CHAPTER: 5

The Process of Transformation and Restoration of Normalcy

In the last two chapters, the violent ethnic clash of the Nagas and Kukis has been discussed. In this chapter, this study will critically deal with the process for the restoration of normalcy between these two ethnic communities. The time period for the Naga-Kuki peace process is drawn i.e. between June 1992 and 2002. The reason for this time period is that on June 1992, Deputy Commissioner of Chandel district, seeing the surcharged atmosphere called for public emergency meeting. Hereafter, there were visits, meetings and appeals to both the communities to maintain peace and harmony. However, violence continued unabated and went on and on for many years. Mr. Paul Leo, the UNC President, was abducted by one group of Kuki militants in February 2001 and there was negotiation between the two not only for his released but also to end the clash. Further, in June 2002, according to PS. Haokip “NSCN -IM and KNA agreed for a cease fire in 2002.” This shows that their main militants involved in the violent clash agreed for peace. Thus, this study ends the time period in the year 2002.

The peace efforts for these two warring groups were exhausting, dangerous and slow in space due to many reasons, which will be discussed. Consequently, it took many years to end killings and burning down of houses, etc. Yet, peace efforts from various corners continued, of course, some of them came to an abrupt halt due to many reasons but they were many who pursued to achieve restoration of normalcy for these two communities. Owing to their sacrifices for peace, the killings dwindled and sense returned to the minds of the people. The militants of each community also began to see the futility of their violent clash and came to sign agreements: NSCN-IM and UKLF, NSCN-IM and KRA, and ‘in 2002, NSCN-IM and KNA agreed for a ceasefire’. Today

these communities are emerging out of mistrust, suspicions and hatred, etc. However, they still need confidence building measures in order to have a real normalcy in their relations.

In this chapter, the discourses will be on the peace efforts and process emerged from various corners. It will also look into the factors, which prevent early achievement for restoration of normalcy.

A Brief Review of the Events and Early Peace Initiatives

The Naga and Kuki tensions began prior to 3rd June 1992 incident. This is shown by events. "On 12th May 1992 Holhokojang Haokip was killed in Chandel District, on 17th May 1992 Lhunkhothang was killed in Chandel District and on 26th May 1992 Tongkholun Haokip was killed in Ukhrul District."509 According to NSCN-IM leaders, "KNA issued 'Quit Nagas' order in Moreh on 30th May 1992."510 P.S. Haokip also listed that Toljang a Kuki village in Ukhrul district was uprooted on 16.4.92.511 Mr. Rishang Keishing narrated that there were clashes in 1992 prior to Moreh incidents. Toljang or Tujang Kuki village was one of those villages, which was affected by the clashes. He visited the village during his tenure as a Deputy Chief Minister of Manipur.512 According to Naga Student Federation (NSF): "On 30th May 1992, armed Kuki undergrounds in olive green uniforms of the so-called Kuki National Army (KNA) had forcibly collected huge amount of money from four Maring Naga villages namely (i) Satang (2) Waksu (3) Phaison (4) Chaktong, Chandel district, Manipur on the Indo-Myanmar border. The total amount extorted from the said four villages was 30,000 kyats (Burmese currency) including one big pig worth Rs. 4000 and 40 kgs. of rice. The entire male population of

---

512 Excerpt from an interview of Rishang Keishing, Ex-Chief Minister and at present Rajya Sabha member, December 2004.
the above villages was subjected to inhumane torture and humiliation.”

When all these were taking place, Onkholet Haokip was killed near Bongjang 7-8 kms away from Moreh town in Chandel District, Manipur. This was protested by the Kuki Students’ Organization, Chandel District. There were processions for two days i.e. 4th to 5th June 1992. According to the NSF, “on 4th and 5th June 1992, Kuki Students Organization (Chandel district) called Moreh bandh in protest against the killing of Onkholet Haokip. Massive procession was carried out in Moreh by the Kuki community, many of them openly brandished guns, spears, clubs and other lethal weapons. In full view of the Manipur Police that very night Kuki youths announced through loud speaker that Nagas should vacate or leave Moreh town within 24 hours or dire consequence.”

Seeing the worsening situation, Deputy Commissioner of Chandel district in whose jurisdiction these incidents were taking place visited the Moreh town on 6th June 1992 and called for public emergency meeting with them but it failed because the Kukis refrained from it and the perpetration of harassment, kidnappings, beatings, molestations, extortions and sporadic killings continued. The state government came to view the situation with seriousness. “On 9th June 1992, DIG Hill Range (Manipur Police) and Superintendent of Police, Chandel district visited Moreh town. On 16th June 1992, Ministers led by the Deputy Chief Minister (R.Keishing) of Manipur visited Moreh and appealed for maintenance of peace, harmony and brotherhood between the Nagas and the Kukis.” According to Mr. R. Keishing, “he gave about 20 thousand as ex-gratia to the Onkholet (victim) family.” “The state government also stationed Manipur Rifles personnel at Moreh Naga village from 17-26 June 1992 as precautionary measures from the possible attacks by the armed Kukis on Naga civilians” All Tribal Students Union Manipur (ATSUM), an apex body of all tribal students’ organizations, Manipur, these include the Nagas and the Kukis, visited the town on 20-27 June 1992 and appeal for peace, harmony and brotherhood. The church pastors particularly from Manipur Baptist

514 Memorandum submitted to the Hon’ble Minister (Home Affairs) Union of India by the Naga Students’ Association, Manipur, 24th August 1992, Annexure- Sequence of Events, p.1.
515 Ibid.
517 Memorandum submitted to the Hon’ble Minister (Home Affairs) Union of India by the Naga Students’ Association, Manipur, 24th August 1992, Annexure- Sequence of Events, p.1.
Convention (MBC) were sent to this area for peace during this month. All these initiatives of the state government, students, the churches and some individuals were not successful.

**The Government's role in the peace process**

The government noticed the growing ethnic tension that the resultant violence between the Nagas and the Kukis; it began to express its concern perceivably from the month of June 1992. The State Government not only gave ex-gratia to the Onkholet's family (the victim) but also distributed red blankets to many Kuki elder/leaders. However, the Nagas felt discontented that such a gesture was not shown to them as well when they were also affected by it, in fact, more than the Kukis. As mentioned earlier, the highest command of Police of the Hill Range and Chandel District visited the town and the personnel of Manipur Rifles were also posted to prevent occurrence of untoward incidences. The Deputy Chief Minister along with his Ministers made the first visit in June and the second on the 4th July 1992, “the Deputy Chief Minister, Manipur and his Cabinet colleagues visited Moreh again.”

It seems, under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner of Chandel District, Peace Committee was formed to work for peace between the two groups. On 24th July 1992, the government issued an order to the officer on Special Duty (Law and Orders) to enquire the community disharmony between the Naga and the Kuki populace in Moreh. The enquiry report was submitted on 1st August 1992. The officer on duty interacted and also had a meeting with the representatives of both the communities. In these, he heard their complaints and plea and he appealed to them to maintain peace and harmony and to restrain from adding fuel to the fire.

Despite these efforts, the situation deteriorated.

The central government looking at the affairs of the state of Manipur imposed President’s Rule under article 356 of Indian constitution on 31st December 1993.

518 Sequence of Events, Naga Student Federation, Kohima, p.2.
According to the Kuki Inpi Manipur (KIM), “the imposition of President’s Rule in Manipur which was more to remove the internal bickering amongst the various factions in the Congress party rather than to quell the Kuki-Naga troubles.”

This shows that there was infighting within the ruling party when the state was witnessing ethnic clash. This was also one reason why the state could not diffuse the tension at an early stage. Regarding the imposition of President’s Rule, when one looked at the record of events, the tension remains unchanged and expatriation continued except the numbers of killed decreased after the imposition of President’s Rule. In fact, burning down villages and wholesale killings in brutal manners came into being. KIM says, “the condition worsened after June 1993 and soon the whole of Manipur Hill Districts excepting Churachandpur District was engulfed.”

Since September 1993, Churachanpur district was also engulfed by the Naga-Kuki violent conflict.

Mr. John Joseph, Member of National Commission for Minorities visited Manipur State on 4th October 1993, therein the Nagas and Kukis agreed with him to find out to bring normalcy. Their agreement is reproduced below:

JOHN JOSEPH
Member
National Commission for Minorities
Camp: Imphal
Date: 4th October 1993.

With the initiative of Mr. John Joseph, Member of National Commission for Minorities, Government of India, New Delhi, the two groups namely the Nagas and the Kukis met separately and then agreed with him to find out to bring about normalcy in the strife torn areas of Manipur Hill districts.

Common points were agreed upon and those were presented to the Chief Minister and the Governor of Manipur. The points were endorsed by them for necessary implementation.

520 Memorandum submitted to the Union Home Minister, Government of India by the Kuki Inpi Manipur (KIM), for and on behalf of the Kukis of Manipur, India, 17th January 1994.
521 The Address of the President of Kuki Inpi Manipur on the occasion of the first session of KIM assembly on the 1st May 1993, Department of Communication, Kuki Inpi Manipur (KIM), p.8.
The Common Points Are:

1. There shall be a “PEACE PERIOD” for three months with effect from 4th October 1993.
2. In order to enable the members to contact the contending parties of the Hill districts, a two weeks time shall be given.
3. The modus operandi for going about to contact the concerned persons shall be worked out separately suited to them.
4. The government is to give all help and assistance such as vehicles and finance as when required.
5. Security Forces and Police personnel should and must maintain absolute impartiality in dealing with the Kukis and the Nagas.
6. No Kuki or Naga in armed forces and policemen be deployed in the affected areas.
7. Substantial ex-gratia and compensation should be given to the grieved families by the government immediately.
8. The public roads and highways, both the national and state should be effectively made free and safety of the passengers be ensured by the state government.
9. The government of Manipur is to start relief measures immediately to provide shelters, food, clothing, medicine, etc.

Sd/-
John Joseph
Member
National Commission for Minorities,
New Delhi.

To diffuse and contain the ethnic violence, the government deployed available Security forces in the state particularly in Manipur State where ethnic violence concentrated. “The Government of Manipur has tried its level best to settle the grievances of the feuding communities and make them live in peace and harmony once again. Security efforts have been beefed up through massive induction of military and Paramilitary forces.”522 It has been mentioned that the government of Manipur posted Manipur Rifles personnel at Naga villages to prevent unwanted incidents from the initial months. Thereafter, the deployment of Security forces increased as the violence intensified. All the available forces in the state were in adequate. The State requested the

Centre for more Para-military forces to assist them. The Chief Minister also announced
the recruitment of more forces. There was, indeed, massive induction of security forces to
contain the situation. Tarapot shows the functioning of Security forces in such a situation.
He says, “the alarming situation put state police department and other security agencies
including some Para-military forces in a tight position very often but there was not much
they could do to prevent the butchering of innocent women and children. All Security
outposts, police situations and mobile parties were put on frequent ‘maximum alert’ one
incident after another to prevent ‘any retaliatory action or attempt by anti – social
elements’ from attacking isolated or rival villages. Authorities concern could be
discerned from a 14th January 1994 crash message to all superintendents of police,
commandants and other relevant security official were instructed to ‘maintain Law and
Order at all cost in the wake of the ethnic trouble and communal flare-up in Manipur
State’. Security agencies were also instructed to inflict ‘punitive fines’ on villages, which
violated public tranquility, disobeyed government orders or sheltered armed militants or
activist. Police station or outposts were strictly instructed to react or counteract against
any untoward happening in their jurisdiction or in the vicinity of the outpost. The
government had warned security and police personnel that any deficiency in this regard
would be taken as a serious lapse of expected duty.”523

The State Government also arranged relief measures for the victims of the Naga-
Kuki violent conflict. Mr. Rishang Keishing says, “the government has provided relief
assistance to the affected people on a large scale. This includes arrangement of temporary
shelters for the displaced people, provision of rice and other edible items, clothing,
utilisils, medical assistance and security. Ex-gratia payment has also been done on
priority basis.”524 “The government of Manipur on 30.4.1993 laid down the guidelines
for giving relief to the suffering public as below:

1. Rs. 110/- per head subject to a maximum relief in the form of rice etc.

524 Key Note Address of Shri Rishang Keishing, Chief Minister, Manipur in The All Manipur Tribals’
2. Rs. 3000/- per house for rehabilitation of house burnt or destroyed, Rs 500/-per house for partially burnt/damaged houses.

3. Rs. 20,000/- for each person killed, and Rs.5000/- per person grievously injured.\textsuperscript{525}

It was reported in the newspaper that “a sum of Rs. 27,47880 has been spent from the Chief Minister’s Relief Fund for relief measures for the people affected by the Naga-Kuki clash says a government press note, which also adds that 1,290 quintals of rice and accompanying quantities of pulses, salt have also been issued over and above blankets, tarpaulins during the last three months. Other measures for suitable rehabilitation have also been taken up says the release. The measures include self employment schemes for those who have incurred losses of houses and properties, add the release.\textsuperscript{526} Further, the Governor of the state also came forward to extend his help to the victims of this conflict. The Kuki Inpi Manipur writes in Aide-Memiore of Naga-Kuki problem to Union Minister of State, “the Governor, Lt.Gen.V.K Nayar, himself has taken the matter in his hands it is perhaps the first time the head of the state traveled in the hills during the last four decades.”\textsuperscript{527} The Governor of Manipur state also distributed relief material worth Rs.1 crore in 1994.\textsuperscript{528}

The centre government also extended succour to the victims of the Naga-Kuki clash. It had sanctioned Rs.2, 00 crores (two crores) from Prime Minister Relief Fund for the rehabilitation of 2150 Kuki-Naga families in Chandel District, vide order no.8/45/93-NEI, dated: 11.10.2000. Other districts, apart from Chandel, did not receive central assistance. According to the source of Home & Cabinet Department, Chief Secretariat, Manipur, 8 crores has been proposed for other districts like Tamenglong, Senapati, and Ukhrul and the department is waiting for its sanction from Prime Minister Relief Fund. Thus, these hill districts have not received any central assistance so far thought they were

\textsuperscript{525} The Address of the President, Kuki Inpi Manipur (KIM) on the occasion of the first session of KIM Assembly, 1\textsuperscript{st} May 1995, Department of Communication, Kuki Inpi Manpur (KIM), P.3.

\textsuperscript{526} 'Rs 27.47 Lakhs Spent for Relief', The Manipur Mail, 9\textsuperscript{th} October 1993.

\textsuperscript{527} T. Kipgen, 'Aide-Memiore of the Kuki-Naga problem', the paper Anniversary, Souvenir of the Kuki Inpi Manipur (KIM), 1994, p.29.

\textsuperscript{528} The Address of the President, Kuki Inpi Manipur (KIM) on the occasion of the first session of KIM Assembly, 1\textsuperscript{st} May 1995, Department of Communication, Kuki Inpi Manpur (KIM), p.11.
also severely torn by Naga-Kuki violent ethnic conflict. It is important to note that the central government has sanctioned from Prime Minister Relief Fund towards Zomi-Kuki violent conflict of 1997-1999, which mainly affected Churachandpur district, about 46700000 (four crores sixty seven lakhs) for the construction of 4670 houses for the displaced families of Churachandpur District, vide, order no. 4/14(7)/99-H, dated: 30th January 1999. But, apart from Chandel district, the hill districts torn by the Naga-Kuki violent conflict since 1992 and went on for nearly a decade has not received till today. Secondly, if one draws a comparison between the two ethnic conflicts in terms of loses and severity, the Naga-Kuki violent conflict was much more than the Zomi-Kuki violent conflict.

When one compares the compensation given to the victims of the Naga-Kuki violent conflict and other parts of India, there is a huge gap between them. In the case of Naga-Kuki violent conflict victims, Rs 20,000 was compensated to the deceased family, Rs.5000 thousand for the injured or affected person, Rs.3000 for the house burnt and Rs.500 for the house partially burnt. Such compensation amount did not cover anything, not even a family to survive for a month. In such a situation, affected family could not dream to build a house. Consequently, even today there are many victims of Naga-Kuki violent conflict without food, shelter and permanently maimed. Radhika jha writes: When it comes to compensating the families of those killed by territories, the contrast between Manipur and other terrorist - affected states are even wider. While the average compensation to a widow is between Rs. 50,000 and 1,00,000, in Manipur, it is only Rs. 20,000. Many people complain that they have only received Rs. 2,000. This explains many things on the treatment between the other parts of India and Northeast India.

Both the Centre and the State governments also made a joint venture not only to nullify the violence but also in a relief measures. R.Keishing says, "The state government and the government of India have jointly decided to go in for an extended rehabilitation scheme. Under this scheme, the displaced people will be persuaded to return to their native villages where their own lands are situated and to pick up the threads of their lives.

---

once again with government assistance. In genuine cases, rehabilitation at new site will be arranged. In any case, it will be ensured that a new house is provided to each displaced family.\textsuperscript{530}

However, despite, massive induction of military and Para-military forces to uproot the violence and prevent further occurrence, killings and burning down of the villages and disturbances in all spheres of life went on. Secondly, relief assistance to the affected people was too meager to sustain their lives and it did not cover even 1/10 of what they have lost. Moreover, many of the victims have not received any thing till today. Yet, the government assistance/contribution could not be dismissed as it raised hope, prevented many things to be damaged and also helped thousands from being killed and other related sufferings.

\textit{Role of Committee for the Restoration of Normalcy (CRN)}

One important organization that emerged to retrieve the situation was the Committee for Restoration of Normalcy (CRN). The background in which CRN was formed: Mr. Rishing Keishing convened meetings such as Meeting of Presidents of All Tribal Organizations on 5\textsuperscript{th} June 1993 and the Nagas and the Kukis representatives meeting on 10\textsuperscript{th} July 1993, etc. In all these meetings the need for a forum where the leaders of the apex bodies of the Nagas and the Kukis could discusses the burning issue and takes an appropriate action together and bring normalcy in their relations. It was proposed to meet on 23\textsuperscript{rd} August 1993, at a State Guest House, Imphal. At the meeting on 23\textsuperscript{rd} August 1993, at a State Guest House, Imphal, CRN was formed.

Kuki Inpi Manipur says, "with the active support of the Deputy Chief Minister, Government of Manipur, a Committee for Restoration of Normalcy (CRN) was formed and inaugurated on the 23\textsuperscript{rd} August, 1993.The CRN, thus, became the Forum where

\textsuperscript{530} Key Note Address of Shri Rishang Keishing, Chief Minister, Manipur in The All Manipur Tribals' Conference on Peace and Harmony, 31\textsuperscript{st} May 1995, 1st Bn Manipur Rifles Ground, Imphal, p.3.
discussion could be held between the Kukis and the Nagas".531 A White Paper on working Relation between the CRN and the VVD (Volunteer for Village Development) says that "with the increasing crescendo in the senseless killing amongst some sections of the Kukis and the Nagas of Manipur in 1993 with its devilish snowballing social and moral effect, brought leaders of the Nagas and the Kukis on 23rd August 1993, and the CRN (Committee for Restoration of Normalcy) was the outcome of that parley held at the State Guest House".532 Thus, CRN comprising of the two apex bodies, viz., the Nagas and the Kukis was formed with a great hope of restoring normalcy for this violent conflict on 23rd August 1993.

Committee for Restoration of Normalcy (CRN) began to function right from its formation, which could be seen from their joint appeal in the meeting of 23rd August 1993 itself. "Since its formation, the CRN ventured into a few programmed for peace campaign in the Hill areas, and a number of press releases appealing to both the Nagas and the Kukis to stop shedding of innocent blood, and burning down of the villages besides making traveling along the highways unsafe. Their peace offensive took shape of a Ceasefire wef 2nd October 1993"533. KIM also says, "CRN undertook joint tours three times and also had worked several sittings to find out the causes of the conflict".534 CRN as a body also worked with John Joseph, Member of the Minorities Commissioner of India, when he visited Manipur on 4th October 1993. It also gave helping hands to many organizations. Wati A. Longchar writes, "CRN visited all troubled areas and appealed to the people who were up in arms to stop all acts of violence, preach to them the gospel of love and forgiveness. They also distributed relief materials to the affected families."535

531 The Address of the President, Kuki Inpi Manipur (KIM) on the occasion of the first session of KIM Assembly, 1st May 1995, Department of Communication, Kuki Inpi Manpur (KIM), p.5.
532 A White Paper on Working Relation Between the CRN (Committee for Restoration of Normalcy) and VVD (Volunteer for Village Development), Imphal, Manipur, 1993, p.1.
533 Ibid., p.1.
534 The Address of the President, Kuki Inpi Manipur (KIM) on the occasion of the first session of KIM Assembly, 1st May 1995, Department of Communication, Kuki Inpi Manpur (KIM), p.5.
CRN was purely a coming together of the Naga-Kuki apex bodies, it had no funding agencies and the State government had indifferent attitude towards them especially after John Joseph, Member of the Minorities Commissioner of India, visit to the State, is shown by in the following words. In Aide-Memiore to Kuki-Naga Problem, “regretfully the CRN including the Kuki Inpi appears to have fallen from the grace from the government. We feel that some of the Ministers take the Kuki Inpi to be aspiring for benefits for which we have no interests. This was noted after the visit of Shri John Joseph, Member of the Minorities Commission and his meeting with the Kuki-Naga leaders and also with the Governor. Immediately the CRN vehicles provided to the CRN was withdrawn.”\textsuperscript{536} KIM says, “the CRN became persona-non-grata in the hands of Dorendro Ministry in October, 1993. They have no funds. They could not give any relief assistance to the displaced and the suffering people”.\textsuperscript{537} The cries of their suffering peoples were unbearable, they were in dare need of material and financial funding to succour their suffering populace but there was none to turn to.

At this juncture, VVD came to learn the existence of CRN and then they contacted it. In a White Paper it stated that “VVD (Volunteer for Village Development), whose headquarters is located at Ukhrul District, was attracted to the activities of CRN, and had come to its aid, and till today, it has remained the only non-governmental organization to have shown such noble gesture, and inclination towards efforts for restoration of normalcy amongst the Tribal Society.”\textsuperscript{538} And in the words of VVD, “VVD had been trying to find ways and means for playing an active and meaningful role in the service of the victims and the people in the mist of ethnic disturbances. VVD was therefore very much encouraged by knowing of the initiative taken by the UNC and KIM for CRN. VVD recognized this as a very important and significant development and a laudable initiative of the leadership on both sides. To VVD it was a sign of hope and the CRN’s work a zone of hope. Therefore, VVD decided to approach CRN to find out if and

\textsuperscript{536} The Paper Anniversary Souvenir of the Kuki Inpi Manipur, Souvenir Committee, 1994, pp. 29-30
\textsuperscript{537} Ibid., p.6.
\textsuperscript{538} A White Paper on Working Relation Between the CRN (Committee for Restoration of Normalcy) and VVD (Volunteer for Village Development), Imphal, Manipur, 1993, p.1.
how VVD could be of some help to CRN in its work.539 Thus, VVD non-governmental organization works with CRN in assisting and aiding the victims of the Naga-Kuki violent conflict materially, financially and morally. VVD helped CRN not only in relief measures but also in their day-to-day functioning so that they are able to carry out their aims and objectives. A.Y.Tipnis is the founder of VVD, non-governmental organization. It has its headquarter at Ukrlul, Manipur but it cover the whole Manipur and Nagaland states. VVD itself is sponsored by many agencies whose targets are to resolve conflict, maintain peace and extend relief measure to the victims. The non-governmental organizations, which supported CRN-VVD ventures, are THREAD of Orissa, EZE-Germany and ICCO-Neatherland, etc. They did many training programmes, meetings and consultations, etc. One remarkable result of training programmes was ‘Green Cross (GC)’. On 11th November 1993, the volunteers detailed by UNC and KIM formed Green Cross Brigade. Later, the name was changed to ‘Fraternal Green Cross’. The funds pour into the CRN account stood as on 24th January 1994 is shown below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Receipts</th>
<th>Expenses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rs 3,50,000.00</td>
<td>Rs 3,22,260.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Balance</strong></td>
<td>27,740.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All the expenses were subjected to auditing by authorized chartered Accountant then it was given to VVD for scrutiny.540

CRN-VVD-GC began what they called ‘expression of humanitarian concern and as a symbol of hope’ during Christmas session. "The First distribution of the relief items amongst the Kuki victims of Bongbal Khullen was inaugurated by shri T.Kipgen, co-chairman, CRN at New Lambulane, Imphal and that of the Naga-victims by shri K.Krongo, secretary CRN at TBA Church Compound, Deulahland, Imphal. In the First instance of Healing Mission of the G.C., 396 blankets and 198 quintals of rice were

---

539 Ibid.
540 Ibid., pp.4 &10.
distributed. And in the second instance, 110 bags of rice and 81 blankets are in the process of distribution. This consignment included victims of villages affected after the President Rule was imposed in the State since 1.1.1994. It also says that "10 bags of rice each were to be made available for emergency purpose and in rare and special instances of financial assistance to 1994 victims, CRN extended a sum of Rs 3500/-." 

According to the record of VVD, the total assistance to the Naga-Kuki victims since December 1993-December 1995 is as follows:

- Rice - 3215 Quintals
- Utensils (pots) - 3727 Nos.
- Blankets - 2334 Nos.
- Mosquito Net - 48 Nos.
- No. of villages covered - 395
- No. of families covered - 10,741

The total amount spent for relief measures = Rs 37,47,234/-
The total nos. of population covered = 63,379.

Source: Fraternal Green Cross-VVD, Chingmeirong, East Imphal, Manipur.

In regard to the distribution of relief materials, CRN took part only in the decision-making of distribution. Both VVD and GC played the role of distributors. GC had an office at Lamphelpat, Imphal and had minimum of four GC volunteers on full time basis along with part-time volunteers. "Much controversy had been raised by some members on the ground that CRN’s primary objective is restoration of normalcy, and that it must strive to maintain a clean image of the CRN. In this regard the view of the overwhelming majority has been a positive one as its relief role cannot be divorced from its main objective and that handling of the actual distribution be left with the GC and the

\[541 \text{ Ibid., p.6.}
\[542 \text{ Ibid., p.6.}
VVD, but the CRN would involve itself in meaningful participation at the decision-taking level of where such relief materials would be most needed and how to dispose off.⁵⁴³

Thus, CRN-VVD-GC worked together to transform the Naga-Kuki relations from violence to normalcy. Their work for these warring communities could not be underestimated. They went even beyond conventional method of bringing peace and harmony. In their pursuit of normalcy they dare threat to their lives and many stymies, both internal and external such as misgivings, censure ship and threats. However, they could not restore normalcy, which they aimed. Yet their contribution is so valuable. One thing that needs to remember is that CRN was an “over ground organization and it did not have control over the under ground organizations”⁵⁴⁴ involved in the violent conflict. It was always questioned by the KNA and NSCN-IM (the main actors of the clash). Moreover, there were fear and suspicion between the two apex bodies of the Nagas (UNC) and the Kukis (KIM), who formed CRN. Further, the effectiveness of these two bodies over their own communities was also lacking. They not only failed to restored normalcy, CRN came to an end after 1995, which means that it did not pursue the goal till it’s achieved or till the clash ended. Yet, one cannot under estimate the aura of its existence and the functioning of CRN for the Naga-Kuki violent conflict. CRN became the hope of the peoples of both the communities to bring normalcy during its existence. It also thwarted off many more lives and properties to be shattered. Further, CRN along with VVD and Green Cross financed and supported by THREAD of Orissa, EZE-Germany and ICCO-Netherlands extended assistance to the victims of this violent clash, financially, materially and morally, etc. They also received false allegation raised, against them in the newspaper. One needs to remember that they did great work for many of the victims of the Naga-Kuki violent conflict, who were in utter helplessness.

⁵⁴³ Ibid., p.9.
⁵⁴⁴ The Address of the President, Kuki Inpi Manipur (KIM) on the occasion of the first session of KIM Assembly, 1st May 1995, Department of Communication, Kuki Inpi Manpur (KIM), p.5.
The Role of the Tribal Communities for Peace

As mentioned earlier, Manipur State is divided into Hill country and Valley country. The Hills’ formed 90% of total area and is inhabited purely by the tribals, which accounts more than 30% of the total population of the state. The Tribals in the state have formed many organizations for the welfare of their own community. These Tribals organizations from local level to state level also played important role for peace between the two communities.

(a) Role of All Tribal Manipur Students’ Union, Manipur (ATSUM)

The All Tribal Manipur Students’ Union, Manipur is one of the strongest, efficient and most effective tribal organizations in Manipur. The Kuki Students’ Organization (KSO) Manipur and All Naga Students’ Association, Manipur (ANSAM), are also the main components of the ATSUM. Under the President ship of Thiso khriina Mao, the All Tribal Students’ Union Manipur (ATSUM), an apex body of tribal student organizations in Manipur, visited Moreh town on 20th June 1992 and stayed there for two days with an aim to retrieve the situation and bring peace and harmony between the two. Naga Student Federation also says, in “June 20-22,1992, a delegation of All Tribal Students’ Union, Manipur (ATSUM), which was initiated by the All Naga Students’ Association, Manipur (ANSAM) visited Moreh town and met the elders and general public of both communities and appealed to maintain peace and harmony at any cost.” Their visits to Moreh town were visits when the violence was at an early stage. However, the Kuki Students’ Organization (KSO) Manipur was expelled from the ATSUM in 1992 and also ATSUM became defunct as the clash was on the rise. During the conflict the KSO and ANSAM sided each own community: they condemned each other in writings through Newspapers and Pamphlets etc.

545 Sequence of Events. Naga Students Federation, Kohima.

214
The need to revive the ATSUM was felt, but it was only in 1997, which was materialized by holding a fresh election. Therein, E.Vungkholen Paite and Washington Shinglai were elected as President and Secretary respectively for the tenure of 1997-2003. Still, ATSUM was not that strong to initiate peace between these two communities, thus, the KSO and ANSAM continued to condemn each other. The reason for this was that ATSUM did not have a good relation with KSO. Moreover, KSO suspected ATSUM that it works for the Nagas’ interest. But they realized the futility of their disunity, thus, in 1999, they had dinner party together in Ashok hotel. In this dinner party they issued a joined statement and a Christmas wish. Further, from hereafter, they planned to meet and discuss together from time to time. Since then, they came to have a good rapport with each other. This good relationship can be shown by the Joint Statements that they issued:

On 23rd May 2001, joint press statement of the Kuki Students’ Organization (KSO) Manipur and the All Naga Students’ Association, Manipur (ANSAM) against the killings of (1). Salesian Catholic Priests on the 15th May 2001 at Nagarian, Thoubal District, Manipur (2). Fr. Shajan Jacob Chittinapilly an Asst. Parish Priest of St.Joseph’s Parish, Sugnu on the 3rd December 2002 (3). Fr.Pali Akara Raphael (4). Fr. Andreas Kido (5). Bro.Shinu Joseph (6). Fr. Tommy Manjally. These were killed by the valley based Underground Group (UG). On 14th July 1999, All Tribal Students’ Union Manipur submitted memorandum to His Excellency, the President of India and to the Hon’ble Prime Minister of India, for immediate creation of a Union under Article 239 and 239A of the Constitution of India for the Tribal peoples of Outer Manipur State. In the Press Communiqué of All Tribal Students’ Union Manipur, Dated 14th September 2001, “for a political solution (of the tribals), a historical and a documented memorandum was submitted to His Excellency, the President of India and to the Hon’ble Prime Minister of India, in 1999 urging them to honour the primitive and natural rights of the Tribals of Outer Manipur and restore them under Union Territory provision of the Constitution of India.”

The above statements show that the KSO and the ANSUM have really come to a good term. Consequently, both took many bold steps. In 2001, when Kuki National Front
(KNF) kidnapped Paul Leo, President of United Naga Council (UNC), KSO and ANSAM worked together for his release. They also had a joint tour programmes, the theme for this was a “Journey of Understanding”. In the leaflet of KSO and ANSAM for Journey of Understanding says, “this is a humble initiative but a maiden venture of the Kuki Students’ Organization (KSO) GHQ, Manipur and the All Naga Students’ Association, Manipur (ANSAM) undertaking a ‘Journey of Understanding’ to the Hill Districts, which had started from last December, 11.2001 onwards to reach out to the two communities in particular and the tribals of Manipur in general. To do away with the false apprehensions and misgivings that seemed to linger on in the minds of the people of both the communities because of the past manifestation is our endeavour. We had already covered Ukhrul and Senapati Districts in December 2001 (11.12.01-13.12.01). In continuation, the two students’ bodies are again undertaking the journey from 6th –8th of September 2002 in Chandel District covering important towns and villages. And within a few weeks, we intended to cover Tamenglong and Churachandpur Districts with the cooperation of the people. We are also happy that we get very good support and response from all sections of the people in this venture. We hope the same support will continue. For no gain, the two communities have indeed harmed each other greatly at the cost of the poor innocent peoples and students in all spheres of life. We wish that the younger generation do not inherit all the awful experiences of the past. The KSO General H/Q Manipur and ANSAM, therefore, humbly appeal through this joint venture, a ‘Journey of Understanding’, to both the communities to leave the past behind and forgive each other for the sake of the younger generation. We intend not to be misunderstood in whichever way but this is our hearts’ desire to reconcile the two communities for good neighbourly relationship and peaceful co-existence in future.

The joint tour programme was carried out by KSO and ANSAM in a brigade of 15-20 members and the respective unit was asked to arrange all the necessaries.

Thus, ATSUM in general and KSO-ANSAM in particular played a valuable role for understanding and peace between the Naga and the Kuki. But most of their precious

547 An excerpt from an interview of Samson Remei, General Secretary of ATSUM, (19th July 2003-2005).
548 Paokam Haokip, President of KSO (GHQ) and S. Kho John, President of ANSAM, KSO and ANSAM Joint Tour Programme for “Journey of Understanding”, 2002.
time was wasted in internal bickering or condemning each other. Had there been a strong unity amongst ATSUM in general, and between KSO and ANSAM in particular, they would have played more effective and efficient role in bringing normalcy. Still, the contribution of ATSUM in general and KSO-ANSAM in particular for understanding and peace is great.

(b) Role of the Tribal leaders

The Tribal leaders, Social workers, Politicians, Officers, Students, Elders and many peace lover individuals etc also came forward to restore normalcy. Mr. R. Keishing, the then Deputy Chief Minister convened many meetings to restore normalcy. One remarkable meeting was a meeting of the Presidents of All Tribal Organizations on 5th June 1993. According to KIM, “in a meeting of Presidents of All Tribal Organizations convened by the then Deputy Chief Minister, Pu Rishang Keishing in his office on 5.6.1993, the following decisions were taken:

(i) Payment of Ex-Gratia for persons killed in ethnic trouble be made within June, 1993.
(ii) Sanction for issue of 5 bundles of CGI sheets per house be made in June, 1993.
(iii) Clothing and Utensils for victim families will be supplied in June 1993.
(iv) Food for work programme will be provided for victim-families.
(v) Security posts will be set up at central locations of minority-inhabited areas and the tension-prone areas of Chandel, Ukhrul and Senapati Districts of Manipur.
(vi) Government will adopt measures for normalization of the situation and ensure speedy return of the forced out and deserted people to their respective original places and villages.  

549 The Address of the President of Kuki Inpi Manipur (KIM) on the occasion of the first session of KIM Assembly, 1st May 1995, Department of Communication, Kuki Inpi Manpur (KIM), p.4.
It was not easy to materialize these decisions yet they were pursued and many of
the victims were helped to some extent. The All Manipur Tribals’ Conference on Peace
and Harmony was held on the 31st May 1995, at the 1st Bn Manipur Rifles Ground,
Imphal. All the tribal leaders and elders were invited to attend this conference. In this
conference, Rishang Keishing the then Deputy Chief Minister of Manipur says, “the
government of Manipur has tried its level best to settle the grievances of the feuding
communities and make them live in peace and harmony once again...a Committee for
the Restoration of Normalcy (CRN) was set to provide a forum for dialogue between the
leaders of the two communities. The Nagas were represented by the United Naga
Council of Manipur (UNC) and the Kukis by the Kuki Inpi Manipur (KIM). Several
rounds of dialogues have been held. However, the results have not been very
encouraging so far because EXTREMIST ELEMENTS from both tribes have not
cooperated. Nevertheless, the effort has not been given up and there is still hope that all
concerned would see reason and decide to live peacefully again.”

(c) Role of Tribals’ Politicians, Officers and Students

Besides, the tribals’ leaders meetings and conferences, there were many peace
initiatives from different tribal groups, amongst many, mention may be made of Tribal
M.L.As, Manipur, Tribal Students Body of DM College Arts & Commerce and Tribal
Lawyers etc. The Tribal M.L.As of Manipur organized a peace rally on 28th January 1994
at Polo ground (Statehood Square), Imphal, Manipur. In their appeal for participation in
peace rally, they wrote that the clashes between the Meiteis and the Pangals in the Valley
and the Nagas and the Kukis in the hills which erupted suddenly in the recent past
annihilating hundreds of precious lives, burning down and uprooting hundreds of human
beings. This frenzy has caused untold human misery and sorrow beyond comprehension
and comparison. The redeeming feature was that the Meitei-Pangal trouble was contained

550 See Government of Manipur notification to the Office of the Sub-Divisional Officer: Chakpikarong, 24th
551 Key Note Address of Shri Rishang Keishing, Chief Minister, Manipur in The All Manipur Tribals’
in a matter of days whereas the Naga-Kuki trouble still continues unabated, viciously affecting individual life, family life, community life, the interest of the state and the country. This act of human madness has to be put to an end completely and forthwith, no matter how heavy or great be the cost. In this great endeavour, active participation of the people of every walk of life is necessary and called for. An open appeal/letter signed by Chief Minister, R.Keishing, Minister (Excise & Taxation), Ngamthang Haokip, KIM’s President, Holkhomang Haokip and UNC’s President, G. Gaingam writes: “Beloved Kuki and Naga brethren, for the sake of our race, our state, our humanity and above all for the sake of our dear Lord Jesus Christ, we call upon those involved directly or indirectly in the Kuki-Naga clashes to stop forthwith all such acts and never to return to the cult of violence. Forgive and forget the past happenings as our Lord has forgiven guilt/sins of each one of us. Let us start altogether a new life of peace, harmony and amity among Kukis and Nagas. Let there be no more burning of houses. Let no more killings. Let no more harm come upon innocent civilians including women, children and aged. Let no more passengers be pulled out of buses and vehicles. Let everyone whether over ground or underground together now actively engage in works to bring peace and normalcy amongst members of the two tribes in particular and the state in general. This is our earnest appeal to all. The people’s mandate is that they want peace. Let us ensure that the people’s mandate is honoured.”

The Mail on 10th October 1993 reported that the Manipur Tribal Lawyers’ Forum appealed to all and sundries (Nagas and Kukis) for restoring immediate peace and harmony. The Newspaper report says that in a significant and bold move by the combined strength of the Tribal Students comprising Nagas and Kukis made a touching unbiased appeal to both the communities to shun violence and contribute to the restoration of normalcy in the hill areas of the state now that so much damage has been done and so many lives have been sacrificed in the unprecedented feud.... the body is

---

552 Appeal for Participation in Peace Rally (leaflet), Tribal M.L.As, Manipur.
553 An appeal/Letter, Beloved Kuki & Naga Brethren (both over ground and underground), Chief Minister, R.Keishing, Minister (Excise & Taxation), Ngamthang Haokip, KIM’s President, Holkhomang Haokip and UNC’s President, G. Gaingam, 27th July 1996.
likely to meet in a conference in the last part of the month to chalk out peace programmes.\textsuperscript{555}

\textit{(d) All Tribal Women Association of Manipur}

In Manipur, there is tribal women organization known as All Tribal Women Organization (ATWO). It is an apex body of tribal women organizations in Manipur. This organization of all tribal women of Manipur includes Naga women and the Kuki women. Rita Manchanda says: "The existence of an NGO like The All Tribal Women's Organization (ATWO) has helped to encourage habits of cooperation and trust."\textsuperscript{556} ATWO has been in the forefront of building communication, trust and cooperation between the Nagas and Kukis as well as the non-tribal Meira Paibis.\textsuperscript{557} During the Naga-Kuki violent conflict, ATWO played important role for peace between the two warring communities. This could be seen from this evidence: "Given the high levels of tension and suspicion between the communities, the Kuki President M.Hechin Haokip tried an experiment in social integration by supporting inter community volley ball matches. Amita Tuishimi, in particular, has been very active in reaching out to all communities. In 1993, when two Kuki boys were arrested, she intervened and got them release. Again, when four Kukis were shot dead and two injured, she went to see the injured in hospital in Imphal. At the peak of Naga-Kuki war, Amita Tushimi (Secretary of ATWO), and T Shangnu of Naga Women Union Manipur (NWUM) went to Kuki villages and appealed to the women and elders to try and stop the killings. They facilitated meetings between the Nagas and Kukis."\textsuperscript{558}

\textsuperscript{555} 'DM College Tribal Students Unite for Peace and Harmony', \textit{The Mail}, Imphal, 10\textsuperscript{th} October 1993.
\textsuperscript{557} Ibid.,p.60.
\textsuperscript{558} Ibid.,p.60.
The Naga Women Union of Manipur (NWUM) and the Kuki Women’s Organization (KWO) also played an important role for peace during the Naga-Kuki conflict. NWUM is an apex organization of the Naga tribes’ women organizations in Manipur, and its president during the conflict was Gina Shangkham. KWO is also an apex organization of the Kuki women in Manipur. There were many events where either or both took active part in peace efforts. For instance, Rita Manchanda writes that “in April 1995 in the midst of the inter-violece between the Kukis and the Nagas, NWUM opened a channel of communication to the Kuki women’s organizations in Senapati district, Manipur. For two months talk went back and forth and a meeting was arranged in the home of a Kuki women in a Kuki village.”559 This meeting did not bring any concrete result. However, this shows that the NWUM and KWO played an important role in the restoration of peace between the two communities. The Naga Women Union of Manipur was involved in many peace meetings, talks and seminars, etc., during this period. NWUM also has a significant voice among the Nagas, particularly in Manipur. They still organize seminars and meetings for peace and confidence-building measures in different parts of Naga inhabited areas, particularly in Manipur.

559 Ibid., pp. 63-64.

As it has been shown earlier, the Nagas and the Kukis live side by side with each other in the hills’ country. There is no hill district, which is purely occupied by one community or ethnic group though the Nagas are much more in numbers in the four out of the five Hill Districts. As a result of this geographical situation, there were inter-communities’ peace meetings at the levels of District, Sub-divisional and Regional. Taking an example of each will show these. On 6th August 1996, Manipur Chief Minister Rishang Keishing invited the leaders and the elders of Chandel District for a peace
meeting. In his invitational letter he writes: "The Kuki-Naga ethnic violence in Chandel District has constantly been our great concern. We have to find out some means to remedy this situation urgently."\(^{560}\) This is one example of peace meetings at district levels. One interesting peace initiative of the communities was inter-community football-match in order to bring normalcy: in Senapati district there were football matches between the Nagas and the Kukis at Tumnoupokpi, Senapati district Hqs and Kangpokpi. These football-matches were organized by the people themselves. In Ukhrul District too there were such football-matches.

The Chandel District is divided into two Assembly constituencies (A/C), viz, A/C 41 and A/C 42. The Moreh town where the violence concentrated at the beginning is under A/C 42. The moment violence sparked in and around a Moreh town, its surroundings also came to be affected but A/C 41 remained mostly unaffected till the violence reached its peak. One important reason being there was preventive meetings between the Nagas and the Kukis, particularly Chakpikarong sub-division under A/C 41, Chandel District. Here, the case of Chakpikarong sub-division of A/C41 Chandel District peace process will be discussed. In this area, they had preventive peace meetings in 1992 i.e. before it was felt in this area. However, these preventive meetings failed and the bloodshed started between the two communities. Yet, in 1995, the Naga-Kuki civilians formed Peace Committee also known as Peace Committee of Chandel A/C 41 to restore peace in the area. The Members of this peace committee of the Naga-Kuki conflict are as follow:

**The members of the Nagas**

1. BD. Behring, Ex-MLA & Ex-MP (Member),
2. SP. Modal, President, CSD Anal Chief Association (Member),
3. RD. Chumnal, ANTA President (Secretary),
4. Ts. Chumhring, V/President ANTA (Member),
5. Ws. Lumshel, Chief of Salluk (Member),
6. Kl. Samuel, Chief of Hnatham (Member).

\(^{560}\) An Invitation Letter of Chief Minister, Manipur, D. O. No.2/8/96-CM, 1st August 1996.
The members of the Kukis
1. Hangkhanpao, Sitting MLA, (Chairman)
2. Lompanlo Zou, Social worker (Member),
3. Chungsei Haokip, Social worker (Member),
4. Ngamkhosi Baite, Chief of Sugnu Tribal (Member),
5. Seikang, Haikha (Member)
6. Chungkhujam, New Santal (Member).

This peace committee, since its inception had a series of meetings for the restoration of normalcy, one of the most important meetings was the meeting held on 7th May 1997 at the residence quarter of Shri Hangkhanpao Taithul, Govt. Chief Whip, Manipur. In this meeting, it was resolved to convene a public meeting at Sajik Tampak on 15th May 1997 and a final public meeting with lunch on 17th May 1997 at Chakpikarong. The final meeting was held with two Mithuns killed for lunch, in which they passed resolutions: those killings, burning down of houses and inflicting violence ended here from this day onwards. Secondly, no disturbances in traveling or journey shall be done. Finally, let's live lives by eating and drinking together like before. After this meeting there was no incident of violence between them. The account of Anal (Naga) and Kuki peace process in Chakpikarong sub-division of Chandel district could be gleaned from the narration of S.P. Modal.

According to S.P. Modal, "in 1995, peace was initiated by the leaders of the area i.e. the Nagas and the Kukis. It also included militants from KNA and NSCN-IM (Lieutenant PS. Fission). While peace was on, some of the Kukis killed the Anals. For this, M.L.A. Hangkhanpao and I went to R.Keishing for help. The leaders of the area i.e. the Anal Naga and the Kuki agreed to form a committee. The committee consist about 12 men from each community. However, the committee failed to achieve its objective because the Kukis could not talk to KNA or KNA did not pay heed to the committee members of the Kukis. This failure, however, did not deter us to pursue farther for peace. After a while, M.L.A. Hangkhanpao came to me and told me to wait for his word. BD. Behring, Ex-M.L.A., came to visit Sajik Tampak, which is some kilometers away from Chakpikarong sub-division Hq, unwillingly many of us went with him, on our way, we
were ambushed but we managed to escape. We had peace-talk in Hekha and we talked to KNA. After this, the leaders as well as the people of the Nagas and the Kukis could meet and there were tears. Consequently, KNA agreed for peace in this area. On 17th May 1997, they had a last meeting for peace and passed resolutions for peace by killing two Mithuns."

The above narration of SP.Modal shows us about the peace committee, the role of militants, their efforts for peace and the hurdles in the peace process. Thus, the peace, they pursued in this area, like any other affected areas, was not an easy task when one looks into the prevailing atmosphere of those days: while peace efforts were on its way, the killings continued and condemnation on each other in the newspapers and other sorts did not halt. As a result, the peace committee or makers were risking their lives, particularly members belonging to these communities. Nevertheless, the case of Peace Committee of Chandel 41 A/C could be termed as one of many successful stories of peace initiatives, as there was no incident of killing and burning down of house/ village after the final meeting. However, these successful peace efforts came only after many lives were lost, hundreds houses burnt, many maimed, properties damaged. Still, had not the peace been restored, there would have been many more losses. There were many Peace Committees in different areas but unlike the Peace Committee of Chandel 41 A/C, they did not succeed.

The Church’s Role in the Peace Process

The role of Church to restore normalcy in the Naga – Kuki violent conflict is remarkable and perceivable. In fact, one could say, the churches persistently worked for the peace despite many problems. As it has been mentioned, the Nagas (About 95%) and the Kukis (more than 98%) are Christians by faith. In church denominations, the Baptist and the Catholics are 1st and 2nd respectively in the numbers of their members among

these ethnic communities. These dominant churches as well as other churches in general began praying and preaching to maintain peace and harmony and to forgive and forget each other from the early stage of violence between the two. They also extended help to the affected ones, financially, materially and morally too.

The first and foremost thing this study would like to mention is the existence of churches having members of trans-crossing language and ethnic (etc) barriers. In many of such churches, there were members ethnically belonged to the warring communities. These churches played a vital role to bring normalcy in their relations by not only praying for peace to prevail but also extended invaluable support to the victims, spiritually and materially.

The MBC is an apex convention or church for the Baptist churches in Manipur. It is the largest convention or church in Manipur whose members in both the communities are more in numbers than any other denominations. Longchar says, "the peace initiative by the Manipur Baptist Convention failed. The Peace Mission Team Members were beaten up badly in many places." This shows the fate of ‘Peace Mission Team’ from the Manipur Baptist Convention (MBC). The influence of MBC over these two groups was greatly expected but then they failed not only to bring peace but also to be recognized as ambassador of peace. In such a situation, the smaller churches’ role could not be greatly expected though they played the role of whatever they could. Longchar, further, says, "The necessity of neutral party from other communities in North East India became very absolutely necessary. Longchar writes, “the Council of Baptist Churches in North East India (CBCNEI) played a very significant role in bringing normalcy during this time of crisis. The Council decided to form a “Good Will Mission” comprising of five (5) members with the following objectives:

- Reduce tensions between the warring communities.

563 Ibid., p.107.
Stop killings of innocent people, destroying of properties.
- Help find means of reconciliation, forgiveness and peace.
- Seek relief funds, materials to help victims survive during this struggle period of violence. In order to express our solidarity, love and sympathy with the victims, the team members paid several visits and some members even stayed more than a month among the affected people.  

The 'Good Will Mission' (GWM) was established by the CBCNEI. Besides others, it also initiated 'Pulpit Exchange Programme', in which the Kuki leaders were sent to the Naga churches and the Naga leaders to the Kuki churches in Ukhrul, Senapati, Chandel and Tamenglong Districts to preach 'Peace', 'Love' and 'Forgiveness' between them so that normalcy returns. To quote Longchar, "one of the first major decisions taken by the Peace Committee was to organize pulpit exchange programmes in the churches. However, there was a big problem. People were suspicious of one another. This prevailed even among the churches. Therefore, only 29 churches were selected for the pulpit exchange programme. The Naga leaders were sent to Kuki churches and vice-versa on the 7th July 1996. They were asked to proclaim the message of love, forgiveness, and peace. The programme was successful in the sense that many participants received encouragement and gained confidence at least to some extent."  

PK. Thekho also says, "there was Pulpit exchanged programme in Senapati District Headquarters to bring peace." GWM team also organized prayers, fasting prayers and chain prayer programmes. They also collected relief funds, these funds were preceded towards the victims of the Naga-Kuki violent conflict. Further, Longchar writes, "to assist and advise in the peace efforts of the CRN, the Good Will Team invited some experts from the USA, two experts came and helped in dealing with the issue."  

---

564 Ibid., p.107.
565 Ibid., p.109.
566 An excerpt from an interview of PK.Thekho (Paumai), Ex-Covenor of NPMHR, he hails from Senapati District.
The All Manipur Christian Organization (AMCO), since its formation strove for the peaceful co-existence of all the groups and churches. AMCO actively participated in the restoration of normalcy for the Naga-Kuki violent conflict. It still continues its work in confidence building measures for these two tribes. Tarapot says that since both the rival factions are Christians, the All Manipur Christian Organisation (AMCO) involved itself in an attempt to bring the warring groups to negotiating table. Besides this, AMCO have a prayer day, recently, i.e. on 2nd October 2004, AMCO had a prayer day at MBC center church, Imphal with a theme: 'Pursue Peace with all People (Heb.12: 14)'.

Further, the prominent churches namely, Baptist, Catholics and Presbyterians, etc., in North East India came together and met all the communities so that peace, love, forgiveness and harmony reigned in the Naga-Kuki relationship. The Churches in Manipur and in North East India used All India Radio and Newspapers to preach about 'Love', 'Forgiveness', and 'Peace' and appeal to them to end taking away lives, inflicting sufferings on the masses and destruction of properties. It appears that the Churches pursued the Naga-Kuki leaders to come to negotiation table. They also sought and collected money and materials to help the victims of the Naga-Kuki violent conflict. One important event of the church's role was a 'Peace march' on 1st May 1993. Tarapot says that what is noteworthy was seven day Imphal-Moreh –Imphal 'Peace March' from 1st May 1993 in which thousands of youths from valley participated in it to bring peace and harmony in 'our beautiful motherland which is now under a cruel spell of ethnic violence'. The people including various communities rose to the occasion to restore love and confidence among the ethnic groups of Manipur and to bridge the gap and misunderstanding between the two major tribes in the state. Journalists, politicians, voluntary organizations, social activists and various ethnic communities took part in the 'Peace March'. According to Longchar, a Peace March from Imphal to Moreh comprised of all ethnic groups. The leaders of the churches also made their best attempts to restore peace and harmony. The prominent church leaders visited the affected

569 Ibid.,p.201.
areas in the hills pointing out the futility of killing and torturing each other and asked the warring tribes to end this senseless violence.571

Thus, the church’s role to restore normalcy in the Naga–Kuki violent conflict was one of the most remarkable ones, which was persistent and enduring. Despite, strenuous efforts the Church could not restore normalcy as early as it was needed. Some of the reasons have been mentioned in the fourth chapter. One of the most important reasons is that the Church did not control the militants of both the groups. Yet, the Church continued its works for ‘peace’, ‘Love’, ‘Non-violence’ and ‘Forgiveness’, etc. It was a shameful thing too for the Christians to see two communities belonging to Christian faith involved in violent conflict. Moreover, it was contrary to their belief. Thus, most of Christian leaders and many laymen risked their lives to end the violent conflict.

*Militants’ Role for Peace*

It has been mentioned that militants’ clashes gradually affected the civilians and then sparked off the violence between the two communities. In this violent conflict of the Nagas and the Kukis, the main actors were the militants, namely, the NSCN-IM and the KNA. The reasons for these were: NSCN-IM and NSCN-K are rivals and the NSCN-K and the KNA are allies. In this situation, NSCN-K remained aloof or even supported KNA and NSCN-IM was its archrival. KNA and KNF were also foes, this could be seen from KNF calling Manipur bandh from 20th–25th April 1993, which was condemned by KNA as ‘irresponsible act’.572 Thus, KNA and NSCN-IM became the key militants engaged in the Naga Kuki violent conflict. As a matter of fact, the civilians were caught unaware. The peace process initiated by the GOVERNMENT, NGOs, CRN, CHURCH, TRIBAL LEADERS, STUDENTS and other various groups became ineffective because the main actors with sophisticated weapons were not ready to obey them. The Naga and the Kuki leaders blamed each other, for their inability to talk to their underground outfits.

---

Both the leaders of the Nagas and the Kukis did not control their militants. Therefore, the peace or ceasefire or an understanding between the two militant groups was needed to contain the Naga-Kuki violent ethnic conflict. In early 2000, NSCN-IM and UKLF made an agreement to end Naga-Kuki violent conflict. It is the first Kuki underground organization that made an agreement with NSCN-IM. It is believed that UKLF was formed to end the Naga-Kuki violent conflict. One of the main aims of UKLF is to bring and maintain peace and harmony in the Naga-Kuki relationship. The KRA source says, “KRA has no link with KNA. KRA after its formation in 2000 made an understanding with NSCN-IM that if any civilians are killed, we should not take revenge or take punitive action for the victims instead we should send public to normalize the situation. Secondly, we should also stop the civilian killings. Thirdly, we should also talk to the leaders to stop killing each other. These principles were carried out with strong determination.” Unlike KNA, Kuki Revolutionary Army (KRA) did not take part in the violent ethnic conflict, yet, KRA and NSCN-IM agreed and pursued for peace between the Nagas and the Kukis.

The Kuki National Army and NSCN-IM came to sign agreement. P.S. Haokip writes that the KNO through its armed wing, the Kuki National Army (KNA), agreed to a ceasefire with the Tangkhul dominated NSCN-IM in 2002. He further says that this was done (a) to demonstrate Kukis did not begrudge Naga gaining its due as a result of the talks with GOI, and (b) that Nagas would honourably reprocicate where Kuki issues were concerned. An agreement signed by the main actors i.e. KNA and NSCN-IM in the conflict could be interpreted as the end of killings between the two communities. All these implied that the militants also realized the futility of the ethnic conflict and came forward for peace. However, one could easily gauge from the half-complete list of the victims and properties damaged shows that this realization came only after much damage have been done to each other. Yet, peace agreements signed by them ended the killings.

573 It is quoted from K. Hangsin, 7th April 2005.
575 Ibid.,p.7
Today there is peace between the two communities. It is believed that they are still working for peace so that permanent peace reigns between the two communities.
common culture, commonality in behaviour and mindset, similarity in outlook, appearance and way of lives, etc. Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization defines a nation or people as a group of human beings, which possesses the will to be identified as a nation, and to determine its common destiny as a nation and is bound to a common heritage, which can be historical, racial, ethnic, linguistic, cultural, religious and territorial. Representative body, liberation movement or other organ of leadership, whether in the territory of the Nations or in exile, recognized as such by a substantial section of the people.\textsuperscript{576} Thus, these communities considered themselves as nations. Many of them looked at Indian government as an imposed government. Most of them have launched movements against Indian Government with wide-ranging demands: some fall within the confines of Indian Constitution and others are outside the ambit of Indian Constitution.

Ethnic relations in India’s northeast are generally characterized by violence and peace. However, there are also ethnic communities whose relations are marked by perennial peaceful relations or perennial conflict. Many a times, violent ethnic relations in this part of India, particularly after India’s independent go to the extreme: where violence is used not only to hurt or kill but also to demonstrate brutality with sophisticated weapons. Some of the violent conflicts in northeast states in the last decade of 20\textsuperscript{th} century are: in Tripura; tribals and non-tribals etc., in Assam; Bodo-Santhal, Karbis-Kukis, Karbis-Damasas etc., in Manipur; Meitie-Pangal, Naga-Kuki, Kuki-Paite, Kuki-Meitie, etc., in Meghalaya; tribals and non-tribals, etc. All these violent conflicts did not attract much attention from the central government and national media. Even today, there are many ethnic tensions in this part of the country.

This study is based on extensive and intensive study of the Nagas and the Kukis and their relations as two ethnic entities using primary as well as secondary sources. Historical interpretations of these sources have been done by using relevant historical methods.

\textsuperscript{576} Rabijit Choudhuri, ‘Indigenous people’ being brought together in North-East, \textit{The Statesman}, 6\textsuperscript{th} March 1995.
This study on the ethnic identities of the Nagas and the Kukis is a complicated one. One reason being the written records and published sources on ethnic identities of the Nagas and Kukis and their relationship are limited. For the pre-British era, traces of references to them in Buranji, Royal Chronicle of Teppera (Tripura) and Royal Chronicle of Manipur are found but they are inadequate to construct an adequate picture about different aspects of their history. The writings on them came to be available with the advent of British rule and Christian missionaries. Many ethnographers, anthropologies, administrators and Christian missionaries, during the British period produced varieties of records and books on them. These have greatly contributed to our study on them. At the same time, many scholars, administrators and the natives have found errors and inadequacies in these records and books. Many post independent researchers, scholars, administrators and intellectuals, including the concerned ethnies, have produced published and unpublished books and articles. In this situation, to study ethnic identities and the relationship between the Nagas and the Kukis are more difficult as the sources are very limited. The available sources are mostly Newspapers' articles and stray references in published and unpublished articles and books. The enormous sources remain in the form of oral history.

The Nagas and the Kukis are found together in India’s northeast and Myanmar. Besides this, the Kukis are found in Bangladesh. The areas they occupied in northeast India and Myanmar are contiguous and compact. In the Chittagong Hill Tracts, north of Bangladesh, the Kukis live there. This area is contiguous to ‘Chin-Kuki-Mizo’ areas in India and Myanmar. It is interesting to note that if one draws a line between Nagas’ settlements and Chin-Kuki-Mizo or Zomi or Zou or Kuki, etc., settlements in areas encompassing Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh, Sagaing Division and Kachin State of Myanmar, and Lushai Hills with adjoining hills and Naga hills with its adjoining hills, there seems to be something like an imaginary boundary between them. The reason being, in one part, Chin-Kuki-Mizo population dominates and the Naga populations dominate the other part. Of course, in each of these, each population is found but small in numbers.
As a result of these, there were trans-national movements of the concerned ethnies. A scholar is bound to ask: why? How? For them, it was simple as their ethnic groups, clansmen or cousins are living in these areas, some here and others there, they could visit each other and if the situation demands they could settle near each other. When the laws of respective countries slapped them, they were compelled to restrict or stop it. But this is not their fault; it begins with the demarcation of their areas. They have occupied these areas for centuries i.e., prior to the advent of British colonialism. The colonialists divided the areas between British India and Myanmar and during the transfer of power from British to India and Pakistan, now in Bangladesh after her independence from Pakistan. Within respective countries, they were divided and came under different states and administrative units. Today, both the ethnies are contesting these divisions by demanding integration and sovereignty for these ancestral homelands.

Today, the Nagas and Kukis are two separate ethnic entities. This began since the advent of the British rule though the terms were used to address them. Some hypothesized that separate ethnic entities also existed in pre-British period. However, looking at inter-tribes and inter-villages wars, the regular and popular use of these terms came only with the British rulers. The classifications of the two into two ethnies, invention of yardstick to determine who are the Naga and Kuki tribes and the advent of ethnic consciousness among the concerned ethnies came with the advent of British rule. This does not mean to deny the existence of their inherent ethnic identities but the level of ethnic consciousness and acceptability by both insiders and outsiders as self perceived ethnic entities.

The term Naga has been successful in becoming an identity of the Nagas as there is no challenger from within. There are some outsiders of the community who attempted to challenge the ethnic identity of the Nagas but they have not brought out acceptable sources, interpretations and hypotheses. Thus, Naga as ethnic group or ‘nation’ stands firm, so is the ethnic identity of the Nagas.
In the case of the Kukis, the contenders not only come from outside but also from within. There are many scholars and intellectuals who advocated that Kuki is a term covering various tribes and the Thadou/ Kuki speaking is one of the tribes. This also means that the tribes under the label Kuki speak different languages but they have mutual affinities. Thus, to them, the term Kuki is an ethnic identity of various tribes including Kuki/Thadou speaking tribe. However, there are many scholars and intellectuals who have propounded that Kuki is synonymous to Thadou speaking group and Kuki is an ethnic identity of the Thadou/ Thadou Kuki/ Kuki speaking peoples.

In this study, I used Kuki as an ethnic identity of the Kuki/Thadou/ Thadou Kuki speaking community. It is not to take sides with any contending group over ethnic identity but to study Kuki/Thadou/Thadou Kuki speaking group and the Nagas and the relations between them. In Manipur state, there are separate recognitions for the Kuki and the Thadou in Schedule Tribe List but in all the states of northeast only Kuki tribe is recognized, which includes the Thadou or its clans. In this context Kuki referred to both Kuki and Thadou tribes of Manipur. The division of Kukis in Manipur into two tribes is politics- partly ethnic identity politics and partly tribal identity politics. The most important of the Kukis referred in my study do believe and practice the same culture, history, political and social organizations, etc. The said community has uniqueness of their own and commonality with other tribes presumed to be in ‘Chin-Kuki-Mizo’ or ‘Zo’ or ‘Zou’ group and even with the Nagas. If one dismissed this ‘uniqueness’, it amounts to erasing out who they really were or are. This does not mean that they should not have. The purpose of using Kuki as an ethnic identity of Kuki/Thadou/Thadou Kuki/ speaking community is based on commonness of the members in all aspects, historical necessity and general acceptability of common people of Kuki speaking community.

The theory of encompassing other recognized tribes under the term Kuki is strongly opposed by the concerned tribes. There are also other theories for the ethnic identity for these tribes including the Kuki/ speaking tribe such as ‘Chin’, ‘Mizo’, ‘Chin-Kuki-Mizo’, ‘CHIKIM’, ‘Zomi’, ‘Zou’, ‘Zo’. These hypotheses are for the ethnic identity of tribes like Mizo, Kuki, Thadou, Chin, Hmar, Paite, Vaiphei, Gangte, Zou,
Simte, etc. So far none of these terms have acquired general acceptability as well as popularity to be their ethnic identity among themselves. During the British era, British rulers used the term ‘Chin-Kuki-Mizo’ and the government of India seems to follow but not rigidly. Further, many of them seem to accept the continuation of the term for their ethnic identity. However, there are many including scholars, leaders and intellectuals of the concern tribes, who disagree with this term. As a result of many terms for ethnic identity of these tribes got compounded by absent of conclusive agreement among them and led many to regard them as groups ‘in search of ethnic identity’. It will be very good if one larger term is accepted as their ethnic identity as early as possible.

The Nagas and Kukis have launched ethnic movements with armed wings. The Naga movement is traced back to Naga Club of 1918. The Naga National Council (NNC) was formed in 1946 with a goal to achieve sovereignty of Naga land or Naga Ancestral Homeland (Nagalim). The Naga Club was the first organization of Nagas for the Nagas. NNC was the first major political organization of the Nagas. NNC’s armed wing Federal Government of Nagaland (FGN) was formed in 1956. Due to what they called ‘betrayal’ of some in 1975 (Shillong Accord) led to the formation of NSCN in 1980. In 1988, due to the infighting in the NSCN led to the split of organization into two- National Socialist Council of Nagaland (Issack-Muivah) and National Socialist Council of Nagaland (Kaplang). Further, NNC and FGN parted company as two organizations. Thus, there are four organizations. The goal of these organizations is the same i.e., for the sovereignty of Naga Land or Naga Ancestral Homeland. At present ‘Indo-Naga Peace Talks’, which began in 1997, are going on. The participation from Naga side is headed by NSCN-IM. Among the Naga underground organizations, NSCN-IM is regarded as the strongest. Besides these, there are number of Naga civil organizations; the apex body of Naga civil organizations is Naga Hoho. The Naga movement is one of the longest movements in the world. It is rapidly growing since recent years. This is proved by their entry into international organization called Un-represented Nations of Peoples Organization (UNPO) based at Hague and Asian organization called Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP) at Bangkok. The feelings of Naga at home are another point to note. Naga
nationalism is deep and penetrates to even to the remotest area. The only thing they feel bad about is the division among themselves, which is still prevailing.

The Kuki ethnic movement could be attributed to begin with the formation of Kuki National Assembly (KNA) in 1946. This movement was an underground civil movement. Despite limited mass base, it presented many important issues for the Kukis. They even threatened to launch a movement like Nagas if their demands were not met. The KNA became recognized political party in Manipur since 1975. The Kuki underground movement came into being since late 1987-8. Today, there are Kuki underground organizations like Kuki National Organization with its armed wing Kuki, Kuki National Front, Reorganization and Confederation of Kukis with its armed wing Kuki Revolutionary Army and United Kuki Liberation Front, etc. The Kuki undergrounds have a common platform called Kuki National Council. The demand of the Kuki undergrounds, both India-based and Myanmar-based, is sovereignty of Kukiland or Kukigam.

The relations between the Nagas and Kukis are marked by peace and war. Pre-British era is generally regarded as a period characterized by headhunting, inter-villages and inter-communities' wars and raids. During this period, there was no sense of ethnic group, ethnic identity and ethnic nationalism. The present day Naga tribes were fighting against each other at village and tribe levels. This was also the situation with the present day Kuki tribe or sub-tribes. Thus, there was no relationship as two ethnic entities. The relations between them were marked as inter-village and inter-tribe or sub-tribe levels. In such relations of the Naga and Kuki villages and sub-tribes, there were both war and peace. If one of the present day Naga tribes was at war with the Kuki tribe or sub-tribe, the other tribe or village of Naga participated on the side of the Kuki. The Kukis also joined either sides of the warring tribes or villages of Nagas. Sometimes they also intervened in the Naga war against each other and brought peace between them. The Kukis were warriors like Nagas but they were stronger due to superior weapons and tactics. On the other hand, many of the Naga tribes were fragile due to frequent fightings and raids against each other. These are regarded as some reasons why Nagas could not
stop the advent of Kukis into their areas. In some cases Naga tribes themselves invited the Kuki chief with his subjects to live in their areas so that they could help them in times of wars. There are also many peace treaties signed between Kuki Chiefs or villages and Naga villages or tribes. Further, there were incidents where Naga tribe or village and Kuki tribe or sub-tribe or village fought together against non-Naga and non-Kuki communities.

With the advent of the British rule in the Naga Hills and Manipur, the influx of Kukis and the Culloch policy of 1940s to settle the new arrivals in the frontier areas and the Naga areas for their vested interest led to the beginning of conspicuous tension in Naga-Kuki relations. During the British rule in these areas, the Nagas and Kukis shared peace as well as violent relations. In this period, two rebellions of each groups occurred. The rebellions show the antagonistic part of their relations. However, after these rebellions, both the group lived in peace till the outburst of Naga-Kuki ethnic violence began in 1992.

During the British rule, the rulers employed 'a policy of divide and rule'. As a result, not only antagonistic part of relations between the Naga and Kuki tribes and villages were fully exploited for their vested interest but also antagonism as two ethnic entities was created. The government of India is also accused of using this policy between the two ethnies. During the Naga –Kuki conflict of the last decade of 20th century, the government role was reported in many of the leading national and local newspapers.

The period between the last rebellion and the Naga-Kuki violent conflict of 1990s was marked by a long period of peaceful relations. Such a long period of peace and a period of tribalistic warfare preceding the British era led ones to doubt the notion of 'permanent enmity'. Secondly, since Naga Club till today the Kukis in Nagaland as Kuki Naga is playing a very important role in the national movement for independence of Naga ancestral homeland. Further a section of Kukis in Manipur and other parts who regarded themselves as representative of Kuki community gave 'unflinching support' to
sovereignty of Naga Ancestral Homeland. On the other hand, whenever violent clash burst out between them the old rivalry issues resurfaced. Thus, both rivalry and peace were inherent in their relations.

The Naga-Kuki ethnic clash of 1992 to the end of the century was sort of an unpredicted ethnic violence of the two. The relations between the two groups began to change with the split of NSCN and the emergence of Kuki undergrounds in the late 1980s. The clash between them was an outcome of various causes like land, ethnic identity and its related problems, etc., but there were immediate issues like territorial dominance, Tax and control of Moreh town and NH-39, etc., provided to spark off the ethnic violence. The clash began with their militants i.e., NSCN-IM and KNA. Gradually, it came to affect their respective civilians. Soon, a full-blown Naga-Kuki violent ethnic conflict headed by their militants came into being. In this violent conflict all the Nagas and Kukis did not participate but all were directly or indirectly affected by it. Hundreds of lives were lost; hundreds remained maimed; thousands lost their hearths and homes; thousands still remain as refugees. The material loss could not be estimated. In short, the loss caused by this conflict could not be calculated. Above all the sufferings of the people including psychological, could not be expressed by words.

The restoration of normalcy began with the violence in Moreh town but failed badly. While the violent clash headed by militants continued, the peace process initiated by Government, CRN, Churches, Communities’ leaders both men and women, from local to state level, also continued. However, peace could not be achieved. The important reason was that the main militants involved in this clash did not obey. Yet the efforts for peace continued till the end. There were incidences where the regional leaders of militants of some areas also pursued for peace between them in that area. By the turn of 21st century restoration of normalcy began to materialize as Naga-Kuki militants came to sign agreements. Today, Naga-Kuki militants are having good rapport. The Naga-Kuki civilians are beginning to feel the air of genuine peace. Confidence building measures and prayers are continuing for the Naga-Kuki relations, so that there is genuine peace.
For this, NGOs, Churches, Government, Civil organizations of the Nagas and the Kukis continue to pursue measures for peace and prevention of violence.

The Nagas and Kukis with many shared similarities as well as uniquenesses have conducted relations for centuries. A good relation between the Nagas and the Kukis is a need for both. Nagas as dominant ethnic group in the area comprises the states of Nagaland and its adjoining hills in Assam and hills of Manipur except Churachanpur should not carry out any plan in exclusion of Kukis and it should not even creep into the minds of Nagas a crime like 'ethnic cleansing' happening in many parts of the world. The Kukis should not be easily swayed by others, particularly to destroy their peaceful relation with the Nagas. They themselves should take decisions for themselves. Both should look at the history, culture, social practices, political organization and religion, etc., of both sympathetically. The past experiences of unwanted tensions should not be repeated and should be a lesson for the peace and good relations in present and future.