CHAPTER III

THE LAND AND LAND RELATIONS
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3.01. Introduction

The land and land relations is always a complex and controversial issue. In general, whenever one talks about the land land relation, there is scope for criticism, challenge, difference of opinion and argument. It is in this context, we felt it necessary to note first the historical accounts and continuity on land relation. In this part, the questions of as to how, why and since when such a vast land was lying vacant, who had vacated the land, the realisation of the value of land and feeling of necessity to occupy, the process of occupation and settlement over the land and push and pull factors to occupy those land etc. are some of the basic issues. We propose to discuss the above issues under three headings: (i) historical background of the land, (ii) present state of land and its relation, and (iii) landownership system.

3.02. (i) Historical background of the land

(1) The Kachari-Ahom relation

From the historical accounts, it is clear that Dimapur\(^1\) was once the capital of Kachari kingdom. The entire Dhansiri valley and the North Kachar sub-division were included in Kachari kingdom and the river Dikhu was its eastern boundary.
During the reign of Suteupha (1268-1281 A.D.), the son and successor of the founder of the Ahom state, viz. Sukapha, the Ahom annexed the Kachari territory between the Dikhu and the Namdang rivers. For about two hundred years, since this incident, there were no hostilities between the Ahoms and the Kacharis. In the last part of the fifteenth century, in 1490 A.D., a battle was fought by the Ahom king, Suhenpha with the Kacharis on the bank of the Dikhu. The Ahoms were defeated and forced to make peace with the Kachari. The Kacharis recovered the tracts east of the Namdang river lost by them in the thirteenth century. In spite of their victory, the Kacharis, however, could not resist the expansion of the Ahom kingdom. In the next thirty years, the Kacharis lost extensive territories to the Ahoms.2

The hostile relation between the Kacharis and the Ahoms had continued for several centuries. They had started open battle since 1526 A.D., during which the Ahoms were badly defeated by the Kacharis but the Kacharis suffered a crushing defeat in the second battle at the hands of Ahoms. The third battle was fought in 1531 A.D. where the Kacharis were defeated. The Ahoms followed up their victory and advanced right up to Dimapur on the river bank of Dhansiri. In 1536 A.D., the Ahoms defeated the king of Kacharis and Dimapur was captured and had destroyed the whole city. The entire battle was fought on the bank of Dhansiri, now Med-ziphema and Kuhoboto blocks where more than one hundred Naga villages have now been established. Because of constant attacks by the Ahoms, the Kacharis deserted their capital city of Dimapur and the valley of Dhansiri-Diphu
rivers (now which falls within Kohima district of Nagaland), and proceeded further towards the south-west direction and finally established a new capital at Maibong (north Kachar) on the Mahur river. The Ahom kingdom was annexed into the British Empire by signing the Treaty of Yandabo on 24th February in 1826 and thereby the Ahom kingdom came under the control of British administration.

Since 1840, the British administrators and the Army officers started entering the present Dimapur town. In the early part of 1840, Mr. E.R. Grange and his party had reached the present site of Dimapur. We are reminded of this ancient city, when we see certain observations left by Mr. E.R. Grange in his diary:

When we left it, and got upon some high country, which led us to the fine bund road skirting the walls of the ancient city. I was very much astonished to find so fine and old place, totally lost sight of by the Cacharees themselves, an oral tradition of which was merely in existence; but they attribute it to the fear they have always felt of going into these forest, which since the desertion of the place, have been overrun by wild beasts, and frequented only by plundering Nagas.

On 9th February 1844, Mr. Browne-Wood and his party did arrive at the deserted ancient city from Golaghat. During this time he had found this city completely covered with jungle. He worked:
Went over to the old fort of Dhemapoor, on the South bank of the Dhansiri, but the place was so covered with jungle, I was unable to distinguish anything, excepting some pillars and a gateway; these pillars are of composition of sand, lime and goor, &c., extremely hard and durable; several of them are in perfect state of preservation, others have been split assunder by large trees falling across them; their general height is about 12 feet in diameter 4 feet, some of them are very neatly carved. These pillars I am told, formed the ground work .... I suppose, is half a mile square, excepting the eastern side, where the gateway is; a double ditch surrounds the walls. There are some fine trees in this fort.

(2) Early interaction of the Nagas with the British

For the first time, the Angami Naga country was visited by Europeans in January 1832; when Captain Jenkins and Pemberton "with a party of 700 soldiers and 800 coolies marched towards this place. They reached Angami Naga country on 23rd January 1832". In the cold season of 1833, Lieutenant Gordon had also conducted an expedition into the Angami Naga Hill, but till then he and his party could not build up any sub-station within their country; excepting stationing in the ancient deserted Dimapur city being left by the Kacharis. In 1848, Samagodting (now called Chummukedima) was built up by the British Government as their administrative headquarter with a view to capturing the whole of Naga Hills. But because of the practical difficulties they had withdrawn this outpost after four years in 1852. But it was again necessary to re-establish for
strengthening the administration and expansion of the Empire in Naga Hills. Thus, in 1865, Samagodting was again re-built and finally it was abandoned in 1877 and shifted further to Kohima for administrative convenience.

The occupation of Samagodting and Kohima stations were further facilitated by opening of road communication linking up the hills with the plains. This is one of the most important factors in the developmental history of Naga society particularly the land and its relations. For the first time, Lieutenant Bigge did realise the necessity of construction of a road from Dimapur to Samagodting in 1841. He himself surveyed the road following the river bed of Dhansiri, which was 18 miles distance but it was only 15 miles by direct Naga route between Dimapur and Samagodting. He suggested to the Government that a sum of Rs. 3000 may be necessary for construction of a road from Dhemapoor (Dimapur) to Rajah-piama (Razaphema) but until 1878 the construction of road between Samagodting and Kohima was not taken up. It was during the time of Mr. S.C. Bayley the then Deputy Commissioner of Naga Hills who proposed to shift the headquarters of Naga Hills to Kohima, commanding, as it did, the principal Angami villages and Manipur frontier. Sixteen Naga villages had already come under British protection to which thirteen paid a revenue of
Rs. 1,032. It was calculated that the income from all 16 Naga villages could eventually be raised to a sum of Rs. 26,000 and 450 armed constables would be required to maintain law and order. In July 1878, the Government of India accepted the Chief Commissioner's plans. In 1879-80, road construction was taken in hand in right earnest to open out the Naga country, and the Nagas began to come from all sides seeking British protection. Many petty internecine feuds were settled by British Officers, and fines were imposed on the offenders tribes for violating British territory or tribal villages in contravention of the officer's orders.  

The occurrence of killings amongst the war-like naked Nagas was so sporadic even at the time of British advent to Naga Hills. It was impossible to control those war-like people by force alone and therefore, the British administrators did apply various methods to control and capture the Nagas by way of (a) offering them strong intoxicant drinks, (b) involving them into the fold of trading with them, (c) recruiting them into labour Corps using them as coolies, messengers, interpreters and porters, (d) giving them presentations and money, and (e) sometimes applying cohesive force with bullet. As a result, even today, drinking among the Angami Naga is
found to be more common than other Naga tribes and also the trading culture has much developed among the Angamis than other tribes.

John Butler, the Deputy Commissioner of the District had said in 1855:

They are very extremely fond of spirituous liquors, the stronger the better; we gave them wine, beer, and brandy; the latter was highly approved of, but the bitter taste of the beer they did not at all relish; they did not either like vinegar or sauces .... If such a people could receive a moral education, how soon would their habits of rapine and murder be changed, and their fertile, well-watered soil, be converted into one of the most beautiful tracts on which morals could reside.

Furthermore,

The Nagas will drink anything, but the stronger it is the better they are pleased.

If we look further into the origin of presentation and bribery found in Naga society today which is very common, one of the main reasons is that it is because of the impact of British administrators who for the first time did use presentation and bribe to win over the Nagas into their fold. Upto this point of time the Nagas had not realised the value of land and did not feel the need to occupy the vast unoccupied land lying in the area.
(3) **Impact of First and Second Great World Wars.**

Prior to First World War, there were very few Angami villages in this block. Some of the names of old villages are Phiphema, Pherima, Medziphema etc. The Angamis are the first settlers of this block followed by the Kukis and the Semas. During the Kuki Rebellion of 1917-1919, many Nagas had participated in the war. Many of the Kukis and the Semas had come across Kohima district and they found the vast area of waste land which they felt was much better than the land in their respective areas. They were attracted by the waste and unoccupied land found in this area and they decided to come to this place and establish their own villages. They came to Deputy Commissioner of Naga Hills, Kohima, who permitted them to establish new villages in the low land and ordered them to start cultivation without further delay. This was the beginning of addition of the other tribes through this pull factor. Consequently, a Sema village was established in 1918 by Nihokhu Sema and as per the Sema tradition he became the first *gaonbora* of the village. A Kuki village was also established in 1910 known as Sirhima followed by another Kuki village called Khaibung in 1928. In this way many other Sema and Kuki villages were added gradually.
When Kohima became the battleground between British and Japanese soldiers in the month of April 1944 the surrounding villagers were compelled to leave their own villages and went to the jungles to take shelter from the hostilities. At that time of the old villages got deserted. It is reported that during that time, nobody was seen in the neighbouring villages of Kohima town as the whole population was living in thick forest near the streams and river throughout the war. After the war was over, they returned to their original villages and at the same time many of them did not return and felt, like staying at the new places; the jungle home; made during the war time. Later on, these jungle homes became their villages, resulting increase of many new villages in the area.

(4) Political Situation

The movement for Naga independence was initially started in 1918 by constituting the Naga Club by a group of Naga Elders as stated in Chapter II under political upheaval. This phase was the beginning of political awareness amongst the Nagas. When they continued their untiring movement declaring themselves to be a Sovereign State outside India on 14th August 1947 and also boycotted the forced election of 1953, the real political turmoil started in Nagaland. In the ensued insurgency and counter-
insurgency a number of people were killed, which was followed by grouping of villages in 1957-58. The reaction was that, thousands of Naga Youth joined the Naga Underground Movement to fight for their rights. Because of such factors the older organised villages were forced to scatter. Later on enterprising young men started occupying the waste land in this area, which may be considered as a blessing in disguise now. For instance, a large number of people from various Angami villages like Kohima, Khonoma, Mezoma, Jotsoma etc. left their original villages and started occupying the vast waste land around Dimapur area; now Medziphema block. Again a band of Sema insurgents surrendered their arms and started occupying the remaining waste land in Dimapur valley, now Kuhoboto-Medziphema Blocks. The fact in this context is that there is one Sema village which is commonly known as Commandant village, named after one Ex Underground, Mr. Vihokhu, who founded that particular village in the area. Similarly, one may find a number of such persons of underground movement in many of the Sema villages who founded their villages. Such developments may be treated as a result of political factors.

In traditional Angami society there is a saying that if a man goes down towards the plain when *Erythrina*
(Tzupen dong in Ao Naga) tree blossoms, he/she would be severely attacked by malaria. This tree is still available on the way to Kohima and starts flowering during the months of February-March, when the mosquitoes start breeding. It appears that because of such a fear-psychosis, the Angamis felt hesitant to go towards the plain area and establish the village there in the past. Thus, the vast land was lying vacant. By and large the Nagas did prefer to establish their villages on the hill-tops so that their lives are properly protected by the natural surroundings from the enemies. In this way vast areas of land were left out unoccupied in the plain as well as in foot-hills. But now they have realised the necessity and importance of settling in plain areas, river banks and the roadsides; which has now became the centre of attraction for the Nagas. It is because of this fact that there is constant land disputes arising between tribes and villages in the areas.

(5) Impact of Statehood

The attaining of Nagaland State has a direct relationship with the land and its state of affairs in the block. When the various departments were created/expanded, the educated people started searching Government jobs particularly the Aos, Lothas, Semas and Angamis. The
Angami and the Sema tribes started seeking new places for establishing villages, consequently, even today the Aos and the Lothas are more in number in Government jobs, whereas the number of villages belonging to Sema and Angami tribes are much more in this block. By nature, the Semas are an adventurous tribe, whereas the Kukis are found to be a migratory tribe. As a result, apart from the Angami tribe who may be considered as the dominant tribe in this block, a number of other tribes like Semas, Kukis, Kacharis etc. have come in the later stage of development and occupied the vast waste land. Coming of Kuki and Sema tribe to this area have different reasons. Early Kuki Christians were tortured very badly in Imphal and they were compelled to leave their villages and they had landed at the present site. The coming of Sema to this area have also another reason; i.e. the land for cultivation in Zunheboto district from where they came, was not sufficient and it was not possible to practise wet permanent cultivation. During those days a vast tract of land was lying vacant covered with thick forest, which was considered as nobody's land. But gradually, the entire area of land has been occupied by different ethnic groups in this area. When Dimapur became the nerve centre for commercial activities in Nagaland, thousands of people gathered from different directions and settled in Dimapur town. Because of
such push and pull factors particularly through attraction of people to land in this area; the biggest land market has been created in this block in Nagaland, which is a new social phenomenon in Nagaland. In this situation, the Angami, the Sema, the Kachari and the Kuki turned out to be the sellers of land whereas the Aos, the Lothas and other Naga tribes became the buyers. Thus, the ownership rights also do transfer from one tribe to another tribe and the value of land increased day by day in this block unlike other places in Nagaland.

(ii) Present state of land and its relation

As stated in Chapter II on 'agricultural scope', this is the only block in the whole of Nagaland having a considerable amount of plain land, where intensive cultivation could be undertaken in larger scale. That is why, Medziphemema block is noted for certain agricultural crops like paddy, pineapple, sugarcane, banana, papaya, citrus, mangoes and vegetables. These could be cultivated on greater scale without much labour compared to other remaining blocks in the State. It is because of the natural gift of the area. It has a beautiful topography; suitable for massive agricultural development and other allied rural development schemes. The block can even feed the whole of Nagaland population without much difficulty, provided the
cultivable waste land comes under scientific method of cultivation. The existing land resource-potential needs to be exploited and a more scientific method of agriculture has to be created in this area.

(1) Operational Holding and Pattern of Cultivation

Out of 150 heads of households in our sample, 119 are cultivators (79.32%), of which 92 or 77.31% were considered as solely cultivators and 27 or 22.68% part-time cultivators. We were interested to know the size of operational holding, pattern of cultivation then its controlling system. The total area under permanent wet cultivation was 433 acres and 75 acres under shifting cultivation. The smallest size of holding per household was two and a half acres and the maximum area under wet permanent cultivation was 30 acres. Except the Sema village of Nihokhu, no household was identified controlling 30 acres of land under cultivation. Most of the cultivators operate four to five acres of land and the average area under operation of wet cultivation was 4.70 acres per cultivator and under shifting cultivation the average operational holding per cultivator was 2.14 acres. As per 1980-81 Agricultural Census, 26.07% of the total holdings fall below two hectares in size. It means that 73.93% or the total holdings in Nagaland as larger than the hectares in size. Similarly, 44.67% of the total holdings are below five hectares in size and
occupy only 11.55% of the area. In the entire block, almost 29.41% of the cultivators still cultivate shifting/dry cultivation mainly for vegetables and firewood. Out of 199 cultivators 35 of them still practise shifting cultivation. We enquired as to why they still practise shifting cultivation which is labour intensive job and when there is sufficient cultivable waste land available for permanent cultivation. Firewood, vegetable crops and other cash crops are not possible in permanent wet cultivation. Because of the fact that it provides articles of their basic needs, they still continue with the shifting cultivation side by side. This method of cultivation is practised not only for the purpose of paddy but for many other domestic requirements, which they do not get from wet cultivation. Out of 119 cultivators, many of them were found practising only permanent cultivation and also some of them were found practising both the methods. The details in table 3.1 give a clear picture of the pattern of cultivation in the block.

Table 3.1: Pattern of Cultivation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pattern of cultivation</th>
<th>Total No. of cultivators</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Practising only permanent wet cultivation</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>70.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Practising only shifting/dry cultivation</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Practising both wet and dry cultivation</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>21.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(2) **Agricultural Labourers**

By agricultural labourer, here, we mean a person working in another person's land either on daily wages or on crop-sharing basis. The existence of agricultural labourer in traditional Naga society is not reported. It was a subsistence farming, in which nobody needed extra agricultural labour, as anybody used to cultivate land as per the needs of the family. Moreover, an agricultural labourer was looked down upon in the society. The method of cultivation was shifting cultivation, in which need for keeping of agricultural labourer did not arise. Even today we rarely find an agricultural labourer in a jhumia village/household.

In this study we have identified three types of agricultural labourers on the basis of mode of payment: (a) employed on full-time basis labourers, (b) seasonal or share-cropping labourers, and (c) daily wage-earners. The full-time labourers are generally found smaller in number. They live either with landowners at their village or on landowner's farm; looking after the farm and managing the same under the supervision of landowner, popularly known as kheti-mallick (owner of the farm). They are paid fixed monthly salary by the owners ranging from Rs. 100-300, which fluctuates from time to time and also varies from person to person. The second category of labourers are
those who work on crop-sharing basis. They are available mainly during the working seasons and paid a certain amount of paddy being produced by them. In this case also, there is no fixed rate of amount to be paid to the share-croppers. The amount of share vary from village to village and also from person to person. The general pattern of payment to the share-croppers is 50% of the total product. The third category of labourers are daily wage-earners, who are paid at the rates ranging from Rs. 10-20 per head per day. They move from village to village and house to house in search of works for their livelihood. This category of labourers form the biggest mobile population in this Block.

The agricultural labourers belong to four major ethnic groups viz: Firstly, the Mias,(Muslims) who came from Bangladesh via. Nowgong and Goalpara districts of Assam, who were pushed out of Assam. Secondly, the Manipuris from Manipur who seasonally migrate from the neighbouring States. Thirdly, the Nepalis, who came from Nepal and also from the neighbouring States of Assam, Manipur and Tripura. Fourthly, the other labourers consisting of both plain tribal and non-tribal groups. The plain tribals are mostly the Karbis, Mikirs, Garos, and Kacharis, who are living around Dimapur and also Karbi-Anglong district of Assam. Among the non-tribal labourers, most of them are
tea garden labourers like Orriya and Bengali coolies, who have come from Assam tea gardens. The rate of daily wages in tea gardens per head per day is hardly Rs. 6/- whereas the local farmers in this area pay Rs. 10-20 per head per day, which makes the agriculture labour more attractive.

The distribution of agricultural labourers by community according to village and household-wise is presented in the table 3.2 below.

Table 3.2: Distribution of Village and House-wise number of agricultural labourers by communities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Village-wise</th>
<th>House-wise</th>
<th>Community-wise</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total number of cultivators</td>
<td>Mias</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Solely Part-</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Dhansiripar</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Dipchupar</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Medziphema</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Molvom</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Nihokhu</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Figures within the brackets indicate the number of households keeping labourers of that particular ethnic group).
Table 3.2 above indicates that 69.7% of the total number of cultivators keep hired agricultural labourers. In this, the village-wise percentage of farmers keeping the agricultural labourers is as follows: Dhansiripar village by 83.33%, in Diphupar village by 51.21%, Angami cultivators of Medziphema village by 84%, Kuki cultivators of Molvom village by 75%, and the Sema cultivators of Nihokhu village by 88.88% respectively. On the basis of the community, the agricultural labourer may be classified into four groups viz. Mias of Muslim, Manipuris, Nepalis and others. The total number was 533 persons of which 45% were Nepali, 32.27% were Mias, 14.82% were Manipuris and 8.81% belonged to other groups. The overall average agricultural labourer per household was 6.42 persons, say seven persons per household. But in case of Sema cultivators in Nihokhu village, it was quite startling. The total number of agricultural labourers kept by eight households were 251 and the average per household was worked to be 31.37 persons. It is in this context, Sinha's are relevant:

It so happens that the Mias come annually before the plantation season to the respective land owners, who provide them with huts for their shelter, make provision for their food; and they are given implements, seeds, manure etc. for the cultivation. All these amenities are extended to the Mias on deferred payment. When the crops are harvested the Muslim farm hands get 1/4 or 1/3 of the crops as their labour, from which the
advances paid to them are deducted. They are supposed to sell the paddy to the landowner at the existing market price and then they go home with some sacks of grains and some amount of money with a view to returning again to the same master for the next year. Thus, this exploitative cycle continues year after year.

We find the agrarian situation in the Block alarming in otherwise stable Naga society. The Nagas have sufficient land for cultivation, but they cannot cultivate them without the help of agricultural labourers. They become helpless without others help to cultivate their land. For the Nagas, to be an agricultural labour is a shameful thing. That is why they are compelled to draw them from other non-Naga community. In the absence of scientific method of farming, they require additional manpower to make the land produce more food for an increased population or market.

In the process of cultivation, all the works right from ploughing, sowing, planting, weeding and harvesting are being done by the labourers from outside the State, and the villagers remain idle in the village doing hardly anything throughout the year. In this way every cultivating household engages numerous labourers. The Semas have occupied the larger amount of plain area in Nihokhu circle. Therefore, they engage maximum number of agricultural labourers. We have found that in Nihokhu village, eight households alone keep 251 labourers and in another Sema
village called Zutovi, there were 1438 labourers, whereas the total number of actual population was only 600 out of 117 households. It is an alarming situation which is bound to adversely affect their society in no time.

The process of induction of agricultural labourers is quite interesting and intriguing. Initially, the landowner uses to hire a few number of labourers and keep them under their protection. These protected agricultural labourers, possibly more acquainted with the agricultural local market induce and induct more labourers under their wings on an understanding of putting certain commission from such labourers. At times certain senior and more experienced agricultural labourers develop a type of labour freedom, which they rule. In this way these labourers are doubly exploited and, thus, the cycle of exploitation rotates year after year.

At another level, there have been reports of inter-ethnic and inter-faith marriages taking place. Even the marriages between the master and his client or between the children of the masters and their clients' which have been just started due to long attachment and intimate social interaction with each other. In case such marriages increase in future, a situation may arise in which conflict may be created. Because of this fact, there would be another
situation in future society even affecting the existing system of resource control and thereby the socio-economic spectrum shall be controlled by the exogeneous people.

The ethnic agrarian scenario has a political dimension also. The political parties register a number of voters invariably from non-Naga groups during the elections. For instance, under political pressure, the census record of 1981 had shown 211 households and 1280 persons against Zutovi Sema village, whereas the actual number of households was only 117 and population of 600 during the time of field work in November, 1985. In another village, Sema village called Pimla, again the actual number of households was found to be 120 with a total population of 700. But the census record has shown it as 337 households and 1978 total population. Similarly when the actual total number of households in Nihokhu village was 54 with a population of 315 as on June 1986, they have shown 281 houses and 1184 persons in 1981 census. These are only a few instances, in case, if the same formula would have been applied in all the villages in Nagaland, there would be a giant deferred figure in 1981 census record. When we enquired to know the reason for such a big difference in census record of 1981 from that of our field data 1985 in the block, we found that in order to fill the gap up they had taken into account all the agricultural labourers working in their villages.
The enumeration was done during 1980-81, just before the State Assembly Election held in December, 1982. Incidentally, the investigator happened to go to another Angami village during that election as Presiding Officer. He was surprised to see a huge number of agricultural labourers standing in queue guided by the landowner to cast their votes in favour of him (farm owner) behind the candidate of Kheti-mallick. They said that casting of their votes was dependent on their Kheti-mallick Khushe (on the desire of the owner of the field). In this way we find that the motive of induction of huge number of agricultural labourers was not only for cultivation, but it had a political motivation. The Nagaland State general assembly election is due in November 1987 and they are preparing the electoral rolls at present. At the time of preparation of electoral roll for the ensuing election, the investigator has again visited three sample villages in order to re-examine how the political parties use the agricultural labourers instrumentally as voters. Its detailed is shown in table 3.3 below.
Table 3.3: Political Motivation of Agricultural Labourers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Name of Village</th>
<th>Tribe</th>
<th>Actual No. of H.H. Population in 1986</th>
<th>Total No. of H.H. Electors shown for next election to be held in Nov. 1987</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Medziphema</td>
<td>Angami</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>682</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Molvom</td>
<td>Kuki</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>758</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Nihokhu</td>
<td>Sema</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>315</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It shows that coming of the labourers to Nagaland was not only for earning more money in Nagaland. The Nagas did search them for dual purposes viz. (a) to let them work on their farm, and (b) to be used as political tool for winning over the elections. This process still continues year after year particularly during the year of general elections in the State. It shows that the Nagas are contradicting themselves when they demand the Regulation of Inner-Line Act 1873 should be honoured in Nagaland so that their society is protected from influx of non-Nagas from outside their State. On the other hand, they are inviting outsiders to their home to work for them at their homes and to participate in election. The introduction of agricultural labourers started in a modest form long back when they shifted their cultivation from shifting cultivation.
to permanent wet cultivation. Consequently, the indigenous farmers and their children have become lazy and dependent on others and they are not taught the dignity of labour at home. They demand the good dress, good food and live a costly life without working for themselves.

(3) **Marketing of Agricultural Produce**

At the present rate of population growth, the projected size of population in Nagaland by 2001 A.D. will be 17.44 lakhs and the total foodgrain requirement will be 4.30 lakh metric tonnes against 1,35,000 M.T. by 1984-85. The State is deficit in the matter of food articles, though 85% of the rural population is agriculturalists. Because of this fact, the whole State has to depend on supplies from outside. The main agricultural crops grown in Nagaland are paddy, millet, maize, pulses, oilseeds, sugarcane, potato etc. There is surplus production of these crops in the Medziphema Block, but marketing of these products is still limited. Except Dimapur town there is no permanent market place for regular marketing of foodgrains and other agricultural crops on a whole-sale basis. Weekly markets are being held at the following places namely, Doyapar on Thursday, Chumukedima on Saturday, Medziphema on Friday, 5th mile on Thursday, Dimapur town on Wednesday and at 3rd mile on Sunday. Purchase and sale of essential commodities and agricultural products are being done in those
places during the market days. Traders of Dimapur town and buyers from the surrounding villages assemble at the market place early in the morning and they dispersed in the evening on the same day. Selling and buying of agricultural products except paddy, are being done during every market days. These mobile markets are also being monopolised by the Marwari traders of Dimapur town.

(4) **Method of Selling of Surplus Paddy**

Of all the Blocks in Nagaland, Medziphema could be considered as the richest Block in terms of paddy production. Even in the absence of scientific and technological method of cultivation, every village in this Block is a self-sufficient village in terms of food products. There is still a large area of cultivable waste land, which could be claimed for intensive cultivation. Every year, huge quantity of surplus paddy is disposed off from every villages. This paddy is normally bought by the Marwari traders of Dimapur; who use to give advance money to the farmers and collect the paddy during the harvest. We see from table 3.4 how the paddy market is being controlled by the Marwaris. They give advance money to the paddy growers, whenever they required and therefore, in spite of the constant attempt made by Cooperative Department to capture the paddy market; they have totally failed to do so. Advance loans are also easily available at the hands of
Marwaris without formalities. During the lean period they give advance loan at lower rate of Rs. 18-20/- per kerosene tin, and during the harvest time they collect the entire surplus paddy from every village. At the time of harvest the normal rate of paddy is Rs. 22-30 per tin which varies according to quality. The existing rate of Nagaland special rice is Rs. 5/- per kg. and after 75% - 85% adulteration the Marwaris sell at the rate of Rs. 4.50 per kg. in the name of Nagaland special rice at Dimapur market getting double benefit. Even without giving loan they collect paddy from the field itself with extra money and, therefore, the villagers of this area are more interested to dispose off the paddy to the Marwaris. In the process, middlemen also enter. The maximum number of big farmers are the Semas who have larger area of cultivable land. With the help of hundreds of agricultural labourers a household cultivates 30-50 acres of land. The average size of a household in this Block was calculated to be 4.55 persons per household and their maximum requirement of paddy for a year is 150 tins per household. But the Semas are operating 30-50 acres of land getting three to four thousand tins of paddy per year per household. The surplus paddy from Sema villages was, therefore, much more than other remaining villages. Every year they dispose off
2500-3500 tins of surplus paddy by each cultivating household, if this, surplus is controlled by the State Government without allowing the middlemen, this Block can feed the State also.

Table 3.4: Village-wise distribution of cultivators selling paddy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Village-wise</th>
<th>Total No. of cultivators (all groups)</th>
<th>Total No. of cultivators selling paddy</th>
<th>To whom sell</th>
<th>Coopt.</th>
<th>Marwari</th>
<th>Dept.</th>
<th>Own Villagers</th>
<th>Others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Dhansiripar</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(54.16)</td>
<td>(76.92)</td>
<td>(23.07)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Diphupar</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(29.26)</td>
<td>(91.66)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Medziphema</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(8.00)</td>
<td>(50.00)</td>
<td>(50.00)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Molvom</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(90.00)</td>
<td>(83.33)</td>
<td>(11.11)</td>
<td>(5.55)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Nihokhu</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(66.66)</td>
<td>(100.00)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Figures within brackets indicate percentage against the total of that particular column).

(5) Land-Man Relations

Nagaland has recorded the highest population growth rate in the country during the last two decades. If the State of Nagaland continues at the same growth rate, it is
projected that Nagland will have 11.62 lakhs population in 1991 A.D. and 17.44 lakhs in 2001 A.D. Similarly, the density of population per sq.km. will also be around 70 persons per km. in 1991 and 105 persons in 2001 A.D. respectively. As a matter of fact the present trend indicates that population will go on increasing. This would be the crux of the problem in future Naga society. Significantly, when we look into the reality by examining the distribution of the total geographical area in the State as furnished below, it is found to be very depressing.

Table 3.5: Distribution of the total geographical area.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SL No</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Area in Hectare</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Area under Government Control</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(a) Reserved Forest</td>
<td>8,358</td>
<td>0.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(b) Protected</td>
<td>50,876</td>
<td>3.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(c) Proposed to be reserved</td>
<td>23,279</td>
<td>1.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,03,638</td>
<td>6.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Area under Private Control</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(a) Village forest</td>
<td>1,83,919</td>
<td>11.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(b) Jhum land</td>
<td>6,20,645</td>
<td>37.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(c) Waste land</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(i) Potentially suitable for forestry</td>
<td>2,84,282</td>
<td>17.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(ii) Non-accessible</td>
<td>2,90,000</td>
<td>17.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(d) Irrigated cultivation</td>
<td>38,000</td>
<td>2.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>14,16,840</td>
<td>85.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Area under dual control</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Area under towns, villages, roads,</td>
<td>1,32,215</td>
<td>8.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>villages, rivers etc.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grand Total (1 + 2 + 3)</td>
<td>16,52,700</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above table shows that future development of the State hinges much on the changes in the use of 85.7% of the land, currently under private control and having potential for scientific forestry and allied activities.

With regard to man-land relations, we find certain basic issues in this area which are worth pointing as they are very touchy and painful. Firstly, the issue of reforestation and log operation because of increasing number of Saw Mills at Dimapur and its suburb, the deforestation in this area is very rampant. These Saw Mills are owned by the Nagas, but they are controlled by the non-Nagas and the local farmers supply the logs. Secondly, is the burning of jungles during the month of March and April every year. During this period the entire jungle becomes a fire place in this area. People are fond of setting jungles on fire and practise hunting games. This is found to be a regular feature during the winter season and in this way huge area of jungles is burnt down without realisation of the value of forest resources and the effect of burning jungle every year on soil. On the other hand, due to heavy demand of firewood from populous areas of Dimapur and Kohima towns, the villagers are selling the entire forest products at high rates, ranging from Rs. 1500 to Rs. 2000 per truck load of firewood. Because of such reasons the entire forest are turning into a barren land. Incidentally this Block has not got an appreciable amount of jhum land.
1.1 Landownership system

The study of landownership system is a sensitive and complex matter. Because, most of the people's need for food, shelter, clothing and energy come from the land. Since time immemorial, land has been recognised as having special importance in terms of properties and values. Ownership of land and accompanying control of its many usages have always been a major cause of contention among people. Surprisingly it is difficult to frame a comprehensive and useful definition of land because land may be understood in diversified ways. However, for the purpose of this study, we have defined land as "any part of the earth's surface which can be owned as property and everything annexed to it, whether by nature or by hand of man."\(^{12}\)

Thus, study of land ownership, its classification and measurement becomes difficult in Nagland as there is no cadastral survey conducted before. Thus, in so far as the land is concerned, there is no detail official record on land in respect of Nagaland. Owing to the absence of required authentic data on landownership system, operational holdings, land use pattern, tenure and tenancy pattern etc., become a difficult task to conduct and present a data-based empirical study on land ownership system. When Nagaland was a part of Assam, hardly a small portion of land about 259
136 sq. kms. was surveyed. It now falls under Dimapur Mauza and except this portion of land, no area in Nagaland has so far been cadastrally surveyed, and no standard and uniform laws have been framed till date. The only legal framework for determining the right to cultivate land is the Nagaland Jhumland Act, 1970, which has also certain limitations.

Invariably the ownership of land, exercise of ownership rights, controlling system, land use pattern, land boundary and man-land relations are based on traditions, which are simply guided by customary laws. The usages of customary laws are also not yet codified, yet they are applied very effectively as guiding principle in the socio-cultural spheres. Every Naga tribes has a variety of traditions and customs which are "very difficult to conceive of as existing even for a single day; and undeniable fact." Every Naga tribe follows its own customs, as there is no uniform customs and tradition for all the tribes. Because of the diverse nature of socio-cultural backgrounds, the land reforms measures like ceiling on landholdings, consolidation of holdings, ownership rights, redistribution of land to the landless etc. has never been attempted.

Article 371(A) of the Indian Constitution provides certain special privileges to the State of Nagaland relating to religion, social practices of the Naga. No Act of
Parliament on the above subjects could constitutionally be enforced in the state of Nagaland unless the Legislative Assembly of Nagaland by a resolution so decides.

![Diagram of Land Ownership System in Naga Society]

As indicated above, the ownership system of land in Naga society may broadly be categorised into two types viz. (a) Individual, and (b) Community ownership. Individual ownership may also be categorised into (i) Chieftainship, and (ii) Ordinary Individual ownership. Again, the Community Land ownership system may be categorised into: (i) Village ownership of land, (ii) Lineage land, and (iii) Clan ownership of land. Except the Kuki, Konyak and Sema tribes, no Naga tribe recognised chieftainship. The remaining tribes follow a combination of both individuals and communal ownership of land. In other words the Nagas follow a diversified nature of ownership which is a complicated matter. The typology of ownership system is summarised below and the
distribution of tribe-wise ownership system as found in Medziphema block showing percentage is given in table 3.6.

A. Individual Land

(i) Chieftainship

In Sema and Kuki societies the role of village chiefs or headmen is significant. They own and control the entire land in their village jurisdiction. This type of ownership is because of the fact that the Semas and the Kukis are having invariably a peculiar socio-cultural background of their own, unlike other tribes in Nagaland. In fact, the Semas are known as the adventurous tribe, whereas the Kukis are regarded as a migratory tribe. In both the cases leadership qualities of chiefs are demanded.

When the Semas are to establish a new village, they proceed to the selected spot even with women and children without fearing the natural environments around them in the forest. They also do not care much for modern amenities like children education, road communication, and other related infrastructural requirements and also without considering the constraints of modern amenities. Another inherent characteristic among them is that of the status of the village chief or gaonburas. Zunheboto is the cultural headquarter of the Sema tribe but today the Semas have scattered throughout the State and have settled in various locations.
Every enterprising and leader like Sema likes to establish his own village in which he and then his descendants will become the chiefs. By and large, the size of Sema villages is smaller than that of the villages of all other Naga tribes. This is because of the fact that the degree of mobility with a view to establishing new villages is found to be immensely high among the Semas so that the number of village chiefs automatically increases as they go on founding more villages. The founder of the village becomes the absolute owner of the land. The proof in this regard is found in this Block as indicated in chapter II on table 2.12. Traditionally, the Semas used to name the villages after the name of the person who founded the particular village.

The Land in Kuki Society

The Kukis are regarded as a migratory tribe, and they, who are now living in this block, are recent immigrants from Manipur State. As in the case of the Semas, the land is owned by the village chief. According to Kuki customs, the land generally belongs to Haosa, who owns and controls the ownership rights. No individual has absolute rights over the land except in case of self-acquired land outside the village jurisdiction. In Kuki society, the land may be broadly divided into: (a) tribal land, (b) ancestral land,
(c) self-acquired land, and (d) tribal forest produce and no individual has absolute right over such land without the knowledge of the Haosa. Even in the case of self-acquired land, an individual may have rights only when it is recognised by Haosa. However, outside the village jurisdiction, Haosa has no control over land.

The role of village chief relating to land-use

(a) Jhum Land

The village chief allots the land to the jhumias every year, but the ownership right is retained by him. He may distribute land according to his own wishes. The location and area to be jhumed is also decided by him. Every cycle year, the chief has to distribute among those who are willing to do jhum cultivation. In this way every farmer cultivates at different places as per the direction of the village chief. In Nihokhu village the jhumias were directed to cultivate as much as they possibly could as a vast stretch of land was lying uncultivated.

(b) Permanent wet cultivation

Once the land is allotted to a farmer, he is allowed to cultivate that particular land perpetually if he so desires without any hindrance from the village chief. Since the ownership right is vested only in the hand of village chief, no one can dispose off the land in Kuki and Sema
traditional villages unless it is self-acquired or inherited land. All the forest resources are controlled by the village chief. However, the villagers are allowed to extract forest resources with permission from the chief. The Sema and Kuki village chiefs are almost identical in relation to the land ownership system, rights controlling powers and status. Thus they enjoy an equal status as the ownership right is the same. They are paid a very nominal commission by the users of the land according to the nature of work and types of resources they obtain from the land. In Nihokhu village one man day labour is given every month by every household in the village to the chief. There is no uniform system of taxes and commission given to the village chiefs. However, there was compulsory taxation/commission upon the entire households/cultivators by the village chiefs as binding customary laws being practised in both the tribes in the past. The Chieftainship in both the tribes is hereditary.

(ii) Ordinary Individual Ownership

Many ordinary individuals have inherited or acquired land through their own efforts. We have termed it as common individual private land ownership system in which an individual has absolute right over that plot of land, either to transfer or to share it with other. This type of ownership is commonly practised by the Angamis, the Aos, the
Chakesangs, the Kacharis, the Lothas and the Rongmeis. The Angamis and Chakesangs, who mostly practise terrace cultivation have individual ownership of land. Every individual farmers owns landed property and enjoys every right over it. The right is permanent and inheritable and also transferable. This type of ownership naturally comes either by inheritance or by purchase. The individual ownership system of land is accepted amongst the Kukis and the Semas who are migratory tribes as reported by Davis almost a century ago.

Private rights of property in land are the rule amongst all the tribes in this district, except the Kukis, Mikirs, the Plains Rengmas, i.e. the migratory tribes. That private rights of property in land are not recognised amongst these tribes is due to the fact that they are in no way pressed for land, the villages being small and uncut jungles extensive. When, however, we come to tribes like the Angamis, Lothas, and Aos, who live in permanent in large villages, and amongst whom land is none too plentiful, we find that the right of individuals to property in land are well known and well recognised, and the rules as to inheritance and partition of such property settled by strict customary laws. Amongst the Angamis land, especially permanent terraced cultivation, is freely sold and bought, there being no more difficulty in seedling a terraced field than in selling a pig or a cow. Amongst the other tribes the custom of letting out land is largely practised, a rent varying from Rs. 3 to 5 for field (jhum) large enough for the support of a household being the usual amount charged for the use of land for two hears.17
B. Community Ownership

(i) Land under the village authority

In most of the newly established Naga villages this system of ownership is being practised. In Chakro (lower) area of Angami villages 75% of the total geographical area of their village land is owned by village authority. But in other area of Angami villages this type of system is not so, because the individual ownership system is more indispensable. Significantly, in Ao society, land is owned either by individual or clan. But in one of the newly established villages known as Chungtia New, 1961, the entire land is owned by the village authority, whereas in Chungtia Old; the land is owned individually. The people in Chungtia New are now the immigrants of Chungtia Old. This shows that the ownership of land in Naga society is based on situational and historical factors rather than a uniform principle.

(ii) Lineage Land

This is one of the most common systems that we find in Naga society today. In this practice, the land is owned by a kin group "which neither can be termed as clan land nor as individual." For instance, if a man purchases a plot of land who has several sons, after his death, his sons and grand-children inherit that particular land and in the long run, this is shared by a kin group.
(iii) Clan Land

Almost every clan has sites for construction of houses and plots for cultivation. The eldest member of the clan is the custodian or head over the clan land and he exercises a titular right over clan land. Every clan member has right to use that land according to seniority of age and also availability of land.20

Table 3.6: Distribution of tribe-wise landownership system showing percentage in Medziphema Block

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tribe</th>
<th>Ownership types</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Angami</td>
<td>Ordinary Individual land</td>
<td>15.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Village authority</td>
<td>70.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lineage land</td>
<td>10.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Clan land</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ao</td>
<td>Ordinary Individual land</td>
<td>80.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Village authority</td>
<td>15.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lineage land</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Clan land</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chakesang</td>
<td>Ordinary Individual land</td>
<td>90.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Village authority</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lineage land</td>
<td>10.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Clan land</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kacharis</td>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>90.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Village authority</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lineage</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Clan land</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3.6 (Contd.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tribe</th>
<th>Ownership types</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kuki</td>
<td>Chieftainship</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lotha</td>
<td>Ordinary Individual</td>
<td>90.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Village authority</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lineage land</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Clan land</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rongmeis</td>
<td>Ordinary individual</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semas</td>
<td>Chieftainship</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some of the significant variations regarding landownership system and its pattern between this Block and others approximate areas amongst the same tribe is that, 70% of the total geographical area of the land in Chakro area of Angami villages is owned by the village authority, whereas in Southern, Northern and Western Angami area almost 75% of the area is owned by the individuals and the remaining 25% is owned by the village authority. Similarly, the ownership system and its pattern between Sema Chief in Diphupar village another Sema chief in Nihokhu is quite different. Diphupar is a mixed Naga tribal village, where the land is owned individually. The Sema Chief has no role regarding land and its control, unlike other separate Sema traditional villages. The ownership right varies from place to place and also from tribe to tribe according to situational factors and socio-political background, which they
have faced during the time of establishment of their vil-
lage and also the motives of making new villages. These
are some of the major determining factors of ownership
system as we find in Naga society in general and Medziphe-
ma Block in particular.

3.05. **Demarcation of land boundaries and land disputes**

Land boundary is a sensitive matter. Land disputes
arise because of inaccurate boundaries or contested land
titles, which are endless and often acrimonious. Very often
it is difficult to establish boundaries accurately and
legally which leads to serious consequences. It often hap-
pens that a boundary line between two ownerships, long
established by usage and often fenced or demarcated and
mutually accepted or at least not contested by the adjoin-
ing owners, turns out to be significantly different from
what should be the true boundary line. Solution of such
problems is found to be very difficult, both legally and
practically; leading to strong and sensitive feelings. Such
things are found to be very common throughout Nagaland
especially among the advanced tribes as they are now reali-
sing the value of land.

Since land is not owned by the Government excepting
purchased or acquired land. There are three layer systems
of land boundaries in Nagaland such as: (a) inter-tribe
boundary; i.e. boundary line with one or more tribes, (b) inter-village i.e., boundary line with one or more villages either with their own community or with other neighbouring tribe(s) and lastly, (c) boundary line with individuals, groups, clan, families and so on within their own village. These are all complicated matters, which need careful study before generating any developmental planning programme. Generally, the nature of such boundary lines are based on long established usages and customs, which need standardisation securing the status of boundary network so that the nature and frequency of land disputes are minimised.

During the time of field work, we tried to gather data on how much land a particular village owned; but it was not possible to collect accurate information on area of coverage and holdings. The villagers also do not know the accurate total geographical area they owned as the land has not been surveyed neither by the government of Nagaland nor by the owners. What the villagers knew in this regard is; the only demarcation of land boundary of their land in their village.

According to judicial reports of the Government of Nagaland, the maximum number of civil cases which reach the level of the High Court and the Supreme Court from
Nagaland are relating to disputes involving inter-tribe village, inter-families and clan lands. There is not a single village without land disputes out of 24 villages within the jurisdiction of the Extra Assistant Commissioner, Medziphema revenue centre. In the process of exploiting land and its resources in the absence of definite legal provisions, the invariably jealousy is developed amongst the different tribes leading to acrimonious situation, hampering the developmental activities at all levels.

In the process of development, certain inter-related issues in terms of land-man relations come up, which hampers the process of development. The process of such developments should be kept free from all negative factors of man-land relations. However, the development activities suffer due to complexity of landownership in Nagaland. Many planners, policy makers and the scholars feel that had the land be owned by the State, then there would have been initiated a much faster pace of development in Nagaland.

3.06. Tenure and tenancy system

According to Agricultural Census of 1980-81, out of the total holding under operation, 98.70% of the area is wholly owned and self-operated, 0.96% is partly owned and
partly leased and 0.35% is wholly leased. The extent of
leased and partly owned and partly leased land is found
to be very negligible in Nagaland as also in this Block.

In the light of the above discussion it is clear
that no land has so far been surveyed in Nagaland except
a small portion about 259 sq.km. in Dimapur area which was
surveyed in the past when Nagaland was a part of Assam.
The Government of Nagaland, Department of Land Record has
also surveyed some of the important administrative head­
quarters (township areas), and except these, no land has
yet been cadastrally surveyed; and no systematic records
of land has yet been built up. The Department of Agricul­
ture, Government of Nagaland use to conduct agricultural
census from time to time, but they also do not have proper
records on land use pattern etc. There is complete absence
of land reform measure, and no concrete attempt has yet
been made so far towards reforming the land. We feel that
land reform measure is the key for rural development
because of the peculiar situation of land man-relations,
no significant results could be brought to Naga society.
In addition to this, there is certain constitutional impli­
cation regarding the ownership and transfer of land and
its resources\(^21\) as we have already mentioned earlier. In
the context of man-land relations, the Nagas are not facing
the problems for want of land at least at present. However,
their basic problems are: (a) unproductive holding, (b) unmanageability due to largeness of holding, (c) unsuitability for agriculture due to typical topographical conditions, (d) fragmentation of holding, (e) absence of regulations of standard boundaries, and (f) constant land disputes over the ownership issue due to absence of (e) above.22

When we examine the land and its relation, we find an alarming situation arising in Nagaland. This we can say basing on empirical data available in our hand; and if these issues are not taken care properly at the right time there is likely to be increased the volume of socio-economic problems more and more in their future society. The next chapter states the present socio-economic status in the selected villages which further reflects the future Naga society and their needs for priority of development.
REFERENCES

1. The word 'Dimapur' is derived from the word, 'Hirimba­pur'. There is legend as to how Kachari kingdom came to be called 'Hirimba' and how the Kacharis became known as the descendants of Ghatotkacha, the son of the demoness, Hirimba by Bhima, the great hero of the Mahabharata epic. It is said that once Bhima, the son of Pandu, came to Assam in course of conquests. He happened to meet Hirimba, the demoness, whom he married and by whom he had a son named Ghatotkacha. In the great battle of Kurukshetra, Ghatotkacha fought on the side of the Pandavas. Since then, the Kacharis became traditionally known as the descendants of Ghatotkacha; and their kingdom was designated as 'Hirimba', after the name of the mother of Ghatotkacha; while the capital was called 'Hirimbapur'; and the Kachari king assumed the title of 'Hirimbeswar' or the Lord of Hirimba. Later on, the word Hirimbapur became transformed into 'Dimapur'. This historical background is taken out from Prof. P.N. Dutta, on his book on Glimpses into the History of Assam, 1962, p. 98.


9. Aier, Sashimeren, 1979, Shillong. Discussion with him on September 10. Some of the prominent figures of the founding members of the Naga Club constituted in 1918 were: (1) Mr. Ngakhu, Head Dobashe, (2) Mr. Likokyangba of Ungma village, (3) Mr. Lentinokdang of Akhoiya village, (4) Changsumo Ngullie, (5) One member each from Kohima and Khonoma villages. The present residential site of Mr. Imlong Chang of Mokokchung town was the original site belonged to this Club, where they run a cooperative store (also refer *Emergence of Nagaland* by Hokeshe Sema, 1986, p. 80).


14. Article 371(A) of the Constitution of India gives assurance to the people of Nagaland as follows:

"371(A)(I) Notwithstanding anything in the Constitution, (a) No Act of Parliament in respect of -
1) Religion or Social Practices of the Nagas,
2) Naga Customary Laws and Procedures,
3) Administration of Civil and Criminal Justice involving decisions according to Naga Customary Laws,
4) Ownership and transfer of land and its resources, shall apply to the State of Nagaland unless the Legislative Assembly of Nagaland by a resolution so decides."

15. The social practices of the Nagas need to be re-examined and re-defined. If the Constitution of India says that no Act of Parliament in respect of social practices shall be applied to the State of Nagaland unless the Legislative Assembly of Nagaland by a resolution so decides. It will be interesting study critically and argue the areas of social practices of the Nagas; and under the framework of this clause and definition of social practices the Nagas could have a new social order. The Indian constitution recognises the necessity
of having a separate political and administrative structure for the tribal people. The "Excluded and partially Excluded Area" are no more in existence and applicable now. It has been disappeared; and their place were replaced by "Schedule Areas". In spite of such clear constitutional provisions the Nagas have failed to reconstruct a self-reliant society; a new social order basing on their socio-cultural practices and beliefs which is the need of the hour.


