



## Review Article


## Reviewing The Naga People's Front (NPF) and Its Manifesto on the Indo-Naga Peace Talk

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Abstract	Manuscript Information
<p>Following the signing of the Indo-Naga Peace Accord in 2015 and the subsequent revelation of the Framework Agreement in August 2020, restoration of peace has taken its final shape in the much troubled, torn Naga-inhabited regions of Northeast India. However, to sustain a long lasting peace in the region, it is a prudential requirement to integrate the accord into the institutional policy designs of the government - regional or state as well as the Centre. For this, the support, collaboration, and collective involvement of political party or parties in power are a must. This paper examines and reviews how the Naga People's Front- a regional party facilitated to resolve the aged old Indo-Naga issues.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ ISSN No: 2583-7397</li> <li>▪ Received: 30-01-2025</li> <li>▪ Accepted: 25-02-2025</li> <li>▪ Published: 30-03-2025</li> <li>▪ IJCRM:4(2); 2025: 118-120</li> <li>▪ ©2025, All Rights Reserved</li> <li>▪ Plagiarism Checked: Yes</li> <li>▪ Peer Review Process: Yes</li> </ul> <p><b>How to Cite this Article</b></p> <p>Devi LS. Reviewing The Naga People's Front (NPF) and Its Manifesto on the Indo-Naga Peace Talk. Int J Contemp Res Multidiscip. 2025;4(2):118-120.</p> <p><b>Access this Article Online</b></p>  <p><a href="http://www.multiarticlesjournal.com">www.multiarticlesjournal.com</a></p>

**KEYWORDS:** Naga People's Front, Political Party, NSCN (IM), Conflict, Peace Talk.

### INTRODUCTION

The Naga political issue is an almost century-old problem that has surpassed the colonial regime and yet still carried alive by various Nagas civil/political organizations and armed groups. The issue is generally perceived as the Indo-Naga political issue in general to mark its historical journey from the times of colonial regime to the founding of an independent decolonized Indian nation. Mention may be made of the various attempts made to pacify the Nagas during the arrival of the Simon Commission

(1927), the State of Nagaland Act (1962), and the Shillong Accord (1975), which was signed between the Government of India and the outfit-Federal Government of Nagaland (FGN). Ignited by the founding of the Naga Club in 1918 and carried forward by the Naga National Council or NNC, the banned Federal Government of Nagaland or FGN, and the National Socialist Council of Nagaland or NSCN, the Naga political issue is still alive and remains unresolved. One recent attempt toward this endeavor of conflict resolution in the Indo-Naga political

issue is the Ceasefire agreement signed between the Government of India (GoI) and the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (Isak-Muivah) or NSCN (IM) and the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (Khaplang) or NSCN (K); both the ceasefire signed separately in the year 1997 and 1998, respectively. For the sake of clarity of this paper, the term “the Naga Peace Talk” is implied and used here to signify this long historical journey from the initial signing of the ceasefire agreement in 1997 (This includes both the informal agreement, unilateral declaration of ceasefire by a belligerent group and formalization through mutual agreement amongst the belligerent groups), the monitoring (of the agreed agreement) and the signing of the Framework Agreement or FA in 2020. While various documents in public platforms have provided an empirical document on the cited Ceasefire agreement, this paper will rather uncover the role of a political party from the academic standpoint and shall try to answer the question as: how do a political party behave in such a complex scenario and why it does so. Therefore, it must be noted here that in this long walk spanning over two decades, various civil society groups and political organizations have also emerged remarkably to represent their grievances, caused and affected by the conflict. As of today, the ceasefire agreement has culminated into a Framework Agreement and has reached the verge of bringing an end to the Indo-Naga conflict. In point of fact, many factors are (or have been) responsible for, and working towards, attaining a peaceful conclusion. Notably, some of these factors include the belligerent parties (i.e. NSCN and its factional groups and the Government of India), the Interlocutor and its Cease Fire Monitoring Cell, the Nagalim churches, the civil society groups, and Naga political parties such as the Naga People’s Front or NPF. Apart from the belligerents, it can be plainly said that all other factors are non-political entities except the Naga People’s Front or NPF, which is a formidable regional party (rather known as a state party) recognized by the Election Commission of India (ECI). It has to be mentioned here that the NPF, which was recently floated as a regional political party in the state of Nagaland and Manipur have emerged, through the floor of various legislative assemblies at the states, and, on the floor of the Parliament of India at the Centre, to aid directly or indirectly resolved the conflict and emerge as the ethnic Naga regional party in the Peace Talk. In fact, the NPF is the only Naga political party recognized by the ECI whose party manifesto hovers around this theme “the Naga Integration”, one of the prime objectives of the Naga Peace Talk. It is a party that constantly reminded the Naga people of their political identity across the four states of Nagaland, Manipur, Assam and Arunachal Pradesh. The party is also able to send elected candidates as the Member of Parliament or MPs representing their cause at the Parliament of India. In doing that the NPF chooses its ally in these states so that opposition(s) to the Naga Peace Talk is (are) kept at bay. In this regard, the party Manifesto published on the eve of the 2017 State Assembly elections in Manipur (India) stated the party’s stand on the question of the Indo-Naga Peace Process and Political Dialogue, as: “*The NPF Manipur State Unit shall work to facilitate in every possible manner and push forward the peace process and the Indo-Naga*

*political dialogue to its logical end with an acceptable & honorable solution at the earliest possible time”.*

If one looks through the lens of civic culture, a much elemental factor for the success of democracy, it is not much an indigene practice among the tribal of North East India. And due to the Nagas' own unique cultural practices and ways of governance, democracy, which brought forth equality of voices irrespective of gender, age and party, is not always the favored practice. In fact, an attempt to include women’s reservation in the local bodies of Nagaland was immediately thwarted of in February 2017. Various tribal bodies headed by the Naga Hoho- the apex body of Nagaland hill tribes- opposed the move stating that women can’t stand in Naga polls. This is a case in point to illustrate that the predominantly ethnic Naga inhabited Northeast regions currently are incompatible and complex for democracy to spread its wings. Nevertheless, one very important function of a political party is that it serves as a connecting link “a bridge” between the citizens and the government. In fact, the Nagas as an ethnic-nation certainly possessed this political bridge by electing ethnic Naga legislators to the state legislatures of Manipur and Nagaland where there exist maximum or sizeable Naga populations. Indeed, it is very clear that no ethnic non-Nagas were elected from the Naga dominated constituencies. To put in plain words, the ethnic Nagas of these two states elect the NPF candidates as their preferred choice. This choice, of course was made after due contemplation among the ethnic Nagas that the NPF as a political party can deliver the Naga Integration promises to the Nagas. In the words of Th Muivah, the general secretary of the NSCN (IM), the Indo-Naga Peace Talk has many stake holders, and the NSCN (IM), the only legitimate organization representing the Naga Nation as a whole. This issue of legitimacy and the legitimate representatives of the Nagas mainly came up after the emergence of the Naga Reformation Group, which also claim equal legitimacy. However, one indicator of this legitimacy is the number and strength of civil societies and political parties which support and rallied around their flags. The NSCN (IM), which has more number of civil societies supporting its cause in almost all the Naga inhabited regions of the state of Nagaland, Manipur and Assam except the Eastern Nagaland regions of the Angamis and Konyaks, thus became the driver of the ships. However, as the Peace talk required a political will, so the political parties in the government assumed extreme importance to take the Peace Talk further. The Peace Talk, occasionally became tossed and tangled in the wave of the sea of political allies and government formation at the Center as well as the Naga inhabited states. In this regard, the NPF which is a formidable regional political party in Nagaland and Manipur played an exemplary role, an unseen political hyphen in the famous Government of India-NSCN (IM) Ceasefire. For the NPF too, it is an incredibly responsibility. With an exception to the Nagaland Nagas, the case for Manipur is always not in smooth water. It has to be stated here that the ceasefire extension of the NSCN (IM) with the Government of India without territorial limit was opposed tooth and nail in the state. It led to a public uproar in Manipur in which the Government of Manipur virtually succumbed, survived by the

fact that the ceasefire extension shall not apply to the state. Any government which secedes to the ceasefire demand would likely remain toppled in this state. Although the matter was censorious, the NPF promptly crosses the floor and at the same time acted as a facilitator to the peace talk. In this regard, the NSCN (IM) has also brought to limelight by acknowledging these legislators' role as a 'facilitator'. In its note of caution to the NSCN (IM), the NPF legislature party leader Kuzholuzo Nienu could also interpret the Framework Agreement (FA) signed in August 2020 as something that has "sealed the fate" of the outfit thereby ruling out "integration, sovereignty, separate flag and separate constitution". Right from the moment the party was formed, the NPF earnestly backed directly or as back-bencher for fulfilling the desire and aspirations of the Nagas through the Peace Talk; either by openly publicizing the party's stand on the Indo-Naga Ceasefire in the form of manifesto, or issuing lobby on the floor of the state assemblies in Manipur and Nagaland. The NPF, during the last four general elections in these two states, has successfully fielded the "Indo-Naga political issue" on the floor of the House concerned.

## CONCLUSION

Like any other political parties in India, the NPF also has also its own political vendetta for political power especially among the ethnic Nagas traversing the states of Manipur, Nagaland, Assam and Arunachal Pradesh in Northeast India. Like any other regional political parties, NPF has also regional ingredients i.e. the Naga integration or territoriality, in its menu i.e. the party manifesto. But unlike any other political parties of the land, the NPF has the Peace Talk coming through its way; owing to the political constituencies of its voters as well as by virtue of the floor of the houses/assemblies on which its party candidate stands despite stiff opposition from other political parties across Manipur, Assam and Arunachal Pradesh. But employing democratic means adopted by the NPF legislators from within the legislature to resolve the conflict is worth citing. However, this party gives peace a precedence, as implied from the party's manifesto and the acts of its elected members, over progress and prosperity even though these are knitted together on par. This prudential responsibility and attribute of the NPF makes the party a unique political platform; and a place to earn for all its commendable work in an atmosphere of unresolved political crisis, power struggle and incomplete nation building projects in Northeast India.

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