

Manual for VG ORGANIZATION

Introduction:

As per the provisions of the Right to Information Act, 2005, which is intended for setting out the practical regime of right to information for citizens to secure access to information, to promote transparency and accountability in the working of every public authority, the VG Organization under the Office of the Commissioner Nagaland has taken all possible proactive measures to meet the goal of expedient furnishing of information to citizens regarding the matters which come under the functioning of the establishment.

In this regard as required under section 4 (1) (b) of the said Act, proactive disclosure is as given in the following pages from Manual-I to Manual-XVII. This disclosure is available in both hard copy and in electronic format for public.

MANUAL-I

Particulars of the Department

1. Particulars: The Commissioner Nagaland, who is also the Commandant General of Village Guards in Nagaland is the overall head of the organization in the State.

a. At the District level the following are the controlling authorities:

- i. Tuensang : Commandant VG, Tuensang.
- ii. Mon : DC as Ex-Officio Commandant
- iii. Kiphire : DC as Ex-Officio Commandant
- iv. Longleng : DC as Ex-Officio Commandant
- v. Meluri : SDO (C) Meluri as Ex-Officio
Asst.Cmdnt

b. Below the Ex-Officio Commandants of Mon & Kiphire are one Dy. Commandant each, whereas, under Tuensang, & Longleng are Assistant Commandants and under Meluri sub-division SDO (C) Meluri is the Ex-Officio Assistant Commandant VG.

About the Village Guard Organization in Nagaland: The traditional Naga Morung is a Unique and epoch-making in the history of human evolution. It was of paramount importance because Nagas lived in Morungs and guarded their villages against enemies from time immemorial. Young people were trained in various arts and techniques of war and proved themselves as warriors through bravery and heroism in defense of their villages. They performed duties as “a watch dog” so that invading enemies were prevented from intrusion and defended their villages. This was a part of social and cultural life of the Nagas ever since the dawn of history.

The idea for raising of the Village Guards was conceived within the purview of the social and cultural life of the Nagas to protect the villages against the insurgents ravage. It was started in a small way as “Peasants’ Volunteer Force” within their reach to guard and defend the villages in the same manner with that of their Morung days.

The emergence of the Village guards began with the attack of Pangsha Village in the then Tuensang Frontier Division of North Eastern Frontier Agency (NEFA) by Naga Rebels on the night of 11/12 February 1957 in which nine persons including women and children were killed. The administration came to learn of an impending attack on this village and therefore arranged 3 SBBL to arm the villagers including 5 shots. The rebels were taken by surprise as the village was well defended. Though armed with only 3 SBBL guns and spares and daos, the villagers were able to defend the village and caused heavy casualties on the attackers. This incident proved to be the turning point in village defense in Nagaland.

The successful defending of the Pangsha village by a group of mere peasants against a well armed and trained group of rebels made Major R.Khathing, MC, OBE, IFAS, Political Officer of the erstwhile, Tuensang Frontier Division, under NEFA administration initiate the proposal for raising of 300 loyal Nagas to be armed with 12 bore guns under the banner of “Tuensang Frontier Division Scouts” for protection of the bordering villages. This proposal was concurred by the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India.

Raised with 300 loyal Nagas on 1st March 1957, the Village Guards have increased its strength to 9571 spreaded over to the border villages in the districts of Tuensang, Mon, Kiphire, Longleng and Meluri Sub-division of Phek covering 318 VG Posts on completion of 50 years in 2007.

The village guards have gallantly defended their villages and guarded the areas bordering with Myanmar (Burma). Twenty four village guards have been decorated with Ashok Chakra series for their distinguished services from the President of India and a host of VGs were recipients of the Governor's Gold Medal and Commendation Certificates. The Village guards played a remarkable role in restoration of peace and order in this trouble torn area during the turmoil period between 1960s and 1970s. They have proved themselves as one of the finest Peasants' Volunteer force in guarding the border villages which speaks volumes in terms of performance. This period also witnessed the sacrifices made by the village guards and many gave their lives while defending their villages and whose exemplary courage in action exalted the Organisation to attain the highest degree of "Honour" in the services of the people and the nation.

The attack of Pangsha Village was a turning point and urgency arose for safeguarding of the villages from insurgents' revenge. The aim was mainly to defend and protect the lives and properties of the villages from insurgents, counter terrorist activities and assist the security forces in their counter insurgency operations within the village area.

Major M.B.Rai, Ex 11 Gurkha Rifle, was brought in to organize the Tuensang Frontier Division Scouts. Thus, the VG Organization was formally raised with 300 loyal Nagas on 1st March, 1957.

Not long before, the new area known as the Naga Hills Tuensang Area was created with the unification of the Naga Hills district of Assam and Tuensang Frontier Division of NEFA on 1st Dec, 1957 under the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India.

And consequent upon the formation of the Naga Hills Tuensang Area, the special constables of Naga Hills and Tuensang Frontier Division Scouts were incorporated and re-organized on 1st Dec, 1957 and re-named as “Village Defense Guard” (VDG).

A post of Military Liaison Officer to the Commissioner NHTA in the rank of Lt.Col. was created with headquarter at Kohima. Three independent wings, one each at Kohima, Mokokchung and Tuensang were established. Each wing was commanded by a Major from the Army with headquarters located at each of the three district headquarters. The strength of the VDG in NHTA was 2000. It was divided into 40 platoons and each consisted of 15 men.

Since VDG was purely an adhoc organization, the Administrative staff were drawn from the Army and Assam Rifles. In certain cases VDG were also attached to the Army and the Assam Rifles for administration, training and operations.

Primary role allotted to VDG was the immediate security and protection of their own villages against violence to life and property. Secondary roles were: limited protective routine duties like Road Opening, Passing of Information, Acting as Guides, and interpreters and provision of escorts to Civil Administrative Officers.

On attainment of Statehood of Nagaland on 1st Dec, 1963, the VDG wings of Kohima and Mokokchung districts were converted and formed major elements of the 1st and 2nd battalions of the Nagaland Armed Police (NAP). Thus, these two VDG wings were disbanded.

The Tuensang wing covering the present districts of Tuensang, Mon, Kiphire, Longleng and Meluri Area of Phek district remain operative for the security of the villages bordering the International Border with Myanmar. The VDG, which was still in operation, was re-designated as Village Guards, Tuensang and the Wing Commander re-designated as Commandant. The appointment was to be held by an officer of the rank of Major from the Army.

On raising of the 3rd battalion of the Nagaland Armed Police at Tuensang in 1966, the Government almost decided that the VGs were to be enrolled in the 3rd NAP and non-volunteers and medically unfit persons to be discharged in the same manner to that of Kohima and Mokokchung VGs. It was however, on the persistent efforts of Shri.Akum Imlong, the Minister for Tuensang Affairs, Shri.Aliba Imti, IFAS, DC Tuensang and Major M.B.Rai, the then VG Commandant that the VGs of Tuensang were not disbanded while volunteers were allowed to enroll in the 3rd NAP.

During late sixties active insurgency shifted from other parts of Nagaland to Tuensang district. The VGs made a major contribution by themselves and in support of the security forces for maintenance of Law & Order in the state. Consequently, insurgency almost came to an end with the signing of the Shillong Accord on 11th November, 1975.

In 1979 insurgency reappeared in a new and more ominous form. A faction of insurgents under the leadership of Th.Muivah and Issac Swu denounce the Shillong Accord and the leadership of Shri.A.Z.Phizo and formed NCSN (National Socialist Council of Nagaland) in the Burma-Naga area and pose a new threat not only to the peace, but also to the social and religious fabrics of Nagaland. They launched a severe wave of terrorism by burning Burma-Naga villages and killing recalcitrant village elders. Then, they turned to villages inside Nagaland. In Khiamnugan Naga area, they attacked Kenjong on 13th May, 1980 and Pang village on 3rd Sept, 1980, burned 103 houses including 31 granaries, a school and church. They killed 10 villagers and wounded 5. These included two old men, two women and 10 children. On both occasions, the VGs rose with traditional Chivalry and beat back the attackers inflicting heavy casualties on the insurgents. Two VGs lost their lives and two were wounded, five death bodies of insurgents were recovered. The insurgents are believed to have carried away many more dead and wounded. For their acts of exceptional courage and devotion to duty, His Excellency, the President of India awarded two Kirti Chakras (Including one posthumous) and eight Shaurya Chakras (including one posthumous) to the VGs.

In recognition of their value and to face this new threat from across the border, Government decided to strengthen and re-vitalize the VGs. With effect from 28th Oct, 1981, Shri Dal Singh, VSM, was appointed as Additional Inspector General of Police, Nagaland on deputation from the Indian Army and placed in-charge of the VGs under the Commissioner. Efforts were taken to increase the strength, cover more villages along the border, which did not have VGs, organized a more effective command and central structure and to enhance the various allowances being paid to the VGs.

The period from 2003 to 2007 is fondly called the period of renaissance for the Village Guards in Nagaland. Today Nagaland prides itself of this unique history and as the state celebrates the fiftieth anniversary of the Village Guards in Nagaland the visionary leaders are being saluted for their “Vision” on the future of this organization. Without their foresight and their courage to keep alive this history, it might have been a different story altogether. Today we are a witness of this small Voluntary Peasant Force emerging as an incredible force in defense of the frontier villages.

The period of renaissance witnessed the dawn of peace and prosperity in Nagaland. There were no major insurgency-related incidents in the border villages, serious enough to draw the attention of the Village Guards. This period can be aptly called the “Golden Period” paving the way for revival of the traditional culture of the Village Guards. However, a need to revamp the Village Guards who were peasants by profession, to a more modern Force was also recognized. In order to be at par with the regular police personnel in terms of discipline, handling of weapons of various bores and to take up the

hazardous task in nature of their duties, the need for newer techniques pertaining to training at all levels was strongly felt.

The era of renaissance is marked by the structural changes of the organization in a more organized manner to cope with the existing social and political system. This being a transitional period, all out efforts were made for bringing the organization to a perfect form so that their services can be fully utilized for the benefit of the society. It was indeed a gigantic task for initiating suitable and appropriate measures to meet the growing requirements commensurate to their hazardous job.

It is true that the village guards have exalted the organization to the highest degree of honor in the services of the people and the nation, yet their service conditions were not adequately taken care befitting their contribution.

Today the role of village guards is not restricted to the defense of village but covers a wider range of duties, though priority is still on the maintenance of law and order. Other duties include providing security cover during elections, road opening party, VIP duties, routine patrolling, and other hazardous duties.

Village guards are truly the indigenous soldiers organized based on tradition with a modernized touch. The results of their performances can be equated with any elite force in the country, the reason being their originality in the tactics of guerilla warfare. A commendable characteristic of the Village Guard is that they uphold the integrity and the interest of the society

and the Nation before that of the individual. In fact, there have been many incidences where Village Guards have even risked their own lives while exemplifying out this very trait.

In terms of apprehending criminals, the Village Guards can be considered as one of the best. For them, as in the case of a disciplined army, every order is treated with the same solemnity and a simple order is all that is required to ensure that the task is executed promptly.

Raised with 300 loyal Nagas as the Tuensang Division Scouts on the 1st of March 1957 the strength of the Village Guards had increased to 3820 personnel in 1982. And now on the eve of the completion of 50 years it stands at 9571 VG Personnel, 10 assistant commandants, 2 deputy commandants, 53 JCOs from the rank of Jamadar to Subedar Majors, and 1 Commandant, deputed from the Nagaland Police Service. The VG organization is headed by the Additional Chief Secretary and Commissioner who is also the ex-officio Commandant General of the VGs. These marked changes in the organizational structure of the VG have been incorporated to ensure the effective and efficient functioning of the VG setup in the state.

It is pertinent to mention that prior to 1982, the JCOs from the rank of the Jamadar to that of a Subedar were paid only honorariums like any ordinary VG personnel. After 1982, JCOs, Assistant Commandants, Deputy Commandants were granted scale of pay but the post held by them were not pensionable.

Recognizing the institution as premier importance in maintenance of law and order and excellence shown by the organization, the government in 1998 has declared as pensionable posts from the rank of a Jamadar to that of the Deputy Commandants. However, all other ranks and files from Havildar Majors downward continue to be paid monthly honorarium only. Efforts are also on to create more posts at all levels in order to provide opportunity to the VG personnel in terms of promotional avenues and career growth.

The uniform of the Village guards, particularly the shirt, has been changed to dark ash colour effective from 1st march 2007 in order to differentiate them from other paramilitary and police personnel to maintain its own identity. However, Khaki pants remain unchanged.

During this period the Village Guards have also been given their own flag signifying that the VG stands as a role model in maintenance of peace and order and defense of the border villages. A separate badge and ceremonial headdress have also been introduced for the VGs.

The Commissioner Nagaland being the Ex-Officio Commandant General of the Village Guards from time to time visits various VG posts and carry out inspections to check the preparedness of the VGs. Such visits are an important occasion for the VGs, who have to not only toil in their fields but also carry their guns for the protection and safety of their respective villages.

Another noble achievement during this period was the increase of honorarium to Rs.500/- per month then in 2007 it has been increased to

Rs.600/- per month, an increase of Rs.100/-. The latest increase of Rs.100/- is being invested as a premium for the Group Saving Life Insurance Scheme, which is considered to be one of the most important security measures adopted by the Government for the security and welfare of the Village Guard personnel. Now a VG can rest assure that his family will be taken care of even in the worst of times.

As a Welfare scheme, a society under the name “The Naga Indigenous Crafts Promotion and Production Society of the VGs and Rural Artisans” has been registered under the registration of society act. The society was established due to the fact that the VGs are known for their skills in bamboo and cane works, woodcarving and black smithy with the objective to provide opportunity to earn extra income for their families as a supporting source. This would provide opportunity to the VGs to translate their wisdom and talents into reality and shall also be an eye opener towards self reliance.

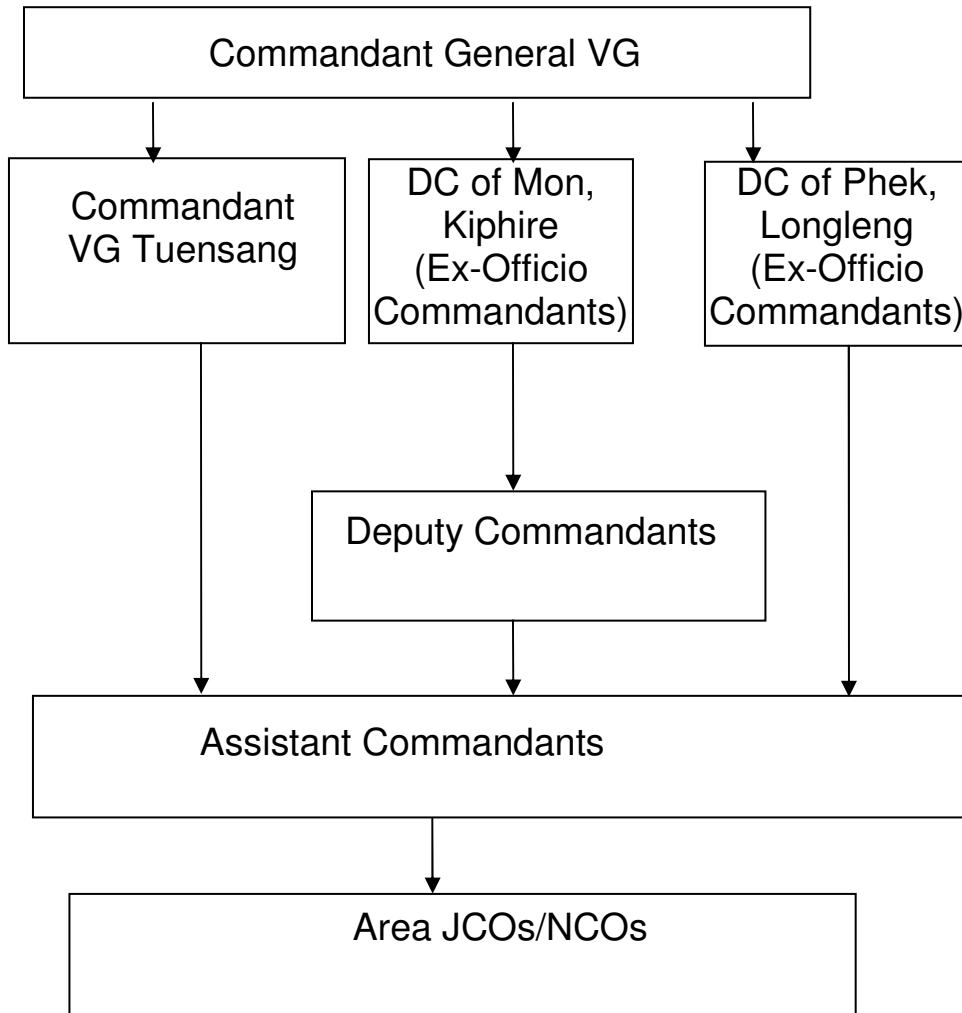
During the last 50 years of its existence, the Village Guards in Nagaland have done exceedingly well not only in defending the border villages but also played a pivotal role in the restoration of peace and order in the State as a whole. They are rightly termed as the finest voluntary force who by profession are peasants. They have been able to deliver, if not more than, a regular force, which deserves appreciation from all.

Truly the Village Guards fit to the slogan “Guardian of the Frontier Villages”. This slogan not only covers the defense of the village, but it also means a guardian of the economic interest of the village, guardian of social

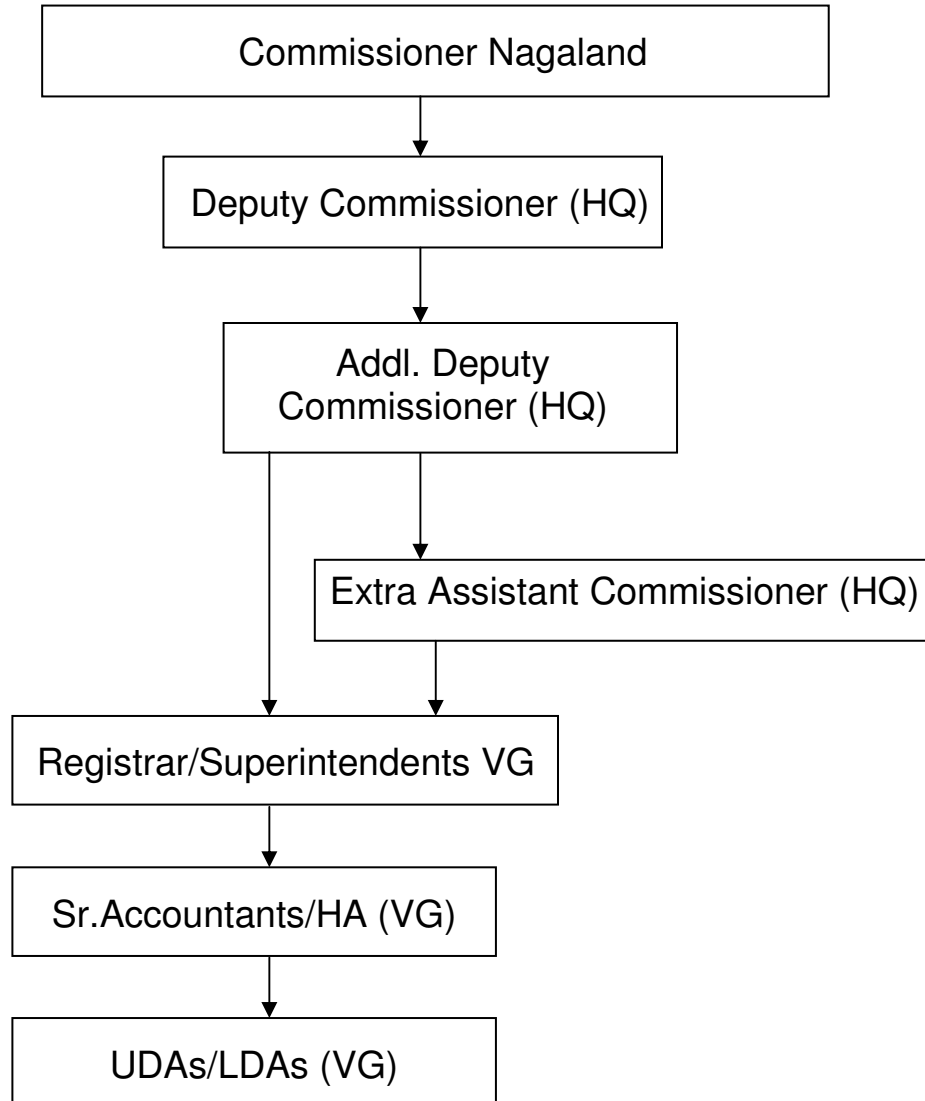
and cultural values of the village, a rescuer in times of disaster, and a protector of the village at all times.

Organizational structures

1. The VG Organizational Setup



2. The Office of the Commissioner Nagaland (Commandant General)



Note:

At present the Commissioner's Office does not have a Registrar. Once one of the Superintendents reaches the required seniority level he/she will be promoted to that of a Registrar.