CHAPTER III
A PROFILE OF NAGALAND STATE AND KOHIMA DISTRICT

3.1 Nagaland

Area - Population - Ethnic Group - Climate - Language
Religion - Villages and Towns - Administration - Education -
Main Occupations - Communication - Political History of the
State.

The study area - Kohima district is one of the seven
districts in Nagaland. Nagaland is a hill state in the
North Eastern India. It is bordered on the east by Burma,
on the south by Manipur and on the west and north-west by
Assam. Its total area is 16579 square kilometres and its
population was 7,74,930 in 1981. With 56.86 per cent in-
crease it is 12,15,555 in 1991. The capital city is
Kohima.

The Nagas belong to the Indo-Mongoloid ethnic group.
The Naga population includes seventeen major tribes and
2
sub-tribes living in Nagaland.

March 26, 1991.

2. Government of Nagaland, Gazetteer of India, Nagaland,
Except a few square kilometres of plain, the entire state is covered with ranges of hills. The Naga hills rise from the Brahmaputra plain in the north, initially with low hills of about 2000 feet which increases to a height of 12552 feet (3826 metres) at Mountain Saramati.

Nagaland has a wet monsoon climate with an average annual rainfall varying between 70 inches (175 Cms.) in the southeast and more than 100 inches (250 Cms.) in the northeast. July and August are the rainiest months. The temperature vary according to the altitude. The summer temperature ranges between 70o F (21o C) and 104o F (40o C), while in winter it rarely goes below 39o F (4o C).

The surveyed forest area of the state is about 7,77,000 acres (314574 hectares). Below 4000 feet (1200 metres) occur wet monsoon and evergreen forests with valuable timber species and varieties of bamboo. On the higher hills in the east and south-east oak, pine and other vegetation appear.

The Naga tribes do not have a common language, and there are about 60 spoken dialects. The languages/dialects belong to the Sino-Tibetan family. Inter-tribal conversation generally is carried on through broken Assamese which
is mixed with local dialects now called Nagamese. Many Nagas now have become acquainted with Hindi and English.

With the advent of British rule in Nagaland Christianity was introduced. Out of the total population about 67 percent are now Christian, about 11 percent are Hindu and the remaining 22 percent belong to other faiths.

Nagaland is extremely rural. 93.1 percent of its population live in villages. There are altogether 860 villages and three urban centres viz. Kohima, Mokokchung and Dimapur with a population of 21398, 17381 and 12292 respectively. Now-a-days urban growth is seen very rapid. The villages are normally large, 53.3 percent have a population of 1500 and above each. Some villages have village gates. Different areas are dominated by different tribal groups which have well defined portions of lands and sources of water.

In common with other states of India, the administration of Nagaland is conducted by a council of Ministers

4. AVARD, New Delhi, Rural Development Plan, Nagaland 1978-83 p.10
which is headed by a Chief-Minister. The Government is responsible to the Nagaland State Legislative Assembly which is having 60 members. The state is divided into seven administrative districts each under a Deputy Commissioner, who is responsible for maintenance of law and order, revenue and administration. Each district is divided into three Sub-Divisions headed by Sub-Divisional Officers who are responsible to the Deputy Commissioner. Special provisions have been made for Tuensang area, which was not placed under the direct jurisdiction of the State Assembly, but was put under a Regional Council consisting of elected representatives of all the tribes in the District to which the Governor also might nominate members. The Deputy Commissioner is its ex-officio chairman. It elects representatives from among its members to the Legislative Assembly.

In some respects the administration of Nagaland differs from other states, that is, a wider autonomy has been provided in the constitution of India to the tribal communities. Each tribe has three local councils - the village council, the range council and the tribal council. These

5. Govt, of Nagaland, Directorate of Information and Publicity "Nagaland the First-Decade 1963-73" Kohima, 1973 pp.41-76.
councils deal with the disputes involving breaches of customary laws and practices. Appeals are made to the Naga Tribunal in respect of cases decided according to the customary law.

This hill and forest state till recent years was an under developed region. Now, it witnesses a socio-cultural renaissance. The popular democratic Government, since its formation in 1964, rapidly established a good measure of stability and diverted its efforts towards improving social conditions. The highest item of Government expenditure is on roads, and adequate emphasis is given to public health and drinking water supply. Simultaneously elaborate facilities are provided for education.

There are eight colleges for Arts and Sciences affiliated to the North Eastern Hill University, Shillong. The Government is making all efforts to get a central university in Nagaland. There are two professional Law colleges, two Theological colleges, one Industrial Training Institute, one State Council of Educational Research and Training, one Nagaland Council of Education and four Junior Teachers

Training Institutes. For educating children there are 1158 primary schools, 322 middle schools and 115 secondary schools.

Agriculture is the mainstay of the economy. About 90 percent of the workers in the state are cultivators. Rice, Pulses, Sugar cane, Potato are the principal crops. Production however is inadequate and Nagaland has to depend largely on import of grains from the neighbouring states. This deficiency can be attributed to inadequacy of cultivable land and common practice of shifting/Jhum cultivation. Under shifting cultivation the jungle on the hill slopes is cleared and the undergrowth is burned down. The ground is then lightly hoed and sown for two successive years. After two harvests the land is allowed to remain fallow for eight to ten years. In many places of Kohima district 'Jhum' is replaced by terrace cultivation. The Angamis excel in the art of terracing and irrigation. The implements of the cultivator include the light heo, dao (a heavy knife) and sickle. Plough is used only in plains, not on hills.

Agriculture is not much improved but undergoing a change.

Poor transport and communication is the main hindrance for industrial growth in the state. In towns, there are small bakeries, motor vehicle repairing and servicing workshops, small rice mills and furniture making units. A sugar mill at Dimapur has come up. A small fruit canning centre is located at Chanki. Nagas are noted weavers and they are very good in basket making.

Nagaland depends mostly on road transport for communication. The North Eastern Frontier Railway runs via Dimapur and the total length of the railway line within Nagaland is only eight kilometres. The National Highway runs from Dimapur via Kohima to Jraphal—the capital city of Manipur. The second important road runs from Amguri (Assam) to Mokokchung. The third important road links Tuensang with Mokokchung. And Mokokchung, Zunheboto, Kohima and Phek are also connected with short all-weather roads. The total length of the roads in Nagaland is 3554 kilometres. More roads are


under construction. Post and telegraph communications have
developed in good speed since 1964. There are telephone
exchanges at Kohima, Dimapur and Mokokchung.\textsuperscript{10}

3.1.1. A Brief Political History

During the Ahom Kingdom of Assam in 13th century, the
Ahom never ruled Nagaland but maintained a friendly rela-
tions with the Naga Chieftains. Even during the Burmese
invasion in Assam in 1816 and Burmese rule from 1819 to
1826, Naga hills were never touched by invaders; but, since
the establishment of British rule over Assam in 1826, Naga
hills were gradually annexed to the British Empire. The
British administration encompassed the whole of Naga terri-
tory by 1892 except the Tuensang area in the north east.
The British rule brought an end to the practices of head
hunting and inter-village raids. The Nagas, thereafter
settled down to a peaceful life of cultivation.

When India became independent in 1947, a strong nation-
alist movement sought a union of Naga tribes claiming that

\textsuperscript{10} Director of Information and Publicity, "Basic Facts
Nagaland 1984" Kohima, Government of Nagaland. p.37

\textsuperscript{11} Allen B.C. "Naga Hills and Manipur" Delhi, Gian Publica-
tions, 1981, Chap IV, p. 70.
Nagaland was a Sovereign State and it would not remain as a part of India. A small armed force was also organised among the Nagas. At the same time, there were political differences among Naga leaders. In 1957 after negotiations with the Naga people's convention at Kohima the Indian Government placed the Naga hills district and Tuensang area under central administration.

This status, however, proved unsatisfactory to a large segment of the Nagas. And hence unrest continued. Nagas began to non-co-operate with the Indian Government. They paid no taxes and there were armed conflicts. A rebel force indulged in sabotage and committed action against the Indian Government. The Indian Government continued to negotiate with the representatives of Nagas. As a result an agreement was made at the Naga people's convention in July 1960. This agreement demanded that the Nagaland should become a full-fledged state in the Indian union. The Naga leaders found this solution acceptable because of the wide autonomy that would be granted to the new state. Accordingly, Nagaland entered the Indian Union vide the State of Nagaland Act passed by Parliament in 1962. And in December 1963 the State of Nagaland was inaugurated by the then President of India. In January 1964 a democratically elected State
Government of Nagaland Nationalist Organisation (NNO) took office. The dissident factions within Nagaland refused to accept this solution, and rebel activity continued.

With the efforts of the Nagaland Peace Observers Team of the Nagaland Peace Centre, Kohima the representatives of the Federal Government of Nagaland signed an agreement for cease-fire and cessation of hostilities in Nagaland at Oking on 10th August 1964. To help speedy implementation of the agreement Peace Observers were appointed at Mokokchung and Tuensang. Dr. M. Ararn, Director of the Nagaland Peace Centre, Kohima was the convenor of the Peace observers Team. The dissidents became increasingly fragmented in the late 1960's and several groups surrendered to the Government with the efforts of the Peace Observers Team. In early 1970's however, a hardcore of extremists were continuing their activities. Again with the dedicated efforts of the Peace Observers Team the Shillong Agreement was signed by the representatives of the extremist group and the representatives of the Government of India in the year 1975. It is


thus, the Nagaland State, owing to continuous disturbances, could not implement the first three five-year plans. The development activities in the State started only from the fourth plan period; by the time, all other states had marched well ahead in implementing the Five-year plans and in building up infra-structure facilities. It is this factor motivated the researcher to choose Nagaland State for his study while he was Executive Director of the Nagaland Peace Centre, Kohirna.

3.2 KOIIMA DISTRICT

Physical Features and Topography - Rivers - Vegetation - Mineral Wealth - Climate - Special feature and natural calamities - Distribution of tribes - Administrative Divisions and sub-Divisions.

3.2.1. Physical Features and Topography

Kohirna district comprises the southern part of Nagaland, bounded by Assam in the west and north west, Wokha district of Nagaland in the north-east, Zunheboto district

MAP OF
NAGALAND
DISTRICT HEADQUARTERS

REFERENCE:

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MON

MOKOKCHUNG

TUENSANG

WOKHA

ZUNHEBOTO

PHEK

KOHIMA

LACHAM LAKE

MANIPUR
xn the east, Phek district in the south-east and Manipur state in the south. The central portion commands a view of the open rolling mountains, but the eastern and south western portions have a more complicated terrain. The north-western portion is a plain land. Kohima, the present State headquarters of Nagaland is situated in the heart of the district. The district commands a charming scenery and a magnificent landscape.

The lofty peaks are thickly wooded with evergreen vegetation. The lower hills are deforested owing to the practice of Jhum cultivation. The weather makes life pleasant and is conducive for manual work.

3.2.2 Rivers

Hill streams are many. The principal rivers are Tizu in the east, Dzulu in the central portion, Yeti in the south, Doyand in the foot-hills and Dhansiri (Temaki) in the south-west of the district. Dhansiri river flows westwardly and then takes a northwardly course forming a natural boundary with North Cachar Hills. It bends eastwardly and flows

15. Ibid p.3
on the Rengapahar-Dimapur Plains in Kohima district. Diphu and Khukhi drain the north-western portion of the district. Tasangki in the west of Paren flows southwardly. Tuilang (Inkoyo) is another river on the southern extremity. Duknaki rises east of chalkot flows westwardly and thence northwardly. Manglu rises north of Paren and flows northwardly. Lang-long rises near Jalukie and proceeds on westwardly. Tahaki or Khova rises from the Paona peak and flows northwardly upto samaguri and then meets Dhasiri. Disagfojan flows parallel to Langlong and Tahaki. Teipuiki rises from Barail.

3.2.3 Vegetation

It is mainly classified as (i) wet evergreen (ii) subtropical wet hill (iii) wet temperate and (iv) pine forests.

The plain belt in the north west with wet evergreen vegetation comprises main species like nator, sam, pome, khokan, ajhar, makai, gonseroi, amari, hingari, hallong, lali, rata, titasopa and nagaser. This zone constitute a tropical broad leaf vegetation, some trees reaching a gigantic height.

16. Ibid pp. 5-6
Sub-tropical wet hill vegetation thrives at an altitude ranging from 1000 to 4000 feet, characterised by species such as Chestnut, Michelia Champaca, Schima Wallichii, Gnelina-arborea, Albizia spp and members of Meliaceae. Foot hills adjoining plains is abound with riverian canes and some places with impenetrable bamboo groves.

Pine trees are found over an altitude varying from 3000 to 4000 feet, lentil confined only to the south-eastern (Chekhasang) region only. Oak and rhododendron are also associated with it.

Wet temperate vegetation is widespread on a 5000 feet altitude. Betula, Rhododendron, Magnolia, juglans regia and Runus are the main species.

Lower hills near Kohima and along the National Highway (Dimapur-to-Imphal.) have largely been reduced of vegetation, because of a large scale deforestation in connection with cultivation and other enterprises. A larger part of the steeps has been reduced to permanent wet rice terraced fields. Jhum cultivation is widely practical by Zelian-groung and northern Rengma, while wet rice by Angami. Terraced cultivation is adopted by almost all the chakesang groups and southern Rengmas.
Wild vegetables, roots, fruits and tubers are eaten raw or cooked for regular food.

3.2.4 Mineral wealth

Chrysotile asbestos and slate occur in south-eastern region and Tizu valley. Coal is sparsely distributed in the highlands, while the Naga foothills bordering on the Assam plains have extensive coal deposits. This is due to the elliptic exposure of the Barail. The only important coal field is Diyung situated in the Lotha foothills (20° 05" : 94° 00"). Thin deposits of copper, nickel, silver and small oil seepages are reported in the Rengma hills bordering on Mokokchung district.

Brines and salt exist in the south-eastern and western portions of the district. They are located at Akhegv/o, Yisi, Purr, Molen and Ozeho in eastern Chekkasang as well as Jalukie, Peietki and Mbanpungwa in Zeliangroung hills. At the brine wells, salt is excavated locally in the indigenous tribal way. North of Rengma areas there are occurrences of dark plastic clay at 26 45" : 27 45" north and 94 25" : 95 49" east.

17. Ibid., p. 8
3.2.5 Climate

The Southern Nagaland, owing to its elevation, has a temperate type salubrious climate. The Kohima district being sheltered by the lofty mountain summits such as Japfu on the centre, Kapamezu on the south-east, winters are cold and the summers are warm. The Japfu is snow-capped during the winter. December and January form the coldest part of the season when frost occurs. The spring season is warm and humid. The heat decreases during the autumn, October and November being the finest part of the year. The north-western outlying foot hills are as hot as the adjacent plains. The average annual rainfall which Kohima receives is 2000 millimetres - much lesser than what recorded at Wokha or Mokokchung. But the summer season is humid.

During the hottest part of the year (July or August) the temperature in Kohima is only on the average 80 or 90°F. Summer and Autumn skies are frequently over-clouded. Dimapur and the areas along the road upto Ghaspani (Madziphema) is hot in contrast to the hills.

18. Ibid p. 8
3.2.6 Special feature and natural calamities

The soil being loose, landslides are frequent and occur almost annually during the post-monsoon period. This causes disruption to the communication system. To cite an instance, on the National Highway to Imphal the fifth mile location after Kohima and in three places between Medzephema and Kohima road transport is disturbed almost every year owing to landslides.

3.2.7 Distribution of Tribes

The principal tribes of the district are:

1. Angami - inhabited the central and northern portion of the district.
2. Rengma - settled in the northern portion
3. Chekhasang - Occupied the eastern tract
4. Zeliangroung - resided in the western area.

Other tribes in the district are Kuki who have settled west of Zeliangroung. A small group of Sema are found in

19. Ibid., p. 9
20. Ibid pp. 9-10
eastern Tsemi nyu administrative division, and a few Garos and Mikirs are found in foot-hills. Kachari colonies surviving from the olden days still remain scattered in Dimapur side. Nepali settlers in negligible ratio are also found in the district. The foot hill area containing Dimapur, Chumukedima and Rengapahar being out of 'innerline' have a large proportion of mixed population.

3.2.8 Administrative Sub-Divisions in the District

The following are the Sub-Divisions:

1. Kohima Sub-Division is in the heart of the Angami area. Kohirna is the headquarters of the Deputy Commissioner (DC) of the District. The Deputy Commissioner is assisted by two Additional Deputy Commissioners, one Sub-Divisional Officer and two Extra-Assistant Commissioners. There are also circle officers attached to each Sub-Divisional headquaz-ters.

2. **Dimapur Sub-Division:**

One of the two Additional Deputy Commissioners is placed at Dimapur. The Sub-Division is looked after by a Sub-divisional Officer (SDO) and he is assisted by two Extra-Assistant Commissioners. Pherima—the Angami area has a circle office.

3. **Jalukie Sub-Division (Zeliah area)** has two circle offices one at Tening and another at Pedi, each under a circle officer.

Tseminyu (Rengma area) has an Extra-Assistant Commissioner. Chiephobozon circle (Northern Angami area) and Pughobotto (Sema area) circle are looked after by circle officers. Tseminyu Administrative circle is attached to the Kohima Sadar Sub-Division.