

Difficult Decolonization: Debates, Divisions, and Deaths *Within* the Naga Uprising, 1944-1963

Jelle J.P. Wouters

This essay traces the early beginnings of the Indo-Naga conflict, which erupts in the 1950s and continues into the present-day. It focuses on the period roughly between the Battle of Kohima in 1944, which ends Japanese expansionism in the east, and the enactment of Nagaland state in 1963 as an envisaged (but failed) political compromise to the demand by the Naga National Council (NNC) for complete Naga sovereignty. This essay uses hitherto scantily used tour and personal diaries, government reports, private correspondence, memoirs, and recorded memories to interrogate the master-narrative of the Naga struggle that reconstructs a relatively straight and uncomplicated historical trajectory that sees the genuine awakening and NNC-led political mobilization of an upland community situated off the beaten track of both Indian civilization and colonial domination, and of Nagas' collective resolve to take up arms to fight for a place on the table of nation-states. Alternatively, if the story is told from the vantage of the Indian state, the dominant narrative apports blame to a 'misguided' Naga elite that seeks to undermine the territorial and national integrity of the Indian state. These prevailing views, attractive for their absence of complexity, however, ignore the anguished debates, interpersonal and intertribal differences, contingent histories and events, dissenting voices, political assassinations, and sharp divisions within the rank-and-file of the NNC, and whose inner dynamics and sentiments could as well have produced outcomes other than war.

Keywords: Naga Uprising, Decolonisation, Naga National Council, NNC

Introduction

Political conflicts have lifecycles: like persons they go through different stages with each associating with particular behaviours, experiences, emotions and viewpoints. While each stage informs the articulations and acts that become seen as characteristic of the next, these stages do not necessarily follow in a unilinear fashion, nor is it

Dr. Jelle J.P. Wouters is a Senior Lecturer at Royal Thimphu College in Bhutan. He is the author of *In the Shadows of Naga Insurgency: Tribes, State and Violence in Northeast India* (OUP, 2018). [Email: jjp.wouters@gmail.com]

always possible to demarcate different stages in a clear-cut manner. Their points of beginning and ending are often fuzzy, overlapping, and open to interpretation. However, especially as time passes, distinct stages tend to become analytically distinguishable and recognizing these offer heuristic frames to better understand the evolution of political conflicts. Reading stages into a political conflict may not be feasible in the heat of the war, or even during its immediate aftermath, but become the domain of 'second-generation historiography', or the more professional, more detached forms of history writing that emerge after 'those who experienced the war fade away and, with them, the scars, emotions, myths, and self-justifications that were part of their mental make-up' (Van Schendel 2016: 76).

The protracted Indo-Naga war is one such political conflict whose historical trajectory can be deconstructed and analysed in the form of analytically distinguishable stages. At the time of writing, the conflict continues to evade a final political settlement, although since the 1997 Indo-Naga ceasefire the war has increasingly turned into a low-intensity conflict. In this context, it remains 'first-generation historiography', written by stakeholders or veterans of either the Naga Movement or the Indian state and its army, that dominates public discourse and moulds popular understandings of the conflict, its causes and consequences.¹ Gradually, however, space is beginning to open for more detached reflections on the conflict, particularly concerning its origins and early beginnings in the 1940s and 1950s.² While historians differently portray and theorise the Naga Movement, the moment the actual war breaks out is shrouded in less ambiguity: 'Troops moved into Tuensang by Oct. 1955', B.N. Mullick, then Director of India's Central Intelligence Bureau, recounted, 'and the war with the Nagas started from then' (cited in Vashum 2005: 112).

The outbreak of war occurred within the stage of the Indo-Naga conflict I propose to demarcate and discuss here, which is the period roughly between the Battle of Kohima in 1944, which ended Japanese expansionism in the east, and the enactment of Nagaland state in 1963 as an envisaged (but failed) political compromise to the demand by the Naga National Council (NNC) for complete Naga sovereignty. This stage often finds itself subsumed into a larger master narrative of the Naga struggle that reconstructs a relatively straight and uncomplicated historical trajectory that sees the genuine awakening and NNC-led political mobilization of a highland community situated off the beaten track of both Indian civilization and colonial domination, and of Nagas' collective resolve to take up arms to fight for a place on the table of nation-states. Alternatively, if the story is told from the vantage of the Indian state, the dominant narrative apports blame to a 'misguided' Naga elite that seeks to undermine the territorial and national integrity of the Indian state.

Simplistic historical reconstructions of any war are worrisome enough in themselves. In the case of the Indo-Naga war such readings become particularly constrictive, though, when they make the present and future generations see the armed conflict – and the death, misery and societal destruction hatched in its name – through a reductive lens of historically inevitable and clear-cut fault-lines between India and Nagas that erupted in full force during the difficult process of decolonization. These prevailing views, attractive for their absence of complexity, however, ignore the anguished debates, interpersonal and intertribal differences, contingent histories

and events, dissenting voices, political assassinations, and sharp differences within the rank-and-file of the NNC prior to the outbreak of the armed conflict, and whose inner dynamics and sentiments could as well have produced outcomes other than war.

While the Naga Movement is home to a growing body of scholarship, I am not aware of any study that concentrates in detail on the period between 1944 and 1963. This is a lack because the political debates and events that transpired in this period not only led to the outbreak of armed conflict, but also set the stage for later developments and complications that continue to haunt and divide Naga society, including intertribal antagonisms and a broad division into ‘underground’ and ‘overground’ Nagas. This essay uses archival histories to challenge and complicate the historiographical certainty apportioned to the early political evolution and outbreak of the Indo-Naga war. I tell the narrative that follows through hitherto scantily used sources, including official statements and memorandums, colonial tour diaries and personal journals, memoirs and biographies, and those memories recorded by history. First, however, the next section offers, in much abridged form, a few reflections on the rise of Naga political consciousness and self-assertion during the era of late-colonialism.

Antecedents of Naga Nationalism

Modern Naga political history can be read as the product of two mutually constitutive processes – the internal dynamics of clan, *khel* (village ward or sector), village, and tribe and the effects and transformations impelled by systematic contact with external agencies and events such as colonial rule, Christian missions, and the First and Second World Wars. Their conjunction is what first gave rise to an encompassing, though ever fraught and fragile, sense of a pan-Naga political identity that became articulated during the era of late-colonialism. While most Naga nationalists prefer to frame the Naga nation as God-given, rather than man-made, and speak of a perennial, historically immutable Naga essence that was not created but awakened in the 20th century, most historians agree that the Naga nation, in its present form and substance, did not flourish in primordial isolation but emerged and took on significance in relation to particular historical processes and cataclysmic events.

Historians variously theorise the experience of colonial rule – here including ‘pacification’, administrative unification, the imposition of an Inner-Line regime, and ethnological classification – and Christianity – its universal ‘truths’, the standardization and Romanization of languages, the advent of mission schools and education – as centripetal forces that established the initial terms for an emergent Naga national identity (see Thong 2016; Thomas 2016). Other reconstructions are less processual and highlight specific events, such as the recruitment of an estimated 2000 Naga villagers from different clans, villages, and tribes into the Labour Corps that was dispatched to war trenches in France during the First World War. Toiling within the sound of guns, these Naga ‘coolies’, the argument goes, gained political consciousness as they were introduced, with harsh clarity, to the modern compulsions of nation, nationalism, and patriotism (Chasie 2005).³ The journey across seas and the war trenches subsequently ‘awakened the spunk of the Naga nationalism’ (Yonuo

1974: xii) as it led to a rethinking and broadening of Naga identity that began to transcend divisions along tribal, village and clan lines.

The returning home of these Naga labours is popularly associated with the establishment of the Naga Club in 1918, the first pan-Naga apex body, even as most of its founding members had *not* been part of the Labour Corps but were newly educated and entrepreneurial Nagas, the majority of whom were serving the colonial government. It is under the aegis of the Naga Club that, in 1929, Naga representatives petitioned the Simon Commission, which had come to British India to study constitutional reform. Were the British to depart, as rumour already had it, they pleaded: 'We [the Nagas] should not be thrust to the mercy of other people... but to leave us alone as in ancient times.' While, bar a few, the 21 signatories belonged to the Angami Naga and hailed from Kohima and its immediate surroundings, they nevertheless claimed to represent not only 'those regions to which we [the signatories] belong... but also other regions of Nagaland' (Vashum 2005: 175). This determining influence of the Angami tribe in Naga political expressions was to remain characteristic, as subsequent sections will show, of the beginnings of the Naga uprising. This thesis of Angami 'leadership' or 'domination' (depending on whom you ask) is personified by the charisma and activities of Angami Zaphu Phizo, who was the fourth president of the NNC and the main ideologue and prophet of Naga nationalism, and whose ascend to power and influence I will discuss further below.

While historians debate and disagree about the relative importance of these processes, events, and the political magnetism that emanated from Phizo, they broadly agree that, taken together, they transformed a social fabric that revolved strongly around fragmented and 'primordial givens' into a society progressively preoccupied with constructing a more generic Naga cultural and political identity.

The next two sections show how experiences during the Second World War further emboldened this emergent conception of the Naga in a self-conscious and politically assertive national mould.

The Second World War and the Nagas

If Naga labourers travelled frightening journeys on rundown ships to participate in the First World War, the Second World War announced itself at Naga doorsteps. In December 1941, the first Japanese bombs fell on Rangoon, the capital of British Burma. A few months later large swathes of Burma were in Japanese hands. India was to be conquered next and rumours of an imminent invasion spread across the hills and valleys of Assam (Bower 1950: 171). Contrary to expectations, the Japanese advance paused at the foot of the Patkai range, the jungle-clad and upland frontier that separated India and Burma. To prepare for the assault, Allied Forces turned the Naga highlands, and neighbouring hills, into a huge 'military bulwark against Tokyo' (Guyot-Récharde 2017: 7). In 1944, Japanese forces began their by now long anticipated march into India and which resulted in a destructive battle that bogged down to the towns of Imphal and especially Kohima, whose hilltop garrison the Japanese placed under siege.

The Battle of Kohima raged between April 4 and June 22 1944 and witnessed

some of the fiercest hand-to-hand combat in the Second World War (see Guyot-Récharde 2017). While thousands of Allied Soldiers lost their lives, victory was nevertheless claimed by them, making Kohima to the Japanese what ‘Stalingrad was to Russia and Alemein to the Dessert’ (Philipps cited in Horam 1988: 57). What greatly frustrated the Japanese Army, as well as the collaborating Indian National Army (INA) led by Subhas Chandra Bose, is that, at the decisive moment, Nagas sided with Allied Forces, instead of capitalizing on the opportunity to revolt against their colonial rulers. A large literature of military analyses and memoirs document how Nagas actively contributed to the Allied Victory by serving as scouts, interpreters, spies, labourers, orderlies, and levies.⁴ Wrote John Colvin (1994: 35): ‘Irrespective of the tribe or sub-tribe, the record of the Nagas during the Japanese occupation was one of extraordinary loyalty to the British’. General Slim (1956: 341) similarly acknowledged: ‘These were the gallant Nagas whose loyalty, even in the most depressing times of the invasion had never faltered’.

But while this official narrative firmly places the Nagas on the ‘good side’ of history, not all Nagas sided with the Allied Forces. Amongst those who did not was the later NNC President A.Z. Phizo. On the eve of the Japanese invasion of Burma, Phizo was in Rangoon, where he had arrived some years earlier out of a mixture of business interests and ‘self-imposed exile’ following a series of ‘anti-British statements’ in Kohima that earned him the reputation of a ‘potential troublemaker in the eyes of officialdom’ (Steyn 2002: 48). Despite past ill-feelings, Phizo enlisted himself as a volunteer in the British Army. ‘I did not hate the British, only their colonialism and what they stood for’, he justified his decision many years later (cited in Steyn 2002: 52). However, Phizo’s political convictions prevented his actual enrolment:

At his interview trouble arose when he was told that Asiatics could not be enrolled and he would have to change his nationality to either Anglo-Indian or Anglo-Burmese if he wanted to enlist. Such a suggestion, of course, immediately put his back up in no uncertain way – his uncompromising retort being: ‘I am a Naga first, a Naga second, and a Naga last’. An inevitable stalemate ensued. The commanding officer, Major Sample, lost his patience and summarily ordered him to depart. Once again, stubbornly dignified Phizo had his way: ‘If you tell me to go, I will go, but for my part I have offered my services’ (Steyn 2002: 54).

Following this encounter, Phizo, accompanied in Rangoon by his wife and brother Keviyallay, did not join the large stream of refugees that fled towards India, but stayed put. He now offered his services to the Japanese:

When war came to Burma in 1942, my brother and I were asked by the Japanese Army to assist them. As they promised to recognize Nagaland as an independent sovereign state, we rendered whatever service we could towards what seemed to us the liberation of our own country (Phizo 1960).⁵

In the end, it was not Phizo but Keviyallay who guided several Japanese patrols into both the Naga ‘Control Area’⁶ and the Naga Hills District (Steyn 2002: 58).

Meanwhile, Subhas Bose arrived in Burma. Phizo met him on several occasions, and became, somewhat informally, associated with the INA, again on the premise that Bose would recognize Naga independence after the British would be routed. While Phizo was inspired by Bose's 'charisma and boundless energy', he is said to have 'refrained from joining the cries of *Jai Hind* whenever and wherever Bose appeared'. Phizo offered to join the INA in their invasion of India, but was 'rebuffed', reportedly because 'he would be needed once Nagaland had been liberated' (Steyn 2002: 60). Phizo subsequently waited out the war in Rangoon (Nibedon 1978: 23).

After Burma fell back in British hands, Phizo and Keviyallay were arrested on charges of collaborating with the enemy. Phizo was jailed and remained so for eight months. Following his release in 1946, he returned to the Naga Hills, and now did so 'with his mind full of unwavering determination and revolutionary ideas to achieve political independence for his homeland' (Yonuo 1974: 199).

From Reconstruction to Political Assertion: the Making of the NNC

By July 1944, Kohima was reduced to ruins and rubble. 'After the battle I was one of the first to return. The entire place was strewn with corpses, rubble', reflected Langalang (cited in Aram 1974: 18), the Headmaster of the Kohima High School and soon to become an influential NNC member. Villages through which Japanese and Allied Forces had passed too suffered painful destruction and depletion. Fields lay uncultivated, granaries were empty, and most livestock was confiscated and slaughtered. This destruction, however, was also politically productive with the war serving as 'an agent of *ethnicization*' (Guyot-Récharde 2017: 3; emphasis in original). As Fürer-Haimendorf reflected:

When the Japanese invaded Burma and India during the Second World War the Naga Hills became a battleground. Soldiers of various races passed through, lived, fought and died among the Nagas. Thus new people, new weapons, new attire, new food and above all new ideas were introduced to the Nagas and when the War came to an end they could not go back to the old secluded life (cited in Joshi 2012: 26).

In the aftermath of the war, the Assam Governor constituted an Assam Relief Measures organization that provided relief and reconstruction for war-affected areas. In the Naga Hills District, Charles Pawsey, the District Commissioner, invited Naga government officers and tribal leaders to his bungalow and proposed the formation of the Naga Hills District Tribal Council (NHDTTC) 'with the aim of uniting the Nagas and repairing some of the damage done during World War II' (Elwin 1961: 51). While Pawsey saw the NHDTTC as a technical, apolitical body, 'once it was formed the council increasingly became a platform for Nagas to express and debate some of their pressing political concerns, ultimately leading to the formation of the NNC in February 1946' (Thomas 2016: 102). As opposed to the NHDTTC, which soon dissolved, the NNC was wholly an indigenous creation.

The NNC began with 29 members and was organized around two central councils: Mokokchung and Kohima. Its members represented all Naga tribes located within the Naga Hills District and several of the 'Control Area'. Membership, however,

was dominated by the Angami and Ao tribes with 7 and 5 members in the council respectively (Misra 2000: 29). At first, the NNC received ‘official patronage’ from colonial officials who perceived of the Council as a ‘unifying and moderating influence’ (Elwin 1961: 51), and who were themselves engaged in discussions on the future administration of the hills.⁷ However, as NNC members became more politically assertive, they increasingly began to view the Council with apprehension. ‘There is a somewhat nebulous body in existence (more or less self-created) called “the Naga National Council”’, J.P. Mills, a veteran administrator among the Naga and then Advisor to the Governor in Shillong, wrote to William Archer upon the latter’s posting to Mokokchung. Mills explained: ‘It is not “National” at all, of course, though it may be nationalistic. It has to be treated with politeness – rudeness never pays – but I personally don’t regard it the mouthpiece of the public’.⁸ In his judgment, Mills was to be mistaken as the NNC soon became the catalyst of political developments in the Naga highlands.

The Debate Within: Autonomy versus Independence

Dominant Naga national reconstructions tell that immediately after its formation in 1946, the NNC began to prepare itself for complete independence, ultimately resulting in a unilateral declaration of independence based on the general will of the Naga people. This single master narrative highlights the political unity of the Naga people and presents the enactment of the NNC and the declaration of Naga independence as complementary events that followed in linear and relatively uncomplicated fashion. This section unsettles such historical certainties and complicates the proclaimed inevitability of Nagas’ claim to independence by focusing on debates, disagreements and divisions within the NNC rank-and-file between its formation in February 1946 and the Naga declaration of independence on August 14 1947, one day before India achieved hers. I am not aware of any surviving minutes of early NNC meetings (if they were kept in the first place), and I therefore rely on official memorandums and statements issued by the NNC as well as on secondary sources, mostly in the form of diaries, notes, and correspondence written unfortunately not by Nagas but by colonial officers (and the spouse of one such officer) then posted in the Naga Hills District. These officers kept themselves abreast of (and also interfered into) political developments through personal discussions with NNC members.

‘The Naga future would not be bound by any arbitrary decision of the British Government, and no recommendation would be accepted without consultation’ (Lisam 2011: 447), the first NNC memorandum read and was submitted to a British Cabinet Mission that visited Delhi in April 1946. The generality of this statement is not because NNC members lacked concrete political vision, but because, right from the beginning, the NNC was broadly divided into two camps: those in favour of meaningful Naga autonomy within Assam and India and advocates of complete Naga independence. These conflicting political viewpoints revealed themselves along tribal lines with Ao Naga representatives, supported by their Lotha neighbours, arguing for autonomy and Angami delegates making the case for Naga independence.⁹ Basing her notes on conversations with Aliba Imti, NNC’s first president,¹⁰ and Mayangnokcha, the vice-president (both Ao Nagas), Mildred Archer (the wife of William Archer, then Sub-

Divisional Officer of Mokokchung District) detailed the rift between the Mokokchung and Kohima centres of the NNC:

On the Kohima side of the district, the Angamis and Kacha Nagas began to dream of a fully independent Naga Hills. 'Until the British conquered us, we ruled ourselves. We were never under the Assamese. Why should an Assam Raj be foisted on us now? During the war we saw the plainsman. We know his tricks. We will never be safe without a Naga Raj'. But on the Mokokchung side, the Aos and Lhotas were much less hostile. The Japanese were halted on their boundaries. They have experienced no Indian exploitation, while a few who were educated in Jorhat and Shillong [Assam] had even

In important parts, these conflicting political positions seemed a response to divergent historical experiences, not least in relation to the Second World War. While the war destroyed and depleted Kohima and most Angami villages, Mokokchung district was saved this disaster, witnessed fewer Japanese and Allied soldiers on its soil, and was so spared the exploitation most Angamis experienced. After the war, Angami villagers favourably compared the behaviour of Japanese soldiers to that of 'the Punjabis' (Guyot-Récharde 2017: 21) with whom they had sided. Subhas Bose's INA conjured similarly disparaging evaluations. 'They treated us like dirt', an Angami headmaster recalled, then added: 'It will be like that if the plainsmen rule us'. 'I worked as a road contractor', another Angami narrated. 'The Indian officers made me promises but they never kept them. They only wanted bribes. The Pathans and the Sikhs were the worst. How can we stand against the plainsman?' (cited in Guyot-Récharde 2017: 21). But not just differential experiences of war. Divergent trajectories of Christian conversion and pre-existent intertribal animosities, too, shaped Ao and Angami political positions differently:

Moreover at the back of their [Ao and Lhota] minds was the vague fear that Independence would mean in practice not a Naga Raj but an Angami one. They saw themselves weakened by Christianity [Ao Nagas were the first to convert in large numbers], no longer militant in outlook, and opposed by a vigorous thrusting tribe [Angami] which was still proud of its warriors' traditions and was only recently weaned from head-taking.¹²

This apprehension of a Naga independence becoming an 'Angami Raj' was to remain an important subtext of NNC debates. While touring the Rengma Naga, neighbouring the Angami, William Archer noticed the strengthening of village defence walls. Villagers told him that they did so for reasons of 'cattle', but when Archer asked poignantly: 'for Angami cattle?', 'they laughed and did not deny it'. Archer wrote: 'Rengmas fear an Angami Raj on the one hand and an Assam Raj on the other, the latter the lesser of the 2 evils'.¹³

Differences between Angami and Ao delegates came to a head during an NNC meeting in Wokha, the Lotha Naga headquarters, in June 1946. Kevichusa, the first Naga graduate and a senior government servant in Kohima, strongly made the case

for Naga independence: ‘Self-government should mean a government of the Nagas, for the Nagas, by the Nagas. Nothing else means anything to the Nagas. We have to be masters of our own country and be free’. Ao delegates were ‘unconvinced’ and ‘realising that only through a united front would any advance be possible, the Angamis yielded to Mokokchung opinion [and] abandoned the demand for independence’.¹⁴ What resulted was a four-point memorandum, which T. Sakhrie, the Angami NNC Secretary, dispatched to Jawaharlal Nehru. It read:

1. This Naga National Council stands for the solidarity of Naga tribes including those in the un-administrated areas.
2. This Council strongly protests against the grouping of Assam with Bengal.
3. The Naga Hills should be Constitutionally included in autonomous Assam, in a free India, with local autonomy and due safeguards for the interest of the Nagas
4. The Naga tribes should have a separate electorate (Vashum 2005: 69).

In his response, Nehru endorsed the first three points, but rejected the idea of a separate Naga electorate: ‘We are against separate electorates as this will limit and injure the small group by keeping it separated from the rest of the nation’. Nehru also informed that an Advisory Committee would soon be enacted to offer recommendations on the constitutional inclusion of the Assam hill tribes, and added that this Committee ‘should have representatives of the tribal areas’ (Vashum 2005: 69-70).

Once enacted, however, the Committee was primarily made up of Congress politicians from Assam, including Gopinath Bordoloi (Assam’s first chief minister) and had only two tribal representatives: Nichols Roy, a Khasi Reverend married to an American and known to favour an integrated Assam, and Mayangnokcha. This immediately irked the NNC: ‘Everyone realised that the object of the sub-committee was not to give the Nagas the constitution they wanted but to ensure that Congress ideas of what the Nagas ought to want should prevail’.¹⁵ It reinvigorated the Angami voice for independence, and in the next NNC meeting, in February 1947, Angami delegates proposed that a clause be included in any agreement that allowed for a Naga interim government for a period of ten years, under the protection of either the British or Indian Government, and after which Nagas would freely decide their political future. A furious debate ensued with Ao representatives standing by the Wokha resolution. It was only after the interference of Pawsey, who called the disagreeing NNC members to his bungalow, that the deadlock was resolved. This time Ao delegates yielded to the Angami position and the proposed clause was added to a new memorandum. Pawsey’s intervention (and not just in this instance) frustrated Phizo. He reflected later: ‘I had seen nationalists at work in Burma. I had witnessed what patriotism could achieve. What I found on my return to Nagaland was nothing – no unity, no ideas. Everybody waited to hear what the District Commissioner wanted’ (cited in Steyn 2002: 72).

Mayangnokcha presented the new memorandum to the Advisory Committee in Delhi, but was rebuked by its members: ‘Your memorandum is merely history... Who ever heard of a Naga interim government?’, they reacted. ‘I tried to reason with

them', Mayangnokcha recounted, 'but they were all sour. They do not argue straight. They twist your words. There is no love in them. No one of them desired the Nagas' good. They think only of Assam'.¹⁶ A frustrated Mayangnokcha tendered his resignation. A few months on, in May 1947, the Advisory Committee visited Kohima to meet the NNC. Bordoloi proposed several suggestions for Nagas' constitutional inclusion in an independent India. 'Give us a reply to our demands, then we will answer your question', is what NNC members responded. The meeting ended with Bordoloi retorting: 'You are really very obstinate'.¹⁷ In a report of the meeting, the Secretary of the Committee stated: 'It was clearly perceived that the Council was now dominated by certain Angami leaders like Kevichusa and Lungalong and the more reasonable elements were prevented from asserting themselves' (cited in Chaube 1999: 141-2).

Now it was Sir Akbar Hydari's, the Assam Governor, turn to try and resolve the deadlock. Three days of consultations in Kohima resulted in an agreement known variously as the 'nine-point agreement', the 'Hydari agreement', and the 'Governor's agreement'. It proposed measures of executive, judiciary, and legislative autonomy. Its ninth, and soon controversial, clause read:

The Governor of Assam as the Agent of the Government of the Indian Union will have a special responsibility for a period of 10 years to ensure the observance of the agreement, at the end of this period the Naga Council will be asked whether they require the above agreement to be extended for a further period or a new agreement regarding the future of Naga people arrived at (Nuh 2002: 67-8).

The Hydari agreement divided the NNC. While it was realised that most clauses were 'very loosely worded' and that 'it said nothing of an interim government',¹⁸ it did fulfil the Ao demand for autonomy and Ao representatives, guided by Mayangnokcha and Aliba Imti, were ready to accept it. The Angami response was more complicated and disagreements led to a split between the historically influential Kohima and Khonoma villages, and their respective traditional allies and tributaries. While the Kohima group reluctantly accepted the agreement, the Khonoma group, of which Kevichusa, Sakhrie, and Phizo were part, called upon Hydari to clarify whether clause nine allowed Nagas to declare their independence after ten years if they would so desire. When Hydari explained that it did not, and threatened violent repercussions if Nagas would proclaim independence, the 'Khonoma Nagas' rebuked NNC leaders for having agreed to it, seceded from the NNC, and began a movement of their own under the banner of the People's Independence League (PIL) with headquarters in Khonoma village.

Confusion within the NNC mounted further when, a week after the Hydari agreement, the Advisory Committee met in Shillong. Aliba Imti, who replaced Mayangnokcha as a member, attended, but discovered that the Hydari agreement had been brushed aside by the Committee, whose members insisted: 'We find the recommendations made by us cover in essence the measure of autonomy contemplated by the Nagas and go much further in some respects'.¹⁹ It were these recommendations that ultimately became the basis of the Sixth Schedule to the Indian Constitution that came to apply to selected upland areas [and later also certain territories in the plains] in India's Northeast. Aliba Imti objected against the Committee 'treating the Naga

Hills District as part of Assam and not as an independent area',²⁰ but he was overruled. In the aftermath of the Shillong meeting, Mildred Archer recorded how 'those who never liked the agreement now feel themselves no longer pledged to it, while those who were satisfied are at loss to understand the position'.²¹ Another NNC meeting was scheduled. This time in Mokokchung.

On the 21st of July, Mildred Archer wrote in her diary:

Today there is great excitement as the Naga National Council is beginning to assemble. Kohima is sending Angami, Rengma, and Kacha Naga delegates, while Sema, Lhotas and Aos are coming in from villages all over Mokokchung. Imlong and Hopongki, the Chang and Sangtam members, are putting their shops in order and already the air is full of trade and politics.

The splitting away of the 'Khonoma group' was the first point on the agenda. Mildred Archer wrote down what Aliba Imti told her: 'the Angami split is more serious than was thought. The Khonoma group have denounced the NNC and formed a separate independence party. A delegation has gone to Delhi and he hears that they have met Gandhi and Jinnah. Their action is a challenge to the NNC and the delegates must now decide what counter steps to take'. Mayangnokcha, however, was of the view that 'a little "extremism" will do no harm', reasoning: 'the Congress leaders will be more ready to listen if they had a preliminary shock'.²² He then proposed that the NNC send a counter-delegation to Delhi. To be noted, here, is that at this stage, less than a month prior to India's independence, the demand for Naga independence was still talked about as 'extremist' within the NNC.

The Hydari agreement was next on the agenda. Once again, Ao and Angami positions clashed with the Angami insisting on the modification of clause nine to allow for the possibility of Nagas seceding from the Indian Union after ten years. Ao delegates, on the other hand, argued in favour of the original agreement and wished to press for its immediate implementation. After three days of discussion, it was the Angami viewpoint that prevailed. This resolution now split the Ao: 'All the morning, excited angry groups of villagers have been standing round and complaining of Mayang[nokcha]'s "treachery." Late last night they angrily abused him. "We stood by the Governor's agreement", they said, "What right had you to change it?"'²³

Meanwhile, confirmation arrived that the Khonoma delegation had met both Jinnah and Gandhi in Delhi, and it was said that both leaders did not object to political projections of Naga independence. In Assam, Bordoloi reacted with fury: 'The question of the Nagas remaining independent of the Indian Union is absurd. A section of the Angami tribe under the leadership of persons from the village of Khonoma is misguided and their number is small'.²⁴ The NNC reacted and, apropos Mayangnokcha's suggestion, send a counter-delegation to Delhi.

'The suspense in Mokokchung is electric', Mildred Archer wrote as India's independence was drawing closer. 'Some of the Aos are exasperated, others are bewildered and every day the silence thickens'.²⁵ On August 12 a cable arrived informing that the NNC delegation had met Nehru and summoned all NNC members to Kohima for an emergency meeting. Mildred Archer pondered: 'Have the Mokokchung demands been granted? Will the meeting be asked to ratify the new

terms? Are we on the verge of a Naga revolt? No one can say and no one dares to guess'.²⁶

The meeting with Nehru had not gone well. While Nehru listened carefully to the NNC delegation at first, after Longri Ao, an NNC delegate, remarked, somewhat crudely, 'if the clause is not accepted the Nagas will go their own way', Nehru banged the table with his fist: 'India cannot be split into a hundred bits. If you fight we shall resist'.²⁷ The next day, two press communiqués appeared. The first, on behalf of the Indian Government, said: 'We can give you complete autonomy but never complete independence. You can never hope to be independent. No state, big or small, in India, will be allowed to remain independent. We will use all our influence and power to suppress such tendencies'.²⁸ In turn, the communiqué the NNC released stated:

The Naga National Council recently sent a full representative body to Delhi to reach a settlement regarding their future relationship with India. In interviews with some of the Government of India leaders in Delhi, they were given to understand that their demands could not be satisfied in full. Since the people they represent will accept nothing short of their full demands, the members of the various delegations have decided that the Naga National Council is henceforth free to decide the future of the Naga people in the way that suits them best.²⁹

The NNC met in Kohima on 13 and 14 August and decided that India's independence celebrations will be boycotted in protest against the government's refusal to revise clause nine of the Hydari agreement. In Khonoma, the People's Independence League took matters in its own hands and on August 14 declared Naga independence. Its leaders drafted a cable to the United Nations. It read:

Benign excellence,
Kindly put on record that Nagas will be independent. Discussion with India are being carried on to that effect. Nagas do not accept Indian Constitution. The right of the people must prevail regardless of size (Nuh 2002:115).

The cable, copies of which were addressed to Delhi and Indian newspapers, never left the Naga Hills, however. The postmaster, sensing the sensitivity of the cable's contents, referred them for clearance to Pawsey, who ordered the cables to be withheld. As a result, 'Nothing therefore reaches the press, not a word appeared announcing their tremendous step'.³⁰

Naga Raj or Khonoma Raj?

'Since 15 August, nothing has happened', Mildred Archer told her diary on August 23. 'The Khonoma group have had a number of meetings but have so far done nothing to set up a rival government. Pawsey thinks that having declared their independence they are now at loss to know what to do next'.³¹ In their private correspondence, Pawsey, Archer, and other colonial officials disparagingly referred to the PIL as the Khonoma 'independence racket'³² and doubted their true motivations: 'In Khonoma it is the Christian clan khel which demands complete independence. One is indifferent

and the other does not want it – the clan which want it does so because it desires to re-impose Khonoma domination – to terrorize the region – as Khonoma did before’.³³

To situate their reasoning we need to back up a little. Prior to British annexation, ‘pacification’, and overrule, ‘No Angamis enjoyed such prestige or levied such widespread tribute as ‘Khonoma’, wrote the colonial officer J.H. Hutton (1921: 11). Several Kacha Naga villages, he observed, ‘seem to have been entirely dominated by settlements of Khonoma Angamis who superimposed on them their own customs’ (ibid.: 156). And not just Kacha villages. The colonial archive reveals that Khonoma raids and tributary relations extended far and wide. Inside Khonoma, the ‘Christian khel’, colonial officers singled out as the forerunner of the independence claim, referred to the Merhü khel. This khel was heir to powerful chiefs and warriors, had earned itself a hardy reputation for subjugating villages (as well as for struggling with the other two Khonoma khels over property and domination within the village), and put up a particularly fiery resistance against British invasions in the 19th century.

‘Today I have been reading a number of tour diaries... The most interesting is by Capt. John Butler who was here from 1870 to 1875’, wrote Mildred Archer. She continued: ‘It is amusing to see how Butler found the Khonoma group a wearisome problem with their unending feuds and “stubborn importunity”. It is the same provocative qualities which mark their incursion into politics today’.³⁴ ‘It is not perhaps surprising that Kevichusa himself should come from the Merhü or partially Christian khel of Khonoma’, William Archer agreed, referring here to Kevichusa’s political argument for Naga independence.³⁵ Not surprising, too, then, in this line of reasoning, is that A.Z. Phizo hailed from the same village and khel. In this reading, the Khonoma declaration for Naga independence was framed within intra-Naga constellations of power and hierarchy: not only did the independence claim provided a new political arena to struggle over pre-existent rivalries and divisions, it also became the basis for an envisaged regeneration of Khonoma village, and the Merhü khel within it, as the leading political and intellectual Naga bastion.

The Khonoma declaration, for one thing, imbued new tensions between Khonoma and Kohima villages, which shared a long history of feuds and raids. Being attached to the offices of Pawsey, Kevichusa was a long-time Kohima resident, but when his wife hoisted an Angami cloth to a bamboo pole in their yard in support of the Khonoma declaration, her doing so ‘immediately revived the old Kohima-Khonoma rivalry of headhunting days’. An angry crowd of Kohima villagers surrounded Kevichusa’s house and shouted: ‘take it down’. Anticipating a breakdown of law and order, Pawsey personally intervened to have the flag removed. ‘Kohima [villagers] are very angry with Khonoma’, he subsequently reported to William Archer.³⁶

The PIL, meanwhile, sought to defuse apprehensions about a looming ‘Khonoma Raj’. In a cyclostyled paper they produced and called ‘Our Home News’, they wrote: ‘Some people said that independence is the voice of Khonoma. What silly talk! How foolish it is! Why is Indonesia fighting today? Is it not for Independence? Why Mahatma Gandhi and Pandit Nehru and all the Indian leaders went to jail? Is it because of their foolishness? Is it not for the independence of India? So, why not say I am not Khonoma, but a Naga’.³⁷ In the following issue of *Our Home News*, the PIL both admonished and encouraged the NNC:

The present situation is very serious. Those members who are and have been in the NNC seem to be feeling down-hearted. There can be no good reason for this lack of

enthusiasm. It is true that their old friends [the Khonoma group] have left the NNC because they want something higher than what the NNC is still now fighting for. A nation must move on according to time and circumstances. Those who are still in the NNC must buck up their spirit and face the situation with manly determination.

The statement then continued:

We are convinced that INDEPENDENCE IS THE BEST SAFEGUARD [sic] and the only salvation for the Nagas to be free from political turmoil... But a few NNC members talk as if they have the fate of the Nagas in their pocket. So we challenge the NNC to take a referendum whether the Nagas want independence or join India. We know definitely that people in the villages are very angry and they will never agree to join India.³⁸

It was this challenge to 'take a referendum' that, a few years later, resulted in the Naga plebiscite, which became foundational to the Naga political struggle. I return to this shortly.

The Abyeance of the 'Hydari Agreement'

While the 'Khonoma group' was pushing for independence, the NNC continued to pursue the revision of clause nine of the Hydari agreement. Governor Hydari himself, however, became increasingly wary about the agreement – both in its original and proposed revised form. He now told William Archer:

The Nagas must learn to fit in. They must shed their insularity. The hills must be integrated with the plains. I look forward to a time when the hillmen will be indistinguishable from the plainmen. We must modernize the tribes. We must make them citizens of the new India. From this point of view, the objective must be greater and greater subordination, lesser and lesser independence.³⁹

As William Archer communicated Hydari's stance to Aliba Imti, the latter admonished the colonial officer: 'You have also failed us'.⁴⁰

In response, Aliba Imti wrote a letter to all NNC members in which he called for tougher action: 'That the Naga people attach so much importance upon the point no 9 modified and as such as we had anticipated from the very beginning that hardly will there be any government who will recognise it easily without strong opposition and firm stand from the Nagas themselves'. His letter went on:

I personally have lost confidence that words alone will bring no effect upon the politicians of India. I presume the Nagas mean what they are uttering for it should be our motto now - "Deeds but not words." 1. Decision should be made in favour of non-cooperation with the existing government. 2. One month's ultimatum be given to the Government of India. 3. From the beginning of Nov. '47, the government servants of Naga people should be ready to lay down their pens. Naga Hills must show worthy of the CALL [sic].⁴¹

Imti's letter exacerbated intra-Naga political divisions. 'Perhaps the Angami will

favour civil disobedience, but if the Aos stay true to type, I am sure no one in Mokokchung will',⁴² Mildred Archer predicted. Imti's political shift, from autonomy into the direction of the Khonoma position, indeed upset the other Ao NNC members, who now decided to boycott the NNC meeting scheduled for September. Mildred Archer wrote: 'They [the Aos] are all angry with Aliba and his pompous announcements. They are opposed to civil disobedience and they are tired of being dragged along by the Angamis. The Aos are prepared to accept the Governor's agreement, although they are still not happy about Clause 9, and are anxious that a committee should start to work out the details'.⁴³ But while civil disobedience was discussed during the September meeting, no consensus was reached and instead a committee was enacted to work out the original Hydari agreement.

Clause 2 of this agreement read: 'Executive – The general principle is accepted that what the Naga Council is prepared to pay for, the Naga Council should control'. As the Committee tried to work out what departments the NNC could reasonably manage on its own, the problem of finances immediately arose. Increasing the house-tax by 'four or five times' appeared the only option. This, however, was a contentious matter. Mayangnokcha opined: 'The villagers will pay anything for complete independence, but what will they pay for this? If we double the house-tax they will grudge it... If we treble it they will refuse to pay any tax at all'. Representing the Kohima circle, Krusihu added: 'The Independence party will laugh at us. They will tell the villagers, "You have not got independence. You have only got taxes"'.⁴⁴

Despite difficulties of finance, the committee fleshed out a draft constitution and another NNC meeting was called to deliberate on it. In this meeting several ambitious alterations and additions were proposed and incorporated, to the extent that, William Archer adjudged, they 'completely nullify the Governor's [Hydari] "agreement" and amounted to a new constitution for an independent state'. 'The same people [of the NNC] speak without stopping', Mayangnokcha lamented after the meeting concluded. 'At the end a vote is taken and everyone agrees without knowing what is really being decided'. Amongst those overruled were Hopongki and Imlong, the Sangtam and Chang delegates of the 'Control Area'. They wished for the 'Control Area' to remain under Assam as the NNC did not have the finances to develop it. Mayangnokcha blamed Governor Hydari for his failure to expedite the initial agreement: 'This delay has given the Nagas time to talk and talk. If he had acted quickly, none of these present difficulties would have arisen'.⁴⁵

Aliba Imti led an NNC delegation to Shillong to meet Governor Hydari with the proposed constitution. Hydari, however, refused to meet them unless they withdrew the ultimatum, which the NNC was not prepared to do. On the 2nd of December, Mildred Archer wrote: 'At the bungalow, we found a typed notice from Aliba announcing that at 12PM on 5 December, the Naga Hills would leave the Indian Union'.⁴⁶ Pawsey successfully pressed the NNC to have the ultimatum postponed to 31 December, but this too did not prompt a response from either Hydari or Nehru. The ultimatum passed. However, divisions within the NNC prevented a declaration of Naga independence or large-scale civil disobedience and records available suggest that the first months of 1948 passed in an uneasy calm.

Then A.Z. Phizo stepped up.

The Ascendancy of A.Z. Phizo

In the spring of 1948, the draft Indian Constitution was published and proposed the Sixth Schedule as the legal basis and machinery to safeguard measures of autonomy for all Assam hill tribes, including Nagas. By now, however, the NNC had moved beyond their initial political demand for autonomy and its members refused to see the Sixth Schedule as the constitutional translation of the Hydari agreement. Sentiments were now changing fast in the Naga uplands. If, early in 1948, Hydari could tell Pawsey that ‘Kevichusa has arrived in Shillong, but I am told he and his party [the PIL] have little following in the hills’ (cited in Steyn 2002: 77), the continued abeyance of the Hydari agreement progressively strengthened the position of the ‘Khonoma group’, of which Phizo was rapidly turning into its most prolific and influential leader.

Phizo began the touring of villages and in fiery speeches decried the timidity and servility of the NNC, lambasted Akbar Hydari, and warned villagers about the taxes and restrictions the Indian state would soon and surely impose upon them if they would not actively resist the enclosure of their hills. Phizo was persuasive and the theory and voice of Naga independence was gaining ground. While stirring up popular support, Phizo also followed a constitutional line and repeatedly called upon authorities in Kohima, Shillong, and elsewhere to seek clarification on the government’s position. ‘What struck me about Phizo at my first meeting was his extraordinary thoroughness and pertinacity’, Nari Rustomji, Advisor to the Governor, recalled, then continued:

He was armed with neatly typed, systematically serialized copies of all documents relevant to the Naga problem and he gave the impression of carrying, in his little briefcase, the destinies of the entire Naga people. Everything had to be documented, nothing left to chance, and as soon as the discussions were concluded, he insisted on having the minutes drawn up while the proceedings were still fresh in mind, and taking copies certified personally by the Governor and Chief Minister... The next I heard of him was when I received monumental letters addressed by him from a jail in Calcutta to the Governor General, Rajagopalachari.

In June 1948, Phizo was arrested for stirring trouble in the Naga highlands. From his prison cell, he appealed to the India’s Governor-General: ‘I, A.Z. Phizo, Naga, your state prisoner, address this letter to you as one of the spokesmen of the Naga people’, he began a series of letters. He then wrote:

Since we endured a life together as the British conquered subjects along with the Indians, we sincerely believed India not to interfere in our liberty and freedom now the British had [sic] left and India is politically free. But the possibility of India’s annexation of Nagaland and domination over the unwilling Nagas, have become more a fearful problem than the British Imperialism whose home country was at least several thousand miles away... (see Nuh 2002: 51-62 for the complete letter).

An answer Phizo did not receive.

While incarcerated, the vehicle in which Phizo’s wife and infant son travelled

met with an accident, instantly killing his son and grievously injuring his wife. Phizo appealed for release on compassionate grounds. His plea was successful and he was conditionally released in December 1948. Jwanna, his wife, made a slow but successful recovery in the Welsh mission hospital in Shillong, with Phizo at her side. In August 1948, Phizo was permanently released, reportedly 'in recognition of a bond of good behaviour' (Steyn 2002: 79).

Meanwhile, Hydari passed away (as did Bordoloi soon after). His successor, Jairamdas Daulatram declared the Naga Hills as an unambiguous and integral part of Assam and India, a political position he impressed upon NNC delegations that called on him. When he subsequently visited Mokokchung he was greeted with 'Go Back' placards. Humiliated, Daulatram dispatched armed police into the Ao region. It was an action that further strained relations and in a follow-up NNC meeting Ao and Sema Naga leaders publicly, and for the first time, 'cry for complete sovereign independence' (Steyn 2002: 80).

It is amidst these political developments that Phizo returned midway 1949. His spell in prison for advocating Naga freedom now added to his name an charisma, and he resumed, ever more vigorously, his touring 'from one village to another in the Naga inhabited areas to mobilise support for Naga freedom' (Yonuo 1974: 200). His popularity soared and ultimately resulted, in 1950, into his election as NNC president. In analysing the beginnings of the Naga Movement it is nearly impossible to overstate the influence of Phizo. Literature that exists on him indeed typifies him as a 'Moses of his people' (Horam 1988: 45) and 'father of Naga nation' (Ao 2002: 21). Even an Indian General conceded how, from the late 1940s onward, Phizo 'operated his strings to skilfully that one by one all tribes were caught in his net, which he cast far and wide and with speed' (Anand 1980: 70).

Violence or Non-Violence: The NNC Divided (Again)

Phizo's ascendancy to NNC president signalled the definite replacement of the initial Ao stance for autonomy with the Angami, but especially Khonoma, demand for independence. However, it did not take long for new divisions to emerge within the NNC over the preferred strategy to achieve this political end. This divide, which turned deadly, was between those who sought to metamorphose the NNC into a militant organisation and advocates of a Gandhian strategy of nonviolence. The main protagonists, here, were Phizo and Sakhrie, the NNC president and secretary, who turned from 'friends' into 'foes'. Both leaders hailed from Khonoma. But whereas Phizo's election to NNC president reinvigorated Khonoma's longstanding political supremacy in the hills, the Sakhrie-Phizo fallout simultaneously created a wedge within the village, and was to stir inter-clan tensions that blemished its social fabric for long decades following.

As president, Phizo immediately 'put the house of the NNC in order and filled its executive with his own chosen men from the People's Independence League [which is subsequently disbanded], purged all his opponents who were determined to remain in India [from the ranks of the NNC]... and strove to make it a militant political organization pledged to fight for the sovereignty of Nagaland' (Yonuo 1974: 201). In response, Governor Daulatram severed all communication with the NNC, insisting

that ‘no useful purpose would be served by having personal discussion with NNC representatives unless they made it clear that they would enter into talks with an open mind to discuss the place of the Nagas within the framework of the constitution of India’ (cited in Steyn 2002: 80-81). At this increasingly tense juncture, the NNC formally followed the path of nonviolence. While a new NNC memorandum, adopted in 1950, declared that ‘anything that is autonomous in character will not be accepted by Nagas’, it simultaneously asserted: ‘The aspiration and inspiration of the Nagas is to fight for freedom through peace and goodwill, not through bloodshed. The Nagas are strongly determined to fight constitutionally for the liberation of their motherland – Nagaland’ (Steyn 2002: 81).

It was in this spirit of struggling ‘constitutionally’ that Phizo announced the plebiscite the PIL had wanted to carry out as early as 1947. But if, back then, the plebiscite was envisaged as a tactic to silence the Ao voice for autonomy, in 1951, with the official NNC policy already shifted to independence, the plebiscite was conducted to dispel, once and for all, claims from the Indian government that the independence demand was the handiwork of a few ‘misguided’ Nagas. Bishnuram Medhi, who succeeded Gopinath Bordoloi as Assam’s chief minister, personalized this view: ‘I cannot think’, he said, ‘of any demand for independent sovereign Naga state raised by a few handful of leaders, mostly Christians’ (cited in Maitra 2011: 22). Phizo wrote yet another letter to India’s president in which he explained that a Naga plebiscite was to be held ‘with the view of furnishing the people and the Government of India with evidential and conclusive proof of their national aspiration and for independence’. In the same letter he regretted ‘the scant attention paid to the case of the Naga people by the Government of India despite very fervent and earnest pleadings’, and concluded by inviting the Government of India to ‘send their observers to witness the whole processing of the plebiscite from beginning to the end’ (Nuh 2002: 92-3).

At this stage, Phizo and Sakhrie still worked in tandem. Not only had Sakhrie actively campaigned for Phizo’s election as NNC president, he now led the organizing of the plebiscite. He printed the papers in Imphal and transported them by truck to Khonoma, from where he saw to it that they were rolled in bamboo cylinders and dispatched to Naga villages (Sakhrie 2006: 11). One the eve of the plebiscite, Phizo addressed a large crowd in Kohima:

We are here to commence our voluntary plebiscite to put on record and to express our mind, our national policy, in the form of thumb impression. It is five months now that our nation has been given time to discuss about this plebiscite voluntarily offered by us to prove our unity and our spontaneous willingness to continue to live on as a distinct nation. In the past five months I have visited every region of our area and met everyone of you. What we do now will go down in our history (see Nuh 2002: 116-133 for the complete speech).

The plebiscite’s result, as declared by the NNC, was an overwhelming 99% of thumb prints in favour of independence. An NNC delegation subsequently carried the plebiscite papers to Delhi, but where, to their dismay, the plebiscite was derided as

illegitimate and non-consequential. And when several subsequent meetings between Phizo, or NNC delegations sent by him, and Nehru (variously held in Delhi, Assam, and Manipur) also proved futile, as well as turned increasingly frosty, Phizo departed from his earlier commitment to struggling through constitutional means. He called for civil disobedience. This time civil disobedience was actively participated in: 'School teachers resigned, children left their studies and village headmen returned their blankets [that signalled their authority and alliance to the government]' (Nibedon 1978: 39). In addition, and crucially, the NNC boycotted independent India's first general elections in 1952 and 'not a single vote is cast' (Sema 1986: 92).

Things came to a head in 1953, when Nehru, accompanied by the Burmese Prime Minister U Nu, visited Kohima with the aim of persuading the Nagas into accepting the Sixth Schedule. The NNC prepared to meet Nehru, but Deputy Commissioner Barkataki denied them the opportunity. Instead he instructed NNC leaders 'to listen what the two Prime Ministers would say' (Yonuo 1974: 204). The Nagas gathered in Kohima responded in style and 'as Nehru and his cavalcade started moving towards the podium, the Naga assemblage started moving out... The Nagas left in full purview smacking their bottoms' (Nibedon 1978: 45). What followed this Naga walk-out were repressive police measures that included raids on the houses of top NNC leaders, including Sakhrie's, the establishment of nine additional police posts, and the enactment of the Assam Maintenance of Public Order (Autonomous Districts) Act, which bestowed extra-constitutional powers on the armed police to decisively and swiftly quell any Naga 'disturbance'.

Anticipating arrest, Phizo slipped into Tuensang, the formerly 'Control Area', and from where he began organising a guerrilla force. According to one reading: 'The adamant posture of the Assam authorities, perhaps natural in those given circumstances, forced Phizo and his men to pledge for a war that would not admit of truces, retreats or compromises' (Nibedon 1978: 57). In a highly symbolic move, Phizo declared the formation of the Hongking Government in 1954 as the government of all Nagas, so formally undercutting the authority and jurisdiction of the Indian government. The next year, in 1955, the Indian Army moved into Tuensang, which was soon followed by reports of encounters, scuffles, attacks, and burning villages. The war began.

Experiencing new levels of insecurity and violence, voices within the NNC raised objections to Phizo's turn to armed resistance. Amongst these were Sakhrie and Jasokie. While subscribing to the thesis of Naga independence, Sakhrie preached passive resistance. In a letter to Purwar, a Ghandian activist, he wrote:

[there] are developments such as the NNC has so far worked to keep in check. The idea is gaining popular favour and momentum. The situation is getting out of control... After the first strike it will not stop until it exhausts itself. We must therefore prevent the first strike from being ever struck. This must be attempted by peaceful methods (cited in Sakhrie 2006: 13-14).

Phizo disapproved strongly of, what he saw as, Sakhrie's softening stance. In several meetings in Kohima and Khonoma, the two debated furiously. 'You are placing your

opponent in a position where he feels morally wrong to oppose you', Sakhrie countered Phizo. 'Fight rather than be oppressed... Die rather than lose your honour' (cited in Sakhrie 2006: 13), Phizo returned. Sakhrie not only took on Phizo verbally, but also began 'blazing his own trail with the message of peace and non-violence... touring the countryside in a bid to dismantle Phizo's guerrilla machine' (Nibedon 1978: 64). It fragmented the NNC and followers of Phizo and Sakhrie now convened separately. Sakhrie's influence was growing and he called for a NNC meeting on the 31st of January in which, it was rumoured, he planned to table a no-confidence motion against Phizo's presidency. It infuriated Phizo as 'Sakhrie's vehement opposition to Phizo's theme of violence made the threat to his preeminent position in the NNC too real' (Anand 1980: 96). Followers of Phizo arrested Sakhrie, took him into the jungle, tortured him for two days, then killed him. The gruesomeness with which this was done made it not just a murder, but a 'crucifixion' (Nibedon 1978: 71). Sakhrie's assassination was the first in a series of attacks by, what press reports soon called, Naga 'extremists' on 'liberals.'

The scheduled NNC meeting and the no-confidence motion never took place.

Violence and the Return of the 'Liberals'

'They have killed Sakhrie! The balloon has gone up', Carvalho, the District Commissioner, exclaimed upon receiving the news (cited in Stracey 1960: 79). While Phizo was seen mourning Sakhrie's death, and termed the murder a great tragedy, all leads pointed to his personal involvement. A police warrant (and a bounty of 5000 rupees) was issued against his name on charges of 'rioting, abduction, trespass, murder, and conspiracy to commit murder of T. Sakhrie'.⁴⁷ Sakhrie's rising influence in the rank-and-file of the NNC had been the Indian Government's last hope of seeing Phizo's guerrilla army contained organically. It now reacted strongly: 'Full Army operations in the Naga Hills', *The Statesman* reported on 31 March 1956.⁴⁸

In the aftermath of Sakhrie's murder it was not just arrest Phizo needed to dodge. Sakhrie's clan cried for revenge and Khonoma split into rivaling camps. What colonial officers dubbed as the 'Christian khel' and 'forerunner' of the Naga independence claim turned into a site of internal division and violent tension. Once again Phizo disappeared. His loyalists, now referred to as 'Phizoites', followed suit, and in February 1956 it was reported that 'All top leaders of the Naga National Council led by its president A.Z. Phizo have gone underground and are directing lawless activities in isolated areas'.⁴⁹

The armed conflict was multisided, and while the Indian Army hunted after NNC members, Phizo and his men pursued the 'liberals' within the NNC and word had it that they were working their way down a hit-list (of which Sakhrie had been on top). 'Official confirmation is lacking', *The Statesman* reported, 'about the latest rumour that another Naga young man belonging to the liberal group has been shot dead'.⁵⁰ The Phizo-led armed uprising also pitched, what the Indian Army called, 'hostile' against 'loyal' Naga villages (or what the NNC called 'national' and 'anti-national' villages). In June 1956, for instance, seven Ao Naga villages publicly pledged to 'break completely with Phizo and his associates and to abstain from violence'.⁵¹

Another report read: 'Naga rebels kidnapped seven loyal Naga leaders in the Mokokchung [Ao Naga] sub-division of the Naga Hills District and beheaded at least four of them'.⁵²

Amidst this engulfing crisis and chaos, Phizo enacted the Federal Government of Nagaland (FGN) as the Naga government, replacing the earlier Hongking government that operated from the formerly 'Control Area.' By now, two guerrilla wings were fully operative and called the Home Guards and the Safe Guards, both of which specialized in classic 'hit and run' attacks on Indian police posts and army convoys, as well as assaulted 'anti-national' Naga villages. The Indian Army stepped up its 'operations' even further, often exerting force at Naga guerrillas and villagers alike. A European tea-planter in the Assam foothills wrote to Pawsey in August 1956:

The Indian Army is in full occupation of every section of the Naga Hills. 60% of the Ao villages have been burnt... 70% of the Sema villages have been burnt, and 30% of the Angami. The army uses incendiaries. Worse still: the Nagas are not allowed to rebuild them so they are living in the jungles as best they can. Their crops are being deliberately destroyed and any Naga seen is apt to be shot on sight so that they cannot enter their fields anyway.⁵³

On February 5 1957, Pawsey received another letter from the same tea-planter: 'Conditions in the Naga Hills seem to go from bad to worse. No one ventures to predict what the outcome will be. There is so much wrong now on both sides and so much pig-headedness to go with it'.⁵⁴ Violence continued to escalate, and began to draw voices of protest from elsewhere. On the floor of the Assam Assembly, an elected member accused the Indian Army of 'excesses' and declared: 'I cannot support the steamroller of police rule in the Naga Hills'.⁵⁵ In the Indian Parliament, Rishang Keishing, a Tangkhul Naga MP from Manipur, blamed the Indian Army of orchestrating 'an orgy of murder'.⁵⁶ Nehru, on his part, defended his armed forces and stated that no talks would take place until Phizo and his men surrendered their demand for independence. As for Phizo himself, he slipped out of the Naga Hills and into East Pakistan towards the end of 1956. In the year 1960 he arrived in London – officially to internationalise the Naga issue – but where he soon adopted British citizenship and died in 'self-exile' roughly three decades later, still in the armor of NNC president. But I am getting ahead of myself.

While the Naga Army was outnumbered by Indian armed forces many times over, it put up a daring fight: 'Naga tribes hold down 30.000 men [Indian soldiers]', *The Telegraph* reported on March 20, 1957.⁵⁷ Here and there, Naga guerrillas won battles. 'Naga rebels... have scored their first spectacular triumph by sending a platoon of Indian soldiers home naked', *The Statesman* reported on August 5, 1957. The article went on:

The platoon was stripped of rifles, ammunition, and every stich of clothing in the steaming Naga hills near the Burma frontier. They surrendered after another platoon of the same regiment – the Garhwal Rifles from the Indian plains – had been massacred. The tribesmen, who have a headhunting tradition, let them go after stripping them. As the naked soldiers ran away, the Nagas jeered after them.⁵⁸

Even more Indian armed forces were dispatched into the hills, and violence flared

from one village to the next. From London, Phizo (1960) called it ‘genocide’, while Indian commentators began to speak of ‘India’s little Vietnam’ (Nibedon 1978: 75). The grim violence exacerbated the crisis within the NNC, to the extent that the *Assam Tribune* reported its ‘dissolution’ following ‘a rift between the leader of the council, Phizo, and its members’.⁵⁹ ‘Dissolution’, however, was too strong a wording for the resurrection of Sakhrie-inspired ‘liberal’ NNC voices, despite continued threats to their lives. In September 1956, Jasokie, Sakhrie’s former right-hand and fellow Khonoma villager, led a delegation of ‘liberal’ NNC members to Delhi where they told Nehru that they were ‘convinced of the futility of the so-called demand for independence’ and condemned ‘the use of violence by some misguided sentiments of their people [read: Phizo and his followers]’.⁶⁰ On returning to the Naga Hills, they pursued internal NNC reforms through the enactment of a ‘Reforming Committee’. However, with Phizo resisting these reforms, and him ruling the day, the group of NNC liberals resolved to break away from the NNC and proposed an all tribes Naga People’s Convention (NPC) to deliberate the political situation.

Came August 1957. A reported 1765 tribal representatives of both the Tuensang Area and the Naga Hills District convened in Kohima.⁶¹ The Convention explained its coming together as a response to the ‘killings and widespread suffering’ and their desire to ‘end the infinite sufferings and bloodshed’. Five days of discussions resulted in three demands that were communicated to Delhi: 1) to come to a ‘satisfactory political settlement’, 2) to amalgamate the Naga Hills District and the Tuensang Area of NEFA into a single administrative unit, and 3) a ‘genuine, general amnesty’ for Naga rebels. The Convention also called on Phizo and his guerrilla army to renounce ‘the cult of violence’ (Yonuo 1974: 232). Imkongliba Ao was selected as the Convention’s president and entrusted to head a delegation to meet Nehru in Delhi for political negotiations. Nehru applauded the NPC’s efforts, consented to the demands, and acted promptly: a general amnesty was declared immediately, Naga political prisoners were released, and the Naga Hills and Tuensang Area merged into a single district within Assam in December 1957.

To further deliberate the nature of a definite political settlement a second NPC was scheduled for May 1958. The NNC, however, took exception to this ‘overground’ political process and warned that NPC activities should ‘not pose any obstruction on the way of independence of Nagaland’ (Yonuo 1974: 228). Warnings and threats were issued to the villagers of Ungma, who offered to host the NPC meet. Within the NNC views on the NPC were not unanimous, however. S.C. Jamir, a later Nagaland chief minister and organizing member of the Ungma Convention, recalled: ‘To clarify the real stand of the underground, Dr. Imkongliba and I met Mr. Jakrenkokba, Advisor to the Home Guard in the village at Sungratsue. He gave us verbal assurance and clearance to go ahead with the preparations for the Convention’ (Jamir 2016: 125). Attended by an estimated 2700 delegates, the Ungma Convention condemned violence of any source and sort, appealed to the Indian government to extend the period of amnesty, and envisaged the political and administrative elevation of the Naga Hills and Tuensang Area from a district into a state within the Indian Union, but with special provisions for autonomy. Significantly, the Convention also enacted a Liaison

Committee with the task of contacting the NNC/FGN and to persuade ‘underground’ Nagas into joining the ‘overground’ political process. The Committee was chaired by Kevichusa, an early advocate of Naga independence and former confidant of Phizo (as well as his immediate relative), but who disassociated himself from the NNC after its turn to armed struggle. Naga underground leaders rejected the Liaison Committee’s overtures and instead asked Kevichusa ‘to inform the Government of India to confirm recognition of the Naga Federal Government first as the basis of negotiation for a political settlement’ (Yonuo 1974: 229). For the NNC/ FGN, the Indian Government communicating with the NPC was an affront to the Naga plebiscite, from which they derived the legitimacy to represent the Nagas politically. The NPC, they insisted, carried no such legitimacy. A disillusioned Kevichusa reported:

I have to report after meeting different leaders that up to this time the Naga Political Party [NNC] does not desire to have any negotiation except on the issue of Independence... So the stalemate continues, and will, I am afraid continue for some time longer. I do believe in the good sense of our people, and I earnestly believe that change in the mind of the people will also come and there will be a settlement on practical lines. But I and my colleagues [of the Liaison Committee] feel that a forced settlement will not bring about any permanent solution (cited in Nibedon 1978: 117-118).

Kevichusa’s message that Nagaland statehood will not bring a political solution, but only produce further divisions was not heeded to by the NPC, which instead enacted another Committee to work out a draft constitution. In a public meeting, Kevichusa made his dissent known: ‘I was the originator of the resolutions of the NPC in 1957. But, friends, I had not the slightest suspicion that a political settlement was going to be made behind the back of those who had their difference with the Government. It was, therefore, a surprise to me that a second NPC was held in Ungma in May, 1958 and the question of a political settlement was raised’ (cited in Nibedon 1978: 117). ‘I hold no brief for the rebels’, Kevichusa clarified (*ibid.*: 120), but then insisted that the NPC was to act as ‘a bridge between the Government of India and the underground people’, not to push for a settlement of its own (*ibid.*: 117).

A third (and final) NPC met in Mokokchung in October 1959 to discuss the draft constitution that was prepared. This meeting culminated into 16 concrete demands to the Indian Government, core among which was the creation of Nagaland state (Nibedon 1978: 88). This demand was accepted by Nehru, who subsequently ushered the Nagaland statehood bill through parliament. From London, Phizo reacted with dismay: he reiterated that the Naga struggle was for complete independence, called the NPC a ‘puppet assembly’ (Yonuo 1974: 236), and stated that ‘No agreement can be recognized regarding the future of Nagaland except with the people who are truly representative of the Naga people’, which Phizo insisted was not the NPC but the NNC/FGN (Stracey 1960: 93).

To waylay these political developments, the NNC stepped up its guerrilla attacks, bombed a train in Assam, and shot down a Dakota plane of the Indian Army, capturing its four crewmen (Yonuo 1974: 237). Phizo’s stance did not dissuade the NPC from

enacting an 'Interim Body' to prepare the grounds for statehood. In this, Jasokie became a prominent leader and was seen as the carrier of Sakhrie's legacy. Jasokie's leadership had repercussions in Khonoma that was 'now split by a deep hatred between the two khels of Phizo and Jasokie' (Stracey 1960: 103). While the Interim Body and the NNC were now at loggerheads, 'only a handful [of the Interim Body] had never come under Phizo's revolutionary doctrines' (Nibedon 1978: 85). With Nagaland statehood drawing closer, Imkongliba appealed, once again, to the NNC/FGN:

I, as the President of the Naga People's Convention, appeal to all the Nagas, including the underground people to join hands with the members of the Interim Body in building up a strong and progressive state of our Nagaland. For the last six years, beginning from 1956, there had been killings, bloodshed and burning of villages causing great suffering to the people on account of widespread armed hostile activities followed by military operations throughout Nagaland. It is high time, therefore that all the sensible citizens of Nagaland should devote wholeheartedly to bring peace to the land doing away with the mutual suspicions and hatred amongst us (reproduced in Jamir 2016: 132).

The NNC/FGN refused to heed. Instead, in a final attempt to obstruct 'overground' political developments, it targeted the Interim Body; [Its members are] the inevitable targets in the shape of verbal abuse [by the NNC], which included such words as 'traitors' and worse... words, which for a Naga were harder to bear than the bullets which were also flung at them' (Stracey 1960: 94). In August 1961 Imkongliba was assassinated by the NNC. Another member of the Interim Body, Phanting Phom, was killed the next year, while several other members made narrow escapes. Many decades later, S.C. Jamir reflected on this period: 'I would also like to keep it on record that the underground's aim was to eliminate all leaders and functionaries of the Interim Body; but they were not successful in their efforts' (Jamir 2016: 134). The reason the Naga Army was not successful in carrying out these assassinations was because Interim Body members were guarded day and night by Indian security forces, an observation which further indicates that it does not serve to look at the Naga uprising in terms of a clear-cut Naga-India binary.

On the 1st of December 1963, Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, India's president, flew to Kohima to inaugurate the state of Nagaland. He spoke:

Friends, I have great pleasure in inaugurating the new state of Nagaland. It takes an honoured place today as the Sixteenth State of the Indian Union... [Our] attempts to secure you the fullest freedom to manage your own affairs have culminated in the creation of Nagaland State... May I also express the hope that, now that the wishes of the Nagas have been fully met, normal conditions will rapidly return to the State, and those who are still unreconciled will come forward to participate in the development of Nagaland (reproduced in Sharma and Sharma 2006: 253).

Coming 'forward' the NNC/FGN did not. To the contrary: 'All those wishfully expecting the collapse of the Underground after the granting of statehood found

themselves to be wrong' (Horam 1988: 12). As predicted by Kevichusa, Nagaland statehood worked to divide Naga society more definitely into two – the people of the new state and the people supporting the NNC/FGN – although the boundaries between them soon had very many crossings, so further complicating the Naga struggle, and the Indian state's response to it, in ways that, five decades on, continue to impede a permanent political solution of the Indo-Naga conflict.

Notes

¹ Examples include: Iralu 2000; Horam 1988; Anand 1980; Aram 1974; Sema 1986.

² Examples of more detached exercises of Naga history writing include Franke (2009) and Thomas (2016)

³ On the role of the Indian Labour Corps, including Nagas and other hill tribes, see Singha (2015).

⁴ See, among several others, Rooney (1992); Campbell (1956) and Swinson (1956).

⁵ This assertion by Phizo is not corroborated by any other source I am aware of.

⁶ The Naga 'Control Area' here refers to the Naga uplands east of the Naga Hills District, and which were not formally administrated by the British, but where colonial offices and officers nevertheless exerted considerable influence, mostly through military and punitive expeditions.

⁷ Administrators like Mills, Reid, and Adams variously envisaged this in the form of a Crown Colony or North-East protectorate, the creation of a separate province for the hill tracts within India, or through the inclusion of the Assam hills not in India but in Burma. These proposals were however resisted by Andrew Clow, the last British Governor of Assam, his successor Akbar Hydari, and the Congress Party, and in the course of 1946 were shelved. The Crown Colony was discussed in early NNC meetings with its members perceiving positively of a plan that 'would sever them from the administration of the plainsmen'; 'thus when the British abandoned the idea of a crown colony and withdrew from India, they left the Council with its expectations heightened by the discussions of a crown colony' (Franda 1961: 154).

⁸ Letters from Mills to Archer. Digital Himalaya, Naga Video-Disc. Url: <http://himalaya.socanth.cam.ac.uk/collections/naga/record/r66612.html> This is the first of a large number of references I make to the Naga videodisc (<http://www.digitalhimalaya.com/collections/naga/>), hosted by Digital Himalaya of the University of Cambridge, and which now offers a significant collection of letters, tour-diaries and memoires written mostly by colonial administrators. Rather than in-text referencing these sources, I will provide a link to each source I use from the Naga Videodisc in the endnotes that follow.

⁹ The tribal dimension emphasised here does of course not mean that all Ao Nagas were in favour of autonomy and all Angamis wishing independence, but that these views were popularly associated with NNC members of these tribes and became talked about as tribal political positions.

¹⁰ NNC, *Golden Jubilee: Naga Independence 1947-1997*, p. 28.

¹¹ Mildred Archer Diaries, 18-07-1947. Digital Himalaya, Naga videodisc. Url: <http://himalaya.socanth.cam.ac.uk/collections/naga/record/r67023.html>

- ¹² Mildred Archer Diaries, 18-07-1947. Digital Himalaya, Naga videodisc. Url: <http://himalaya.socanth.cam.ac.uk/collections/naga/record/r67023.html>
- ¹³ Notes by W.G. Archer, not dated. Digital Himalaya, Naga videodisc, Url: <http://himalaya.socanth.cam.ac.uk/collections/naga/record/r66445.html>
- ¹⁴ Mildred Archer Diaries, 18-07-1947. Url: <http://himalaya.socanth.cam.ac.uk/collections/naga/record/r67024.html>
- ¹⁵ Mildred Archer Diaries, 18-7-1947. Url: <http://linux02.lib.cam.ac.uk/nagas/record/r67026.html>
- ¹⁶ Mildred Archer diaries, 18-7-1947. Url: <http://linux02.lib.cam.ac.uk/nagas/record/r67028.html>
- ¹⁷ Mildred Archer diaries, 18-7-1947. Url: <http://linux02.lib.cam.ac.uk/nagas/record/r67029.html>
- ¹⁸ Mildred Archer Diaries, 18-7-1947. Url: <http://linux02.lib.cam.ac.uk/nagas/record/r67031.html>
- ¹⁹ Mildred Archer Diaries, 18-07-1947. Url: <http://linux02.lib.cam.ac.uk/nagas/record/r67032.html>
- ²⁰ Ibid.
- ²¹ Ibid.
- ²² Mildred Archer Diaries, 21-07-1947. Url: <http://linux02.lib.cam.ac.uk/nagas/record/r67033.html>
- ²³ Mildred Archer diaries, 24-07-1947. Url: <http://linux02.lib.cam.ac.uk/nagas/record/r67036.html>
- ²⁴ Mildred Archer diaries, 29-07-1947. Url: <http://linux02.lib.cam.ac.uk/nagas/record/r67039.html>
- ²⁵ Mildred Archer diaries, 06-08-1947. Url: <http://linux02.lib.cam.ac.uk/nagas/record/r67053.html>
- ²⁶ Mildred Archer diaries, 12-08-1947. Url: <http://linux02.lib.cam.ac.uk/nagas/record/r67074.html>
- ²⁷ Mildred Archer diaries, 19-08-1947. Url: <http://linux02.lib.cam.ac.uk/nagas/record/r67087.html>
- ²⁸ Mildred Archer diaries, 19-08-1947. Url: <http://linux02.lib.cam.ac.uk/nagas/record/r67088.html>
- ²⁹ Ibid.
- ³⁰ Mildred Archer Diaries, 23-08-1947. Url: <http://linux02.lib.cam.ac.uk/nagas/record/r67104.html>
- ³¹ Mildred Archer Diaries, 23-08-1947. Url: <http://linux02.lib.cam.ac.uk/nagas/record/r67105.html>
- ³² Letter from Pawsey to Archer, Digital Himalaya, Naga videodisc, not dated. Url: <http://himalaya.socanth.cam.ac.uk/collections/naga/record/r66645.html>
- ³³ Manuscript notes W.G. Archer. Digital Himalaya, Naga videodisc, not dated. Url: <http://himalaya.socanth.cam.ac.uk/collections/naga/record/r66666.html>
- ³⁴ Mildred Archer Diaries, 9-7-1947. Url: <http://himalaya.socanth.cam.ac.uk/collections/naga/record/r67110.html>
- ³⁵ W.G. Archer notes, 13-01-1947: Url: <http://himalaya.socanth.cam.ac.uk/collections/naga/record/r66662.html>

- ³⁶ Mildred Archer Diaries, 23-8-1947. Url: <http://himalaya.socanth.cam.ac.uk/collections/naga/record/r67104.html>
- ³⁷ Mildred Archer Diaries, 30-08-1947. Url: <http://himalaya.socanth.cam.ac.uk/collections/naga/record/r67121.html>
- ³⁸ Mildred Archer Diaries, 4-10-1947. Url: <http://himalaya.socanth.cam.ac.uk/collections/naga/record/r67186.html>
- ³⁹ Mildred Archer Diaries, 31-8-1947, Url: <http://linux02.lib.cam.ac.uk/nagas/record/r67125.html>
- ⁴⁰ Mildred Archer Diaries, 31-8-1947, Url: <http://linux02.lib.cam.ac.uk/nagas/record/r67126.html>
- ⁴¹ Mildred Archer Diaries, 18-09-1947, Url: <http://himalaya.socanth.cam.ac.uk/collections/naga/record/r67164.html>
- ⁴² Mildred Archer Diaries, 18-09-1947, Url: <http://himalaya.socanth.cam.ac.uk/collections/naga/record/r67164.html>
- ⁴³ Mildred Archer Diaries, 21-9-1947, url: <http://himalaya.socanth.cam.ac.uk/collections/naga/record/r67173.html>
- ⁴⁴ Mildred Archer Diaries, 15-10-1947, Url: <http://himalaya.socanth.cam.ac.uk/collections/naga/record/r67201.html>
- ⁴⁵ Mildred Archer Diaries, 31-10-1947. Url: <http://himalaya.socanth.cam.ac.uk/collections/naga/record/r67232.html>
- ⁴⁶ Mildred Archer Diaries, 2-12-1947. Url: <http://himalaya.socanth.cam.ac.uk/collections/naga/record/r67331.html>
- ⁴⁷ *The Statesman*, 'Warrant Issued Against Phizo', (04-02-1956).
- ⁴⁸ *The Statesmen*, 'Full Army Operations in Naga Hills' (31-03-1956).
- ⁴⁹ *The Statesman*, 'Warrant issued against Phizo.'
- ⁵⁰ *The Statesman*, 'Naga Leaders go Underground' (01-02-1956).
- ⁵¹ *Assam Tribune*, 'Nagas pledge to break with Phizo', (26-06-1956).
- ⁵² *The Statesmen*, 'Rebels behead four loyal Nagas' (05-04-1956).
- ⁵³ Pawsey Papers, Letter from Stephen Laing, (13-08-1956). I thank Edward Moon-Little for very generously scanning and sending me the Pawsey Papers from the archives of Cambridge University, where they are kept.
- ⁵⁴ Pawsey Papers, Letter from Stephen Laing, (05-02-1957).
- ⁵⁵ *The Statesmen*, 'Police Accused of "Excesses" in Naga Hills' (27-03-1956)
- ⁵⁶ Pawsey Papers, Newspaper clipping (name of newspaper not mentioned), 'Nehru told: try peace in your own land' (27-08-1956).
- ⁵⁷ *The Telegraph*, 'Naga Tribes Hold Down 30.000 Men' (20-03-1957),
- ⁵⁸ Pawsey Papers, Newspaper clipping (name newspaper not mentioned), 'Head-Hunters Strip Nehru's Soldiers' (05-08-1957).
- ⁵⁹ *Assam Tribune*, 'Dissolution of NNC', 23-05-1956.
- ⁶⁰ *India News*, 'Prime Minister meets Naga delegation', 22-09-1956.
- ⁶¹ Yonuo (1974: 222) speaks of '1765 traditional representatives of the different Naga tribes particularly from the Naga Hills and Tuensang Area of NEFA and about 2.000 observers from the other Naga areas.'

References

- Anand, V.K. 1980. *Conflict in Nagaland: A Study of Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency*. Delhi: Chanakya Publications.
- Aram, M. 1974. *Peace in Nagaland: Eighty Year Story: 1964-72*. Delhi: Arnold-Heinemann.
- Bower, Ursula 1950. *Naga Path* London: John Murray.
- Campbell, A. 1956. *The Siege – A Story From Kohima*. London: George Allen.
- Chaube, S.C. 1999. *Hill Polities in Northeast India* Noida: Orient Longman.
- Colvin, John. 1994. *Not Ordinary Men*. London: Leo Cooper.
- Franda, M.F. 1961 'The Naga National Council: Origins of a Separatist Movement', *Economic and Political Weekly*, February 4.
- Franke, Marcus. 2009. *War and Nationalism in South Asia: the Indian State and the Nagas*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Guyot-Réchar, Bérénice 2017. 'When the Legions Thunder Past: the Second World War and India's Northeastern Frontier', *War in History*, Doi: 10.1177/0968344516679041.
- Iralu, Kaka. 2000. *The Naga Saga: A Historical Account of the Sixty-Two years Indo-Naga War and the Story of Those Who were Never Allowed to Tell it*. Kohima: published by author.
- Jamir, S.C. 2016. *A Naga's Quest for Fulfillment* Bhubaneswar: Apurba.
- Lisam, K.S. 2011. *Encyclopedia of Manipur, Vol. 2* New Delhi: Kalpaz Publications.
- Maitra, K. *Nagaland: The Land of Sunshine*. New Delhi: Anjali Publishers.
- Phizo, A.Z. (1960) 'The Fate of the Naga People: An Appeal to the World' (London, 1960). Url: <http://naganationalcouncil.org/the%20Fate%20of%20the%20Naga%20People.html>.
- Rooney, D. 1992. *Burma Victory: Imphal, Kohima, and the Chindits – March 1944 to May 1945*. Oxford: Osprey Publishing.
- Sakhrie, A. 2006. *The Vision of T. Sakhrie for a Naga Nation*. Kohima; published by author.
- Sema, Hokishe 1986. *The Emergence of Nagaland*. New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House.
- Singha, Radhika 2015. 'The Short Career of the Indian Labour Corps in France, 1917-1919', *International Labor and Working- Class History*, 87: 27-62.
- Slim, William 1956. *Defeat into Victory*. London: Cassell and Company.
- Steyn, Peter 2002. *Zaphu Phizo: The Voice of the Nagas*. London: Kegan Paul.
- Stracey, P.D. 1960 *Nagaland Nightmare*. New Delhi: Allied Publishers.
- Swinson, A. 1956. *Kohima*. London: Arrow Books.
- Thomas, John. 2016. *Evangelizing the Nation: Religions and the Formation of Naga Political Identity*. New Delhi: Routledge.
- Thong, Tezenlo 2016. *Colonization, Proselytization, and Identity: the Nagas and Westernization in Northeast India*. London: Palgrave.
- V.K. Nuh, 2002. *The Naga Chronicle* Shillong: ICSSR.
- Van Schendel, Willem 2016. 'A War Within a War: Mizo Rebels and the Bangladesh Liberation Struggle', *Modern Asian Studies* 50(1): 75-117.