

Voice from the Udalguri relief camps



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Monjib Mochahari 4 November 2008 7336 views

The unfortunate communal conflagration which erupted on 3 Oct. between indegenous tribes and the illegal Bangaladeshi settlers in Udalguri and Darrang districts of Assam, left more than a lakh population roofless. The indegenous tribes like Bodos, Rabhas, Assamese, Garos, Nepalese and other various minority communities have been forced to live in the relief camps.

The "four-days violence" (called a four-days woner), which began on 3rd October till 6th Oct. and there after, created a valcano like situation, reduced more a thousand houses into ashes. Now, more than two lakh people are lodged in 78 relief camps in Udalguri districts alone, forcing the indegeneous people to think twice "will they be able to go back to their homes? and will they ever have to fight for their own survivable even in own their own land?"

A little girl, Munjun Daimari, 13, now lives in one of the relief camps in Udalguri. Her village is just a two and half kms away from the relief camp. She wants to go back to her house, but she knows little why she cann't go back to her village. One thing is sure, she knows her house is being reduced to ashes and soon she forgets it as she plays with other children in the relief camp.

Similar, is the story of others who share the same nightmare in the relief camp. Everyone has a story to tell, but whom to share, nobody knows. But they begin to share one-another as they stand in queue to collect 'roti and dall' every morning.

Worst still, schools students haven't seen their schools since the riots occurred on Oct 3. Gitanjali Mochahari, a class five student of Rowta High school has a story to narrate. "I never thought that my school would become my home one day. I can't believe it, but my house is already burnt down", she says.

The suffering and agony are visible on everyone's face. Nobody knows when and how the life in the relief camps will be. Nobody has an answer how long will they have to live in their tiny makeshifts?

Despite all odds, life goes on as usual, with no work, except echoing the trauma of the incidents. The the deep-wound and shock of the riots still haunt everyone's heart. The untold psychological fear which the violence has created is still around the corner. And yet difficult for everyone to overcome it.

The government has to stand against all odds, if people are to return to their homes. The safety and security is what the people need at this point of the crisis. It has to convince the sufferings that they are safe and protected. However, the government cannot waste time playing a blame-game over the issue by distributing 'roti, kapda aur makan'.

Let not politicians hijack the issue. Let peace and unity rule Assam.

Monjib Mochahari

BY MONJIB MOCHAHARI

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