The study of the historical background of people of a region is necessary in order to understand its present character in a proper perspective. Such a study as encompassing the whole of Nagaland from social geographic point of view becomes rather more essential, and in a way imperative when it is to deal comprehensively with the people made up of several tribal groups in their spatial context. Nagaland is the homeland of more than a dozen tribes, namely Angami, Ao, Chakhesang, Chang, Chirr, Kheinmungan, Konyak, Lotha, Makware, Phom, Rengma, Sangtam, Sema, Tikhir and Zeliang. Collectively, these tribal groups are called 'Naga'. This common name 'Naga' was not in general use among themselves until recently. Gradually, however, as they became more united under the same political territory they began to use the name for themselves more popularly. It is against this backdrop that the present chapter is devoted to the treatment of people in the historical perspective, first dealing with the word 'Naga'. 
4.1 The Word 'Naga':

There are several views expressed by different scholars as to why the people living in this part of the hills are called Nagas. Some writers are of the opinion that the word 'Naga' originated from the Sanskrit word 'NAG' meaning snake. This, however, is not tenable as the snake race of the Vedic chronicles had nothing to do with the Nagas who were not at all in the habit of worshipping snake even in the olden days. Another version with respect to the origin of the word 'Naga' is that, the word 'Naga' has come from the Bengali word 'NANGTA' meaning lack of cloth. In the same vein, some writers opine that the word 'Naga' has evolved from the Sanskrit word 'NAGNA' which means naked. But this view seems not convincing. For in Sanskrit literature the inhabitants who were non-Aryan tribes living in the mountains particularly in the Himalayas and in the north-eastern areas of India have been known as Kiratas.¹ There is yet another version according to which the word 'Naga' is a deformed expression of the Hindustani word 'NANGA' meaning nudity. However, this also is implausible as there is hardly any mention about the Hindustani speaking people coming in contact with

the Nagas in the olden days so as to give them a name.²

The explanations given above to the effect of the origin of the word 'Naga' are assumptions and therefore, cannot be taken for granted. The most plausible theory as to the origin of the word 'Naga' seems to be the one which has Burmese connections. As the Nagas had migrated to their present territory through Burma, probably it was the Burmese who gave them the name. It was the tradition of the Nagas for both men and women to have their ears pierced for ear decoration. The Burmese called that group of people, having holes in ears as 'NAKA' meaning pierced ears, and the anglicised word for 'NAKA' became Naga.³ This can be further supported logically. The Britishers first came into contact with the Burmese in 1795 and with the Nagas in 1832. It is, therefore, obvious that it was the Burmese who gave the information to the British explorers about the 'Naka' group whose movement took place through Burma while migrating to their present hill country. Since then, the anglicised word 'NAGA' has been in use in all the anthropological books and official records.⁴

⁴ Ibid., p. 41.
4.2 Origin of the Nagas:

Despite the availability of paleolithic tools and the legends, the origin of Nagas is shrouded in obscurity. This is primarily due to the paucity of written records or chronicles. As to the origin there are, apart from scholars' views many legends and mythological stories that are in prevalence among the different Naga communities. Though lacking in authenticity, these legends throw at least some light on their origin and migration to their present abode. Here it will be worthwhile to mention some of those legends.

The Aos hold the view in accordance with their old legends that they originated from a group of stones. Similarly, the Konyaks' tradition has it that their ancestors came out from stones along with the progenitors of other tribal groups. The Angamis too say that they are the descendants of those who emerged from the bowels of the earth in the south of their present habitat. In the same way, the tradition of the Chakhesangs, Semas, Rengmas and Lothas points that their ancestors came out of stones in a place known as Khezakenoma (located in southern part of Nagaland). These traditional stories are no doubt based on superstitions and religious beliefs and hence cannot be considered authentic. However, a close study of these

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scattered views reveals that these Naga tribes are not autochthonous to Nagaland but moved into their present habitat from the south after coming from the Burma side. Besides these legends, there are views expressed by different scholars regarding the origin and migration of the Nagas who belong to the Indo-Mongoloid race.⁶

On the basis of their affinities with the tribes of south-east Asian countries, scholars have conjectured that the Nagas migrated from those places. They are of the opinion that originally the Nagas came from Central Asia, where they were known as the non-Chinese Chinang Tribes.⁷ From there they first moved towards the north-west border of China, many centuries before the Christian era. Later on, these tribes spread over to China, Indonesia, Philippines, Bhutan, Burma and Nagaland.⁸ Also according to Smith, the social customs and culture of the Nagas bear resemblance to those of Dyaks and Koyans—the tribal people of Indonesia and the Philippines.⁹ Furthermore, he believes that the Nagas belong to the same blood which is found in the people of Burma, Sikkim, Bhutan and other hilly areas of north-east Asia.

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India. Thus, from the preceding we can conclude that the Nagas are, by no means the original people of Nagaland. The hypothesis that the Nagas' ancient abode was near the sea or must have come from the sea coast is also strengthened by the life style of the Nagas and the ornaments such as conch shells used by the Nagas in the villages. Also the long war-drums hewn out of huge logs and which were used by the Nagas in olden days greatly take the shape of the canoes, popularly used by the islanders of Indonesia and Philippines. The use of all these things - marine articles and canoe shaped log-drums indicates that these people were once living near the sea.

4.3 Nagas in the Historical Perspective:

History of the Nagas may be broadly periodised into three parts; viz. (i) Process of peopling in Nagaland. This refers to the ancient period that covers the migration of Nagas and their occupation of the present territory, (ii) Middle period and (iii) Modern period.

4.3.1 Process of Peopling in Nagaland: Though their hoary past has sunk into oblivion, it is probable that the Nagas with the allied tribes like Karen, Kachin, Singpho, Chin, Shan, etc. came towards Burma from north-western China. Leaving behind the allied tribes in Burma, different Naga

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tribes continued their movement towards Nagaland after crossing the Irrawaddy and the Chindwin Rivers of Burma. And as the weight of their tradition points out, most of the Naga tribes entered Nagaland from the south at different times and in different waves. Their date of occupation of the present habitat cannot be determined with certainty for lack of recorded history. Yet, some scholars do agree on the point that their migration to Nagaland probably took place in the early part of 12th century.\(^\text{11}\)

The first wave of migrants was of the Angamis, Semas, Rengmas, Lothas, Chakhesangs, etc., who entered Nagaland from the south through the mountain fringes touching the valley of Manipur. As the tradition goes these tribes moved northward from the plains of Manipur and reached Mekruma (located in northern part of Manipur).\(^\text{12}\) From Mekruma they advanced further towards the north and reached Khezakenoma. It is from Khezakenoma that the different tribes seem to have radiated to different directions at different times. First, the Lothas moved northwardly and after halting at some places in between, reached Kohima\(^*\) where they stayed for sometime. From Kohima


\(^*\) The word 'Kohima' is said to have originated from Lotha word Khayima meaning 'uncountable'. For Lothas increased in number during their stay there and hence they named the place Khayima which later changed into Kohima.
they went further northward until they reached Wokha, and it is from Wokha that they dispersed into different directions and finally settled in their present area around Wokha. Next, the Rengmas proceeded northward as far as Tsemiinyu, the tribal headquarter of the main group of Rengmas and established themselves there. A group of Rengmas however, broke away from the main group and went to the plains. Now they live in Rengma area between Kaliani and Dhansiri Rivers in Mikir Hills (Assam). The Angamis moved northwestward to Kohima and from there spread to north, east and west, and occupied their present area. Without moving very far from Khezakenoma, the Chakhesangs spread to the north, north-east and east. Their territory falls in Phek District and thus they occupy the southeastern part of the State bordering on the Manipur State. The Sernas too took a north-east route and reached Sumi Village. They settled there for sometime, but as the pressure on them mounted from other tribal groups such as Angami and Chakhesang they moved further northward along the Doyang Valley and reached their present occupied territory of Zunheboto District. While most of the tribal groups went northward via Khezakenoma, it seems that, the Zeliangs took a south-west route from Mao area and occupied the south-western part of the State.

* Prior to the reorganisation of States in 1956, it was known as Rengma Hills. After that it was renamed as North Cachar and Mikir Hills. From 1978 it is known as Karbi Anglong.
** It is in Chakhesang Area in the southern part of the State.
In the second wave of immigration were the Aos, Changs, Kheinmungans, Sangtams, Yimchungers, etc. It is believed that they migrated from Thangdut (near the Chindwin River in Burma) by different routes and at different times.\textsuperscript{13} Though the exact migration route followed by the Aos is not known, from the tell-tale evidence it is conjectured that they entered Nagaland through Manipur.\textsuperscript{14}

From Manipur they moved northward and after passing through the areas now inhabited by the Chakhesangs, Yimchungers and Sangtams reached Chwingliyimti which is located in Sangtam inhabited area. Indeed, it was there that the Aos attained a great achievement in the reformation of their socio-cultural heritage and polity. After staying at Chwingliyimti for a considerable period of time they moved westward and founded the Soyim Village.\textsuperscript{*} It was from Soyim Village that they seemed to have spread into different directions and occupied their present area which is in the mid-western part of the State. The other tribal groups such as Chang, Kheinmungan, Yimchunger and Sangtam, in the Tuensang District, however, seem to have penetrated into their present occupied areas directly from the east. Except


\textsuperscript{*} It is now known as Ungma Village, located at a distance of about 5 kilometres south of Mokokchung Town.
Sangtams who moved westward and settled in the Central part of the State, others did not drift away much from their point of entry into this land. As their tradition points out the Konyaks and Phoms who inhabit the north-western part of the State also entered their present occupied land from the north-east.

From the foregoing it is evident that the different Naga tribes migrated into Nagaland at different times and from different directions. After reaching Nagaland they began to inhabit the land each carving out its own territory within the confines of hilly ranges and river basins. At the moment, the relative-spatial position of their territories in the State stands more or less as follows. The northernmost portion of the State is occupied by the Konyaks and the Phoms. Just below the Konyaks are the Aos inhabiting the north-western side of the State. Further below, on the south of the Aos are the Lohas occupying the mid-western part of Nagaland. Below the Hengma territory are the Angamis who occupy the south-western part of the State. On the north-west of the Angamis are the western Semas, and on the south-west of the Angamis are the Zeliangs and on their east are the Chakhesangs who occupy the south-eastern portion of the State. In the mid-eastern part of the State is the Kheinmungan territory which is bounded on the south by the

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Chirrs, Tikhirs and Makwares, on the west by the Yimchungers and on the north by the Konyaks. Yimchungers are on the west of the Kheinmungans, and on their north are the Changs. The main group of the Sernas is centrally situated. They are flanked by the Aos and Sangtams on the north, Lothas on the west, Angamis and Chakhesangs on the south and the Yimchungers on the east. On the north of the Sernas are the Sangtams surrounded by the Aos in the north and by the Changs in the east. The three minor tribal groups; viz. Chirr, Makware and Tikhir are living in the southern part of the Kheinmungan territory.

The migrational pattern of the Nagas, irrespective of the tribal groups, was invariably a movement from one place to another until they finally reached their present territories. No concrete proof can be furnished as to why their wanderings took place. However, certain factors which might have impelled them to do so can be taken into consideration. The first may be ascribed to the adventurous trait of the Nagas who by nature are adventure loving people. Possibly, it was their zeal for further exploration of more lands which activated them to move from one place to another. The infighting among the tribal groups might have been another factor which forced the weaker groups to migrate to other places. The third factor which is far from the least was the economic one which might have urged the people to move in search of better and more fertile lands. Their dispersion into different directions on reaching their
present territory can also be attributed to the above mentioned factors. Particularly, the entry from the south might have been forced upon due to the environmental barrier in the form of high hill ranges which they faced on the eastern part of Nagaland. These ranges remain not only covered with thick forests and vegetation but there is also snowfall in these ranges during winter season. Finding these physical barriers difficult to cross, the oncoming tribes made a digression and entered from the south. Apart from the obstacles imposed by the environment, some are of the view that there were threats from the earlier settlers in the north and north-eastern, and hence the southern detour became imperative for the majority of the tribal groups. However, it requires further research to substantiate this view.

4.3.2 Middle Period: The middle period is referred here to the time from when the different Naga tribes settled in this land to the date of formation of the district of Naga Hills under Assam. 16 This was a period, particularly the early part when the Nagas plunged into savagery characterised by inter-tribal as well as inter-village feuds. Independently they lived in their 'Village-States' and as such they never managed to establish a single sovereign State for the

governance of all the Nagas. The absence of law enforcing authority or anything else approximating it, under the control of one king or chieftain gave rise to the perpetuation of head hunting practice and lawlessness. As a result, they continued to live in their own way in the small sovereign village-States until they were absorbed into the fold of British India Governments' administration.

Living in such a situation surcharged with high-voltage tension, Nagas could hardly find any scope to have social interaction particularly among those who were constantly at loggerheads with one another. This social segregation from one another because of rivalry and hostility was accentuated by the very nature of formidable physical terrain. It conditioned the people to remain in isolation from one another. However, when such a social environment prevailed among the Nagas some Naga tribes particularly in the western part of Nagaland came in contact with the people living in the plains of Assam and later on with the Britishers who gradually extended their sway over the Nagas. Here, it will be worthwhile to discuss the relations that the Nagas had with the plains people as well as the Britishers and their impact on the life of the Nagas.

4.3.2.1 Relationship of Nagas with Ahoms: It was only after the establishment of Ahom kingdom in the 13th century
in Assam that the Nagas came in contact with the Ahoms. Their relation with the Ahoms was characterised by a rather curious blend of hostility and friendliness. The Ahoms having come to north-eastern Assam through the Patkai Range and North-Eastern Frontier Agency (Arunachal Pradesh) spread over the plains of the Brahmaputra Valley. After the consolidation of their power in Assam in 1226, Sukapha, the first Ahom king, wanted to conquer the neighbouring areas and attacked some Naga villages. This led to the development of enmity between these two peoples. In retaliation the Nagas often carried out depredations on the plains. Each raid was, however, followed by punitive expeditions from the plains. In course of time, the Ahoms succeeded in exercising their control over some of the Naga tribes. By the end of the 17th century they had established their authority over the Naga tribes namely, Konyak, Ao and Lotha who were living within the borders of the Ahom kingdom. The Nagas were made to pay tribute to the Ahom king in the form of slaves, elephant tusks, spears, hand-woven cloth and cotton as a token of their allegiance. The Ahoms in return granted exemption to the Nagas from rent over the lands and the areas meant for fishing.

Though the relation between Nagas and Ahoms was mostly dominated by raids resulting in punitive expeditions, there were also some sort of understanding between them. Therefore, their enmity was not permanent but short lived. The Ahoms were satisfied with the Nagas' acceptance of their supremacy and did not interfere in their internal affairs. Even facilities were extended to the Nagas for marketing in the plains. This congenial relation between these two peoples was, however, limited to economic aspect only and did not culminate in matrimonial alliance so as to cement their social intercourse. But nevertheless, the people of the plains left a far reaching impact on the life of the Nagas. The most remarkable one is evidenced in the use of Assamese language, though in a broken form by the Nagas as their common medium of communication till today. Further, it could be mentioned that though the relation between the Nagas and the Ahoms was essentially marked by conflicts, it nevertheless introduced the Nagas to their first glimpse of a wider civilization.

4.3.2.2 Anglo-Naga Relations: The process of Nagas' coming into contact with the Britishers and ultimately their subjugation by the latter was somewhat a long one. The contact took place as a result of a series of explorations made by the Britishers mainly to find out a regular communication with Manipur through the Naga inhabited hilly
areas. It was also motivated by a policy on the part of the Britishers to bear down the aggressions of the Nagas into the dominion of the British in Assam.

After having completed the consolidation of their rule in Upper Assam in 1828, a growing need of communication with Manipur through Naga Hills impelled the British to conduct exploratory expeditions into the hills. It was in 1832 that the first exploratory expedition under the command of Captain Jenkins and Captain Pemberton was set out from Manipur to Assam through the Naga Hills with a strong force. The movement of non-tribals through their homeland greatly annoyed the Nagas, and as such they resisted the expedition party with strong opposition. In the following year, Gambhir Singh, Raja of Manipur accompanied by Lieutenant Gordon marched through the hills for the purpose of further exploration of the hills. However, the march was not easy, as a strong Naga force was constituted to oppose and withhold the advance. During this period the Nagas not only opposed the advance of exploratory party but they themselves were also in the habit of raiding villages in North Cachar. This prompted


the British to despatch military expeditions to the hills to give pressure upon the perpetrators.

Between 1835 and 1850, the British led no less than ten military expeditions to protect the plains of Assam from the incursions of the Nagas. But the desired result was not obtained, the raids continued to be made by the Nagas into the British territory. So, in 1851 the British realising that punitive expeditions to the hills were futile and the effort was not worth the trouble and hardship to which soldiers and officers were put, decided upon pursuing a cautious policy of non-interference in their dealing with the Nagas. Accordingly, for about a decade the British followed a Laissez Faire policy towards Naga Hills. Later, however, this policy of non-interference proved a failure. The Nagas who were happy over the arrangement resumed their plundering activity. The people in the plains of Assam began to doubt the credibility and capacity of the British in safeguarding their lives and property. Even the weaker Naga villages themselves began to seek the protection of the British from the raids of the more powerful Naga villages. So, in view

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23 Ibid., pp. 11-14.

of all these happenings and pressures, in 1862 the then Commissioner of Assam recommended to the Lieutenant Governor to abandon the policy of non-interference and adopt practical as well as effective measures to control the Nagas.  

4.3.2.3 Formation of the Naga Hills District: In pursuance of the decision taken by the British Government of India on the recommendation of the Lieutenant Governor of Assam, a new district of the country inhabited by the Nagas called Naga Hills District was formed in 1866.  

Samaguting (Modern Chumkedima) was made the Deputy Commissioner's Headquarters and Lieutenant John Gregory became its first Deputy Commissioner. The Government however, gradually began to feel that Samaguting was too far from the heart of the hills to carry out administration effectively. Therefore, in 1876 the District Headquarters was shifted to Wokfaa (Lotha area) for administrative convenience and also to check the activities of Lotha-Nagas who not only used to attack the British survey party but also proved themselves a menace to the tea gardeners in Upper Assam. Two years later, the


headquarters of the district was finally transferred to Kohima which lies on the summit of a ridge with great panoramic views. It is now the capital of the State of Nagaland.

4.3.3 Modern Period: The early part of the modern period which commences from the establishment of District Headquarters at Kohima was marked by the assertion of the Nagas of their right to be independent and the prevalence of inter-tribal as well as inter-village feuds in the Naga society. With the advent of the British to the hills, the hostility of the Nagas towards them got more heightened which resulted in their making the last daring attempt to oust the alien people from their territory. However, their attempt met with a defeat at the hands of the better organised and equipped British soldiers. Thenceforth, the British acted upon their policy to consolidate their authority over the occupied areas and at the same time efforts were made to annex more territories.

The occupation of Wokha and Kohima by the British highly infuriated the Nagas and made them all the more hostile. They began to equip themselves with firearms, spears, daos, etc. to fight the British. On hearing this large-scale preparation by the Angami-Nagas, Mr. Damant, the then Deputy Commissioner, personally went to Khonoma Village with an escort of eighty men to control the situation. However, when he entered the village he was shot
dead and the men who accompanied him fled away. This emboldened the Angami-Nagas and attacked the British post at Kohima. A fierce fighting ensued until at last the retreat of the Nagas from the battle without being able to withstand the heavy force of the British. This setback suffered by the Angami-Nagas in their most desperate bid to drive away the British from their land marked the end of serious trouble and hostility in the Naga Hills. After the defeat of the Angami-Nagas in 1859, the British in conformity with their policy began to consolidate their authority over the areas already occupied while simultaneously acquiring unoccupied Naga territory. The British soon established their control over Mokokchung area and made Mokokchung a sub­divisional headquarters. By the first quarter of this century, the British had succeeded in bringing the major part of Nagaland into the administration of Naga Hills District. Now the only Naga tract that remained unoccupied and outside the orbit of the British administration was the Tuensang area (consisting of present Tuensang District and a major part of Mon District). However, through vigorous efforts the British could extend their influence to the Tuensang area by 1922. In 1951 a separate subdivision of Tuensang was formed.

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under the Naga Hills District. In 1952, however, the Tuisang area was separated from Naga Hills District to form a separate division under the North East Frontier Agency (NEFA) to be governed by the Governor of Assam on behalf of the Central Government. It remained so until it was retransferred from NEFA to Naga Hills District in 1957.

The imposition of the British authority on the Nagas was followed by innumerable changes in the simple life of the Nagas. Not only did it usher in peace to the feud-ridden Naga society but it also affected the socio-economic life of the Nagas in a number of ways. Side by side with their efforts to gain control over the Naga Hills, the British did introduce various measures to uplift the Naga society. Assisted by the Christian Missionaries, the Government introduced western system of education in Naga Hills District. This was primarily to bring the Nagas in touch with modern civilization and also to use the educated class as a link between the ruler and the ruled. According to 1901 census the literacy rate in the district was 1.03 per cent. In 1903-1904 there were one secondary, 22 primary and 2 special schools. The number of students under instruction in 1890-1891, 1900-1901 and 1903-1904 was 297, 319 and 647 respectively.

efforts were made to bring about improvement upon the road condition. During 1903-1904, seventy-three miles of cart road and about 473 miles of bridle paths were opened and maintained in the district. The cart road from Manipur to Dimapur through Kohima was also widened. In the economic sphere too, spectacular changes took place, the most notable being the introduction of currency system. Thus, the Naga 'Village-States' hitherto under separate kings or chieftans and hostile to one another began to feel the inroads made by modern civilization under the rule of the Britishers with a different life style.

4.3.3.1 Nagas During the World Wars: The two world wars which the Nagas experienced during the British rule had a profound impact on the life of the Nagas. By their participation in the wars they not only came in contact with the people of more civilized society but also imbibed new ideas which played an important role in generating a sense of oneness among them. The historic battle in and around Kohima between the invading Japanese and the allied forces greatly hustled the mental make-up as well as the socio-economic life of the Nagas who steadfastly stood by the British throughout the war.

During the first world War which ravaged the world for about four years (1914-1918) the Nagas responded

32 Ibid., p. 112.
remarkably to the British call of help and assistance. In 1916–1917 about two thousands Nagas were recruited for a labour corp and sent to France.\textsuperscript{33} When returned from the European battlefields they brought horrifying accounts of their experiences there. They related how the great civilized nations fought against one another with great loss of life and property, while they condemned the Nagas for their traditional custom of head-hunting. Besides, the intercourse of different Naga tribes in France, far from their home fostered in them a feeling of friendship and a longing for solidarity which manifested itself in their verbal resolution to work for a Naga unity and harmony among themselves. It was in this spirit that on returning home in 1918, the first centres of social and political activities — the Naga Club — was opened at Kohima and Mokokchung.\textsuperscript{34} Its objectives was to voice the grievances of the people and also to promote their interests. Later on, this Naga Club acquired political significance and stood against the British imperialism.

In the Second World War when the Japanese entered the Indian territory through Burma and heavy fighting took place at Kohima the Nagas showed spontaneous loyalty to the

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\textsuperscript{34} Singh, Chandrika (1981): Political evolution of Nagaland, Lancers Publishers, New Delhi, pp. 31-32.
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British and helped them. Field Marshal Sir William Slim, in his book 'Defeat into Victory' has paid a fine tribute to the Nagas with the words as: 'The gallant Nagas, whose loyalty never faltered. They guided our claims, collected information, ambushed enemy patrols, carried our supplies, and brought in our wounded under the heaviest fire and then, being the gentlemen they were, often refused all payment'.

The war with all its pathos and horrors had a devastating effect on the Nagas. When the fierce fighting was fought in their land, many Naga villages were destroyed as a result of bombardment and other military operations. Many villages around Kohima were evacuated, and this displacement of people had its own share of disturbing the social milieu of the Nagas. For, when the resettlements were made after the retreat of the Japanese, many people found it difficult to settle down to their old ways of life. Further, epidemics occurred in many villages in the wake of the war. Hundreds of people died of dysentery, typhoid, enteric fever and cholera in Manipur and southern Nagaland. However, the war was followed by significant changes in all spheres of life of the Nagas. The improvement and expansion of communication system broke the centuries old isolation of the Nagas.

from the outside world, and speeded up the social interaction among the Nagas. They began to conceive of themselves as part of a larger world which hitherto had been regarded as something alien and separate. There was also an upsurge of new patterns of business consciousness among the people. Thus, the war not only detached the Nagas from their traditional moorings but also widened the horizon of their social outlook and concept of the world.

4.3.3.2 Formation of the State of Nagaland: Prior to 1st December, 1957 Naga Hills District was one of the districts of Assam. In 1957, Tuensang area was detached from NEFA (now Arunachal Pradesh) by an act called the Naga Hills Tuensang Area Act and amalgamated with Naga Hills District to form a new administrative unit known as Naga Hills Tuensang Area (NHTA) under the Central Government. Tuensang became a district of it, and the original Naga Hills District was divided into two districts; viz. Kohima and Mokokchung. Naga Hills Tuensang Area was administered through the Governor of Assam acting as an agent of the President of India. After the formation of NHTA the Naga Peoples' Convention was held in May 1958. It appreciated the functioning of the new arrangement and also selected a Drafting Committee to draw up a draft of sixteen-point memorandum for the creation of a State to be called Nagaland within the Indian Union.

In 1959 the charter of demands was passed by the Naga Peoples’ Convention and was presented to the Government. The Late Prime Minister of India, Pandit Nehru agreed to grant autonomy to the Nagas within the framework of the Indian Union and the Government decided to grant statehood to Nagas with effect from December 1, 1963. On February 18, 1961 under the provision of the Nagaland Regulation 1961, the Nag Hills Tuensang Area was designated as Nagaland, and as a first step towards statehood an Interim Body was constituted to function as the de facto Legislative Assembly. On the 1st December, 1963 Nagaland became the sixteenth State of the Indian Union. Ten years later, in 1973 the districts of Nagaland were reorganised by dividing the districts such as Kohima into Kohima and Phek, Mokokchung into Mokokchung, Zunheboto and Wokha, and Tuensang into Tuensang and Mon, thus raising the number to seven. Under each district there are subdivisions which have further been subdivided into administrative units or circles (Fig. 8). In all, there are now sixty nine circles in the State and it is at the circle level that the major part of the analytical work of the present study would be done.

Since the dawn of Indian Independence, tremendous changes have taken place in Nagaland in all spheres - political, economic and social. The changes have obviously

38 Ibid., p. 1.
become more pronounced after its attainment of statehood. With the ushering in of an era of political stability, peace and tranquility, now the people enjoy sufficient opportunities for self-expression and participation in the political and development activities of the State. So far the State has had five general elections to the State Assembly. Significant progress, although not comparable with the leading States, has also been made in the economic field, mainly as a result of the implementation of the successive Five Year Plans and other planned economic programmes. The recent development of transport network piercing through the breasts of the hilly ranges has inevitably brought marked changes upon the social surface of Nagaland. Social interaction has now become easier not only among the indigenous people but also between the Nagas and the outsiders.