

## CHAPTER 3

# A PROFILE OF THE ANGAMI TRIBE

### 3.1. Introduction:

Nagaland is a hilly state in the North - East of India. It borders the Assam state in the West, Manipur in the South and Arunachal Pradesh in the North. It shares an international boundary with Myanmar on the East. The capital of the state is Kohima. Dimapur is the largest city in the state. The state covers an area of 16,579 sq. km. The population of Nagaland stood at 1,980,602 as per the decennial census of 2011. It is one of the tiniest states of the Indian Union. The state has twelve administrative districts. They are Kohima, Mokokchung, Tuensang, Phek, Wokha, Zunheboto, Mon, Dimapur, Kiphire, Longleng, Peren and Noklak. One of the tribes inhabiting in Nagaland is concentrated predominantly in each of the above mentioned districts. Unity and also diversity in customs, political systems, social conditions, language, sartorial tastes, and traditions appear in every administrative district.

Nagaland is the sixteenth state of India. It had been carved out from the former district of Assam in the wake of a covenant signed between the Government of India and the Naga People's Convention. The state came into being on the 1<sup>st</sup> of December 1963. Article 371(A) of the Indian Constitution gives special protection "in respect of religious or social practices of the Nagas, their customary laws and procedure, administration of civil and criminal justice involving decisions according to Naga customary laws and ownership and transfer of land and its resources would apply to the state, without approval from the Legislative Assembly of Nagaland".

Nagaland is blessed with a magnificent landscape of verdant hills and valleys, and rivers cascading down the mountains. The state is mostly mountainous. The highest peak is Mount Saramati which with a height of 3,840 meters soars heavenward. It serves as a natural border between Nagaland and Myanmar. The exotic charm of the region remained unchanged down the centuries

**Table: 3.1.1. List of Districts in Nagaland**

Sl. No	District	Headquarters	Population (Census 2011)	Sex Ratio (per 1000)	Average Literacy
1	Dimapur	Dimapur	378,811	919	84.79%
2	Kiphire	Kiphire	74,004	956	69.54%
3	Kohima	Kohima	267,988	928	85.23%
4	Longleng	Longleng	50,484	905	72.17%
5	Mokokchung	Mokokchung	194,622	925	91.62%
6	Mon	Mon	250,260	899	56.99%
7	Peren	Peren	95,219	915	77.95%
8	Phek	Phek	163,418	951	78.05%
9	Tuensang	Tuensang	196,596	929	73.08%
10	Wokha	Wokha	166,343	968	87.69%
11	Zunheboto	Zunheboto	140,757	976	85.26%
12	Noklak	Noklak	7674	915	83.00%

(Source: Census of India, Nagaland, 2011)

Nagaland's population is wholly tribal. The state is inhabited by sixteen major Naga tribes: Angami, Ao, Chang, Chakhesang, Khamniungan, Kachari, Kuki, Konyak, Phom, Lotha, Pochuri, Rengma, Sumi, Sangtam, Yimchunger, and Zeme – Liangmai (Zeliang). There are also sub tribes. People of each of these tribes speak its

own language as well as its own dialect. Altogether their languages including dialects number about 60. They belong to the Sino - Tibetan family of languages. English is the official state language which is widely spoken in official circles. The medium of instruction in schools and colleges is English.

The sixteen tribes as well as the sub - tribes of the state have their own unique languages, customs and dresses. Even while preserving their traditional culture, they have now begun to adopt modern ways of life. Each tribe has its own flamboyant dress code. Bamboo and cane abound in the region. From cradle to the grave they are an indispensable and inseparable part of Naga life. They engage widely in handicrafts made of bamboo and cane.

During the North - East (NE) monsoon, it rains continuously and often heavily triggering the growth of dense vegetation all around. As a result, there are a few wildlife parks and sanctuaries in the state. Kohima, Dzukou Valley, Japfu peak and Intanki Wildlife Sanctuary are the major tourist attractions. The most important economic activity in Nagaland is farming.

### **3.2. Religion in Nagaland:**

Majority of the people of Nagaland are Christians who embraced the faith after the arrival of the westerners. The state is considered “The most populous Baptist state in the world.” There are also considerable number of Hindus and Muslims. A miniscule minority follow the traditional faiths. Most of them are mainly confined to Peren and the Eastern districts.

As has been shown in the table 3.4.1., there are 8.74% Hindus, 2.44% Muslims, 0.34% Buddhists, 0.13% Jainists and 0.1% Sikhs in Nagaland as per the

decadal census of 2011. As almost all of them are settlers from outside pursuing various professions, the researcher has chosen to keep them out of the ambit of the study. A large majority of the people of Nagaland especially the Angamis professes the Christian faith and an infinitesimally small percentage of the Angamis are animists. Being the sons and daughters of the soil, representatives from both communities have been included in the survey as respondents, although animists number but a few.

**Table 3.2.1. Nagaland at a Glance Religion Wise**

Christianity	88.1%
Hinduism	8.74%
Islam	2.44%
Buddhism	0.34%
Jainism	0.13%
Sikhism	0.1%
Traditional religion and others	0.14%
Not religious	0.10%

(Source: 2011 Census report, Nagaland)

### **3.3. The Nagas:**

The origin of the Nagas is lost in the mist of time. According to certain historians, they have settled in the Naga hills of India and Myanmar in the 10<sup>th</sup> century C.E. Legend has it that they had come from Sumatra (Indonesia). But most historians are prone to believe that they had migrated to this part of the world from China and Mongolia in waves after waves. It is also said that tribes of a similar stock were in the region from the Vedic times. The Nagas are comprised of various tribes

and sub – tribes. They are spread across Nagaland, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, and Manipur as well as in some parts of Myanmar across the border. It is difficult to pinpoint the exact number of the Naga tribes because of various factors including inter -tribal marital relations.

According to Singh, “the Nagas constitute a very ancient tribal society. They practice customary laws which have religious, political and social moorings”(Singh 2008). There are various hypotheses on the Naga migration to North – East India. V. Sanyu says that Claudius Ptolemy in his work *Geographia* mentioned about Nagas around 150 C.E. He had described the Naga country as “The Realm of the Naked” (Sanyu 1996). Sanyu, while writing about the origin of the Nagas quotes the Chinese pilgrim Huang Tsang, who had visited Assam during the rule and reign of Bhaskarvarman in 645 C.E. According to him:

*“The east of this country is demarcated by a line of hills, and great cities are conspicuous by their absence in the realm. Contiguous borders stretch to uncivilized south – west China. These tribes are related to the Man people in their customs and usages (Sanyu 1996).*

There are no written records regarding the age and manner of Naga migration to their present habitat. There is also no theological or philosophical conceptualization about the Naga migration. Therefore one can only rely on oral traditions preserved in folk songs and folk tales (Savi 2012).

The famous historian Hutton writes:

*“The history of how the Naga tribes came precisely to occupy their present position has, of course, passed into the dim obscurity of vague traditions. But*

*enough of them remain to give some indications of the course which the migration took. The legends of the Aos and of the Semas give those tribes a more or less autochthonous origin, though these legends are probably the old legends of the race which have been given a local value. The Angamis, too, spring from ancestors who emerged from the bowels of the earth, but not in Angami country, but in some other land to the south. And all the weight of tradition points to migration from the south (Hutton 1921).*

Because of the lack of written documents, an analysis of Naga history is not possible. However, the accounts of professional story tellers about the Nagas handed down from generation to generation can enlighten one on them to some extent.

The ancestors of the Nagas believed that they had migrated from a place named Hedzura. In the Angami dialect Tenyidie, it refers to a region not enveloped by the sky. It was very cold and windy. As a result the people aged quickly. To escape from the inclement weather, they moved to other regions where the climate was conducive to agriculture. One can now infer that the Nagas have been traditionally farmers.

Another story goes that they moved to a place called 'Chin land' which may mean China. The construction of the Great Wall of China is said to have been executed by them as prisoners at the hands of the Chinese. The Chinese treated them very cruelly and they are believed to have migrated to Borneo. Then they moved to Burma from there and during the next phase to the present place of their settlement.

Yet another legend has it that the Nagas had arrived from a cave in Myanmar fearing that there would be a population explosion. In order to obviate such an

eventuality, the cave was blocked with a stone. The people who had left the cave are believed to have been the Nagas. D'Souza (2001) says that the process of migration is marked by both fusion and fission. This is true in the case of Naga migration too. Some joined them from China and some stayed back in Myanmar. Lasuh feels that "the Nagas are believed to be the original megalith builders as many of the megaliths over the world from Europe to America, Southeast Asia and Middle East are all likely to have been erected by them. These megaliths are connected with a definite and united culture, called the Naga culture" (Lasuh 2002).

Many gates, pillars and memorial stones in Naga villages are megalithic constructions. Vestiges of Naga culture can also be found on the sea coast. Their ornaments made of sea shells, conchs, and beads bear out the fact that originally the Nagas lived close to the sea.

Their houses and wooden drums where they stored their things resembled ships or boats. Their spears are suggestive of their association with the Philippines and Indonesians. According to R. Tiba, "The route of Naga migration from South-East Asia can be proved by the resemblances in cultural features such as terrace cultivation and the use of sea shells in their ornaments" (Tiba 2010).

The culture, traditions, and social and religious organizations of certain indigenous communities in Borneo, Taiwan and Vietnam and those of the Nagas are almost alike. Hutton (1921) is of opinion that "the Nagas have very strong cultural affinity with the natives of Borneo and the Philippines. There is also physical resemblance with some of them.

One theory about the four paths of the migration of the Nagas is that they had come from Nepal, Bhutan and Sikkim in the north, and the regions lying near the rivers Ganges and the Brahmaputra as also the shores of the Bay of Bengal and Burma. Some say they may have come from Malaysia. Yet some others say they can be traced to China.

According to Allen (1908) Nagas and other tribes of Assam are members of the Tibeto - Burmese family. Their physical and cultural characteristics are a testimony to the fact that they are migrants from outside. They are believed to have lived in sub-Himalayan regions two millennia ago. Their physical features betray that they are a Mongoloid stock.

#### **3.4. Etymology of the Word 'Naga':**

The Etymology of the Word 'Naga' is shrouded in mystery, despite the fact that it has been in use for centuries. Scholars have offered various explanations regarding the origin of the term. Allen says that the Assamese used it to refer to a number of tribes who inhabited the hilly terrain between the Brahmaputra valley and Myanmar (Allen 1908). Imsong (2011) is a famous Naga scholar. According to him, the people of the plains in Assam and Bengal gave the name 'Naga' to the Tibeto-Mongolian settlers who lived in the North - East of the Brahmaputra River and the Irrawady in upper Burma. Dzuvichu (2003), another Naga scholar, notes that the Nagas were described as 'Kiratas' in the 10<sup>th</sup> century B.C.E. She also notes that "the ancient Sanskrit literature referred to them as hill people sustaining themselves on mostly on fruits, roots, and game. They were dressed in animal skins. They were a

war – like people, wearing mighty weapons. They were rich with natural minerals and forest produces. They were experts in the art of weaving clothes.

According to W.C. Smith, the expression Naga can be etymologically traced to the term ‘Noga’ which is believed to have been derived from ‘Nok’ meaning people. ‘Nok’ transformed into ‘Noga’, which eventually became Naga. E.A. Gait also concurs with this view. Captain Butler and Hutton associate the term Naga with the Sanskrit word ‘Nangta’ meaning naked or the Bengali word ‘Nangta’ which also means naked, which is a cognate of the English word naked.

The cognomen ‘Naga’ in Cachari dialect refers to a young man and hence a warrior. The term is derived from ‘Nok’ meaning people in Tibeto-Burman languages. Owen and Rowney hypothesize that ‘Naga’ is a cognate of the Sanskrit word ‘Nag’ meaning snake. A.Z. Phizo has another hypothesis regarding the etymology of the word Naga. According to him, ‘Naka’ was the root of the word Naga, ‘na’ meaning ear and ‘ka’ meaning pierced. Concurring with the views of W.C. Smith and E.A. Gait, Bareh (1970) says that it was Holcombe, who traced the word ‘Nag’ to the word ‘Nok’. There are also people who say that ‘Nok’ means man.

Although it is hard to arrive at unanimity regarding the provenance of the term ‘Naga’, it is to be admitted that it serves to embrace all the tribes in Nagaland, Manipur, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh as well as the frontier territories of Myanmar.

### **3.5. The Angami Nagas:**

The motif of this study is the political socialization of the Angami tribe, a predominant section among the Nagas. A comprehensive study on this theme is possible only if a comprehensive profile of the Angami Nagas is drawn up. Hence

the researcher here seeks to survey the Angami scene in all its political, social, economic, cultural and religious aspects.

Traditionally, the Angamis have been living in central and southern parts of the present Kohima and also in certain regions of Dimapur district. Considering administrative and social imperatives, the Angamis now fall under four regions. The Northern Angamis mainly inhabit Kohima and the surrounding villages. Those who live to the West of Kohima are referred to as Western Angamis and those to the south as Southern Angamis. Chakro Angamis are chiefly found on the slopes along the National Highway from Kohima to Dimapur.

J.H. Hutton (1921), an authoritative scholar on the tribes of the Nagas in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century distinguishes four groups of the Angami Naga tribe they are: the Khonoma group, Kohima group, Viswema group and the Chakroma group. Their common language is *Tenyidie* which is the first Naga language to have been introduced at the University level.

### **3.5.1 Meaning of the Word Angami:**

The original name of the 'Angami' is *Tenyimia*.<sup>1</sup> The name 'Angami' may be a distortion of the Manipuri word '*Gnamei*' (Hutton 1921). Sanyu (1966) says that the word Angami was a coinage by the Zemi tribes from their word 'gami' meaning 'invaders'. The name Angami has been in use for a pretty long time. At present the Angamis themselves use it to identify themselves. *Tenyimia* which seemed to be the original name of the Angami tribe now assumes new status as a bigger tribe. Today, the *Tenyimia* group is composed of tribes such as the Angami,

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<sup>1</sup> The word is derived from *tenyimia* meaning swift walker.

the Rengma, the Zeliang, the Pochuri, the Chakhesang, the Mao, the Maram, and the Pochuri. The above mentioned tribes also include the *Tenyimia* group. Initially it included the Sema and the Lotha Nagas.

### **3.5.2. Myths on the Origin of the Angamis:**

Legends abound on the origin of the Angami tribe. According to one legend, a person named Koza, having arrived from the East, reached Mekroma (Makhel) in the present Manipur. He prayed to God to give him guidance and direction. All of a sudden a bird found its perch on his bison's (*Mithun*) horn. Then it flew in the direction of Khezhakenoma. Koza now dropped his staff on the ground in order to check the divine guidance. As it fell on the ground in the same direction the bird had flown, he took it as a divine sign and headed toward Khezhakenoma. When he reached Khezhakenoma, the same bird was found perched on a stone. He also saw a toad leaving the stone after having brought some grains. The grains presently increased twofold. This prompted Koza to place on the stone a basketful of rice to get it dried. Wonder of wonders, the rice multiplied twofold. Koza now settled at Khezhakenoma. Eventually, he was blessed with three sons.

J.H. Hutton, an authority on the history on the Nagas, says that the three sons spread paddy on the stone taking turns in drying the paddy. One day the brothers quarreled among themselves over whose turn it was. The concerned parents fearing bloodshed cracked an egg on the stone, covered it with brushwood, and set it ablaze. The stone slab burst with a loud report and the spirit went up to heaven in a cloud of smoke. From that very day, the sacred stone lost its mysterious power. "The three

sons separated in search of a new place to settle and became the ancestors of the Angamis, Lothas, and Semas” (Hutton 1921).

The place of the origin of many Naga tribes is believed to have been Khezhakeno village. It had a great significance in the migration path of the Nagas. This village has a significant position in the migration route of the Nagas followed. “The name ‘Khezhakeno’ derived from the word *Khezhan* which means ‘tax’, because even after leaving, villages both near and far paid annual house tax to their ancestral home” (Lucy 2009). It is generally believed that having migrated to their present place, some of them settled at Khezhakenoma for a while and then split up into smaller groups. There are no historical records to check the veracity and factuality of these legends.

No one can gainsay the historic significance of the Khezhakenoma village as far as the Angamis are concerned. In order to memorialize the miracle of the multiplication of grains, the Angamis celebrate a festival known as *Theyu - u Khupfhunyi* to this day when paddy is ready for harvesting. The term means ‘toad’s meal’. The observance of the festival is believed to bring them many riches.

### **3.6. Socio - Economic and Political Aspects of Angami Tribe:**

Political socialization is a process in which people associate themselves with their fellow citizens as members of a political system or as ‘political animals’, to recall Aristotle. It closely depends on the political culture of a society. It aims at instilling in the minds of people the attitudes, values, and orientations about a polity and also about political and governmental organizations. It is a process that begins at

childhood and endures for life. It is supposed to develop a positive attitude towards politics. Its benefits pass on from generation to generation as a continual activity.

In political socialization, agents or agencies have a pivotal role to play. The institutions performing informal socialization as well as those institutions engaging in the inculcation of political values and orientations in the citizens come under the term agents. A person's political socialization involves his understanding of political patterns through different political, economic, and social agents.

The Angamis of the Nagaland have been a closely knit and self-contained tribal group. As a comparatively isolated community, until recently they had an insular outlook and they stuck to their age old customs and traditions. But in the time – space continuum, change is inevitable in any human system, and consequently great changes have overwhelmed the Angami society also. However, they have been scrupulous not to abandon most of their customary practices.

The role of socio – economic and political factors in affecting changes and bringing about modernization in the Angami tribal community is recognized in this chapter. In the following studies the researcher analyses the changes brought about by various socio economic and political factors in the process of political socialization. They are mainly the family, traditional and modern educational institutions, British colonization and modernization of the Nagas, Christianity, gender, ethnicity, the Angami village structure and organization, political parties, mass media, and the state. The socio – economic and political institutions have been the principal components of socialization agents in the Angami community.

### 3.7. Family:



**Figure: 3.1. Model of an Angami House**

It is the institution of family (Kikru) that has served as an important agent of socialization. One first comes across an awareness of politics from one's family. According to Christakis:

*“A child learns its values from its parents. Often this consistency in political attitudes within the family has been attributed to family socialization. Social scientists have argued that common intra – family attitudes can be the product of three or more distinct casual mechanisms” (Christakis 2009).*

In the so called advanced societies, there has been a breakdown of the family system and family values. In contrast, it still remains comparatively stable and acts as an effectual agency of political socialization in the Angami communities. A typical Angami family, which is the smallest social unit, is comprised of the father, the mother, and the children. There are both nuclear and extended families. There is a patriarchal society. The father is the head of a family with certain powers and

duties. It is his duty and responsibility to be the breadwinner of the family. He represents the family at clan<sup>2</sup> meetings. Performing the customary rites and rituals during festivals and ceremonies, he acts as priest too. It is he who enlightens the children on the boundaries of the family's landed property. He, it is who teaches the children the oral traditions about the tribe and family. He bequeaths to his children the family assets usually equally. He is to make provisions for his wife in the event of his decease. Daughters are not entitled to the ancestral property. But they can claim a share of the assets their father himself has acquired. When the father is dead or incapable of looking after the family, the responsibility devolves on his wife or the first son.

Most domestic chores are performed by the mother. She is the 'housewife' literally. In matters of import, the father usually seeks the advice of the wife. Presently, the joint or extended family system is rare. When a son gets married, he and his wife usually move to a new house to start a new life. Marriage and family are the oldest social institutions of humankind, which has been considered sacrosanct by all societies down the centuries, although fissures are showing at present. As an agent of political socialization, its role is informal and natural. It has a formative and transformative influence on the young. Family provides a conducive ambience to expose them to the wider aspects of social life. It is here a child or an adolescent imbibes the values of healthy social intercourse, socializing and more significantly, political socialization.

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<sup>2</sup> Clan is the backbone of the rural social structure. It is linked with all the socio – economic activities in a village.

It is the parents and the elder siblings who have the greatest influence on the young during their formative years. Their attitude to life and their views on and perceptions of all the aspects of life as well as their likes and dislikes have an enduring effect on them. “The politically richer the home environment, the more likely an adult is to undertake some political activity other than voting” (Verba, Burns, and Schlozman 2003). The ideology the parents hug close to their heart is certain to be interiorized by the children.

### **3.8. Education:**

As an agency of political socialization, educational institutions also play a very vital role. It is the teachers who transfer knowledge to pupils and help develop their cognitive skills. The discussions pertaining to political and public issues can be initiated by them. However, they may not be always able to turn the students into politically conscious citizens. The apathy on the part of pupils is also a negative phenomenon. Verba notes that “education is in fact the strongest promoter of political activity. In most studies education is the strongest predictor of political participation even other socio economic factors are taken in consideration” (Verba 2003).

It is through education that one acquires skills that are required to become politically engaged and understand democratic principles. “It is educated people who mostly participate in political affairs because their schooling provides them with the skills people need to understand the abstract subject of politics, to follow the political campaign, and to research and evaluate the issues and candidates” (Wolfinger 1980). In addition to academic knowledge, academic institutions instill in students social values like respect and submission to authority.

### **3.8.1. Traditional Education of the Nagas:**

Before the advent of the colonial rule, the Nagas had no formal educational institutions, a common language, or a common script. They had no indigenous writings. There was a time when they may have recorded their stories on animal skin. The story goes that a dog, lured by the odor of the parchment, swallowed the same. That may be the reason why they have no written literature about their past. But they adopted a unique substitute method of schooling known as ‘Morung’<sup>3</sup> where children of both sexes learned the social customs of learning.

### **3.8.2. Institution of Morung**



**Figure: 3. 2. A Morung**

*Morung* resembled a formal educational institution. There were separate *morungs* for both boys and girls. At their *morung*, the boys of the village came to know about the love, customs, traditions, and marital life of the tribe. It was from these *morungs* that ideal citizens of the village state emerged. They were now in a

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<sup>3</sup> ‘Morung’ is an Assamese word for dormitories.

position to shoulder all social responsibilities. *Morungs* thus shaped the character of the Nagas, which is the ultimate object of education. It was a unique institution known as ‘village dormitory’. There the inmates lived together. The Angamis called their morung ‘kichuki’<sup>4</sup>. Morung is a word of Assamese origin.

Morung was the axis around which the social, political, religious, cultural and educational activities of the young people turned. It was in many respects similar to a modern formal school. Here they were trained in the fundamentals of socialization in every sense of the term. The morung system also promoted social cohesion and solidarity in a village. The number of the *morungs* in a village was in proportion to its size. There were villages with about five *morungs* for both boys and girls. It was compulsory for all the young boys in the 10 – 15 age groups to join the morung. They studied together, played together and worked together till they married. They learned self-discipline, different arts like basket making, wood carving and war strategies. They were also trained in fine arts and even in dispensing indigenous medicines. Flute and violins played an important role in the life of the *morung*.

The boys and girls listened to the ‘extension’ lectures given by the venerable elders of the tribe, who often waxed eloquent about war, discipline, love, bravery and natural calamities of the past. Their experiences in the morung greatly contributed to their turning out as ideal citizens who could even sacrifice their lives for the commonweal. Young unmarried women were never allowed into a boys’ morung. Occasionally enemy’s severed heads were brought to the morung for performing certain rites. Strangely enough, it could also bring about reconciliation

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<sup>4</sup> ‘Kichuki’ is the Angami word for Morung.

among them. A morung can be said to have been a village in microcosm. While in the morung, young men learned the art of love from the experienced seniors. In an exigency, they could help the weak and the poor. In the event of an attack or a raid, they could respond heroically.

According to Bower:

*With minds so alert and physique so robust there was no room for idleness and idle thought. Individual difference melted away in the common cause of defense of the village through the easy contact provided by the morung institutions. No service of a single man was wasted. Life within the morung was a continuous and long process of testing the young people till they got married and accepted social responsibility. The young men became more self-reliant, sensible, morally sensitive and better disciplined. Their loyalty and sense of service to the corporate body was well developed (Bower1950).*

The institution of the Morung lost its relevance in some areas with the spread of Christianity, as it was considered out of tune with the Christian spirit and principles. However, some missionaries advocated its continuance because it was an effective agency for teaching the Bible and group music. For nearly half a century after the advent of the British, the dormitory institution was functioning with vigor. Nonetheless, with the emergence of modern education, the Morung system died down.

### **3.8.3. Colonial Education:**

It was the Christian missionaries who introduced modern education in the North – East. The English language facilitated British administration. The English language was an instrument of pacification and civilization at the same time. Modern

education made the natives in the Naga Hills competent enough to play their own role in the colonial administration.

Initially it was the American Baptist Missionaries who gave them modern education. However, in the first decade of the 20th Century, the government turned many missionary schools to public schools and also opened new schools. Consequently the number of missionary schools dwindled. Education was very effective as a socializing agency. It was also an agent of change. Although initially the natives were indifferent, gradually they adjusted themselves to the changed situation. People were now conscious of the enlightening effect of modern education as well as the material benefits that they could access by it. Going to school or college was now a natural thing for the Angamis, whether one was rich or poor, animist or conservative, Christian or pagan. “Lack of arts and science colleges, as well as professional colleges is a great obstacle to the youth in prosecuting higher education and therefore many of them are forced to go outside of the state” (Primary source: *Interview with Avibu*. (12December 2017).

#### **3.8.4. Impact of Modern Education:**

Modern education had a lasting impact on Naga society. The archaic indigenous system of education declined and the tribal youth hugged to their bosom modern sciences and humanities. As a result, the socio – cultural life of the Nagas underwent a substantial transformation, effectuating a social cohesion among them for the first time. Modern education brought about a radical transformation in the outlook of the Nagas. From a savage state, they evolved into a civilized stage. It

helped them advance their career in various disciplines. The Nagas now saw a new heaven and a new earth.

### **3.9. British Colonization and Modernization of the Nagas:**

Even before the arrival of the British, Nagas had contact with the outside world in matters of combat and finance. When the Ahom dynasty ruled over Assam for more than four centuries there was also an instance of marital relationship between an Ahom king and a Konyak Naga woman. In 1826 the British vanquished the Ahom dynasty. A parallel development was the contact between the Nagas and the British colonizers. As the British found the Naga Hills unproductive and a financial liability, they were not much interested in the region. In the meanwhile, conflicts between the Nagas and the British were a constant phenomenon. About the British Naga conflict, S. Baruah says: “This conflict was one of the most violent chapters in the History of British conquest of the sub- continent.” Subsequently, the colonizers subjugated them for more than a century.

The Treaty of Yandaboo signed on 24<sup>th</sup> February 1826 between the British and the Burmese bringing to an end the longstanding conflicts between both was a watershed event in modern Naga history. According to D. Souza (2001), with this treaty, the spread of the imperial British regime over the Naga territories was ensured. The British – Naga relations covered three phases. During the first phase (1832 - 1850), the British mounted military expeditions into the land of the Nagas ensuring considerable control over them. During the second phase (1851 -1865), the colonial government pursued a strategy of non – interference and at the surface level the approach of the British administration appeared to be sensitive to ‘other’ cultures.

However, the purpose for such approach was the underlying principle of the thickly modernistic concept of evolution. In other words, British administration considered the Naga culture as “primitive” or “savage,” which reflected their own nascent stage of civilization. They considered the Naga Hills as a large natural scientific laboratory in which to do their positivistic research. But in the third period which began from 1866, the British steadily extended their control over the entire Naga Hills” ( Souza 2001).

In 1832, accompanied by 700 soldiers and 800 coolies, Captain Francis Jenkins and Lieutenant R.B. Pemberton journeyed through the Angami country looking for a route between Manipur and Assam. The first expedition carried out in 1839 was a total disaster. The second one carried out in 1840 was a success. Several bloody encounters followed between both parties. With the defeat of Lieutenant Vincent at the hand of Kikruma, the British were compelled to beat a retreat. Then followed the policy of non- intervention in the Naga affairs marking the second phase of the confrontation between both. The third period began with the conquest of the Nagas by the British and the formation of the Naga Hills district in 1866. The colonial power brought modern education, transportation, and modern medicine to the Naga country. The Christian missionaries also proselytized thousands of Nagas so much so that Nagaland is now a Christian majority state in India.

World War II is one of the most momentous events in the history of the world, and Nagas also played a major role in it. When Japan overwhelmed former Indo - China and trespassed into British India which took them to Kohima, an Angami area and the present capital of Nagaland, a fierce war raged. The Nagas greatly contributed to the successes of the operation. Before this battle there prevailed peaceful relations

between the Nagas and British. The system of administration followed by the British was in tune with what the Nagas wanted and was conducive to the maintenance of law and order among them. As has been mentioned above, at the time there prevailed a harmonious relationship between the British and the Nagas. The British could win the loyalty of the village headman and village chiefs. The Nagas wholeheartedly fought on the side of the colonial masters. The Nagas including the Angamis were conferred rewards for their bravery in the war.

The Japanese originally treated the Nagas well paying for all their supplies. But when the food supplies dwindled, they robbed the Nagas of their rice and other food materials. They raided Naga villages and killed their livestock. They were forced to work as coolies. “The Nagas who were suspected to be British spies were killed with utmost brutality against the norms of war as set down in the International Law” (Yonuo 1974). During the Battle of Kohima, the Nagas suffered greatly at the hands of the Japanese as well as Subhash Chandra Bose’s Indian National Army.

The Battle of Kohima had certain positive results also. The isolation of the Nagas came to an end promoting their political socialization. Newly built roads, railways and airlines opened them to the wider world. They were now very conscious of the benefits education could bring them such as wealth, power, employment and the riches of the English language. One can say for certain that the Battle of Kohima contributed to shaping future Nagaland.

The British still treasure with gratitude the help the Nagas rendered to them during the Great War. The British Veterans recently came together and founded the Kohima Educational Trust in 2003 to assist the Nagas educationally. The trust

provides for the visit of Naga school children to the United Kingdom. As an act of gratitude for the rescue of British Flight Lieutenant Ray Jackson by the Nagas when his plane had crashed in 1944, a Basket –Ball court was opened in 2008. It all shows that the British still cherishes the happy memories of the cordial relationship between them and the Nagas.

### **3.10. Religion:**

No other institution has influenced the lives of humans down the millennia as has religion. All political systems are influenced by religion which has a major role in shaping political opinion and effecting political socialization.

#### **3.10.1. Christianity and the Nagas:**

Pfutsana<sup>5</sup> which means ‘rites of the ancestors’ in Tenyidie<sup>6</sup> dialect has been the traditional religion of the Nagas. According to Mewuda and Baxla (1996), “in a broad sense, all religions can be called traditional religions, since tradition stands at the origin of all religions”. The Nagas of old believed that all things big and small are animated by a spirit. Thus theirs was an animist religion. They were not idol worshippers. When natural calamities were visited upon them, the Nagas performed arcane archaic rituals to appease the spirits. Besides the spirits, the Nagas believed in a supreme Deity. “It may be their belief in one supreme God, a God of goodness and mercy, that they have inspired them to embrace the Christian faith” (Horam 1990).

At a time when head – hunting was at its peak, the Christian message came blowing across the Naga Hills like a soothing breeze. The Nagas had their first tryst

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<sup>5</sup> ‘Pfustana’ is the traditional Angami religion.

<sup>6</sup> The Angami dialect.

with Christ sometime in the seventeenth century. It was a new and transformative experience for them (Lucy 2009). It was the Ao Naga tribe that first converted to the Christian faith in the year 1842, Rev. Miles Bronson being the first missionary to work among the Nagas. He brought to them modern education and taught them tea cultivation. When he left the scene on account of ill health, another missionary, Rev. E.W. Clarke, arrived at Amguri in the Naga country and evangelized a few Nagas. Thus the foundation of Christianity was laid among the Nagas. He authored an Ao - English dictionary. It is still in use. Besides, he authored a hymn book and a catechetical treatise. In addition, he translated the gospels according to Matthew and John. An Assamese Christian by name Godhula also began earnest missionary work in an Ao village in the meantime (Maitra 1991). “Rev. H E. Witter came to Wokha in 1885 and worked among the Lotha Nagas. He prepared the first Lotha grammar and vocabulary. The first Lotha Bible was released in October 1898. In 1913, Rev. J.E. Tanquist reached the Serna (known today as Siimi) area where he started his missionary work among the Semas/Sumis. As a result, in 1922, a Sema Association was formed. Gradually the Naga converts spread Christianity to other parts of Naga territory” (Maitra 1991).

Another prominent missionary Rev. C. D. King arrived in 1878 to spread the gospel among the Angamis. He set up the Angami Mission School. Later it was taken over by Rev. S.W. Rivernburg in 1886 (Maitra 1991). He was the originator of the Angami alphabet. He it was who published the first printed book in Tertyidie, the Gospel according to Matthew in the year 1890. Sometime later there appeared the translation of some canticles, the translations of the Gospel according to John, the

Acts of the Apostles, the gospel of Luke and a book on arithmetic (Bareh 1970). With the passage of time Tertyidie has become the language of higher education including PhD, which must be a matter of great intellectual satisfaction to the Angamis. There is no gainsaying that the whole credit for it goes to the pioneering and dedicated works of the missionaries from the 17<sup>th</sup> century onwards.

### **3.10.2. Influence of Christianity on Naga Literature and Education:**

At the time of the arrival of the missionaries, the Nagas were not a literate community nor had they a written literature. It was they who introduced the Latin alphabet to the Naga country. They transformed their languages an alphabet. It was they who first authored a literature in the Naga dialects. At their initiatives, the lexicons, grammar primers and articles appeared in the Naga landscape. The translation of the Bible was the most defining development. It added a new intellectual and spiritual dimension to the Naga identity. In this context, one can say with certitude it was the evangelical zeal of the missionaries that saved “the tribal languages and dialects from extinction” (Karotemprel 2004). Education helped the Nagas to transcend the linguistic barriers which had prevented them from responding the gospel. English education made the Nagas confident enough to assert themselves and question the powers that be who dominated and exploited them.

The Kohima mission school started by C.D. King in 1882 was the first formal school in Kohima. “He adapted the Angami dialect (Tenyidie) to the Roman alphabet which is taught to school children” (Bareh 1970). Today the field of education in Nagaland has expanded extensively. As of now, higher secondary schools in Nagaland number 69, high schools 337, middle schools 465, and primary

schools 1662. But higher education centers are few and far between. As per the Census Report 2011, the literacy rate in Nagaland stands at 79.55 percent. Gender – wise, male literacy is 82.75 percent and female literacy is 76.11 percent.

### **3.10.3. Humanitarian Service and Medical Care:**

Humanitarian services like orphanages, relief work during natural calamities, and medical work and village development were carried out at the initiative of Christian missionaries, which endeared them to the general public. As Downs(1992) notes, the active role the Christian missionaries played in Nagaland in providing medical care to the people was crucial as far as the health scenario is concerned.

It was at a time when disease was widespread due to unwholesome atmosphere that the Christian missionaries appeared upon the scene. The Nagas were not very fastidious about personal hygiene. “To take a bath was a social taboo among some Naga tribes; a certain day was set aside to take a bath, preferably during festivals. This taboo was associated with the religious belief that a person’s wealth would be washed away if she or he took a bath. Diseases such as small-pox, sores, syphilis, cholera, malaria, and leprosy were very common among the Nagas on account of the unhygienic surroundings where germs multiplied uncontrollably” (Nshoga 2009). There are people of the older generation who still believe that the habit of daily bath washes away one’s wealth.

The missionaries visited even the remote Naga villages giving the pestilence – stricken multitudes free medical treatment. They enlightened the people on the importance of hygiene and sanitation. The traditional way of treating diseases was having recourse to animal sacrifice, sorcery, and certain other arcane rituals as

suggested by their priests (Nshoga 2009). The Nagas also depended on herbal medicines and other indigenous antidotes which could not be fully relied on.

“The concept of health care among the tribal was introduced based on hygienic living habits in contrast with the unhealthy practices” (Stanislaus 2004). “In the traditional Naga society, humans and animals lived and moved together. Consequently, contagious diseases and epidemics were a common feature. The medical interventions of the missionaries in such a situation were a great blessing to this once savage people” (Primary source: *Interview with Vikeyieno*. (29 November, 2017).

Hospitals sprang up in district headquarters and even in remote villages. “It was at the initiative of the British Governor-General that the first modern hospital in Kohima was established as an act of gratitude to the Nagas for their loyalty to the colonial masters” (Joshi 2001). The authorities enlisted the service of a few Spanish sisters in the initial phase of the hospital now known as the Naga hospital. As a result of it all, life expectancy among the Nagas increased, as mortality rate came down.

#### **3.10.4. Promotion of Culture:**

Christianity has sought to further the unique Naga identity in various ways. Tribal languages, culture, and customs were encouraged. It was instrumental in bringing together the different tribes of Nagas enabling them to interact with people from other parts of the country and the world. According to Karotemprel, “the Christian missionaries sought to promote the Naga culture through their various activities and further harmony and integration among the citizens. Literacy was

sought to be promoted through introducing the printing press and publishing books” (Karotemprel 2004).

There is no denying the fact that Christianity played a substantial role in liberating the Nagas from their fear of evil spirits, as Christian faith replaced animism. Christianity added a new dimension to the perceptions of the Nagas about life here and the hereafter. As a result, their world view also changed.

### **3.10.5. Status of Women:**

As was asserted by Abdul Kalam on the importance of women and women’s empowerment, “When the women are empowered a stable society is assured” (Kalam 2004). The Christian missionaries always had their focus on the improvement of the status of women. The missionaries were pioneers in educating women and girl-children, which played no mean role in their emancipation and empowerment in Nagaland ultimately bringing about the development of the Naga society.

The first women organization in Nagaland was ‘The Angami Women’s Organization’ which was originally founded in 1980. In order to address the problems faced by the Naga tribe, ‘Naga Mother’s Association’ was launched in 1984. They have effected radical changes in the social, cultural, religious, and even political life of the Nagas.

### **3.11. Gender:**

The leadership in the Angami tribe traditionally passed on to male successors by inheritance. Women were confined to the domestic arena. They had no much role in the decisions made in the family, village and social fora. Even in the modern democratic system, women’s demand for more decisive role in the society is viewed

with suspecting by men. In the words of Monalisa, “the system as it exists today is biased, discriminatory, obsolete, and inimical to the welfare, development and progress of Naga women” (Monalisa 2004). In short, men employed every means to strengthen patriarchy. The Tribal tradition is that men control community assets and society. There have been so far few reforms aimed at introducing the equality of the sexes. In certain cases, it was the elders in a society who decided who should take over the leadership. In all these matters, men’s decision was final and irrevocable.

### **3.12. Angami Women:**

Down the centuries, as in most societies, women have been confined within the four walls of the house. As times changed, they have begun to enjoy more space in other arenas of life. Although she is constrained by many traditional ‘do’s and ‘don’ts, she has begun to enjoy more privileges. But women are always chided for everything. Mills has observed that “women weaved cloths required for the family, worked in field, brought in firewood, fetched water, and performed all manner of drudgery” (Mills 1969). Writing on the status of women on the hills, Downs’s observation is also relevant in the context:

*“If we are really to improve the home surroundings of these hill tribes, we must educate the women and work through them. Women may not have, in these hills, the same influence amongst the community or in family life that they possess in more civilized countries, but I am confident that the more we civilize and raise the status of women, the better the condition of the people will be, both from a material and moral points of view (Downs 1992).*

### **3.12.1 Economic Matters:**

#### **3.12.1.1. Property Rights:**

As far as economic matters are concerned, women's plight is deplorable. A daughter is not entitled to inherit any of the ancestral property like land or house. Only male children can own land. In the event of a father dying without a male child, his property will devolve on the immediate male relatives. This practice is known as '*kayie*'<sup>7</sup>. Nevertheless, the assets acquired by parents themselves can be bestowed on the daughter or daughters, which they can use at their discretion.

#### **3.12.1.2. Occupation and Livelihood:**

First and foremost, a woman was a mother and a housewife, and then a farmer. The unwritten rule was that a woman was to work but not to earn. She was just an illiterate working machine. The male members of the family including husband or brother never came to her help. From dawn to dusk, and often late into the night, she sweated it out either in the field or in the slow fire. However, with the introduction of modern education, women have now begun to land jobs and have their own income.

### **3.12.2 Social Matters:**

According to Horam, "the Naga women (now) have a high and secure position in society and the family centers round her". With education and salaried jobs, the position of Angami women has risen substantially. As a matter of fact, even women in sophisticated Indian societies eye them with envy. In the words of Furer Haimendorf, "many women in more civilized parts of India may well envy the

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<sup>7</sup> '*Kayie*' is the ancestral property handed over to the next male kin in the absence of a male child.

women of Naga Hills, their high status and their free and happy life; and if you measure the cultural level of a people by the social position and personal freedom of its women, you will think twice before looking down on the Nagas as savages”.

### **3.12.2.1. Marriage and Divorce:**

With the spread of the Christian faith, great changes have come about in the institution of marriage among the Angamis. As education spread, women became more self-reliant and self-confident. They could now raise their voice against discrimination and injustice. Now women can choose their spouses. Traditional marriage system has changed to westernized system. Inter-tribal marriages are very common now. Because of the influence of Christianity, divorce rate has come down as marriage is considered a sacrament. The husband and the wife are to always remember the vow they took at the time of marriage. However, divorces do take place rarely. Women empowerment may be one of the reasons thereof.

### **3.12.3. Women and Religion:**

Religious rites and rituals are an inseparable part of Angami society. When animism was widely prevalent, it was usually women who performed the rituals. But in certain other matters she was considered as taboo. For example, during the Angami festival of ‘sekrenyi’<sup>8</sup> (feast of purification), it was taboo on the part of women to fetch water or cook food. It was regarded as cause of defilement. Feasts are still celebrated without the ethnic rituals of yore due to the influence of Christianity.

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<sup>8</sup> Literally sanctification festival: celebrated in February for 10 days

In religious practices men and women enjoy equality. Women can proclaim the glad tidings of the Kingdom of God within the church and speak on religious and temporal matters outside. In some Christian denominations, women are ordained as ministers.

### **3.13. Angami Women's Organizations:**

#### **3.13.1. Women's Welfare Organizations (WWO):**

That organizations working for the welfare of the Angami women have been launched at their own initiative is a reflection of their empowerment and efficiency. They function actively in many fields. The Angami Women Organization and Kohima Village Ladies Organization (Kewhima Zhavipfiiko Krotho) are especially worth mentioning in this context.

#### **3.13.2. Angami Women Organization (AWO):**

This organization works for ensuring women's rights. It takes up the cause of oppressed women also. Besides, it endeavors to end anti-social activities like drug peddling and bootlegging.

#### **3.13.3. Kohima Village Ladies Organization (KVLO):**

Most of its members are women who have studied up to the matriculation. Founded by two eminent social workers, Mrs. Khrie - ii Sekhose and Miss. Vitshii - ii Sekhose, the organization seeks to popularize traditional customs, the vernacular language and dialects as well as their ethnic songs. It serves as a platform for educated women to develop their latent talents. The organization addresses many major issues faced by women.

### 3.14. Participation of women in Politics:

The participation of Angami women in the political sphere is not much conspicuous. Their presence in the state assembly or parliament has been almost nil to date. Since the first state election conducted in Nagaland in 1964, there has been only just one woman representative in the state assembly, despite a high rate of literacy among them. Similarly, the only woman so far returned to parliament, was Rano Shaiza, having been elected in 1977. This must be the result of gender bias and male chauvinism in the Angami patriarchal society. In this context, Christina states: “although women do not directly contest in elections they are active in election campaigns” (Christina 2002).

Savi observes:

*“No women have led the State politically, not because they are incapable but they are not given the space to do so”. She also adds, that “there are no women members in the Legislative Assembly, which also shows that women are yet to find a political voice and create a role for themselves in the political sphere” (Savi 2012).*

According to Vamuzo:

*It is the legitimate right of every woman to avail herself of rights to shelter, food, education, and health. So also every woman has the right to voice the demands and not only be confined to the home but active in political spheres in order to bring advancement, development, and empowerment for a better meaningful life (Vamuzo 2009).*

### **3.15. Ethnicity and Political Socialization:**

As a result of the pressure exerted by dominant majority groups, every ethnic group everywhere strives to assert its identity. An ethnic group shares a common and distinctive culture, customs, usages, religion, and language. An ethnic group is often a minority group. This observation is very relevant and significant in the case of Naga tribes. In their language, dress, festivals, culture and customs, they are sui generis, a class by itself.

The clan, the family, and the village were the basic units of identity among the Nagas before the arrival of the British. With its own culture, religious faith, and dialects, each village was distinct and unique. It was the non – tribal people of the plains who referred to them by the term ‘Naga’. They had no generic name. They used particular names to refer to each specific group of villages. These villages were often at war with one another before the British regime began. The Nagas were composed of very many tribes speaking their own dialects. Harmony and unity was not a constant among them. Their cultural practices and even physique varied from village to village and tribe to tribe. However, the Nagas developed a common identity during the British rule. Although an alien term, ‘Naga’ eventually began to include various tribes of the region. It may be noted that most of the Nagas became aware of their Naga identity, strangely enough, after the setting up of the Naga National Council.

The British rule was instrumental in bringing about among the Naga ethnic tribes a degree of cohesion. With the maintenance of law and order, with modern means of communication and the spread of Christianity and education came a great transformation in the Naga Hills in the economic, political, social, and cultural

domains. Concomitantly, there was now a greater unity among them and a pride in their age old culture and identity which was rediscovered and redefined. With the passage of time, the Nagas have journeyed a very long way from their benighted past. They are now self-disciplined and proud of their identity. They are capable of making sacrifices for the common good. They are fired by political aspirations. They now dream great dreams and see great visions.

**3.16. The Angami Village and its Organizations:**



**Figure: 3.3. Angami Village - A Hierarchical System**

As did many other tribal communities, the Angamis too had a number of socio - political institutions. Among them, the family (Kikru) was at the lowest rung of the social hierarchy. Just above it was the clan (Chienuo) comprised of several agnatic kin. Next came the ‘Khel’ (Thepfu), an administrative unit in a village. Every village had many Khels. The village (Runa) occupied the topmost rung of the social ladder.

With respect to village administration, each tribe has a unique character. However, there is some form of uniformity in the administrative system. There is a Village Council and Village Development Board in every Naga village. The former

was conferred with legal status in 1968, which enabled it to manage developmental matters. A village development board was formed in 1978 by the Village and Area Councils Act, 1978.

### **3.16.1. The Village Council (V.C):**

The administration of a village turns round the village council. 'Runa'<sup>9</sup> is the Angami term for a village. There is a traditional gate termed 'Kharu'<sup>10</sup> to enter every village. It symbolizes friendship, peace and unity. It is supposed to defend the village, should a war occur. It is the elders who govern the villagers. An Angami village can be considered as a sovereign state. It is the village elders who maintain the traditional laws. The *khels*<sup>11</sup> are known after their ancestors. The *kharu*, the *kichuki*, and *Thehouba*,<sup>12</sup> are the features of a *khel*.

### **3.16.2. Administrative Agencies:**

In a Naga village, the elders are invested with a great deal of authority. They are known as *Gaonburas*<sup>13</sup>. During the British colonial regime, they introduced two layers of administrative agencies. They were the village elders instituted in 1874 and the *Dobashi*<sup>14</sup> in 1842. They settled disputes and discords in accordance with the customary laws. As far as the Angamis are concerned, a village is their sovereign land, and the village court, in their perception, the Supreme Court the decision of

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<sup>9</sup> Runa is an Angami term which refers to village. (An Angami Village)

<sup>10</sup> The Angami village gate.

<sup>11</sup> 'Khel' is an Assamese word for an Angami exogamous group.

<sup>12</sup> A raised platform for a sit out

<sup>13</sup> Dressed in a red shawl, the 'Gaonbura' is a village elder appointed by the government.

<sup>14</sup> Dressed in red coats, and appointed by the government, a Dobashi who is a judicial officer sits in judgment over the customary laws at the district level in Nagaland.

which is final and binding to all. The *Gaonburas* and *Dobashis* were elected on the basis of their merit.

### **3.16.3. District Administration:**

“Along with the offices of the *Gaonburas* and *Dobashi*, the British also set up the office of the District Administration to supervise the overall administration” (Venuh 2004). It is the Deputy Commissioners and Sub – Divisional officers who supervise district administration. Every Naga village had a common system under the district officers, who travelled throughout the districts, visited villages after villages, and met *Gaonburas* and the common people. They developed a rapport with them and settled disputes. They also involved themselves in all the activities in a village. The new pattern of District Administration restructured the traditional Angami polity. Now the chieftains and the elders of the village wielded their authority without any interference. In this context, one may recall the fact that the British turned the Angami polity into a three – tier system, which helped them to consolidate their power and control over the Angami Nagas.

### **3.16.4. Village Development Board (VDB):**

The village Development Board (VDB) is a statutory body. It functions under the Village Council. It is a grass roots level system. The concept was first implemented at Ketsapomy in Phek district in a tentative manner. It included all the permanent inhabitants of the village as members. It functioned under a management committee. The secretary was an elected official whose tenure lasted three years. It was really a novel scheme where the locals could give expressions to their needs and perform the activities more effectively. It was instrumental in improving the

economic and social standards of the poor people in the villages through employment generation and infra structural development. The VDBs have been functioning very actively since 1980 when it was first formed.

“The VDBs tried to ensure grass roots level involvement of the populace in governance. It played a vital role in the construction of roads, irrigation canals as well as rain water harvesting. These projects contributed a lot to rural progress and development. There is no denying the fact that the VDBs as an important institution brought great progress in the rural regions of Nagaland” (Primary source: *Interview with Kekoyato*. (30 October, 2017).

### **3.17. Political Parties in Nagaland and Political Socialization:**

Political socialization is a process wherein the role of political parties is pivotal. They shape the preferences of the people and seek to make indifferent people interested in politics. Of course, parties fight among themselves for promoting their vested interests. However, they are one in supporting the process of the political system. The elections that take place intermittently activate the political awareness of the common people and shape the orientations of the individual in the system. Most importantly, they play a direct role in political socialization through their propaganda machinery, election campaigns and the audio visual media.

The Key political players in Nagaland are the Naga People’s Front, Indian National Congress, Janata Dal (United), Bharatia Janata Party and Nationalist Congress Party. The Nationalist Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN) popularly known as Nagalim is an extremist, Naga outfit in the North east, especially Nagaland. It was active in northwest Myanmar (Burma) also until 2012. Their goal

is the establishment of an independent Naga state, covering all the territories inhabited by the Nagas in North - East India and Northwest Myanmar. The Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 has branded it as an extremist organization. The majority of the people of Nagaland consider a peace accord is more important for them than elections without which the crisis will only get exacerbated.

“During elections, all political parties indulge in corrupt practices like distribution of money, liquor, and drugs to canvass votes for their candidates. It is only natural that once a candidate gets elected, he/she will resort to all kinds of malpractices to make up the money spent in the election. They are not motivated by a desire to serve the citizens. Certain political factions even ingratiate themselves with the insurgents to pressurize and threaten the voters to their advantage” (Primary source: *Interview with Kotso* (25 January, 2018).

### **3.18. Mass Media and Political Socialization:**

In the modern world, it is the mass media that link various sections of the people as well as the powers that be. News gets ‘broken’ every second. The media socializes individuals politically by wielding tremendous influence on them. The government and the political parties resort to every means in manipulating news to influence the citizens. Thus, the mass media acts as an effective agent of political socialization. According to Lucian Pye (1963), “socialization through the mass media is best short run technique available and is crucial to modernization.”

In Naga society, the mass media plays a great role in disseminating information on current affairs. As most of the people are in the habit of reading them or listening to the television or accessing the internet and the social media they go a

long way in shaping public opinion. They cannot help being influenced by the news about the insurgencies in the region that affect them subliminally also. The state and non- state actors often pose threats to the very life of the journalists. However, notwithstanding the threats, they strive to play the role of peace makers.

### **3.19. The State and Political Socialization:**

The media outlets often depend upon the state to access news. Of course it can inform and misinform the media and eventually through the media the public. This is usually referred to as propaganda. It is also part of political socialization. Through agencies such as the legislature, the executive, and the bureaucracy, the government reaches out to the public and this is political socialization in its ideal form. If political socialization leads to improving the condition of the people, it is really great.

#### **3.19.1. Communitization Programme in Nagaland:**

People's direct as well as indirect involvement in governance is the very essence of democracy. The people living in a particular administrative unit are more knowledgeable about its conditions, strengths and weakness than outsiders. Cognizant of this fact, the government of Nagaland has been taking steps to promote people's participation in civil society so as to energize the public services through what is termed 'communitization' which was introduced in 2002 following the passage of the Nagaland Communitization and Services Act, 2002.

It is a novel concept intended to promote the partnership between the government and the community. As a part of it, ownership of public resources and assets is transferred to Local Committees. It is supposed to improve the work of public utility systems, making government employees answerable to the public. The

communitization programme has been a great success, with its innovative use of rich social capital. Impressed by the success of the scheme, Nagaland was given the United Nations Public Service Award in 2008. In an issue of UNICEF's 'The State of the World's Children', a full page article titled "Imagining Nagaland" paid glorious tribute to the state for successfully carrying out communitization. Various other prestigious awards for fostering participation in policy – making decisions through innovative mechanism also followed. It can be rightly said that communitization has gone a long way in promoting a rapport between the government and the general public and political socialization.

**3.20. Conclusion:**

From the above paragraphs in this chapter crystallizes the fact that the state of Nagaland is unique in many respects geographically, culturally, ethnically, sociologically, politically, economically, linguistically, and religiously. The arrival of the British colonialists in the region and their victory over the ferocious and courageous Naga tribes were a watershed event in the history of Nagaland. They brought there a solid administrative structure with a strong bureaucracy. They introduced the modern system of education through English which exposed the Nagas to the universe of modern sciences. It marked the dawn of a great enlightenment in the Naga landscape and mindscape. The change from savagery to civilization was mind boggling indeed. What strikes one's mind in the midst of it all is that the Nagas have been jealously clinging to their cultural heritage keeping it intact and the government of India has been helping them in the matter through constitutional provisions.

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