

Black Monday, what next?



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Peter Alex Todd 24 February 2014 12275 views

Assam buys yet another bad name. A farmer died after self-immolation attempt in Dispur on Monday. That too because of land patta. The man in the centre of shock is Pramode Boro. The 45 year old carpenter by profession from Gorchuk took this extreme and unprecedented step sending shockwaves across the state. It was on Monday. The clock struck at 9-50. All of a sudden, he got down from a vehicle in front of Dispur state secretariat. Immediately after landing in the public place, Pramod whose dress was wet with kerosene set himself on fire with the match he had in his pocket in full view of the security forces. Immediately after it blazing fire engulfed him entirely. Blankets and water were used to extinguish the fire. But by then he sustained 100 per cent burn injury to be sent to the GMCH. Despite best possible treatment, the end came at 4-28 in the afternoon.

KMSS, which has been spearheading the movement for the landless lot has been dead opposed to the idea of distribution of land pattas for only 500 people from a list of 62,000 applicants. They did not want 500 pattas to be distributed on Monday. They held several rounds of talks with the government. But there was hardly any outcome. Both KMSS and Dispur refused to listen each other. That's the problem that darkened the face of democratic agitation in the capital city on Monday a day before the much-hype visit of Rahul Gandhi. Morning was very brisk for the security personnel deployed to deal with any eventuality. Protesters were blocked in various entry points to the city as a precautionary measure.

Much to the utter inconvenience for the commuters, the city buses were not allowed to move on their regular routes. But media people were deployed in some vulnerable points in view of the KMSS decision on a massive protest to foil the Chief Minister's programme at the Sankardev Kalakheta.

"I was strolling and all of a sudden, I saw a man shouting from behind a vehicle parked on roadside near the railings adjoined to Police station side and then running in flames" Said Sanjay Bora, a National media Camera person.

"I guess he had set himself on fire behind the parked Bus and a truck and then came out shouting", he added. Assam Chief Minister, Tarun Gogoi, condemned the self immolation incident, and said if possible legal action would be taken. "What mistake we have done that such things should be done, we will give land rights to the people and the process have started, but we cannot allot land in forest lands and wetlands, even the central government won't agree to it" Said Gogoi after he had come out attending a the function.

Now its time for blame game. Dispur blames it all on KMSS leadership while the peasant body along with the various political parties, organizations and individuals held the government responsible for it.

Chief Minister Gogoi announced that his government would give Bodo's family best possible compensation. He further ordered a high level administrative probe to unearth the truth behind this tragic chapter. But who is responsible? Is it Dispur for refusing to bend? Or the KMSS leadership who allegedly instigated its activists to take this extreme step to extract mileage thereof?

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