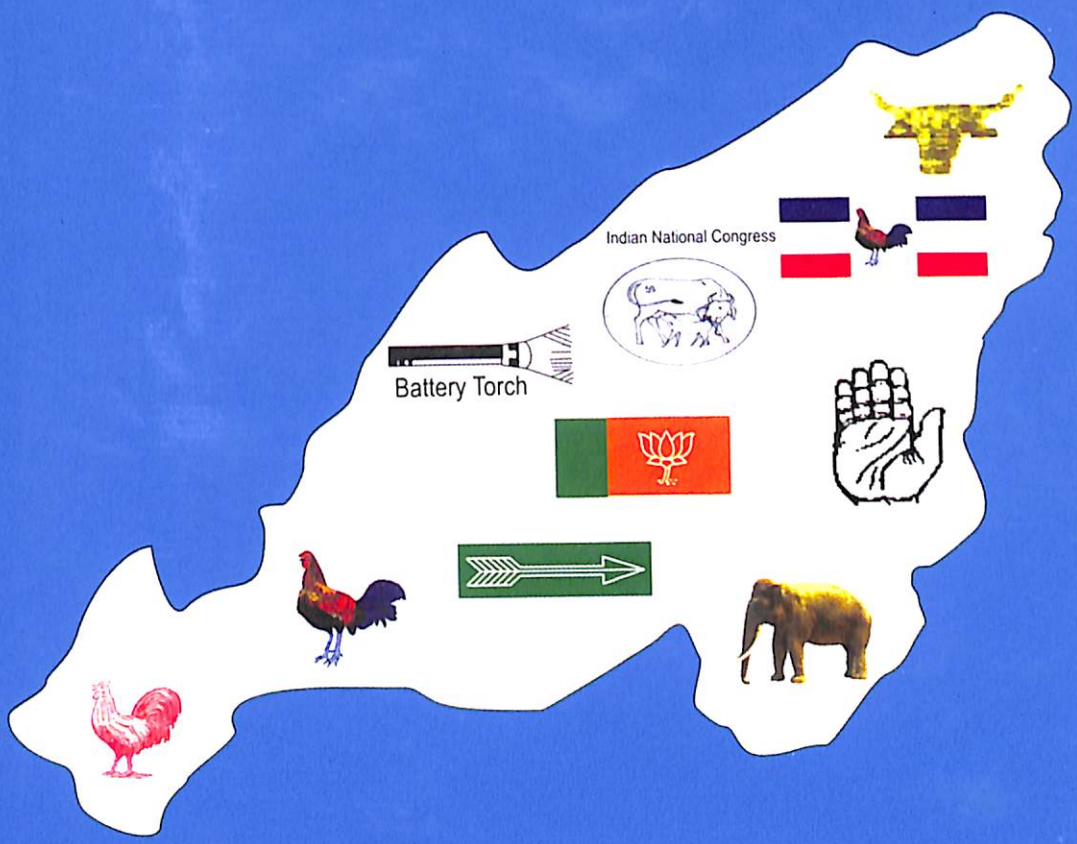


# POLITICAL PARTIES IN NAGALAND



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IN

# NAGALAND

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## PREFACE

I am happy to place this piece of work in the hands of the readers “The Political Parties” about the backgrounds and their formation, Election manifestoes, promises to the voters, voting behaviour and the results of elections held in Nagaland since 1964 up- to- date.

There are a number of reasons why I have prepared this documentation work. First, the piece of work is to create an awareness of both the contestant parties and the voters, to check their election promises in the election manifestoes. This will also offer an opportunity to check their assumptions against the actual election results. Secondly, this piece of work, I am sure, will offer as useful source of information to the researchers and the students of social sciences.

I am fully aware the deficiency in this book. How hard I tried in my attempt to collect information from all the political parties of the present including those parties existed before, but some of them could not be made available due to certain obvious reasons. Of these are: The Nagaland Democratic Party (NDP), The Democratic Labour Party (DLP), The Samata Party (SP), The National Congress Party (NCP), The All India Trinamool Congress Party (AITCP), The Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD) and , The Rashtriya Janata Party (RJP). However, I shall try to incorporate them in the next edition. The documents, records, materials and ideas have been drawn from a wide range of sources including my own library.

I owe a deep sense of gratitude to numerous individuals and government departments, particularly the officers and staff of the Chief Electoral Office and the Nagaland Legislative Assembly, who provided me easy access to a large number of records and a varied of other materials needed for publishing this book without which this venture could have been a failure. There are score of friends who contributed valuable ideas and suggestions whose names could not be mentioned here but will be treasured in my heart forever.

Last but not the least, I express my deep appreciation to Mr. Imnayanger Jamir, who had taken great pain in computer typing of the entire manuscript without which this venture would have been a frustrated attempt.

**( Dr. HOKUTO JIMOMI )**

## CHAPTER - I

# INTRODUCTION

Nagaland, the land of numerous Hills, the rugged terrains, impenetrable sub-tropical forests and fear of raiding among the villages. On the other hand, the independent spirit of Naga villages with self-reliance in defence and the self-sufficiency in food grains with its agrarian economy kept the Nagas isolated from the contact of outside world for many centuries together. At some points of time, there existed scanty relationship with their neighbouring countries as we trace back to the history of Ahoms, the Kacharis and Manipuris but those relationships appeared and remained in isolation until the advent of the Britishers and Christianity in Naga Hills.

The coming of Britishers to the Naga Hills was in order to consolidate their positions in Manipur and Assam, and when consolidated, they felt it necessary to keep the Nagas under their control. Virtually, the first contact started in 1832. Whereas, the Christian Missionaries first acquaintance with the Nagas started in 1857. With the fall of Khonoma village in 1879, the Britishers had succeeded in bringing some Naga tribes under their control. Although, the major parts of Naga Hills brought under their administration but not fully till the transfer of power in 1947.

Basically, the Nagas were simple, honest, frank and hospitable, cheerful humor, self-effacing but independent spirit. As most societies in the world, except those strictly matriarchal, men have a higher status than women, and this was certainly true in early Naga culture. Even polygamy was practised before the advent of Christianity which recognised the virility of men. The Nagas prior to western influence maintained chieftainship as a basic element of government which can be compared to Greek-city State where every village was independent. There were no taxes, such as land-tax, water-tax, forest-tax., as they belong to the people and no taxes were ever thought necessary to impose either for its utilisation or exploitation.

days, the Indian Security Forces had unrestricted authority/power to arrest, detain, torture and even causing to death any innocent Naga which cannot be questioned in the Court of Law. The Naga Peoples' Convention was a unique in the history of Naga people for its representative character.

The Naga Peoples' Convention, in the face of stiff opposition from the Underground Federal Government of Nagaland, went ahead of electing late Dr. Imkongliba Ao as its President and Mr. J.B. Jasokie Angami as Secretary. The Naga Peoples' Convention declared their opposition to violence (Naga underground) and adopted constitutional means to achieve the political settlement within the Union of India. The convention proposed to establish Naga Hills Tuensang Area (NHTA) as a separate Administrative Unit under the External Affairs Ministry. The convention selected nine-member delegation under the leadership of Dr. Imkongliba Ao, met the Governor of Assam in Shillong and later the Prime Minister in New Delhi and presented their resolutions. As a result, on 1st December, 1957, a separate Administrative Unit known as NAGA HILLS TUENSANG AREA (NHTA) was created under the External Affairs Ministry, by the Government of India and administered by the then Governor of Assam on behalf of the President.

In May, 1958, the Second Naga Peoples' Convention was held at Ungma village against the wishes of the Naga Underground Federal Government. In this convention, a Draft Committee was appointed to prepare a 16 point Agreement for the creation of a separate state of Nagaland within the Indian Union. Prominent Naga elders, village elders and even government officials were invited to participate in the Convention. It is, however, to be noted that at that period of time, most of the village Chiefs and Elders whose leaderships were acknowledged in their respective localities were either in prisons or in jungles. Even then, the original intention behind the first Naga People's Convention was laudatory in that most of the participants came to the Convention with genuine concern and determination to offer ideas or suggestions as far as they could. Unfortunately, the bureaucrats who were running the District administration got control over the Convention.

## CHAPTER-II

# BACKGROUND TO THE FORMATION OF POLITICAL PARTIES.

With the Delhi Agreement between the Government of India and Naga Peoples' Convention (NPC), the final decision was announced by the Prime Minister in Parliament on 1st August, 1960 that a separate State would be created for Nagaland within the Union of Indian . It was also announced that during transitional period, an Interim Government would be installed with the representatives from every tribe to assist and advise the Governor of Assam in the administration of Nagaland. As a result, of which, the Nagaland Transitional Provision was promulgated by the President of India which says, "The Interim Government shall consist of 45 elected members representing the various Naga tribes. The term of the Interim Government shall be three years".

This regulation provided Nagaland for the creation of an Interim Government with an Executive Council which was a prelude to creation of a fullfledged Statehood for the Nagas. Accordingly, the Interim Government started functioning from 18th February, 1961 with the Executive Council of five members to assist and advise the Governor. P.Shilu Ao as the Chief Executive Councillor, Hokishe Sema, R.C. Chiten Jamir, J.B. Jasokie and Akum Imlong as Executive Councillors. Dr. Imkongliba was the Chairman (Speaker). After assassination of Dr. Imkongliba by the Federal Government of Nagaland, T.N. Angami was elected as Chairman and M.Kithan as Deputy Chairman (Deputy Speaker).

The Thirteenth Amendment Act 1962 enacted by the Parliament, provided the formation of a separate state called Nagaland in the Union of India. However, the administration of Tuensang district shall be carried on under the special

responsibility by the Governor for a period of 10 years to enable the people of that district till they can shoulder fuller responsibilities of administration. The Tuensang Regional Council duly elected representatives of the tribes therein shall supervise the administration of the villages in the district. No law passed by the Nagaland Legislature will enforce to that district unless so recommended by the Regional Council. One of the elected representatives from Tuensang district in the Legislative Assembly of Nagaland shall be appointed as Minister for Tuensang Affairs by the Governor on the advice of the Chief Minister of Nagaland.

The Constitution (Thirteenth Amendment) Act No. 73 of 1962 provided for the following representation of Nagaland, i.e. one representative for the council of states and one representative for the house of people. And the Nagaland Legislative Assembly shall have a strength of 60 members which shall be chosen by direct election. Hence, in February, 1962, the election machinery in the state was set up with two Circle Officer (C.O) namely Mr. A. Kachari was appointed for Kohima District and Mr. Teka Ao for Mokokchung District. In June 1962, both of them were sent to Shillong for first hand knowledge in the matter of preparation of Electoral Rolls and conduct of elections. In Nagaland, the powers and functions pertaining to election were handled by the Judicial Department. A nucleus staff of the election branch was set up. In July 1963, the Addl. Development Commissioner took over as ex-officio Chief Electoral Officer.

Under the Nagaland Act 73 of 1962 section-ii authorised Election Commission to delimit the parliamentary and the Assembly constituencies. The Commission was assisted with five members from the Interim Government for the performance of its function of delimitation of constituencies. All constituencies were made single member constituencies and the population for each constituency was set up in June 1963. Nagaland, the 16th State of Indian Union was inaugurated by S.



Radhakrishnan, the President of India on 1st December, 1963. The delimitation of Constituencies was finalised and published on 2nd December, 1963. Following the announcement of the 1st General Election to the Nagaland Legislative Assembly. The Tribal Council, one by one, would be allowed to stand for election and that all would be returned uncontested. This was a turning point in the political history of Nagaland, for those Naga leaders whose genuine efforts had time and again been thwarted by the bureaucrats had no other option but to form a political party. The party was named the Democratic party.

It is to be noted that in those days, special Armed Forces Power Act 1958 was fully enforced, it was extremely difficult for anyone other than a Government approved person to conduct any political activity. Public meetings were strictly banned and travel permits had to be obtained to go from one village to another. The Security Forces had full authority to arrest, detain and torture and causing death. Under such circumstances, the Democratic Party (DP) contested in 24 Constituencies in a House that was to consist of 40 elective seats and 6 nominated seats. Tuensang District (then comprising of the present Tuensang and Mon District) had been placed under a special category for 10 years. Of the 24 seats that the DP contested, it won in 12. The then "ruling" party having no name so far, had also captured 12 seats. The rest went to Independents who lost no time in joining the ruling ranks.

The first and foremost objective of the Democratic party was to bring the two conflicting parties (i.e. the Naga Underground and the Government of India) to a negotiating table.

The party reserved to itself the option to dissolve itself if and when it considered its task accomplished. Thus, the Cease-fire agreement was brought about in 6th September, 1964 under the efforts of the Nagaland Peace Mission consisting of the late Jaya Prakash Narayan, the late Bimala Prasad

Cheliha and the late Rev. Michael Scott, and when the first round of talks were announced, the 12 DP Members of the Legislative Assembly resigned en bloc, urging the ruling party (which by then had taken the name "The Nagaland Nationalist Organisation") to do likewise in order not to cause any impediment to the negotiations. The DP followed up with dissolution of the party, firmly believing that an amicable settlement of the political problem was just round the corner. Events later proved that the DP leaders had sadly placed too high a fifth in the wisdom of the persons then holding the destiny of the people in their hands. The peace talks were stalled, and sporadic exchanges of fire continued until the 2nd General Election to the Nagaland Legislative Assembly came around. The leaders of the erstwhile DP got together again and formed the United Front of Nagaland (UFN) with the same objectives and the same symbol, "Cock". But in 1969, the people's faith in the electoral process was at a low ebb, and the UFN fared worse than the DP, having only of its candidate elected to a House of 40 elective seats and 12 nominated members from Tuensang District.

Another turning point in the Naga Political history came about in early 1971 when mid-term poll to the Lok Sabha was announced. The UFN set up its candidate Mr. A. Kevichusa, the founder of the party, while Mr. S. C. Jamir was renominated for election by the NNO, Mr. S. C. Jamir had been sent to the Lok Sabha since early 1960's by the NNO Government without having to face any election, and the 1971 mid-term poll was to be the first Parliamentary election Nagaland was to take part in. Gauging the political mood of the people of the then Kohima and Mokokchung District, the then Tuensang District hoping to win their sympathetic votes even though the 10 years "special category" status was to continue till 1974. However, the result of the 1971 parliamentary election proved that the people of Tuensang District were by no means as backward as they are made out to be, at least not where their mental faculties

are concerned. Mr. A Kevichusa UFN candidate defeated Mr. S.C. Jamir in Parliamentary election in 1971 mid-term poll. The same year, however, three members of the legislative Assembly died in accident and under natural causes giving Mr. S.C. Jamir his first chance to come into state Politics. In 1972 bye-election, he defeated UFN candidate in the Mongoya Constituency on an NNO ticket. But even before he could be sworn in as a Member of the Legislative Assembly he challenged the leadership of Mr. Hokishe Sema and caused a split in the NNO. Together with 14 other MLAs, Mr. S.C. Jamir broke away from the NNO and joined the UFN but failed to form government. Meanwhile the name of the party was changed to that United Democratic Front (UDF). However, the party retained its symbol (Cock) and its policies and programmes remained unchanged.

Under the stewardship of Mr. Hokishe Sema, the situation in Nagaland continued to drift from bad to worse. Without the approval or even the knowledge of the Legislative Assembly he had Nagaland transferred from the External Affairs Ministry to the Home Ministry in utter violation of the 16-Point Agreement of 1960. Over and above this, following an attack on his life, he had the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) of 1958 applied to Nagaland in addition to the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act. Also in 1972, the Government of India unilaterally abrogated the Cease fire Agreement of 1964, plunging the State back into the horrors of the 1950's and early 1960's.

In the 3rd General Election to the Nagaland Legislative Assembly held in February 1974, the result was: UDF -25, NNO -23, and Independents- 12. The Indian Army sent helicopters to lift all successful Independent candidates and took them straight to Chief Minister Hokishe Sema's residence. But one by one as many as seven Independent MLA's slipped out quietly from the Chief Minister's residence and joined the UDF camp, raising the UDF strength to 32 in a House of 60. Faced with such reality, the then Governor had no other choice but

to invite Mr. Vizol, the leader of the UDF, to form the Government even though he (the Governor) later faced the kind of abusive and wrath from the army top-brass that no other Governor had ever faced before.

But the army could not reconcile itself to the realities of the situation, in that, the following year ( i.e. 1975) the army, with the connivance of the Central Government and its agencies, engineered defection, and in March 1975, the first Government headed by Mr. Vizol was toppled. The new Ministry led by Mr. Jasokie also could survive hardly for 10 days as a result of further defection. The President's Rules was then imposed in the State due to fluid and chaotic situation arising out of it which lasted for 32 months. During the President's rule, and the National Emergency which followed in its heel, the NNO merged into the Indian National Congress Party, and thus ushering in for the first time a national party into the Naga polity.

The Congress, under the guidance of the bureaucrats who, now under President's rule, wielded absolute power in the State, went about terrorising the people. While sparing a few top-ranking leaders of the UDF, most of the party's active leaders were arrested under the provisions of the Maintenance of Internal Security Act (MISA) and subjected to the mental torture of being denied even visits of their near and dear ones.

Meanwhile on November 11, 1975, some representatives of the underground organisations and the Government of India signed the Shillong Accord, bringing temporary respite to Nagas from the army's rampage. The months later, the pros and cons of the Shillong Accord vis a vis the Naga people's struggle, however, was yet to become a bone of contention and as far as can be foretold, historians have yet to determine its merits.

In March 1977, Nagaland, then still under President's Rule, went to the polls along with the rest of India for the 16th Lok Sabha. Accordingly, elections to the Legislative Assembly also ought to have been held simultaneously, but the Congress party, both in the State and in the Centre, did not feel confident of winning, and President's Rule was extended. The UDF fielded Mrs. Rano M. Shaiza while the Congress set up Mr. Hokishe Sema as its candidate. The entire bureaucratic machinery was geared up in favour of the Congress candidate. Yet the Naga people proved once again that they can stand upto oppressions. The UDF candidate was elected with a convincing majority. In India, the Congress party had been trounced and the Janta party formed the first non-Congress Government at the Centre.

In November 1977, the 4th General Election to the Nagaland Legislative Assembly was held. The result: UDF-35, Congress-15, NCN-I and Independents-9. Predictably, most of the Independents joined the UDF later on. The second UDF Government under the leadership of Mr. Vizol was installed amid great expectations from the people. It therefore came as a rude shock to the people when in October 1979, the Chief Minister had to sack his then Deputy Chief Minister, Mr. S.C. Jamir on grounds of "Mismanagement of financial affairs." The UDF had to pay for this scandal with the loss of the Lok Sabha seat in the mid-term poll held in January 1980. In April 1980, Mr. Vizol had to bow out of office for the second time owing to defection. Mr. S.C. Jamir formed a coalition Government which lasted only 48 days. Meanwhile, the 28 UDF Legislators who remained in the party had entered into an agreement with several other non-Congress MLA's led by Mr. J.B. Jasokie to take over the reins of power. Accordingly, Mr. Jasokie took over Chief Ministership in June 1980.

During his Chief Ministership, Jasokie was influenced by unscrupulous businessman and the Nagaland House, Kolkata becomes an apple of discord. On the organisational

level, the question of merger of the UDF and the Naga National Party (NNP) led by Mr. Jasokie was raised, But the merger issue ran into trouble when Mr. Huska, who was not accommodated in the Cabinet (ostensibly by his own choice) rebelled against the party decision and filed a petition in the Election Commission for recognition of the faction led by him as the "real" UDF, a long legal battle ensued and the Election Commission on February 12, 1982 gave its judgement dismissing Mr. Huska's petition. Mr. Huska then took the case to the Supreme Court, which also subsequently dismissed his petition. He then took the case to the Delhi High Court which also dismissed his petition. He filed yet another petition in the Delhi High Court, this was also dismissed. He then filed a review petition in the Election Commission. This again was dismissed. These legal battles ended only when General Election to the 5th Nagaland Legislative Assembly was announced.

Meanwhile, on December 3rd 1981, the UDF at its 9th General Session held at Kohima had amended the Party Constitution changing the name of the party from UDF to NNDP (Nagaland National Democratic Party). The validity of this amendment was upheld by the Election Commission, the Delhi High Court and the Supreme Court of India.

The result of the General Election in November 1982 was NNDP 24, Congress (I) 24, Nagaland UDF (i.e Huska) 1, Independents 11. The Congress (I) under the leadership of Mr. S.C. Jamir formed the Government with the help of Independents. But in October 1986, the Congress (I) high command dislodged Mr. S.C. Jamir in favour of Mr. Hokishe Sema.

In the 6th General Election to the Nagaland Legislative Assembly held in November 1987, the Congress (I) for the first time won absolute majority (34). It therefore came as a rude shock to the Congress (I) party when, on July 30, 1988, thirteen of the 34 Congress (I) Legislators broke away to form a new

party under the name and style, "Congress (Regional) Party" with Mr. K. L. Chishi as President and Mr. Yeangphong Konyak as General Secretary. The following day, the leader of the opposition, Mr. Vamuzo announced the formation of a coalition under the name, "Joint Regional Legislature Party" (JRLP). On the same day (July 31) the speaker ruled that a split had taken place in the Congress (Regional) party as a separate party in the Assembly in accordance with the Tenth Schedule of the Constitution. Meanwhile, four Independent MLA's also announced their support to the coalition, thus bringing the total strength of the JRLP to 35 in a House with an effective strength of 59 (Mr. Sopen Konyak of the NNDP, died in June).

Mr. Vamuzo, as leader of the coalition, asked for dismissal of the minority Government headed by Mr. Hokishe Sema and staked his claim to form the Government. But the governor, Gen. K. V. Krishna Rao (Retd), recommended dissolution of the Assembly and imposition of President's rule in Nagaland. Accordingly, President's rule was imposed w.e.f Aug. 7th 1988. Mr. Vamuzo filed a petition in the Guwahati High Court challenging the Constitutionality of imposition of President's rule. A Division bench consisting of the hon'ble the Chief Justice Mr. A. Raghuvir and the Hon'ble Mr. Justice B. L. Hansaria ruled that the Governor's action as unacceptable and unjustifiable.

Meanwhile, Mr. Huska having pulled out of the merger talks at the last minute, it was left to the NNDP to change the name of the party to Nagaland People's Council (NPC). This was done at the 6th General Session of the NNDP held at Dimapur on September 21, 1988. The Election Commission gave its approval to the change nomenclature of the party from NNDP to NPC vide its notification No. 56/84-XXXXVIII dated November 18, 1988. Thus, the Nagaland People's Council, formed only in September 1988, had maintained its continuity from a small gathering at a meeting held at Kohima village on September 17, 1988.

