal Government of Nagaland believed in a negotiated settlement but the leaders of the Federal Government still had faith in the solution of the problem through the armed struggle. This was why the Phizo's group did not attend the all-parties conference at Dimapur held on 20 April, 1968. Kughato Sukhai represented the Council of Naga People, the political wing of the Revolutionary Government of Nagaland formed on 1 November, 1968\(^{21A}\) which was essentially a breakaway group from the Federal Government of Nagaland and the political wing of the Naga National Council. Hence the assurance of Kughato Sukhai had no meaning so far as the Phizo's group was concerned as Phizo was the President of the Naga National Council, exiled in London, and thus they continued the freedom struggle by armed means.

The activities of the rebel Nagas of the Phizoist group not only alerted the Indian troops but also made them increase their watch on their movements with the result that a number of clashes took place from May to June 1968.\(^{22}\) On June 7, 1968, a major clash took place at Jotsoma when a group of Chinese trained rebel Nagas tried to re-enter into Nagaland.\(^{22A}\) Nearly 200 rebels were either killed or injured in the clash while 90 Indian army personnel also suffered casualties.\(^{23}\)
The Indian army captured a lot of Chinese made mortars, medium and light machine guns and automatic rifles. Several secret documents were seized from the possession of the captured rebel Nagas which clearly showed the hands of the Chinese behind the hostile activities of the rebel Nagas. The Peace Observers' team was shown the captured arms and ammunitions and equipments of Chinese origin. They also went through the diaries and note books which related to their military training and political indoctrination in China. The Peace Observers' team was left with no doubt that the rebel Nagas were instigated by Communist China. Hence, it issued a statement on 16 June, 1968, in which it stated that "The Federal men have returned from China after military training and with arms and therefore have infringed the terms of the Cease-Fire Agreement in this respect. The Peace Observers' team wish to point out that if the period is used to strengthen the military preparation for an eventual showdown, then peace loses all its meaning."

Now the Indian Government had the irrefutable proof of Chinese hands in the disturbances of Nagaland. Therefore, Indian Government lodged a strong protest with the Chinese Charge D'Affaires, in New Delhi on June 19, 1968. The protest note stated: "The Government of India have concrete and irrefutable proof that arms and other equipments, manufactured in the People's Republic of China, have been
surreptitiously smuggled into Indian territory with the clear purpose of aiding some subversive elements in Nagaland. It is obvious that such materials could have not found its way into India without the active assistance and encouragement of Chinese assistance. In the face of incontrovertible evidence of the Chinese Government's complicity in abetting subversive elements in Nagaland; her profession of adherence to the five principles of peaceful co-existence which was claimed only by a senior Chinese leader, are to say the least hypocritical. The sinister design which the Chinese Government harbour against their neighbours and the extent to which they are interfering in the internal affairs of their neighbours in utter disregard of all norms of international behaviour and in repudiation of the Bandung declaration on the promotion of World Peace and cooperation is abundantly clear to the whole world .... The Government of India take a very serious view of such interference which is in flagrant violation of all canons of international behaviours and affront to India's sovereignty. The Government of India, therefore, strongly protest against the conduct of the Chinese Government and would like to make it clear that they will not tolerate interference of any kind in India's internal affairs. Chinese Government are warned that they will be entirely responsible for the consequences of their interference in the internal affairs of the Government of India. 24a
However, India's protest note remained unreplied for long because Chinese complicity in promoting subversive activities in Nagaland had been proved beyond doubt. But Chinese attitude towards India softened after the Bangladesh war in 1971.

**Arrest of Rebel Nagas**

The Jotsoma incident on June 7, 1968, alerted the Government of India as well as the State Government of Nagaland. The Indian army intensified their patrolling on the borders. T.N. Angami, the new Chief Minister of Nagaland, spoke in a radio broadcast on 15 June, 1968, that the State Government would not hesitate in taking stern action to stop such activities which jeopardise peace and bring suffering to the Naga people. He further said that the State Government had not taken any stern action against the hostile elements so far because the Government was observing Cease-Fire Agreement and believed in peace and friendship with all. If the hostile elements would not stop unlawful activities, the Government knew how to deal with them.

The Jotsoma episode and T.N. Angami's warning to the rebel Nagas gave the impression that there would be once again large scale bloodshed and disturbances in Nagaland. This made the peace loving and nationalist people very apprehensive. Under the given situation the
Baptist Church leaders made another effort at reconciliation between the Government and the rebel Nagas. With the help of the State Government they sponsored an all parties conference on 22 August 1968 at Kohima, to find out ways and means for the reopening of the peace talks. Kughato Sukhai, the associate of Kaito Sema, and some Churchmen attended the conference. Here it was decided that a 7 (seven) men committee should be formed to persuade the Indian Government to resume the peace talks. In September, 1968, the committee was formed under the leadership of P. Vamuzo who met T.N. Kaul, the Foreign Secretary, at New Delhi on 22 October, 1968, and requested him to arrange peace talks between the Government of India and the Naga underground leaders. Indira Gandhi, however, was not in favour of any dialogue with the rebel Nagas so long they did not accept the fact of Nagaland being a part of India. T.N. Kaul, therefore, frankly told Vamuzo that no talks could be resumed until the rebel Nagas had stopped all hostile activities and accepted Nagaland as a part of India.

Phizo Party had neither stopped hostile activities nor were ready to accept Nagaland as part of India. To add more fuel to the fire they continued to send their men to Pakistan and China for military training and arms procurements. Under the given situation the Government thought that it would be futile to reopen the dialogue
unless the Phizoists Nagas were completely liquidated. Therefore, the Indian armed forces intensified the jungle operations and patrolling with a view to capturing such rebel Nagas who were hovering around the border to re-enter Nagaland. They destroyed a heavily guarded underground Camp at Mozema on 2 September, 1968. Some of the rebels managed to escape into the thick jungle but they left behind a huge stock of Chinese made arms and ammunitions. Indian army also succeeded in capturing a number of hostile Nagas in March 1969 who were returning from China. Isaak Swu, the leader of the Naga rebel however, managed to escape. General Mowu Angami, the so-called Commander-in-Chief of the rebel Nagas Army of the Phizoist Group was also arrested on 16 March, 1969, in a surprise manner along with 200 armed men of the underground while they were attempting to reach a secret jungle underground Camp in Tuensang area.

After arresting Mowu Angami on 16 March, 1969, he was sent to Delhi for interrogation by the Indian army intelligence. Mowu was reported to have revealed China's design on Nagaland. He said that the Chinese had laid down several pre-conditions before giving any massive military aid to the Nagas. Mowu disclosed that they had asked the Nagas to submit themselves to the Chinese Government under some political arrangements. They also wanted to enlist the Nagas' help to wage war against
other enemy countries. Meanwhile the Soviet Union accused Peking (China) of interfering in the internal affairs of neighbouring countries.\textsuperscript{32} The arrest of Mowu Angami and his other associates was a definite blow to the Phizoist Party who were struggling not only against the Indian army but also against the rival group of Kughato Sukhai's Revolutionary Government of Nagaland. This is evident from the fact that about 170 armed Chinese trained Phizoist Nagas were reported to have been captured by Kughato's group in the same area.

The capture of Mowu and other hard-core rebel Nagas made many from the underground think afresh about their policy of confrontation with the Government. Some of them even decided to surrender. Consequently in 1969, itself 578 underground Nagas had surrendered to the Government. Again in 1969, some 1,949 rebel Nagas had surrendered in the Tuensang district.\textsuperscript{33} All of them were later rehabilitated. The leaders of the Revolutionary Government of Nagaland including Kughato Sukhai and Scato Swu, the new Prime Minister of the newly formed Revolutionary Government of Nagaland, had disclosed to Dr. Aram (Member of the Peace Observers' Team) that they were prepared to work out a solution of the Naga problem acceptable to the Government. They further stated that their party was not going to insist on a sovereign Nagaland if that was not acceptable to the Indian Government. Even Imkongmeren,
Lt. Col. in the pro-Phizo Naga Federal Government, expressed the view that a reasonable and peaceful settlement with the Government of India should be immediately arrived at. If the goal of Independent Nagaland could not be achieved when the underground Nagas were united, it would be very difficult for them to achieve it now, when they were divided into small groups. Hence Imkongmeren said that it would be best for the Nagas to be within the Indian Union and have settlement politically. These defections further weakened the cause of the underground Nagas but the hard-core of the Phizoist Party still believed in armed struggle and so they continued their hostile activities. There were four serious encounters between the Phizoist underground Nagas and the Indian army only in August, 1969. In one of the encounters rebel Nagas made a heavy mortar attack on a building in a residential locality in Kohima in which 12 persons including three army jawans were killed. In 1970 also, there were a number of clashes between the Indian army and rebel Nagas of the Phizoist group. In all these the rebels suffered more heavily because of the fact that the Indian regular army are more well equipped with sophisticated weapons than the obsolete weapons used by the hostile Nagas. A few Indian army jawans were also killed in action but gradually they succeeded in cornering the Phizoist Naga underground.
Insipite of stray cases of hostile activities the political atmosphere in Nagaland had considerably improved after 1968. This is evident from the fact that Indira Gandhi was given a rousing reception when she visited Kohima on September, 1969.\(^{34B}\) Hokishe Sema, the new Chief Minister of Nagaland, while welcoming her said that soon the people of Nagaland will get the opportunity of complete participation in the mainstream of Indian life.\(^{34C}\) The Chief Minister voiced the general feeling of the common man in Nagaland. In fact most of the people wanted an atmosphere of peace and order so that the economic backwardness of the State could be removed. By 1970, it was almost clear that the underground Nagas might not be able to achieve their goal of an Independent Nagaland. This feeling inspired the nationalist as well as some of the underground Nagas to explore further avenues for settling the Naga problem peacefully.

Consequently a public meeting was held at Kohima on 6 September, 1970, the sixth peace anniversary where a resolution was adopted which put emphasis on a meeting between the top leaders of the overground and the underground Nagas.\(^{35}\) This however, required great patience and tact because some of the underground Naga leaders still believed in the armed struggle. After some time a Church leader, Rev. Longri Ao, succeeded in persuading the leaders of the different underground Naga groups and
the prominent nationalist leaders for such a meeting. Thus at the initiative of Rev. Longri Ao, a meeting was convened at Kohima on 28 and 29 April 1970, which was attended by the representatives of the Naga Nationalist Organisation, the United Front of Nagaland, the Naga National Council and the Revolutionary Government of Nagaland. The Phizo group however boycotted the meeting again, as usual, with the result that no tangible progress could be made in the direction of the peaceful solution of the Naga problem. This was simply because the Phizoists group had not lost their hope of achieving an Independent Nagaland through armed struggle.

Meanwhile the liberation movement had started in East Pakistan in the middle of 1971. With the help of India, the people of East Pakistan succeeded in overthrowing the dictatorship regime of President Yahya Khan of Pakistan. The Pakistani forces surrendered on 22 December 1971 and East Pakistan became the Independent Nation of Bangladesh. Thus the creation of Bangladesh, a country friendly to India, was another death-blow to the Naga and Mizo hostiles. They had lost a place of refuge after creating disturbances in Nagaland and Mizoram. Even the Government of Bangladesh, helped India in arresting two important Naga rebel leaders, the self-styled Brigadier Thinsilie Angami and the so-called, Brigadier Nidilie Angami. Thus the fall of East Pakistan and the arrest of these two important Naga
underground leaders broke the backbone of the Phizo group of the Federal Government of Nagaland.

The leaders of the underground Nagas became all the more desperate. They stepped up their activities. Now they not only ambushed the Indian troops but also started attacking the officials of the State Government. On 8 August, 1972, Hokishe Sema, the new Chief Minister of Nagaland, was ambushed by the underground Nagas on the road while he was coming back to Kohima from Shillong along with his 16 year old daughter Kaholi. The bullet of the underground Nagas killed the driver and two of his police escorts. His daughter was also injured. Hokishe was unhurt.

The ambush was a desperate attempt by the rebel Nagas to terrorise the Government of India as well as the Government of Nagaland. But neither the Indian Government nor the Nagaland Government was to succumb to such tactics. Both Governments decided to deal sternly with the situation. On 1st September 1972, the Naga National Council and the Naga Federal Government were outlawed/banned under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967. With the signing of the cease-fire agreement operations against the rebel Nagas had been suspended since September, 1964. Though the Phizo group violated the cease-fire agreement on a number of occasions, yet officially there was a
cease-fire in Nagaland. But when these rebel Nagas started attacking Government institutions openly, there was no use in maintaining the semblance of a cease-fire. Hence the Government declared the lifting of the cease-fire with effect from 1 September, 1972.\textsuperscript{39}

The Indian troops were handicapped in dealing with the rebel Nagas while the cease-fire was operative, because it required them to operate only on the border and on the road sides. The lifting of the cease-fire enabled the Indian security forces to act swiftly against those rebel Nagas who were still engaged in hostile activities. Now they got the opportunity to search such rebels even in the villages and towns. Thus the rebel camp soon began crumbling on account of intensive military operations. Consequently, the Phizo group who had already been weakened could not withstand the mounting pressure put by the Indian armed forces. And thus most of them decided either to surrender or to go underground of safety areas outside the Naga territory.

The underground Nagas of the Kughato Sukhai's group (Revolutionary Government of Nagaland) and the associates of Thongdi Chang of the Tuensang area had already realised the futility of armed struggle against the Government.\textsuperscript{40} So Kughato Sukhai's Revolutionary Government of Nagaland, finally decided to surrender on 16 August 1973 and his men
were formally dissolved at a parade held at Zunheboto in the presence of B.K. Nehru, the Governor of Assam and Nagaland. Three hundred and thirty (330) armed underground Nagas of the Revolutionary Government of Nagaland (RGN) of Kughato Sukhai, including Lessumo, the President; Scato Swu, the Prime Minister, Zuheto, the Commander-in-Chief, respectively surrendered. (Later on Scato Swu was nominated as a Rajya Sabha Member on 1st April 1974). This was a major step bringing the underground Nagas in the mainstream of India. Later the leaders of the dissolved Revolutionary Government met the Indian Prime Minister at New Delhi and expressed their willingness to work within the framework of the Indian Constitution. Disclosing the contents of their meeting with the Prime Minister, Mr. Scato Swu, told the UNI correspondent on 6 September, 1973, "we met the Prime Minister last month in an effort to end bitter, wasteful and protracted conflict in Nagaland. We have maintained that a peaceful settlement of the conflict must be found. We accepted the verdict of the people of Nagaland (RGN) and their desire and wish for peace. We have assured the Prime Minister that in order to ensure peace and prosperity of Nagaland, we shall take the oath of loyalty to the Constitution of India." About 200 men of Thongdi Chang's group also surrendered in the presence of Tochi-Hanso, the Health Minister of the Government of Nagaland in 1973.
The surrender of the prominent leaders of the underground Nagas encouraged others to do the same. Thereafter there was a large scale surrender of the underground Nagas. Even some of the Phizo's group laid down their arms and sought the protection of the Government of India. For example Saniba Ao, the so-called Major-General in the Naga Federal Government along with Mepyangdang, the Vice-President of the Naga National Council - and his Secretary, Tajen Ao surrendered in the middle of 1975. Saniba Ao, Major-General of the Federal Government of Nagaland not only surrendered but also induced his associates to do the same. He issued a statement which said, "I have been watching the situation in Nagaland and have reached to the conclusion that at no stage our movement had any hope of achieving useful results. Actually things have been going from bad to worse. All that we have achieved over the years of our struggle in Nagaland is untold miseries for our kith and kin." He, therefore, requested his associates to come overground and work for the peace and prosperity of their land. Saniba Ao's message had its impact and soon many prominent rebels excepting the hardcore, surrendered. It was reported that the Ao, Lotha, Sema and Chakhesang areas were completely cleared of the underground influence and a total of 1,214 Naga underground either surrendered or were captured by the security forces from April to August, 1975. During this period nearly 634 Naga underground who had declined to surrender were
also arrested. About 140 fire-arms were recovered from different parts of Nagaland. L.P. Singh, the new Governor of Assam and Nagaland, addressing a mammoth gathering at Kohima on 15 August, 1975, disclosed that during the last four or five months there has been a marked improvement. About a thousand persons who were underground have either been arrested, captured or voluntarily came out. The process is continuing everyday. The people are voluntarily coming out or they are being captured by the security forces. Trying to induce the remaining underground Nagas to surrender, L.P. Singh, said that it has been our policy to treat the people who come out voluntarily into the mainstream of normal life and recognised the responsibilities of Indian citizenship, as honourable citizens of our country. He also said that we will do nothing which should make him lose self-respect. This was our policy and will continue to be our policy. Whenever necessary we shall do our best to rehabilitate those misguided people who decide now to come to the mainstream of Indian life.

L.P. Singh further disclosed the allotment of 22.25 lakh rupees for the rehabilitation of the underground Nagas who had voluntarily surrendered. Thus it was found that the policy of the Government to win over the underground Nagas through persuasion succeeded to a large extent and the hostile Naga activities gradually subsided.
What were the factors which contributed to the gradual elimination of the Naga hostile activities in Nagaland?

Firstly, there was a gradual weakening of the underground Nagas after 1967, because of infighting and inner conflict. The underground Camp had split into three groups in 1968. Those groups may be termed as, The Federal Government of Nagaland led by the President of the Naga National Council, Mr. Phizo, the second group is led by Kughato Sukhai's Revolutionary Government of Nagaland and lastly Thongdi Chang's group. There is an old saying "that a house divided against itself cannot stand". This is very much applicable to the underground Naga movement for freedom. While the underground Camp had split, the rebel Naga leaders were also not very clear about the means through which the goal of an independent Nagaland has to be achieved. While some favoured armed struggle some wanted to seek help from Communist China to achieve their political objectives without proper understanding of the economic and political philosophy of Marxism, Leninism and thought of Mao-Tse Tung. Others preferred to go on without any foreign help. Thus there was neither any unity in their Camp nor any clear thinking about the means through which they were to achieve the desired goal for independent Nagaland. Secondly, many underground Nagas were tired of living in the jungles. They did not have even the basic amenities. They had lost patience and they wanted
comfortable life which was possible only when they gave up hostile activities. Moreover, some of the underground leaders had fully realised the futility of armed struggle which only resulted in the miseries of the Naga people and retarded social and economic progress in Nagaland. Hence, they not only lost faith in their leaders but also favoured the abandonment of the cause for which they had been fighting so far. Thirdly the Indian security forces had a major hand in eliminating the rebels. They sealed the borders with China. This prevented the rebels both from going to Chinese and Pakistani training camps or from returning to Nagaland after receiving training and arms.

The Indian security forces also captured many rebels and destroyed their jungle hideouts and secret camps. The Indian military intelligence and the Indian armed personnel worked together to weed out the rebels. The fighting capacity and morale of the underground Nagas broke down on account of the massive operations of the Indian armed forces. Fourthly, the emergence of Bangladesh in 1971, inflicted a death-blow to the cause of the rebel Nagas. The underground Nagas not only lost an important escape route and training centre and guerrilla sanctuary but also came to know of the superiority and strength of the Indian army. The fact that India had become militarily strong and dampened the zeal and spirit of the rebel Nagas.
They became very discouraged and lost the stamina to continue fighting. Lastly, the Naga underground activities did not have a mass base. By no stretch of imagination can it be called a mass movement. The majority of the Naga public were peace-loving and they were with the Government of India. They disliked the terrorism of the rebel Nagas. They were convinced that peace and order was essential for the progress and prosperity of the Nagas. It is because of this that they helped the Indian security forces many times in capturing the rebels. Moreover, the creation of Nagaland State as a Constituent State of India had fulfilled most of the aspirations of the Naga people. They had their own legislature and Government. When elections were held some underground Naga leaders actively participated. This gave them a sense of participation in the affairs of the State and induced many rebels to give up the path of violence.

The large scale surrender of underground Nagas in 1975, however, does not mean that Naga hostilities completely ended and lasting peace was established there. In fact while the enlightened underground Nagas were surrendered, some of the hard-core Phizo group and members of the Federal Government of Nagaland were still engaged in hostile activities. Even then there were nearly 83 incidents of shooting in 1975. In March, 1975,
the President's rule was imposed in Nagaland. Some army convoys were also ambushed. But in all such incidents the rebels suffered heavily. A few of the Indian jawans were also killed but that did not deter the Indian security men from pursuing the rebels in the thick jungles and destroying their hideouts. Since the border had been sealed, the rebels were experiencing difficulties in importing arms and ammunitions from China. After the decisive victory in the Indo-Pakistan war of 1971, China had also become a bit soft towards India. Efforts were being made to improve the relations between the two countries. Hence the hostile Nagas were becoming isolated. The shooting incidents gradually diminished. Thus by the middle of 1975, five districts of Nagaland were almost cleared of the hostile elements. The underground movements remained confined only to a few pockets in the Kohima and Phek areas. Thus the hostile activities did not come to a dead end but were definitely on the decline.

Dawn of Peace in Nagaland

Meanwhile to win over the remaining underground Nagas was the need of the hour. If they also surrendered, the chances of establishing lasting peace in Nagaland would greatly improve. This made members of the Naga Peace Council think over the issue afresh. Longri Ao, the Chairman of the Peace Council took the initiative and
sounded a few underground leaders including Kevi Valley, the brother of Phizo about negotiating with the Government of India for resolving the Naga issue.49 Kevi Valley, agreed to act as a contact man between underground Naga leaders of the Naga National Council and of the Federal Government of Nagaland and the Liaison Committee of the Peace Council which had been recently formed for the purpose.49A Kevi Valley was given safe conduct by the Government of Nagaland to stay at Chedema of the underground Camp and contact his erstwhile colleagues for discussions. Longri Ao also met with the Liaison Committee for ways and means of establishing permanent peace in Nagaland. After prolonged discussions between the underground Naga leaders of the NNC and the Liaison Committee consisting of Longri Ao, Rev. Kenneth Kerhuo, L. Lungalang, Dr. M. Aram and Lungshim Shaiza, it was decided that the underground leaders would send a 6 (six) Member Representatives with full authority for negotiations with the Representatives of the Government of India for establishing peace in Nagaland.49B Thereafter the underground President of the Federal Government of Nagaland, Mr. Zashei Huire, selected Messrs. Kevi Valley, Z. Ramyo, M. Assa (so-called Major-General), Sani Dahru Mao, I. Temjenba and Venyi Rakhu as underground Naga representatives to talk with the Government of Nagaland/
Government of India for the restoration of peace in Nagaland.\textsuperscript{50}

The Naga Peace Council was making all these efforts with the consent of the Governor of Nagaland who was at that time looking after the administration since the promulgation of President's rule in March 1975 in Nagaland. Before going for talks, L.P. Singh, the Governor of Nagaland, however, wanted to ascertain whether the underground Naga representatives had the full authority and powers to negotiate and arrive at a settlement. He, therefore, instructed his advisors Zopianga Rammuny, to hold discussions with the underground leaders and as to ascertain the fact.\textsuperscript{51} The underground leaders assured the advisors to the Governor that their representatives would have full authority to take decisions. Temjenba even addressed a letter to Longri on 29 September, 1975, in which he wrote "on the question of the authority of the present Federal and the Naga National Council representatives, we have made it clear that we are competent authority to take decisions and whatever decisions we take will be honoured by the Federal Government of Nagaland. In this regard we would like to inform you that in some stages of the talks we would include some of our senior colleagues in our Team."\textsuperscript{52} Meanwhile the self-styled Lt. General Viyallie Metha of the Naga Federal Government also wrote to the underground representatives at Chedema.
in which he said that whatever decisions they took, on his behalf, would be honoured.\textsuperscript{53}

The letters of Temjenba and Viyallie Metha made it amply clear that the underground Naga leaders not only had full authority to negotiate but they were also very much keen to arrive at a negotiated settlement.

When L.P. Singh was convinced that the underground representatives of the NNC/FGN at Chedema had the full authority to negotiate and arrive at a settlement, the Governor agreed to meet them at Shillong in the capacity of the representative of the Government of India. The Naga underground representatives as nominated by Zashei Huire, thereafter went to Shillong for talks which were held on 10 and 11 November, 1975. There were nearly 4 (four) rounds of talks between the Governor and the Naga underground representatives.\textsuperscript{54} During negotiations, L.P. Singh was assisted by his advisors H. Zopianga, M. Rammuny and M.L. Kampani, the Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Home Affairs and on some occasions Kampani held discussions with the underground representatives alone because he had certain understanding of the Nagas problem. In all these discussions the Governor showed sympathy and concern for the welfare of the Naga people as a whole. He tried to convince the Naga underground representatives that the hostile activities neither helped
them nor the people of Nagaland. Nagaland had been created under the Indian Union and now they should manage their own affairs. They were as free as any Indian was. Hence under the given situation a Sovereign Independent Nagaland had no meaning. L.P. Singh asked the underground Naga representatives to assess for themselves the reality of the situation and work for the peace and prosperity of Nagaland. The underground Naga leaders also appeared to be keen on settling the Naga problem peacefully. They however, sought clarification on certain issues. When they were satisfied that their interests would be fully safeguarded by the Government of India, they agreed to accept the Constitution of India and to sign the Peace Accord. Thus a three point Agreement was concluded on 11 November 1975, between the Governor of Nagaland and the Naga underground representatives which came to be known as the new phase as the Shillong Accord of 1975. The three point Shillong Accord was as follows:

1. The representatives 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 discussions for the final settlement.\textsuperscript{56A}

Thus the Shillong Accord was accepted by the underground organisations among themselves at their meeting on 5 December, 1975.\textsuperscript{56B}

The Shillong Accord was a historic event as it opened new chapter in the history of the Naga Freedom Movement. It ushered an era of understanding, peace and tranquility in this strife-torn State. The constitutional issue of the basic political problem and the insurgency were brought to an end by the Shillong Agreement. The underground organisations and movements thereafter ceased to exist, as all had agreed to be peaceful citizens of India and to function in accordance with the Constitution as it stands. The people of Nagaland heaved a sigh of relief because the hostile activities at long last came to end. Thus the underground Nagas got an opportunity to live peacefully and happily in the midst of their family members and friends. They also got an assurance of being rehabilitated by the Government of Nagaland. The Shillong Accord also provided an opportunity to those underground
Nagas who were across the border to come back to their land and to join the rest of their colleagues in accepting unconditionally the Constitution of India and taking their rightful place in the society in a democratic manner.

End of Hostilities

Clause two of the Shillong Accord had provided that the underground Naagas would deposit their arms at places to be settled later on. It was also provided that the Government, the underground representatives, the members of the Liaison Committee and the representatives of the security forces would work out the modalities for implementing clause two of the Shillong Accord of 1975. To give effect to this, a meeting was arranged between the Governor, and Beseto Medon Pukrove, the so-called Lt. General of the defunct, Naga underground Government with Z. Ramyo. Thereafter, a Five-Point Agreement supplementary to the Shillong Accord was concluded on 5 January 1976. They were as follows:

1. It was decided that the collection of arms, initially at collection centres, would commence as early as possible, and will be completed by 25 January, 1976 (just before the Republic Day celebration). Initial places of collection to be decided through discussion between the Commissioner, the representatives of the underground organisations
and the members of the Liaison Committee.

2. Once all arms are collected, these will be handed over to the Peace Council Team at the respective places of collection.

3. Peace Council Team will arrange to transport the arms from collection centres to Chedema Peace Camp and arrange guards etc. for safe custody of arms.

4. Similar arrangement at agreed place/places will be made in Manipur with the concurrence of the Manipur Government.

5. The underground Nagas may stay at Peace Camps to be established at suitable places and their maintenance will be arranged only by the Peace Council. Any voluntary contribution from any source will be made to the Peace Council which will utilise the fund according to necessity.\(^57\)

The five-point supplementary agreement was mainly intended to bring out the arms which were in possession of the underground Nagas. It is thus, obvious that Shillong Accord not only brought the rebels overground but also virtually disarmed them. Surrender of arms was very essential for the establishment of lasting peace in Nagaland. Hence the supplementary agreement was in the right direction. After the conclusion of the Shillong Accord and the supplementary agreement, the Governor of Assam and Nagaland suspended all operations and actions
under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967. The ex-underground leaders in accordance with the provisions of the supplementary agreement of January, 1976, collected and deposited their arms at Chedema Peace Armoury. Temjenba, an ex-underground leader, however, frankly admitted that possibilities of some hidden arms might be there. However, the moment they were located, they would be deposited in the peace keeping armoury. Temjenba expressed the hope that with the completion of the process of the surrender of arms they could look into the future with confidence.

Thus the surrender of arms by the ex-underground Nagas created a very cordial atmosphere in Nagaland. L.P. Singh, the Governor of both Assam and Nagaland, appreciated the action taken by the underground leaders in signing the Shillong Accord and surrendering of arms. On the Republic Day, the 26th January, 1976, the Governor said, "I would like to say here that it requires great courage and it showed great wisdom on the part of those leaders to change their course out of their own will. They did so in the wider interest of the Naga people for the prosperity of Nagaland and out of recognition that in this great country of India their talents and their capabilities could find fullest expression. The same day he also announced that he would release all persons who had accepted the Shillong Accord and would
refund to the villagers all collective fines imposed after September, 1972. 59A

The underground Nagas who surrendered were allowed to stay in peace camps without any arms. These camps were managed by the Peace Council mainly financed by the government and voluntary donations. 60 Hence there is no denying the fact that with the signing of the Shillong Accord, the Naga hostilities virtually came to an end. The Unlawful Activities Act and the Security forces' operations had been completely suspended. There was no curfew and the people in the villages started enjoying a secure life. Those among the prisoners who accepted the Shillong Accord were released. 61 Sentences of those who had been convicted were remitted. Cases against undertrial prisoners were withdrawn and cases pending investigation were closed. 61A All collective fines imposed on the Naga villages since 1972, were repudiated. 61B Thus an era of peace was ushered in the Nagaland State after the conclusion of the Shillong Accord of 1975.

But it has to be admitted that the problems of those Naga hostiles who had gone outside Nagaland country to get military training and collect arms and ammunitions remained as it was. R.R. Reddy, the Indian Home Minister, made an appeal to the ex-underground leaders to make sincere and genuine efforts to persuade those Nagas who
had gone outside the country to fall in line with the rest. He further said that, "they are also welcome to come back to Nagaland and make their legitimate contribution to the progress of peace and normalisation which is well on its way in Nagaland." The appeal of Reddy, however, had no impact on these hostile elements. They did not care to come back to Nagaland under the Amnesty announced by the Governor with the result that the problem of such rebel Nagas is still there. Some of the Naga leaders including the members of the Peace Council made efforts to persuade them to come back to Nagaland and live peacefully. But so far much 'political ice' has not been broken till date.

Postscript - After the Shillong Accord of 1975

After the Shillong Accord of 1975, another political party known as the National Socialist Council of Nagaland, a breakaway party from the Phizoist group of the Naga National Council was formed in early 1980, led by the two well-known Naga underground leaders, namely, Muivah, a Tangkhul Naga and Isaak Chishi Swu, a Sema Naga from Nagaland. This new party got all materials and moral support from China and Burmese Nagas. However, after sometime, Tesandong Yimchunger, a famous member of the People's Council and Publicity Officer of the
National Socialist Council of Nagaland, surrendered along with Chinese arms and ammunitions and some important underground documents in different Naga dialects before the Deputy Commissioner of Tuensang in July, 1980. The documents carried by Tesandong read, "all castes and communities had different history of their own. The Naga history is for safety and happiness. The Nagas had never made friendship with Indians. Hence, there can never be peace between the Nagas and the Indians." Emphasising the aim of the Government of the National Socialist Council of Nagaland the document declared that, "the aim of the new Government is to drive out Buddhism and Hinduism from Nagaland and Nagaland will stand for Christ." It also stated that the new Government of the National Socialist Council of Nagaland would work for socialism in Nagaland on the basis of a non-party system.

Seeing the hostile activities of the National Socialist Council of Nagaland led by Muivah and Isaak Chishi Swu and party (Khaplang from the Burmese Naga side joined hands with them) it appeared that this new party was determined to create prolonged troubles for the Naga people and disturb the peace of the State of Nagaland in order to achieve a sovereign independent State of Nagaland at par with India, China and the rest of the world of free nations as equal members. During
the turmoil period hundreds of Khiemungan Nagas from northern Burma have already taken shelter in various places in the Tuensang areas to save themselves from the wrath of Muivah's faction. This group had killed over two hundred Khiemungan Nagas in north Burma and burnt down about one hundred and fifty villages and looted the properties of the villagers. Most of the refugees have taken shelter in the areas of the Tuensang district of Nagaland with their relatives, causing not only homeless but also rehabilitation problems for the State Government of Nagaland. A sense of demoralisation has crept into the minds of the Khiemungan Nagas all along the Tuensang border because of the continuous threats given by Muivah and Isaak group. On 3 September, 1980, a group of underground Nagas belonging to the Muivah-Isaak Group of the National Socialist Council of Nagaland attacked the village of Pang, in Tuensang district along the Burma border with the sophisticated weapons obtained from China. During the hours of carnage in the village the attackers killed a number of people. They burnt down hundreds of houses including Churches and Mission Houses and ransacked the village. Thus the Pang village incident resulted in increasing the number of refugees. Rev. Inti, the Field-Director of the Khiemungan areas of the Nagaland Baptist Church Council disclosed that about one hundred Khiemungan Nagas including eight
Church leaders were killed by the Muivah-Isaak group of the Naga underground in northern Burma in September, 1980.66

An alarming incident of violence occurred in Nagaland when Nuklo Kanyak, a Congress(I) M.L.A. from the Tuensang area was killed along with two others in an ambush on 27 April, 1981, by some unknown (underground) assailant.67 This was the first major incident of politically motivated violence after the Shillong Accord in 1975. And now it appears that the destructive force led by Muivah-Isaak group is on the surface. If these forces are not checked in time then it may create more of political turmoil in Nagaland. However, it is encouraging to note that any sort of violence has widely been condemned by all sections of the Naga people.68

But the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (N.S.C.N.) Party led by Muivah and Isaak, strongly condemned the Shillong Accord, 1975, because the Accord was signed without consulting them and more so Muivah was the General-Secretary of the Naga National Council at that time. However, now, they are camping in northern Burma.69 This party has become constant political turmoil in Naga politics in the North-East India.

However, the recent trend of the present political current reveals that Rishang Keishing, the present Chief Minister of Manipur (who was the first Naga member of
Parliament from Manipur, 1952), is of the view that the Centre should open a new dialogue with the new underground Nagas (N.S.C.N.) giving them the maximum autonomy already provided in the Constitution of India and thereby to end the insurgency in the North Eastern Region of India.
Notes and References


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8. The Assam Tribune, Gauhati, August 4, 1968.


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20A. Ibid.
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25B. Ibid.
31. The Times of India, New Delhi, March 22, 1969.
34A. Ibid.
46. Based on interviews with the ex-underground Naga leaders, like Messrs. Scato Swu, Kevi Yalley, Medon and Raymo etc.
47. Based on interviews with Naga leaders, village Headmen and students.


63. *The Warrior,* vol. 6, No. 1, April, 1976, op. cit., pp. 4-5.