

# **SOCIO-CULTURAL HISTORY OF THE CHAKHESANG NAGAS: CONTINUITY AND CHANGE**

**Thesis submitted to Nagaland University in partial fulfillment  
for the award of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in History**

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## DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY & ARCHAEOLOGY

### NAGALAND UNIVERSITY

#### CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis entitled “**Socio-Cultural History of the Chakhesang Nagas: Continuity and Change**” by Ms. Dikhrou Dianuo bearing Regd. No. No.PhD/HAR/00018 dated 17.08.2016 in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of Doctoral of Philosophy in the Department of History & Archaeology is an original work carried out by her under my supervision and guidance which is a plagiarism free thesis.

The thesis has not been submitted previously in parts or in full to this or any other University or institution for the award of any degree or diploma.

Prof. N. Venuh  
Supervisor



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#### DECLARATION

I, Ms. Dikhrou Dianuo hereby declare that the thesis entitled “**Socio-Cultural History of the Chakhesang Nagas: Continuity and Change**” bearing Regd. No. No.PhD/HAR/00018 dated 17.08.2016; submitted by me under the guidance and supervision of Prof. N. Venuh is an original research work which is free from the Plagiarism. I also declare that it has not been submitted previously in parts or in full to this University or in any other University for award of any degree.

This thesis is submitted to Nagaland University in partial fulfillment for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in History & Archaeology.

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## Chapter I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 The Land

Nagaland is in the North Eastern part of India. It consists of 16 districts and 17 major tribes, each with its own unique traditions, culture, polity, customs, organization, folklore, folk tales, customary laws, attires and dialects. On the other hand, their habitats are contiguous, and they have affinities in culture and physical characteristics. Chakhesang Nagas form one of the major tribes of Nagaland. The district Phek which is in the southern part of Nagaland has rich in flora and fauna. About 80% of the population engaged in agricultural sector. The villages are usually located on hilltops.

Phek is the home district of the Chakhesangs. Phek district was formed on December 21, 1973. The elevation of Phek town which is the lowest in the district is 1524 meters above sea level and the highest is Pfutsero town 2136 meters above sea level (Government of Nagaland, District Profile). The distance from Kohima, the state capital, is 120 kilometers. There are 163,418 people living in the district as per the 2011 census. The Angami tribe in the Kohima district in the west, the Zunheboto district in the north, the state of Manipur in the south, and Myanmar in the east border the territory. The density of population in the district stands at 81 per square kilometer. The literacy rate stands at 79.13%. (2011 census). The land is mountainous just like other parts of Nagaland. The highest peak is *Mt. Kapamodzu*, which rises to a height of 8,596 feet. The largest river, *Tizu*, flows from the Sumi region and eventually joins the Chindwin River near Myanmar. The majority of people i.e. 80% live in rural areas. Geographically, the land is separated into five areas or features: Secheku, Phek, Chokri, Kuzhathede, and Chozuba.

The climatic condition of the district is moderately warm in summer and winters are cold dropping to zero degree Celsius. Many preserved virgin forest which were own by the community could be seen from different villages among the Chakhesang Nagas. The primary occupation of the populace is agriculture. As opposed to the other Naga tribes' shifting Jhum



practice, they engage in terrace cultivation. The non-agricultural economy in the Chakhesang villages is also heavily focused on crafts, blacksmithing, weaving, etc.

## **1.2 The People**

The Chakhesang tribe was formed on 1<sup>st</sup> August 1946. Due to their close affinities in terms of food habits, dress, social customs, terrace cultivation, and other aspects, the British identified them as Eastern Angamis. For this reason, they were simply referred to as Eastern Angami in old previous records. But after the Second World War, the Chakhesang Nagas realize their self-identity. Historical movement changed swiftly, self- identity became very important and therefore, few leaders from the three sub-tribes named and formed the Chakhesang tribe. The three sub-tribes are combined to form the name "Chakhesang": "Cha" from "Chakru," "Khe" from "Khezha," and "Sang" from "Sangtam."

The Chakhesang Naga communities are situated on a hill or, more commonly, on the ridge of a spur that descends from a high range. Since they were taking part in the attacks and battles during the war, the goal was to ensure their defense against their adversaries. Because of this, the majority of the Chakhesang villages were perched above hills. In the village's polity, the clan is very important. It had its own leadership team and its own organization. Every settlement featured sturdy gates and wooden walls decorated with carvings of warriors, heads, and other human forms.

Like many Naga tribes, the Chakhesangs have a rich cultural heritage. There are many different types of traditional clothing and decorations. The Chakhesangs are superb artisans who excel in creating furniture, sculptures, baskets, and pottery. Family and clan ties are among the most prominent features of Chakhesang community. Although women have considerable status in their family, the culture is patrimonial (Marhu, 2006). Loyalty, trust, and support are societal ideals that are ingrained or embedded in their identity. All villages adhere to the unwritten customary laws. Members of the community are required to abide by these regulations, which

are passed down through the generations. On conflicts and concerns pertaining to the village, the elders of the community make decisions and render judgments.

The Chakhesang people are known for their wrestling prowess and robust health. They live off agriculture and are known for their adeptness in terrace cultivation. The Chakhesangs are Mongoloid by race, just like the other Nagas. According to E.A. Gait, “Nagas belong to the Tibeto - Chinese” which they later on came to Meikhel. The Chakhesangs are believed to have migrated from *Mekhrore*, also known as Meikhel, which is situated in the Senapati district. According to the tradition and legends of the Nagas, it is believed that human evolution occurred gradually at *Kazhuchebo's* feet (Callery pear tree) in *Mekhrore*, (Plate 1) from which the Chakhesangs, Poumais, Angamis, and other tribes migrated and traced their origins. To the Meikhel villagers, this *Kazhuchebo* tree is known as the oldest tree in the history of the Nagas. It is also believed that once upon a time all the Nagas lived at *Mekhrore*. However, with the increase of population people gathered at the foot of this tree and departed to different directions for new settlements. The tree still stands as a symbol of unity and oneness of the whole Naga tribes. When a branch of the tree is fallen or broken by a wind, genna was observed by different villages in different regions viz, Angamis, Chakhesangs, Poumais etc. to appease the Supreme being in fear of any natural calamities or adversities. After departing from *Mekhrore*, the Chakhesangs arrived at their current settlements. "They lived in the southern portion of Nagaland, who were economically well off, medium in structure, strong and sturdy" (Maitra, 1991). The dialects spoken by the Chakhesang people are *Khezha*, *Chokri*, *Sapu*, and *Sumi*.

### **1.3 Concept**

The word “culture” is derived from the Latin word “cool-ere” which means “to inhabit”, “to cultivate”, or “to honor”. Its etymology shares a number of other words relating to fostering growth. Culture is the characteristics and knowledge of a particular group of people, defined by everything from language, religion, law, politics, cuisine, social habits, music and arts referring to the whole aspect of human activity. Anthropologist E.B. Tylor defined culture as “that

complex whole which includes knowledge, beliefs, art, morals, law, custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society”. Hence, the culmination of the two words socio-cultural can be understood as relating to the different groups of people in society and their habits, traditions and beliefs. It is a form or a part of the identity and heritage of the traditional or indigenous community that are passed down from generation to generation. UNESCO recently provided the definition of culture as, culture should be regarded as the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of society or a social group, and that it encompasses, in addition to art and literature, lifestyle, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs (UNESCO,2001).

Culture is dynamic and stable at the same time, exhibiting perpetual change (Herskovits, 1948). According to Herskovits, culture is universal in man’s experience, yet takes different forms in different places. Historical definitions frequently viewed culture as a legacy that is carried down through the ages. The International Encyclopedia of Social Sciences defined cultural change as a conceptual term that describes many ways in which cultures alter their cultural norms. The fundamental questions here are not whether cultures are static or changing, but rather how and why there are shifts in rate and type of change. The phenomena of cultural stability or continuity are the opposite of the phenomenon of cultural change. According to Darwinian Theory, it is a process brought about by the constant interaction of natural selection, heredity, and variation. According to this perspective, the only way to demonstrate how culture has evolved is by pointing out certain rules or principles that have guided its ongoing actions (Radcliffe-Brown, 1958, p.8). Any culture must have continuity in order to survive, and it is an essential component of all cultures. It was not from the inductive point of view but from historical stand that the aim of culture on society was not to discover its fundamental laws followed by developing culture, yet to prove “that development had been a process by which human society passed through a number of stages or phases” (Radcliffe-Brown, 1958, p. 9).

Since stability and cultural change are inextricably linked, it is important to examine both while examining cultural change. Integration of customs, religion, habit, ethnocentrism, and other elements can make a culture resistant to change.

As a result, among the Chakhesang Nagas, cultural continuity is evident to a large degree (Dube, 1990). While some of these habits saw substantial modifications, the majority of beliefs and practices persisted with minor adjustments in the light of the prevailing circumstances. It was not so much the colonial state as it was Christian missionaries and their work that brought about these developments. Another important factor in this reformatory trend inside Naga society has been education.

This topic aims to achieve a balanced of positive and negative results that will aid in the recovery and restoration of socio-cultural values and demonstrate how it is recognized as a representative and emblematic of the Chakhesang Nagas in both the past and the present. The study also aims to investigate the traditional values, their evolution, and their persistence in expressing the socio-cultural practices of the Chakhesang Nagas. It will explore the rich history of the Chakhesang Nagas focusing on the significant influence of Christianity and Western education on their way of life. It will also examine how these changes have shaped and merged with the traditional cultural identity. This topic explores religious and cultural syncretism, showing how customary Chakhesang Naga beliefs and practices have evolved to fit into contemporary society. It specifically focuses on the Chakhesang Nagas as a remarkable example of the adaptability of indigenous culture, emphasizing their capacity to accept change while preserving and continuing their essential beliefs and sense of identity.

#### **1.4 Literature Review**

From the literature review mentioned, generally it consists of the contributions of the British administrators, Christian missionaries, anthropologists, historians and indigenous writers which have helped to the present research.

Bhattacharjee (1989), *Sequences in Development in North East India (A study of Tradition, Continuity and Change)*. In this book, the author highlights the legacy of British colonial control, which disrupted the region's magnificent political isolation of the ethnically and physically distinct areas. However, because of the deliberate plunder and exploitation of the wealth-generating resources by the British colonial power, the North East is developing significantly more slowly than the rest of the country. B. Datta Ray quoted "The situation did not change much even after independence. The region is backward even in our national words, the policy of the region has not so far been institutionalized while tribal and regional consciousness is growing".

E.B. Taylor (1871), *Primitive Culture* regarded that the first phase of human lives as animism in any development of religions. He was determined that in the development of society and religious progression, there is always some functional basis which is universal. He opines how many obscure customs and religion had shed light on things that were perceived in the past.

Pariyaram (2005), *Tribal Communities and Social Change* the author of this book focused on the nature and scope of social change, education, and education in Eastern Indian tribal society. People have interacted closely throughout history, and in spite of tensions and disputes, a distinctive convergence of characteristics and values has also developed as a part of the greater process of civilization, in which all people are involved. It also suggests colonialism, which signaled the start of a drastic shift in the circumstances facing tribes. For the first time, tribal resources especially land were traded like goods. The tribal world was completely and violently opened up to resource exploitation. For this reason, the tribal people reacted more fiercely than any other group, exhibiting a desire to accept the new system through a succession of movements, revolts, and upheavals. According to T.C. Das, the shifting of a cultural center might be compared to the trembling of an earthquake. Culture is a cohesive system of characteristics. As a result, when one of them changes, the others too change.

Horam (1988), *Nagas Old Ways New Trends* the work was produced with a sociological study in mind. The author portrays the generational divide in society as a "conflict within Tradition." Nonetheless, there is common ground in the majority of disagreements, thus it will take both parties to reverse course and reconcile. The divide might narrow if younger people try to influence their elders and exhibit less disrespect while the older people follow through on their sermons and lead more moral lives. "The idea of false protection should be done away with in modern Naga society; living in isolation will not do any good to the Nagas, and therefore, Nagas must be exposed to the outside world," the author said. Horam, M. (1977), in his book "*Socio-cultural life of Nagas*" outlined the changes in the Tangkhul tribe's economy, politics, society, and religion and attempted to map out the social shift. Additionally, he claims that the Naga underground had some political responsibility for bringing about changes in social life.

M.N. Srinivas (1966), *Social Change in Modern India* states the nature of the relation between the processes of Sanskritization, Westernization and Secularization in Indian social and cultural life. A detail description of social change in India especially the Hindu society has noted down. The author sums up all the forces brought into existence by British rule were responsible for the increased sanskritization, westernization and secularization.

Alexander Bentley R. and O'Brien Michal J. (2017), *The Acceleration of Cultural Change. From Ancestors to Algorithms*. This book compares and contrasts our current modes of knowledge exchange with those of prehistoric humans, highlighting the rapid advancements in technology and culture. This book offers a fascinating look at how cultures evolve and endure throughout time, examining fast shifting customs ranging from old fairy tales to viral memes.

Singh (1992), *Social and Cultural Anthropology* this book outlined the various ideas of culture put forth by various intellectuals, including evolutionism, diffusion, and acculturation. The premise of the evolutionary theory of culture is that mental structures are similar, that evolution proceeds from simple to complex, and so on. It demonstrates that the advanced societies of today were previously in a rudimentary stage; their current form or nature is the

result of social development. However, there are a number of reasons why the evolutionary hypothesis of culture has been refuted. Golden Wiser contends that evolutionary philosophers have not given invention the respect it deserves. In actuality, culture is a human construct founded on social needs.

Dube (1990), *Tradition and Development* in this work, sociologist Dube made the case that a culture is fundamentally an adaptive process. Every culture has elements of continuity and change at any given time; it is never stagnant. Cultural values encompass these two types of elements. While some promote adaptation and change, others place more emphasis on the stability and longevity of particular cultural elements. He added that value transformation always comes before, during, or after cultural change. He also stated every society underwent change however, some elements of culture continued with modified version.

Lohe Kewepfuzu (2010), *Socio Cultural Heritage of KuzhamiChakhesang Nagas*. The author indicated that social change has occurred in a straight line, moving from tradition to modernism. He explains in detail how the arrival of the British, Christianity, formal education, and Nagaland statehood brought about social transformation in the Naga villages through modernization. It is an empirical reality that social, political, cultural, and economic change processes tend to be cumulative and adaptive by nature, favoring social differentiation and structural replacements in particular.

Longkumer Jungmayangla (2009), *Change and Continuity in Tribal Villages. A Sociological Study*. The book is based on classical village studies, where the main goal is to comprehend the conventional social structure and the forces of change that have either failed to disturb it or have shook it. The author expresses worry about some of the village's rapidly vanishing traditions.

Wouters (2020), *The Social Lives of Stones: Studying the past in the Chakhesang Naga Village of Phugwumi*, *Anthropology Today- North –East Institute for Research in Anthropology. Academia* 1 (1): 21-41. The author demonstrates how societal histories, culturally infused ideals,

and personal biographies were extensively incorporated into monoliths in Phugwumi, the Chakhesang Naga community. He emphasized that monuments like these, or the social lives of stones, offer a glimpse into the past and shed light on a history that has mostly remained unwritten and unrecorded. Also in his another work, *Who is a Naga Village? The Naga 'Village Republic' through the ages. The South Asianist*, Vol.5, No.1, pp. 99-120. He demonstrated the extraordinary tenacity of the Naga village as a self-sufficient, political, and functional community using historical and ethnographic means. To him, the Naga village represented a moral community distinguished by its spatial and temporal rootedness. To be more precise, he explained the current structure and essence of the Naga village with regard to local government, elections, democracy, and identity. The descriptions, nevertheless, were quite brief.

Lucy (1998), *Women in Naga Society*. In her book, Dr. Lucy highlighted the Naga Society from both the traditional and contemporary perspectives, which offers essential information on the perspectives of both men and women on the Naga women. Above all, she demonstrated how, in the newly formed Naga society, a woman's status is primarily determined by her accomplishments in terms of her position, career, and education. The tendency in the book is from an accomplished status to one that is assigned.

Lasuh (2000), *Christianity and Culture in Chakhesang Naga Tribe*. The author briefly discussed the proper relationship between Christian culture and faith. According to him, not all cultures are good or harmful. As a result, a Christian must decide what strengthens his faith and reject what undermines it in others.

Venuh (2004), *Naga Society: Continuity and Change* dealt with today's scenario of social, political and cultural change. In chapter six Babu examine how Christianity has affected the old beliefs and practices in transforming Naga society. The author briefly wrote how some practices underwent significant change, however most beliefs and practices continued with little modification according to the prevailing situation. Aier's *Cultural Change Among the Nagas* she refers to attire and festivals, Nagas examines the mechanisms of cultural change within the Naga



people. According to her, there hasn't been a significant shift in the Naga society's fundamental cultural structure. She explained how the Nagas' clothing and accessories represent more than only their rich cultural heritage and vibrant social life.

Changkiri (2015) in her book *“Socio-Cultural and Political History of the Nagas”* describes the creation of the Technical School and the introduction of formal education to Naga Hills. It demonstrated the dexterity of the Nagas at the turn of the 20th century and paralleled the achievement of the only technical school in Naga Hills. The book emphasizes the importance of the Aoleang and Moatsu festivals of the Konyaks and Aos, as well as the standing and place of Naga women in society both historically and currently. If the author had included the festivals, legal frameworks, and customs of Nagaland's other principal tribes, the book would have been even more insightful.

In addition, Inato Shikhu (2007) in his book *“A Rediscovery and Rebuilding of Naga Cultural Values”* points out the disastrous effect on the whole life of the Nagas as a result of alien culture, politics, morality, attitude and practices demoralizing the Naga traditional cultural values. He opines that acknowledging the progress of technological advancement, education and other political consciousness. He also stated Nagas are sandwiched in the middle of the two worlds. His work in Chapter three, he stressed on the major encounters and its changes with the British administration in India which is of high relevance to the proposed work.

Dozo (1994) in his work *“Growth of Baptist Church in Chakhesang Naga Tribe”* opines that the Chakhesang society has been mainly impacted by the change of religion from the traditional one to Christianity. This monograph is written only from the Christian stand and its periodical growth of Christian community. Had the author focus deeper on the social and religious lives of the people during pre-colonial period, would add more insightful interest of the people.

Again some contemporary literatures which are relevant to research work is Nshoga's (2009) *“Traditional Naga Village system and its Transformation”* gives a descriptive information

on the way of life on Naga society and its changes. However, Naga unique history remains isolated from outside world due to unexploration of its history on cultural life. He stated how the rich culture of the Nagas are hidden away from the world as very little research or writers have done concerning the Naga history.

Shimray (1985) in his book *“Origin and Culture of the Nagas”* highlighted the orthodoxy, conservativeness and sensitivity to their traditions. The Nagas being left undisturbed for such a long time, have retained the culture of the most ancient times till today. He also opined that the tribes are differentiated by languages and their traditional practices.

Contemporary and indigenous literatures reviewed which add to its work are, Alemchiba Ao (1970), *“A brief historical account of Nagaland”*, gives valuable information about the origin of the Nagas, about the migration and to the present settlement in the Naga hills. The book is mostly dealt with 20<sup>th</sup> century Nagas and provides the information of the arrival of American Baptist missionaries to the Naga soil.

Besides an indigenous writer Marhu (2006), in his work *“Metha, Menyie, Kenyu of Chakhesang Naga in the context of Modernization”* mentions the deteriorating moral, social ethical life style of Christians in contemporary society. He also points out that the early Christian missionaries had discouraged use of customs and cultures that they do it away of the moral teachings of fear, shame and taboo. In this book, he compares the moral values, ethical life of Christians with that of traditional one where sincerity, honesty, faithfulness has lost. He briefly elaborated how globalization and westernization has affected adversely the values of traditional ethics.

Zetsuvi (2014) in his book, *“Traditional culture of the Angami Nagas”* gives a valuable information of cultural values and observation on the traditional culture, society and religion. The author in this book gives insightful information on religion, social structure, customary laws, art, beliefs and practices of the Angamis.

In addition, Jamir's (2011) *"The Impact of Modernization on the Nagas"* states the conflict between the British colonizers and the missionaries where he conclude the conflict was won by the missionaries and thus Naga culture was revolutionized. Various entities and modifications had crept and there was a tremendous change. The writer also argued that the impact of modernization amongst the Nagas has crippled their ability to act and transform their culture.

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

- No detail research has been done by any specialist till today on the proposed research topic.
- The influence of the western culture and the weakening of socio-cultural practices within the tribe.
- Lack of preservation and the diverse socio-cultural trend leading to the changes within the community.

### **1.6 Statement of the Problem**

The inculturation of western Christian missionaries to the Nagas in general and the Chakhesang Nagas in particular has been a mixed blessing, stimulating fresh faith on the one hand and undermining the traditional culture on the other. Social customs and cultural beliefs have disappeared as inculturation has progressed. The Chakhesang Naga society is evidently experiencing a transitional stage. In today's globalized world, it is true that no society could stay isolated, and the Chakhesangs are no exception. Urbanization, the advent of contemporary technology, and the sedentary lifestyles all contribute to the increasing complexity of society. Though there are a number of Chakhesang Naga writers, scholars, intellectuals, politicians, only few books about the Chakhesangs are made available. The current generation of the Chakhesang society are gradually becoming less interested in indigenous knowledge, authentic meanings, traditional values, customs and to the point where they are becoming oblivious to their own

culture. The adoption of a new lifestyle in some circumstances, ignoring their own customs, traditions and values.

The rich traditional culture is being threatened with the race of modernization and is nearly ignored entirely. This has brought in changes within the traditional society of the Chakhesangs, their cultural norms, values, behavior and attitudes. Westernization has being assimilated and has its negative effects within the Chakhesang community. The biggest challenge facing by the present and future generation is losing one's own cultural identity. The rich literature of the Chakhesang Nagas stored in memory are disappearing along with the passing of an elderly and the scant written record of the Chakhesang culture and tradition is at risk of vanishing. Thus, the challenge is to ensure that the excellent old traditions and culture does not disappear in the midst of modernization and societal changes. Therefore, it is in need of an hour to rebuild the traditional life and culture with home-grown values rather than judging from imported principles and ideas.

### **1.7 Objectives of the Study**

- To study the socio-cultural aspects of the Chakhesang Naga tribe in the pre-colonial and colonial period.
- To examine the influence of modern education system in the rich culture of the Chakhesang tribe.
- To recommend policies and measures to preserve the culture of the Chakhesang tribe.

### **1.8 Research Hypothesis**

- With the advent of Christianity, there are changes in the social and cultural aspects of the Chakhesang tribe.
- Education played a very important role in influencing the socio-cultural life of the Chakhesangs.

## 1.9 Methodology

It is very much essential to study the historical developments of society and culture when it comes to the study of continuity and change. Therefore, the following methods were employed.

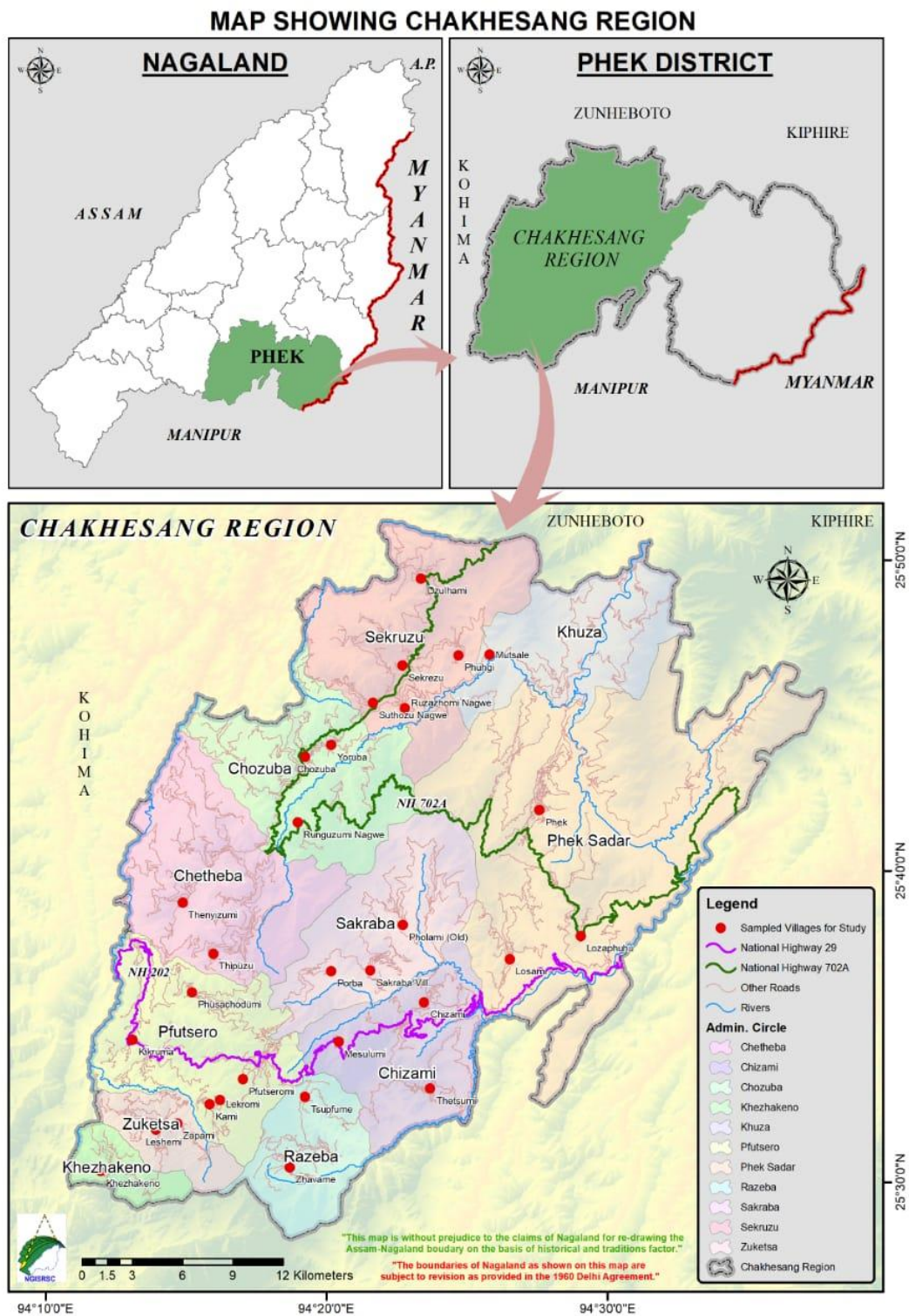
- Primary source i.e. interview method, oral narratives, official records, observation, archival sources of the colonial period in India.
- The secondary sources include literary sources i.e. journals, both published and unpublished documents, articles, books, newspapers etc. Libraries were explored and examine for referring the proposed study.
- In order to support the study, demonstrations, photographs and sketching were also taken and utilized. Primary source from field survey work formed the highest data of this study.

## 1.10 Study Area

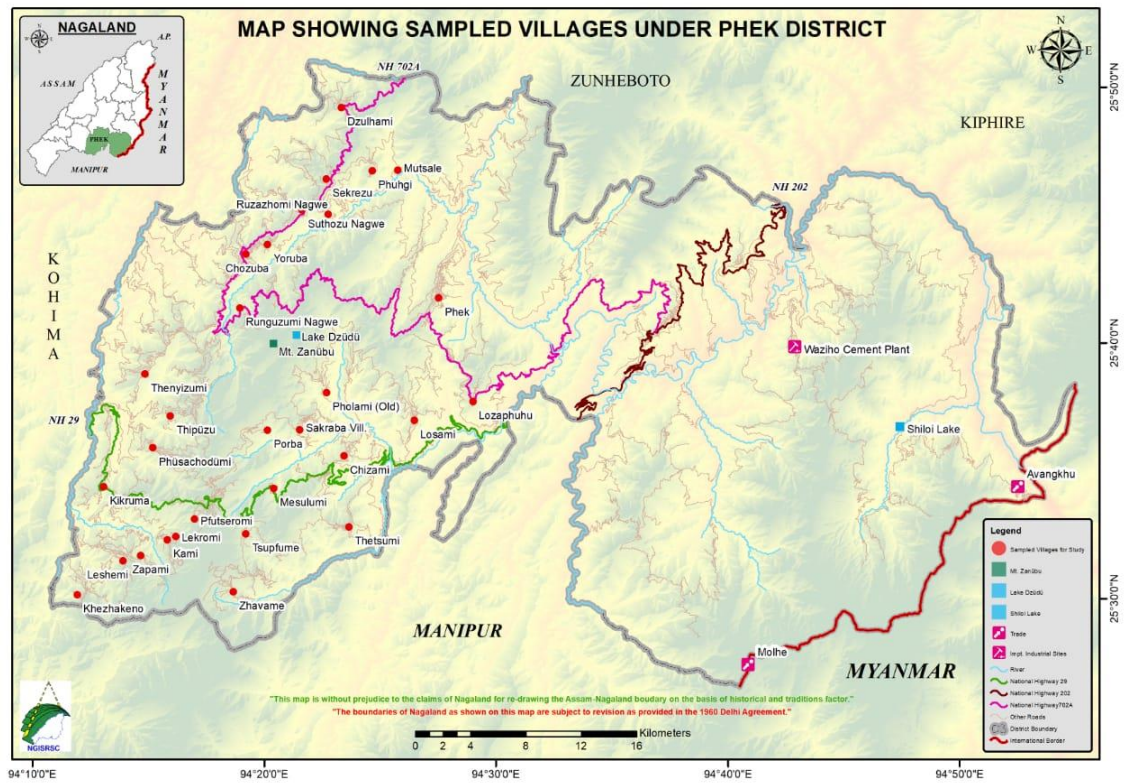
The research villages were chosen using a random sample method across Phek district of Nagaland. These villages were selected considering the different features within the Chakhesang Nagas with the aim of collecting analytical primary data (Table 1).

| Area/Region       | Name of the Villages   |
|-------------------|--|
| <b>Kuzhathede</b> | Khezhakeno, Leshemi, Zapami, Lekromi, Pfutseromi                           |
| <b>Secheku</b>    | Chizami, Mesulumi, Thetsiimi, Zhavame, Tsiipfume, Porba, Phola, Sakraba    |
| <b>Chokri</b>     | Kikruma, Phusachodu, Thipuzu, Thenuzumi                                    |
| <b>Phek</b>       | Phek, Lozaphuhu, Losami, Mutsale   |
| <b>Chozuba</b>    | Chozuba, Yoruba, Phugi, Sekrezu, Runguzu, Ruzazho, Siithozu Nasa, Dzulhami |

**Table1: Name of Area/ Features and Villages under Study**



**Fig 1.1** Map showing Chakhesang region under study



**Fig 1.2** Map showing sampled villages for study





**Plate 1:** *Kazhuchebo* wild callery pear tree at Mekhrore believed to be a migration place



## Chapter 2

### SOCIETY AND CULTURE DURING PRE-COLONIAL AND COLONIAL PERIOD

#### 2.1 Socio- religious Practices

The Chakhesangs has rich culture, folklores, traditions, attires or other practices. They have their own distinct features and cultural practices which differentiate them from other Nagas. The village played a prominent role in fostering the society (Wouters, 2017). The villages are mostly divided into Khels or Clans where its history is carved in their customs and traditions. The customary laws are mostly unwritten and practiced by all villages. These laws are binding to members of the society and were passed on from generations to generations by way of verbal communication and practices. The elderly people of the village decide and passed judgments on disputes and matters concerning the welfare of the village.

Within the socio-religious life of the Chakhesangs, the gennas (*menyi* or *miinna*) were observed with certain purposes by the respective villages. The gennas were observed according to the purposes, restraining from going to fields as well as other constructions. Different kinds of genna observed were: To worship and appease the Supreme Being for good harvest of crops or asking the bountiful food grains every year. To appease the Mother Nature that no natural calamities would destroy the crops, house, human, animals etc. The villagers also observed genna to ask blessings, protections from enemy, protection of domestic animals from epidemics, pests of crops etc. Basically various kinds of gennas were observed and most of them were based on religious observation. To cite some: -

- (i) **Festival Genna:** Festival genna is observed for its sanctification. Various ritual observations were done purposefully. Religious rites or gennas were observed as per the respective village according to the timing of their festivals. According to the research interview conducted, during festival genna, sanctification of house known as *ekiedi* or *ciedu* were performed by the head of the family and the priest of the village. In such observation days, the wine and some little portion of meat were offered to appease the

Supreme being. Whenever a person was found defiling a genna, the consequences fall upon the individual.

(ii) **Natural Calamities Genna:** When natural calamities such as flood, wind, fire, earthquake etc. occurred in the village, genna was observed strictly to control the further occurrence. In such genna observation days, early morning the *Mewu/ Thevo* informed the villagers by performing *esah* from *esah beh* (Plate 2). This *esah* means informing the villagers to observe genna and order not to do any kind of work. In such day, people appeased the Supreme being by not even showing the food to the sky. Therefore, rice beer in the traditional bamboo cups were covered by hand if the person goes out with drinks to *Mapumo* (khel gatherings). A plate of food was also taboo to show the sky, therefore having food outside the house or in the courtyard was taboo. These all were the belief that the benevolent spirit who control the weather might curse again to human if they do not abide and perform the rites.

(iii) **Evil Spirit Genna:** Naturally no human could see an evil spirit or other supernatural being, but when it was seen by a person sometimes, the genna was observed by the whole village to avoid any epidemic, accident, illness or misfortunes etc. When any unidentified blood was seen, genna was observed to control any accident, dead, sickness etc. Such gennas were observed by placing *Thopi/Pinnah* (wild mugwort plant). The strong odor *Thopi* plant (Plate 3) was placed as a sign of offering to the benevolent spirit. On the other hand, it was also believed that such strong odor plant would also scared away the evil spirit. Such rituals were done or placed within the village gate, or the place where evil spirit were seen. Such rites of placing mugwort plant were also done to appease the Supreme being to avoid sickness whenever they came across giant stones in the wild. Because it was believed such giant stones have spirits. They prayed that no evil spirit should come and cast them any illness or accident.

- (iv) **Death Genna:** The villagers strictly observe genna when a person died naturally, accidental death or normal death. When a warrior was killed by the enemy, the whole village observed genna to cleanse the enemy's impurities. In this type of genna, the villagers without doing work, prayed to Supreme being not to occur such death in the village. In such genna observation, the animals killed known as *eprah* was distributed to the whole villagers. Such distributed meat has to be eaten within three days. All the cooking pots has to be washed on day three, the water stored in the house has to be drained off and even the ash in the fire hearth has to be cleaned. Genna was also observed when lunar eclipse or solar eclipse occurred. The entire village was forbidden from working during this genna observation, and they begged for the moon and sun to return to their lives since without them, life on earth would not be possible.
- (v) **Weather Genna:** The weather genna was observed strictly when the paddy ripens as a worship to Supreme Being to avoid any natural calamity. This genna was somehow the same like that of natural calamity genna.
- (vi) **Pests/ Animal Genna:** Animal or pests genna was observed to control the destruction cause by wild animals and pests in the fields. Such genna was observed without killing or eat any kind of animals or insects. It was taboo to eat any kind of meat or insects like grasshopper etc. during such observation dates. A prayer to the Supreme Being has being offered to protect the crops and its cultivation.

## **2.2 Genna /Menyi**

During the observation of any kinds of gennas, as per the traditions of the tribe, it was *kenyi* or forbidden to work in the fields, construction of houses etc. The person was forbidden to work with any agricultural implements, tools, house building etc. It was even taboo or *kenyi* to clear and clean the irrigational channel (Plate 4). It was also forbidden to violet religious banned, restrictions imposed on every person on the certain day of genna.

According to the research interview conducted, in some villages, the violators of genna were compelled to re-observe the genna the next day by himself or along with his family members. Villagers also condemn the violators to the extent of expelling from village if they do not abide the rules lay down by the village or religious authority. When no one caught the person defiling the genna, it was more dangerous as the unseen Supreme Being never left such violators unpunished.

### **2.3 Observation of Religious Rites and Ceremony**

Within the custom and tradition of the tribe, religious rites and ceremony can be defined as a formal occasion in which a special acts and formalities are to be perform. A systematic sequence of performances, prayer to appease the benevolent God. Such observation of religious ceremonies were done for the well-being of the village community or for the socio-religious lives of the people and that do not harm to any individual or community in the days to come. Such observation of religious rites and ceremonies were done throughout the year such as during festivals, terrace paddy plantations, harvest, marriage, death, or any special upcoming events etc.

### **2.4 Ordination of Village Priest/ *Mewo-ku*.**

“*Mewo-ku*” was a traditional practice for ritual ordination of priest. The meaning of *Mewo-ku* ‘*Mewo*’ means ‘Priest’, and ‘*Ku*’ means fasting cum performing of rituals’. There were two ranks of priesthood-one was without *Mewo-ku* and the other was with *Mewo-ku*. Priest with *Mewo-ku* was regarded as authoritative priest with certain authorities which a priest without *Mewo-ku* does not enjoy. *Mewo-ku* was performed by the priest for three months starting from somewhere in March. During the period of *Mewo-ku* the entire village also has some parts to observe it. During *Mewo-ku* period, the village should not allow any enemy village to come and chop even a small piece of wood from the wood block of the village for fear of becoming weak and easy prey of the enemy. The *Mewo* or priest was also forbidden to travel to other villages to talk or even encounter people from other villages. He was forbidden to throw his waste from his body to other’s land.

*Mewo-ku* was a merit title for the priests, only the rich priests can earn it. When an ordinary priest would enter into the *Mewo-ku* house (Plate 5) he shall be led by two men who carry spears, shield and with a dog. This companion was for protection and shielding of the priest. The selected bull without blemish shall be killed by strangling to death. The meat of the bull shall be distributed to each household. Part of the meat shall be kept particularly for the priest to eat for that year. Other animals also shall be killed for the entire village to feast. A huge quantity of rice beer shall be prepared by him for male folks of the village. The feast shall continue for three days.

Some restrictions for *Mewo-ku* priest were as follows: -

- 1) He shall not bath for three months.
- 2) He shall not cut hair for the whole year.
- 3) He shall put on only white cloth.
- 4) He should not eat other's food or belongings that whole year.
- 5) He should not have sexual intercourse for that whole year.
- 6) He should not eat any other meat except that unblemished bull and vegetables.
- 7) He should not host any guest of other village.

After the whole ritual was over, the priest shall have the authority to say and perform the duties with authority. Then the priest shall bless upon the people of the village. According to the tradition, the priest never finish the food on his plate when he eats. He remained a little portion of rice believing that there is more to eat and the food is never finish. According to the oral tradition, when a priest died, he was buried together with a living dog in a separate enclosure. From the field survey conducted at Zapami village, the burial site of *Mewo* and a dog could be clearly perceived (Plate 6). A hallow pipe known as *Khubo* was inserted for the dog to breath with air passage passing through the pipe so that the dog survived for six, seven days. This was believed that the dog would accompanied and protect the death's soul and alert the enemy which

comes on their way as during pre- colonial period, war with the foes was inevitable. The same case was also performed to the well known good warriors during pre-colonial period.

### **2.5 *Romeni-Fuphre/ Thevii Meta* Release of Chicken**

“*Romeni-Fuphre*” or “*Thevii Meta*” is a strict traditional ritual. The meaning of “*Romeni-Fuphre*” ‘*Ro*’ means ‘God’, ‘*meni*’ means ‘religious forbidden day’ and ‘*Fuphre*’ means ‘release of chicken’. *Romeni-Fuphre* was observed annually during the month of *Selukhrrii* July. However, this act of releasing the chicken, some villages performed the rituals before the start of any agricultural activities. According to the tradition, when a date was fixed, the villagers shall select two strong men from amongst themselves and the two shall carry spears (Plate 7) and a selected unblemished chicken with them. They shall go outside the village gate just before sun set and shall release the chicken at a place where the chicken will not return back to the village. All the villagers who went outside the village gate shall return home before this ritual was performed. While releasing the chicken the two shall say, “this chicken has carried away all the sins and sicknesses of the village”. They also prayed to the benevolent Supreme being for good harvest, protections of agriculture from animals, protection and safety of the villagers from enemy, good health, or protection of any adversities within the village. Then they shall come back to the village gate (Plate 8) and closed the gate for the night. The reason was that no evil or sickness should come to the village thereafter. The two men then head straight home without speaking to the other people who comes on their way. They also would never turn back in fear and believe that it would pollute the rituals which they had performed.

### **2.6 *Rifu / Therihu* Warrior’s Trophy**

During pre-colonial period, *rifii* or war in the enemy battle was very popular. Young men skilled in enemy’s battle were honored and looked up as a true warrior. Courageous and brave at heart, was a must to be a true warrior. As such, they gained honored and respect from the villagers and the best among them was made the leader of the village. When a villager died at the hand of the enemy, the members of this family killed animals and gave to good warriors,

begging them to avenge the death of their loved one. The warriors with much pursuance, consented to the request of the grieved and prepared for the war. With daos, spears, shields (Plate 9), sharpened bamboos and wood to pierce the feet of the enemies who might come after them. They marched with might and confidence.

According to the tradition, when the warriors beheaded the enemy, the head was brought to the village, placed it in the house of the priest (*Mewomi*) for a ritual ceremony (Plate 10), followed by great feasting. The meat eaten at the feast was known as '*Riphrito*'. '*Ri*' means war and '*phrito*' which means 'meat eaten'. When the warriors beheaded an enemy's head, they don't go silently, they shout joyously, "*whe...whe...whe.*" pass the enemy's head into a stone enclosure (Plate 11) from north and exit towards south indicating the superiority and defeat of an enemy. They dance about to proclaim their victory at a distance away from the enemy's village. After hearing the shout, the enemy villagers gathered to see as to which of their members have gone missing. Thereafter, they go in search of him where about. Soon a group of people called the '*Edemi*' (search group) would be formed in search of the dead body. The *Edemi* carried baskets, spears and a certain plant known as '*Kekiinyii*' which they put over their heads so that people may not identify them. The jurisdiction of the '*Edemi*' were divided representing different areas. On certain occasions, people gathered to see and identify them. This group of people were protected and as such nobody killed them. In case of such untoward incidents, their community members cursed them with famine, epidemic and so forth. People therefore, feared to kill them or harm them. *Rifii* or war with enemy was limited to a certain period. It was banned during planting and harvesting of paddy after which war was declared again. A sect of people called '*Wethomi*' (peace keeping people) who represent different areas controlled war. War always seemed the scenario of olden days and a skillful art.

## **2.7 Festivals and Rituals**

All year round the Chakhesang Nagas celebrate various festival. According to the convenient of the date, each village observed in different scheduled dates. Although, the

traditional festivals are celebrated on different dates, it is celebrated on the same month by each native village, and the nature of festivals, name and religious rites observed by them were almost the same.

**(i) Siihkriinye/ Body Purification Festival.**

Siihkriinye is the most important festival and is celebrated in the month of January. Both boys and girls were sanctified during this festival through ceremonies and rituals. Siihkriinye covers for about 11 days with the start of '*Nyede*' (preparation for festival) and within five days including '*Nyede*' necessary preparations were made for the rest of 6 days of the period.

The first day of the festivity period was known as '*Cedu*' sanctifying the house. On this very day animals were killed and each household sprinkles the blood of the killed animals on the pillar of the house. The first fetched wine was offered to the deity in banana leaf and the cooked meat and rice-beer were offered to the high priest and priest of the village in exception of blessings.

The second day was called '*Siihkriih*' meant for men folk. '*Siihkriih*' signifies sanctification of young innocent and obedient boys for this ritualistic ceremony. On this very day, every man was supposed to take a fresh-water bath and was forbidden to use water fetched by women. To perform this ritualistic ceremony (*Siihkriih*) everything new was used including utensils and fireplace. The men folk go to the well early morning before any animal or bird touches or partake of the water and take a fresh water bath immediately after the first crow of a cock which indicates the breaking of a new day in order to sanctify themselves. Thereafter the unpolluted water, considered to be holy, was brought home, fire was made out of the traditional fire making method and unblemished cock was killed and cooked with the holy water and ate it to sanctify the boys for the rest of their lives.



On this day the entire men folk go for community bird-trapping (Plate 12). The collected birds were hung on a decorated tip of a tall bamboo as a symbol of *Siihkriinye*. Different kinds of birds so caught were believed to foretell the fortunes for the forthcoming days of the year of the concerned individual.

The third day was called '*Thiino Nuso*' which was meant for women only. The mother performs this ceremonial ritual to sanctify her young innocent daughter or daughters. *Thiino Nuso* was much simpler than that of *Siihkriih*. They prepare an unblemished young hen and ate it to sanctify themselves for their entire lives.

The fourth day known as '*Miithi Celhii*' where social feasts such as *Miilelhii* or feast of social age groups, *Zhotho Muza* (feast of merit), etc. begins. This day was set aside from religious rituals.

The fifth day was known as '*Cedii Zhongu*' which means accomplishment of the festivals. The sixth and the last day was known as '*Thiinye Miikra*'. Now that the festival's religious pursuits were relaxed, to mark the last day of *Siihkriinye* festival it continued feasting, dancing and singing throughout the day and night till dawn. *Siihkriinye* being a festival of sanctification, it marked the time of joyful celebration and so people do anticipate and yearn for the next to come.

## **(ii) Tsiikhenyie/ Tiikhanye**

*Tsiikhenyie* is celebrated in the month of April. '*Tsiikhe*' which means end of agricultural activities and '*nyie*' which is festival. A new year of activities begins with the arrival of Spring. All sports and games or other youth activities which began after the harvest would cease with the closing of this festival.

The festival lasts for four days. On the first morning, the village priest would offer sacrifice with the first cock that crowed in the morning. All men folk come to the designated well and purify themselves by bathing. (all male child who can use a spear). This purification of bathing was very important. Any acts not conforming to the set rites

and ceremonies will be frowned at and will bring bad luck to the person or family (Lohe, 2010, p 135). In this bathing ceremony people use only *Riha* (Plate 13) new dry gourd dipper (for hauling water) specially set aside for this day, and also put on new dresses. After the bath was performed, they invoke the Supreme being for strength, long life, good harvest and other blessings.

During *Tsiikhenyie* festival, only the best unblemished male domestic animals would be slaughtered for consumption. No female livestock will be slaughtered. New rice beer will be prepared and used. The meat and other food prepared will be shared with the best friends. Games and sports such as *Meno* indigenous wrestling, *Thozhi ketshii* traditional games played by girls with wild broad beans. *Ehu* (Plate 14) and *Meshi* (traditional way of howling by male folk producing melodious sound) folk music competition etc. were organized among the different age groups after which feast was also organized among those different age groups. Married women go to their parent's house and prepare the best food for their husbands. In some villages, the male youths would declared the most beautiful girl of the village for the year.

With the end of the festival, all the traditional games and music articles such as *Lici* (Plate 15) animal horn trumpet, *khubo*, *leswu* water straining basket for fishing (Plate 16) will be stored away which is known as *Kehale-mekhi* (a genna observed and kept the utensils upside down) and not used till the necessary rites were performed for their use in the next year after harvest festival. Even the plates, pots which were used for presenting food to the spirits of the dead will be kept upside down till the next opening of such performances after the harvest known as *Kehale- methsii* (re-use by observing genna). All leisure activities were forbidden after this festival.

As the festival ends with the invocation of new blessings, all leisure activities will be left behind and concentrate only in the activities of the terrace fields and other related activities. With this the sowing of paddy and planting of new seeds starts. *Tsiikhenyie* is

a festival which celebrates the culmination of all leisure activities and a festival for welcoming a new fruitful life and year.

**(iii) Khuthonye**

‘*Khutho*’ means end of paddy cultivation and ‘*nye*’ means festival. *Khuthonye* is a festival for body build up and healthy growth of paddy. It is celebrated in the month of *Selukhrri* July after the hard toll of terrace cultivation. The festival is a break for enjoyment and relaxation after the cultivation. This festival collaborates with *epupfii*. ‘*Epupfii*’ is a body regain from its hard toll during terrace cultivation without observing rituals. Different animals like pigs, cows, dogs, chicken etc. were killed for the feast and people enjoy with local rice beer to regain the strength which they exerted during *khushekhuno* i.e paddy transplanting.

**(iv) Chiinye**

‘*Chiibe*’ means millet and ‘*nye*’ festival. The festival is celebrated after the harvest of millet from the jhum land. Thanksgiving rituals and worship to the supreme being is observed. During festival, it was forbidden to do normal work in the fields. The first day was observed as ‘*ekiedi*’ (sanctifying the house). The villagers slaughtered animals and celebrated with thanksgiving to god. The second day is observed with cleaning the footpath in the village. On the third day or last day the priest of the village performs rituals, blessed and asked the Supreme Being for the good health and guidance of the whole villagers.

**(v) Enonye**

*Enonye* was observed with strict *menyi* or genna. It was celebrated in the month of August (*Enokhrri*). An animal was sacrificed to invoke their god to protect paddy, crops from natural calamities such as hailstones, pests, insects etc. Rituals of worshipping god were done in order to have a successful and bountiful harvest. During *enonye*, it was forbidden for any person to wash clothes, pluck any living plants or even outsiders to

enter the village. It was believed that if a person comes from outside the village, it will pollute and take away the blessings from the village. It was also prohibited to take bath from the village well. It was also taboo to weave clothes or blow animal horn, *khubo* (traditional trumpet) till after the harvest of *budielha* or *ebouchito* (opening of granary store). The animal sacrificed for festival was shared to all the households of the village, cooked and rituals were performed, invoking god's blessings and enjoy in the evening.

**(vi) Budielha or Ebouchito**

*Budielha* was celebrated after the harvest of paddy in the month of *Bulokhrri* (November). Most of the villagers celebrate and observed two or three days. Before the observation or celebration of *budielha*, it was forbidden for anyone to eat newly harvested paddy. 'Bu' or 'ebu' is big granary store and 'lha' which means opening of the granary. This festival marked the beginning of consuming the new paddy. This festival was celebrated with crabs, fish, snail, frogs etc. (Lohe, 2010). Women folk played a pivotal role in this celebration and rituals. On the first day women reaped the remaining paddy from the field and add little amount to each *ebu* i.e granary store. Women eat only crabs, fish, frogs and was taboo to drink the rice beer. The second day, women from every household would go to the village spring water early in the morning to fetch water from the dry guard jars before any animals or birds pollute or drink. She then took few amount of paddy from each granary, grind it, cooked with the water she fetched from the village well. She invokes blessings to god to have abundance of paddy even if consumption starts. With this it marked the beginning of consuming new harvested paddy of the year.

The third day was observed with another genna known as *thebvo lezhi bou* or *mewetho meny* to appease god for protection from fire and help them to protect them from any danger or calamities. With this women folk proceed to jungle or field to cut

thatch for making house roofs. Before such genna was observed, it was forbidden to cut thatch as it was believed natural disaster might happen.

**(vii) Thiirinye/Riinye**

‘Riinye’ festival is celebrated after the harvest of paddy which was observed for about 10 days with different designated days. It is celebrated in the month of *Riinyekhrri* (December). In this festival, the *Cheje* was observed solemnly as a religious rite, so that the village will not face any adversities or misfortunes, but to led a good health, long life, without fire incident and to live prosperously in that year.

The first day, villagers observed as *ekiedi* (sanctifying the house). The small amount of rice beer in the banana leave and little pieces of meat were offered to god. Then the village men folk would go howling and catch pigs to be killed for the festival. It was taboo to kill the pig with spear, gun or dao. The pig is killed with a sharp pointed bamboo or cane by piercing in the heart as a sacrifice which is called as *melikerhikhru*. Such act of *melikerhikhru* was done by sharp bamboo believing that it was not a man who killed the pig but it was a sharp bamboo. So that by the time of their death, such animal’s soul would not come to disturb the journey of human soul. The blood of the sacrificed animal would then rub on the wall or door frame of the house. The meat was shared among the villagers and few pieces were offered to god for blessings known as *erukhumetshii*. Before this religious ritual of *erukhumetshii*, it was forbidden to drink or eat. Only after the ritual the meat will be cooked for the family and the real celebration begins.

The next day, all male folks take bath from the village spring well as a symbol of purification from sin, followed by a religious rituals known as *ethozo* (see the fortune or fate) by shooting gun in the air. If the sound produced by the gun was strong well enough, it was considered his fate will be good that year. If not, it was believed to be very careful in the coming days for any adversities or misfortunes. After the

purification of their body, the male folk go for hunting and birds, animals found during hunting were hung on a long bamboo pole as a sign of victory (Plate 17). With this the celebration continues. Riinye festival is also observed as '*Hachi*' (cooked meat and rice beer) to the elders and relatives near and dear ones. '*Khukhe*' (a plate of rice and meat) is also offered to the infant for blessings of their lives by the elderly person. *Riinye* festival was celebrated by sanctifying the house with blessings, gratitude and thanksgiving to the Supreme Being for its prosperous harvest of the year.

Besides, the above mentioned festivals, the community celebrates other festivals such as, *Ngunye* in February, *Tsakronye* in March and *Turhinye* in August etc. During these festive period, several gennas were seriously observed and also days of enjoyment as well as a public worship to appease the benevolent God for different purposes.

## **2.8 Feast of Merit *Zatho/Zhotho***

According to the religious tradition of animism, the couple must first host *Seseh* or mini-*Muza* ahead of *Zhotho/Zatho*. Religious rituals were performed by the couples and offerings of rice beer and meat to the Supreme Being was observed. The couple also observed fasting and prayed to the Supreme Being for the necessary upcoming event of the feast. Any couple who host feast of merit should first perform *Seseh*. This *Seseh* was hosted by the end of November after the harvest. All men folk were distributed meat in the evening. Only the next morning, meat was distributed to the women folk. This was the first step of feast of merit. It has been partake by all villagers. It was considered taboo for all the villagers to work in the agricultural activities during the celebration.

*Zhotho/Zatho* was the most honored and prestigious with the highest traditional respect. It was also the most expensive feast and only the rich couples could afford to host the feast. The villagers after observing the granaries, checked the wealth of the couple, only then if they

possess enough wealth, a declaration to host the feast was made with the final permission given by the village priest.

For hosting *Zhotho*, there were two parts. In the first part it was *Thirheza* and shall be hosted in December preceding or succeeding *Thiirinye/Riinye*. In this, the host usually killed at least 8 to 12 fat pigs and 4 to 6 oxen, and nearly used 3 to 4 barns of paddy. The best meat was distributed to the whole kitchen household in the village.

The second part of *Zhotho* was succeeding the *Siikhriinye* festival. In a year only one feast can be hosted by the couple (Vasa, 2021). The feast donor usually used 6 to 8 barns of paddy for preparation of rice beer, killed 10 to 12 pigs and 4 to 6 oxen. In the same way, the best parts of oxen meat were again distributed to the whole household mandatorily. The whole village population irrespective of relatives, non-relatives, young and old participate the feast for twice.

High ceremonial honors and respects was given to the feast donor during *Zatho/Zhotho* feast. No one shall be left out without an invitation. The whole village population enjoy the mass feast in the evening and also the next morning. It was mandatory to have two times mass feasts during *Zhotho* feast. Young and old, man, women and children partake in celebration. Joyful musical voice, (*cehbiikuhou/Ehu*) traditional yodeling, folk song etc. shall be presented in honor of the host in their house or premises. Before entering into the feast donor's premises, people gathered from another place and present the mass voice know as *Ehu* which was of high ceremonial honors and respect. In both the mass feast, evening and next morning, men folk present musical folk song, yodeling etc. to the host premises.

## **2.9 Several Entitlements for Feast of Merit**

The first time feast of merit hosted by a couple shall be bestowed and entitled to put on the decorated or protocol shawl of *Theriikadiera/ Riizakhu/* (Plate 18). For the construction of the house, the pillar and the two main plunk walls shall be stained with blood of animal which was killed to celebrate on the day of religious rites in order to dedicate the house to the Supreme Being.

In the second time feast of merit, the couple shall be entitled with various privileges, honored and highly looked upon. Besides various entitlements, award of decorations, the persons whoever hosted feast of merit raised their status with the capacity to speak to his villagers in times of needs. The same couple who hosted feast of merit for the second time shall enjoy the privileges and entitled as below: -

- i) The couple shall be entitled the shawl of *Thsiiketsiira/Thiipikhu* (Plate 19) according to the traditional protocol.
- ii) The couple were entitled to construct house horn *Cekacie/Kecikie* (Plate 20).
- iii) The couple has the right to put up the sculptors of animal heads on the plunk walls.
- iv) The feast donor whoever provide feast to the village and at the same time to other village (feast for two village at the same time) will be bestowed and entitled to construct house-horn at the front as well as the back side of the house.
- v) The couple who hosted feast of merit for the second time was also entitled to erect one stone together with other religious and traditional protocol entitlements.

## **2.10 Religious Rites for Construction of House by *Zathomi/ Zhothomi***

The feast is performed with religious rites before the celebration where the couple has to regale for the whole village (Vasa, 2019). A minimum of two days of religious rites were observed by *Zathomi* in order to construct the *ceka* house (see plate 20). A pig is killed and the blood is stained to the main pillar and plunk wall. This was followed with traditional prayer and blessings to the unseen God to protect from all calamities, good health, wealth etc. The plunk walls of animal sculptures (Plate 21) represents how many animals the feast donor slaughtered in the feast. (eg: one animal can be decorated or sculpt with two animal heads). The Naga house-horn will be put at the front of the house when the feast donor hosted two times feast of merit, and also toward the backside of the house if any. (if he hosted feast for two village). Villagers or well wishers who brought presentation or contribution shall be invited to feast for recognition. The owner of the house offered blessing and sanctified the house before the feast. The self-



brewed rice beer and meat were offered to the Supreme Being known as *metshii* (a bit of rice beer and meat). After which, the feast for the mass begun.

### **2.11 Erection of Menhirs/Stone Pulling**

Erection of menhirs/Stone pulling was a megalithic monument that represent as a living tradition among the Chakhesang Nagas. These monuments reflect the identity and other aspects of the person who erected by hosting feast of merit (Wouters, 2015). The erection of stone signifies social and economic status of the feast donor. Tracing from the socio-cultural perspective, erecting megalithic stones was one of the most visible features of the Chakhesang community (Jamir & Muller, 2020). These monuments, menhirs/erection of stone can be single or clusters of two or more stones. Basically has its implications attached to social, religious and economic status of an individual (Changkiri, 2019). A number of menhirs, megalithic monuments were still present both within and outside the villages. Erection of menhirs were mostly situated on the outskirts of the village, footpaths, nearby village, view points, resting places, footpath leading to the fields etc.

### **2.12 Menhir /Tsoshe/Tsiishu**

*Tsoshe* or *Tsiishu* is standing stone. This *Tsoshe* can be single or clustered together (Plate 22) in more than two stones depending on how many times the feast donor gave to the villagers. The erection of stone involves a complex process with many rituals which were performed by the feast donor. The stone pulling and erection of stone start with a single stone when the couple hosted feast of merit for the second time which is called “*Tso siikele*”. It is to be note that, the first time hosting feast was not entitled to pull or erect any stone. Rich couples in the village hosted feast of merit multiple times depending on their ability of acquiring wealth. In some village, couples hosted numerous time feast of merit where some stones were clustered to 16 stones at Phusachodu, 21 stones at Pfutseromi, 32 stones at Runguzu village etc. This indicates that the couples hosted numerous time feast of merit. However, pulling and erecting stone for both husband and wife starts only from the fourth time when the couple gave feast.

Simultaneously, the couples were entitled to pull two stones one for man and other for his wife with their continuous feast hosting.

It was traditionally oriented, that in order to pull stone, the man highly depends on his precognitive dreams. Future vision, future sight check was considered very important for him to pull stone. When the stone was selected (not necessarily from the donor's land), the man foresees his dream only then it was considered. If his precognitive dreams show bad luck, belief to be unhealthy for future, death or poor etc. he gave up the desired stone and opted for another stone. However, if he had a positive or good signs in his dream, the selected stone was final. The main feast was hoisted on the stone pulling day. With this, the whole men folk of the village partake in pulling the stone. Every male child who could walk participate in pulling the stone, the meat was distributed who partake. A man known as '*Tso ko*' (stone caller) who wears black shawl *Chootsiirah* played a vital role in pulling the stone. He would stand on the stone, shouting and yodeling, howling on top of his voice pressing and urging the men folk to give full might in pulling the stone.

The stone was usually erected on the stone pulling day. If the stone could not reach the site on the very date, the feast was postponed to the next day. The stone or menhir is usually erected besides the common foot path, common resting places etc. where it can really signify the dignity of the feast donor. Usually the stones were erected in any other's land. The plot for erecting menhir were being exchanged with baskets of paddy, some few amount of money or at times from the free will of the land owner.

For the erections of menhirs, the *Sohemi* clans (ordinary people) after hosting second time feast of merit he was entitled to pull one stone. However, in the case of *Thevomi* clans (Priesthood) only by the third time, hosting feast of merit would be entitled to pull one stone.

The details of erection of stones is shown (Fig2.1).

| Hosting of feast of merits | Sohemi Clans | Thevomi Clans | Entitled for House-horn/ Shawl     |
|----------------------------|--------------|---------------|------------------------------------|
| 1 <sup>st</sup> time       | .....        | .....         | Riizakhii/Theriikadiera            |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> time       | 1 Stone      | .....         | Thiipikhii/Tshuketsiira/House-horn |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> time       | 1 -Stone     | 1- Stone      | .....                              |
| 4 <sup>th</sup> time       | 2 -Stones    | 1- Stone      | .....                              |
| 5 <sup>th</sup> time       | 2 -Stones    | 2-Stones      | .....                              |
| 6 <sup>th</sup> time       | 2-Stones     | 2- Stones     | .....                              |
| 7 <sup>th</sup> time       | 2- Stones    | 2-Stones      | .....                              |
| 8 <sup>th</sup> time       | 2- Stones    | 2-Stones      | .....                              |
| 9 <sup>th</sup> time       | 2-Stones     | 2-Stones      | .....                              |
| 10 <sup>th</sup> time      | 2-Stones     | 2-Stones      | .....                              |
| 11 <sup>th</sup> time      | .....        | 2-Stones      | .....                              |
|                            |              |               |                                    |
| <b>Total</b>               | 16- Stones   | 16-Stones     | .....                              |

**Table 2:1 Showing the equal number of stones from both the clan**

## 2.13 Economy

Agriculture is the primary source of income among the people. For the Chakhesang people, terrace cultivation (Plate 23) is the main means of subsistence. The Zabo system of rice growing technology is widely used by farmers. The name "Zabo" combines the management of forests, agriculture, cattle, and fisheries and refers to the impounding of water (Sharma & Sharma, 2004). Enhancing crop yield, protecting the environment, and managing soil and water resources effectively are the main elements of the technique. Farmers in the area prepare to plant paddy saplings in the wet terrace fields in June, when the rainy season officially begins. But

before the entire village begins planting, the priest and the head of the household observe the pre-planting known as *Eloshemeri* or *Tekhou Shekhri* ceremony. It was considered taboo for any person to plant before the ceremony was done. Such ceremony was done early morning where the head of the family goes to field along with wine and the dry meat which was hanged in the house during *Runye* festival. He also takes with him the paddy saplings and the tip branch of *Rhus Semialata* plant *Emviike* (Plate 24). After finishing of planting the paddy, he took a break and blessed the field and offered to the Supreme Being a little amount of wine and meat in the banana leave which he brought from home. He then drank his wine, plant the tip branch of *Rhus Semialata* plant between the paddy and ask God that his paddy be like *Rhus Semialata* fruit as it holds hundreds of seeds per tips.

Besides agriculture, animal husbandry, craft and weaving by women were the main activities that sustain the livelihood of the people. The quantity of *Ebou*, *Tshiiriibou*, granary stores (Plate 25), and animals a person owned determined their place or status in the community to a large extent. Barter was the customary mode of exchange before the arrival of the British. Based on age, gender, or place of birth, there was no labor division (Lohe, 2010). In actuality, there were special conventions that forbade the other sex. For example, men were not allowed to weave or even touch a piece from weaving; only women do this. The same idea applies to women fighting alongside their enemies. The warfare was exclusively for men, and women were not allowed or was taboo to partake.

The people are hardworking, skilled and produced a variety of craft products, including paddy mats, winnowing trays, and baskets in various sizes and styles for various uses. Certain villages also produced salts from the brine springs and earthen pots. Each village has its own blacksmith, and their primary business was forging iron tools that the entire community uses. People also went fishing, hunting, and carpentry. The Chakhesang community is independent from other communities and maintains its own subsistence economy. There was equity among

the villagers and no one was above the other. If people who were insufficient, if any were taken care of by the strong sense of community.

## **2.14 Weaving**

Weaving by the Chakhesang women has been an essential aspect of their existence from the time of their forefathers, in addition to other livelihoods. Unlike other crafts, weaving is exclusive to women alone. “It was considered taboo or forbidden for men to weave. This taboo was believed that men would fall into pray of the enemy or misfortune” (Dianu, 2023, p.7). Weaving was considered indigenous household industry since pre-colonial period.

During the pre- colonial and colonial period weaving was traditionally done by women using yarns gathered from native plants such as cotton, *kuthro* (*Hibiscus sabdariffa*), the bark of stinging nettle plants *Thebvo* or *Sazu* (Plate 26) and other species. Additionally, women processed and collected dyes from various plants, tree barks, and ashes that were readily available in the wild. The Chakhesang women weft a great deal of clothing, which they did not depend on the outside world, could fulfilled the need of the family and loved ones for its clothing.

The women of Chakhesang Nagas weave various shawls and wraparounds for both genders of the folk. “Chakhesang women is believed to have conceptualized the idea of weaving the prestigious shawl for her brother as a gift during the occasion of brother performing the feast of merit” (Chakhesang women welfare society). In the olden days, weaving was done mostly by singing in a peer group. One of the legendary song sung during weaving was discovered by Weriilo Mero from Pfutseromi village. He was said to be a man who could foresee and heal the sick and was guided by a spirit (*Metimi*). It was said he once led by the spirit to a cave where he heard a melodious song being sung by the spirits. The song inspired him so much that he learned it and handed down to the next generation. The song was particularly sung representing the spinning of yarn and weaving. It was said Weriilo Mero was such an empowered man that even strangled and dead animals could be brought back to life.

The weaving song *Edo Ketshii Lii* (The weaving Song)

Hi...ii...aii...hi...

Secho secho rekhwe rekhwe

Wupa keba rumi kiengu kiengu

Hi---ii...aii.. hi

Nohi mole ani bemoyole...hi o yoleyi...ii hi

Lisii mole hicideru le Hiyole...ii.... hi

Hino khede kedzii delede.... Hiyole,

Tsathini nihi tsathini hi

Tsiilo kewe tsiilo kewe

Yato yato yato yato

Edo tshiide tshiide tshiide

Lonyii pfvokhre loje khehi

Keso toutou keso khrukhru le.... ii

Hino khriihi khriihi khriihi

Nagami akhrii khrii yo khriiyo

Mino kelhi kelhi kelhi

Ra kelie bi ra kelie bi

Khra kelie tso khra kelie tso

Khra kelie tso khra kelie wu

Kekho meci kekho meci

Kewe-o tshiite tewulole

Translation of the song

“Shall we be gathering in this manner, had it not be for love?

And the other message we want to sing to you is...

Today, in this auspicious day

And on this day, we spin the yarn and weave

As we raise and lower the warp yarns,

The rhythmic sound of the battenning emanates ‘toutou’, ‘khrukhru’

This month is a month, meant for the Nagas.

We only live once

And our place will be replaced by the next generation

So even if we part from this place

May you always prosper wherever you go” (PCT, 2009).

The exquisite shawls and wraparounds made by the women depict the distinct individuality of the Chakhesang Nagas and reveal hidden meanings derived from their cultural and historical experiences. The weavers' inventiveness and technical proficiency were astounding. Every detail of the design has its significance. For instance, *Therukadiera/ Riizakhii* which was weaved for people who hosted a feast of merit. The shawl which is white and the four intricate stitching lines which were stitched together by porcupine quill. Many pieces of thread were twirled to stitch together. This pure white shawl represents the farts and the big stitching lines symbolizes the large intestine of animals been killed during the feast (see plate 18). Besides, the unique elaborate designs on the woven clothing represent both the diversity and complexity of human culture as well as the inventive nature of the people. The clothing which were weaved by women indicates the rich cultural tapestry of the community.

### **2.15 Customs and Traditions Relating to Customary Laws/ Village Court**

In every Naga village, the village played as a political institution, effective unit and self protective (Wouters, 2017). Tribal customary law strengthens tribal communities, identities and cultural foundations. Law and justice were based on simplicity and truthfulness. Customary laws were handed down from generations solely through oral tradition and practice among the tribe. Since time immemorial, the Chakhesangs were free from the foreign domination. Each and every village irrespective of big or small, has its own political institution, social, religious and economic existence. The people enjoyed the power of sovereign authority in the early life. During such period, all the villages had its own separate form of government of the same type and having the same culture and tradition (Chakhesang Public Organization, 2020).

During the pre-colonial period, justice was played with a strong will power. In the case of land disputes, whoever was ready to fight for his land, challenged the opponent. Such challenge were being played by *meno/ kiine* wrestling and whoever defeat the opponent would be considered to be the real claimer of the land. If, a person was found hesitated or reluctant to face any challenge, or being defeated, then the land shall be claimed by the person who won the fight.

There was no much intermediary role between the two parties. From the research interview conducted, the informant remarked, at Lasumi village there was a land dispute between Zathochii and Pfiiciikha Nechii Mebou before the existence of Gaun Bura system. The traditional law was made in such a way that whoever stayed inside the water with their head for longer period would be considered to be the owner and whoever float outside would be considered to be the disclaimer of the land. And so the former was considered to be the honest person as he has stayed inside the water for longer period than the later. The same case was found even at Tsiipfiime village. Likewise, in the villages whenever cases arise, the village elders, clans by consulting the colleagues, summon the cases and tried the cases with any written record or summon case statements and decision order of the case with the existence of GB system in the villages. There is no other higher court even if the judgment order of the village court was not satisfactory. But the parties were bounded to comply with the same decision order.

In the religious aspects, each village has Chief Priest and other religious heads respectively. However, in the governance of village, there was a strong body consisted of elders of the village, head of clans and sub-clans who administered the village and looked after all the village affairs without any designation or statutory position (Venuh, 2004). It was a democratic nature as all the head of clans and sub-clans were members of its governing body. The same body with collective members was a traditional institute and all the executive, legislative and judicial powers were vested in its body. There was no appointment of such body members, however basing on the capacity, wisdom and by virtue of age, such persons usually included regularly in the meetings of the council body. This body consisted of elders and head of clans was the most powerful organ in the village governance. They were considered the village administrators, advisors, councilors, educators, master planners, custodian of customary laws, jury experts etc.



## **2.16 Polity During the Colonial Rule**

Every Chakhesang village has its own village council. The function of the council were categorized into Executive, Administrative and Judicial. By the second half of 19<sup>th</sup> century, the British adopted the policy of administration which was suitable for the age-old traditions and local customs (Venuh, 2004,p.95). However gradually, the British eventually abolished the pre-existing administrative structure, acknowledge the elders and traditional authorities, and included them into their colonial rule. This led to the introduction of Gaonburas and Dobashis.

### **i) Gaonburas (G.B)**

The Gaonburas were chosen in accordance with local traditions and customs. There is one Head Gaonbura for the village and one G.B and Assistant G.B. from each Khel or Clan in each village. Taking into account that the government appointed G.Bs to support the colonial administration, their interests were best served. The headmen of the villages were acknowledged as leaders and became representatives of the colonial government as loyal agent through traditional means. As the village leaders, the G.Bs developed a crucial function as a conduit between the general public and the British, the government determines the role of G.Bs as a representative of colonial authority. They were not involved in creating the policies on their own. The district officers provide guidance and supervision to the G.Bs. during their employment.

### **ii) Dobashis**

Dobashi acted as an intermediary role between the Government and the native. One of the most crucial ways the British established fruitful relationships with the villagers and the people was through the function of Dobashis. District officers made extensive use of Dobashi services. “The Dobashis were at the same time employed as judges in the villages. Dobashis also advised the British officers in the settlement of cases according to the customary laws” (Venuh, 2004, p. 96). Dobashis also routinely steps into mediate and settle problems among the people.

In order to preserve ties with the native population, the British Government indirectly altered the entire political structure of the Nagas as a whole. Prior to colonial domination, the village council had the exclusive ability to uphold law and order, establish policies, and other matters throughout the villages. The political structure evolved as a result of British colonization, and the district administration adopted the common method of administration.

In 1978, the Nagaland Village Council Act, was enacted and the village council was formed in every village (Chakhesang Public Organization, 2020). The old traditional body of village administration was transformed into a democratic institute of village council with a tenure of 5 years. The powers vested in the old traditional body was, therefore, transferred to village council, but the GBs being the ex-officio members of the council, the same tradition of village court and procedure is maintained in village council court.

## **2.17 Customary Laws**

Customary law exists basing on the natural law and justice, and where there is an infringement of the customary law, in such case, the action is initiated by the village customary court. The principles of justice as per the customary law can neither be diluted nor changed, nor misinterpreted in another sense or system. Henceforth, the decision of the customary is strong, justified and cannot be challenged again in any manner in other court of customary law. The village court used customary practice and announce free and frank, and the party whichever is wrong cannot argue any further, when all the wrongs were announced publicly, and at the same time, the rightful claims or defense are brought out from the case. According to the tradition of the Chakhesangs, the village court used to allow and shall allow the oath between the two parties under the following circumstances; when there is a land disputes with no boundary or no witness, theft allegation, defamation case and denied with strong defense, allegation of poisoning case and denied with strong defense etc. Both parties were allowed to compelled in most of the civil and criminal cases. Within the property disputes, when both the parties take oath, the property in dispute shall be divided equally to both of them. In some other property dispute, the

single party of appellant is allowed to take oath, and the position of property in dispute shall be given to the appellant for he has taken oath (Chakhesang Public Organization, 2020, p 496). In other case, when the appellant party refuses to take oath, and if the single defendant party has taken the oath with a strong defense, the portion of the property in dispute shall be given to the party of defendant. In criminal cases, especially in the poison case or related cases, when one party is liable to be fine but if such party has taken oath, the fine as penalty against that party shall be waived off or cancelled. Similarly, in the case of theft, when the alleged offender is liable to be punished with fine, and if the oath is not taken by either parties both parties shall take oath. However, if the alleged theft alone take oath, in such case the fine shall be waived off the whole amount or half of the amount of the fine as the case may be. (Taking an oath is a way of asserting oneself that he has not done any wrong and if he had done, pleading God to punish him or family).

It is believed whether the civil or criminal case, but the results of the false oath has an instant action from the unseen God. It stated that, may be a serious injury, serious illness, accident, lost of animals or other properties, lost of lucks and fortunes, adversities etc. In certain cases, and the person whoever took false oath shall die soon pre-maturely. If the other adversities and evils are not befallen upon him or her as a consequence of false oath, he may be assumed as the right owner or defender.

## **2.18 Marriage and Property Inheritance of Women**

The traditional marriage system of the Chakhesangs were mostly arranged by parents. The couple married after the arrangement and agreement from both side. Marriage in the olden days were basically fixed according to the appearance of the full moon. People do not marry when the moon lit gloomy, or ending part of the full moon. In case, of the occurrence of incidents such as death, marriage were been postponed. Marriage took place only based on full bright moon and clean without any problem hampering the couple.

Marriage ceremony was strictly on the basis of religious rites and blessings. It is said, on the day of marriage, the man comes and take his wife from her home. On arriving her house, he would stump his feet on the ground at the door step to signal his arrival without uttering a word to the bride's family. The bride by then gets ready with her belongings in the basket containing a jar full of local rice beer, shawls, her attires, spades and agricultural tools etc. and followed the men. It was forbidden to speak to each other until they reach halfway at someone's place to rest. On reaching someone's home, the wife would be accompanied by a young girl to converse or play an intermediary role between the couple when both feels discomfort. This little girl played a bridge between the two.

Property inheritance for women differs from men. Immovable property or movable property for women comes from the lineage of female line. Paddy fields, ornaments, agricultural tools, jars, baskets etc. were handed down to a female daughter from female ancestors. Anything handed down from male ancestors were not allow to own by women. However, land for paddy fields were reverse back to the mother's siblings (brothers) by the time she died. In this case, among the KuzhamiChakhesangs nowadays, *Merhi* (namesake amount of the property) is taken by the mother's family after her death and the land or field is given permanently to the daughter. However, in the case of some Chokri villages like Phiisachodu, fields, lands were permanently handed by her son and were not given or owned by women. This has become its customary law and it continued throughout today. Most of the Chakhesang women were gifted paddy of 10 baskets or more by their parents after their marriage. The rich family gets more besides female ornaments, agricultural tools, paddy fields etc.

### **2.19 Morung System *Ciethicie/Kekhrokelukie***

Like any other community in Nagaland, Morung (dormitory for young youths) system played a vital role in the society among the tribe. The place which was considered to be an institution of learning before the arrival of modern education. Probably young youths after attaining 15,16 years of age were sent to the Morung or dormitory. Male and female dormitory

were set differently for them to discuss or learn according to their own respective genders. The first and foremost socialization among boys and girls in the olden days was taken in the Morung (Lohe, 2010). The venue of the Morung were mostly hosted by the rich and well to do so, a person who has good moral character, who was skillful in handicraft making, who knows traditional songs etc. so that it may be handed down to the youths. The rich house were occupied with the dormitory or Morung because in times of thirst, hunger, the owner of the house may offer the food or rice beer. For both boys and girls, *Kezhiipfu* (owner of the house/warden) plays an important role in fostering the youth. He was expected to be ideal, polite and smart. From Morung, boys and girls learnt about the social life, obligations, responsibilities, respects, one's role in political, economic and religious conditions. Young youths learnt traditional folk songs, games, tales, crafts etc. Before, the arrival of western education, Morung plays an important role of informal school, taught and trained in different activities.

After three years (maximum) of staying in the Morung, a girl was supposed to get married. Till then, the hair was shaved before marriage. One was forbade to married the same clan. When there was no right person found, the girl has to married to other village. This first stage of marriage was called *Menasiitsah/ Relimhi*. *Menasiitsah* lasted for few days.

## **2.20 Elu Menasutsah/ Relimhi Girl Trial Marriage**

As previously indicated, all of the village's eligible young boys and girls enrolled in the morung. For boys, *Kekhroke*, and for girls, *Keluke* (Kuzhale dialect). There was no set number of years required to be in the morung. Nonetheless, the highest number of years that youths engaged was most likely three. Matrimony marked the end of an individual's Morung membership and the start of a new stage of adult life in the community. *Elu-Menasutsah/Relimhi* or girl marriage (trial marriage) was a customary norm which every girl has to pass through before marrying permanently.

In the olden days, it was common for elders in the community to advise members of the Morung to get married as they grew older, especially the senior group *Keshethra/Pethikrou*.

However, the final choice about whether or not to be married was made by the Morung members themselves. With each partner's permission, parents, family, and occasionally friends proposed and arranged the majority of the marriages. But since there were no strict guidelines, people also made their own decisions about whom they would marry. It was customary for the entire *Keshethra* (older group) to be married on the same day once the decision to get married was made. Some girl members occasionally failed to locate compatible companions in a timely manner. In such a situation, everyone in the group waited for the girl until she found a partner.

According to the tradition, all the girls would put on *Mena/Nyiepii* an extended earring, on the day of *Elu-Menasutsah/Relimhi* marriage. They all brought with them the traditional rice beer *Hazhu* in *Riha* (in a dry gourd jar). This *Riha* was carried in *Echie*, a bamboo basket intended for carrying objects that was suspended from the rear. “An elderly woman who was considered honest, well to do in the society customarily led all the young girls in group to the house of their respective husbands” (PYO Souvenir p.30). In some village, a young girl also accompanied the girl to the husband’s house.

There was no other feast in *Menasutsah/Relimhi*. The only feast held at *Menasutsah* marriage was the *Ebouchito/Khilivatii* ceremony on the second day. The rite of opening *Ebou* (granary stores) is called *Ebouchito*. A little portion of rice was taken and pounded by using *Epa*, a huge single wood designed specifically for this purpose. After that, the rice is cleaned, cooked, blessed and ready to eat. On the third day, there was no work done and the couple were bound to fast with *Ekekenii/Ciekenii*. This *Ciekenii* fasting was observed for good health, abundance of food, peace and long life. Before such fasting it was taboo for them to eat anything. They were only able to eat in the evening after such completion of *Ekekenii*. The newlyweds were entitled to share a bed when these two rituals were finished.

The girl was required to spend three days minimum at her partner's house during *Menasutsah/Relimhi*, without having the opportunity to see her parents. After three days, the ceremony and sign of *Menasutsah*, which is also known as *Relimhi* were finished, her spouse

was required to chop off the elongated earring she was wearing when she came to his house. In some cases, like Porba village, a girl child who accompanied the marriage chopped the elongated earrings. In such cases, the *Mena /Nyiepii* (earring beads) were made as necklace for the young child who accompanied the marriage. Only when the required three days had passed and proper rituals and ceremony, or maybe even a week or two, or even a month, could the lady retreat back home with mutual agreement if the couple find themselves incompatible.

Nonetheless, if the pair felt they were a good fit, they made the lifelong decision to become husband and wife. In the past, the true purpose of *Elu- Menasutsah* or *Relimhi* was to encourage the village's expansion and population growth as early as possible. Since the villagers were attacked by the enemy during war, or being hunted by the ferocious animals within the vicinity of the village. An additional rationale for this age-old custom was to simulate marriage in order to inspire young people to get married in the future. Thus, the couple who desired a lifetime together were permitted to settle down. Over time, they were required to carry out additional rites and tried to serve the village's entire population a marriage feast, known as *Kela Seseh*, as an official token of their union. The pair would only engage in additional feast of merit-related and stone-pulling if they became wealthy after that.

All of the girls who had chosen not to settle the marriage during *Elu-Menasutsah* and had instead chosen to return home to live with their parents were referred to as *Nherimi/Kiithamhi*. After *Menasutsah* or *Relimhi*, they had to keep their hair long unlike shaving their hair before marriage. At that point it was believed and stated that a girl started to seem extremely lovely and feminine once she became a *Nherimi/Relimhi*. However, only after a year or longer would they be permitted or eligible for a permanent marriage to another person. Any man may make a marriage proposal at this time, and if it was accepted, the new couple could begin their married life (PYO, souvenir, p.31). This implies the same to the couple to provide a marriage feast, known as *Kela Seseh*, for the entire village within a reasonable timeframe. In the upcoming

years, the other associated feast of merit and stone pulling remain the same if they become wealthy.

The custom of *Elu-Menasutsah/Relimhi* was vitally important and necessary in the past among the Chakhesangs. Without *Menasutsah/Relimhi*, marriage was prohibited and would remain an unfulfilled genna, which was against local customs, beliefs, and the law. It was also noted that young males reject the incomplete genna female in fear of dreaded illness, early death, and other personal tragedies. Therefore, every girl has to pass through *Elu-Menasutsah/Relimhi* girl marriage by trial in order to get married permanently or even just to unshaved the hair.

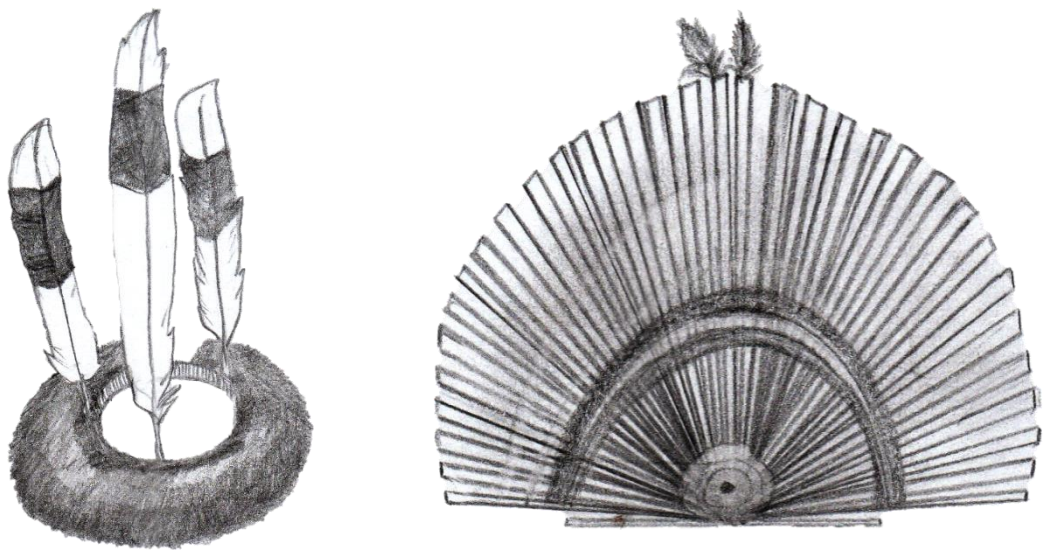
## 2.21 Ornaments and Attires

The richness and colorful attires of the Chakhesangs represents their colorful and light spirit. In the olden days, simple cotton spun and *Thebvo* (nettle) clothing were used. Women weave cloth for the entire family. Apart from weaving, knitted apparels, embroidered etc. were also common. Ornaments like necklaces, earrings, ivory armlets, headgears (Sketch 1), conch shells, bracelets, spears, bangles, ornamented belts etc. were considered precious ornaments for the customs. The traditional attires of the Chakhesangs are classified into two categories i.e. casual and ceremonial attire. Most of the ornaments and decorated piece for both male and female were worn during festivals or occasions. Attires like *Thiipikhu/Thsiiketsiira*, *Touphara*, *Dsiinhumenie*, *Pficiimenyie* (Plate 27), *Thebvorah* (Plate 28), *Nunha* (Plate 29), *Theriikadiera/Riizakhu* etc. are mostly common and wore as casual, ceremonial or occasions.

Special occasions like *Zatho* (feast of merit), festivals, pulling of stones, feathers of beautiful hornbill, cock, birds were used by men as '*Thezu*'. *Chiizhiimanapa* (feather of beautiful bird) used as earpiece by male folk (Plate 30). Both male and female wear different shawls according to their designated positions within the society. Males wear ivory tusk on the arms, *Pficiimenyie* wrapped on their waists which goes down to knee length. *Phekherii* and Cane strings *Phetho* (Sketch 2) is also wore in their calves, *Thoupriha* Elephant tusk armlet, *tsiiphra* a necklace and conch shells on the back known as *Takhu* (Sketch 3). Wild Boar tusk necklaces



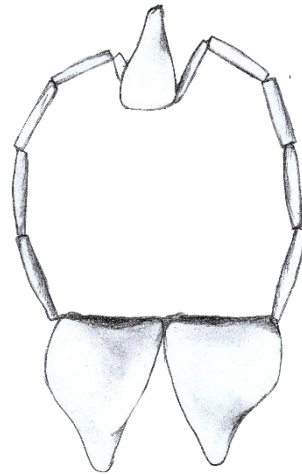
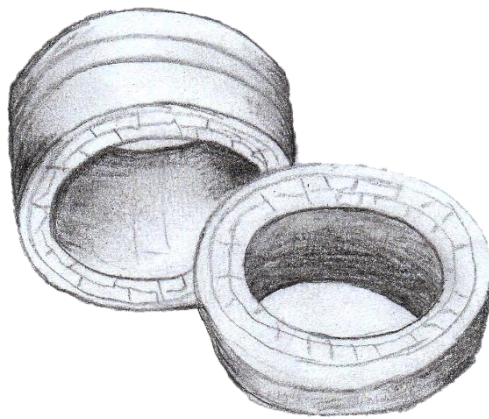
also worn by brave successful hunters (Sketch 4). Only a good warriors were entitled to wear four lines of cowry-shells in the *Pficiimenyie* (men's kilt). Young female wear *Nunha* down to the knee, coiled bracelets on the upper arms and brass bracelets (Sketch 5) on the lower arms. *Ketsiirazhie* (small black shawl wrap around) is tied upon the shoulder to cover the female body. *Laprimena/Mesiinyie* and *Menaketi/Nyeipii* (traditional earrings) were worn in the lady's ears. Different shawls, *menyie* (wrap around) etc. are mostly made of cotton, *Kuthro* (Hibiscus sabdariffa) and *Thebvo* or *Sazii* (nettle) woven by the stinging nettle plant. It is said and also believed that a person who has more ornaments signifies the wealth of a person.



**Sketch 1:** Headgears worn by men



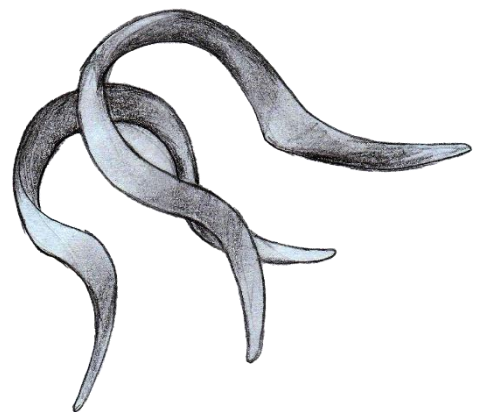
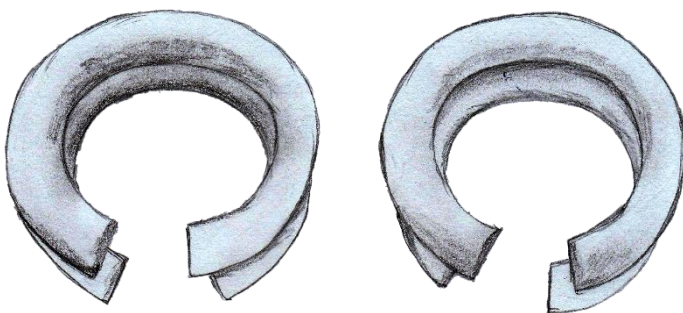
**Sketch 2:** *Phekherii* and cane strings *Phetho* worn in mens' calves



**Sketch 3:** *Thoupriha* elephant tusk armlet and *Takhu* worn by rich mens' son



**Sketch 4:** *Menyifii* Wild Boar tusk neckpiece worn by brave hunters



**Sketch 5:** Coiled bracelets on the upper arms and brass bracelets on the lower arms worn by women

## 2.22 Indigenous Games

Since centuries, Indian culture have always been connected with traditional games (Netzone, n.d.). Indigenous games represent the leisure time for young children and youth during festivals, competitions of Clans or Khels, village to village for both men and women. There were numerous indigenous games played during pre-colonial and colonial period. Many of such games were continued during festivals tracing back to the roots. The following were some of the most popular games played by the Chakhesang Nagas.

- (i) ***Meno/Kune***: (Male wrestling): One of the most important and biggest indigenous sport played by the Chakhesangs is *Meno* (Plate 31) This folk game has existed since time immemorial. To the Chakhesang Nagas, *Kune* or wrestling is a must to every male child when he grew up. During the olden days, *Kune* was also played between the opponents when there was land disputes etc. and the winner was considered the claimer of the land. The game is a common and essential activities played during festival such as *Tsiikhenyie*. The game is confined only to men. *Meno* is being play by two persons, with each one tied colored waist band around the waist known as *chephe*. Each opponent hold firm the waist band to the opposite and the wrestler has to attempt toppling the opponent onto the ground. The main objective of this wrestling is to bring the opponent's body to the ground. Whoever toppled the opponent down on the ground is considered the winner. In this game, three bouts make a final result. This indigenous game has become the national game of the Nagas.

- (ii) ***Dochemo-Doracie***: 'Dochemo-Dorachie' 'Do' which means the foundation and 'Chemo' unidentified and 'Doracie' to protect. This indigenous game is played by both men and women folk separately. The game is usually played in between two parties. While one party played as a defender and the other party played as an attacker. The game is played in turns. The defending party formed a single vertical chain for which the first person stretched both hands to protect the last person behind him to be touch by the attacker. The

attacker party runs to and fro to touch the last person from the defending team. When the defending party say '*Dochemo-Doracie*' and the attacker party say '*Kezato*'. The defending party tried to keep the chain without breaking as it would be disqualified. When the attacker party has touched the last person in the chain, the person would be out. This game was played during festivals and leisure times.

(iii) ***Zhazii Zhazii***: *Zhazii Zhazii* is another traditional game played mostly by Zhaveme village. The word 'Zha' refers to the indigenous bamboo mat made for paddy drying. And 'Zii' which means rolling. Therefore, *Zhazii* refers to the rolling of bamboo mat. Traditionally, bamboo mat is rolled and store from any damage. "In this game, the players join their hands tightly and wrap themselves around the person in the middle in a clockwise motion singing, "zhaziizhazii..." continuously. When everyone is wrapped around closely, the person in the outermost will begin unwrapping singing "*dakhelekhe, dakhelekhe...*" meaning "let us return back" in anti-clockwise" (Cultural Connect p.32). This game is usually played during happy occasion for merrymaking.

(iv) ***Lasoh Kezhuhzhuh***: *Lasoh* means bamboo for closing gate and *kezhuh* means to fix it in the gate. This game is played only by male folk (Plate 32). All male participants have to carry the bamboo pole (approximately 6 ft.) on their back without any support or without being tied. Such bamboo has to be balance by the person clutched on the foot. When the participants aligned themselves, they were set to move towards the finish line to fix the gate with the bamboo. In this manner, the participants have to crawl forward. The person who reaches the finished line first is considered the winner. Whoever, falls his bamboo on the back would be considered disqualified.

Besides the above mentioned indigenous games, there were numerous games played by different villages of the Chakhesangs. Each village has its own popular and special games being played since time immemorial. Many games were also showcase during festivals, special occasions or any other state festival like Hornbill festival.

## 2.23 Death and Burial System

According to the Chakhesang culture, it was considered taboo for someone to die at the hands of another live person. Thus, if an individual, particularly an infant who is typically carried by an adult, is going to breath last, he should kept lie down. As soon as a person died, his body is washed thoroughly by the family members. If father dies, son of the house does the washing and if mother dies, the daughter of the family does the washing. The family of the dead kill pigs, cows, or buffalos and the killed animals were then cut and distributed to the villagers for final feast of the death person. The meat distributed during the dead is called '*Eprah*'. On receiving the *eprah*, it was taboo to say 'thank you' as no one welcome death, people do mourn for the dead and it was not a happy feast. It was somehow very expensive thing for the family during the death of any person in the family.

Every death was attributed to evil spirits in the Chakhesang Naga belief system. For this, family elders, friends typically attempt to frighten the evil deity away in order to prevent similar incidents from happening in the future. These performances of the funerary rites were carried out in accordance with war customs, where the performer would dash to the death location and begin shouting his battle cry or *meshi*. He would then throw caution to the air, stamping feet and declare that his friends and family would protect him on his next voyage. Challenging and shouting at the evil spirit in the deceased house. The performer of the funerary rite would also burnt dried bamboo and torched around dug pit of the grave before the corpse is laid (Jamir, p.118). This torching of burning the bamboo flame was to frighten the evil spirit as well as to light up the way of the dead which he might be feeling a dark journey. Many gunshots were fired in the air to chase the evil spirits during the funerary rites. In the case of un-natural death like being killed in war by enemy, the Chakhesang Nagas do not bring the dead body inside the village. Such deceased were interred outside the village gate. This is because the belief that the evil spirit should not come to village and disturb the livings.

The corpse was interred by the Chakhesang Nagas close to his home. For the burial, a wooden plank was laid on the dug ground and the body was then laid with the head towards the north or the west. For the good warriors and hunters, spear or machete along with some of his belongings were buried together. This was the belief that on his dead voyage, when an enemy or fierce animals comes on the way, he could attack with spear or machete. Above the body is then overlaid with capstones or wooden plank known as *khuse* before filling the earth on the pit (see Jamir). It is taboo for any villagers to go and work in the field during the demise of a person. The whole village mourned the death and pays tribute to the deceased. In the case of Kuzhami Chakhesangs, the same clan members mourned the death for three days. After three days had passed, everything new has to be use like even making the new fire in the fire hearth after cleaning all the ashes. Water stored in the kitchen has to be drained off and new water has to be filled. Anything leftover food or *eprah* has to be eaten within three days or to be disposed off on completion of three days. The funerary rites and practices by the Chakhesang Nagas during the colonial period was very meticulous and a complex process.

#### **2.24 A Foreseen Tale of Khumvii-ii and Metilo-u**

Legends of the Chakhesang Nagas states that, there once were a travellers named Khumvii-ii and Metilo-u. Metilo-u was a spirit, and Khumvii-ii was a humble human being. They both travelled around the Chakhesang area of Kuzhathede and Sechuku and delivered a message to the locals about what they believed to be the modern world of today.

The prophecy they had shared with the villagers is steeped in mythology. They informed the locals that the pathway after hundreds of years would resemble *Ezhikhurherhe*, i.e the numerous lines on the mud under water on wet terrace fields which was created by *Neurocordulia obsoleta*. The people would only be using iron utensils, iron cups, and iron plates. Additionally, they stated that the female genitals would be the size of *zathoche* or machete scabbard while the male genitals would be the length and size of a *kumhi* or rice pounder. Everybody will be a nymphomaniac (lover of sex), and human ears will enlarge to the size of

*meriificii* winnowing tray. The human stature will become smaller to the point where people will begin to climb chilli and perilla plants. The world will gradually come to an end because human life will be too disrupted.

After conveying the message to the villagers, they travelled towards Zhavame village region in Phek district, they stopped and rested above Tsiipfiime village beneath a large stone that resembles a cave (Plate 33). Following their dissemination of the anticipated words to the people, Khumvii-ii and Metilo-u set out for the state of Manipur region. The story accurately foresaw today's world in which everything came to an experienced.

1. The pathway will become like *Ezhikhurherhe* tells that current roads are built with spiral curves and numerous lines that meet at an angle.
2. Unlike the use of old traditional indigenous earthen pots, wooden plates, or cups, everyone today uses iron utensils.
3. The desire for sex in which there is no shame, taboo, or sin is reflected in the male genitalia like *kumhi* and the female genitals like *zathoche* the machete scabbard.
4. The human ear increasing to the size of *meriificii* winnowing tray indicates that people are not listening to one another and are disregarding and turning a deaf ear to their parents' or elders' counsel.
5. People haven't started climbing perilla and chili plants, which is the only thing that Khumvii-ii and Metilo-u conveyed. However, the average human height is decreasing today comparing to the olden days.
6. The world is getting too troubled and tainted.

The place where they took shelter which is known as Khumvii-ii and Metilo-u *Tso beh* still served as a legendary picnic spot. A strong belief of this tale still exist today.





**Plate2:** *Esah beh* at Zhavame village where the Chief stood to command gennas. If any other person stood or touches the stone, genna is observed to purify the sacred stone



**Plate 3:** *Thopi/Pinnah* wild mugwort plant use for genna observation



**Plate 4:** *Kulu* irrigational channel for terrace cultivation



**Plate 5:** *Mewo/Thevo* house at Leshemi village



**Plate 6:** Burial site of a dog in a separate enclosure at Zapami village





**Plate 7:** *Emhi/Riingu*  
Spears



**Plate 8:** *Ketsah* village gate at  
Pfutseromi village



**Plate 9:** *Mezhi* Shield  
for protection during  
war



**Plate 10:** Wood log for keeping an enemy's  
head at priest house Pfutseromi village



**Plate 11:** Stone enclosure passing through  
an enemy's head at Leshemi village





**Plate 12:** *Kusa* Traditional bird trapping tool



**Plate 13:** *Riha* dried gourd jar for hauling water (Zapami village museum)



**Plate 14:** *Ehu* Traditional howling by male folk at Kezhakeno village



**Plate 15:** *Lici* horn trumpet



**Plate 16:** *Leswu* water strainer for fishing





**Plate 17:** *Ruciikekhi* decorated bamboo pole where birds were hung during Riinye festival at Pfutseromi village



**Plate 18:** *Theriikadiera/Riizakhu* shawl worn by people who gave feast of merit



**Plate 19:** *Thsiiketsiira/Thiipikhu* worn by people who gave two times feast of merit





**Plate 20:** *Kecikie/Cekacie* entitlement house of *Zhothomi* (Chozubami)



**Plate 21:** *Echō* plank wall of animal sculptures in the rich man's house



**Plate 22:** *Tsoshe/Tsiishu* megalithic monuments of feast donor at Phusachodu village





**Plate 23:** *Khulo* terrace cultivation at Pfutseromi village



**Plate 24:** *Emviike* Rhus Semialata plant use for religious rites



**Plate 25:** *Ebou* and *Tshiiriibou* granary stores





**Plate 26:** *Thebvo/Sazu* bark of stinging nettle plant use for weaving



**Plate 27:** *Pficiimenyie* men's kilt



**Plate 28:** *Thebvora/Saziikhu* Nettle shawl



**Plate 29:** *Nunha* girls wrap around to the knee (Photo taken at Zapami village museum)



**Plate 30:** *Chiizhiimanapa* long tailed broadbill bird feather earpiece worn by men





**Plate 31:** *Meno/Kiine* male wrestling at Siithozu Nasa



**Plate 32:** *Lasohkezhuzhuh* game played by male folk at Pfutseromi village during Tsiikhenyie festival



**Plate 33:** Khumvii-ii and Metilo-u *tsobeh* at Tsiifiime village

## Chapter 3

### ADVENT OF CHRISTIANITY AND WESTERN EDUCATION ITS IMPACT

#### 3.1 Early Beliefs and Practices

The animistic indigenous religion of the Chakhesang Nagas, which is centered round several superstitions and a morally upright way of life, is intriguing. The intricate religious history adds to the alluring history of the past. The native religion of the many Naga tribes is best describes as animism. Their unwavering conviction in the presence of spirits in all facts of life and the environment including rocks, rivers etc. persisted untill the introduction of Christianity into the Naga Hills (Sharma, Haihing, 2018). The Chakhesangs believed that there was one Supreme god *Menupi*. The God of kindness and generosity is also the God of humility, so the Chakhesang Nagas were monotheistic. However, this spiritual peace was disturbed by evil spirits that cause suffering, sickness, misfortune, and death. To ward off these evil spirits, people sacrifice fowl, pigs, dogs, and other domestic animals to appease the evil spirits. It is important to remember that people believe in the good God and evil spirits and do not worship idols or images. The life of Chakhesang community was full of fear of countless ghosts that lived in streams, caves, tress, forests and rocks. They also believe that demons of air, sky, forest and mountains make the herd-barren. These huge number of invisible ghosts with evil intentions must be propitiated (Marhu, 2006). In order to console God and restrain the wicked spirits' malicious intentions, men serve as a mediator between the good God and the wicked Spirits.

The Chakhesangs held that a person's soul does not pass away with their body when they die; instead, they believed that if a person lived a morally upright life on earth, their soul would go to higher realms and become a star. However, if he had a bad life, he would have to go through seven phases of spirit existence before changing into a housefly, bee, locust, or bug. The Chakhesang Nagas believed in omens and rigorously followed them to determine future issues, whether they related to personal or communal matters. For instance, no travel was done until it was determined that the fortunes were favorable. Important actions, like beginning a hunt,



fishing, planting a seed, reaping a crop, etc. were never undertaken without first consulting certain omens. According to the interview conducted, one of the most significant and popular ways to consult the omens was to hold off a chicken (preferably an untainted cock) by the neck and throttle it which is known as *ethozo*. If the cock dies with its right leg slightly crossed over its left, that was a good omen. It was believed the individual who set out on the journey would safely return home. However, if the left leg crossed the right, it was a sign of bad omen which indicates the person to be more careful. Unlucky omens include hearing a tiger howling nearby in the vicinity, seeing a deer or cat cross the route, and hearing some types of birds sing.

The Chakhesang Nagas believed that all illnesses, including fever, pox, rapid appearance of boils, loss of speech, and strange illnesses, were the work of bad spirits. All of these were the results of spirit's wrath and the inevitable repercussions of breaking the commandments of "Gennas." For this reason, when a man becomes ill, they go to the *Metimi* who could cast away the ill (Lohe, 2010).

There was a priest in every Chakhesang Naga village, and they were usually the ones who offered the sacrifices, along with the household head. Traditional local remedies were applied for certain illnesses; the majority of these remedies were derived from leaves, barks, and plants. The Chakhesangs also hold a belief in spells and poisons, believing that certain foes have gained strength and have cast spells on individuals or houses, causing illness and death. By combining power, an opponent can also contaminate food and beverages, leading to death.

Additionally, they think that the only way to stop such spells and poisonous deeds was to go to a person who was similarly knowledgeable as "*Metimi*," ask him to identify the magic being used against him, and then have him recommend a counter magical remedy. This may seem absurd to a modern person, but practically every tribe in the globe practices some form of this, so I'm not sure whether there is any scientific basis for it. These kinds of rumors are believed even by educated Christians.

In times of death, Christians bury the deceased today in accordance with Christian customs. The mourners sing hymns, the priest offers prayers for the deceased, and the living were consoled and informed of the Christian hope of eternal pleasure and meeting in paradise. Even though the external aspects of illness and death have changed, the Chakhesangs continue to hold onto some ancient notions about illness, such as spells or poisons. They even still trust in folk medicines and frequently use plants' barks, herbs, and other natural therapies instead of visiting contemporary medical facilities.

### **3.2 Christianity in Nagaland**

Bronson was the first missionary to the Nagas. He founded the mission at Namsang in the Tirap border Division on March 13, 1840. However due to health issue, the mission could not last (Philip,1976). On September 7, 1851, at Sibsagar, S.W. Whiting baptized an Ao named Longjanglepzuk from Merangkong village, who became the second Naga convert after Hube Konyak (NBCC history, n.d). Dr. Clark met the vibrant Nagas, who traveled to the Assamese plains from their mountainous home to engage in bartering. Attracted by their sincerity, hospitality, and friendliness, Dr. Clark became friends with these men of the hills despite their unwavering views of war with enemy. Godhula, an Assamese preacher, was employed by Dr. Clark in Sibsagar in the printing factory. He developed a close bond with Supongmeren, an Ao-Naga from the Dekhahaimong (Molungyimchen) village (Nagaland Missions Movement, n.d.). On December 18, 1872, Dr. Clark traveled to Dekhahaimong village in Nagaland with Godhula and another Sibsagar church member. On December 22, 1872, they baptized fifteen men and established a Baptist Mission Center at Molungyimchen village (Eastern Mirrior, Dec.21,2019). But as the number of converts increased, the issue of whether or not to observe regional religious ceremonies and customs arose, and the village's views on religion became sharply divided (Philip, 1976). Thus, Dr. Clark established Molungyimsen, a brand-new Christian community. A few households from Merangkong village, which is located a few miles from the original Molungyimchen village, as well as the converts from that village were present in this

community. Thus, Impur became the Ao-Naga headquarter and mission center in October 1894, the same month that the entire Ao region was placed under British rule. The gospel was transmitted to the other tribes from this center.

### **3.3 The Arrival of Christianity Within the Chakhesang Nagas**

During the British rule in the Naga Hills, Chakhesangs were called as Eastern Angamis. It comprised of Khezhas, Chokris and Poumai. The coming of Christianity traces back to as early as 1895. Rev. S.W Rivenburg was the first missionary who came along with Khruneizhii and Sieliezhii to Chozuba. Soon after in 1895, at the request of Rev.Rivenburg, a gathering place of thatched-tabernacle was set up (Dozo,1978, p.31). Rev.Rivenburg preached the gospel about everlasting place of rest after death. Khruneizhii translated the gospel and Sieliezhii sung some gospels where the villagers listened the melodious song taking rice beer in the gathering. “On the same day, (date not known) ten persons accepted the Christian faith. There was no opposition and reaction. But later on due to social pressure, seven out of ten persons reverted into their former faith. The remaining three persons became the initial pillars and Christianity began to grow with them. They were baptized immediately in 1895 and thus became the first congregation-Chakhesang Jerusalem” (Dozo,1978,p.31). It was stated that the Chakhesangs first came into contact with the missionaries in 1894 at Chozuba village. The first Chakhesang converts were Hiiliyi, Ngakra and Swiiziimo from Chozuba village in 1895. The early history of laying the foundation for the church goes back to 1895, however according to the mission report, even in 1907, there was only one organized church and that was in Kohima. No doubt there were some Chakhesang Christians about the time mentioned. But the first church was organized only in the 1920’s at Chozuba village about 40 miles from Kohima. In 1923, Tanquist reported that during 1906, there were converts from the Eastern Angamis, meaning the Chakhesang people studying at Mission school. The first church as mentioned above was founded through the efforts of missionary Rev.Rivenburg at Chozuba village. It is believed that the pioneers of Angami converts Mr. Sieliezhii and Khruneizhu played prominent and important parts in preaching the

gospel to Chakhesang people (CVBC, Quasquicentennial,2020). As early as the students from Chakhesang tribe were studying at Kohima Mission school, it also indicates that there would have been some Christian influence at the earlier date. The entire Chakhesang area was evangelized by pioneers Trio. They were called the first preachers during the resistance period. Evidently, there were no local evangelist during 1895-1914. The 1915 report shows that one evangelist from Kohima was designated to the Chakhesang area. The converts remained in their faith but they did not know how to preach Christ to other people. This trio began their career only in 1914.

### **3.4 Suluho, Lhiitsiive and Etshirii (Sare) Local Christian Evangelists**

Suluho and Lhiitsiive the son of Ngakra and Sweziimo were the earliest preacher produced from the Chakhesang community. They were among the early converts like their fathers. Mr. Suluho and Lhiitsiive from Chozuba village became local Christian evangelists to spread good news to different villagers during early 1930's. It was not an easy task, inspite of facing stiff oppositions and threats from the villagers, the evangelists managed to enter different village risking their own lives and preached the gospel to the villages. Likewise, contemporary of Suluho was Lhiitsiive of Chozubami village and Etshirii Sare from Chizami village. Sare was one of the first educated men from Chizami village and was a government official in Public Work Department. He converted Christianity through Suluho and Lhiitsiive in the year 1931 the same year when he was preparing to host feast of merit. He forsook his social status and became the first convert in Chizami village (75<sup>th</sup> Lozaphuhu Baptist Church Anniversary, 2021). He later on resigned his government job and became a preacher, travelling with Suluho and Lhiitsiive (P. Dozo, 1978, p33). The advent of Christianity within the Chakhesang Nagas was one after another in different years within the different time period in villages and commenced of evangelists preaching.

The second congregation was founded in Yorbami village. Like Suluho his counterpart, Lhiitsiive started his mission as native preacher and was assigned as a teacher in the newly

established Mission School from 1919 to 1922. He was appointed by Rivenburg assigning the work for school as well as a mission pandit. But after Rivenburg retired to America, Lhiitsiive too left the school and quit his job due to less emolument and other management hardships. After many years, in 1935, Rivenburg sent his last salary when he remembered. By then Sieliezhii an Angami from Kohima insisted his grandson Mevolhoulie to sponsor evangelist in the area. With that Lhiitsiive was again paid with Rs.5 and continued the job.

Etshiirii Sare from Chizami village was a contemporary of Suluho and Lhiitsiive. They worked together for church ministry in 1930 to 1950. Etshiirii was more willing to serve the people as a role of evangelist rather than serving in one church. Therefore, he got the ministry licence in 1949 from Kohima Mission. Sare's ministry was beyond the existing Naga border to Burma (Chozuba Quasquicentennial souvenir, 2020). In 1913, Suluho became the first ordained evangelist from Kohima mission.

### **3.5 The Approach in Spreading Christianity by the Missionaries**

The way evangelists used in spreading Christianity among the villagers was very simple. They preached in the village gatherings, homes, or village *mapumo* (khel gatherings). The evangelists usually took permissions from the village headman, priest or chief. The preachers travelled mostly in group or sometimes even individually. The main theme to preach to the villagers was Christ the creator and life of eternal peace after death. Most of the gospels were sung in folk tune. It was somehow a hard task for the evangelists as they carry their own food, travelled miles and miles walking. It is worthwhile to mention that Kohima Mission School played a vital role as a missionary agency directly or indirectly. It was through Angami preachers that many converts were won from Chakhesangs during 1917 (Philip 1976, p.93). It was the first educated people and the prominent people of the villages embraced Christianity at the early stage. The growth of the church was very slow though. The Chakhesang Mission was thus under the guidance of Kohima Mission (CBCCWD, Report 2022). The Chakhesang people search for eternal and good life after death even before the arrival of the Christian faith. They were

persuaded to believe, accept and become Christian when the message of salvation and eternal life in Jesus Christ was presented to them.

From the data collected, several factors contributed to the conversion of many traditional animists to Christianity and faith in Christ:

1. The animism faith was ambiguous even though it acknowledges a Supreme Being.
2. Healings and miracles that happened when someone prayed in Christ's name.
3. Deliverance from dread through trust in Christ, who extends mercy and pardon.
4. The challenge of practically adhering to the strict rites and customs of the traditional religion of animism in a world that is changing quickly.

The missionaries also preached in those villages that were friendly by nature. Some other villages were Chizami, Melomi, Losami, Lozaphuhu etc. The other mountainous regions and interior parts were explored by the native Chakhesang evangelists later. The Chakhesang churches became more active under the leadership of Mr. and Mrs. Savino (Angami). They reached Phek on 6<sup>th</sup> July 1949 and established the Christian church. The discipline continued vigorously. The churches and members multiplied year by year. The Chakhesang Baptist Church Council (CBCC) was formed as a separate council from Kohima field in 1950 with the deputation of Rev. Megosieso Savino from Angami Baptist Church Council (ABCC) as the first field director in 1949 (CBCC Mission Report, 2020). The year 1971 report shows that there were 83 Churches with a baptized membership of 5389 people. The total Christian community amounts to 20,961 (CBCCWD Report, 2022).

Almost everyone who previously practiced animism had gradually converted to Christianity. During my field work, I came across certain places where the old religion was practiced by only a small number of individuals. Nowadays, practically almost all villages among the Chakhesang Nagas were officially recognized as a Christian community.

### **3.6 Persecution, Threats and Harassment Faced by Early Christian Converts**

The village priests with other honorary members, leaders of the village including the youths, GBs persecuted and harassed the early Christian converts and meted out all sorts of threats to their lives. When the gospel has set into the Chakhesang region, the role played by the early evangelists was not an easy task. The spread of gospel was the most challenging faced by the missionaries.

In the case of Lozaphuhii village, when first evangelists Siiliho and Lhiistiive reached the village, the villagers strongly opposed and had driven them out from the village where they slept under the bamboo grove. The next day on 10<sup>th</sup> March 1938, the two missionaries claimed to have witnessed a fireball descended into a house. About 170 houses were consumed by fire out of 177 houses. All had turned into ashes. It is believed even today that such incidents had occurred because of turning a deaf ear to the message of God. It was believed to be a devine connection as the villagers had mistreated the missionaries (Lozaphuhu 75<sup>th</sup> Souvenir).

At Kikruma, with the arrival of Christianity in 1947, Riidatso the first Christian convert and other followers challenged lots of threats, harassment from the mass around 1950's. None Christians began to attack the houses of Christian converts. They were not allow to fetch water from the village well.

The same way, when Christianity arrived in Phek village in 1929, Christian converts were excommunicated and they were forced to settle at present Phek Basa. The Phek Basa was thus, the result of new settlement for Christian converts in 1930. According to the research survey conducted, most of the Christians converted in group rather than individually, because it was against the will from the village mass. People convert in group so that they can withstand the harassment and threat meted out to them by the villagers.

At Pfutseromi village, Mr. Neilo Kapfo was the first Christian converts in November 1945 at Mission Chapel, Kohima village. By the following years, Christian converts had increased but it so happened that at Pfutseromi village a house belonging to Mrs. Echi-u Kapfo

where the converts held worship services was wrathfully destroyed with all properties and most of them were expelled from the village.

Though Christianity has set in, Christian converts were not allowed to move out of the village gate during the genna observation days by the Non-Christians. At Phusachodu village, when Christianity has set in 1948 and with the following years of converts, options were given to those who could not obey the rules of the old religious and traditional norms, to move out of the village boundary and settle outside. Such harrassment orders were laid to the Christian community. However, Christians were allowed to take service on Sundays. Within the village, traditional gennas, festivals, religious observations, ceremony days etc. whether Christian converts or non Christians all were bound to stayed inside the village. Christians were not allow to go out and work in the fields during religious gennas, ceremonies etc. observed by the villagers.

Some of the early Christian converts gathered near the vicinity of the village and sung the gospel prayed together as in such early phase, they were looked down by the villagers and mistreated. Many thought that Christianity was an alien evil belief and that would lead to the evil of death. Therefore, there was a strong threat from the non-Christian community and many from different villages were banished to the most exterior part of the village or worst site considered to be the place or abode of evils.

The above mentioned indicates the hardship toll faced by the Christians during early advent of Christianity within the community. Some of the converts within the community had come through intolerable conditions that they were driven out from the village and they had to find a new dwelling place for them. They were not allowed to use village wells, nor allow to cut firewood within the community forest or even to cultivate within the community land for Jhum cultivation etc. It is indeed admirable for the courage, the zeal and the selfless of the missionaries, and without whose work and dedication the Chakhesangs will be still the same as a century ago (CBCC, report 2020). Although the early Christians had undergone untold sufferings



and miseries on account of their new faith, they did not abandon their new found faith and accepted Christ as the only savior.

### 3.7 The Growth of Church

According to the research, it was stated that missionary Siiliho and Lhiitseve took journey to different village to spread the gospel. The establishment of church was not known till then in the Chakhesang region. It was only in 1912, that the first church was established at Chozuba (Plate 34). By then the members of Chakhesang Christian converts remained in Kohima. Siiliho first became the ordained evangelist in 1913 among the Chakhesang Nagas. Through them there were many Christian converts and many offspring churches were developed (Chozuba Quasqui-Centennial Souvenir, 2020). Some villages converted to Christianity without much resistance from the first phase and later on establishment of church which both of them have travelled and delivered message (Table 3:1).

| Sl.No | Church       | Year | First Convert                                 |
|-------|--------------|------|---|
| 1.    | Phek Basa    | 1929 | Jore  |
| 2.    | Phek Village | 1930 | Mushusa & Kiivesa                             |
| 3.    | Chizami      | 1931 | Sare  |
| 4.    | Thipuzu      | 1939 | Niipohii Kezo, Cekroshuyi Epao, Hiiliiru Rose |
| 5.    | Dziilha      | 1941 | Besiicho, Dupor Vasa, Sao & Molhiyi           |
| 6.    | Riinguzu     | 1942 | Miisorii Ringa                                |
| 7.    | KhulazuBagwu | 1942 | Hiisori Resiih                                |
| 8.    | Khulazu Basa | 1942 | Besiineyi Rhakho                              |
| 9.    | Chesezu      | 1943 | Lhiiziiyi Nyekha                              |
| 10.   | Sohomi       | 1945 | Chawuthi, Huthiigu, Tiizalu & Kotsiithi       |
| 11.   | Khiisomi     | 1946 | Khwiinerii & Puciyi                           |
| 12.   | Thenyizu     | 1947 | Netsiitso Theyo                               |
| 13.   | Kikruma      | 1947 | Riidatso Tunyi                                |
| 14.   | SuthozuNagwu | 1948 | Vekhonii Rhakho                               |
| 15.   | Middle Khomi | 1958 | Veducholu                                     |
| 16.   | Khiitsa      | 1958 | Cekhwushoyi Keyho                             |
| 17.   | Upper Khomi  | 1962 | Yevecho Neinu                                 |

**Table: 3:1 First converts from the two missionaries and later on development of church**

The other villages within the Chakhesang Nagas were too brought directly or indirectly by the local evangelists and local missionaries. According to the different mission report of CBCC, the church and the converts grew bigger with the passage of time and years.

### **3.8 The Formation of Women Department**

Along with men, women were also actively engaged in gospel ministries. As the church gradually grew, so has the number of women members also increased in the church. Therefore, Miss Yotsolu from Chozuba village, studied in Kohima under missionary Tanquist's wife in 1920 initiated and formed the first Women Department in Chakhesang region. She took responsibility of pastor in Women Ministry in the church in between 1925-1932 (Keyho, Women department report, 2020). She introduced handful of rice collections and did evangelism with the women folk. In January 1948, the first Women Association was held at Chozuba. In June 6, 1949 Mr. Meguosiezo Savino from ABCC took up the responsibility of field Director of Chakhesang Baptist Church Association. On March 1, 1950 his wife Mrs. Janikhou Savino joined him in ministry and looked after women department till 1952 (Rakho, CBCCWD 2022). There was no full time secretary or proper office bearers by then. The women evangelists looked after its association and convened association meeting every year in the initial years. In 1965, Mrs. Vesozolu Khamo was appointed as the first full time women secretary in CBCC Women Department and served till 1970.

#### **3.8.1 Women Department Activities for Missionary**

- 1) **Source of Income:** The main source of income is from handful of rice collection starting from 1920's and till today this has been a major source of income to local churches as well as women department, CBCC, special offerings, one day wage, and besides these the department has two building projects and generated monthly income for mission work.
- 2) **Equipping Leaders:** One of the main activities of women department is to equip women leaders in the church by conducting trainings, seminars, workshop, refresher course for

women pastors and women deacons in CBCC level, area level annually and even in the local churches.

**3) Mission and Evangelism:** In 1948, Miss Zasehiilii and Miss Lhikhwerii-u were sent as the first women evangelists among Chakhesang women to Sangtam (present Pochury) area followed by Miss Siizolu, Solhou-u Pulo, Kapunyi-u Mero, Ngahiilu. These evangelists did not only spread the gospel message but also demonstrated and educated the people with a healthy living and life skills such as weaving and knitting among women. There was no transport and communication facilities and it was a very hard and sacrificial job to walk barefoot through difficult terrains to get to the villages with their rations and clothing. As they preached the gospel, they also distribute clothes and other relief materials to the needy in spite of challenging environment as Christians were minority who constantly faces wrath and humiliation from the non Christians. From the very beginning of its ministry, women were actively involved in mission by contributing 50% of their income towards mission and sponsored pastors and sent teachers to villages. In 1979, the Chakhesang Mission Society (CMS) was formed to fully engage in revitalizing and mobilizing the local churches for outreach mission work. Miss Neibelo-u Lasuh and Miss Miizipolii Nyekha were commissioned by CMS in June 1993 as the first outreach lady missionaries to outside Nagaland. At present the women department felt honored and blessed to witness the emerging women missionaries who are actively working in different parts of India and even in foreign countries like Japan, Cambodia and Thailand.

**4) License and ordination:** The first ordained women was Rev. Dr. Keziitshiilo-u Kapfo who received ordination in February 17 2002. She served as Women Secretary in CBCC, in Chakhesang Women Welfare Society and also in NBCC as Women Secretary. The first women licensed were two lady missionaries, Miss Miizipolii Nyekha and Miss Vetaniilii Rhakho who were given licensed to administer in the mission fields in 2012, during Mission Convention. Both of them are still actively involved in mission fields.

- 5) Ministry to Theological Students:** From the early 1950's women department sponsored lady teachers to various villages to educate the villagers and this continue till today. From 2000 to 2020 women department undertook hostel ministry at Kipheri under the mentorship of Mr. Thujoveyi, a pastor. He and his wife sponsored 7 Myanmar students out of which 4 of them did theological studies and was serving in their country. Women department also sponsors local theological students to help their own local church.
- 6) Member Health Care:** Women ministry from the very beginning gave much importance on caring ministry by observing helping hand day to extend help to the poor and destitute members, caring for old age members, disabled, sick, widows, needy and destitute through relief in cash, kind or physical help.
- 7) Social Service and Social Issues:** Miss Siizole was sent by women association for maternity training and she completed in 1954 and she was appointed in 1955 as a midwife and nurse to serve the villages since there was no hospital facilities. By 1955, 4 women were trained to serve in different places. Ministry to orphanage and jail ministry like imparting skill training to jail inmates. Awareness drive and sensitization on Clean Election, HIV Aids, Human Trafficking through seminars and workshop in council level, area levels and in local churches. Checking of liquor during election by setting up of check gates in collaboration with Mother's Association to stop inflow of liquor to the villages and towns in Phek district.
- 8) Rehabilitation Centre:** One of the major problem the church and society faced today, is alcohol and drug abuse. Therefore, women department took up the rehabilitation ministry and set up Shalom Home for drug addicts and alcoholics in 2014 at Dzii-ii, Lt. Boshi Vamuzo's building. However, it discontinued in 2018 due to need aroused of building by the owner. Later in 2019, the Chozuba Area Council donated a plot to Chakhesang Baptist Church Council Women Department (CBCCWD) to continue this project aimed to complete soon and to continue the mission.

### **3.8.2 Chakhesang Women Welfare Society (CWWS)**

The Chakhesang Women Welfare Society was formed in 1976 by the Women Department of Chakhesang Baptist Church Council under the leadership of Rev. Dr. Kezutshiilo-u Kapfo, Women Secretary and Rev. Dr. V.K. Nuh, Executive Secretary. The society started with the aim to improve, promote and empower women. In 1976 it launched adult literacy program and in 1977 it started weaving unit but in 1978 adult literacy program integrated with weaving and named it as Vocational School with some teachers Mrs. Mary Lasuh and Miss Ziivepralii and Mrs. Satsiilii as treasurer. In 1979, October 15, condensed course was introduced with 15 girls and later tailoring, knitting, typing training were introduced. Till 1979, CWWS functions under CBCC Women Department and women secretary took full responsibility to supervise the welfare projects but due to increased of workload of welfare activities, it was bifurcated from CBCC Women Department in 1979 and Women Welfare Society functions separately as development wing under Women Department with appointment of Miss Neikolo-u Letou as full time Secretary in 1980. In 1982, fruit processing and preservation unit was set up.

Today, the society has expanded its outreach from an initial 15 women trainees to one multipronged successful establishment covering large percent of women across the district undertaking and facilitating sustainable economic support systems through implantation of livelihoods projects such as piggery, agriculture and horticulture activities, micro-financing, employment and skill building training in tailoring and weaving, tourism, hospitality and food processing. Mini Museum to preserve the age –old tradition, has a documented cuisine book, Chakhesang traditional attire book. Livelihood projects which not only target the women alone but the whole community where community-based organizations like Self Help Groups, Farmer's Groups etc. were formed to enhance the livelihood as well as to utilize the existing resources to ensure economic sustainability.

### **3.9 The Coming of Western Education Within the Tribe.**

The arrival of Christian missionaries and other historical, social- cultural and political developments, many changes occurred and these are all reflected on the society and its people. The villagers or local ethnic groups had come in contact with urban areas. The British rule and its bureaucratic settings and the occupation of the Indians in the Naga Hills have made a definite and permanent impact on the indigenous people. Along with Christianity, western education was accompanied together hand in hand like any other region in Nagaland. This was because, the early converts knew the need of reading and writing and learn English as most of the missionaries and other Britishers speaks English and the intermediary role played by the locals was very challenging. Early Christian converts propagated the importance and value of education. The first formal school established in Phek district was at Chesezu village in 1885 under Chozuba block but was closed down in 1888 due to various reasons.

Not only was 1912 a pivotal year in the history of the Chakhesang church, but it also set the stage for education. It wasn't an abrupt realisation, but a number of local Christian converts and Kohima Association leaders took advantage of the opportunity to establish a mission school in Chozuba to meet the needs of the community, particularly those of the surrounding communities and the first converted villages, Chozuba, Yoruba and Iganumi. Consequently, the wish was granted by J.E. Tanquist, who was in charge of Mission schools and landowner Ngakhra Rhakho received payment of Rs.30 for the location. Khezei Angami from Kohima village was the first teacher for which the school was named after him. The source states that the school started functioning in 1913-1914. However, the house collapsed and there were insufficient funds for maintenance, the school was forced to close three and half years later, in 1917. Tanquist later moved the school to Yoruba village in 1919 at the request of Yoruba converts. Khezei Angami retired in the same year that Lhiitsiive was appointed as a mission pandit, a position he held until 1922 (Souvenir CVBC 2020). Rivenburg retired in 1923 from the

mission in Kohima and the same year Lhiistiive quit the job due to less enrollment and other management problem.

### **3.10 Establishment of Vernacular Bible School**

On the initiative and suggestion of Siiliho and Lhutsiive, Tanquist built a Vernacular Bible School in Khezeibaka in 1943, 20 years after Yoruba Mission School closed. The school was renamed “Chayaba” in honour of Chozuba and Yoruba. This was thought to be the Kohima Field’s first vernacular bible school. The school was built with the help of two nearby churches. Although Megosieszo Savino is credited as being the first instructor, he was relocated to Kohima in 1946 when a new Bible school opened (CBCC report 2020). The school was temporarily closed in 1944 when the World War II broke out in the area, but it eventually reopened in 1945.

The Chayaba School was moved to Phek in 1949 and given the new name Phezu Bible School. Megosiezo and his wife Janeikho-u did their best work during the transitioning period, serving as the school’s Field Director and Headmaster until 1953. However, due to Indian Armed Forces’ occupation in the school during the Indo-Naga conflict, the school had disrupted once more. In 1961, the Vernacular Bible School relocated to Pfutsero. Finally, the medium of teaching was switched to English and it was renamed as Baptist Theological College.

### **3.11 Establishment of Government Primary Schools and First High School**

In 1925, the second Government Primary School was established at Chizami. The third Government Primary School was established at Phek village in 1927. Tracing the root of the first High School in Phek district, Mr. Dilo Ritse from Pfutseromi village took keen interest in establishing the private school in the village. After receiving education from Kohima in 1930, he returned home and voluntarily took deep concern for the villagers and imparted education freely to the villagers. In 1942, the Kuzha committee members approached the villagers to shift the school to Menyipide presently at Pfutsero town so that the other neighbouring villages could access the facility. On 30<sup>th</sup> September 1945, the primary school from Pfutseromi village was shifted to present Pfutsero town with the acceptance of land owners. By then there were 16

students headed by two teachers Mr. Weprelo Mero and Ngulo Khape. The same year in November 1945, Phykhamo Lotha became the new headmaster. It was in 1952, the school was taken over by the Government of Assam and renamed as Government Middle English School. Prior to the government take up, the school was functioned by the 21 Kuzha Committee's contribution and some well wishers (Educational Break Through, 2020). Years passed and the Kuzha Committee persuaded to government to take up the school as full-fledged recognized High School. Thus, the first Government High School in Phek district was recognized in July, 1961 with the assurance given by Mr. Markot Ramuny the then administrator of Assam.

Mr. U.N. Dutta, B.A., B.T., started as the first Headmaster of the newly absorbed and upgraded Government High School Pfutsero on 21<sup>st</sup> November, 1961 and continued till 14<sup>th</sup> December 1964. On January 21<sup>st</sup>, 1962, Mr. Delong Ao, M.A, succeeded him as the first Assistant Headmaster of Government High School Pfutsero, a position he held until December 31<sup>st</sup>, 1962 (PVSU Souvenir 2020). Since then, residence of the town as well as those from the nearby villages have been able to receive an education at the Government High School. Another government high school, Phek Government High School was added in 1967. As a result, the Chakhesangs accessed to two of the sixteen high schools that the state of Nagaland had during the period.

As history and reality narrates, Nagas were fairly isolated from other regional ethnic groups and people. The cultural and traditional richness of the Nagas are well maintained due to the geographic isolation such as natural wilderness. Till today, Nagas in general and the Chakhesangs in particular are maintaining their cultural and identification, when many others are merged with other mass milieu or extinct.

According to the Indian Literacy rate of 2011 Indian stands 70.40% and Nagaland was 80.11%. Chakhesang Naga tribe literacy rate stands at 79.13%. The Chakhesangs still need to go a long way in education, need for specialized training in different field for the tribe to move forward. Educationally, the Chakhesang tribe comes under 'Backward Tribe' category among the



indigenous inhabitants of the state of Nagaland. This is because the people of the tribe had late access to modern education and the number of educated people is still quite low. The two main reasons were the slow growth of education among the people not accepting the western way of life and the other is that the Chakhesangs were too deeply involved in Indo- Naga conflict which gives less importance to modern education. As stated a speech by Shri Chotisuh Sazo on 12<sup>th</sup> March, 2011 Kohima, “Chakhesang community still has a long way to go in the field of education. However, people belonging to both advanced tribe and other backward tribe categories argue that the Chakhesang should no longer be under backward tribe category. The rational is that, we made some significant progress in the last few years”.

Educationally, Chakhesangs were considered backwardness because, the region has been one of the epicenter of conflict in the Naga Nationalist Movement for which many were busy in the movement leading to late access of education. Many villagers were burnt down, innocent people were hunted down. Men were not spared, women were raped, many villagers escaped to thick jungles. Children of those time period grew with fears, hate and bare with many psychoses which hinders their lifetime till date. The fear, hatred towards armed personal of Non- Nagas still lingers their mind. The untold sufferings, miseries in the 1950's and 1960's has made the tribe quite noticeable in education which led to backwardness and less in government services (Kangla, 2011). However, one can assumed and is also proved that the character of patriotism is one reason why many educated Chakhesangs entered into political fray rather than opted the government job.

### **3.12 Impact of Christianity and Western Education Within the Tribe**

The most urgent work for the missionaries was to educate the people but this was not an easy task. Without exception, Christian missionaries faced innumerable oppositions in the initial years of their work from the villagers. Because of strong religious beliefs, it made the community difficult to yield into any new system very easily. Most of the villagers believed by spreading Christianity, it will pollute the people and custom which would bring ill-luck. The

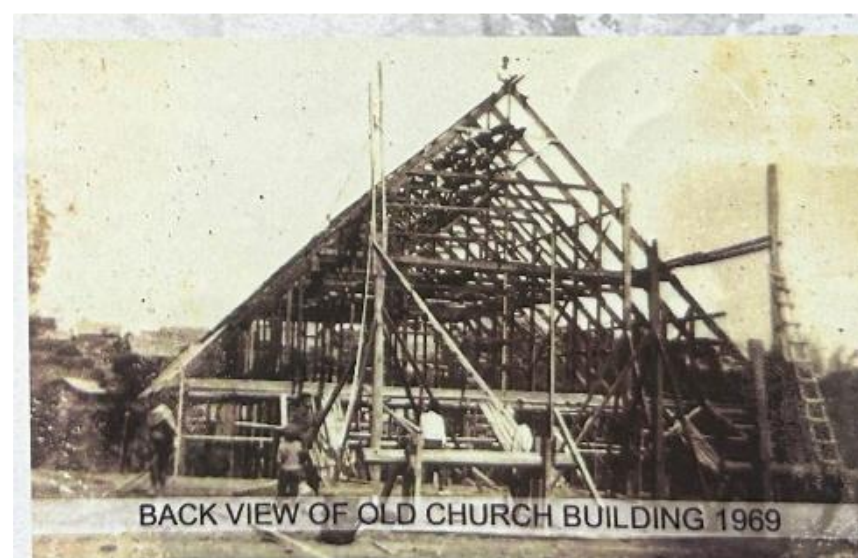
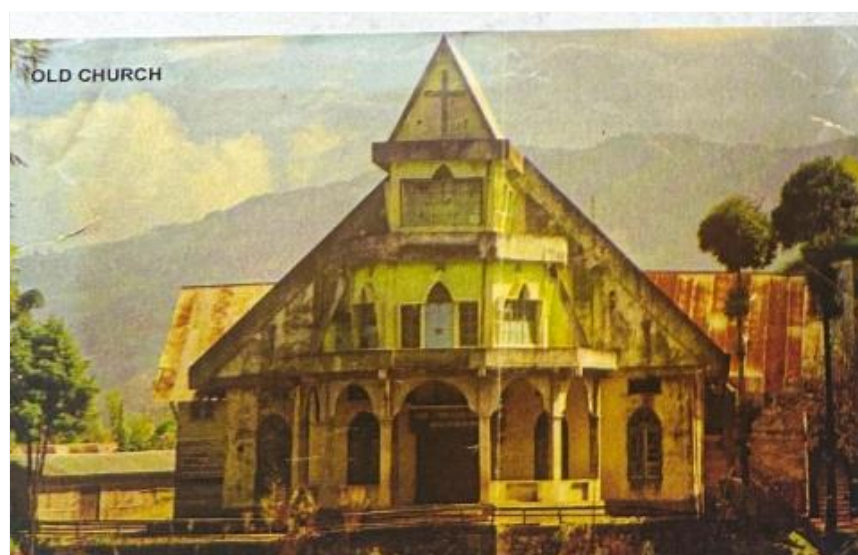
belief that it will cause natural calamity, sickness, famine etc. In the beginning response to this conversion was extremely slow and a hazardous job. It needed patience and love. Education was followed by preaching of gospels and conversion of the people which was more difficult than going to school. However, missionaries achieved their goal and today almost all men and women converted and took up education as their main priority. Secondly, the next important work for the spread of Christianity was medical work. It might be interesting to examine Nagas in general before the coming of Christianity, personal hygiene and cleanliness was not known. To have a bath was taboo in some religious observation period, death or on certain days like priest ordination period. This taboo was associated with wealth and that it is believed by taking a bath, wealth and good fortunes were washed away. There were no separate place for cattle, pigs and fowls. All lived together in the same house with the owner. This could be still seen in some Chakhesang village like Phugi where pigs move freely within the vicinity of the village and inside the house of the owner without its pigsty. During the research survey work it was also witnessed a woman sharing her plate of rice with the pig by throwing some portion of food from her plate to the eager pig by her foot. When asked, the informant with a wicked smile replied, letting pigs move freely in and around the house is a boon to the village for its wealth, plentiful to consume. All these unhygienic conditions often gave birth to many germs, diseases. To fight diseases and to remove superstitious beliefs, missionaries went invariably and opened dispensaries along with schools and sent trained nurses from outside. Hospitals and Community Health Centers are assisted by well trained nurses and Doctors. Cleanliness is no doubt that has contributed by Christians and educated people. Thus equally shows the impact of the influence of Christianity and western education. Even in the remotest village, on Sundays people specially youth dress up with traditional and foreign garments hurrying to church. However, there are also signs among the tribe who still live like the forefathers did without much change, and one can see the ugly sign of economic disparity among the tribe.

The acceptance of new religion within the tribe has demanded the new religious activities and obligations. This has breakaway from the old way of life. Resting on Sundays was considered like resting on traditional genna observation days. It is difficult to reconcile to many nominal Christians as they are sandwiched between the new and the old. Lately among the tribe, the traditional method and Christian method have evolved to compromise i.e. festivals celebrated with traditional flavor without religious rites and ceremonies. Christian festival like Christmas observed with both traditional and western culture. The other kind of impact is lack of belonging. The spread of Christianity within the tribe have imitated a good deal of western habits i.e. sing, talk, eat, and even think like the westerners. While imitating other's culture, people do not really behave like one of them and also do not fit in the traditional society. Among students, another sense of class consciousness has risen. Students who goes to towns and cities come in contact with other societies and eventually adopt another class for themselves. This has resulted in creating a gap between the villagers and educated youths. The villagers on the other hand feel a sense of inferiority with the educated people. For the past few decades there has been tremendous increase in the field of education and this has made a priority for its career among the Chakhesang community. This do not really conform with their indigenous way of life. Therefore, people are rapidly losing their identity and culture. The educated people have lost contacts with the villagers and only retain small links. Horam states, "they no longer have interest in cultivations and even mere matriculate look for white-collar jobs though the salary paid is very meager. It is also witnessed and heard many a times that more educated people talking glibly that some village is backward or uncultured because they are not educated, however it is to note that wherever they talk of culture, they invariably mean foreign culture without really knowing what they mean by culture".

The lost of culture is irreparable. Christianity did not only bring blessings, it did a lot of damages. The history that is handed down by oral tradition from generations in the way of stories, songs, dances etc. is vanishing with the arrival of Christianity. Many youngsters do not

have any clue about the traditional songs, folklores, dances etc. Another damage is in the field of art, indigenous weaving, crafts. People aspired for good taste or new one from outside. Christians prohibit the drinking of home brewed rice- beer and this has resulted in poor health. A proper substitute should be given however, there is no such substitute given by the Christian missionaries to supplant the main item of food. This has resulted the consumption of foreign liquor creating injurious to health.

Although, there have been bad effects on cultural life of the tribe, there have been tremendous good things brought by Christians serving the people, doing social work, service to old age, visiting the sick, aid during calamities, diseases etc. Christianity has brought a new symbolism a corporate life fostering love. The constant feuds and war trophy were cut off by the new doctrine based on love and brotherhood. In educational field, literature have been written and considered a strong weapon which was once upon a time only oral transmission. Another important impact was the social awakening which has brought the people a sense of belonging by way of political awareness, a number of humanitarian works. Srinivas the Indian leading sociologist opines, “humanitarianism resulted in many administrative measures to fight famines, control epidemics and found schools, hospitals and orphanages. Christian missionaries played a notable part in humanitarian activity especially in providing education and medical and to sections of Indian society”.



**Plate 34:** Chozuba village church in 1969 (Photo CVBCQ 125<sup>th</sup> Souvenir)

## **Chapter 4**

### **FACTORS OF SOCIO-CULTURAL CHANGE**

#### **4.1 Cultural Change**

The investigation into "culture change" first began in the late 19th century. These studies' major goal was to comprehend how manufactured items like tools, were created and their designs change over time. Many academics have since developed the idea of culture transformation in various ways. Change is a universal phenomenon, according to anthropologist Herskovits, the processes of change over time make up culture. Since change is meaningless in and of itself unless it is projected against a baseline of human behavior as of a certain time and nature, cultural change cannot be researched as an isolated event. Any culture must have continuity in order to survive, and it is an essential component of all cultures (International Encyclopedia of Social Sciences).

Every culture develops throughout time. Cultural change is the consequence of the regular addition and elimination of cultural features (E.B. Tylor, 1871). However, from society to society, there are differences in the rate of development and the cultural elements that change. A culture can change as a result of many different reasons (Herskovits, 1955). It is challenging to generalize the causes of cultural change because the factors and method of change vary from culture to culture.

The adoption of Christian principles and interactions with Indian and Western cultures have sparked a process of social and cultural transformation among the Naga people. (Goswami, n.p.) The Naga society's material culture has been profoundly touched by the emergence of the modern state order, social and economic development programs through education and various development packages, and contemporary society's globalization issues. Thus, the appearance of modern Naga civilization conveys a highly Westernized culture. There is no denying that the Naga people are undergoing a historical period of transition and transformation where the old is being replaced by the new in terms of material, technological, and social aspects of their lives

(Saikia, PR.1826). It is possible that, contrary to popular belief, the cultural foundation of their society has not undergone significant alteration when the outer layers of contemporary culture are removed (Aier,2004, p.59).

#### **4.2 Cultural Change Among the Chakhesangs**

When the Chakhesang community first settled in the villages, the *Mewu/Thevo* (priest) held the best position in the center of the village, with the other residents settling close by. The *Mewu* and the villagers were watched over and shielded by the fearless warriors who made their home close to the gates. In fact, it was set up for village security. *Thevomi/Mewumi* were chosen based on their accomplishments. Each village was divided into *Rikhu* or Khels. There were *mapumo* gatherings in every *rikhu* (Lohe, 2010). During gatherings in the *mapumo*, the majority of culture and tradition was passed down to the following younger generation. In the past, boys' and girls' official education took place at morung. Adolescents received instruction in customary arts, music, and handicrafts, as well as training in a variety of skills including animal hunting and warfare. The teenagers learned about their responsibilities and obligations to their family, neighbors, friends, elders, priests, and to participate in political, religious, and social activities in the morung. However, the missionaries opposed the morung institution after Christianity emerged, and individuals who became Christians were forced to quit the morung because their fellow morung members could no longer welcome them.

The father is the head of the family. The mother, however, is the head of the family while the father is absent. In case of parental absence, the older sibling has the right to rule the younger ones. Family relationship is patriarchal in every Naga society. The family structure was established in the past by customs, and family bonds were extremely tight, cohesive, and inflexible. The structure of the rights and obligations was straight forward. In every activity, they collaborated.

The word "*kenyi*," 'forbidden' has great significance and is powerful in Chakhesang Naga society (Marhu, 2006). *Kenyi* prevents people from carrying out bad deeds. Up to seven

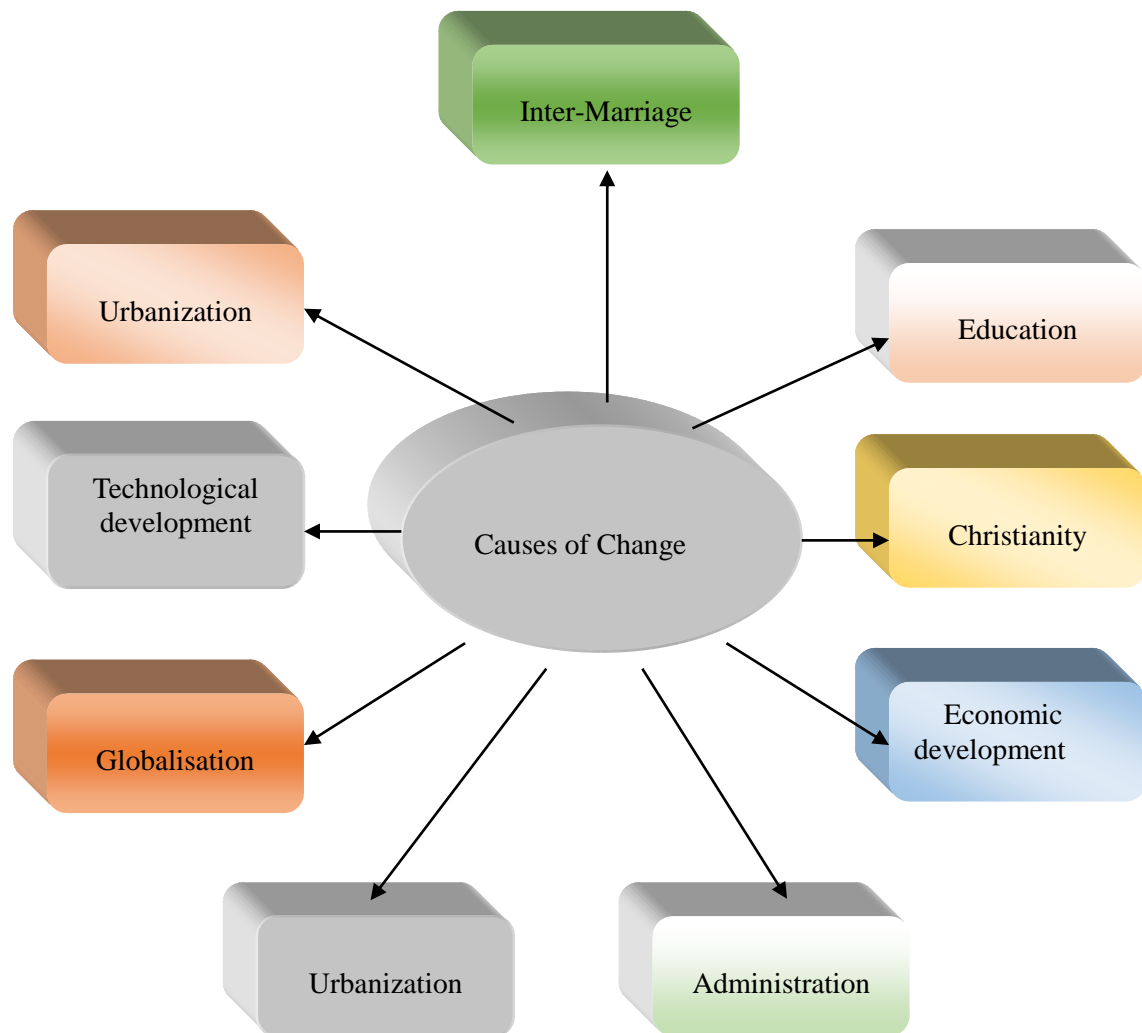
generations afterward, sickness, misfortune, and God's curse are experienced by those who break the *kenyi*. There is also *Metymi* (who foresee) who says they can communicate with the spirit. *Metymi* treats the sick and cures ailments. After a person passes away, *Metymi* transports their spirit to *Kechimikie* (journey of the death) a location where souls reside. In order to predict their future in a variety of areas, including agriculture, weather, enemy conflict, and animal hunting, Chakhesang Nagas also practiced omens.

The traditional religion observes many *menyi*/genna related to harvests, feasts, festivals, seasonal changes, illnesses, etc. Numerous significant feasts were observed, such as *kelaseseh/Muza*, *krilo*, *elito*, *zatho*, or *zhotho*. *Zatho* was the most significant feast of them all. The wealthy men in the village provided the celebration, which lasted for thirty days (Lohe, 2010). January, the month of *Zathokhrii*, was the celebration month for this *zatho*. As stated earlier, stone pulling, decorating with house horns, etc., go along with this *zatho*. In addition to the feast donor, other villagers also performed their roles and ceremonies. Various rites were carried out for the village by the priest *Mewu*. Along with him are some of the local clan representatives, who serve as the head of religion. Curses can be pronounced upon anyone who disobeys or would disobey the village's established standards, taboos, and *menyi* by the *Mewu* and the clan leaders. Such curses were made during Riinyie festival know as *Chii*.



### 4.3 Primary Causes of Change Within the Chakhesang Nagas

Different factors led to the development of cultural change among the Chakhesang Nagas (Fig:4.1).



**Fig: 4.1 Causes of change within the Chakhesang Nagas**

#### 4.3.1 Education

One of the most chief patron and most powerful instrument of social change is the act of education. Educational ideologies were brought by the educationists which plays as an assistance in adopting social change (Saikia, pr 1826). The opening of schools in the village and other locations, which made it difficult and impractical for students to continue living in the morung with its strict regulations and *kenyi* (forbidden), was another element that contributed to the morung's gradual demise. The role of the morung was adopted by the official schools and

institutions. The morung life completely disappeared with the arrival of Christianity and the new formal school system. In the socialization processes of society, government primary schools and high schools that are connected to them serve as mentors (Horam, n.d. p.16). For the purpose of improving society, those who attended schools, universities, and other educational institutions founded a variety of social groups, including charity forums, youth clubs, and student unions. Educational institutions, newspapers, articles, books etc. greatly affect the social life of the people. Since the inception of education within the community, the lifestyle drastically changed in every perspective in favor of modern ways of life leading to the development of attitudes, fighting superstitions and traditional beliefs. On the other hand, education also paved way for preservation of society's cultural heritage, values, traditions to the younger generation (Alemchiba, pr. 1804).

Globalization has not only impacted the Chakhesang society but also the whole education and knowledge system as well. How knowledge is produced, used and transferred in society is witnessing significant irreversible shift. It has turned out to become a knowledge-based economy, the scientific research in all the field of life and business is the most important driver of innovation and development (NCERT, 2023). Under the effects of the process of the globalization, the whole education system is undergoing an unending and continuous change to adjust with the new realities in international education system, mainly in higher education. The rapid change in communication technologies along with the globalisation is changing the relationship between the students and teachers within school and university system (Chaudhary, 2016). The whole system being based on ideas, values and knowledge building producing a shift in society from traditional society towards an information-based society. This reflects the effect on culture and brings about a new form of cultural imperialism within the Chakhesangs.

#### **4.3.2 Christianity**

It has been found that the adoption and intervention of Christian values has completely degraded the traditional values of *kenyi* taboo and shame. There have been changes in religion

and society, and Christian culture is now infused with traditional religious traditions. Christianity occupies the highest percentage of cultural change among the various factors (Fig.4.2). Good Friday coinciding with traditional festival of *Tsiikhenyei*, and Christmas falls with *Riinye*. Offerings of Christmas feast were considered to be equivalent to those of *Zotho* feast. The pulling of monoliths culture is still practiced by the Christian church today. Christianity replaced the war against the enemies with the peace of winning souls for eternal life. They have made peace with their adversaries and have allowed to go anywhere they like. There is little doubt that Christianity has made a significant impact on Naga village society. The need for modernity should be added in the development of traditional values. Additionally, it provides a clear understanding of God as the all-powerful, all-knowing, omnipresent Creator of the whole world and Savior of humanity. Both in the past and the present, social relationships are determined by religious institutions as well as their ideas and practices. The almighty, omniscient, and omnipresent *Menupi*, also known as the unseen God, is the creator of the whole universe according to the traditional religion. The Chakhesang Nagas had a view that the soul is eternal and departs from the body upon death. The deceased person's soul lives on and is active just as if they were still here on Earth. As a result, all required tools, clothing, weapons, and other items are buried with the deceased at the moment of burial. They also hold that the pious man becomes a star in the sky when he passes away. Christians, on the other hand, held that the deceased's souls rest in heaven with God in eternal peace.

#### **4.3.3 Economic Development**

Society's progress which is mainly determined by means of production like agricultural, businesses, job, traditional industries both rural and urban status etc. has a huge impact on cultural change. Economic factors highly created a society in a newly social form. For instance, the Chakhesang Naga traditional industries like weaving, arts and crafts, pottery, black smithy etc. which no longer could compete with the machine made modern goods declined. This has forced to adapt the machine device in production which caused less labour and less time

consuming leading to raised the standard of production and enjoy more leisure for aesthetic pursuits. This add to the tendency for assimilation with an economically more potential system for production, to ensure social security through integration etc. This is social and cultural forces which affect the process of absorption and adaptation. The growth of industries, factories outside, cities, township has highly attributed to economic factor within the tribe. Most of the educated Chakhesang youth migrate to towns, cities for better leisure income rather than sweating in the agricultural farm. Irrespective of gender, both men and women hunt for easy leisure income. All these which effect the process of assimilation and adaptation leading to social and cultural change (Fig: 4.2).

It was discovered in the village's economic institution that the clan and the village *Mewu* regulated economic activity. With the *Menyi* observation, a specific economic activity was kept for each month. Everyone was required to complete the task within the allotted time. The priest conducted all required religious rites before the start of agricultural work. The majority of religious rituals and celebrations had to do with farming activities. They were entirely reliant on the economy's primary sector. There are several kinds of land holdings, including kitchen gardens, residential plots, wet and dry terrace paddy fields, virgin forests, jhum land, and agro-forestry. Many social groups, including *Lezhiekro*, *Keluke*, and *Kekroke*, were engaged in agricultural production. They supported one another as well as the elderly, the sick, and anybody else who needs assistance. Crafts were a professional part-time job. Men crafted a variety of patterned baskets, as well as large and tiny husking baskets, wooden blocks, and planks for house design. Contrarily, women used to cultivate cotton, spin exquisite thread, and weave for their loved ones. Another hard task that many Chakhesang women performed was the weaving of *Thebvo* (nettle weaving). In the past, gathering nettle from the forest, pounding, drying, and producing refined thread for weaving were all regarded as important tasks. With the introduction of contemporary market yarn, this type of weaving has decreased. Over time, women's handicrafts involving the spinning of threads and the creation of colors progressively vanished,

and they began to utilize thread that was manufactured in factories situated both inside and outside the state.

It has been found that current socio-economic structure was determined by the profession a person holds. And today people's occupation was determined by the formal educational system. Those with degrees pursue a variety of careers, including teaching, administration and medical, theology, the private sector, politics, the armed forces, the police, etc. Their employment determines their social standing and function in society.

Chakhesang Naga society was quite basic and simple in the past. They had the same religious beliefs and worked in the same industry, which is the main driver of the economy. However, in their current economic endeavors, people have embraced new and diverse vocations and learned to coexist with members of diverse social systems. Currently, wealthy individuals or those in prominent positions in the government, build concrete houses and have access to modern amenities like cars, TVs, computers, washing machines, and the internet. They were regarded as having the highest prestige in the community and provide the villagers with Christmas feasts as well. It has been noted that the process of changing the socio-economic structure has made it more and more appropriate and adjusted with suitable circumstances that have given rise to the simple-complex society.

#### **4.3.4 Administration**

The setup of Indian administration, liberalization of Indian economy and other aspects such as society, culture has brought to a greater transparency and a sense of responsibility. The introduction of new technologies such as internet and e-governance in administrative set up and Right to Information Act 2005 has enforced more transparency, responsiveness, productivity, ethical values and efficiency. Colonization of British within the Naga territory has brought many changes in administration however leaving the villages to administer according to their customs (Venuh, 2005). The British introduction of Gaon Bura (GB) institution and the set up of village council in 1971 to this day continued. The principle of equity which was once upon a time

centered round from the village or oral tradition were now mostly replaced by written laws through Indian Constitution. The hierarchical structure getting flattered emphasizing on stakeholder's satisfaction and pro-social policies removing multiplicity of organization resulting the intense growth of interaction between society and administration. Goswami quoted, 'the transformation from a village polity to a national polity is a big leap forward'. It demanded a lot of changes i.e. mental make-up in attitude towards national outlook, replacing village-oriented social, economic or cultural organizations.

It was discovered in the politico-judicial system that the clan representatives, assisted all religious rites and local law enforcement, provided assistance to the traditional *Mewu* or *Thevo*. One of the most significant roles played by the village's *Thevo* and clan leaders was the administration of justice. The effective operation of the legal system is essential for maintaining the peace, harmony, and unity of the people. The village chief and clan served as the institution for carrying out the executive duties of the administration. The priest and clan representatives reached a final decision in the case. Village leaders, including the chief, clan, and skilled warrior, arbitrated disputes between villages. There was no other volunteer group that could resolve them.

The legal system and political system underwent modifications upon the arrival of the British government. The Gaon Bura (GB) institution was established by the British. The G.B. institution took the place of the chief's majority of administrative and political-judicial functions in the village.

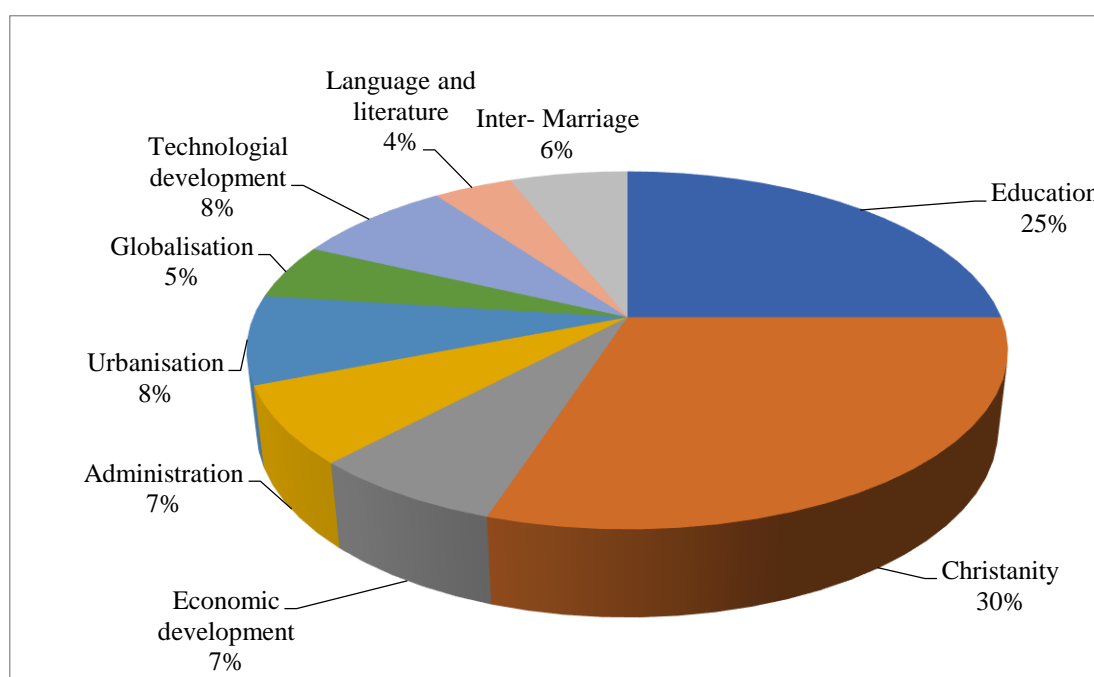
The Village Council remains in place today, having been established in 1971. There is a chairman, a secretary, and a representative from every clan in the village. Priesthood, clan, and the old system were all no longer in use. Additionally, G.B.'s authority was diminished and given to the village council. Women society was formed in every Chakhesang village. All of these different groups are actively promoting social cohesion and solidarity with the Village Council.

The general assembly of the village, which operates according to the same rules as a modern legislative assembly is, its legislative body. The village democracy's unique quality is

most fully expressed at the village assemblies attended by every villager. The village council currently has the top position in the community. On occasion, the lack of persuasive evidence from both parties prevents the village court from reaching a conclusion. The court will then order the parties to take an oath in such cases.

Customary rules were established for the benefit of all people from the outset, based on the principles of equality. To uphold truth and justice, harmony and solidarity, there is no distinction made between the rich and the poor, powerful and weak, smart and foolish. Written laws do not exist. The custom was transmitted orally from one generation to the next.

Article 371A (1) of the Indian Constitution encourages the Nagas to create and uphold customary laws within the political-judicial system. As a result, the village's customary laws grow more powerful. Customary rules have a long history and are adaptive and accretive, adding new values to meet the needs of development and changing social structure (Wouters, 2022, pp.146). The right to appeal to any court, including the village council court, civil SDO court, DC court, High court, and Supreme court, is granted to every villager.



**Fig: 4.2 Figure indicating the percentage of change as on 2021**

#### **4.3.5 Urbanization**

The continuous shift of population to urban areas from rural areas make society adapt to change. The increase of economic opportunity in towns and cities innovation of artistic field, and increase cultural diversity has impacted the life in urban sector. In most urban modern cities and towns, multiculturalism becomes a basic aspect of life. Many young generations of Chakhesang Nagas migrated from villages to towns for studies, job, or settlement. This has resulted the influence of different culture mingling and interacting with one another has impacted hugely on society. Urbanization led the changing demands of political, socio-religion, socio-economic or day to day life leaving no room for traditional lifestyle. However, this has not impacted only on negative aspects but to many significant undeniable aspects. As a result of the influence of formal education, Christianity, improved communication tools, and governmental regulations, there developed a progressive and growing division of interests and career goals for both male and female in the families. Their interactions with towns and cities outside the state as well as neighboring villages increased as a result. The people's loyalty to their original land decreased as a result, and their mobility grew. It became popular, particularly among the educated younger generation and those with metropolitan connections, do want to move to cities in order to pursue further education and professional programs and jobs at well-paying institutions and organizations.

#### **4.3.6 Globalization**

Globalization is the process of integration of economy and society, the intermingling of different cultures. In other words, globalisation is the process of the mobilisation and distribution of resources (tangible and intangible) from one geographic boundary to another has huge impact on society. Social and cultural integration and intermingling is an important aspect and result of globalization. From the social point, globalization seems to have significantly impacted the normal life of Chakhesang community such as life style, attitude, identity, work culture, family structure, values and eating habits etc. The hunt for higher paid job and easier accessibility by an



individual is another factor. As far as the culture is concerned, globalization have impacted on Chakhesang society directly or indirectly. The aspects like social and political values are some other important factors that get effected in the process of globalization. And India is not immune to these changes. The Chakhesang Nagas as a result, have crept into social and cultural change due to globalization.

#### **4.3.7 Technology**

The simple traditional society which practice the same religion, engaged in the same primary sector with the same work have being adopted with new technological advancement. Traditional houses being replaced with concrete modern style, facilities like computer, internet, television, telephones, washing machine, refrigerator, working tools and equipments, running automobile, etc. These technological capabilities have been equipping Naga society specially the Chakhesang community with a lot of soft power and opportunities to interact and exposed to other parts of the world. The social interaction has been much easier with the introduction of communication technologies and have made available to every person at the cheapest rate. This is not only helping in social integration but also economic integration as well. However, at the same time the whole process is bringing a drastic attitudinal shift towards a number of social values, issues as well as taboos within the community.

#### **4.3.8 Language and Literature**

The introduction of western education, has made English a common language not only in India but also in Nagaland. Beside English, Nagamese has become a demand specially for young youths and is increasingly with every passing day. People from the same community converse with common dialect of Nagamese or English. English literature has become very rich among the tribe and has been accepted as an official language in almost all the institutions. Novels and poetry writings were also translated into English. Earlier, most of the writers wrote happy ending stories but now realistic grey shaded stories and poetry is being written and read by readers across the region (Khilini, 2004). Chakhesang Nagas have also translated and written the

beautiful Gospel Hymnal of the Church and Bible to its own Kuzhale dialect since the past decade which was earlier used in Tenyidia dialect. It is true that the one thing common to all Nagas is that they have no written records in the pre-colonial period. Though Chakhesangs have no written literature, the vast variety of songs and stories treasured in memory from generation to generation have a high poetic quality and exquisite memory. The richness of Chakhesang folk literature cannot be realized unless one sits with and listen to an old man in the village, who gives out unendingly his songs and stories from his memory. This rich literature stored in memory are gradually but certainly disappearing along with the passing away of the keepers “the old man”. When an elderly died, the library is lost. The task of recording and preservation of the folk literature is thus challenging and urgent.

#### **4.3.9 Inter-Marriage**

In the Chakhesang community, marriage fulfills both religious sacraments and customary law. Clan exogamy and monogamy exist. It is customary for a single woman to wait to get married before getting long hair. In addition to the boy's personality, his wealth, the financial standing of his family was taken into consideration while choosing a son-in-law. The most crucial attributes of a daughter-in-law were her family history, diligence, moral integrity, and general health. The choice of a life partner used to be greatly influenced by parents. A lifetime marriage contract does not exist. A woman and a man were free to get a divorce, however this doesn't happen very often.

Following the arrival of Christianity, the people embraced Christian standards for marriage. There are no second marriages or divorces after being married with the consent of the Church, the parents, and the relatives of both parties, with the exception of those who are separated due to death only.

The change of culture takes place with inter-marriage of different tribes, mainland or foreigner. This led to the adaption of different culture i.e acculturation or diffusion. For instance, a woman married to other community or mainland India modify her behavior in changing with

social conduct. With this process an innovation of culture brings with various unforeseen results in the society. Many Chakhesangs today have married to different religious, social and ethnic groups. This has created another factors of cultural change. Greater ethnic and religious tolerance is the biggest reason for increasing intermarriage. The children of intermarriage, for instance grew up with mixed culture. This process creates both diffusion and acculturation within the family or community.

#### **4.4 Continuity of Chakhesang Culture**

##### **4.4.1 Agriculture**

Agriculture the main backbone and primary source of sustainability since time immemorial continued till today. Terrace cultivation is one and foremost unchanging traditional practice despite with fast and growth of globalization and modernization. With the development of scientific technology, mechanization innovations like use of power tiller (Plate 35), power harvester were greatly use in the villages for easier method of tilling and harvest in the fields. Such usage of technology better fertilizers, and better tools from the markets have even boosted and yielded more quantity. However, many villagers still use and practice the old indigenous method of natural manure of animal waste to increase the harvest. To the Chakhesang Nagas, with the start of rainy season in June almost every one irrespective of male, female, rich or poor, job holders, farmers etc. rush for paddy trasplantation. According to the research survey, majority of the Chakhesang Nagas depended on the local rice production rather than the imports from the main land of India. The tradition of *Mulemi/Lezhiekro* (peer group) which worked on the basis of rotation in support of each other continued since time immemorial. This in turn promote friendship and reduced owner's labour charge.

##### **4.4.2 Village Brotherhood Relations/ *Ekhrami***

Many Chakhesang villages have good relationship with other fellow villages since pre-colonial period. It was believed that they were brothers and descended from a single ancestor. Fighting a battle against these kind of villages was prohibited. For security reasons, the

Chakhesangs have also maintained cordial ties with neighboring villages since the time of *rifu* (war against foes). Every time they went to battle, they sought safety or respite in these welcoming communities, and the following day they headed back home. A *Kelekiemenye* (feast with other village) was also practiced by them. Example: Sakrabami village (Sechuku area) and Tekhuobami village (Kuzhathede area) had feast with *Kelekiemenye*. Brotherhood villages like Porba village having a strong brotherhood with Pfutseromi village. When things were tough, they still support one another during emergencies or natural disasters. To this day such brotherhood village sought and offer help from one another. A strong relation which developed from the settlement of the respective village continued. The warfare against hostile villages was entirely discontinued with the arrival of the British authorities. In addition, the adoption of Christianity led to mutual reconciliation by the villagers.

#### **4.4.3 Craft and Weaving**

Despite the growth and the flow of modern technology and the influx of modern garments, weaving and craft productions among the Chakhesang Nagas is highly in practice. Wood craft, bamboo craft becomes highly in demand as most of the household are a consumer to these crafts. Traditional making of bamboo baskets, cane baskets, winnower, bamboo mats etc. are some of the common products that were produced from the villages. Besides woodcraft is another practice still continued by the Chakhesangs. Siithozu Nasa village among the Chakhesangs considered the most efficient woodcarving (Plate 36) continued till today. Likewise, Gidemi village which is the prominent village for making traditional men's headgear and other stuffs for man's attire continued. Making of proficient woodcrafts such as traditional plates, bowls, spoons or other cutleries were not uncommon to Chakhesang Nagas. Weaving by the Chakhesang women is another indigenous practice since time immemorial. Many women today opt for weaving to sustain the livelihood of the family. With the imports of varieties of yarns from the market unlike the olden days, different attires were produced by the local weavers. With the introduction of handloom technology time consumption and production

cost becomes easier however, majority of the weavers among the Chakhesangs prefers indigenous way of weaving i.e. the back strap looms (Plate 37). This is because the production quality is more refine, more skillful and more beautiful. “There is a belief among the Chakhesang community that women should be like *Thebvora* (Nettle shawl) in order to have a strong and good marital life. Women must be rough and strong enough to stand up and down all through her marital life. *Thebvora/ Sasiikhii* has its warm and hardy quality. As, it is considered as the roughest and strongest of all the Naga shawls” (Dianu pp3). Weaving is a household industry which add economy and many women opt for this occupation for sustaining the expenditure of the family. This indigenous way of weaving could be seen mostly outside the house if one walk through the Chakhesang villages. The women of Chakhesang Nagas are still regarded as exceptional and best weavers today, and they weave a variety of patterns such as waistcoats, shawls, mekhalas, traditional kilts, bags, ties, and other items.

#### **4.4.4 Folksongs and Music**

The whole spectra of music have been hit by the process of westernization. The traditional old folk music is on the verge of vanishing by the exposure of western music and it has been an instant hit in Nagaland. It has been replaced with different genres of music including rock and roll, rap, pop, hip-hop, heavy metal etc. This has impacted many local artists which are westernizing the music. This has been verified with the help of increasing demand for western music within the community. However, the alien music does not wholly supersede the traditional old folk music of the Chakhesang community. Folk music, expressed through *li* or folksongs and performed on a single-stringed bamboo instrument called a *tati* or *libuh*, was a rich trove of music owned by the Chakhesang Nagas. However, these conventional musical genres were shunned in the early years of Christianity because of their alleged licentious content, which was incompatible with the tenets of the newly discovered religion. Nevertheless, a noteworthy individual named Sare Echirii, the first convert from Chizami, set out on an amazing quest of blending cultures and religions. They blended Christian gospel lyrics into the traditional music

with their own native taste, making for a distinctive and beautiful combination (Kapfo, 2023). The church has become a new home for the melodies of ancient folk music in the modern day. These songs, which are rooted in worship and contain Christian lyrics, show how adaptable the Chakhesang Nagas are to their cultural past and how it fits with their Christian beliefs.

The society being a traditional, folk songs plays an integral part of life. Through traditional folk songs, it narrates a short history of the people involved in it. Traditional folk songs, hawling or yodeling etc. are still very much in practice within the community to this day. Festivals coincide with folk songs, folk music, yodeling etc. Musical instruments such as *Tati* (Plate 38), *Khuboh*, (mouth instrument) *Lici* (buffalo blow horn) etc. are used in enhancing the vibrant festivals and traditional folk songs. This continuity of folk music adds colour and variety in pattern of a routine mode of living and introduces a definite element of naturalness and spontaneity to the ways and attitudes which, for various reasons have got warped and stunted and are on the way to being wholly mechanistic in the artificial set-up of today. Most of the Chakhesang folk songs are really melodious and these do not lack in any purity of tunes or standards. Many a times friends and people from other tribes commented that Chakhesangs are the best singers among the Nagas and that their voice does not lack with best vocals across the globe. In order to fulfill the needs of modern taste, some refinement accompanied with modern musical instruments like guitar, piano, drums etc. are added to produce beautiful folk fusion. It is to the fact that folk music and other folk items of culture acted as an intermediary to bridge the gap between the modern and that of traditional Chakhesang society.

#### **4.4.5 Food and Eating Habits**

The Chakhesang community being an agrarian economy based, the consumption of food habits is mostly vegetables, cereals and staple food rice. Traditional local rice beer known as *Zutho* occupies the main drinks of the people. *Zutho* is made of glutinous rice with fermented yeast. Popular traditional food includes red rice, snail with perilla seeds, millets, job tears, corn tea, sticky rice cake wrapped in banana leaf and other traditional steamed food etc. Most of the

eating habits are confined to home and open-air during festivals. Chakhesangs are very hard and strong working people. Family plays an important role in having food together at home. With the dawn of modernity, the traditional local rice beer replaced with imported alcohol. Dinning outside home considered not good was no more not a serious matter with the influence of western culture affecting every individual. Dinning in hotels, restaurants increasing with every passing day. Drinking alcohol is not a taboo as it was decades ago. The local rice pounding drinks, organic food replaced by imported drinks, imported fast food etc. in an easier way. Among the community, dinning outside home and drinking is a common phenomenon. Rural community still lacks in this regard but is catching as drinking and dinning outside home is increasing in rural areas also (Sinha, 2012).

Inspite of the influence of imported foods, drinks, the Chakhesangs still preserved the rich traditional food which plays an integral part in continuing and keeping alive the rich culture.

#### **4.4.6 Traditional Attires/ Ornaments**

Most of the ornaments and attires are still in use today. Each one has symbolic meanings. Instead of being able to use and afford to buy, one must earn certain attires. The following are some of the most noteworthy attires and ornaments that the Chakhesang Nagas continue to wear.

##### **(i) *Thiipikhu/Thsiiketsiira***

Only couples who generously held feasts of merit for the villages were allowed to wear *Thiipikhu* in the past. It demonstrates the person's diligence and hard work. Wearing *Thiipikhu* was forbidden for ordinary people. A person who held Christmas feast with the village earns the right to wear this lovely, treasured shawl in today's deeply ingrained traditional customs. *Thiipikhu*, a representation of tradition and changing cultural manifestations, embodies the Chakhesang Naga people's lasting spirit and cultural legacy.

##### **(ii) *Riizakhu/Theriikadiera***

The right to wear this *Riizakhu* has a moral essence of the people for community and goodwill. This *Riizakhu* which was woven purely white and crafted by stitching

porcupine quills together were worn by people who performed *Muza* or *Seseh* a feast to the entire village prior to the pulling of stones and house horn. This shawl today is worn by people who hosted feast during Christmas and had holy matrimony from church from the Christian law.

### **(iii) *Chiinamenie/Tiisiine***

In Chakhesang Naga tradition, the black kilt adorned with three or four rows of seashells has a specific meaning that represents several facets of honour and celebration. The four rows were originally awarded to a person who was a brave, strong, and good warrior. The three rows, usually worn by a regular man. But today, among the Chakhesangs such differentiation of rows does not specify the character of a person as war with enemy has stopped. However, using of such kilt is very popular in almost every occasion such as festivals, traditional dances, special program etc. It serves as an emblematic celebration.

Besides the above mentioned attires, almost all other traditional attires and ornaments are in use. This shows the legacy that the Chakhesangs Nagas in spite of its cultural change, the core root of their culture which shape and endure the values defining who they are has not shaken.

There are quite significant differences between the Naga culture and western culture styles and similarly, Nagaland urban and rural life style. But the process of globalisation is changing the whole way of life in Nagaland as a whole (Pais, 2005). The difference between western and Naga urban lifestyle is diminishing with every passing day and rural Nagaland is following the same direction of the urban Nagaland. The dressing code within the community is changing at a very high pace and the acceptance of western cloths and life style is increasing every day. Traditional Mekhala (women wrap around) and shawl is becoming a rare thing among tribe which was a common outfit till the late 1970s and 1980s. These were being replaced by denim jeans, T-shirt and tops and other



western outfits. There is an increase in consumerism in Nagaland and Nagas are looking more options to consume and spend (Fernandes, 2000).

A noticeable changes could be seen within the tribe with the dawn of modernity. Ornaments, dresses like trousers, shirts, shoes etc. were replaced with *pficiimeyie* (traditional kilt), *nounha*, *rashie* etc. along with the whole process of globalization.

Nevertheless, the Chakhesangs with its rich vibrant culture and colourful attires identifies and adorn them from the rest of world. For instance, *Riizakhii/Theriikadiera* is worn by a person who has carried out feast of merit. Traditional attire signifies a prominent element of the tribe and people still preserve traditional clothing heritage by wearing it during special occasions, festivals, cultural day, award ceremony days, weddings, funerals or any special days. Many contemporary modified versions (Plate 39) of such traditional attires were also produced by the Chakhesang Nagas. Production of such attires are also time consuming and costly compared to western clothing. It is also tedious and challenging work. Traditional attires of the Chakhesang Nagas have also developed in fashion apparel at the international level. The *Rira* shawl (Plate 40) of the Chakhesang Nagas became the first Naga shawl which was granted the Geographical Indication (GI) under the category of handicrafts in India with the application no. 542 since April 2017 (Morung Express, 25<sup>th</sup>, October 2017). This on the other hand could preserve the rich culture and indigenous knowledge of sustaining resources.

#### **4.4.7 Traditional Values and Beliefs**

The societal shift of the Chakhesang Nagas that has occurred has followed a linear path, moving from tradition to modernism. There is a history of cultural and historical legacies of values, beliefs, and rituals that are adapted during the process of social change to fit a new circumstance or need. The term taboo *kenyi* is highly valued to this day. Such *kenyi* can be verified as the Chakhesangs still believed that it is *kenyi* to encroach the public footpath, *kenyi* for women to climb the roof of the house, *kenyi* for women to clear or cut the jungle for jhum cultivation in Thetsumi village till today, *kenyi* for un-natural death to bury inside the village.

Exogenous causes such as the arrival of the British, Christianity, formal education, and Nagaland statehood were the key drivers of social change in Naga communities during the modernization process. These were the primary elements that transform the basic social structure into a simple-complex social structure, which is composed of interconnected roles and status, rights, and obligations in the interaction system. It is an empirical fact that social, political, cultural, and economic change processes by their very nature favor selective structural replacements and social difference. They also have an accumulative and adaptive tendency.

In spite of the manifold factors that have changed the Chakhesang Naga society, they still continued to believe the traditional practices and values such as visiting *Mytimi* during sick, using herbs or plants for massage rather than going to modern hospitals. The old rich tradition of Chakhesang culture is still well preserved in many aspects be it dialect, folk music and songs, foods, attires, habits, traditional economy etc.

#### **4.4.8 Law and Justice**

In the field of law and justice, customary law plays the highest role in dealing any situation that may come. The Village Council which is the highest institution within the society administered and strengthened the welfare of the people. In spite of the political developments, the governing government, no other law can replace the root of customary law. Though tremendous developments and transformation have taken place for the past few decades, the Chakhesang society within its core have not much change and is keeping the rich culture.

#### **4.4.9 Tsoshe Erection of Monolith**

As was previously mentioned, the Chakhesang people had a long-standing custom of pulling massive stones from a distance and erecting them at important spots or along the main, well-traveled path. This kind of practices was done only those who hosted feast of merit. Furthermore, these standing menhirs serve as monuments and a living tradition with immense symbolic meaning. These days, erecting of stones are connected to churches, organisations, village jubilees, etc. which marked the symbols and commemorations. Within the tradition, these

stones serve as an everlasting, significant monuments that signify the Chakhesang Nagas' ongoing legacy and bridge the gap between the past and present (Plate 41).

#### **4.4.10 Festivals**

The Chakhesang people still celebrate their traditional festivals, despite the fact that many of the animistic rites were abandoned when Christianity arrived. During festivals in the past, people would present and sacrifice animals to the spirits, sprinkle animal blood on the walls, and offer them rice beer and meat. Such purpose of the animals offered as sacrifices during festivals has changed over time. Festivals today provide as a happy occasion for feasting and celebration with loved ones. Festivals are celebrated as a significant role in strengthening the social life of the community and preserving the rich heritage, harmony and peace. Different festivals celebrated among the Chakhesangs today embraced the cultural values and its roots. The dynamic interaction balancing between tradition and modern cultural expression among the Chakhesang Nagas is shown in this progression and continuity of celebrating festivals (Plate 42).

#### **4.4.11 *Ciikie/Kale* Kinship**

Within the Chakhesang Naga village settlement, there are several clans. Every clan is separated into different *Ciikie*, or groups that inherit each other's properties from the same ancestors' descendants. This tradition of property inheritance includes both movable and immovable property. Example like even to the extent of baskets, bamboo mats, winnowing baskets, paddy etc. When a person or the family does not have any male child to inherit, such properties were transferred to the *Ciikielo/ Kale*. This tradition is being followed till today by the Chakhesang Nagas. Members of the clan support one another in administrative tasks, business dealings, marriage and funeral rites. It was used to be a privilege for outsider to join a clan and then become a full-fledged village member by dropping their original surname when the community's population was less. A person who relocates to a village from another one can become a fully fledged member of the village and join a particular clan and become the real citizen of the village. However today, even though he may be a Naga by birth, no one is now

permitted to join a clan as a full member without the Village Council's approval. A clan is not allowed to admit non-Nagas as full members of the village according to the rule. Through marriage, a person's responsibilities and duties within the kinship system were extended to other villages, tribes, ethnic groups, and races. Due to the widespread socialization that has resulted from inter-tribal, village, outsider, etc. marriages, family relationships have also altered as a result of the population's rapid increase.

In the past, the family served as the primary socializing agent. It was once believed that there were different phases of human life, ranging from infancy to old age. From the family, the individual picks up morals, manners, roles, and responsibilities. People in traditional societies picked up knowledge through experience and observation. The socialization process changes drastically after Christianity, the market economy, and formal education in the West. The majority of children and young people today are sent to Sunday schools, churches, colleges, and universities, among other places. Therefore, these institutional entities play a part in socialization in addition to the role of the family.

“Thus while some of the practices underwent a sea- change, most beliefs and practices continued with some modification” (Babu, 2024, p.91). The Chakhesang Nagas continued to believe and practice the traditional culture with its core root handed down from forefathers. Contemporary attire designs too have not displaced the traditional designs and specific motifs. The dress and attires, monuments etc. Still serves self identification of the Chakhesang Nagas. To some extent of modification, traditional festivals even coincided with Christian celebration like Good Friday with *Tsiikhenyie* festival and Christams with *Riinyie* festival.



**Plate 35:** Use of scientific technology in agricultural sector at Pfutseromi village



**Plate 36:** Wood carving at Siithozu Nasa village



**Plate 37:** Back strap looms of *Thebvo* nettle weaving at Zapami village



**Plate 38:** *Tati* musical instrument



**Plate 39:** Contemporary modified version shawl of *Thebvora* with intricate patterns



**Plate 40:** *Rira* shawl for men and *Rura* shawl for women









**Plate 43:** Modified version of traditional gate at Pfutseromi village



**Plate 44:** *Pakhu* Rice pounder (Photo taken at Zapami Museum)



**Plate 45:** Collection of pottery (Photo taken at Zapami Museum)



**Plate 46:** *Kuwa* Traditional Basin (Photo taken at Zapami Museum)



## Chapter 5

### CONCLUSIONS

#### 5.1 Discussion

The structure of social ties is altered when human society changes. Social roles and the relationships between groups, and institutions are related to social relations. The social systems undergo change. It could emerge from within the system where tradition is ingrained or from the influence of certain reform processes. Change is the term used to describe the observed contrasts between the old and new customs and behaviors that are sanctioned by the old tradition. Change might come about as a result of environmental adaptations or external interference. “Patterned behavior is learned and not fixed in the organism and subject to modification when time permits” (PR.1831,p.2). Both a process and an element in how society and its traditions innovate and change is modernization. The procedure might work occasionally, but not always. Additionally, time is a factor. Change might come about quickly in certain situations and take longer in others. At times, the pace of change might be so gradual and even that it becomes challenging to determine the precise moment at which the shift has become firmly established. Factors such as societal settings and situations influence change. Because humans are social creatures, they cannot exist in solitude and must depend with all life's challenges. Therefore, one must comprehend the stability that gives rise to change in order to comprehend all of the changes.

Within the Chakhesang community, social change is happening at an astounding rate. Without the aid of contemporary tools like science and technology, Chakhesangs has leapt from an antiquated level of civilization into the whirlwind of modernism during the past three decades. Traditional values have been the principal casualty of this process.

The decline of moral principles and attitudes is one of the main shortcomings. The ideals and customs that formed the foundation of Chakhesang culture were blindly folded and this value structure is completely collapsing. Traditions of our heritage included bravery, honesty, sharing, caring, and making sacrifices for the good of the community. For example, there used to

be very few criminal cases, very few stealing cases, and no knowledge of locks and keys. Once established, the label of "thief" was such a social office that the bearer could hold a position of status in village affairs and the title persisted for generations as a social disability (PR,1831, p 3). In legal disputes, the customary procedure may provide the closest and most prompt justice. Tragically, in the Chakhesang community, all values vanished in such a short period of time, and complicated procedures pertaining to civil and criminal justice administration including in cases of compassion are invoked in the name of modernism, negating the immediate and fundamental justice that the people were previously afforded through customary practices.

The electoral politics, which has contributed to some political stability and democratic consciousness, has unintentionally institutionalized many social problems that were not there in the past, which is the second significant issue. In a short amount of time, corruption in all spheres of life puts society in grave risk (PR,1831, p 4). The rise of corruption in modern times has caused a complete breakdown of the state's value system. A while back, wealthy men from the Chakhesang villages held feasts honoring, sharing love and generosity. By genuinely giving his community his wealth and love, he hoped to elevate his standing in the community. Put another way, a person's interests used to be centered on the community, but they are now self-serving.

Thirdly, institutions have been eroding. The success of a society, especially in a democracy, rests on its institutions. The old institutions were rendered ineffectual on the one hand, and on the other, they were forced to adopt a system in which institutions function in a diluted autonomy and those with independent thoughts are labeled as dissidents. Only around autonomous persons can autonomous institutions be constructed. Indeed, when complex hierarchies replace existing systems and organizations. The young people who will handle the inherent obstacles and complications will need to be nurtured to shape their autonomy within the society we envision today, if autonomous individuals are to be grown up for the healthy growth of autonomous institutions to promote democracy.

Fourthly, all values have also been removed from the educational system. A generation or more has reached adulthood without being exposed to culture. It is possible to refer to this as a system of "de-culturalization" of our social interactions. It is a standing testament to the principles our heritage is built upon. Everything crumbles when that base gives way. The main goal of the education system established by the British was to prepare some of the locals for jobs as office clerks. Sadly, or thankfully, despite significant changes in social, political, and economic life, the same structure still exists today. Rarely does a Naga view education as something that will better prepare him for his everyday life; instead, they view it as something that will prepare them for a very different kind of life, one that they expect to be provided to them in the form of a government job that can best be described as a sitting and eating job. He is unwilling to return to the village life and is searching fruitlessly for a job that will utilize his skills.

An additional source of annoyance in contemporary culture is the issue of social abnormality. A social aberration has been brought about by the growth and affluence that followed (PR,1831, p.5). In just twenty years, a once-backward region has been overtaken by development efforts and transformed into a purportedly contemporary state. The masses were intoxicated by it even before they realized its value. And a warped civilization was born in the process. A society where greed took precedence over all other factors. People no longer have high goals in mind instead, they have materialistic desires. Human values have been the cause in this process inside society.

Urbanization is rapidly advancing in relation to administrative requirements. When society has engaged in the daily incoming changes, there has been a push observed with the typical urbanization elements, village to urban migration. The advancement of good health, care, and economic independence of the people has been acknowledged by the Nagaland government. These interactions with the changing environment would undoubtedly spark a revolution in the people's growth, bringing them closer to the nation's other intellectually gifted citizens.

The Chakhesang community is known for its self-respecting principles and widespread awareness of the ways in which the outside world is changing. It will adapt to this new dynamic for a complete overhaul and greater revitalization. With the establishment of popular governance through franchise and all these socio-administrative developments, it is accepted earlier than it was previously. Prior to this interaction, the indigenous elements in various spheres were greatly drawn to these new and innovative patterns of behavior, which were with the outside people. Over time, several components of the community's social structure began to include elements from other systems.

After splitting off from larger Assam to become its own state, Nagaland established a bureaucratic government. From then on, Chakhesangs in particular and Nagaland as a whole have encountered numerous facets of change. Actually, however, a number of forces have been at play since World I and World War II. People from all around the nation began to flood into the offices with these administrative settings. The educational institution also had to make accommodations for outside teaching staff. These outsiders come from a variety of linguistic, cultural, behavioral, and religious backgrounds. There is no doubt that the various communities who live in Nagaland have left a lasting cultural impression on the various groups of people (Alemchiba, p.2). The acceptance of stressed features within their own group and culture is facilitated by this gradual encounter and engagement. It will naturally take a long time for an alien trait or a portion of one to be embraced by the stable culture in which Chakhesangs are bred in order to integrate them into traditional culture. The primary cause of this is that Chakhesangs were forced to testify to the suitability of those cultural qualities through many experimental phases, which made the younger generation more prevalent than the older generation. Many antiquated customs and trends have been incorporated into contemporary patterns.

The Chakhesangs have not only been impacted by outsiders for a change, since the 1980s, it has been particularly evident that the children of the community have left the state or district for work, education, training, vacation, or other short-term stays. These kids encountered

a lot of changes while they were outside and applied what they had learned to their own lives. When they go back home, they carry these changes with them. The newly acquired behaviors and adjustments they are unable to give up and continue to practice in their own environments.

These traditional lifestyles that each people follow have enchanted long-standing patriarchal characteristics as well as those who have progressively adopted them after never having been outside. As a result, it has been observed that society began to adjust in the early 1980s for the reasons previously described.

When an educated individual from a rural location gets a job in an urban area, they have to relocate and adjust to a new environment. An individual's identity is disrupted as a result of this migration, which removes them from their own family, social circles, place of origin, economic status, and cultural background and places them in a new social milieu. It is impossible to separate or give up their customary, normative ideals and way of life. The people living in metropolitan areas are sophisticated, perceptive, and sensitive to everything going on in their immediate surroundings (Saikia, pr. 1826, p4). They are able to acclimate to the habits, attitudes, conventions, and conduct of metropolitan places through continuous association and the influence of their new surroundings. Government agencies have constructed a variety of housing options for its staff in urban areas. There are instances where personnel from various departments live in the same complex. These workers may come from various states and have different languages, cultures, and customs, or they may belong to separate ethnic group cross-sections. As a social creature, man cannot survive in solitude for very long. It is inevitable for these migrants to interact with others. Relationships with neighbors have a significant impact at homes and their families.

It has also been noted that a person must engage with people when they join a society, association, or group, whether at work or outside of it. Cohesion among the members of the association is a result of this communication. Engaging in various social events provides possibilities for development, which in turn leads to making decisions and taking on family and

societal duties. As a result, people experience objective changes in their behavior, such as self-motivation and adaptability, participation in social interactions, group decision-making, and family and village affairs.

The social life of Chakhesang society is well-regulated by efficient organizations. These organizations, of which the village council is the principal body, are fully empowered to control and implement social norms. Particularly when they were working in agriculture, people would spend their working hours with friends, family, and neighbors. Similar to this, people who work in offices tend to form friendships with others in similar age, sex, income, and status groups. Making acquaintances outside of one's group is considered necessary by high-income and status employees, which is why it is frequent and popular. In addition, outdoor leisure promotes social interaction and provides a platform for independent thought and creative expression, including the development of interests and routines. The Chakhesang people are amiable and straightforward by nature, therefore they like socializing with others. This interaction and enjoyment also influences their way of life. Engaging in culturally creative activities such as music, gardening, arts and crafts, etc., provides abundant opportunity to learn about various attributes that belong to other people. Everyone appears to be using the knowledge they have now learned. The knowledge that the younger generation acquires in his free time transcends cultural boundaries. Recreational skills are an addition to economic pursuits, which not only provide a sense of fulfillment but also imply the blending of ideas and perspectives for change.

The conditions of living in cities and dealing with a variety of individuals have had an impact on leisure activities. The educated who come from an agro-economic background have gone to work for the government. Working people are now exposed to modern recreational activities like as movies, dramas, picnics, outings, and cultural events credited to the service categories that are based on education, occupation, income, and status. They may now purchase musical instruments such as guitars, drums, record players, radios, table tennis, football, cricket, and more credits to their salaried occupations. Keeping up with global news can be achieved

through reading newspapers, journals, articles, or by watching and listening to TVs, phones, and other devices. The nature of leisure and recreational activities has changed significantly as a result of the increased social connection that now exists among people living in remote regions that are cut off from their original homes. Both urban and rural literate populations have a preference for learning Western and Indian music. It is also evident in contemporary music, as singers skillfully blend native notes with Western pop music while accompanied by guitar, drums, and other instruments. It is impossible to dispute how the traditional games have been impacted by modern influences. Regular instruction is provided at stadiums and educational institutions on drills, games, and parades, both indoor and outdoor. It has been noted that workplaces and educational institutions offer half-day holidays in the event of a competitive match. This demonstrates how people are drawn to contemporary video, games and sports and how enthusiastically they are supported. This shows recreational delight, but on the other hand, it also reinforces contemporary views on society and culture.

There are noticeable adjustments made to dress codes and attire. Every ethnic group in the region, including the Chakhesang community, has vibrant traditional clothing for both men and women. In cities, it was rare to see men in traditional kilts and shawls or ladies putting on mekhalas and shawls, etc., on a typical day. Acceptance of others' attire and personal style is highly prevalent across both genders. Western clothing items like as coats, ties, skirts, blouses, shoes, and shirts were popularized by British administrators, who helped the locals adapt to the local climate and ease of mobility (Alemchiba, pp5,6). The designs and patterns of the hand-woven fabrics are currently based on styles that have been copied from other states or countries. A person's entire appearance has changed as a result of their hairstyle. Girls who are single no longer cut or shave their hair. She could preserve things the way she wanted them. Horam states, “the Naga youth today are as conscious of their appearance as the youth anywhere in the world”.

Regarding eating customs, the Chakhesang people have borrowed several dishes from non-tribal individuals who have traveled outside of the state and from other tribes. By dining at

hotels, parties, and friends' homes, they had developed these appetites. A lot of ladies have begun cooking various cuisines that they have learned from recipe books and publications. Very little indigenous food is provided to visitors at formal events like weddings or other festivities; instead, Indian and Western cuisine is served. However, it is impossible to dispute that the traditional foods and cuisines contribute to the rich traditional food and are also a significant and unique delicacy that the community still practices in its original tongue. Both the Chakhesangs and the Nagas have taken to using imported cooking oils to prepare various foods; roasting and cooking Chinese and Indian food is becoming increasingly common. The majority of the changes in cooking have occurred among highly educated and affluent individuals who have hung out with a variety of social classes and cultural backgrounds. It's possible that some groups' newly developed reliance on imported foods is depleting the economy and having long-term consequences on society until the state produces its own. Aluminum, Chinese and Indian pottery, stainless steel bowls, cups, and plates are gradually replacing household items such as wooden plates, bamboo mugs, containers, and spoons. According to individuals I interviewed for my field study, the reason for this change is that these creative utensils look better and are more cost-effective to keep. It said that the passage of time has required.

With modernity, people have begun embracing new lifestyles and modes of operation. The people of Chakhesang are really open to change and becoming less attached to their traditions. The society and its social structures are being impacted by interaction, contact, adjustment, and assimilation. The structure and culture reflect the aspirations of the local population to embrace the advancements. Today, education is present everywhere throughout the country. Nagaland takes pride in the fact that every community has access to a primary school. As a result, individuals are informed about the changes that have occurred in the modern world. Those with educated jobs, along with their siblings and kids, hold innovative components in high regard. Urban regions see the effects first, and they progressively extend to every corner of the world. Easily accessible manufactured commodities are a luxury when compared to the



challenging times when men were preoccupied with objects to satisfy their needs rather than striving for any kind of lifestyle change. The daily necessities and way of life are where the changes are most evident. Without the contemporary equipment that drive Chakhesang civilization toward global advancement, the way of life today would cease to exist.

## **5.2 Policies and Measures to Preserve the Culture of the Chakhesang Nagas**

To recommend the policies and measures in restoring the misplaced Chakhesang culture, many interviewers have responded positively that:

- Government run institutions like Art and Culture Department can be allocated with enough financial help in order to restore the rich culture of different tribes in Nagaland.
- In order to be aware of own culture and values for the young generation, the Nagaland Board of School Education (NBSE), the Colleges both private and Government run institution be introduce with at least one subject about Naga history be it political, social, economy, culture.
- The Government whether state or center should provide funding to the educated unemployed, scholars who intend to study the past history of the Chakhesang Nagas or any other Naga tribe.
- Every institution, be it schools, colleges, offices, civil societies, universities should organize seminars to promote cultural values in Nagaland.
- The Ministry of Tribal Affairs, the schools or Universities outside Nagaland state should hold seminars or introduce one subject in the institutions about the rich cultural heritage of the North-East India so that the main land India knows the tribal society how rich their cultural heritage are.
- The Chakhesang Public Organization (CPO), the Naga Hoho, the students' body, Civil Societies should take strong initiative in restoring the cultural values such as compulsory wearing of pure traditional attires in special occasions, tribal music or dance competitions, traditional games competitions etc.

- The business community could also establish different handicraft stalls in the market to promote the indigenous Chakhesang handicrafts which could also attract the tourist in all round year rather than opening during temporary seasonal period.
- Every village could establish village mini-museum by giving importance to cultural values, relics, artifacts for promotion and preservation of indigenous culture and the knowledge for younger generations.
- Traditional garments both male and female attires, the protocols of using or wearing some highly designated shawls be strictly look upon by the civil society or Women Department in order to avoid or dilute the highly earned attires by the feast donors.
- Traditional restaurants and hotels could be establish by some entrepreneurs which can really attract outsiders and making them know the closely knitted community of the Chakhesang Nagas in particular and Nagas in general with the rich cultural heritage. This could enhance and promote the losing Naga food, cuisines and drinks.
- Home kitchen grown culture like cooking traditional recipes which had passed down from generations can be taught to children by the parents which many young generations had no ideas.
- Introduction of compulsory wearing of traditional attires in institutions like schools, colleges, universities and offices at least a day in a week can really promote and preserve the rich vibrant culture of the Nagas as a whole.
- Folk songs, music and dance, or any traditional way of competitions can be implemented within each village or schools during occasions like festivals or special observation days in order to preserve and pass on to the younger generations.
- Institutions like colleges, schools, universities can set up museum for awareness and saving of own traditions and preservation in restoring the traditional values.
- Cultural exchange study program can be implemented by the colleges, universities with the concern state government to promote and understand tribal society.

- Programs such as Cultural Sunday in Churches, Cultural day in institutions like schools, colleges, or even offices can really upgrade the promotion and preservation of socio-cultural values.
- Every Chakhesang Naga individual should contribute and encourage in restoring the rich culture which has been diluted by other western culture.
- The values of culture can be understood by the people if the government, influential bodies like student's body, civil societies, NGO's make a strong initiatives, there is high possibilities to preserve and promote Chakhesang Naga culture.

The rationale behind the listed suggestions amply demonstrates and embodies the disorganization of the Chakhesang culture, whether it be in educational institutions, other organizations, or individual members of society. The government has the lion's share of responsibility for its corrupt practices, policies, and failures (Shikhu, 2016, p.189).

Cultural identity, education system, owned industry can only become a relevant or to the forefronts of the world, nation if everything is rooted and obtained from traditional knowledge and traditional strength. Nobody can become the master of someone else's knowledge and strength. One's traditional, morality, cultural strength does not come from other country, but from the cultural strength in one's own self whom he belongs. The findings from this research study have shown that many modern factors have impacted the socio-cultural life of the Chakhesang Nagas yet, the Chakhesang people at its core root has still kept, preserved and continuing the rich tradition. This rich culture can be extensively promote and preserve if every individual takes responsibility, concerning the degrading and erosion of cultural values. Imna Along states, the educational system should be made in a holistic way respecting the traditions and culture and incorporated for sustainable growth. Discipline, honesty and integrity of an individual were highly a concern of the village within the Naga society in the past. To acquire such cultural values, one has to be trained in the traditional institutions (Alemchiba, p. 7). With the abolition of such institution, cultural values have deteriorated. Today avoidance of such

customary disciplines have changed the life and living free out of any control. “No measures of Government would be able to check the deterioration of cultural values unless each Naga becomes conscious of the lost of Naga tradition of honesty, discipline and integrity” (Alemchiba, p.7). It is in need of an hour that the government, institutions, NGO’s, villages, civil societies, policy makers gives importance and play a pivotal role in promoting the rich cultural heritage.

It is criminal that the younger generation be deprived of their cultural heritage. Will only the government take initiative to promote the healthier Chakhesang society and culture than the one in which we are living today?

## Glossary

|                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| <i>Budielha/Ebouchito</i>       | - opening of granary   |
| <i>Bulokhrri</i>                | - month of November  |
| <i>Bu</i>                       | - granary store  |
| <i>Bou</i>                      | - touch  |
| <i>Cedii Zhongu</i>             | - accomplishment of festival and sanctification                  |
| <i>Chiibe</i>                   | - millet   |
| <i>Cehbii kuhou</i>             | - male folk howling to produce beautiful sound                   |
| <i>Cekacie/Kecikie</i>          | - house horn   |
| <i>Chootsiirah</i>              | - black shawl with some motif designs and stitches               |
| <i>Ciethicie/ Kekhrokelukie</i> | - morung institution   |
| <i>Chiizhii manapa</i>          | - long tailed broadbill bird feather earpiece                    |
| <i>Chephe</i>                   | - waistband  |
| <i>Chii</i>                     | - curse together by a group to a culprit                         |
| <i>Ciikie/Kale</i>              | - one who has the right to inherit the properties                |
| <i>Dsiinhumenie</i>             | - wrap around with red, white, green lines worn by married women |
| <i>Ekiedi/Ciedu</i>             | - sanctification of house  |
| <i>Esah</i>                     | - commanding to observe genna                                    |
| <i>Esah beh</i>                 | - place where the chief of the village stood                     |
| <i>Eprah</i>                    | - meat distributed during death of a person                      |
| <i>Edemi</i>                    | - search group during war  |
| <i>Ehu</i>                      | - male folk producing melodious sound                            |
| <i>Epupfii</i>                  | - body regain  |
| <i>Enokhrri</i>                 | - month of August  |
| <i>Erukhumetshii</i>            | - offering meat and wine to God                                  |
| <i>Ethozo</i>                   | - see the fortune or fate  |

|                                  |  |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <i>Eloshemeri/Tekhou Shekhri</i> | - first paddy plantation observed by priest          |
| <i>Emviike</i>                   | - tips of Rhus Semialata plant                       |
| <i>Elu Menasiitsah/ Relimhi</i>  | - girl trial marriage                                |
| <i>Echie</i>                     | - bamboo basket carrying objects in a suspended rear |
| <i>Ebouchito/Khili vati</i>      | - religious rite of opening granary                  |
| <i>Epa</i>                       | - single wood for pounding rice                      |
| <i>Ekekenii/ Ciekenii</i>        | - fasting at home                                    |
| <i>Ezhikhu</i>                   | - neurocordulia obsoleta (water edible insect)       |
| <i>Ethozo</i>                    | - see the fate                                       |
| <i>Elito</i>                     | - who perform rites during festival or feast         |
| <i>Hachi</i>                     | - food offer to love ones                            |
| <i>Hazhu</i>                     | - rice beer  |
| <i>Kazhuchebo</i>                | - Callery pear tree                                  |
| <i>Kenyi</i>                     | - taboo or forbidden                                 |
| <i>Khubo</i>                     | - cardiocrinum giant Himalayan plant                 |
| <i>Kekunyii</i>                  | - green plant with white flower                      |
| <i>Kehale- Mekhi</i>             | - genna observed and kept the utensils upside down   |
| <i>Kehale- methsii</i>           | - re-use by observing genna                          |
| <i>Khutho</i>                    | - end of paddy cultivation                           |
| <i>Khushekhuno</i>               | - paddy transplantation period                       |
| <i>Khukhe</i>                    | - cooked rice and meat offered to infant by elderly  |
| <i>Kuthro</i>                    | - hibiscus sabdariffa                                |
| <i>Kezhiipfu</i>                 | - owner of the house at a morung                     |
| <i>Kekhroke</i>                  | - male dormitory                                     |
| <i>Keluke</i>                    | - female dormitory                                   |
| <i>Keshethra/ Pethikrou</i>      | - elder group  |

|                            |  |
|----------------------------|--|
| <i>Kela seseh</i>          | - marriage feast   |
| <i>Ketsiirazhie</i>        | - small black stole wrap around on the upper body of a women   |
| <i>Kezato</i>              | - snatch off   |
| <i>Kumhi</i>               | - rice pounder   |
| <i>Kechimikie</i>          | - journey of the death   |
| <i>Krilo</i>               | - who harvest hundred baskets of rice                          |
| <i>Kelekiemenye</i>        | - feast with other village                                     |
| <i>Lici</i>                | - animal horn trumpet  |
| <i>Leswu</i>               | - water strainer bamboo basket                                 |
| <i>Lezhi</i>               | - thatch   |
| <i>Laprimena/Mesiinyie</i> | - round brass earring worn by married women                    |
| <i>Lasoh kezuh</i>         | - house entry with bamboo gate                                 |
| <i>Lezhiekro/ Mulemi</i>   | - peer group who work in rotation                              |
| <i>Menyi/Miinna</i>        | - genna/religious observation                                  |
| <i>Mewo/Thevo</i>          | - village priest   |
| <i>Mapumo</i>              | - khel assembling place  |
| <i>Mewo-ku</i>             | - ordination of village priest                                 |
| <i>Miithi Celhii</i>       | - mass feast   |
| <i>Meno/Kiine</i>          | - male wrestling   |
| <i>Meshi</i>               | - howling by men   |
| <i>Mewetho</i>             | - see the fate   |
| <i>Melikerhikhru</i>       | - piercing the heart of a pig with sharp bamboo                |
| <i>Metshii</i>             | - small portion of rice beer and meat offered to Supreme Being |
| <i>Metimi</i>              | - who can heal the sick and talk or see the spirit             |
| <i>Merhi</i>               | - amount of terrace field during the death of a married women  |
| <i>Mena/Nyiepii</i>        | - elongated earring  |

|                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| <i>Menyie</i>            | - wrap around  |
| <i>Meriificii</i>        | - winnowing tray   |
| <i>Menupi</i>            | - unseen life giver                                      |
| <i>Menyifii</i>          | - wild board tusk neckpiece for men                      |
| <i>Nyede</i>             | - preparation for festival                               |
| <i>Nherimi/Kiithamhi</i> | - once married and divorce women                         |
| <i>Nunha</i>             | - girl wrap around till the knee                         |
| <i>Pficiimenyie</i>      | - men's kilt   |
| <i>Phekherii</i>         | - cane legging worn on the men's calves                  |
| <i>Phetho</i>            | - cane strings   |
| <i>Romeni-Fuphre</i>     | - observation of religious rites while releasing chicken |
| <i>Rifii/ Therihu</i>    | - going for war  |
| <i>Riphrito</i>          | - meat eaten for celebration when enemy is killed        |
| <i>Riinyekhrii</i>       | - month of December                                      |
| <i>Riha</i>              | - dried gourd jar  |
| <i>Rikhu</i>             | - different ward or area in the village                  |
| <i>Selukhrii</i>         | - month of July  |
| <i>Siihkriih</i>         | - sanctification of innocent boys                        |
| <i>Seseh/Muza</i>        | - first time feast of merit                              |
| <i>Sohemi</i>            | - ordinary people  |
| <i>Thopi/Pinnah</i>      | - wild mugwort plant                                     |
| <i>Thevii Meta</i>       | - release of chicken                                     |
| <i>Thiino Nuso</i>       | - rituals for innocent daughter                          |
| <i>Thiinye Miikra</i>    | - end of religious pursuits and relaxed                  |
| <i>Tsiikhe</i>           | - end of agricultural activities                         |
| <i>Thozhi Ketshii</i>    | - game played by girls with wild broad beans             |



|                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| <i>Thebvo</i>                   | - stinging nettle  |
| <i>Thirheza</i>                 | - killing and distribution of meat during feast of merit           |
| <i>Theriikadiera/Riizakhu</i>   | - pure white shawl with big intricate stitches worn by feast donor |
| <i>Thsiikestsiira/Thiipikhu</i> | - shawl with different intricate designs worn by feast donor       |
| <i>Tsoshe/Tsiishu</i>           | - standing stones  |
| <i>Tso - sii- kele</i>          | - pull one stone   |
| <i>Tso-ko</i>                   | - stone caller   |
| <i>Thevomi</i>                  | - priesthood   |
| <i>Tshiiriibou</i>              | - wooden storage carved out from a single wood                     |
| <i>Thebvo/ Sazu</i>             | - stinging nettle plant  |
| <i>Touphara</i>                 | - cotton shawl   |
| <i>Thebvora</i>                 | - nettle shawl   |
| <i>Thezu</i>                    | - some hair kept at the back of the head by male                   |
| <i>Tsiiphra</i>                 | - cornelian necklace with beads and shell                          |
| <i>Takhu</i>                    | - conch shell necklace   |
| <i>Tso beh</i>                  | - stone resting place  |
| <i>Tati/Libu</i>                | - musical instrument made of pig urinary bladder                   |
| <i>Thoupriha</i>                | - elephant tusk armlet   |
| <i>Takhu</i>                    | - conch shell neckpiece  |
| <i>Wethomi</i>                  | - peace keeping people   |
| <i>Zhotho Muza</i>              | - distribution of meat during feast of merit                       |
| <i>Zhotho/Zatho</i>             | - second time feast of merit                                       |
| <i>Zathomi</i>                  | - feast donor  |
| <i>Zathoche</i>                 | - machete scabbard   |
| <i>Zathokhrui</i>               | - month of January   |
| <i>Zutho</i>                    | - rice beer  |

## Oral Sources

Mr. Besuhu Vadeo, age: 80 years, Porba village, 12<sup>th</sup> May 2018

Mrs. Methasulu Vadeo, age: 78 years, Porba village, 12<sup>th</sup> May 2018

Mrs. Khrucholu D. Vadeo, age: 78 years, Porba village, 12<sup>th</sup> May 2018

Mr. Kedutshe Lasuh, age: 98 years, Thestumi village, 9<sup>th</sup> February 2018

Mrs. Vepenyi-u Doulo, age: 72 years, Thestumi village, 9<sup>th</sup> February 2018

Mr. Kevechulo Tshuzu, age: 70 years, Thestumi village, 9<sup>th</sup> February 2018

Mrs. Neichulo-u Tshuzu, age: 64 years, Thestumi village, 20<sup>th</sup> May 2023

Mr. Danyi Krocha GB, age: 72 years, Zhaveme village, 12<sup>th</sup> October 2022

Mr. Athe Krocha, age: 70 years, Zhaveme village, 12<sup>th</sup> October 2022

Mr. Nasu Movi, age: 76 years, Zhaveme village, 12<sup>th</sup> October 2022

Mr. Anonymous, age: 60 years, Tsiipfiime village, 12<sup>th</sup> October 2022

Mr. Vekuzo Lohe, age: 45 years, Sakraba village, 14<sup>th</sup> May, 2021

Mrs. Tsotalu Nakro, age: 38 years, Pholami village, 10<sup>th</sup> October 2021

Mr. Anonymous, age: 72 years, Pholami village, 10<sup>th</sup> October 2021

Mr. Anonymous, age: 47 years, Pholami village, 10<sup>th</sup> October 2021

Mr. Neitsho Wezah, age: 42 years, Mesulumi village, 13<sup>th</sup> October 2021

Mr. Dingupe Lasuh, age: 42 years, Mesulumi village, 13<sup>th</sup> October 2021

Mr. Mehumvu Lachii (Mewu), age: 75 years, Mesulumi village, 13<sup>th</sup> October 2021

Mr. Supohu Venuh, age 76 years, Phek village, 15<sup>th</sup> March 2019

Mrs. Vesohulu Venuh, age 74 years, Phek village, 15<sup>th</sup> March 2019

Mr. Keveciyi Venuh, age 80 years, Phek village, 15<sup>th</sup> March 2019

Mr. Neiwelo Mekrisuh, age 55 years, Losami village, 18<sup>th</sup> March 2019

Mr. Chisato Vero, age 39 years, Mutsale village, 16<sup>th</sup> March 2019

Mr. Anonymous, age 40 years, Lozaphuhu village, 18<sup>th</sup> March 2019

Mrs. Neitshopeu Thopi, age: 48 years, Chizami village, 1<sup>st</sup> July, 2023

Mr. Beduhu Tunyi, age: 79 years, Kikruma village, 21<sup>st</sup> May 2019

Mr. Zhopota Kezo, age: 46 years, Kikruma village, 21<sup>st</sup> May 2019

Mr. Huzuyi Chotso, age 62 years, Phusachodu village, 20<sup>th</sup> March 2019

Mr. Rudashoyi Thuluo, age: 76 years, Phusachodu village, 20<sup>th</sup> March 2019

Mr. Joshuhi Thuluo, age: 86 years, Phusachodu village, 20<sup>th</sup> March 2019

Mr. Hucuruh Vero, age: 84 years, Phusachodu village, 20<sup>th</sup> March 2019

Mr. Keduveta Chotso, age: 37 years, Phusachodu village, 20<sup>th</sup> March 2019

Mrs. Veprunulu Sapu, age: 68 years, Phugwu village, 10<sup>th</sup> November 2018

Mr. Chekhrosayi Sapu, age: 70 years, Phugwu village, 10<sup>th</sup> November 2018

Mr. Puniiyi Khusoh, age: 78 years, Yoruba village, 24<sup>th</sup> May 2019

Mr. Nuveta Khusoh, Research Scholar age: 43 years, Yoruba village, 12<sup>th</sup> August 2020

Mr. Veswuzo Phesao, age: 59 years, Chozuba village, 11<sup>th</sup> October 2020

Mr. Muzapu, age: 74 years, Runguzu village 16<sup>th</sup> April 2021

Mr. Dikhamu, age: 62 years, Suthozu Nasa village 6<sup>th</sup> November 2021

Mr. Poswuyi Swuro, first Christian converts age: 99 years, Ruzazho village, 9<sup>th</sup> November 2018

Mr. Zhopra Swuro, age: 58 years, Ruzazho village, 9<sup>th</sup> November 2018

Mr. Zadulhu Phiiswiio, age: 70 years, Dzulhami village, 10<sup>th</sup> November 2018

Mr. Anonymous, age: 50 years, Thenuzumi village, 1<sup>st</sup> February 2024

Mrs. Sene Chuzho, age: 52 years, Thipuzu village, 20<sup>th</sup> March 2024

Mr. Tavehu Thingo, age: 62 years, Thipuzu village, 19<sup>th</sup> July 2023

Mr. Ciepfuta Chuzo, age 56 years, Thipuzu village, 19<sup>th</sup> March 2023

Mr. Ngulo Akri, age: 100 years, Leshemi village, 8<sup>th</sup> March 2019

Mrs. Neingu-u Letru, age: 49 years, Leshemi village, 8<sup>th</sup> March 2019

Ms. Lezo-u Khutsoh, age: 40 years, Zapami village, 5<sup>th</sup> October 2022

Mrs. Pfucukha-u Wetsah, age: 58 years, Zapami village, 5<sup>th</sup> October 2022

Mr. Neikhape, age: 45 years, Zapami village, 8<sup>th</sup> October 2022

Mr. Dikhalo Kenye, age: 99 years, Zapami village, 17<sup>th</sup> April 2021

Mr. Neilo Koza, age: 62 years, Kezhakeno village, 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2018

Mr. Lhouvelo Koza, age: 40 years, Kezhakeno village, 2<sup>nd</sup> March 20218

Mr. Kedoute Kapfo, age 60 years, Lekromi village, 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2023

Mrs. Melhitsu-u Dianu, age: 74 years, Pfutseromi village, 10<sup>th</sup> February 2018

Mr. Momvu Medo, age: 58 years, Pfutseromi village, 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2018

Mr. Lonyo Mero, age: 80 years, Pfutseromi village, 27<sup>th</sup> April 2018

Mr. Lhiwepelo Ritse, age: 56 years, Pfutseromi village, 28<sup>th</sup> April 2018

Mr. Lhipekhalo Dianu, age: 52 years, Pfutseromi village, 20<sup>th</sup> December 2019

Mrs. Keretshu-u Mero, age: 82 years, Pfutseromi village, 29<sup>th</sup> April 2018

Mr. Solhi Mero, age: 85 years, Pfutseromi village, 29<sup>th</sup> April 2018

Mr. Dilhizu Dianu, age 74 years, Pfutseromi village, 30<sup>th</sup> April 2018

Mr. Wepretso Mero, age 65 years, Pfutseromi village, 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2023

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