

NAGA NATIONAL COUNCIL

Urra: Nagaland

70th Anniversary of Nagaland Independence Day: 14th August 2017

Dear Naga People,

Seventy years ago, the Nagas asserted their inherent right of independence on the 14th August, 1947, at that time of change of hands coming into our part of the world from the British Colonial power. At that time the Naga National Council (NNC) on behalf of the Nagas declared it to the world. Since then, we observe and celebrate our independence day every year on this day. The significance was Nagaland declared her independence one day ahead of India, and much later Myanmar (Burma) declared its independence. And so both these countries cannot claim the Naga territory as we all have separate entities. There was no such thing as “Burma Naga” or “India Naga” at any time. Only Naga “inhabited areas” which belong to Nagaland.

To commemorate the 70th anniversary is a great day for the Nagas, to look back not in anger but wonder and be thankful to God how our people could pull through in various obstacles all these years and overcome in every difficult time in the past years. These are all due to national foundations which are firm and our village community system is strong and well organized. Besides, the society is classless, casteless, and helping hand towards one another are always present in the community.

Grateful to our forbearers, Nagaland has a unique history. History begins from battlefield, and the last battle with the British took place in Khonoma on 22nd November, 1879. And the oral treaty was followed suit on 27th March, 1880 at Mezoma with Great Britain, having faith on the Nagas that “their pledged word can always be trusted”. That was Naga virtue in the past, and that is worthy of note for the present generation.

The Present problem with India and how it came about:

Nagaland stand is very clear from the beginning to this day that Nagaland belongs to the Nagas. There was no territorial dispute or political blunder with India. The unique history about Nagaland is; there was no written treaty or agreement with Great Britain. Knowing Nagaland’s position, before India declared her independence, the constituent Assembly of India sent her representatives to Kohima and met the Naga National Council members and requested to join the emerging Indian Union. The offer was refused. Then in June 1947, a Nine-Point Agreement was given to NNC. But later it ended up in contradiction. It was just a waiting game before finishing in writing their constitution to claim Nagaland. But NNC informed India that Nagaland will not accept their constitution.

In consequence, NNC President, A.Z. Phizo organized the people to have a voluntary plebiscite that took place on 16th May, 1951. The referendum result was 99.9% not to join India. Learning of the result, the Prime Minister of India, Mr Nehru was livid. After India became a republic, their first general election took place in 1952. Their ballot boxes were sent to Nagaland. But no Naga participated and empty boxes were sent back.

Unbelievably, India's invasion on Nagaland started from November 1954 to 1964 till the ceasefire agreement between the Federal Government of Nagaland and the Government of India, initiated by Nagaland Baptist Church Council (NBCC) and arranged by International Peace Mission in May 1964 and became effective from 6th September, 1964. Unlike the present day communication facilities and mass media, Nagas had gone through India's secret war against Nagaland. The Indian army atrocities committed on the Nagas knows no age limit in raping, torture, burning down of villages, forced labor, and hunt for our patriots. "Relentless and determined and they are not allowed to get away to fight another day". In town after dark, they fired at random to any house and used search light everywhere. In this dark period, many suffered, maimed and died. For their sacrifice, the country returned to peace atmosphere. We will always remember them. Trust God continuously to bring permanent peace in our land.

Nagaland is still surrounded by the Indian Army Forces with the order of Armed Forces Special Powers Act of 1958 (AFSPA) in force. Where divide and rule policy is applied, how can anyone aspect "unity" and "peace"?

Because of the unique position and status of Nagaland, in the beginning Indian Government put Nagaland in their external affairs ministry but later shifted it to their internal affairs ministry. They broke up Assam and coined "North-East problem" to draw Nagaland into it as their internal matters. Otherwise, there was no such thing as North East problem before. To make Nagaland as their excuse in breaking up Indian Union is wrong.

There are many indigenous people who lost their country and live under occupation. The Nagas are fortunate that when that danger came, the people stood firm and fought and resolved the situation in peaceful manner. Our past leaders were trustworthy and respectful people. That legacy was handed over to the present generation and we are determined to uphold it. Nagaland is a nation by right.

Occupation come and go and even India under occupation for centuries and became free only 70 years ago. If they value their freedom, can they deny others freedom? Good sense must prevail and leave Nagaland soon without interference anymore.

Greeting to all our people far and near. May God bless Nagaland.

Urra Uvie

Dated: London
August 10, 2017

Adinno Phizo
president
Naga National Council