INTRODUCTION

The adjective term 'ethnic' preceded the noun 'ethnicity'. Ethnicity emerged after the Second World War though the term ethnicity exists prior to 2nd world war and the study on the ethnicity is gaining momentum since 1960. Dennes L.Thompson says: "the term ethnicity has replaced the terms like Nationality, National grouping and Minority." In India there are many ethnic entities: some have launched ethnic movements with an armed wing while others launch ethnic movements, which do not involve armed clashes. Of course, there are also ethnic entities with no movements. In ethnic movements with arms or without, northeast region of India is one of the most important regions. Yet "rarely do northeastern issues make it to the front page, quite unlike the treatment given by the national press to similar unrests in other parts of the country. Verily, the region is geographically and even otherwise at the periphery of the National consciousness." As a result of this apathy, the knowledge about northeast region is poor among the population of the rest of the country. This is one reason why the ethnic movements like Nagas is least known, despite, christened as the longest movement. The ethnic clashes in northeast after India's independent are, at times, worst than any of the bloody clash in the rest of the country in terms of brutality, heavy toll on innocent human lives, properties and span of conflict but mostly went unnoticed. There are many complains about apathy towards India's northeast issue like Naga-Kuki violent ethnic conflict. For instance, Pranay Sharma complains in a newspaper:

"The spate of killings of innocent Kukis and Nagas by insurgents in Manipur reveals the absence of a comprehensive government policy for the regions and shows removed the northeast is from the National Consciousness. Since last October, when ethnic clashes between Kukis and Nagas first broke out, over 1,000 people have been killed, but precious little had been done by the Union Government to bring the situation under control. Neither has the opposition exerted pressure on the center to tackle the turmoil in the Northeast meaningfully. Observers feel that this lack of attention shows that the region is not one of the nation's top priorities. The centre's responses to

problems in the northeast has been characterized by knee-jerk reactions and short-term solutions though 47 years have passed since independence, no effort has been made to evolve a policy that would take care of the special need of the region. The problems of the northeast are not merely political but also cultural, social, linguistic and economic in nature. The Union Minister of State for Home (Internal Security), Mr. Rajest Pilot was prompt in visiting the state thrice this year. But apart from dismissing the director-general of police, for his failure to contain communal clashes in May, he did not do anything. Politicians from the region wonder how the Manipur Chief Minister, Mr. R.K Doreendra Singh, is sitting pretty despite the incessant killings of innocents in his state, when the DGP was dismissed for the very same reason. Source close to Mr. Pilot, however, maintain that he had strongly recommended Singh ministry, but the Prime Minister chose to ignore it. The Centre's attitude is reflected by the bureaucrats here. Asked to comment on the steps being taken by the government on Manipur, a home ministry official said, "We have already dispatched an additional battalion of CRPF to the State." It seems that Delhi wants to find a readymade solution to the problem merely by sending additional Para-military forces. The Union home minister, Mr. S.B. Chavan, is so bogged down with problems of Hindi heartland that he has repeatedly postponed his visit to the region. In the Parliament, the demands and problems of northeast are seldom voice. Recently, the Madras blast, the killing of a TDP MLA in Andra Pradesh and the flare-ups in the northeast were almost simultaneous forcing the Centre to make statements on both the Madras blast and the killing of the TDP legislator, P.Shiva Reddy, M.Ps from Bihar and Bengal also sought clarification on the win tragedies. However, when Mr. Pilot makes a suo-moto statement on the Kuki-Naga clashes, only a handful of MPs were present in the House.~

Northeast region has seven states connected to the mainstream India in a long 14 km neck and share international boundaries with China, Bhutan, Myanmar and Bangladesh, which is about 2% of India’s international boundaries. Historically, pockets of Assam were known to some ‘mainstream’ rulers of India and later on, princely states like Manipur came to have some link with ‘mainstream’ India prior to the advent of the British rule. But the rest of the areas were unknown areas and were occupied by various tribes like the Nagas. With the advent of British rule, this situation came to be altered. The treaty of Yandabo in 1826 between British rulers and Burma, besides others, is remarkable as it paved the way for the British rulers to conquer some (approx.1/3) of the tribes’ areas and to claim the rest of unconquered areas as theirs though their administration did not extend over to these areas. Further, princely state like Manipur also came to be under the influence of the colonialists.

When India got Independence, it inherited the areas enclosed by colonial boundaries. In the northeast, the princely kingdoms and the ethnic entities were persuaded to join Indian Union by signing ‘instrument of accession’. However, many of

them refused to sign it. But gradually all of them were persuaded by fair or foul means to sign it: the Mizos joined Indian Union voluntarily as it was perceived a sort of social compulsion during that period. Khasis signed ‘instrument of accession’ with opposition from within. In the case of the Nagas, they refused to join Indian Union, thus, ‘Hydari agreement’ was signed on 26th June 1947. But the government failed to implement it. Till date, this agreement remains a bone of contention between the Indian government and the Nagas. The Princely states like Tripura and Manipur signed ‘agreement of accession’ in 1949. Thus, by 1949 northeast region came to be considered as a part of Indian union, which completed India inheritance of colonial boundaries in northeast. But, today, most of ethnic entities including in princely states questions ‘agreement of accession’ to Indian Union.

Today, there are many ethnic entities in northeast; many of them have launched movements against the government of India. These movements could be classified, keeping in mind Indian Constitution, into three: constitutional, non-constitutional and a mixture of the two. The demands of these movements’ falls under the followings: a) Sovereignty, b) Autonomy within the framework of a nation-state of India c) ethnic rights, recognition, preservation and promotion, etc. The method they adopted to achieve their goals are violent or non violent or both, which means non-constitutional or constitutional or both.

Most of the ethnic groups in northeast India considers Indian rule as the same as British colonialism. Therefore, ethnic movements to many of them is to free themselves from Indian colonialism. The ethnic groups like the Nagas say that they never signed any agreement to be part of Indian Union, thus, it is an imposed government. Secondly, for those ethnic entities regarded as agreed to be part of Indian Union, question over the signing of ‘instrument of accession’ to Indian union - they considered that it was done by force and fraud means. Further, there are also ethnic entities unnoticed during ‘instrument of accession’ have launched movements for any of the above mentioned goals.
Some of the ethnic movements in northeast India began during colonial era while others on the eve of India's independence or after India independence. Today, many of these movements in northeast are labeled as 'insurgencies' which means 'rising in revolt against an established civil authority'.

"Coming now to the Northeast India scene, it is incumbent for us to know the significance of the term 'insurgency' while referring to the various political movements that took place during the British period and which are taking place ever since India’s independence. The question before us is: whether the leaders of these movements call themselves insurgents...we may surmise how they would call themselves: freedom fighters, patriots, liberators, or defenders of their nation, faith and culture...All of them did not regard themselves as 'insurgents'. They all talked about their country, nation, identity, faith and culture in the sense of being a Naga, a Manipuri, or a Mizo. An attempt to preserve one’s identity does not necessarily mean that he is an insurgent nor does an attempt to preserve one’s independence, from the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN) point of view, amounts to insurgency. It therefore depends on how the concerned parties look at the problem."

The major movements in the Northeast are:

1. The Nagas movement.
2. The Assamese movement.
3. The Bodos movement.
4. The Damasas movement.
5. The Karbis movement.
7. The Kukis movement.
8. The Tripuris movement.
10. The Khasis movement.

5 Ibid., pp.3-4.
There are many more movements but the ones mentioned above are a few of the major movements. Since years back, these movements in northeast forge alliances to fight jointly against Indian government to achieve their goals. In recent years, alliances and unity have become prominent features for the ethnic movements in northeast India: on 22 May 990, Indo-Burma Revolutionary Front of the NSCN (K), ULFA and UNLF was formed, in late 1993 United Liberation Front of the Seven Sisters (ULFSS) was formed under the leadership of the NSCN-IM and on November 30, 1994 Self-Defense United Front of South-East Himalaya Region (SDUFSEAHR) with 23 representatives under the leadership of NSCN-IM. These organizations are different from the Northeast-East Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Forum as the latter is the organization represented and headed by overground ethnic leaders. The Northeast-East Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Forum was established in 1994 i.e., after the International Year of Indigenous Peoples in 1993. It was reported in the newspaper, “extraneous agencies seem to be working in tandem with the National Socialist Council of Nagaland to forge alliance between all the secessionist and separatist ethnic movements through the apparently innocuous mobilization of “indigenous peoples” in the North-East. A common feature that has been discerned is the plea for right to self-determination for all indigenous and tribal people. The inspiration evidently having come from the U.N. draft declaration on the Right of indigenous people.” The U.N. defines the indigenous peoples as descendants of people who inhabited the present territory of a country, wholly or partially at a time when persons of a different culture or ethnic origin arrived from other parts of the world, overcame them, by conquest, settlement or other means reduced to non-dominant or colonial condition. The U.N. seeks to provide right to self-determination to the indigenous people so as to enable them to determine their own political status and institutions. India along with some other counties including USA is opposed to this, as this right will legitimize secession, encourage terrorism and lead to disintegration of States. For North-East, “the North-East Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Forum in its convention at Guwahati in September last year (i.e.1994) welcome the U.N. draft

8 Ibid.
declaration including their right to self determination.”9 “At the 12th session of the United Nations Working Group of Indigenous Populations (UNWGIP) in Geneva last week, held from July 25 to 29, five prominent tribal leaders of India, authorized to present their case by the various tribal organization in the country, said the right of self-determination was now considered a fundamental human rights without which no other human rights could be enjoyed.”10

In this study, I will be dealing with the Nagas, the Kukis and their relations. Before the study begins, I would like to introduce the Nagas and the Kukis.

The Nagas are found both in India and Myanmar. In Myanmar, they settled in Sagaing division and Kachin state and in India, according to the List of Schedule Tribes of India, they are in the states of Nagaland, Assam, Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya and Mizoram. In these states except Manipur they are recognized as ‘Any Naga tribes’. In the state of Manipur, according to Tribes In Manipur At A Glance,11 all the tribes could be divided into Naga Group of tribes, Chin-Kuki-Mizo Groups of tribes and Intermediate Group of tribes. However, in reality most of the tribes of the intermediate group are Nagas. Therefore, in Manipur, there are nineteen (19) Naga tribes. According to Naga Hoho, the total geographical areas occupy by the Nagas is 1,00,000 Sq.Km.12 This total geographical areas of the Nagas includes Nagas in India and Myanmar. In India, according to Wetshokhrolo Lasuh, Naga-inhabited States in India are Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur and Nagaland. There are eight districts in Nagaland State, viz., Phek, Mokokchung, Kohima, Tuisang, Wokha, Mon, Zunheboto and Dimapur. Naga-inhabited Districts in Manipur are Tamenglong, Senapati, Chandel, and Ukhrul. Naga-inhabited Districts in Arunachal Pradesh are Chanflang and Tirap. Naga-

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9 Ibid.
12 White Paper on the Naga Integration, Published by Hekhevi Achumi, Secretary (Finance), Naga Hoho, Nagaland, 2002, p. 64.
inhabited Districts in Assam are Haflong and Diphu. The total population of the Nagas in both countries are estimated as 3.5 millions.

The Naga tribes both in India and Myanmar are:

1. Anal  
2. Angami  
3. Ao  
4. Chakhesang  
5. Chang  
6. Cheril  
7. Chirr  
8. Chiru  
9. Chothe  
10. Hemi  
11. Hewa  
12. Htangan  
13. Inpui  
14. Konyak  
15. Khiamnungam  
16. Kharam Khaklak/Hkaklak  
17. Koireng  
18. Kayo  
19. Khaklak/Hkaklak  
20. Kengu  
21. Lamkang  
22. Liangmai  
23. Laihe  
24. Lainung  
25. Lotha  
26. Maram  
27. Mao  
28. Maring  
29. Moyon  
30. Monsang  
31. Macharay/Makury/Makhor  
32. Malang  
33. Nokho/Noko  
34. Nokte  
35. Nolang  
36. Namshik  
37. Pakang  
38. Phellongri  
39. Phom  
40. Phochuri  
41. Phango  
42. Phankem  
43. Pangmi  
44. Pangu  
45. Para  
46. Poumai  
47. Rangpan  
48. Rasit  
49. Rekho  
50. Rengma  
51. Rongmei  
52. Sangtam  
53. Saplo  
54. Shangphuri  
55. Singpho  
56. Sira  
57. Somi  
58. Sumi  
59. Tarao  
60. Tangkhul  
61. Thangal  
62. Tanssa  
63. Tikhir  
64. Wanchao  
65. Yimchunger  
66. Zeme.

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14 *White Paper on Naga Integration*, Published by Hekhevi Achumi, Secretary (Finance), Naga Hoho, Nagaland, 2002, pp.68-69
Thus, the total numbers of Naga tribes are sixty-six (66). However, besides, the above mentioned Naga tribes, there are many unrecognized Naga tribes, which are not listed above. Out of these sixty-six (66) Naga tribes listed above, there are about thirty-six (36) Naga tribes in India:

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<td>34. Wanchao</td>
<td>35. Yimchunger</td>
<td>36. Zeme</td>
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The Naga tribes in Myanmar are thirty-four in numbers, they are:

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<td>29. Shangphuri</td>
<td>30. Sira</td>
<td>31. Somi</td>
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The Naga tribes that are found in both the countries i.e. Myanmar and India are seven (7):

1. Anal
2. Konyak
3. Khiamnungam
4. Moyon
5. Tangkhul
6. Tikhir
7. Yimchunger.

The Nagas are one of the indigenous ethnic groups of India and Myanmar. They launched a movement for sovereignty since the British rule. The Naga movement is known as one of the longest but least known movement in the world. The Naga movement is lead by both civil organizations and armed organizations. In northeast India, the armed wings of the Naga movement are often called as the mothers of all insurgents in northeast India. Recently, the Naga movement represented by NSCN (IM) became a member of an international organization, namely, Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization (UNPO) and also a member of Asian Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP) represented by Naga Peoples Movement for Human Rights (NPMHR). "The NSCN is the lone common feature to figure in the three different yet striking similar organizations operating in three different layers – Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization (UNPO) based at the Hague, Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP) at Bangkok and the North-East Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Forum (NEITPF) floated in Guwahati."\(^{16}\) The Nagas represented by NSCN (IM) is engaging in peace talks with the government of India since 1997. On 11\(^{th}\) July 2002, the Government of India recognized

\(^{15}\) Ibid., pp.68-69.
the “Unique History and Situation of the Nagas” and the ban on NSCN was lifted on 26th November 2002.

The Kukis are found in three countries Bangladesh, Myanmar and India. In Bangladesh, the Kukis settled in Chittagong hill tracts. In Myanmar, the Kukis are found in Sagaing division and Kachin state. In India, according to the Indian government list of Schedule Tribes, they are in the states of Manipur, Nagaland, Assam, Megalaya, Mizoram and Tripura. According to P.S. Haokip the total population of the Kukis in two countries i.e., India and Bangladesh is approximately 17.5 lakhs. In the List of Scheduled Tribe, the Government of India recognized the Kukis in different states of northeast India-Tripura, Assam, Nagaland, Mizoram, Meghalaya except Manipur are recognized as ‘Any Kuki tribes’. In the state of Manipur, they are recognized under two heads, namely, ‘Thadou tribe’ and ‘Any Kuki tribe’.

In the state of Manipur, the Kukis are found in all the nine districts but they are concentrated in the five Hill Districts. They formed the second largest population in all the Hill districts. In Nagaland, they are found in three out of eight districts, viz., Kohima District, Dimapur District and Phek District. In Assam, Kukis are concentrated in Karbi Anglong District and North Cachar Hills District. There are Kukis in Tripura and Mizoram too.

In the state of Assam ‘Any Kuki tribes’ includes: Biate, Biete, Changsan, Chongloi, Donngel, Gamalkhou, Gangte, Guite, Hanneng, Haokip, Haupit, Haolai, Hengna, Hongsungh, Hrangkhwal, Rangkhol, Jongbe, Khawchung, Khawathlang, Khothalong, Khelma, Kholhou, Kipgen, Kuki, Lenthang, Lhangum, Lhougum, Lhoujem, Lhouvum, Lupheng, Mangjei, Misao, Riang, Sairhem, Selnam, Singson, Sitlhou, Sukte, Thadu, Thangngeu, Ubuh, Vaiphel.\(^{17}\)

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In the state of Mizoram ‘Any Kuki tribes’ includes: Biate or Biete, Changsan, Chengloi, Doungel, Gamalkhou, Gangte, Guite, Hanneng, Haokip or Haupit, Haolai, Hengna, Hongsungh, Hrangkhwal or Rangkhol, Jongbe, Khawchung, Khawathlang, Khothalong, Khelma, Kholhou, Eipgen, Kuki, Lenthang, Lhangum, Lhoujem, Lhouvum, Lupheng, Mangjel, Missao, Riang, Sairhem, Selnam, Singson, Sitlhou, Sukte, Thadao, Thangeu, Uibuh, Vaiphei.\(^{18}\)

In Meghalaya ‘Any Kuki tribes’ includes: Biate, Biete, Chongloi, Changsan, Doungel, Gamalkhou, Gangte, Guite, Hanneng, Haokip, Haupit, Haolai, Hengna, Hongsungh, Hrangkhwal, Rangkhol, Jongbe, Khawchung, Khawathlang, Khothalong, Khelma, Kholhou, Kipgen, Kuki, Lenthang, Lhangum, Lhoujem, Lhouvum, Lupheng, Mangjel, Misao, Riang, Sairhem, Selnam, Singson, Sitlhou, Sukte, Thado, Thangngeu, Uibuh, Vaiphei.\(^{19}\)

In Tripura ‘Any Kuki tribes’ includes the following sub-tribes: Balte, Belahut, Chhalya, Fun, Hajango, Jangtei, Khareng, Khepong, Kunte, Laifang, Lentei, Mizel, Namte, Paitu, Paite, Rangchan, Rangkhole, Thangluya.\(^{20}\)

In Nagaland, it is mention as ‘Any Kuki tribes’. This includes all the clans of Kuki. In Manipur ‘Thadou tribe’ includes clans like Thadou, Haokip, Kipgen, etc., and ‘Any Kuki tribes’ of Manipur includes sub-tribes/clans like Lunkim, Lenthang, Thangeo, Changsang, Thangum, Khulhlu, Gumhlu, Khumthang, Hlanghau, Lupheng, Mate, Lhungdim, Chongthu, Doungel, Haolei, Taothang, Dimgel, Chongloi and Hangsin, etc.

The Kukis are indigenous peoples of Northeast India, Myanmar and Bangladesh. In India, they have civil organizations since British rule to present the interest of their peoples. Since late 1980s, Kukis armed wings have appeared. The demands of these armed wings range from statehood within the framework of the nation state of India to sovereignty. The detail discussions on these will be found in the main chapters.

\(^{18}\) Ibid., p.33.
\(^{19}\) Ibid., p.32.
\(^{20}\) Ibid., p.38.
The focus of this research is on the Nagas and the Kukis ethnic identities and their mutual relations. This study looked into their ethnic identities and war and peace relations with a historical perspective. The area covered by this study is the India’s northeastern states, particularly Manipur, Nagaland and Assam where these ethnic identities settled.

This Thesis has five main chapters. The first chapter is on *Ethnic Identities: the Nagas and the Kukis*. The analysis in this chapter begins with definitions of ethnic identity and discussion on the various approaches to the ethnic identity, viz, Primordialist/Essentialist, Instrumentalist and Constructionist. It is done in order to understand approaches to ethnic identity in general and put the case studies in the appropriate theoretical frameworks. It also discusses how the ethnic identities of the Nagas and the Kukis came into being, which were relatively unknown to them and to the outside world. Today, the Nagas and the Kukis have established separate ethnic entities. In this, I have done an extensive and intensive study on the Nagas and the Kukis ethnic identities. I have also looked into their ethnic identities within the framework of various approaches. Finally, the discussion came to their ethnic movements, which are still going on. In this, the discourses do not merely confine to their armed wings but also encompass civil organizations.

The second chapter is on *The relations between the Nagas and the Kukis, 1826-1990*. This chapter is about various aspects of their relationships, particularly, political, religious and economic. The discourses in this chapter begin with their origins, migration, British colonial policy and the role of native rulers. With this background, this study examines the relationship between the Nagas and the Kukis. The two ethnic groups’ relationship is looked at from two different angles i.e. the perspectives of violence and the peace.

The third Chapter is on *The Naga-Kuki Violent Ethnic Conflict of 1990s*. This chapter is about the Naga-Kuki violent conflict that took place in 1992 and went on for a
decade. This study explores various definitions of the terms like 'ethnic cleansing', 'genocide', and 'communal clash' and 'ethnic conflict' as employed for the Naga-Kuki conflict by various intellectuals. This is done to explain why the researcher has preferred to use one particular term i.e., ethnic violent conflict. The study also looks into different views on the ethnic violent conflict as stated by various individuals including the concerned ethnic groups, and the government. This chapter is also a detailed discussion on some of the causes of the ethnic violent conflict of the Nagas and the Kukis. In it, I trace the past relations to the issues that sparked the violence between them in 1992 in Manipur State. The causes encompass not only the relationship of two ethnic groups but also the role of the government and its agencies and the condition of Manipur state that led to the outburst of Naga-Kuki violent conflict.

The fourth chapter is *The Changing Nature of the Naga-Kuki violent ethnic conflict*. In this Chapter, the researcher analyses how the conflict spread to other areas and why did it spread to other areas. It mainly narrates on the incidents of violence that took place during the Naga-Kuki conflict: the severity, brutality and barbarism of the violent conflict between the Nagas and the Kukis. It also shows how Human Rights were violated by those who were sent to quell the violence and protect the civilians.

The fifth chapter is on *The Process of Transformation and Restoration of Normalcy*. This chapter is a discussion on the peace process during and after the conflict for the restoration of normalcy between these two ethnies viz., the Nagas and the Kukis. It also discusses the role of the Government, different non-governmental organizations, Churches, and various individuals, etc. It also shows how the violence between these two communities has come to an end. For this, there are many, who are still working on confidence building measures between the two groups and trying to bring about peace in the region.
Sources

The sources for this study are both the primary and secondary sources. The primary sources include both unpublished sources and published sources. Further, I conducted interviews, discussions with knowledgeable individuals, and collected the views in written from the leaders and those who have vast knowledge about them. Secondary sources on the relations between the Nagas and the Kukis is limited but most of the available sources, which were within my reach, have been explored. However, the most important question is the historical interpretation of these sources. In this context, I have tried my best to apply the relevant historical methods to constitute balanced and contextualised readings of my sources.