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## The Movement For The Creation Of Frontier Nagaland

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### Abstract:

The process of the isolation of Eastern Areas can be traced back to 20<sup>th</sup> century with the creation of Excluded Area in the Naga Hills District under the province of Assam and therefore it is necessitate in understanding the history before being clinched to deliberate on the contemporary context. It is advertent to rewind the history for better grappling of the complexities of the frontier movement by examining the chronology of the region as to understand the sentiments and demands of the people. History as been professed over a time states that the Nagas had lived independently in their own territory, prior to their contact with the British in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. The Naga territory underwent a political transformation post the battle of 1851 known popularly as the battle of Kikruma. The British established their first headquarter after reoccupation of Samaguting in 1866 and subsequently sub-divisional headquarters were created at Wokha (1875), Kohima (1879) and at Mokokchung (1889) in the then Naga Hills. The Permanent headquarter after re-occupation of Kohima was established in 1881. The Naga Hill district was under British administration while Tuensang area remained as un-administered area until 1902 with the label of Tribal Area. In 1880, Assam frontier Tracts Regulation was implemented extending up to the Naga tribal areas. Through this regulation, the first British expedition reached Tuensang area on 12th January 1889, via Kohima and Mokokchung. Although the Britishers were able to bring certain area under their control they could not fully enforce their administration throughout the Tuensang area. The area remained un-administered, some under the political control and certain area beyond the political control. In 1914, Tuensang area was clubbed under the North East Frontier Tract by the regulation of Assam Frontier Tract Regulation Act of 1880 as tribal area under section 311 of the Government of India Act 1935 by which no British laws and regulation were to be implemented in this area, and thus the area remained officially un-administered until 1948 though certain measure were taken by 1902 yet this historical negligence with the political corruption post the formation of the statehood in 1963 impacted the areas to the current times and thus the movement for the creation of frontier Nagaland was envisioned in the year 2010 for the areas lying in the Eastern regions currently consisting of 6 districts inhabiting by the seven Naga tribes.

**Keywords** – ENPO, Frontier Nagaland, Frontier Territory, British Administration in Naga Hills.

### I.INTRODUCTION:

The Eastern Area of Nagaland had a long history of isolation; the coming of modernity through the British administration did not adequately reached these areas. After the battle of Kikruma in 1851, the British in 1866 established the first headquarter at Samaguting. The Naga Hill district covering present region of Samaguting now Chumoukedima, Kohima, Wokha, Mokokchung, Zunheboto were kept under the British administration but Tuensang area was kept outside the purview of direct British administration. On 10th January 1929, the Naga Club submitted a memorandum to Simon Commission. As per the recommendation

of Simon Commission, the Government of India under the Act of 1935 renamed the Naga Hill District as the 'Naga Hills Excluded Area'. In 1948, a separate Administrative center as Tuensang Administrative Circle was established at Tuensang, post-India independence the Tuensang area was placed under 'Part B' of Tribal district as per the 6<sup>th</sup> Schedule of the constitution of India in 1950. In 1951, Tuensang areas were brought under North East Frontier Tract alongside the Balipara, Mishmi, Tirap and Abhor region. In 1955, Tuensang Assimilation of Laws Act was implemented by which all laws that are enforced within North East Frontier Agency will be applicable and be enforced into the Tuensang area. On 1st December 1957, Tuensang Frontier Division was joined with Naga Hills District and renamed as Naga Hill Tuensang Area within the administration of the Governor of Assam under the External Affairs Ministry of Government of India. On 26<sup>th</sup> July 1960, the 16-point agreement between NPC and GoI was signed and based on this, the NHTA bill was introduced in the Lok Sabha on 1<sup>st</sup> August 1960. In 1961, Naga Hill Tuensang Area was renamed as Nagaland and Statehood was conferred to Nagaland on 1st December 1963 but Tuensang area was kept under the charge of Governor with the creation of Regional Council for a period of 10 year till 1973. On 21st December 1973, Mon was bifurcated from Tuensang creating it as a separate district further, in 2003 Kiphire and Longleng district were carved out, Noklak on 20th January 2021 and Shamator on 19th January 2022. The Eastern area demanding the Separate Statehood, a Frontier Territory has now 6 districts Tuensang, Mon, Kiphire, Longleng, Noklak and Shamator with 7 Tribes viz. Chang, Khamniungan, Konyak, Phom, Sangtam, Tikhir and Yimkhiung. The demand for the frontier Nagaland started in 2010 under the banner of Eastern Naga People Organisation that represent the 7 tribes of 6 districts. ENPO's primary demand of separate statehood was driven due to the economic negligence of the area concerning infrastructural development related deprivation. In 2010, ENPO submitted a memorandum to the then Prime Minister of India Manmohan Singh for the creation of Frontier Nagaland state and thus inceptioned the Peoples Movement.<sup>1</sup>

## II. SIMON COMMISSION AND CREATION OF BACKWARD TRACT:

The British derived the idea of the creation of Excluded Area as per the memorandum submitted to the Simon commission by the Nagas. The Naga Club submitted a memorandum to Simon Commission on 10<sup>th</sup> January 1929, this memorandum was the first Naga political document ever submitted to a foreign sovereign. The Simon Commission was dispatched to India in 1927, to study the constitutional reforms for India under the seven British members of parliament headed by Sir John Allsebrook Simon, Clement Atlee, Harry Levy-Lawson, Edward Cadogan, Vernon Hartshorn, George Lane-Fox and Donald Howard. The commission arrived in India on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 1928 at Bombay and in the Naga Hills on 10<sup>th</sup> January 1929. As per the recommendation of Simon Commission submitted by the Naga club, the Government of India under the Act of 1935 renamed the Naga Hill District as the 'Naga Hills Excluded Area' on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 1936, removing the 'Backward Tract' label earlier declared by the Government of India Act of 1919.<sup>2</sup> In 1948, a separate Administrative center as Tuensang Administrative Circle was established at Tuensang. In 1950, Tuensang area was placed under 'Part B' of Tribal district as per the 6<sup>th</sup> Schedule of the constitution of India and in 1951, Tuensang area was brought under North East Frontier Tract alongside the Balipara, Mishmi, Tirap, Abhor region. In 1954, North East Frontier Tract was renamed as North East Frontier Agency and was divided into 6 divisions, under which Tuensang area were kept separately as Tuensang Frontier Division. In 1955, Tuensang Assimilation of Laws Act was implemented by which all laws that are enforced within North East Frontier Agency will be applicable and be enforced into the Tuensang area. On 1 December 1957, Tuensang Frontier Division were joined with Naga Hills District and renamed as Naga Hill Tuensang Area within the administration of the Governor of Assam under the External Affairs Ministry of Government of India.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Hokato Awomi, *chronology: from backward tract to frontier territory*, Morung Express, 26 March 2024, <https://morungexpress.com/chronology-from-backward-tract-to-frontier-territory>

<sup>2</sup>Wikipedia, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Simon\\_Commission](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Simon_Commission), Also see, Vol.1. *INDIAN STATUTORY COMMISSION VOLUME I Report of the Indian Statutory Commission, Volume 1—Survey. Presented by the Secretary of State for the Home Department to Parliament by Command of His Majesty*, London, May, 1930 Vol.2. *INDIAN STATUTORY COMMISSION VOLUME II Report of the Indian Statutory Commission Volume II. Presented by the Secretary of State for the Home Department to Parliament by Command of His Majesty*. London, May, 1930.

<sup>3</sup>Tuensang, *the Land of Culture*, Government of Nagaland <https://tuensang.nic.in/history/>  
Also refer <https://arunachaltimes.in/index.php/2022/08/15/politico-administrative-evolution-of-arunachal->

### III. SIXTEEN POINT AGREEMENT AND SPECIAL CLAUSES:

On 26<sup>th</sup> July 1960, the 16-point agreement between Naga Peoples Convention and Government of India was signed and based on this agreement; the Naga Hills Tuensang Area bill was introduced in the Lok Sabha on 1<sup>st</sup> August 1960. Thus in 1961, NHTA was renamed as Nagaland and on 1<sup>st</sup> December 1963, Nagaland was formally declared as the 16<sup>th</sup> state of the Union of India with the creation of existing three districts Kohima, Mokokchung and Tuensang. However, Tuensang area was kept under the charge of Governor with the creation of Regional Council for a period of 10 year. This arrangement was done on the basis of the recommendation given by the leaders of Tuensang representatives on 14<sup>th</sup> August 1959 to the NPC. The representative of Tuensang area held a meeting and resolution was taken. One among the other resolutions was the administration of Tuensang area. The representative leaders of Tuensang expressed that since the area are under-developed and people are backward, it must have a special provision to safeguard for the development of area and therefore they proposed a separate council for the Tuensang district in the new administrative set up. The financial requirement for development for Tuensang area should also be controlled by the Governor and thus based on this demands; Point 10- (clause a-f) were added under 16-point agreement primarily for the Tuensang area.<sup>4</sup>

### IV. EMERGENCE OF FRONTIER MOVEMENT:

The demand for the frontier Nagaland started in 2010 under the banner of Eastern Naga People Organization popularly known in short as ENPO. ENPO was formed in 1997, the driven force behind the formation was due to the economic negligence of the area for so long concerning infrastructural development, political, socio-economic welfare related deprivation which the people generally refer as step motherly treatment by the advance tribes that is also the factor for claiming of the backward quota. One of the similar kinds of deprivation was exposed during the covid pandemic, lack of proper hospital infrastructure and health care facilities, roads connectivity, communication, education and job opportunities. ENPO claimed that even the 25 percent reservation policy in the governmental job are not properly implemented thereby leading to rise of inequality among the job holding percentage within the Government of Nagaland.<sup>5</sup> On 25<sup>th</sup> November 2010, ENPO submitted a memorandum to the then Prime Minister of India Dr. Manmohan Singh and based on the memorandum on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2010, then Home Minister P. Chidambaram under the Congress Government offered the Regional Council status to ENPO but the ENPO rejected the offer and demanded a full-fledged Frontier Nagaland state. On 14<sup>th</sup> December 2010, another memorandum was submitted to the Central Government of India as a result the status of Autonomous Council authority was offered but this offer was rejected as well by the ENPO. In 2011, another memorandum was submitted to the Prime minister of India under the then President Manmohan Singh and General Secretary of steering committee Toshi Wungtung for the creation of Frontier Nagaland. At the same time in 2011, Nagaland Legislative Assembly also recommended, the creation of Autonomous Council and subsequently on 5<sup>th</sup> June 2012, the Union Home Minister P. Chidambaram met the CM N. B. Rehngam and Cabinet Minister of the Government of Nagaland. The state government states that the Central govt. had ruled out the demand of separate statehood and offers an autonomous status but ENPO leaders claim that the possibilities was not ruled out by the Central Government and continue its demand. Nagaland govt. also offered 500 crore package in lieu of statehood demand to ENPO but it rejected the offer. In 2011, Government of India is said to have offered 300 crore package to ENPO but ENPO decline that they have not received the fund, this claim was also refuted by the public leaders in the social media podcast interview.<sup>6</sup>

[pradesh-the-british-policy-of-isolation/refer 6th Schedule, chrome extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/ https://www.mea.gov.in/Images/pdf1/S6.pdf](#)

<sup>4</sup> Dr. SC Jamir, Naga Peoples Convention and 16 Point Agreement, Revised edition 2017.

<sup>5</sup> Longrangty Longchar, We Demand Frontier Nagaland – ENPO, The Morung Express, 07 January 2011, <https://morungexpress.com/we-demand-frontier-nagaland-enpo> also see, The development of ENPO'S demand for 'Frontier Nagaland', Hub news, 9 January 2023, <https://hubnetwork.in/the-development-of-enpos-demand-for-frontier-nagaland/>

<sup>6</sup> Times of India, Centre rules out ENPO demand for 'Frontier Nagaland', The Times of India, 4 June, 2012, <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/guwahati/centre-rules-out-enpo-demand-for-frontier-nagaland/articleshow/13826094.cms>



## V. MEMORUMDUM, RALLY AND PROTEST MOVEMENT:

On 4<sup>th</sup> December 2012, the BJP National President, Nitin Gadkari asserted that a separate state of Frontier Nagaland will be carved out if BJP came to power in Lok Sabha election of 2014 and asked for a support to the political party, later BJP came to power but it remained a fake promises, the solution hasn't arrived yet even after decades of remaining in power. However, a round of talks taken by the Central Government cannot be rule out in regard to the frontier statehood demand, the serious official talks begin after NDA came to power in 2014 and talks was resumed by 2015. On September 2015, the Ministry of Home Affairs offered development packages but ENPO rejected again stating that they are not going to compromise the frontier statehood demand with mere economic packages or autonomous status. In September 2018, Central Government offered another solution but it was the same developmental package yet again even this time, ENPO rejected this developmental package. As election knocks the door, the same old promises resurface, the promise of solution if comes to power took the propaganda narratives and people were made to dance to the narratives in the hope of fulfilling the promise. The BJP came to power for the second time but the promises remained unfulfilled and people aspiration were once again toyed in the alter of politics<sup>7</sup> However on 26<sup>th</sup> August 2022 before the state general election, ENPO called a meeting at the Tourist Lodge in Dimapur and a resolution was made to boycott the upcoming state election if the demand are not fulfilled by the government. A marathon meeting was held in different district as on 16th November 2022 at Mon and 19th December 2022 at Tuensang and boycott movement was carried out by 7 tribal councils within the ENPO jurisdiction. ENPO asked the incumbent 20 MLA to resigned and boycott the 2023 state election for the general welfare of the public. Consequently in midst of the prevailing political upheaval, on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2022, Home Minister of India, Amit Shah visited Nagaland as a part of state election campaign and held a meeting with ENPO leaders, a meeting in the presence of sitting MP Phongnon Konyak and former MPs Asungba Sangtam and Wangyuh Konyak was held and HM assured ENPO to resolve the issue, He also assured to visit ENPO areas by January 2023 however the visit could not able to bring any concrete solution to the vexed problem.<sup>8</sup>

## VI. PROPOSAL OF FRONTIER NAGA TERRITORY

A proposal was also made about the Frontier Naga Territory in December 2022 under Interlocutor AK Mishra and on 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2023, emergency meeting was held at DUDA Guest House at Sovima and resolution was taken to boycott the state election. On 5th January 2023, at a meeting held in Guwahati where the MHA agree to offer a blueprint to settle ENPO issue as a result a meeting of ENPO leaders was held with the 3-member committee of GoI consisting of AK Mishra- Interlocutor and Advisor of North east. Mandap Singh- Joint Director of Intelligence Bureau and AK Dhayani- Director, MHA, Northeast Division. Consequently on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2023, MHA sent a letter to ENPO and asked to review its stand on its demand of frontier Nagaland while at the same time, Naga civil bodies and Naga political groups also appealed ENPO to reconsider its stand on, Separate statehood demand on account of the impending Naga solution.<sup>9</sup> On 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2023, ENPO called another emergency meeting with ENLU and decision to uphold the boycotting of election was re-asserted but on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2023, ENLU defying boycott call held a meeting

*Eastern Nagaland Peoples' Organization stages demonstration in Delhi, Nagaland Post, 09 December 2011*  
<https://nagalandpost.com/index.php/2011/12/09/eastern-nagaland-peoples-organization-stages-demonstration-in-delhi/Enpo-demands-separate-state>, Nagaland Post, 27 December 2010,  
<https://nagalandpost.com/index.php/2010/12/27/enpo-demands-separate-state/>

<sup>7</sup>The Morung Express, BJP assures Frontier Nagaland if voted to power, MEX, 15th May 2012,  
<https://morungexpress.com/bjp-assures-frontier-nagaland-if-voted-to-power>

<sup>8</sup>Nagaland Tribune, Demand for frontier Nagaland grows louder eastern Nagaland, 27 August 2022,  
<https://nagalandtribune.in/demand-for-frontier-nagaland-grows-louder-eastern-nagaland-to-abstain-from-participating-in-state-and-central-election-processes/>  
<https://www.indiatodayne.in/elections/nagaland-assembly-elections-2023/story/nagaland-enpo-relaxes-august-26-resolution-eastern-areas-to-participate-in-polls-507437-2023-02-04>

<sup>9</sup>Nagaland Tribune, GoI and ENPO agree for creation of separate administration may be called frontier Naga territory, 26 June 2023, <https://nagalandtribune.in/goi-and-enpo-agree-for-creation-of-separate-administration-may-be-called-frontier-naga-territory-sources/> also see Interlocutor Ak Mishra Resumes Consultation With Naga Rebel Leaders, 09 JULY 2023, Nagalandpage, [https://nagalandpage.com/interlocutor-ak-mishra-resumes-consultation-with-naga-rebel-leaders/#google\\_vignette](https://nagalandpage.com/interlocutor-ak-mishra-resumes-consultation-with-naga-rebel-leaders/#google_vignette)

and resolve to participate in state election.<sup>10</sup> So on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2023, after a consultative meeting, ENPO declared participation in state poll. After election on 24<sup>th</sup> June 2023, ENPO accepted the proposal of 'Frontier Territory' as proposed in December 2022 under MHA by GoI. As on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2023, Home Minister Amit Shah visited Nagaland as part of state election campaign and on 7<sup>th</sup> December 2023, Home Minister Amit Shah assured settlement of ENPO issue before enforcement of Election Code of Conduct for Lok Sabha election 2024 but even after election date been announced and poll been held there is no final arrival of final settlement. On 16<sup>th</sup> December 2023, a 3 member committee of MHA arrived in Tuensang to discuss the ENPO issue but the meeting was not successful. After meeting, ENPO President, R Tsapikiu Sangtam stated that they will boycott both Central and State election if Government of India did not fulfill their demand and reject the solution offered of economic packages and developmental settlement.

After a failed negotiation; on 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2024, a collaborative meeting was held at Chenmoho village in Mon district and ENPO decided to boycott 2024 Lok Sabha and on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2024, ENPO held an emergency meeting, demanded a final draft of MoS from the government of India, declared Public emergency within Eastern areas which was later was suspended from 21<sup>st</sup> March 2024 after election.<sup>11</sup> ENPO demand a final draft and a date of signing the MoS with central government of India. ENPO claimed that the area of Eastern areas consisting of 6 districts occupies an estimated area of 8,154 sq. km out of 16,579 sq. km of Nagaland state and so in terms of area, almost 48 percent of total land of present Nagaland state are occupied by eastern Nagas and in terms of population when the demand for Frontier Nagaland was raised in 2010 the total population was around 0.9+ million that is almost half the total population of Nagaland. It claimed that even though it has almost half percent in terms of area and pollution, there is still unequal distribution of political representation, economic and infrastructural development for the areas, further states that only 6 MLA out of 40 MLA was allotted to eastern areas at the time of the creation of Nagaland statehood in 1963 that was raised to 12 in 1968 and to 20 seats in 1973 after Tuensang area got a separate district, these political arrangement that was made in 1973 are still in application in the current arrangement. It stressed that the per capita income in eastern areas is quite below the average of other district of Nagaland, the per capita income of Eastern areas is just Rs.5000 as against Rs.16,000 of other district of Nagaland that is seen as an unjust and economic injustice for the people of the region.<sup>12</sup>

## VII.DEMANDS UNDER FRONTIER TERRITORY:

As per the memorandum submitted in 2010 and consequent demands and as circulated in various media report, some of the demands for the creation of the Frontier territory can be clubbed under the following list.

- i. Creation of 45 departments under new administrative structure
- ii. A Separate State Assembly
- iii. A Separate Capital
- iv. A Separate Secretariat
- v. A Separate High Court
- vi. A Separate Governor
- vii. Additional Director General of Police for the Frontier territory
- viii. Implementation of Art 371(A) – by which it also mean implementation of BEFR 1873 and Art 371A
- ix. Direct central development funding from the Central Government, this is also based on the provision in Art 371(A) under which it gives a special provision to eastern areas i.e. under Clause 1, Sub clause (d) special provision for the administration of Eastern areas Secondly; Clause 2, sub clause (b) consolidated fund for development provided to the Government to Nagaland, the Governor shall arrange equitable allocation for Tuensang district.
- x. After this, if MoS is agreed and signed between ENPO and GoI, an interim government will set up for a period of one year to carry out the process of agreement into full implementation.

On December 18 last year, Union Home Minister Amit Shah handed over the highlights of the draft MoS

<sup>10</sup>Nagaland Post, ENPO to boycott assembly polls, 28 August 2022, <https://nagalandpost.com/index.php/2022/08/28/enpo-to-boycott-assembly-polls/>

<sup>11</sup> Indian Express, After 'assurance' by MHA, ENPO withdraws poll boycott call, Indian Express, 5 February 2023, <https://indianexpress.com/article/political-pulse/after-assurance-by-mha-enpo-withdraws-poll-boycott-call-8424417/> also read, <https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/eastern-nagaland-peoples-organisation-lifts-boycott-call-against-nagaland-assembly-election-2330466-2023-02-04>

<sup>12</sup>Mokokchung times, ENPO clarifies on CM Rio's MoS statement, Mokokchung Times, 28 February 2024, <https://mokokchungtimes.com/enpo-clarifies-on-cm-rios-mos-statement/> also see <https://nagalandpage.com/rio-asserts-draft-memorandum-of-settlement-for-eastern-nagaland-is-from-mha/>

with ENPO on FNT to the Nagaland government for its comment at the earliest. "However, the issue is being stalemated till date for reasons best known to the state government."<sup>13</sup> The ENPO said in its statement.

#### VIII. MEMORANDUM OF SETTLEMENT OR DRAFT MEMORANDUM:

As reported on 12<sup>th</sup> October 2024 in its press release, The Eastern Nagaland People's Organisation (ENPO) convened coordination and consultative meeting with its frontal and tribal organizations on 11 October 2024 at Mon town, reinforcing its demand for a timely response from the Nagaland state government. The meeting concluded with unanimous resolution urging the State authorities to submit their comments on the "Highlight of the draft MoS with ENPO on FNT" by October 31<sup>st</sup> 2024. ENPO claimed that, it had written to the Government of Nagaland for the third time in past two months, stating that the letter that was issued earlier on August 23<sup>rd</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> September 2024 had reminded urging the government to take the matter seriously and uphold the spirit of collective responsibility as outlined in Article 164 (2) of the Constitution of India, while giving its comments of the MOS draft and to understand the position of the ENPO.<sup>14</sup> On 14<sup>th</sup> February 2024, at the meeting with the frontal organizations, the organization collaboratively rejected the offer of an autonomous council or economic packages etc. other than the Frontier Nagaland.<sup>15</sup>

However there was some confusion over the draft MoS as from where had the draft MoS has emerged. It was clarified by Nagaland Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio on 26<sup>th</sup> February 2024 that the draft proposal of Memorandum of Settlement (MoS) was from the Home Ministry which was handed to him by the Union Home Minister Amit Shah to discuss with the elected members and Eastern Nagaland People's Organization (ENPO) when he visited the state. CM Neiphiu Rio further stated that, ENPO can receive the draft directly from the Union Ministry without involving the third party referring to the state government and have a negotiation between the ENPO and Government of India. Over this confusion, the ENPO refuted that the organizations haven't got any such draft MoS from MHA. The draft MoS is said to have some of these provisions, that there would be no division of the state, no separate state or union territory or separate sixth schedule or amendment of the Art 371(A) and no discretionary power of the Governor.<sup>16</sup> On 12<sup>th</sup> April 2024, Eastern Nagaland People's Organization, (ENPO) blamed the Nagaland government for failing to materialize their demand of Frontier Nagaland Territory before the announcement of Model Code of Conduct as assured by the Union Minister Amit Shah on his visit to Nagaland in December 2023. The MHA is said to have handed over the highlights of draft MoS for FNT to the State Government in the month of December 2023 that was supposed to give its comments before 31<sup>st</sup> of December, 2023 failure of which led the ENPO to abstain from participating in the election because the state government was not giving its comments to the central Government as assured to be given before the announcement of the Model code of conduct for the Lok Sabha election thereby stalling the settlement of FNT.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>13</sup> The New Indian Express, Frontier Nagaland Territory: ENPO sets October 31 deadline for govt. comment, 12 October 2024, <https://www.newindianexpress.com/nation/2024/Oct/12/frontier-nagaland-territory-enpo-sets-october-31-deadline-for-govts-comment>

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.opcit.

Aslo read, The Morung Express, ENPO reminds state govt. to address MoS draft on FNT, 22nd September 2024, <https://morungexpress.com/enpo-reminds-state-govt-to-address-mos-draft-on-fnt>

<sup>15</sup> Nagaland Tribune, GoI draft MoS says spirit of Art 371(A), 13 February 2024, <https://nagalandtribune.in/fnt-gois-draft-mos-says-spirit-of-art-371-a-state-govts-recommendation-for-autonomous-council-to-be-maintained/>

<sup>16</sup> Nagaland Tribune, CM Rio clarifies MoS draft., 26 February 2024, <https://nagalandtribune.in/cm-rio-clarifies-that-mos-draft-proposal-on-fnt-was-handed-to-him-by-union-home-minister-to-discuss-with-enpo/>

<sup>17</sup> Northeast Today, ENPO Blames Nagaland Government For Delaying Frontier Nagaland Territory Settlement, 12 April 2024, <https://www.northeasttoday.in/2024/04/12/enpo-blames-nagaland-government-for-delaying-frontier-nagaland-territory-settlement/>



## IX.ACCEPTANCE OF UNIQUE ARRANGEMENT:

On 18 December 2024, it was reported that Eastern Nagaland People's Organisation had decided to accept the central government of India offer made by the Union Home Ministry in New Delhi during a tripartite meeting on December 13 for a "unique arrangement with executive, legislative, and financial autonomy" for the Frontier Nagaland Territory (FNT) under the Central Home Secretary Govin Mohan. The ENPO delegation had made its acceptance clear by stating that the ENPO made its unwavering stand very clear that the demand of the people of eastern Nagaland is for a separate statehood 'Frontier Nagaland'. However, the ENPO having considered the difficulties of the Government of India at the present juncture decided to temporarily accept the offer of FNT, a unique arrangement with executive, legislative and financial autonomy," the Organisation said in a statement.<sup>18</sup> The economic times reported the development under the title, Tripartite talks on Frontier Nagaland advance, As per the report, the ENPO General Secretary M. Honang Konyak said that they are optimistic that the Central government, led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, would not fail in fulfilling the proposed offer of FNT by the Centre in the interest of the people of eastern Nagaland. Further asserted that, the ENPO having considered the difficulties of the Centre at the present juncture had decided to temporarily accept the offer of the government for FNT, a unique arrangement with executive, legislative and financial autonomy.<sup>19</sup> As per the circulated highlight draft of draft MoS with ENPO, some of the following demands were supposedly made under the draft Memorandum of Understanding.

**HIGHLIGHT DRAFT OF DRAFT MOS<sup>20</sup>****A. Some basic principles of draft MoS**

- i.No division of Nagaland State - No separate State/Union Territory/Sixth Schedule Council.
- ii.Spirit of Article 371A (Regional Council System) and State Govt.'s recommendation for Autonomous Council/Authority to be maintained
- iii.Article 371A not to be subjected to amendment.
- iv.Governor not to have any discretionary powers State.
- v.Legislative, Executive and Financial autonomy within Nagaland state.
- vi.Functional coordination between proposed set-up and State Govt., MPs/MLAs of the Region and District administration
- vii. Special Constitutional/Legal provisions (exemption from Panchayati Raj/Article 371ABEFR 1873) to continue.
- Viii. No impact on Naga talks

**B. Frontier Nagaland Territory/FNT & Frontier Nagaland Territorial Authority/FNTA****A.Structure:**

- i. Six districts of Eastern Nagaland (undivided Tuensang District) to constitute FNT.
- ii. Proposed Administrative set-up to be known as FNTA
- iii. FNTA to be constituted under Article 371A.
- iv. Total 49 members - 40 directly elected and 9 nominated by Governor (7 women one each from seven majority tribes + 1 for Eastern Sema + 1 eminent person).
- v. Term of office 5 years - elected/nominated members to have equal rights.
- vi. Executive Council consisting of not more than 9 members, incl. CEM and Dy. CEM.
- vii. Within FNT area, CEM/Dy. CEM equivalent to Cabinet Minister and Members equivalent to Minister of State.

<sup>18</sup> *The Hindu*, Nagaland Group Accepts Centre's Offer On Frontier Territory, 18 December 2024, <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/nagaland/nagaland-group-accepts-centres-offer-on-frontier-territory/article68996023.ece> also refer, Deccan Herald, Eastern Naga Body temporarily accept Centre offer of Unique arrangement for frontier Nagaland, <https://www.deccanherald.com/india/nagaland/eastern-naga-body-temporarily-accepts-centres-offer-of-unique-arrangement-for-frontier-nagaland-territory-3321787>

<sup>19</sup> *Economic times*, Tripartite talks on Frontier Nagaland advance, 17 December 2024. [https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/india/tripartite-talks-on-frontier-nagaland-advance-says-enpo/articleshow/116407930.cms?utm\\_source=contentofinterest&utm\\_medium=text&utm\\_campaign=cppst](https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/india/tripartite-talks-on-frontier-nagaland-advance-says-enpo/articleshow/116407930.cms?utm_source=contentofinterest&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=cppst)

<sup>20</sup> *Unpublished draft documents, Highlight of draft MoS with ENPO.*

viii. Administrative functions through an IAS officer (preferably of ACS rank not below Commissioner cum Secretary)- to be appointed by State Government in consultation with FNTA - to be designated as Chief Executive Secretary.

ix. Departments to be headed by Officers not below the rank of Director.

#### B. LEGISLATIVE/EXECUTIVE POWER/FUNCTIONS:

i. Governor to make rules for first constitution of FNTA- FNTA to make rules subsequently with the approval of Governor.

ii. FNTA to have legislative, executive and financial powers w.r.t. subjects transferred from State Government.

iii. Laws, rules and regulations made by FNTA to have effect only after assent of Governor and publication in State Gazette.

iv. Any Act of State Legislature pertaining to transferred subjects shall not apply to FNTA unless FNTA so decides.

v. Class-I&II Officers to be posted by State Government under FNTA with due regard to views of FNTA - preference to be given to officers hailing from FNT.

vi. Class - III & IV staff to be appointed by FNTA – regulations for appointment and service conditions to be made with approval of Governor.

vii. Selection Board to be constituted for recruitment of Class III & IV staff -adequate representation to all tribes of FNT.

viii. FNTA to transfer officers/staffs within its jurisdiction—State Government not to transfer Class III & IV staff outside FNT without FNTA's approval.

ix. FNTA shall not create any post without the concurrence of State Government.

#### C. FINANCIAL FUNCTIONS:

i. Governor to allocate funds from State Budget keeping in view population, area, backwardness and topography of FNT.

ii. FNTA to submit Annual Plan to State Govt.

iii. FNTA to have earmarked funds under a separate major sub-head within State Budget Funds to be released by State Govt. within a week not to be diverted for other purposes.

iv. Sanctioning powers of HoD to be conferred on Chief Executive Secretary of FNTA.

v. FNTA to furnish utilization certificate after incurring expenditure.

vi. Utilization of developmental funds subject to CAG audit – audit report along with ATR to be placed before State Assembly annually.

#### D. MISCELLANEOUS FUNCTIONS:

a. Village Guards:

i. FNTA to take necessary steps to preserve heritage of VGs.

ii. FNTA to modernize and upgrade VGs with assistance from Gol and GoN.

b. Village/Municipal Council

i. FNTA to ensure proper functioning of VCs/MCs within FNT.

ii. FNTA to devolve appropriate powers/responsibilities to VCs/MCs to enhance their effectiveness.

iii. Creation of new VCs/MCs by FNTA to be with prior approval of State Government.

#### E. MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS:

a. Interim Arrangement

i. Governor to nominate Interim Body in consultation with ENPO – not more than 9 members

ii. Interim Body not to continue beyond one year - elections to be held within one year.

b. Political representation

i. Gol to constitute Delimitation Commission for delimitation of PCs and ACs in Nagaland.

ii. Population and topography of the area to be kept in view during delimitation.

c. Security and Law and Order

i. FNTA with the help of tribal bodies shall endeavor to maintain peace in FNT.



- ii. State Government to post ADG/IG at FNTA Headquarters to coordinate with CEM on security issues.
- iii. IGP/DIG rank officers to be posted by the State Government at other suitable location in FNT.

#### F. DEVELOPMENT FUNCTIONS:

- i. Gol to focus on all round development of FNT under Act East Policy.
- ii. Gol to allocate adequate funds under a Special Development package for FNTA Over a period of 10 years.
- iii. FNTA to ensure equitable development within FNT and will be responsible for quality of projects.
- iv. One time grant by Gol to FNTA for construction of FNTA administrative infrastructure.
- v. Gol may consider funding CSS projects for FNTA to the extent of 100% for a period of 10 years.
- vi. Illustrative list of projects (to be finalized)- big development projects to be implemented through Central agencies.
- vii. Special recruitment rallies by Central SFs and State Police for FNT youth - assistance in pre-recruitment training.

#### G. SPECIAL PROVISIONS:

- i. DCs in FNT to coordinate with FNTA in development matters.
- ii. CEM of FNTA to coordinate with MPs/MLAS of FNT on development issues.
- iii. Governor to streamline coordination between State Government and FNTA– differences, if any, to be resolved by the Governor.
- iv. Governor to submit annual reports to President regarding administration of FNT and recommendations for improvement.
- v. Governor to review financial position of FNTC in his report.
- vi. BEFR, 1873 to continue to apply in FNT.
- vii. Joint Monitoring Committee to be constituted with representatives from Gol (MHA), GoN, FNTA and ENPO to oversee implementation of MoS.

#### H. ILLUSTRATIVE LIST OF DEVELOPMENT PROJECT FOR FNTA:

- i. University of FNTA
- ii. National Law University
- iii. NIIT
- iv. Bachelor of Education College (B.Ed)
- v. District Institute for Education & Training (DIET)
- vi. Engineering and Management Institute
- vii. Medial Hospital and Research Centre
- viii. Science Centre & Planetarium
- ix. Agricultural Research Centre
- x. Herbal Medicines and Ayurvedic Hospital and Research Centre
- xi. FNTA History, Language and Culture Research Centre
- xii. Handicraft/Handloom Research Centre
- xiii. Medical College at Mon
- xiv. Dikhu Hydro Project and Zungki River Hydel Project
- xv. Science College
- xvi. Polytechnic Institute
- xvii. Construction of Inter-District 4-Lane Roads
- xviii. FNT Guest Houses at New Delhi, Kolkata, Guwahati & Shillong.

Besides these provisions, ENPO has also brought out the proposal of the following subject to be transferred to FNTA. Some of List of subjects proposed to be transferred to FNTA are Agriculture & allied, Art and Culture of tribes in FNT, Co-operation, Forest not being a Reserve Forest, Irrigation, use of any canal or water course for the purpose of agriculture, Regulation of the practice of Jhum or other forms of shifting cultivation, Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, Health & Family Welfare, School and College education, Horticulture, Labor & Employment, Land Records and Survey & Revenue, Land Resources, Regulation of VCs and ULBs within FNTA, New & Renewable Energy, Mini-Hydel Projects, Water ways transport, Operation of public transport, Public Works Department including Village and District Roads and bridges/culverts/retaining walls thereof within FNT, Small, Cottage and Rural Industries, Khadi and Village Industries, Printing & Stationery, Rural Development, Sericulture, Social Welfare (Women Resource & Child Welfare), Soil & Water Conservation, Vocational Training & Skill Development, Shops and Establishments, Trade and Commerce

within Frontier Nagaland Territory, Tourism, Village Guards, Veterinary & Animal Husbandry, Water Resources, Youth Resource & Sports, Small, Cottage and Rural Industry, Handloom and Handicrafts, Regulation of money lending by individuals or entities other than banks and non-banking financial institutions, Regulation of liquor and intoxicating substances, Collection of land revenue, Collection of local taxes, tolls and fees, Urban/Rural Housing including implementation of schemes, Tribal Affairs including implementation of special schemes, Public Health Engineering including implementation of small projects, Rural Electrification including implementation of schemes, Planning, Coordination, Development and Statistics, Village Customary courts. Geology and Mines, Food and Civil Supplies, Markets and Fairs, Department of Underdeveloped Area (DUDA), Bamboo Mission, Fire & Emergency Services.

These are the highlight of the unresolved draft of Memorandum of Settlement, as from December meeting of 2024, ENPO and the Government of India is reported to have agreed to convene the next round of tripartite discussions by the second week of January 2025 to address unresolved issues.<sup>21</sup>

## X. CONCLUSION:

The Eastern area has been isolated and deprived of proper administration although it was the Nagas of the region that was resisting the British rule in their territory and as result the region didn't had a robust administration both under the British government and post-India independence under the Govt. of India, The areas also has a violent experience due to the Naga Resistance movement in free Naga areas, even after the formation of state of Nagaland in 1963, not much improvement was seen and has been meted a step motherly treatment. The leaders of ENPO have been adamant to their commitment and demand for the creation of Frontier Nagaland. The movement didn't succumbed to the just temporary arrangement or settlement of financial, economic or developmental packages but wants a long term solution for the future generation, for the betterment and welfare of the people Eastern Nagas. The economic package may get drain in few years or decades but if proper solutions are made that is going to last for the generation. The content of the Memorandum of Settlement is another intriguing subject to discuss and ponder, however the ENPO seems to go and wait a little longer as the issues is intricate and lot of string attached with the issues of the state within as to the Naga Political Solution. Whether the arrangement would lead to be the disintegration of the present state of Nagaland or the settlement would be within the state of Nagaland. ENPO demands seen to be a legitimate and central govt. of India must not ignore the pleas of the people. The areas deserve an improvised infrastructure and standardization of lifestyle. Basic infrastructure as Airport, Railways, Hospitals, University, Schools, Electricity, Roads, Water supply, Job avenues for the youths and other public infrastructure should be immediately given a priority within a specific period to the Eastern areas for a peaceful co-existence. The ongoing process of negotiation for the creation of Frontier Nagaland has span a decade from the inception of the movement in the year 2010 under the congress government but the people of the areas are yet to see the light of the day and enjoy the fruits of the labor and sacrifices laid down by their ancestors for a better life for the younger generations. Whether the demands of the Eastern Nagas will be achieved or not is a matter of time but the movement has undergone a swift change from the demand of the creation of separate statehood for Eastern Naga areas to an acceptance of Frontier territory to a unique arrangement that is currently under negotiation. The areas has definitely gone through a tide of unjust administration, social and economic inequality for a long decade over the course of history that also needed a deliberate discourse and academic debate and discussion in highlighting the suffering the people of the areas had endured over a long decade.

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