



A BRIEF REVIEW OF THE NAGA PROBLEM

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ABSTRACT

The economic progress of any country is a symbol of its progress and prosperity. Since independence, India has been working tirelessly to achieve equitable economic development through rapid industrialization, liberal economic policies and laws. The launch of the NITI Aayog along with the Five Year Plans of India adds a new chapter to India's economic history. The purpose of which was to bring about the overall development and continuous improvement of the country. But the impact of these efforts has not been equally felt across the country. The overall development process of the country is being hampered due to the rise of separatist forces and other institutions. Due to this the North-eastern part of the country has remained relatively backward as compared to other states. The state of Nagaland was not left out. There are various problems that are still present in the way of economic development. Nagaland is one of the 'Seven Sister's' state of North-eastern region. Extraordinary biodiversity and natural resources are found in this state. But rises the question is why this state is lagging behind despite so many possibilities? This state was born in 1963 after resolving all the issues. Then other states like Manipur, Mizoram, Meghalaya, Tripura, Arunachal Pradesh were born. But the Naga problem still remained present. What problems are germinating there, that are hindering progress. This research paper sheds light on all those issues.

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INTRODUCTION

In a multidimensional country like India, a democratic structure has emerged in the post-independence era, keeping in mind the inherent unity of diversity. The Constitution of India speaks of a Sovereign, Democratic, Secular, Socialist Democracy with the aim of ensuring justice, freedom, equality and fraternity for its citizens. One of the important mysterious parts of India is the state of Nagaland. That part, even though it is part of India, does not seem to be a part of it. Even to the people of the mainland, they seem unfamiliar, a little distant. Our attitude towards us is somewhat skeptical. Nevertheless, it is true that this magnificent state is an integral part of India. For various reasons they are isolated and underdeveloped. That is why their anger is not inconsistent. But the central government is determined to make the region's inclusion in our democratic system a reality.

Identity of the state of Nagaland

The North-eastern region is linked to the Indian mainland by a 21-kilometre long land corridor passing through Siliguri in the eastern state of West Bengal, called the 'chicken's neck'. Nagaland is one the Seven Sisters of the North-eastern region of India.

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The state is bounded by Assam in the west, Myanmar on the East, Manipur in the South and Arunachal Pradesh and part of Assam on the North. This State appeared on the map of India in 1963 as a separate state consisting of the Naga Hills from the Assam or North Eastern Frontier Agency of India. It is a bit isolated from the mainland like other North-Eastern states. Even though this state was also deprived of the first three five-year plans yet one of the major social capitals of Nagaland, known as the festival kingdom and the tribal kingdom, is its diverse tribal society.

Naga problem

There are various types of tribal problems scattered in different parts of the Indian subcontinent. The biggest of these problems is in Nagaland. It has been going on since the past. Not only are the various groups here in crisis, they are hostile to each other, but they are also isolated from the original nationality, which may be rare in the history of the world. The history of Nagaland, which is a mixture of different languages, cultures and tribes, has many mysteries hidden in its history. Their journey started from 1826. And with the arrival of the Britishers between 1839-45, the entry of Baptist missionaries into the Naga hills at the urging of Major Jenkins changed the life of the Nagas. Although the Nagas lives changed, they later developed their mythology into their own way of life and culture. They combine different languages like Nepali, Assamese, Hindi, English and some dialects to form a common language called 'Nagamiz'. Despite this, they have

not been able to unite with the Indians. Not only that but the conservative mentality of a small number of people which has created an extreme crisis of nationalism even after independence. This problem is chronic. Different groups are in crisis here and are prone to quarrels among themselves and isolated from the original nationality. Truly this event is rare and wonderful in the history of the world.

The first thing that needs to be highlighted in this regard is the 1919 incidents. The Naga Club was formed by some of the Naga soldiers, who joined the British army in the First World War. Because they felt that there was something called nationalism. For which this is the First World War. So they united themselves socially and politically and established nationalism through the Naga Club. The purpose of this Naga club was development of Naga society, which consisted of village chiefs and government employees and discussed important issues. As a result of which various separate tribal councils were born. For example, in 1923, 'Lahota', in 1928, 'Ao' etc. And through this the journey of separation begins. If we look at the history, we will see some events of 1929. When the Simon Commission reached Kohima, about twenty different tribal groups handed over a memorandum signed by the people on behalf of the Naga Club. Where it was written- 'We pray that the British Government will continue to safeguard our rights against all encroachment from other people who are now more advanced than us by withdrawing our country from the reformed scheme and placing it directly under its own protection. If the British Government, however, wants to throw us away, we pray that we should not be thrust to the mercy of the people (i.e. India) who could never have conquer us themselves and to whom we are never subjected, but to leave us alone to determine for ourselves as in ancient times'

The Nagas made their demands, but they did not receive a positive response from the Britishers. As a result, various groups in the Naga Hills came together and started a frontal war against the Britishers from 1930. Which gradually spread to the largest level. Jodonang was the leader of this rebellion. But the revolt was not only against the Britishers, but also against the land-tenant outsiders and authority of the neighborhood. The main objective of this revolt was to establish the Naga Raj. After Jodonang death, the rebel Gaidinliu took over the leadership of the rebellion. They stopped paying revenue to the Britishers. That's why, the revenue collection of the Britishers decreased. And they began to persecute different ethnic groups in the pursuit of their own vested interests. The British empire subsequently declared the Naga Hill District a completely "Disturbed area" in April 1937. The administration of Assam is entrusted with all the control of the region. As a result, ethnic divisions and animosities among the Nagas began to grow. On the one hand, there is the self-rule of the Naga Hills, which is under colonial rule. On the other hand, the self-governance of the central law of 'The Naga Hills Tuensang Area'. As a result, the level of hostility increased. After World War II, Naga rejected the British plan to form a hill tribes in the Indo-Burma regions with the proposed independence of India and to establish a 'Crown Colony' for the Nagas. On the eve of independence, the entire Naga community declared the entire Naga region as a

tribal area, demanding full self-government. And in 1945 A.Z Phizo, the Deputy Commissioner of Naga Hills, formed the 'Naga Hill District Tribal Council'. Not only that, in 1946, the 29-member Naga National Council strongly objected to its annexation to post-independence India through a 16-point demand. And on June 29, 1947, the Naga National Council presented a nine-point charter to the then Governor Akbar Hydari stating that the development of the Nagas would be managed by the Nagas. But Phizo was vehemently opposed, when the leaders of another group, such as T. Shakhari and Aliba Imti, spoke of the peaceful establishment of a large political representation of the Nagas under the Governor of Assam. In such a situation, a delegation of Nagas met Jawaharlal Nehru and Mahatma Gandhi with the intention of not joining India. Even though they promised the Nagas that there would be no coercion from India. But the independent Union Ministry of 1947 declared in August that it would not approve the independence of the Nagas. As a result, on 14 August 1947, in the Naga Hills, they declared their independence by hoisting their own flag. The ideal of their hostility in the arena of independence on Indian soil is thus clearly established.

The post-independence Naga problem

The Naga National Council did not accept the inclusion of the Naga Hill Districts in the Sixth Schedule of the Indian Constitution in 1950 and the granting of autonomy under the Assam State Legislative Assembly. And with that came the issue of a referendum in 1950, but they denied it. As a result, no one from the Naga Hills participated in the 1952 general election and the formation of the district council. In 1956 they formed the Naga Federal Government and the Naga Federal Army. In 1951, the Naga People's Convention was formed in Kohima under the leadership of Imkongliba Ao to form the Naga state from within India. The territory of new the new state coincide with what was then the centrally administered Naga Hills Tuensang Area in 1957, bringing together the Naga Hills district of Assam and the Tuensang district of North East Frontier Agency. Which is under the Governor of Assam. In 1960, a nine-member delegation reached an agreement with the then Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru on the basis of a 16-point demands. Some of these 16-point claims are mentioned below. The name of Naga Hills will be Nagaland. The new state will be under the Ministry of External Affairs of the Centre. Administrative structure and hierarchy from state level to local level will be specified. Central aid is promised in addition to revenue from running the state administration. The Naga Regiment was formed to give the Nagas the opportunity to join the army. Then on August 10, 1960, the Prime Minister declared Nagaland as the 16th state of the Union of India. And Regulation No. 2, on 24th January 1961 Nagaland became de facto state. An interim advisory team was formed by selecting five members from among the Naga tribes to manage it. And the independent state of Nagaland was born on the first of December 1962 with three districts including Kohima under the Nagaland Act of 1962.

Despite the formation of separate states for the Nagas, insurgent groups such as the NNC and NFC have not stopped their activities. They continue to walk the path of enmity with their vested interests in front of them and secretly wage military war with the government forces. This is why the

Government of India had to enact the AFSPA Act in 1958. However, the Indian government had earlier tried to solve the problem by implementing the Assam Disturb Area Act in 1995 but flailed. Even after Nagaland, Meghalaya, Manipur, Tripura, Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh declared independence, the Naga problem is still more prevalent than other states in the North East. In 1964 'Civil Society' formed a peace mission for peace in Nagaland. The boycott agreement was announced on September 6 at a tripartite meeting initiated by Jayaprakash Narayan, Sankardev, BP Chaliya and others. But in 1966 the treaty was broken on the question of sovereignty. Then 1972, the Indian government completely broke the treaty and annulled the Naga National Council. However, the situation did not improve. Finally, the 'Shillong Peace Accord' was signed in 1975 between the Indian government and the secret military to end the war and develop the Naga Society. Although the agreement caused controversy among several groups. Even though many agreed but A.Z Phizo had objections to this agreement. With the help of China or attracted to political ideology, the Nagas' nationality was shattered. Conflict begins among themselves. As a result, Naga nationalism completely collapsed in 1980. The main leadership of the Naga National Assembly is in the hands of A.Z. Phizo, On the other hand, the pro-Maoist 'Nagaland National Socialist Council' or 'Nagalim' was formed under the leadership of Muivah, Isak Chishi Swu, S.S Khaplang and others. Their main goal was to form an independent sovereign state outside India. They criticized the 1975 agreement as a "complete sale out of the rights". However, a few years later, in 1988, for ideological reasons, the NSCN split in two parts. On the one hand there is the 'National Socialist Council of Nagalim' (NSCN-IM) led by Muivah and on the other hand there is the 'National Socialist Council of Nagaland'(NSCN-K) led by Khaplang. Muivah's goal was to form a separate state with the Nagas of Nagaland, Manipur, Assam and Arunachal Pradesh. And Khaplang's aim was to annex part of Myanmar into greater Nagaland. In addition to this, it can be said that these militant groups in Nagaland have been provided with training, tools and military weapons by the foreign government in various ways. Not only that, at the time of the COVID-19, China has been helping all these militant groups through Myanmar in various ways.

Peace efforts

What was that problem all the time? No attempt was made by the government? In this regard, in 1975 Shillong Accord can be highlighted. Where a large section of the separatist groups accepted the Constitution of India and they surrendered to the Government of India. Not only that, the Indian government also released the imprisoned rebels in response. Then on August 1, 1997, the Government of India v. NSCN (IM) negotiated the Arms Treaty and the peace process. The two main points of the 1997 agreement are that the Indian military cannot take any action against them and they have to do the same. In response, mainstream opposition groups, including Naga Hoho, organized about 10,000 people in 2007 for reunification. If Muivah wanted to join the mainstream, the militant members of the group formed the NSCN (Unification) with 100 members in 2007 without opposing any talks. When the NSCN group declared a ceasefire in 2001 and wanted to

reach a settlement with the government, a special section of them, led by N.Kitovi Zhimomi and Khole Konyak, formed a connection with Azheto Chophyi, the leader of the unification. As a result, the problem takes a new turn. NSCN (K) broke up in 2011. From where the opposition group NSCN (KK) came out led by Khole. Not only this, a new party Eastern Nagaland People's Organization (ENPO) has been formed in Nagaland with the main goal of forming separate 'Frontian States' with six ethnic groups in four districts of Nagaland. Not only is the formation of separate parties, separate states, but also the aggressiveness of their movement is reflected in the attack on the army convoy in Manipur a few years ago. However, the government is moving forward without making any mistake. The agreements reached in 2015 and 20019 can be said to be very positive. Although the 2015 agreement was not fully publicized, it was a 'framework agreement'. The 2015 agreement was not entirely successful as they left Myanmar but claimed parts of Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur and Assam. However, in the 2015 agreement, the Indian government acknowledged the Nagas' past acquaintance or history. It was also clear that the Nagas would not want a separate state and would work from within the Indian government. Then let's talk about the 2019 agreement. In the 2019 agreement, the NSCN(IM) demanded to have their own separate constitution and separate flag. However, at the local level, the Indian government has agreed to keep separate laws (Yezhabo) and separate flags for its own cultural events in the Indian constitution with its own regional language. But the Indian government never accepted the demand for a separate constitution. Then let's talk about 'Camp Hembron', where the NSCN runs a parallel government. Not only NSCN but there are many other groups who run the government on their own.

The Government of India has some questions about this, which are mentioned below-

- 1.Should 'Naga Hoho' still be obeyed in all cases despite having a political party or government?
- 2.The 2015 agreement did not demand a separate constitution and a separate flag, so why now?
- 3.Why is there still a separate government in Nagaland despite having Indian government and state government? Although the Indian government is currently trying to talk to various other North-eastern state governments. Because many parts of those states fall under the greater Nagalim. And in those areas where there are many minorities who are not Nagas, the government is thinking of giving importance to their views as well. The Government of India is of the view that they will negotiate peace with the Government of India on the one hand and all the Naga groups in Nagaland on the other. The sovereignty of India must be recognized and it must be made clear that they are Indians. If all those militant groups take up arms, they will be recruited to the Indian Army. And later the Government of India will take AFSPA Act. There will be no change in the boundaries of the state. The Legislative Council should be formed in the Legislative Assembly of Nagaland. The issue of reservation of seats for women was also emphasized.

In view of the introduction of NRC in Assam a few days ago, they introduced the NRC rule in their own way which is called the own version of NRC(Register of Indigenous Inhabitants of Naga). Here the property of the father of the family is not yet

shared with any daughters. They are not even represented in any decision-making body. No woman has been elected to the Legislative Assembly since 1963. They have even set up the 'Government of the People's Republic of Nagaland' to establish relations with foreign governments.

CONCLUSION

Now the question is, even after 72 years of independence, will the peace and development process of a part of the Indian state remain unfinished in the name of protecting the interests of a special class of people? Will the factionalism that has developed from the pursuit of vested interests continue? Although the environment here has radically changed. So why so much individual pride? Sixty percent of the people are educated, the impression of modernity is found, marriages outside one's own community and hospital treatment outside the practice of Ayurveda. In addition to this, there is a women's association instead of a 'Morong'. But why is it so much a problem? Because they have partial cultural fundamentalism, tactics to protect mainstream political interests and a tradition of somewhat isolated mentality. Again, different parties and factions are being born as a result of the factions of the separatists. Each of which has its own government, camps and military forces. As a result, unrest and anarchy are still growing. Will the Indian government make all efforts in this environment? The answer is no. Along with the Government of India, various political parties and civil society need to play an active role. The coalition government has to take practical steps while standing on reality. The idea of nationalism needs to be inculcated in the Indian Army by recruiting members of various militant groups there. The Government of India will have to consider lifting various preventive laws. Those laws raise questions about humanity. The attitude of other communities besides the Naga people should also be given a chance. They need to understand the real value of Article 371 of the Indian Constitution. The power that society, culture, religion, justice and administration have given to the Nagaland Legislative Assembly is sufficient for the development of Naga society. That power does not belong to the central government at all. So the sooner the Naga youth realize the simple truths of Section 371, the sooner nationalism will grow among them and the problem will be eliminated within the federal structure.

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