CHAPTER IV

NON-INTERVENTION

The punitive expeditions sent against the Nagas, as have already discussed, were not entirely barren in results. The villages on the British border with a few exceptions were for several years free from raids and several Angami chiefs entered into agreements with the British officers for keeping the peace of the border by offering nominal submission on behalf of their villages. But soon it was discovered that their chiefs, who promised to keep their agreements were really powerless in their villages. They had neither the authority, nor the means to bind down the entire clan, and were merely "leaders in action and spokesman in parley", while all real authority was wielded in the general assembly of the people. As a result all their show of submission and promises to keep the peace became meaningless on their return to the hills. In 1842-43, therefore, the Governor-General in-council desired that verbal agreements entered into with the chiefs should be renewed by the exaction of a tribute from them as a token of their submission. But when an officer was deputed to the hills next year to collect the tribute, not only did the Nagas refused to tender it, but they renewed their inroads. As these raids became too numerous, expeditions were led into their hills, not only to punish them,
but also to conciliate them after their submission. Towards this end, a post in the heart of their hills was established under a native Daroga. Unfortunately, his undue interference in their internal feuds had cost him his life and the Government of India, a costly and difficult expedition.

However, after the termination of hostilities, the Government of India realising the dangerous consequences of interference decided to abstain "entirely and unreservedly" from all concerns of the Nagas. In pursuance of this decision, the troops were withdrawn from the hills in March 1851, retaining only a party of the Shan Militia at the frontier post of Dimapur.¹ The moment Samaguting was abandoned and the troops left the hills, the Nagas almost ran riot and one outrage after another was committed in North Cachar and its adjoining territories. The first incident reported was an attack made on a party of Kachari elephant-hunters. Since there was some doubt as to the British jurisdiction over Hassong Hajo, no immediate steps against the aggressors could be taken. But in the second instance, punitive action was not possible because of Government of India's insistence on the policy of non-interference. Nevertheless as a precaution for future, a proclamation was issued by the local authorities prohibiting British subjects from proceeding to the hills beyond Dimapur.²

¹ Butler, J.; Travels and Adventures, p. 212.
² B.J.P. 1852, Nov. 18, No. 116.
SITUATION IN NORTH CACHAR:

The failure on the part of the Government of India to punish the aggressors effectively had resulted in frequent inroads into North Cachar and Tularam's country. Indeed, since the beginning of 1841, these areas were in such a disturbed condition that the detachment of the Cachar Levy had to be constantly vigilant. The inability of Tularam to repel these attacks single-handed and the early indifference of the British authorities told heavily on the Kachari and Mikir population. Consequently they fled into the adjoining districts for safety. The expeditions of Grange and Bigge had failed to bring the turbulent Angamis under control. Captain John Butler, the Principal Assistant of Nowgong, reported to the Agent in July 1850, that since he had taken over charge of the district in 1845, six outrages had been committed on the villages in the eastern side of the Mahur river by the Nagas living within the jurisdiction of Tularam. He revealed that the frequent inroads of the Nagas had rendered an area of about 2100 square miles barren and reduced the population to 5000 souls.

4. B.J.P. 1850, Nov. 6, No.127, Butler to Jenkins, 1850, No.136.
RESUMPTION OF TULARAM'S TERRITORY URGED:

Butler, while referring to the aggressions of the Nagas alleged that the two sons of Tularam, who had been entrusted with the management of their father's territory since 1844, were utterly incompetent to restore confidence in the minds of their subjects. He reported that though he had asked Nakulram, the eldest son of Tularam to deliver up the offenders, not only did he fail to surrender a single individual or afford any assistance in their capture, but had been screening them from the police. He further alleged, that Tularam and his sons send Kacharis with muskets to side with the Nagas for sharing the spoils of their plunder.

Butler was of opinion that under the rule of Tularam and his successors there would be no peace either in their territory or in that of the neighbouring British districts. The conduct of Tularam and his sons towards the British Government, he said amounted to a breach of the agreements entered into with the Senapati in 1834. Besides these, he added, Tularam was held in low estimation by his people, partly because of his implication in the murder of Raja Gobindachandra, and partly on account of his mean origin. In consideration of all these Butler urged the Government to resume Tularam's territory without delay.

5. B.J.P. 1850, No. 6, No. 127.
Almost all the charges levelled against Tularam, of misrule, oppression on the ryots, complicity with the Nagas, non-cooperation with the British officials, low origin, etc., were refuted by the Senapati with strong evidence. On the other hand, he had charged Butler of falsehood, high-handedness and deliberate misrepresentation of facts with a view to deprive him of his territories. There was no evidence of misrule or oppression of either Tularam or his sons on their ryots. As regards their complicity with the Nagas, Butler could not adduce any positive evidence except quoting his predecessor's (Captain Eld) statement that they helped the Nagas with fire-arms for sharing the spoils of plunder and that they were too cunning to appear openly in these affairs.6

In fact Tularam, true to his commitments had been assisting, since the first expedition under Grange, the different officials passing through his country on way to the hills. He had accompanied Grange to the frontier as far as Haflong and helped him in cutting paths, erecting huts and providing ressuds for the troops. His subsequent failure to meet the requirement of the officials with as much earnestness as was demanded of him was due to the uncultivated and disturbed state of the country and the distance which separated his residence from his ryots. Added to all these were

6. Ibid.
his old age and family misfortunes, aggravated now and then by the quarrel between his two sons, which was at last composed due to the intervention of the father. Since 1844, frictions continued to take place between the family of Tularam and the officials of the Government relating to the supply of provisions and labour. These were mostly accentuated by the undue demands of the officers and troops, and their forcible seizure of men and supplies like fish, vegetables and rice without making payments. The relationship of the Kachari chief with Butler worsened when allegations and counter-allegations were levelled by the one against the other.

PROPOSED RESUMPTION NEGATIVED:

From the very beginning, Jenkins accepted Butler's allegations against the Senapatí and his sons with some amount of reservation. He did not agree in supposing with him that Tularam was ill-disposed towards the British authorities. On the other hand he believed that at times "the conduct of our police and other officers may have been very galling to these rude chiefs". He admitted that too much was expected by the officers from a country so thinly populated. The large exodus of the inhabitants was the consequence of the excessive demands for labour and supplies and not for the oppre-

8. B.J.P. 1850, Nov. 6, No. 127.
ssion of the Kachari chiefs as alleged. Concurring in the opinion of the Agent to the Governor-General, the Deputy Governor of Bengal expressed the view that nothing serious had occurred to affect British relations with Tularam so as to warrant the resumption of the country as proposed by the Principal Assistant of Nowgong. 9

PROPOSAL RENEWED:

Although the proposal of resumption of Tularam's country was shelved by the orders of the Government, Butler's quarrel with the Kachari chiefs continued. The death of Tularam on October 12, 1851 gave Butler fresh opportunity to renew his pet proposal of resumption. In addition to his previous charges against the heirs of Tularam, he tried to convince the Government that the treaty concluded with Tularam was merely a personal one and, therefore, with his death his territory had forfeited to the British Government. Jenkins did not consider his argument to be convincing; he believed that the treaty was intended to extend to the chief's heirs. Even the "strong and stout annexationist" Dalhousie did not concur in the view expressed by Butler. The local authorities were accordingly directed by the Government of India to confirm the sons of Tularam in their possessions

9. Ibid.
subject to the same terms and conditions on which their father held the country. 10

VINCENT'S DEPUTATION TO NORTH CACHAR:

Tularam's sons were confirmed in their possessions, but their troubles did not terminate. Their territories were now subjected to repeated raids of the Angamis, the repercussions of which were even felt in the adjoining British territories. To conduct an enquiry into the cases of these aggressions and to propose suitable measures for preventing them Lieutenant Vincent, the Junior Assistant of Nowgong was deputed to North Cachar in the cold season of 1851. On enquiry he learnt that no less than twenty-four outrages had been committed by the Nagas in this sub-division during the last few years, as a result of which fifty five persons lost their lives, ten wounded and one hundred and thirteen were captured. Atleast three of these outrages were ascertained by him to have been committed by the hostile clans of Khonoma and Mozoma. Vincent attributed them mostly to the cessation of the periodical visits of European officers to the district; the supineness and laxity of the British Police; the want of faith of the Nagas on British justice; desire for revenge and plunder; the withdrawal of troops from the hills and the impunity with which prior aggressions had been

committed. 11

For the security of North Cachar against the Angami menace, Lieutenant Vincent made several recommendations. The most important one which had got the support of the Agent to the Governor-General, was the permanent posting of an European Officer to North Cachar. It may be recalled that such a proposal was sanctioned as early as 1838, by the Government of India, but was abandoned on the threatening attitude of Ava. In 1841, this proposal was revived by Bigge and Gordon. The Agent was convinced that the permanent residence of an European officer in the hills would be able to bring about changes in the Angami character. But Butler had misgivings in entrusting management of the tribe to native agency. He recommended that the Junior Assistant of Nowrong be permanently posted in North Cachar. This proposal received support of the Agent; the presence of such an officer, he hoped, would help in suppressing the feud between the Nagas and the Kukis which was gradually increasing since the latter's migration to North Cachar in recent years. 12

Above all Vincent strongly recommended the immediate resumption of Tularam's territory and the country of the Angami and Kuchcha Nagas. The extension of British territory in an easterly and north-easterly direction over all the Naga tribes, he hoped, would serve as an effective

11. B.J.P. 1852, Nov. 18, No. 122.
12. See Account of the Province of Assam, 1903, p. 73.
bulwark against Burma or Manipur. He was convinced that the implementation of these measures would go a long way in the introduction of civilisation and Christianity among the tribes now steeped in "barbarism and superstition".  

THREAT OF BURMESE INVASION:

In the meanwhile, situation on the Manipur frontier became extremely disquieting due to the threatening attitude of Burma. In fact, the expansion of the British power over the valley of the Brahmaputra and its growing influence over the surrounding hills in the north-east made her extremely jealous. Since 1837, the Court of Ava, assuming a definite policy of hostility had strengthened the frontiers. Naturally, the contumacious conduct of some of the tribes and their clandestine relations with the Burmese made the British Government all the more apprehensive. The sudden appearance in 1852, of an armed party of two hundred strangers in the Naga Hills, "wearing strange dresses and having their hair gathered into a knot on the top of their foreheads" made the local officials uneasy.  

It was gathered that the party came from the Burmese frontier and tried to proceed westward towards the Dayang, but being opposed by the Abor Nagas retired to the eastward. The motive of the party could not

13. B.J.P. 1852, Nov. 18, No. 123.
be ascertained, but Mr. Masters, Sub-Assistant of Golaghat, concluded that its only object was to reconnoitre the country and examine the mountain passes. On the other hand, Jenkins was of the view that they had been definitely invited by the Khonoma Nagas. A small party like theirs, he said, could never have dared to enter the hills had there been no hope of being joined by others from within. It was not unlikely; after the destruction of their village the men of Khonoma had been trying to regain their former ascendancy in the Angami hills with the help of the Manipuris and the Burmese.

Whatever might be the causes of the intrusion, the Government of India was so much alarmed, that the local authorities both military and civil were alerted against a possible show down with the Burmese. Major Hannay, Senior officer in-charge of the Regiments strengthened the guards at Sibsagar and also called in a detachment from his regiments at Dimapur to be stationed at Golaghat. The Agent himself proposed to move two companies of the Second Assam Light Infantry to Golaghat at the close of the rainy season. The Governor-General in-Council approved the measures already taken by the local authorities for repairing the roads in Upper Assam, but suggested that a steamer and a flat be kept ready in the Brahmaputra to facilitate the movement and concentration of troops on any threatened point. 15

15. B.J.P. 1852, May 6, No. 95.
BIVAR TAKES CHARGE OF NORTH CACHAR:

The defensive measures adopted so far had failed to protect North Cachar and its neighbouring country from the inroads of the Nagas. The continuance of such a state of affairs prompted the Government to accept the recommendation of Vincent for posting one European officer to the charge of North Cachar. Accordingly, Captain Bivar, the Junior Assistant of Nowgong, was permanently posted at Gauraigaon in January 1853, under the direct supervision of the Agent to the Governor-General in the North-East Frontier to keep peace amongst the Nagas and the Kukis, to prevent them and other tribes from making aggressions on each other and to protect them from the attack of the Angamis.

Hardly had Bivar settled himself in his new station in North Cachar, a large body of Nagas from Mozoma attacked Semkhor on April 3, 1853, in retaliation of the murder of one of their chiefs some ten years ago by the Kacharis. The Nagas burnt the village, killed 86 men and carried off 115 as prisoners. Tularam's eldest son Nakulram at the head of a large force of Kacharis and Nagas of the Khonoma clan proceeded against Mozoma. But on nearing the enemy village he changed his plan. On the persuasion of the Khonoma Nagas, he attacked the Dishoma Nagas who came in force and decoyed him into an ambuscade and put him to death along with many
of his followers. The fall of their chief made the Kacharis to run helter and skelter. As Nakulram of his own free will and in clear violation of the existing treaty attacked the independent Dishomas without any provocation, no blame was attached to the Nagas. On receipt of this news, the Agent to the Governor-General, however, directed Butler to send a detachment from Nowgong to the place of occurrence to restore the confidence of the Kacharis and prevent the Nagas from repeating such mischief.

TULARAM'S TERRITORY RESUMED:

The death of Nakulram gave the local officials the much desired opportunity to press once again the resumption of the territory. Nakulram's declaration of war against an independent tribe was considered to be a flagrant violation of the existing treaty. Bivar who went to enquire into the circumstances leading to the murder of Nakulram, told the Agent that nothing short of resumption would effectively prevent the repetition of such attacks since the second son of Tularam could not be relied upon. Jenkins, however, believed that permanent security was impossible without the maintenance of a detachment and the establishment of a line of posts between Gumaigaju and Dimapur. To carry out these

17. B.J.P. 1854, Jan. 12, No. 186.
measures against the Angamis, the resumption of Tularam's country was indispensable. At the same time he believed, that had Semkhor been considered a part of the British territory, the Nagas would not have attacked it. In view of all these he changed his earlier opinion and urged the Government of Bengal to annex the territory of Tularam forthwith.

Mr. Moffat Mills, Judge of the Sadar Court of Calcutta on deputation, being called upon by the Government of India to give his opinion on the subject recommended its annexation on the assumption that "the country under its present administration is a serious obstacle to the settlement of the Naga country." Lord Dalhousie concurring in these views desired the Government of India to resume the territory, as its occupation seemed to him a less objectionable alternative than letting it alone. Accordingly the territory in question was annexed to North Cachar by a proclamation issued by Bivar in December 1853, after intelligence being conveyed to the Nagas through the Subedar Commanding the post of Dimapur. In accordance with the desire of the Government of Bengal, the remaining heirs of Tularam's family were granted annual pensions in cash, besides rent-free lands at Mohong Dijua during their lives.

18. B.J.P. 1854, Jan. 12, No. 185.
B.J.P. 1854, Jan. 12, No. 188.
PEAK OF ANGAMI AGGRESSIONS:

With the addition of Tularam’s territory to North Cachar, the responsibility of the officer in-charge of that sub-division considerably increased, but he was strictly forbidden to interfere in the internal affairs of the Nagas except for defensive purposes. As a consequence, the peace of the frontier was lost and law and order could not be maintained. In fact, since the appointment of Biver during a period of three years, twelve cases of aggressions of the Nagas were reported. The feuds between the Angamis and the Kukis and also of the former with the Kuchcha Nagas were rampant. The first incident that came to the notice of the Government related to a raid committed by the Nagas upon a Mikir village in which forty six persons were killed and two carried off. The last of the twelve was the surprise and massacre of a patrolling party of the Nowgong Militia. Almost all these were believed to have been committed by the Angami Nagas of Difoomah and Phekerkreemah. Being fully convinced that outrages upon British villages and their internal quarrels could not be forcibly prevented by any cordon of troops, the Agent urged the Government of India to send an expedition against the aforesaid villages. At the same time, he suggested as a permanent measure the annexation of the

20. Despatch from the Court of Directors (J), 1859, Jan. 27, No. 86.
hills to put an end to all future troubles in the Naga frontier. But the Government of India negatived the proposals of the Agent and impressed on him the necessity of turning the direction of the Naga policy in a contrary direction.

GROWING INFLUENCE OF MANIPUR IN NAGA AFFAIRS:

The experience of the last few years had proved that non-interference as a policy had signally failed to bring peace into the Naga frontier. On the otherhand it had encouraged raids into British territory and blood-feuds amongst themselves. Ever since the inauguration of this policy, the influence of the British in the hills was gradually decreasing while that of Manipur was increasing. The growing influence of Manipur reached its climax in the beginning of 1854, when a large Manipuri force, led by a chief of that state totally destroyed the Angami village of Mozoma. As the Manipuris had threatened to return again to bring them under their rule, the deputies of twenty two villages had sought the protection of the British Government promising complete submission and payment of revenue in return. On enquiry by the local officials it was discovered that the Khonoma Nagas were mainly instrumental in inviting them to destroy the Mozoma Nagas. But Bivar attributed it to the plundering raids of the Mozoma Nagas on the Kuchcha Naga villages within Manipur's jurisdiction. Disagreeing with the latter view
Jenkins believed that the invasion was brought about by the refugees from Khonoma, whose only desire was to see Manipur's supremacy in the Naga Hills in place of the British who were the allies of their enemy.  

Whatever might have been the causes of this invasion, the terror of Manipur persisted in the Angami hills for a long time. The Agent now urged upon the Government of India to prevent Manipur from invading the Angami country in future except in communication with the appropriate authorities. But the Government of India stated that the Angami villages being not under British protection, it was not competent to demand of the Manipur Government to abstain from invading the Angami country. As the Manipur Government was independent, the British Govt. considered the former to be within its rights to punish the Angami Nagas if they attacked the Naga villages within its jurisdiction.

Even after this communication, the Agent was urged by several Naga villages to take the Angami country under British protection. They seemed to be not convinced, when they were told that the British Government had no power to restrain Manipur. They probably thought that the British were abettors in the attack against them by the Manipuris. In fact, a deputation from Mozoma told Jenkins frankly, that

they would retaliate on the British villages if their villages were not taken under immediate protection. But the Naga were warned that if they retaliated they would be met with signal retribution.

JENKINS ADVOCATES ANNEXATION OF THE ANGAMI HILLS:

The appointment of a European Officer, it was expected, would put an end to the unhappy state of affairs both in North Cachar and its adjoining territories. The experience of the last few years, however, shewn "how futile have been all attempts to cover our villages from inroads of these ruthless clans by our merely defensive operations and how little we have succeeded in deterring them from pursuing their barbarous habits by intimidation, or humanise them by conciliation". Being disgusted with such a prevailing situation, Jenkins and his several subordinate officers strongly urged the occupation of the Angami Country which appeared to them to be the only solution for putting an end to the Naga depredations on the British territories. Although the Government of India was opposed to such a policy, to the Agent there was no other alternative "sooner or later, we or the Munnipoories, must advance our positions into the Angami country." He admitted that initially, the expense of such occupation would be very high, but with little exertion the

23. B.J.P. 1855, March 8, Nos. 161-163.
Government would be able to civilise and christianise the tribes and even reclaim the vast areas now lying useless. But he doubted, whether Manipur would be able to do much except the tranquilisation of the country by exterminating half the population.24

JENKINS CENSURED : POLICY NEGATIVED :

The Lieutenant Governor of Bengal fully appreciated the strong conviction of the Agent that it was not possible to maintain the position towards the Nagas as desired by the Government of India and at the same time to prevent them from making raids into British territories. But he could not agree with the Agent that something serious had taken place in the meanwhile which warrant a reversal of the policy of the Government prescribed in 1851. It may be mentioned in this context that at that time the Governor-General in-Council emphatically condemned the policy of obtaining control over the hills and of establishing British sovereignty over their inhabitants. Instead of following such a course, the Agent was then directed to confine himself to effective measures of defence on the British frontier, refraining at the same time from all interference in the internal feuds of the Nagas. The Lieutenant Governor, therefore, could not support any proposal of obtaining control over the Nagas. While rejecting

Jenkins' proposition, he was constrained to observe that not only had he not taken any pains to explain to the Naga chiefs Government's stand towards them, but failed to exert his personal influence over them in strengthening British relations with the Nagas. He made no secret of his utmost dissatisfaction that Jenkins had failed to discharge that part of his duty which his very office enjoined upon him. He was blamed for not giving his personal attention to these matters and leaving too much in the hands of young officers like Bivar who hardly understand the prescribed policy of the Government. The Governor-General in Council also concurred in the opinions entertained by the Bengal Government and strongly condemned the policy of annexation of the Angami country under any circumstance.

NON-INTERFERENCE INSISTED UPON:

Thus the repeated attempts of the Agent and his officials in-charge of the hills to force the hands of the Government of India, to take a more direct part in the management of the Nagas met with a rebuff. While condemning such a policy, the Government of India maintained that the protection of the British borders from the depredations of the Naga tribes could be more easily, more cheaply, and more justly, be obtained by establishing effective means of defence.

25. B.J.P., 1855, June 14, Nos. 194, 196.
on the lines of the British frontier. In view of the express wishes of the Government of India, the Bengal Government instructed the local officials to mix no more with the feuds of the Angamis and to cease from attempting to push forward unnecessarily beyond the boundary of the actual subject population and to punish any violation on British territory inflicting severe punishment on the offenders as quickly as possible. Accordingly, the officer in-charge of North Cachar was directed to avoid any meddling in the concern of the Angamis who were henceforth to be regarded as "persons living beyond the authority of the British Government".

DEFENCE OF THE NAGA FRONTIER: ITS DIFFICULTIES:

In pursuance of the directive of the Government of India, the local authorities now engaged themselves in the problem of strengthening the frontier defences. But the task of protecting the long line of frontier from the depredations of the Angamis proved itself a colossal one. It was really difficult to deal with a people like the Angami Nagas, acknowledging no supremacy and strictly speaking having no chiefs. Besides the country to the protected was very intricate with an extensive frontier line covered with dense forests and

27. B.J.P. 1856, May 15, No. 189.
haavy undergrowth, where only Nagas could travel as swiftly and as stealthily as tigers without the least chance of being detected. Moreover they always avoid beaten paths when bent on outrage. Usually they engage scouts to make sure that they won't miss the prey. Military measures without the establishment of posts could never hope to achieve the desired result, but multiplication of such posts throughout the frontier was difficult and expensive. Under the circumstances, the local officials expressed themselves in favour of the adoption of indigenous expedients which might prove efficacious in keeping the peace with the Nagas.

FRONTIER LINE CONTRACTED:

As strictly defensive measures had been recommended by the Government of India against the Nagas, the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal accepted the suggestion of Major Hannay, for making Golaghat, the headquarter of an officer with one or two companies of the Assam Light infantry. He also suggested the creation of two detached posts at Jamuguri and Borpotha and opening of good roads for connecting these posts with Golaghat, Dimapur and Mohong Dijua so that effective patrolling could be undertaken. The Lieutenant Governor of Bengal accepting the suggestion of Hannay sanctioned the opening of such roads as were considered desirable. But before

considering the question of the detached posts he wanted a thorough review of the existing posts with a view to withdrawing any that was in advance of the British inhabited districts. The posts according to him should "defend something real and not inhabited forests". In this connection he observed that the policy hitherto followed in pushing the frontier too far into the close proximity of the tribes was unwise.

In accordance with the desire of the Government of Bengal, the Agent directed Butler to withdraw the advanced post of Dimapur and make Mohong Dijua a post of 50 men. He was also instructed to connect Mohong Dijua with Borpothar by a road. As a result of the withdrawal of the post of Dimapur, Borpothar and Mohong Dijua became the most advanced posts at this end of the eastern frontier. 29

NEW EXPERIMENT OF VILLAGE DEFENCE:

As a means of defending the border villages against the depredations of the Angami Nagas, on the suggestion of Vetch (Officiating Agent to the Governor-General) two or more of the boldest men in each village armed with muskets were put as Chowkidars and the other able bodied men armed with their own weapons were to rally round the musketeers in times of danger. This system, he said, worked well against the

29. B.J.P. 1855, Nov. 29, Nos. 182-183.
Mishmis on the north-east frontier. Bivar did not support its introduction among the Nagas, because it was dangerous. He considered giving of arms to the villages would be inexpedient. Fire-arms would enable the warlike men to resist their enemies with ease, but by placing the same in the hands of the unwarlike much harm was likely to be caused. It would invite the more powerful neighbours to take possession of the arms from them. Notwithstanding such warnings, the measure was introduced in some frontier villages belonging to Rengma and other tribes. Chowkidars were also appointed in some villages by the Officer in-charge of Nowgong.

ENLISTMENT OF ANGAMIS IN THE LOCAL MILITIA:

On Bivar's proposition another experiment of subduing the Angamis was made by recruiting Angami youths to the local militia. These youths possessed great aptitude for military service and were intelligent and courageous. They evinced great desire to take service in the police militia. But the main reason of their willingness to join such service as Jenkins had rightly surmised, was their desire to learn the use of fire-arms to better repel the attacks of the Manipuris and the enemies of their own tribe. However, Jenkins considered that nothing would be better than taking them into the service of the Government. He was convinced that it would

30. B.J.F. 1855, April 26, No. 214.
gradually conduce to their civilisation and well being and British influence over them would be much increased. He, therefore, permitted Bivar to enlist twenty of them to the Nowgong Militia. But, soon it was discovered that these young recruits were not willing to remain for long in service. Lieutenant Sconce, the officer in-charge of North Cachar revealed that out of thirty seven men enlisted, only eight remained on the rolls. As they were accustomed to unrestrained wild habits, no attempt was made to bind them by agreements, which might not only encourage desertion with arms, but prevent their taking service altogether.

PLANTING OF KUKI COLONIES AS BUFFER:

Major Jenkins had little faith in the capacity of the Kachari, Mikir and Aroong Naga population of North Cachar to defend themselves against the aggressions of the Angamis. But he had great faith in the capacity of the Kukis. They were brave and ferocious, but restless. Of late they had been showing a tendency to migrate. Jenkins proposed to induce them to settle permanently in the deserted lands west of the Dhansiri, by holding to them the prospect of total exemption from taxation. On the approval of the Government this measure was introduced by settling a colony of Kukis

B.J.P. 1855, Sept. 27, No. 399.
to the east of the Langting river in a direction of about 30 miles to the north-east of Asalu. The Kuki settlers were provided with fire-arms and ammunitions for effectively defending the frontier from their most turbulent neighbours, the Angami Nagas. But the measure did not prove a success. The Kuki villages were respected by the Nagas, but the villages of other tribes remained as much exposed to Angami attacks as before.

FUTILITY OF DEFENSIVE MEASURES:

The defensive arrangements based on a policy of non-interference failed to check the lawless propensities of the Angami Nagas. The inability to punish them for their continued aggressions on the British villages was construed by them as a defeat of the British Government. Hence each successful attack emboldened them to renew their attacks, which rendered the border villages more and more insecure. The never-ending hostilities of the villages of Difoomah, Phekerkreemah, Razepamah and Samaguting let loose a 'reign of terror' in the villages in their neighbourhood. The depredations of the two last named villages caused so much alarm in the minds of the inhabitants of the village of Mohong Dijua, that they even decided to leave their village. The audacity of the Angamis

32. B.J.P. 1856, Sept. 18, No. 265.
   B.J.P. 1866, April, No. 139.
reached its climax when they attacked a party of the Police Militia on patrol duty on the road to Borpothar. Mivar proposed an expedition against the villages responsible for the lawlessness and continued trouble in this part of the frontier. But before any appropriate action was undertaken, the deputies of the guilty villages of Difoomah and Phekerekreemah came in with their offer of submission, expressing fealty to the Queen. They also prayed that they might be forgiven for their past offences. Their offer of submission was not accepted by the Government, but they were forgiven and allowed "to resort freely to our territory for purposes of trade and intercommunication", on condition of future good behaviour.  

RELATION WITH THE EASTERN NAGAS:

In 1851 an outrage was perpetrated by the Banphera Nagas on the Dhodar Ali resulting in the death of two Assamese villagers. As the offenders immediately after the incident had fled and took shelter with the Joboka Nagas, they could not be apprehended. However, on the recommendation of captain Holroyd, since succeeded Brodie as Principal Assistant of Sibsagar, the Government directed the closure of the Joboka duar to force them to surrender the guilty persons. But before this measure was introduced, the Joboka Nagas handed over the accused. In 1852, the report of an aggression of the Lhota  

33. Despatch to the Court of Directors (J), 1859, Jan. 27, No. 86.
Nagas upon the village of Borpothar, little below the guard house reached the Government. The same report revealed that the villagers of Borpothar armed with bows and arrows and four old muskets chased them out killing two of the raiders. The Lhotas, like the Angamis were in the habit of committing outrages on the Kachari and Ahom villages near Borpothar. During the last few years they were reported to have committed several raids into the Rengma hills too. Though unconnected with the British Government as yet, the Lhotas used to come down to the plains armed with their daos and spears to trade. They annually brought about 12000 maunds of cotton and disposed them free of any duty. This tribe had been enjoying rent-free lands (Naga Khats) at Nogorah and Jamuguri and fishing rights in the Dayang ever since the days of the former Government. 34

Mr. Masters, the Sub-Assistant Commissioner at Golaghat who conducted the enquiry into the Borpothar outrage suggested that the Lhotas be prohibited from entering the plains armed with their weapons and that the two Naga Khats be resumed and that they should not be allowed to fish in the Dayang below the Rengmapani. Though Captain Holroyd authorised his Sub-Assistant Mr. Masters to enforce these measures, the Agent apprehending retaliation from them recommended that the villagers of Borpothar be provided with fire-arms.

34. B.J.P. 1853, Jan. 20, No. 121.
to defend themselves. Before this measure could be enforced, the same party made a retaliatory attack on Borpothar killing twenty villagers. Butler instructed Bivar to interdict them from trade and take such steps as would be necessary. But Jenkins did not approve the blockade of the passes, because such a measure would inflict injury on innocent clans, while the guilty ones would in no way suffer. 35

QUARREL BETWEEN NAMCHANG AND BORDUAR NAGAS:

In the cold season of 1853, a deadly quarrel took place between the Namchang and Borduar Nagas out of non-payment of tribute to the Namchang chief by six Naga villages (dependent of both chiefs) at the instigation of the Borduar chief. The dispute was personally settled by Holroyd and in his presence the two chiefs, both being disciples of the Bareghoria Gossain, swore by him to maintain the agreements they had now entered into. Moreover, they consented to leave the management of the disputed villages to the officer-in-charge of Sibsagar who would collect the tribute and distribute the same among the claimants. 36 Holroyd sought the permission of the Government to allow him to visit Namchang, Borduar and the disputed villages again to make permanent arrangement to maintain peace in this frontier. He had also

35. B.J.P. 1855, April 12, No. 154.
suggested in this connection the permanent posting of an 
European officer at Jaipur for maintaining cordial relations 
with the tribes in this tract. Jenkins supported this pro­
posal, but the Governor-General in-Council regretted that 
no additional officer could be spared for this duty.

NON-INTERFER. NCE RECOMMENDED:

Notwithstanding the arrangements made in the begin­
ing of 1856, the hostilities between them were again renewed. 
Holroyd wanted to punish the guilty party for violating the 
terms of the agreements entered into with him at Jaipur 
(February 1854). He solicited the permission of the Government 
to allow him to march along the frontier annually to make 
arrangements with the heads of the Naga clans to exercise an 
influence over the tribes. But in view of the existing policy 
of non-interference in relation to the Nagas, the Govt. of 
Bengal advised the Agent not to allow the Principal Assis­
tant of Sibsagar to proceed any further with the case. Between 
1855 and 1857, some more cases of murder and bloodshed were 
reported but in most cases the chiefs always handed over the 
offending persons on demand. In fact, by this time trade had 
so profound a hold among the tribes in this frontier that the 
policy of closing the duars for traffic always resulted in 
the surrender of the guilty persons. 37