

## Remembering the 'Dark Day' of 1956

April 22, 2015



FILE – In this photo, students are seen enacting the atrocities meted out to the villagers by the Indian armed forces at the Süngratsü Students' Union 75 years jubilee held in 2011. Süngratsü village was completely reduced to ashes by personnel of Indian armed forces on April 19, 1956 which is reported to be the first among the numerous Naga villages to be burnt down by the armed forces.

Limalenden Longkumer

Mokokchung | April 22

59 years ago during this time of the year, the people of Süngratsü village were going through a harrowing phase in the history of their village, rebuilding their village from ashes, which was to be indelibly etched in the annals of the Naga's quest for self determination.

On the wee hours of April 19, 1956, personnel of the Indian armed forces occupied the village of Süngratsü and directed every member of the village to assemble in an open space located at a vantage point of the village. The whole village was surrounded by the occupying forces and all village gates were locked.

Every member of the village – from the newest born baby to the eldest person– was confined to the small open space, a location from where one could view the whole village. The sick and the elderly, the disabled and expectant mothers, men and women of all ages were cramped and surrounded by military personnel.

“There were newborn babies and small children crying in the laps of their petrified mothers, a terrible sight to behold,” according to an eye-witness account. Even the dead were not allowed a dignified burial. Everything happened fast and, there was chaos everywhere that even the “cock did not crow that morning to herald the dawn.”

At around 8:30 in the morning, the villagers were directed to look down to their village as the armed forces went about torching every house and granary. Within minutes, dark bellowing smoke covered the skies above the village and what was once a prosperous village, a village that no invader had ever raided before, was reduced to ashes. The villagers were surrounded by the army with trench mortars and light machine guns mounted all around them, which were fired indiscriminately in all directions to fend off the ‘hostiles’ in the surrounding jungles.

Accounts of this ‘Dark day in the History of Süngratsü’ are recorded in the literature of both the Church and Students’ Union of the village. It is said that the villagers had a bountiful harvest the previous year. The granaries were full to the brim but were destroyed in the fire that day, along with other invaluable items.

**MystiQue**  
SPA & SALON

**MYSTIQUE CORPORATE SPECIAL**

Body Massage  
Manicure & pedicure  
Hair styling  
and many more....

**20%**

Best offer ever

Produce your Employee / Student's ID Card to avail Discount

Venue: Niapa office, Near Agri-Expo Main Gate, Diphapur Dimapur, Nagaland.

For Appointment contact: +91 8731010509

According to Dr. I. Otongdangba Jamir, a retired joint director of the state's Veterinary and Animal Husbandry department, the villagers were released only after the whole village was burnt down. That was around late afternoon. According to him, who witnessed the whole episode as a 17 year old schoolboy, the first thing the villagers did after they were released was to run to the granaries to salvage whatever was left. The villagers survived on the half-burnt rice grains thus salvaged. It is said that heavy rains that night doused the embers in the granaries.


Some took shelter under the trees in the nearby woods, while others occupied the barns in their paddy fields. It took the villagers months to rebuild their houses and return to the village, only to be herded again en masse to the nearby village of Mopungchuket on July 22, 1957, where they were concentrated till November 3 of that year.

The razing down of Süngratsü village on April 19, 1956 is reported to be the first instance where a whole Naga village was razed down by the Indian armed forces. Many more Naga villages were reduced to ashes after this, which caused untold sufferings to the Naga people leaving an unaccounted number of Nagas dying of starvation and disease. It could not be ascertained which regiment or battalion of the Indian military was involved in this incident but it is clear that personnel of the Assam Police accompanied the armed forces that day.

[Share this post..](#)  
  

### Related Post

**Urra Village adopted as 'Fishery Model Village'**  
April 22, 2015  
Dimapur, April 22 (MExN): Urra Village under Dimapur district is one of the prospering villages...  
[Read the full article →](#)

**Okusa Toyota green initiatives**  
April 22, 2015  
  
Organises painting competition on environmental issues Morung Express News Dimapur | April...  
[Read the full article →](#)

**Participatory Rural Appraisal exercise held at Peren**  
April 22, 2015  
  
Peren, April 22 (MExN): Participatory Rural Appraisal exercise was conducted in Old Jalukie, Old Tesen...  
[Read the full article →](#)