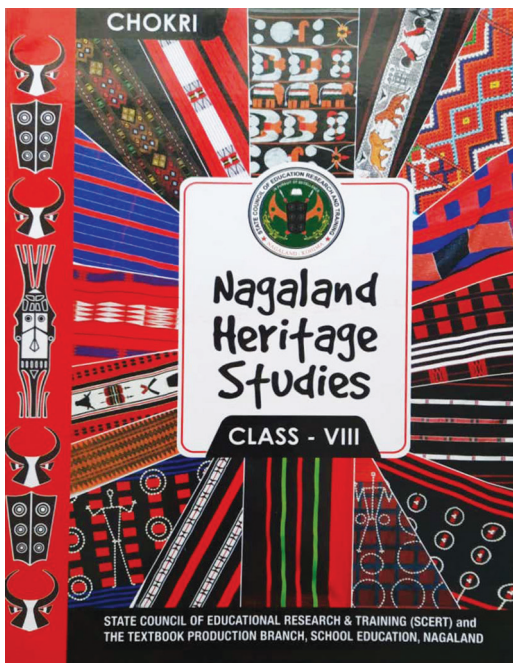


Mother Tongue Education in Nagaland

Keduwe-u Tsuhah*



The first school in Nagaland was established in Mokokchung district in 1878. This laid the foundation of language education in the state.

Despite having a small size population of approximately 20 lakhs (2011), the language variation in Nagaland is so diverse that no two persons meeting from two different tribes can understand one another. Ethnically, the Nagas are one. However, the languages spoken by different tribes are so distinct that they are not mutually intelligible. Though Nagaland has 18 officially recognised languages, English occupies the status of the official language of the State, owing to the local linguistic complexities.

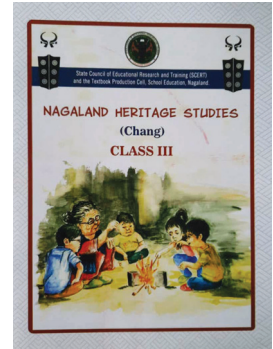
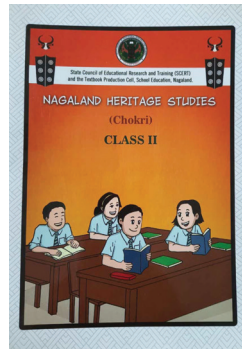
Recognising the need to preserve and introduce the mother tongue in schools, the Government of Nagaland constituted a committee to study the feasibility of introducing local languages to replace alternative English in the school curriculum. Based on the recommendation of the committee, the Nagaland Heritage Studies textbooks for Classes I to VIII were developed by the State

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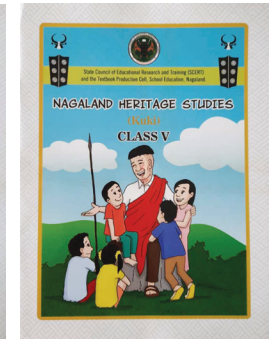
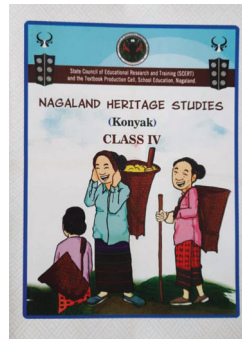
Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT) Nagaland in collaboration with various Naga Tribal Organisations, State Centre for Naga Languages and Naga Literature Committees.

The introduction of Naga languages in the State's schools in 2018 aligned with the guidelines of the NCF 2002. While issuing a notification regarding the introduction of the Naga languages, the government made it clear that English would continue to be the medium of instruction in all schools. However, teachers are encouraged to explain difficult concepts and scientific terms in the mother tongue. The Nagaland Heritage Studies textbooks are developed for 18 different Nagaland languages in each class, i.e., from Class I to VIII. The languages are:

1. Ao
2. Chokri (Chakhesang)
3. Khuzhale (Chakhesang)
4. Chang
5. Khiamniungan
6. Konyak
7. Kuki
8. Lotha
9. Phom
10. Pochury
11. Nethenyi (Rengma)
12. Nzonkhwe (Rengma)
13. Sangtam
14. Sumi
15. Tenyidie
16. Yimkiung
17. Liangmai (Zeliang)
18. Zeme (Zeliang)



The curricular expectations of Nagaland Heritage Studies textbooks used in schools, as a school subject, are not confined to language acquisition or proficiency in the mother tongue alone, but developed with the plan to teach the Naga languages using local culture and heritage as its content base. The contents have been selected encompassing nearly all the important aspects of Naga culture from across the Naga tribes.



The aims of Nagaland Heritage Studies are:

- to improve language skills in the mother tongue for effective communication;
- to promote multilingualism;

- to know and appreciate each other's culture;
 - to foster unity among Naga tribes;
 - to promote one's own tribal culture and language;
 - to revive, and practice the common Naga traditional values of honesty, integrity and hard work;
 - to enhance pupils' awareness of their immediate environment;
 - to promote local literature, arts and crafts, and skills of local artisans; and
 - to reacquaint the pupils with the universal values of justice, freedom concern for others well-being, and respect for human dignity and rights which are old Naga values as well.
- It is hoped that the material would be of interest to other States/UTs as well.