Beat: News

“˜Chakma´ Migrants Meet Dr. Jitendra Singh

Minister To Seek Views Of MHA On Chakma

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USPA NEWS - The Minister of State for DoNER, Dr. Jitendra Singh listening to the grievances of a delegation of “Chakma“ migrants, in New Delhi on October 11, 2016.

Minister To Seek Views Of MHA On Chakmas´ Issue

A delegation of All India “Chakma“ Social Forum called on Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER), MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr. Jitendra Singh on Oct 11, and sought his intervention for grant of citizenship rights to “Chakma“ migrants which, according to them, they had been denied for the last almost half a century.

In a memorandum submitted to the Minister, the members of delegation stated that during the period from 1964-68, around 15,000 Chakmas had fled from the Chittagong Hill tracts of the then East Pakistan to escape the oppression of Pakistani rulers. After migration to India, they settled in the then Northeastern Front Agency (NEFA), currently Arunachal Pradesh.

However, the delegation members complained that not a single Chakma migrant in Arunachal Pradesh has been granted citizenship rights till date despite specific directions of the Supreme Court of India issued on January 9, 2016 in the case National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) vs. State of Arunachal Pradesh and others. Later on, following another writ petition, the Supreme Court in its judgment dated September 17, 2016 directed the Union of India and the State of Arunachal Pradesh to process the citizenship applications.

The memorandum also alleged that not a single application of any Chakma migrant had been recommended for grant of citizenship in spite of the applications fulfilling the criteria for the citizenship. As a result, according to them, the Chakmas cannot move out of their villages because of lack of identity proof which is necessary and is indispensable in the context of current security scenario.

Seeking intervention of the Minister, the signatories to the memorandum requested for designating two special officers in the Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) to address the issues raised by them and ensure early redressal. Dr. Jitendra Singh gave a patient hearing to the delegation and said that he would forward their case to the MHA and seek its views on the issue.

Prominent among the members of delegation were Mr. Santosh Chakma and Mr. Tejang Chakma from Arunachal Pradesh and Mr. Paritosh Chakma, Mr. Victor Talukdar Chakma and Mr. Dhana Kumar Chakma from Mizoram.

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