

The Factional Killings in Nagaland : The Clash of Ideologies

- Jagdamba Mall

There are four major ideologies in the world – They are Hindu, Christian, Muslim and Communist. Except Hindu, all the other ideologies are expansionist, intolerant and violent by nature. Hindustan has suffered at the hands of all these intolerant forces. But they clash among themselves also when their interests are hampered. The Christians clash with communists and Muslims and vice-versa. This has taken a toll of millions of human lives in Bharatvarsh and across the globe. Such clashes are witnessed within one country also. It occurs between believers and non-believers of one particular doctrine.

When I look at the genocide in Nagaland in this context, I find some similarity to what has already happened in other part of the world or in some states of our country as well. Nagas embraced Christianity and with this, secessionist armed uprising began. The Christian countries helped this insurgency through their churches planted in every nook and corner of Nagaland. But this game plan could not succeed. It is very often stated that nearly 40,000 Nagas sacrificed their lives in this fight, some with security forces and mostly with rival factions.

The tough stand taken by **Indira Gandhi** after the collapse of **Cease-fire Agreement, 1964** and signing of **Shillong Accord 1975** under compelling circumstances to avoid the further loss of Naga lives, caused despair and delusion in some hardcore demagogues in Naga guerilla camp led by Phizo from his London abode under the banner of Naga National Council (NNC). This discontent mounted when Phizo refused to disown the Shillong Accord 1975, the signatories of which included his own brother Kevi Yalie. The Church failed in their endeavor for this crisis management. The Christian supporters in Christian countries could also not vent a tangible ray of hope of materializing the NNC's declared dream-Naga sovereignty. Because of this, a section of NNC guerilla leaders disenchanted with Christian model of solution or crisis management, opted for Communist model. These disillusioned NNC leaders crossed the international border and sneaked into Chinese territory via Burma, now Myanmar. It is not that they had come in China for the first time. Earlier also, they had got arms training in China only. But this time, they had come with a view to adopt a Communist model of crisis management and to acquire matching arms training and psychological war-fare. While doing so, they, the frustrated block, might have, I presume, thought to muster pro-active support of China while the remnant NNC under Phizo would, they (defectors from NNC) might had thought, command the support of Christian countries through Rev. Michael Scott, Billy Graham and other foreign missionaries. The detractors of Phizo and his NNC perhaps thought that if Christian forces mobilized by Phizo and communist forces to be mobilized by discontented group then under training in China, could join together against Bharatvarsh, the sovereignty to Nagaland would become a reality. During those days, the demand for **Greater Nagaland** was never reported in local media. It was only sovereignty, sovereignty and sovereignty of Nagaland. **In fact, Indira Gandhi had said during six rounds of talks in 1965 that she was prepared to give anything except sovereignty but NNC leaders refused.** They did not mention anything about greater Nagaland. After their training in guerilla war-fare with special thrust on mountain and jungle fight, a separate guerilla organization coined as **National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN)** was formed in 1980 under deep influence of Chinese Communism with Isak Chishi Swu (a Sema Naga from Nagaland) as its Chairman, S.S. Khaplang (a Hemi Naga from Myanmar) as its Vice-Chairman and Thuingaleng Muivah (Tangkhul Naga from Ukhrul district of Manipur). When they sneaked into Bharatiya territory in Nagaland, a fierce fight between NNC and NSCN was the order of the day. This slaughter drama was also enacted in Naga inhabited areas of Myanmar. The Church and reverends were the first casualties. Several Churches were demolished and many reverends were killed. These factional fights were regularly reported in local English weeklies viz., (i) Ura Mail edited by Chalie Kevichusa and printed by Manik Bhattacharjee, (ii) Nagaland Times edited by Kalu Datta, (iii) Kohima Weekly, (iv) Platform and (v) Nagaland Journal. The monthly publication like "Youth Voice" and other occasional publications also carried out such reports. In these factional fights, the liberals with inclination towards Phizo and NNC were worst hit. I have seen **J.B. Jasokie** as Chief Minister, Minister and also without portfolio, always under Assam Rifles protection in Kohima. A highly honoured and most refined person **Chalie Kevichusa** with an analytical and visionary mind was also done away with. Though it was not clearly stated, it was an obvious fight between Christianity and Communism which was nothing but Maoism. Mao believed that power comes through the barrel of gun. Though NNC was under Christian doctrine and NSCN was under Communist influence, there were a section of guerillas in both the camps – NNC and NSCN who had some quantum of influence of native ethos though dormant in their mind during eighties and nineties. This dormant influence of native Naga ethos handed down from generation to generation by Naga forefathers appears being revived and rejuvenated now. This section of Naga society found in NNC and both the NSCNs are presumably realizing that by experience it appears to them that neither Christian model nor Communist model has succeeded in resolving the problem. And in the process Naga society has suffered a huge loss in terms life and property without any gain. If various survey reports informed through media from time

to time pertaining to the adverse psychological effect on adolescent mind of young generation of insurgency affected communities are correct, the vital section of victim society is very badly affected.

They suffer a loss of enthusiasm to advance and climb up from step to step. In Nagaland, it is equally applicable to Naga youths of both the genders. **Naga mothers and sisters are worst sufferers due to biological reasons. Who could imagine that a Naga father (Lotha) could rape his own four daughters for years under the sight of their mother? This is neither an aberration of a Naga male nor it is an isolated case in the Naga society but simply a tip of an ice-berg.** The image of Naga society in non-Naga communities is also not appreciable. The independent thinkers, writers, reputed persons in the field of journalism and selfless Naga social workers (but never the NGO owners) though Christian by faith, have started preparing the profit and loss statement of adoption of Christianity followed by Naga insurgency. When they notice minus return against huge investment in terms of man, money, religion, culture and native ethos, they get bemused and disheartened. This type of independent thinkers are also in NNC and NSCN. **This native Naga doctrine is also a force to reckon with. Thus, the present factional fight is not so simple to analyse. This is a tri-dimensional ideological war between Christianity, Communism and native Naga doctrine.** Nobody in the world can sail two boats at a time. But Nagas wish to sail three or more boats at a time. They wish to prove to be a devout Christian to please Christian countries; they want to prove that they are also a staunch follower of Communism (Maoism) to please China; they do not want to antagonize Hindusthan as well because they will starve without the help of Hindusthan. At the same time, they wish to preserve Naga identity. Under the given circumstances, they change their colour more shiftily than a chameleon. A chameleon changes its skin colours with the help of pigment cells found in epidermis of skin. But Nagas are found changing their colours without any pigment cells. Thank God, they have not become Muslim as yet to ensure support from Muslim countries. But if present trend continues, this also can not be ruled out.

The Church leaders were once very respectable and beyond doubt. The Christian people were obeying them. They (Naga Christians) genuinely repented for their mistakes in confession services in front them in Churches. But this is not so today. The forced conversion, programmes like Shisha Hoho, the Church's insistence on declaration of Nagaland as dry state and their failure in the following same by themselves, their involvement in Naga insurgency and Naga politics in the state, partisan behaviors, greed of money, lack of spirituality and love for carnal pleasure etc have tarnished the missionary image of Naga reverends, deacons and pastors. Now, they are treated as simply paid servants with assigned duty to conduct Church services and speak very high of Bible and Christianity while not following the same. This is the reason that any call given by Church leaders pertaining even to Naga reconciliation or Church programmes is not taken seriously which was not so a decade ago. They have lost people's trust because they, themselves, don't follow what they ask others to abide. That is why, any talk or any initiative taken by Church in the name of Peace Initiative is not taken seriously even by underground faction or by Naga public.

With a view to show that they are also very busy in their 'holy' work, the Church in Nagaland is engaged in training 10,000 Naga missionaries for saving Hindu souls in UP, Bihar, Bengal, Arunachal, Sikkim, Asom, Manipur and neighbouring countries like Bhutan, Nepal, Myanmar, Thailand, Indonesia and China etc. The missionary work in Nagaland is, perhaps, complete because all the Naga souls have been won over; all the Naga souls have been saved. Now they are determined to 'save' others' souls. When Naga public is straggling to come out from the swamp of problems and from the present quagmire should everybody not put their contribution individually and collectively to redress the sorrows of screaming Naga society? One may recall the proverb – Nero played flute when Rome was burning.

Same is the case with Naga political leaders. These selfish Naga political leaders are using different underground factions in winning elections and once they occupy the political throne, they (political leaders) start repaying them (the underground faction of their choice). The Naga Student Organizations, various tribal hohos, women hohos and NGOs – all are being utilized by political leaders and these electoral helpers utilize in return the political leaders for monetary benefit and for teaching a lesson to rival factions. Today, the factional killings have crossed all the limits. As per a rough estimate, over two dozen Nagas have been slaughtered mostly at Dimapur in only the month of April 2008. As per the talk in the town-Dimapur, nearly 50 crores of rupees are extorted by different underground factions each year. Whichever Naga faction will rule over Dimapur, they will enjoy this huge amount of money. The present spate of factional killing is, therefore, neither for "Naga sovereignty" nor for "Greater Nagaland". It is entirely a war for gaining the monopoly over this flourishing business called Naga insurgency wherein, there are only returns and returns without any monetary investment. And while doing so, there is no much risk of any punishment from Central or State Government against the killings, extortions and kidnappings. They are immune to law. These extortionists are unmindful of destruction of trade and commerce of the

state. At present, all the prominent businessman and traders have left the state to avoid the threat. Surprisingly, the Human Rightists who shout against security forces for human rights violation appear to have gone into hibernation. Perhaps, they don't see any violation of human rights of innocent Naga people by warring factions who are on rampage to kill, kidnap and extort.

The Naga political leaders are now shouting at the top of their voice because the Naga public is condemning the rulers for their preferential behavior and for flouting the declared policy of equi-distance from all the underground factions. But are these political leaders in sheep's skin are not responsible for sowing the seeds of dissension and hatred? The people are not happy over state government's inaction. The responsible leaders at the helm of state Government appear to have performed their divine duties by shifting the responsibilities on the shoulder of Central Government and by condemning Delhi durbar.

Today, they appear to have come to their sense that there is a Cease-fire Ground Rules mutually agreed upon and signed by the all the concerned parties. They are emphasizing now that these Cease-fire Ground Rules should be strictly adhered to. But it were these political leaders across the party line that used various underground factions to win over the elections in 2003 and also in 2008. They poured money beyond imagination. This was in utter disregard to election norms. Obviously, these corrupt Naga demagogues have no command over Naga society. This is the reason that they have to use Church, underground factions of their choice and money might to snatch away the political power. Once, they ascend on political throne, they relax for few weeks and then engage themselves in exploring the "new" and "novel" schemes meant not for people's development but for siphoning off moneys from Government treasuries to re-pay to their election manipulators and booth capturers. Before implementing any developmental scheme, these politicians fill their coffers first. From the very first day in office, they start accumulating money to fight the next election. The helpless public have no way out but to simply watch and curse them. **Had there been a law to call back the betrayer and corrupt politicians, the condition would have not reached to such an extent.**

There is a perceptible crisis of Naga leadership. Yes, let us talk about crisis of Naga leadership. There is no use of talking about crisis of Naga Identity because enemies of Naga identity are shouting to preserve Naga Identity. And Article 371A and Article 25 and so also the provisions of fundamental rights in the Constitution have been misused by Nagas themselves to destroy Naga Identity. It reminds me the proverb-Chor machaye shor (The thief sounds alarm) for diverting the attention of mob to escape.

Therefore, there will not be any stop to present mad killings in Nagaland unless Naga society comes forward against the present corrupt leaders and unless an independent new leadership evolves. Today, only master manipulators are (mis) leading the society not only in Kohima but also in Delhi and other states. The people of the country are suffering. So also the people of Nagaland. But here in Nagaland, people suffer most because you get the government as you are. A new brand of Naga leadership free from all the allegations can only lead the Naga society out of present crisis.

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