

# A Life of Faith and Service: The Ministry and Legacy of Rev. Zhaviu Khro

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**Abstract**—This article examines the life and legacy of Reverend (Rev.) Zhaviu Khro (1915–1997), the first ordained minister among the Chakhroma community, whose six-decade ministry profoundly transformed the spiritual, educational, and cultural fabric of his people. Born into an animistic family, Rev. Khro embraced Christianity in 1937, marking a radical departure from traditional beliefs. Ordained by the Angami Baptist Church Council in 1962, his ministry was marked by resilience and unwavering faith as he traversed challenging terrains to evangelize, baptize and nurture a vibrant Christian community amidst political and infrastructural adversity. Beyond his pastoral work, he co-founded the Chakhroma Baptist English School and held key leadership roles in the Chakhroma Baptist Church Council, contributing to holistic community development. Through contemporary commemorations like the Rev. Zhaviu Memorial Trophy, Rev. Zhaviu Khro Memorial Hospital, Rev. Zhaviu Khro road and his enduring theological insights, his legacy continues to inspire faith, service, and perseverance, cementing his place as a transformative figure in Naga Christianity.

**Keywords:** *Reverend Zhaviu khro, Chakhroma, Christianity, Community*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Rev. Zhaviu Khro, born in 1915, emerged as a luminary of faith and devotion, becoming the first ordained servant of Almighty God Jehovah among the Chakhroma community. His life of spiritual dedication began in 1938, marking the commencement of an extraordinary ministry that spanned nearly six decades. Through his unwavering commitment, Rev. Zhaviu Khro enormously shaped the spiritual prospect of his community until his earthly sojourn ended on October 7, 1997. His enduring legacy continues to inspire, as his life and work ignited a movement that greatly touched and transformed countless lives. Born into an animistic family as the second son of Mr. Kodolhou Khro and Mrs. Neikeno Khro, Rev. Zhaviu Khro's formative years were rooted in his ancestors' traditional beliefs.

However, his life underwent a radical transformation with the arrival of the Gospel in his village, an event that marked a pivotal turning point. Embracing the Christian faith with genuine conviction, Rev. Zhaviu Khro devoted himself to the service of God, leading his people from the shadows of ancestral traditions into the light of the Christian faith.

## II. BEGINNING OF MINISTRY

In 1937, at the youthful age of 22, Rev. Zhaviu Khro experienced a significant spiritual transformation when he embraced Jesus Christ as his Saviour, an event that irrevocably altered the trajectory of his life. By 1938, his staunch commitment to his faith and community led to his appointment as the Christian Endeavour (C.E.) Chairman of his church—a position he executed with unyielding dedication until 1948. Early in his tenure, he demonstrated visionary leadership by organizing the inaugural Chakhroma Area C.E. Conference, a modest gathering of 15 participants that became a foundational milestone for the establishment of the Chakhroma Christian Endeavor Union. Rev. Khro's journey was marked by exceptional determination and resourcefulness. Recognizing the challenges of serving the Lord without literacy, he courageously took a leave of absence to acquire literacy in the Angami vernacular, undertaking studies in Khonoma village from 1943 to 1944. This pursuit of knowledge was not merely an act of personal growth but a strategic effort to enhance his effectiveness as a leader and evangelist. Armed with his newfound knowledge, he resumed his duties as C.E. Chairman, continuing his impactful ministry with renewed vigor until 1948.

In his quest for deeper theological understanding, Rev. Khro enrolled in Bible School in Kohima, where he pursued formal theological training from 1949 to 1950. Upon graduation, he was appointed as an evangelist by the Angami Baptist Church Council (ABCC) and was dispatched to Vipphoma Village,

where he served with devotion from 1951 to 1952. During this period, his ministry was characterized by a profound commitment to sharing the transformative message of the Gospel, marked by humility, compassion, and an unrelenting sense of purpose.

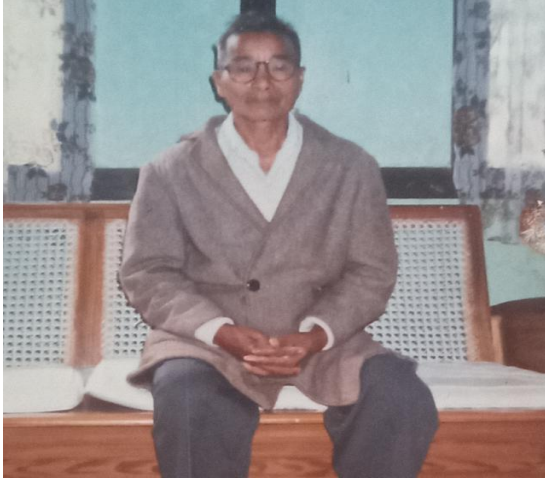


Fig.1.Photo of Rev.Zaviu Khro  
Source: Nollhouzeü Khro

Rev. Khro's ministry expanded significantly when he was entrusted with the broader mission of evangelizing the Chakhroma region under the auspices of the ABCC from 1953 to 1964. Displaying extraordinary zeal, he traversed the rugged and often perilous terrain of the region, moving from village to village to disseminate the life-changing message of salvation in Jesus Christ. His tireless efforts bore abundant fruit as countless individuals were drawn to the Christian faith, publicly professing Jesus Christ as their Saviour. With great joy, Rev. Khro baptized these new believers, leaving an indelible spiritual legacy throughout the region.

The physical challenges of his ministry were formidable. In an era devoid of reliable infrastructure, Rev. Khro navigated dense jungles and mountainous landscapes on foot, often travelling alone. On many occasions, his journeys forced him to spend nights in the wilderness, where he encountered the dangers of wild animals and harsh natural elements. Despite these trials, he remained steadfast and intrepid, drawing strength from his unshakable faith in God. He often testified to the Lord's abiding presence, declaring with conviction, "Throughout my life, Jesus was with me, and I faced no trouble."

His ministry coincided with a tumultuous period marked by political instability and frequent military

patrols conducted by the Indian Army. Yet, even amid these external adversities, Rev. Khro's courage never wavered. His fearless proclamation of the Gospel and his adamant reliance on God's protection were profound testaments to his deep spiritual conviction and unwavering trust in divine grace. (Personal interview: Mrs. Nollhouzeü Khro, Wife)

### III. MATRIMONY AND EVANGELISM

In the year 1952, Rev. Zhaviu Khro entered into the sacred covenant of marriage, an event emblematic of divine favour and personal commitment. Shortly thereafter, in 1954, the esteemed Angami Baptist Church Council (ABCC) conferred upon him the ecclesiastical authority to officiate matrimonial unions, administer the sacrament of baptism, and preside over other sacred liturgical services dedicated to the glorification of the Lord. This pivotal recognition underscored his determined dedication to his spiritual vocation and his commitment to serving his community in the name of Christ.

Rev. Khro's journey of faith reached a momentous milestone in 1962 when he was ordained into ministry at the ABCC convention held in Jotsoma. This ordination, a culmination of years of devout preparation and service, marked the formal affirmation of his role as a shepherd of the faith, entrusted with the sacred charge of guiding souls toward spiritual enlightenment and salvation.

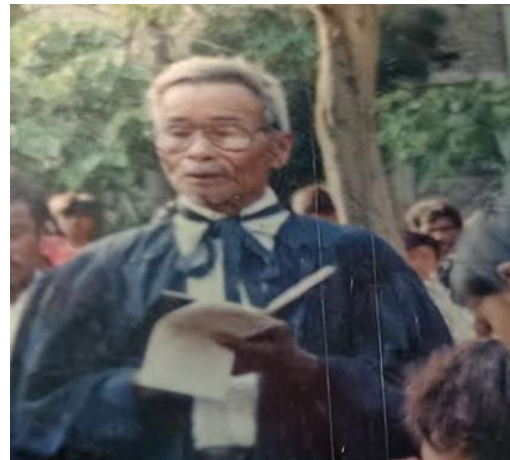


Fig.2. Ministry of Rev.Zaviu Khro  
Source: Sedevikho Khro

Between the years 1963 and 1980, Rev. Khro embraced his calling as an itinerant evangelist with unparalleled zeal, traversing the Angami region to

proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ. His evangelical mission was illustrated by an unyielding determination to disseminate the tenets of the Christian faith to diverse communities, often navigating challenging terrains and cultural landscapes. Concurrently, he assumed multifaceted responsibilities within various church organizations, demonstrating exceptional leadership and a servant's heart. His ministry was invariably guided by an abiding love for the Lord and an earnest aspiration to share the transformative message of salvation with all who would hear. (Personal interview: Mrs. Nolhouzeü Khro, wife).

#### IV. COMMUNITY SERVICE

From 1965 to 1969, Rev. Zhaviu Khro, with distinction as the inaugural Chairman of the Chakhroma Baptist English School in Medziphema, a position that accentuated his visionary leadership and unswerving commitment to the intellectual and spiritual formation of future generations. Through his stewardship, the institution became a beacon of education rooted in faith, nurturing young minds to embody the principles of integrity, service, and devotion to God.



Fig.3. Rev.Zaviu Khro with family.  
Source: Keneilhoulie Khro

Simultaneously, Rev. Khro undertook the demanding role of Travelling Pastor for the Chakhroma Baptist Church Council (CBCC) from 1967 to 1969. In this capacity, he tirelessly traversed the region, offering pastoral care, encouragement, and spiritual

edification to numerous congregations. His itinerant ministry was represented by an extraordinary ability to inspire unity and hope among diverse communities, fostering a collective sense of purpose in the service of the Lord. Rev. Khro's commitment to ecclesiastical leadership reached new heights between 1980 and 1984, during which he served as President of the Chakhroma Baptist Church Council. This esteemed position allowed him to shape the spiritual direction of the Council while continuing his impactful work as a Travelling Pastor. His dual responsibilities during this period reflected his profound dedication to the holistic growth of the church and its members, blending administrative acumen with heartfelt pastoral care.

In 1984, Rev. Khro returned to his cherished home village of Seithekema, where he humbly assumed the role of Church Elder, serving faithfully until 1987. His tenure as Elder was marked by a deep sense of responsibility and spiritual wisdom, earning him the respect and admiration of the community. In that same year, he was entrusted with the position of Local Pastor of Seithekema Old Baptist Church, a role he embraced with unwavering conviction and a steadfast commitment to shepherding his congregation. His leadership during this time was marked by a spirit of compassion and a resolute focus on guiding his flock in their journey of faith. Rev. Zhaviu Khro continued his ministry with indefatigable zeal until his earthly departure on October 7, 1997, when he was called to eternal rest with the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. (Personal interview: Mr. Keneilhoulie Khro, Grandson).

#### V. REV ZHAVIU KHRO MEMORIALS

In 2013, the 7<sup>th</sup> Rev. Zhaviu Memorial Trophy, organized under the auspices of the Chakhroma Baptist Youth Department (CBYD), was held with great fervor from December 5 to 9 at the local ground in Medziphema. The event was graced by two distinguished dignitaries: Shri Kuzholuzo Nienu, Minister for Roads and Bridges, as the chief guest, and Shri Lhousito Khro, Political Advisor to the Parliamentary Secretary for Urban Development, as the guest of honor.

In his inaugural address Shri Nienu expressed his gratitude to the public for their pivotal role in bringing the Democratic Alliance of Nagaland

(DAN-III) to power. He assured the gathering of his commitment to completing the construction of all roads within the Medziphema jurisdiction by the following year. Reflecting on the significance of games and sports, Nienu articulated that active participation in athletic endeavour is vital for the holistic development of youth. *"It is in such arenas that an individual's skill, mental acuity, physical strength, strategic thinking, patience, and capacity for teamwork are rigorously tested,"* he remarked, emphasizing the transformative potential of sports in shaping character and leadership qualities.

The inaugural program commenced with an invocation pronounced by Rev. Megovotuo Kuotsu, President of the Chakhroma Baptist Church Council (CBCC), setting a reverent tone for the occasion. This was followed by a heartfelt speech delivered by Mr. Kevisokho Khro, the eldest son of the late Rev. Zhaviu Khro, who provided a brief yet profound reflection on the life and legacy of his father. Rev. Zhaviu's enduring contributions to faith, education, and community development were highlighted as the inspiration for this prestigious tournament. The competition witnessed enthusiastic participation, with 14 women's teams and 19 men's teams contending for the coveted trophy. In the women's division, Team Vidima Village claimed first place, followed by Medziphema Village in second place and Viphoma Village securing third. Kikruvino from Team Vidima Village was honored as the Best Female Player for her outstanding performance throughout the tournament.

In the men's division, Team Menguzouma Village triumphed over MTBCC in a fiercely contested final to clinch the championship trophy. Team Tsüüma Village earned the second runner-up position, while Mr. Kevingulie from Team Menguzouma Village was recognized as the Best Male Player, a testament to his exceptional skill and sportsmanship. The tournament not only celebrated athletic excellence but also served as a unifying platform for fostering camaraderie and showcasing the vibrant spirit of the community. (Nagaland Post, 2013).

The Rev. Zhaviu Khro Memorial Trophies continue to be observed as an enduring tribute to the remarkable legacy of Reverend Zhaviu Khro. These events serve not only to honour his memory but also to foster a sense of community and shared purpose among participants.

The most recent observance took place on the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> of December 2023 at the Seitheke Basa Local ground, reflecting the ongoing commitment to this tradition. The occasion was graced by the presence of Shri. Sedevikho Khro, Chairman of the Nagaland Staff Selection Board, Government of Nagaland, exhorting the event. His participation represents the significance of the event, both as a commemoration of Rev. Zhaviu Khro's enduring influence and as an opportunity to strengthen communal bonds. The continued organization of the Memorial Trophies exemplifies the community's deep respect and appreciation for Rev. Khro's contributions, ensuring that his legacy remains an inspiring force for current and future generations. (Personal interview: Mr. Visietuo khro, Grandson).



Fig.4. Rev Zhaviu Khro Memorial Hospital  
Source: Dr. Kevingulie Khro

Rev. Khro, a steadfast advocate for education and its pivotal role in shaping the future, played a foundational role in facilitating the establishment of what is now known as Patkai Christian College in Seithekema- Chumoukedima, Nagaland. Recognizing the transformative power of education for future generations, he took a proactive and visionary step by interceding in the donation of land for the institution in 1974. This act of generosity and foresight not only laid the groundwork for the creation of a premier educational institution but also underscored his deep commitment to empowering individuals through learning. Rev. Khro's role in this significant



contribution highlights his dedication to encouraging intellectual and spiritual growth within the community. By prioritizing education as a cornerstone for progress, he demonstrated an enduring belief in the potential of young minds to shape a better future, leaving a legacy that continues to influence the region's educational and cultural landscape to this day. (Personal interview: Mrs. Nolhouzeü Khro, Wife)

## VI. CONCLUSION

Throughout his 59 years of devoted service, Rev. Zhaviu Khro encountered an array of formidable challenges and personal trials, each of which only served to deepen and fortify his unwavering faith in Jesus Christ. In moments of reflection, he often remarked, *"Serving the Lord is difficult, but through hardship, I receive blessings and strength. In the ministry of Jesus, one cannot attain power or salvation without enduring suffering."* These words encapsulated his profound understanding of the Christian journey, recognizing that true discipleship often involves bearing the weight of trials and tribulations, yet it is through such adversity that one experiences the transformative power of divine grace. Rev. Khro's final words, spoken with resolute faith, resonated deeply with all who heard them: *"Believe in the work of Jesus, and trust in the power of His blood"*. This declaration, imbued with the depth of his spiritual conviction, serves as a lasting testament to his steadfast belief in the redemptive power of Christ's sacrifice. (Personal interview: Mrs. Nolhouzeü Khro, Wife).

Beyond his personal testimony, Rev. Zhaviu Khro's heart for service profoundly impacted the lives of countless individuals. His selfless dedication to the spiritual and temporal welfare of others left an indelible mark on the community, creating a legacy that transcends his earthly life. His work was not merely a collection of ministerial duties, but rather a living example of Christ's love in action, a model of sacrifice, humility, and compassion that continues to inspire those who knew him. His life stands as a testament to the enduring truth that true greatness in the Kingdom of God is measured not by power or recognition, but by one's capacity to serve others with a heart full of love and devotion. The impact of his life's work continued to inspire and uplift those

who follow in his footsteps, offering both solace and strength in moments of doubt or difficulty.

In 2021, Dr. Kevingulie Khro, the second son of Rev. Khro established a hospital- Rev. Zhaviu Khro Memorial Hospital, located at Chumoukedima as a tribute to his father's profound and continuing legacy. Rev. Khro's substantial contributions to both the church and the wider community have left an indelible mark, shaping the spiritual, social and cultural fabric of the region. His unwavering dedication to service, coupled with his commitment to the well-being of others, has garnered widespread recognition and respect. (Personal interview: Dr. Kevingulie Khro, Son)

In acknowledgment of Rev. Khro's remarkable impact, the community of Seithekema has undertaken a significant act of commemoration by naming the Seithekema- C road in his honor as Rev. Zhaviu Khro Road. This gesture serves as a lasting reminder of his contributions and recognition to the deep regard in which he is held by the community. The Hospital as well as the renamed road stand as enduring symbols of his influence, reflecting the values of compassion, service and commitment that he embodied throughout his life. These initiatives not only honor his memory but also inspire future generations to uphold and emulate his exemplary. (Personal interview: Mr. Sedevikho Khro, Son)

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