

Essays of pochury festival essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

STORY BEHIND SEPTEMBER 6 BLACK DAY| | On August 14, 1960, the Naga Army attacked Assam Rifle out-post at Thuda (Phor village) in Pochury area. The attack was undertaken by the Eastern Command's 1st Brigade under the command of Major General Zuheto, along with the then 4th battalion of Pochury Region under the command of Lt. Colonel Thorpa. The monsoon was at its height during the time and all major rivers like Tizu, Lanye and Thethsii were in full spate. The attack was launched after destroying all the six bridges on all the rivers. This was done to stop reinforcement from reaching the besieged army post.

As the attack continued into the thirteenth day, ammunitions on both sides were running short and on several occasions the Indian Air Force plane tried to drop relief material and ammunitions but were prevented by the Naga Army. At the same time the Indian Air Force jet fighters strafed the attacker's positions. An Indian transport plane (Dakota) trying to drop relief materials and ammunitions to the besieged post was shot down by the Naga Army on the 14th day of the siege and crash landed at Zathsii, a paddy field of Meluri village. The Naga Army captured all the 9 (nine) airmen including Flt.

Lt. A. S. Singh. This led to a heavy army operation in Pochury area by the Indian Army, who was on a mission to search and rescue the captured airmen, none of whom were ever tortured but were later set free through the Red Cross. In the process of the army operations to rescue the airmen many villages were burnt down and untold atrocities and tortures were inflicted upon the villagers. On September 1, 1960, 6 (six) villagers from Phor village were tortured to death. Their names are Lt. Turachu, Village Chief, Lt.

Yutsuchu, Pastor, Lt. Chupuchu DB, Lt. Yituchu GB, Lt. Turuchu GB, Lt. Mughazu GB.

Again on September 3, 1960 another 3 (three) villagers from Yisi village were beaten to death namely Lt. Mazu GB, Lt. Throchu, Lt. Mazu RP. Two villagers Lt. Yichuhu and Lt. Nyupuchu. from Mokie village were also beaten to death. In Laruri village, Lt. Lingsang was buried alive after severe beating. Lt. Nyukhrusuh and Lt. Rhorupa of Meluri village were beaten severely and after which, their heads were chopped-off. Two villages, namely Tsikuzo and Kuluopfu, were abandoned due to tortures and humiliations meted out by the Indian army. On 6th September 1960, the Punjab Regiment posted at Kangjang village reached Matikhrii village around 10 am.

The entire village was encircled in three rings and all the villagers were ordered to gather in one place. Men folk were separated from women and children. All the men were made to keep jumping and do sit-ups, for more than 5 hours in the scorching sun, naked. Any signs of tiredness were met with kicks and hits with rifle butts. Then just before sunset, Indian army not satisfied with the punishment meted out to the villagers, rounded them up inside the Village chief's house and were forced to sit heads down like a lamb being lead to its slaughter. Lt.

Thah, the then Village chief, knowing what was in store for them bravely volunteered to sacrifice. He stood bravely for the Naga cause even to his last breath and said " It's a man's pride. No surrender, no compromise for our birth right. This sacrifice is to protect our freedom. I shall gladly lay down my life for the Naga future generation. " Then an Indian army jawan, holding a

blunt dao(hatchet) chopped off the head of Lt. Pogholo who was first in the line. Witnessing the brutality and horror in front of their eyes and knowing that all of them were going to be killed, one of the villagers managed to escape the execution forcefully.

Then one after another heads rolled down separated from the bodies, and in the event a total of nine lives were lost. Their names are Lt. Thah, Lt. Pogholo, Lt. Mezitso, Lt. Pongoi, Lt. Eyetshu, Lt. Zosituo, Lt. Thitu, Lt. Kekhwezu, Lt. Kezukhwelo. The Indian army did not even allow the loved ones to perform last rites and rituals for the dead. All the dead bodies were dumped inside the village chief's house and were burnt down to ashes along with the other houses and granaries.

The women and children who had fled to the jungle to evade the horror and torture of Indian Army came back the next morning to find the whole village burnt down to ashes. Lt. Thitu who narrowly escaped from the execution was found by his wife Mrs. Rhiitariih with three cuts on the neck, stomach slashed and intestines thrown out. He quoted “ Love, tell my beloved children the sacrifice I have borne for them and I am waiting to die in your lap with a cup of water” and after drinking, he breathed his last. Another victim Lt. Zosituo, traveling Pastor, was also found almost dead with multiple injuries on his chest and neck.

Not long after, he died. Then the horrified women and children with no means simply covered the dead bodies with mud and left for the jungles fearing the Indian army might turn up any time. For days together, the survivors wandered in the deep jungle without proper food and shelter. The

wild berries and fruits of the jungle were their only food and means of survival. The only comfort and encouragement they could give to each other was the knowledge of glorious sacrifices made by their men folk. The wild animals and birds of the jungle were their only companions, besides themselves.

In extreme conditions of hardships and difficulty, many more precious lives were lost. The Naga Army then came to their rescue. They were given food, shelter and protection. Even today, the nightmares and tragedy of the incident still remain fresh in the mind of the survivors. In this long dispersion and exodus, the survivors entered Burma and stayed with the Naga Army in their camp at Sathi where Gavin Young of London Observer met them in the later part of 1961. In his book “ Indo-Naga War”, page 29-30, he wrote that when he met the survivors, there were only a pathetic thirty people.

They spent their lives in the wilderness for two and half years. In 1963, village re-establishment took place but normal life could not be restored for many years. The people of Pochury have ever since observed 6th September as “ BLACK DAY” in memory of all those who had suffered and laid down their lives for the greater glory and freedom of the Nagas. It is a day of sadness and a day to acknowledgement of the sacrifices made by the martyrs. Khuosatho Nyusou, President, P1ochury Hoho Kohima (PHK).
(Courtesy: Pochury Students Union.)| |