

Government breaking sweat to deal with ANLA



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Nagendra Sarma 25 March 2008 7364 views

It is very much surprising and alarming that despite the presence of the armed security forces, in a small town like Merapani of Golaghat, an organization formed with an object to raise its voice against the Government. Suddenly it turned from moderate to a violent and dreaded militant group with name and style of ANLA (Adiwasi National Liberation Army). Now it becomes so strong that it dared to blast the Rajdhani train recently in protest of the arrest of seven of its cadres who were carrying arms and remunerations with them. At the initial stage of its formation the activities of this organization were limited within the area of Merapani only and then extended to the Golaghat District and then to the entire northeast region. Had the Government would have taken a stern action against it when it was getting itself involved in petty crimes it would not have been grown to the present stage. In course of time ANLA came in close relations with bigger militant group like NSCN(IM), ULFA and other organisations in the region and procured explosives with arms and remunerations from them and also get its cadres trained. The surprising part of the whole episode were alleged to have been going on in the Merapani area under the nose of the neutral force and the local administration but regrettably no steps were taken.

One of the senior officers of the neutral force deployed in Merapani area on the condition of anonymity told this correspondent that they were not properly fed with the intensity of the problem by the civil and police administration and added -“When local administration do not get involved why should we? Our job is to maintain status quo in the area of Assam-Nagaland border.” It may be recalled that the neutral force was deployed in Merapani and other parts of the border of both the states (Assam-Nagaland) in 1985 when there was a fight between the two states and assigned to maintain status quo. In this context, if rightly thought, it was the duty of the local administration to take serious note of the criminal activities of ANLA and not of the neutral force.

Now the strength of ANLA and its network has reached such a level that it seemed difficult to strain its criminal activities like extortion, kidnappings, demanding ransoms and innocent killings etc. It has been a challenging task before the government. Being aware of the impending grave situation suspected to be created by ANLA the government (both State and Centre), army officials and other agencies are reported to have been putting their heads together chalked out a plan to nab the cadres of ANLA and root out its existence.

Meanwhile a large numbers of its cadres including those who are holding high rank in the organization are reported to have been apprehended and put behind the bar. In view of the intensive campaign against the ANLA, its cadres in large number have surrendered before the Government. But according to some of the militancy analyst this can't be a continuous phase. In course of time it has to be deferred for certain reasons. The militancy analysts are of the view that the deferral period may be utilized by the ANLA for regrouping its cadres and resort to their criminal activities in a different way. Such practices will go on for all time to come. The only solution of such problems is to have a direct talk across the table try to understand what they are fighting for.

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BY NAGENDRA SARMA

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