

Actions taken by Assam State Government in Disputed Area Belt (DAB), Golaghat district in the 2025-26 to mitigate the issue of illegal encroachment in the reserve forests and government lands and its impact

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Abstract—The Disputed Area Belt (DAB), Assam- Nagaland border is divided in six sectors by name sector A, B, C, D, E and F. Out of these six sectors, four sectors viz. A, B, C and D falls in Golaghat district of Assam side. These four sectors also contains reserve forest like Rengma Reserve Forest, South Nambor Reserve Forest and Doyang Reserve Forest. According to various reports, a considerable part of these reserve forests and government lands are under encroachment. Both Assam and Nagaland governments though trying to take strict actions in these areas but are not a position to find a smooth solution.

Index Terms—Disputed, Encroachment, Nagaland, Interstate Border, Eviction, Forest Rights Committee

I. Introduction

As a part of research work on prolonged interstate border dispute between Assam and Nagaland, this research paper provides a short insight into the current actions taken by the concerned administration to compensate for the losses due to boundary contention. The actions are termed as mitigating measures to age long encroachment happening in the reserve forests of the DAB, Assam Nagaland interstate border.

II. Main Content

The Disputed Area Belt (DAB) contains reserve forests like Renga Reserve Forest and South Nambor Reserve Forest that allegedly fall prey to rampant encroachment by both Nagaland and Assam side people. According to an unofficial statement of district administration, around 10,500 bighas to 11,000 bighas of land were encroached upon by the people so far in the reserve forests and government land areas.

So, in the months of July-August 2025, a massive eviction drive was carried out to clear alleged encroachments on nearly 1,500 hectares of forest land in Assam's Golaghat district. The initial drive was started in the encroached areas of Rengma Reserve Forest in Uriamghat along the Assam-Nagaland border in Sarupathar sub-division, Golaghat.

Socio- economic affects: After the eviction, estimated 1000-1200 houses belonging to various community people living in the disputed lands became homeless. Media reports claimed that most of the affected people belong to religious minority communities who settled in those areas taking advantage of loopholes in the administration system and socio-political situations.

It is unfortunate from the government side that there were houses under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Gramin (PMAY-G), water connection under Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM), government schools under Sarba Siksha Abhiyan (SSA), sub-health centre under National Health Mission (NHM) and electricity connections to almost every household, besides markets, mosques, madrassas and churches etc that were established in well span of time in those evicted areas.

Relived dwellers: According to rough data, estimated 2000-2200 families were living in the DAB out of whom about 1500 families were served with eviction notices for their alleged encroachment while others were relieved as they were in possession of certificates from the Forest Rights Committee (FRC). The Forest Rights Committee (FRC) had been formed by the administration to locally look after the matters related to settlements and residence mostly for the forest/ hills dweller community, i.e. Tribals/ hills men like Bodo, Kachari, Manipuri and Nepali etc. However, the religious minority people were not granted the FRC certificates due to which they were considered as illegal residents in those places and were subjected to eviction.

It is worth mentioning that while the forest dwellers/ hill man belonged historically to various forests and hills of Assam; NE Indian region and lesser Himalayas, the religious minority people belonged to districts like Barpeta, Nagaon, Morigaon, Dhubri, Cachar etc. It is also a rumour that some illegal migrants have settled in those disputed areas due to lackadaisical functions of the concerned institutions.

Conclusion: Mass eviction though may not be only solution to the encroachment issue at this moment of time while the socio-religious-political condition of the state is fragile. The government should have undertaken some compensatory steps before starting the eviction drive by way of extensive and deep survey regarding the nationality, landlessness and economic status of the victims. This would have helped to save the resources, investment and expenditures and economic losses incurred in those areas by the government and the general public both.

Data Source: Secondary Sources.