

NYISHI-APATANI JOINT DECLARATION

The two prominent communities – the Nyishi and the Apatani had a very strong social bonding, popularly known as Mazañ/Manyw (or) Ajiñ/Ajin (or) Gotu/Gyotu Ajiñ/Ajin. In other words, this unique reciprocity in social practices of interdependence between the two communities existed since time immemorial with well-knit barter trade economy.

2. The modern party politics, cash economy and growth of education system have made these two communities very competitive and individualistic. Over the years, the Nyishis of Lower Subansiri District began to feel less represented in terms of land allotment, trading license and in the sharing of resources in the notified District Headquarters, Ziro of both the communities which led to a sense of alienation from the main stream of the District HQ, Ziro. Many a times, local and individual differences including petty quarrels and rumours have been flared up like communal issue, thereby, posing major threat to the age old fabric of social relationship and communal harmony.
3. The unfortunate incident of 15th June 2013 at Hapoli that led to the death of Kapu Tajam at GNRC, Guwahati on 18th June followed by aggravated situation at Hapoli on 19th June ignited communal tension like situation of the Nyishi & Apatani who have been enjoying cordial relationship since time immemorial. The social thinkers under the aegis of Nyishi Elite Society (NES) - the apex body of the Nyishi community and the Apatani Cultural & Literary Society (ACLS) - representing Apatani community initiated the peace process christened - **First, Second and Third Ziro Dialogues** on 12th July 2013 at Conference Hall of District Administration, Hapoli, 27th July 2013 at the same venue and 28th September 2013 at Yazali respectively. During these three rounds of Ziro Dialogues, the social leaders of both communities had fruitful discussions covering all the issues of common interest and realized the necessity of maintaining peaceful co-existence, mutual trust and confidence for posterity of both the communities as has been there since time immemorial.
4. During the **Third Ziro Dialogue** at Yazali, the following resolutions were unanimously evolved by both the community leaders as under: -

Late Kapu Tajam burial issue:

- i) It was resolved that the mortal remains/dead body of late Kapu Tajam shall not be removed / exhumed from the present spot.
- ii) The land owner – Shri Tilling Tasang shall have the right of using his plot of land in any manner except that the mortal remains of late Tajam shall not be disturbed / destroyed.
- iii) The family members of late Kapu Tajam will have no right to claim the said plot of land where the deceased was buried.
- iv) The NES-ACLS shall jointly appeal the administration/ Government to provide help or assistance to the aggrieved parties.
- v) Keeping in view, the social tradition of Apatanis – **Supuñ-Dapo** will be performed.

Exercise for the peaceful Co-existence:

In order to draw a genuine road – map for peaceful co-existence of both the communities, the house unanimously resolved to constitute drafting committees of each community. The reports of the drafting committees will be placed before the joint meeting scheduled to be held on 30th November 2013. The house will take up the reports submitted by both the drafting committees to arrive at a final agreement to be signed by the leaders of the both communities. *(The Resolution of the Third Ziro Dialogue of Yazali was jointly signed by Dr. Hage Tam, President, ACLS and Shri Bengia Tolum, President, NES)*

5. Under the given circumstance and past experience, the community leaders of both the communities have decided to put on record, their commitment towards peaceful co-existence and to pass on healthy legacy of social institutions for the generations to come. As a follow-up to the Yazali Resolution of 28th September 2013, both the communities constituted joint drafting committees for the social declaration which first joint meeting was held at Itanagar on 31st January 2015.
6. Under the definition of Communal Issue, the issues pertaining to the community as a whole which covers community festivals like Nyokum Yullo, Dree, Boori-Boot Yullo, Murung, Longte, Myoko and such religious places or shrines (or) any actions/statements made in the name of Nyishi-Apatani community based organizations (or) any member of a community acting on a gang with criminal conspiracy with an intent to harm members of other community shall be construed as communal or any other issues as deemed fit and proper by the Nyishi Elite Society (NES) and Tanw Supuñ Dukuñ (TSD) shall come

under the ambit of the concern of the communities. Any individual disputes or controversies like motor accident, marriage, theft, property & land dispute of individuals, family, clan or a village shall not be construed as community issue.

7. After thorough discussion and understanding the volatile issues confronting both the communities in the past, present and for the well-being of the future generation, the following resolutions is adopted and jointly declared as follows:-

- i) Both the communities resolved to maintain the age-old social relations prevailing since time immemorial. The communities shall strive to revive the age old tradition of interdependence through established social institution of Friendship System called Mazañ/Manii (or) Ajiñ/Ajin, etc. The institution of Community Herding of Animals called Sw / Subu luth of both the tribes shall work in tandem and advised that no cattle of either tribe are harmed by another. The people of both the communities shall respect the traditional boundaries and not engage in illegal activities like hunting or extraction of forest produce like; cane, bamboo, medicinal plants, logging etc.
- ii) Under no circumstances, any individual, group (or) organizational issues with vested interest shall be allowed to paint communal colour, provoke insinuations by individual (or) group issues. Any criminal or civil offence committed by any individuals (or) groups (or) organizations shall not be allowed to tag communal issue, rather, it shall be addressed as per the provisions of the rule of law.
- iii) The traditional system of revenge in both the tribes shall be strictly denounced and prohibited so as to avoid victimization of the innocents.
- iv) Both the communities shall activate more social and communal harmony, confidence building measures by encouraging inter-tribe marriage on mutual consent, cultural and social exchange programmes.
- v) The district Headquarter shall be expanded to accommodate and ensuring equal participation in the facilities and developmental process by the Nyishis and Apatanis.
- vi) Any one of the heavy infrastructure like - street, shopping complex, community hall, colony, school or dispensaries in the expanded district Headquarters referred at para 7(v) shall be named after late Kapu Tajam in his memory.
- vii) Both the communities shall encourage their members to participate in the traditional festivals like – Nyokum Yullo, Dree, Boori-Booth Yullo, Longte, Myoko,

etc, so that the younger generations shall have opportunities to intermingle so as to learn and respect each others culture.

- viii) The violator(s) of the Joint Declaration of the Nyishi-Apatani Summit 2015 shall be dealt by Nyishi Elite Society (NES) and Tanw Supuñ Dukuñ (TSD) on case to case basis based on ground realities. If any party of either community violates this declaration, the respective apex body of the community shall initiate to deal with the situation.
- ix) The Nyishi Elite Society (NES) and the Tanw Supuñ Dukuñ (TSD) shall work in close co-ordination to ensure strict implementation of the aforesaid historic summit in letter and spirit and shall convene joint meeting as may be required from time to time. The General Secretary of the respective community apex body shall act as the ex-officio Convenor to call such joint meetings to be chaired by the President, NES and TSD on alternative basis.

8. We jointly put our hand and seal on this 20th day of September 2015 on behalf of the Nyishi community; represented by the Nyishi Elite Society (NES) & Apatani community; represented by Tanw Supuñ Dukuñ (TSD) in witness of community based organizations under their respective umbrella in this unprecedented and historic social conglomeration of the Nyishis & Apatanis at the Government Higher Secondary School Ground, Ziro, Lower Subansiri District, Arunachal Pradesh.

(Dr. Hage Lodor) President,
Tanw Supuñ Dukuñ (TSD)

(Bengia Tolum) President,
Nyishi Elite Society (NES)

In witness of the Federal Organizations of TSD and NES:

(Neelam Moriam Khoda), President,
Nyishi Nyem Acham (NNA)

(Hage Shalla Yasung), Chairperson,
Apatani Women Association Ziro (AWAZ)

(Taku Chatung), President,
Apatani Youth Association (AYA)

(Biri Kakum), President,
All Nyishi Youth Association (ANYA)

(Byabang Joram), President,
All Nyishi Students' Union (ANSU)

(Tamo Tachang), President,
All Apatani Students' Union (AASU)

As approved by: -

1. The Central Executive Body, NES at Hotel Benjamin, Papu Nallah on Monday, 9th March 2015 and vetted by the Community on Sunday, 22nd March 2015 at State Guest House, Naharlagun.
2. The Central Executive Body, TSD and vetted by the Community at Conference Hall of District Administration, Hapoli on Saturday, 14th February 2015.
3. And finalized by in the Joint Executive meeting of Nyishi Elite Society (NES) and the Tanw Supuñ Dukuñ (TSD) on Sunday, 26th April 2015 at Hotel Donyi Polo Ashok with minor corrections.