

North East and the Nagas: A Bird's Eye View

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The north-east of India is a region of ethnic diversity inhabited by an innumerable variety of tribes professing a wide range of religious, culture, languages and social systems. Nagaland, the 16th state of the Indian union was born on 1st Dec 1963. It is bounded by Assam in the west and north Tirap district of Arunachal Pradesh in the northeast, and Manipur in the South. On the east it shares India's international boundary with Myanmar, Burma. The state is divided into eight districts. The terrain is hilly, rugged and mountainous. The highest peak is Saramati in the Twensang district which is 3840 metres above sea level. The average height of the peak is between 900 and 1200 metres.

The main rivers that flow through the state are Dhansiri, Doyang, Dikhu, Tizu and Melak. There is no waterfall in Nagaland. The only lake well known is Lacham to the east of Mehiri. The hill sides are covered with green forests. In the Angami region, the terraced fields are a feast to the eyes.

Nagaland - The home of Nagas emerged as a new state of India in 1963. Nagas are not a single homogeneous people but a composite of some 18 tribes speaking about 30 dialects. And yet there are distinct features of similarity amongst them. They are a hardy people, warlike and sternly elemental. They have common food habits; strong resemblance in the various items of their dress is also their mode of agriculture. Until 1958, they practiced head-hunting which earned them both the curiosity and stigma of the outer world. They are, by and large, gay and carefree with an extraordinary capacity for enjoying life.

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