

Status of the Naga Accord

What is the issue?

\n\n

\n

- “Naga Framework Agreement” was signed in 2015 between the Union Government and the “National Socialist Council of Nagalim (Isak-Muivah)”.

\n

- But despite the initial euphoria, little has moved ahead in the deal.

\n

\n\n

How has the framework agreement been received by the masses?

\n\n

\n

- The exact details of the agreement aren't public yet, but the agreement has received a mixed response from various sections in the Northeast.

\n

- The agreement has raised expectations among the Naga people but also apprehension in neighbouring Assam, Arunachal and Manipur.

\n

- The apprehension are well founded as states have been created after due consideration of a number of factors.

\n

- Any alteration to state boundaries to satisfy Naga concerns might end up affecting the economy and finances of the neighbouring states.

\n

- As the framework remains secretive, a section of articulate Nagas who have asked for its terms to be made public to enable discussion and debate.

\n

\n\n

What is the track record of NSCM-IM?

\n\n

\n

- NSCM-(IM) emerged as the principal Naga rebel group in the 1980s, and

they entered into a peace accord with the union government in 1987.

\n

- They've been running a parallel government across vast swaths of Naga territory in addition to the state government.
- \n
- Negotiations for reaching a sustained solution for the Naga problem has been going on since and the agreement reached in 2015 was a significant event.
- \n
- But the organisation has come under criticism from some sections of the Nagas on multiple fronts - particularly their violent suppression of detractors.
- \n
- It has also tried to sabotage platforms such as the Forum for Naga Reconciliation for alternative discourses on the peace process.
- \n
- But to be fair to the NSCN-IM, its leaders have remained steadfast to the goal of wresting an "honourable settlement" for the Naga people from the Union.
- \n

\n\n

How has the Indian establishment reacted to the Naga cause?

\n\n

\n

- Jayaprakash Narayan (JP) was the most prominent leader to have taken efforts to understand the Naga cause in the early decades of independence.
- \n
- He traversed across Nagaland and his interactions with the Nagas, are said to have showed incredible empathy about their history and origin.
- \n
- Notably, JP spoke for the diverse cultural landscape that made up India and demanded a cultural union even before a political union.
- \n
- Even today the tribes of this region are not influenced by the typified "Indian culture" but proudly inheritors of a unique tribal affinity.
- \n
- But after JP, India has failed to produce a statesman of his stature to take forward the aspirations of culturally significant tribal communities.
- \n
- Currently, in Indian establishment, there are deep prejudices against Naga demands, with some being completely dismissive of Naga's unique history.
- \n

\n\n

Are Naga demands constitutionally tenable?

\n\n

- Currently, Naga civil society and political leaders are working to nudge the union government towards a more pragmatic policy towards the Naga cause.
- But multiple governments have repeatedly cited constitutional constraints for meeting the Naga aspirations for autonomy.
- Contrarily, the Nagas vouch that unlike the Maharajas of Manipur, Meghalaya and Tripura, they never signed a formal instrument of accession with India.

\n\n

What is the way ahead?

\n\n

- Despite the tense and violent past, Nagas have journeyed a long way with the rest of India for almost 70 years now.
- A level of comfort has indeed developed between the Naga people and the larger Indian masses, which needs to be capitalised on to resolve the conflict.
- Hence, it would be desirable for both sides to pause political egos and be open minded to make compromises for future of younger and aspiring Nagas.
- The Indian dispensation too needs to realise that pluralism is a cornerstone of our constitution as long as it doesn't affect the greater good.
- Hence, the possibility of a settlement beyond the present ambit of the constitution should be kept open if needed to resolve the longstanding dispute.

\n\n

\n\n

Source: The Hindu

\n\n

\n\n

\n



SHANKAR
IAS PARLIAMENT
Information is Empowering