

Eviction is no solution to Reangs' problem: Ubati Rieng



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Daya Nath Singh 18 February 2012 10025 views

Ubati Rieng, a sixty year old lady, who played a major role in bringing Barak valley militants to negotiation table with the government, is disappointed on the role of the state government for its dillydally tactics in solution of the major issues relating to the rehabilitation of those, who came forward for the peace talks. According to her recent violent incidents in the Hailakandi district of southern Assam, were the outcome of state's inaction as regards the solution of the issues. The Rieng youths are losing heart and peace is vanishing, she was reported to have said. She said that the Riengs did not ask any thing that was not possible for the government to agree. Their simple demand was to constitute a Hill Tribe Development Council and give permanent land settlement for Riengs in the forest areas of the state.

Earlier, Ubati Rieng had played a major role as mediator to bring the United Liberation Front of Barak Valley (ULFBV) led by Panchram Rieng to negotiation table. She was also trying to convince United Democratic Liberation Army (UDLA) to surrender. She contacted Assam Police Additional Director General, Khagen Sarma at Guwahati in connection to the Reangs' demand, but she was disappointed by Sarma's advice of making a conducive atmosphere for talks only and nothing more than that. They wanted that other nine militant organizations should also surrender before the Republic Day and at the same time UDLA issue could also come up. This made the issue complicated. She regretted that even after sixty four years of independence granting a Hills Tribe Development Council, at least some problems of Riengs below poverty line (BPL) could have been solved. According to her, Khagen Sarma indicated that district development council could be given, but it would require representation of Riengs. She further said that the demand for settlement of land for Riengs, was not new one and it is legally admitted too, but the government was not taking any step. Taking advantage of this, sometimes forest department officials threaten to evict them and sometimes vested interests conspire to evict them. Eviction is no solution to Riengs problem, said the old lady. She said that the recent disturbances in the area were the result of similar conspiracy. Certain tribesmen want to destabilize Reangs and take their land, house etc; without paying a single paisa. For this they take help from security personnel. Since they cannot be successful in their illegal acts, therefore they plan confrontation with UDLA. This confrontation led to the derailment of surrender process of Dhanyaram group of militants.

Biswanath Riang is a peace loving simple person, she said and added that he had no connection with any militant organization. For the sake of bringing peace in the area, he also accompanied Ubati Riang to meet Khagen Sarma in Guwahati. She alleged that Biswanath was called out from his house and police wanted to frame him as the chairman of UDLA. She asked, whether chief of any militant organization would remain at his house at a time when the police was after him. In case he was a militant why no action was taken against him so far and at the beginning of the peace process with the Additional Director General of Police, she asked.

Regarding Dhanyaram group surrender, Ubati Riang said, that she did not have any talk with them. She used the services of Biswanath Riang in that case also. From the very beginning Dhanyaram was not optimistic about the talks, but Biswanath put all his efforts to bring them under peace process, said Ubati. Even the surrender of Panchram group could not bring any social change, but Ubati had an ambition that by granting Hill Tribe Development Council, development activities could have been started and the Riang youths of Barak Valley should not have taken arms in their hands.

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