



Case Study

Peace Accords: Determinants of the Process to End Conflict - A Case Study of the State of Assam, India

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Abstract

For several decades now, insurgency and violence has been a continued problem in Assam and its neighbouring states in the north-eastern India. Insurgency rebellion came to forefront in Assam with the birth of the United Liberation Front of Asom in 1979 with their demand of a sovereign state. This was followed by the ethnic rebellion by the Bodos in western Assam with whom the government has already signed two peace accords and yet the issue still remains boiling. Several other ethnic rebellions raised head creating turmoil in the state with different demands, including statehood and autonomous territorial councils. Two more peace accords were signed with insurgent groups called the United People's Democratic Solidarity (UPDS) and the Dima Halam Daogah (DHD)—both belonging to the two hill districts of Assam. It has been observed by analysts and researchers that in spite of the peace accords signed, peace has not been prevailed in the concerned areas as breakaway factions are carrying out violence on one side while those who had been parties to the peace agreements are becoming restive as accord implementation is facing obstacles, many times implementation of most of the provisions are not even initiated. While peace processes are initiated and carried out with the objective to end conflict, signing of a peace accord should not be viewed as end to conflict. In fact, the framing of a peace accord and its implementation plays a decisive role in the process of ending an insurgency conflict. This paper gives an introduction to the peace accords signed in the state of Assam, the factors for their failure or success as well as brings a comparison with the Mizo Accord which has been considered as uniquely successful in bringing peace to Mizoram, one of the states in the Northeast.

Keywords: Peace Accord, Bodo Accord, autonomous council, Assam insurgency, Mizo Accord.

Introduction

North-eastern India's most populous state, Assam is an ethnic hotspot¹. The different ethnic communities, including armed insurgent groups of some of these communities, carrying out their own forms of movements to push for the rights of the respective communities they seek to represent. While the social and political groups try to achieve their objective through democratic agitations and electoral politics, the insurgent groups carry out their own forms of movements through an armed struggle, with the Indian state as their main target. Assam has been kept on the boil by various armed insurrection since the birth of the United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA) in 1979. Between 1992 and 2016, a total of 8227 persons are reported to have died in insurgency related violence in Assam².

In this backdrop, it is not unusual to find the government and civil society engaged in efforts to restore peace in the State by dealing with various insurgent groups through the medium of dialogue. Since the early 1990s, the government encouraged several insurgent groups to come forward for peace talks by

suspending counter insurgency operations by the armed forces^{3,4}. The first peace accord reached to end a homeland agitation was signed on 20 February 1993, between the All Bodo Students' Union (ABSU) and Bodo People's Action Committee (BPAC) on one side, and the State government and the Government of India on the other. This agreement ended a violent agitation that began in 1987 with the ABSU launching a mass movement for the creation of a full-fledged Bodoland state to be carved out of Assam⁵. The Government rejected the homeland demand but granted the agitators a politico-administrative structure called the Bodoland Autonomous Council (BAC).

Objectives of the Study: The paper aims at analysing the four peace accords signed with insurgent groups in Assam and their failure or success in bringing peace. The argument is, bringing insurgent groups to peace talks and signing an accord cannot put an end to this problem of insurgency. The peace process itself has to be inclusive in character, and the framers of the accord must have a holistic approach to resolve the conflict, instead of an ad-hoc approach that can only be a piecemeal solution to the

problem. The implementation stage of any peace accord also falls under the peace process, the success of which can usher peace among the people and the area concerned.

Peace is a Complex Issue in Assam

Soon, however, it became clear that the quest for peace is a complex issue in a state like Assam where the society is extremely fragmented. The Accord with the ABSU-BPAC combine failed to fulfil the aspirations of the Bodo people for a variety of reasons. The discontent was given voice to by a section of the BVF (Bodo Volunteer Force, the ABSU's armed group) who rejected the 1993 Accord and formed the rebel organization Bodo Liberation Tigers (BLT) in 1996³.

Already, another Bodo insurgent group was active on the scene since 1986, by the name the NDFB (National Democratic Front of Bodoland), earlier known as the Bodo Security Force (BdSF). The BLT as well as the NDFB were engaged in a campaign of violence especially in the districts of western and northern Assam. The worst-hit district, of course, was Kokrajhar, the hub of Bodo political and social life.

The extent of violence despite the 1993 peace deal indicated it was a failure and had not been able to satisfy either the armed insurgent groups or the people. The BLT was emerging as a major force to reckon with, if the degree of violence its cadres unleashed is considered as one of the factors to determine the capacity of the group to create nuisance. The Government was preparing to bring this group to the negotiating table. On 29 March 2000, the BLT had a cease-fire agreement with the Government³. The Bodoland Autonomous Council (BAC) was eventually dissolved on 20 April 2000, and a 'monitoring committee' of Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) was installed in its place.

Negotiations gained momentum between the Government and the BLT. Eventually, this culminated in the signing of the second Bodo Peace Accord, between the Central Government, the State Government and the leaders of BLT (Bodo Liberation Tigers) on 10 February 2003. The Accord led to the formation of the BTC (Bodoland Territorial Council), with jurisdiction over four districts of Assam: Kokrajhar, Baksa, Udalguri and Chirang. In fact, three new districts were created and included in the newly formed BTC as part of the agreement.

The Question of Representation

That no single group—democratic organization or insurgent outfit—can claim to be the sole representative of the community they belong to has once again been proved. Soon after the BLT transformed itself into a political party called BPF (Bodoland People's Front) and started governing the newly elevated autonomous council, the NDFB, which was outside the purview of the peace process with the BLT, started wreaking havoc in the Bodo heartland with acts of violence. In the meantime, the NDFB suffered a split in December 2008 into NDFB

(Progressive) and NDFB (Ranjan Daimari). Despite the acts of terror, Government of India invited both the factions as part of its 'open door policy'. This despite Ranjan Daimari being directly accused by the security establishment of being involved in the October 2008 serial blasts in Assam that killed around 100 people. But things were not yet under control. One rouge faction—the Songbijit Ingti Kathar faction of NDFB was formed in November 2012 and emerged as the most deadly insurgent group killing people and creating a reign of terror.

In the hill district of Karbi Anglong in southern Assam, the insurgent group United People's Democratic Solidarity (UPDS) signed a peace accord with the Government of India and the Assam government on 25 November 2011. The outfit had earlier entered into a ceasefire agreement with the government on 23 May 2002 after three years of violence and bloodshed since its formation in March 1999. But even five years after the signing of the agreement, the Accord is yet to see any implementation initiative.

The Dima Hasao district (erstwhile known as North Cachar Hills District) witnessed insurgency violence with the formation of the Dimasa National Security Force (DNSF) in 1991⁶. However, the en-mass surrender of its cadres in 1995 did not include its co-founder Jewel Garlossa who again co-founded the group called Dima Halam Daogah. When in January 2003, this group, too, entered into a ceasefire with the government, Jewel Garlossa continued with his violence and terror, this time by launching DHD-J (Jewel) and went ahead killing many, and on one occasion (between 2007-2008) killing 70 civilians and 34 security forces^{7,8}. However, after the arrest of Jewel Garlossa in June 2009, insurgency scenario in the district changed and a peace accord or Memorandum of Settlement (MoS) was signed between the two DHD factions—DHD and DHD (J)—and the Central and State Governments on 8 October 2012 in New Delhi. The agreement provided for creation of Dima Hasao Territorial Council (DHTC) with promise of an 'enhanced autonomy' and 'speedier socio-economic and educational development of the area'. However, unlike the Bodo Liberation Tigers (BLT), the DHD leadership were not installed in power at the existing Autonomous Council as an interim measure before they could contest the Council polls and possibly get elected. It is a different story that the leaders and nominees of both the DHD factions who contested the polls later could not win enough seats to take control of the Council's administration. This resulted in the Accord being largely left unimplemented because the signatories of the peace agreement were sidelined from the sphere of direct administration.

It is not unusual to find different insurgent groups raising different demands during the actual peace negotiations. For example, the ULFA, whose core demand was achieving a sovereign, socialist Assam, has decided to focus on demands for the state's overall development under the purview of the Constitution during its ongoing talks with the Government of India.

Again, the question emerges—whether one group or faction of an insurgent group represents the entire community or the area they seek to represent. So far, the ULFA-I (the ULFA-Independent faction headed by Paresh Baruah) is of the firm view that unless they are able to achieve their main demand, that of an independent Assam, they will not be able to fulfil the hopes and aspirations of the people of the State. Therefore, ULFA-I leader Paresh Baruah has categorically said that they would continue with their struggle to achieve their goal⁹. In this backdrop, an accord with the Pro-talk ULFA faction, as and when it is reached, will certainly not bring the curtains down on the ULFA movement in Assam.

This is because of the question that will arise as to which is the legitimate or dominant ULFA faction. This brings us to the question whether the Government as part of its peace policy or peace approach needs to first take steps to unite the various factions of a particular insurgent group or at least narrow the differences among such factions before entering into a holistic dialogue to avoid a peace-meal solution.

In Assam's heterogeneous society, a peace accord with any insurgent group that represents a particular community is found to be heavily tilted against other communities who live in the same space. For instance, the Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) Accord reached with the BLT in 2003 is not categorical regarding the provision for protection of the rights and interests of the other communities like the Rabhas, Tiwas, Koch Rajbongshis, and the Adivasis who have inhabited the area since time immemorial. This is the primary reason why a community like the Koch Rajbongshi with a total population of 2,46,137 (7.81 per cent of the total population of 31,51,097 in the Bodo Council area as per the 2011 Census) has more than one organization demanding autonomy for separate state.

Peace Accords: An Analysis

An assessment of the four peace accords signed in Assam — their provisions and the extent of their implementation by the government shows that there is a serious flaw on the part of the authorities regarding execution of the various provisions in letter and spirit. Besides, in some cases, the provisions themselves were extremely faulty and ill conceived, and at times vague. This raises questions as to the sincerity of the government and to some extent the insurgent groups in bringing about a permanent solution to the problem that the respective conflict sought to raise.

Bodo Accord 1993: An Ill Conceived, Non-Inclusive Agreement: The Bodo Accord of 1993 is an instance of an ill conceived, short sighted agreement that was reached in haste without taking into account the wishes of the majority 72 per cent non-Bodo people living in the area who were against the creation of Bodoland. According to Census 2011, the Bodo population in the BTC area is 27.28 per cent, the population of other tribes is 6.22 per cent while the non-tribal population in

the area is 66.49 per cent¹⁰. So, it is clear that the demographic profile of the area was not really taken into consideration while coming up with a so-called settlement of an agitation launched by mainstream groups representing the Bodo community.

Even the documentation of the Accord, too, is highly non-inclusive in nature. That the accord is meant mainly for the Bodo people of the area is clear: "The Government of India and the Government of Assam have been making concerted efforts to fulfill the aspirations of the Bodo people relating to their cultural identity, language, education and economic development" (BTC Accord 2003). Such language in the agreement resulted in a feeling of insecurity among the non-Bodos living in the area.

The provision in Clause 3 (a) of the Accord created much trouble and disturbance. It states: "There shall be formed, by an Act of Assam Legislative Assembly, a Bodoland Autonomous Council (BAC) within the State of Assam comprising contiguous geographical areas between river Sankosh and Mazbat/river Pasnoi. The land records authority of the State will scrutinise the list of villages furnished by ABSU / BPAC having 50% and more of tribal population which shall be included in the BAC. For the purpose of providing a contiguous area, even the villages having less than 50% tribal population shall be included." This was a major factor behind the escalating ethnic conflict and bloodshed in the concerned area.

The provision that for the sake of contiguity, villages with less than 50 per cent tribal population were to be included in the newly created Bodo Council led to disturbing consequences. Some Bodo groups opposed to the inclusion of non-Bodo villages in the Bodo Council took the lead in sort of an ethnic cleansing campaign to oust the non-Bodos from Bodo minority villages so that after they leave, such villages turn into Bodo majority villages¹¹!

It is observed that the then Assam Chief Minister Hiteswar Saikia had reservations on several provisions in the 1993 Accord particularly on boundary demarcation and he wanted the BAC boundary to be clearly demarcated before signing the deal¹². However, under pressure of the Centre, the Accord was signed in haste. His fear that tension would continue was established as immediately after signing of the Accord extremist groups such as BdSF and BLT emerged and started attacking non-Bodos—Muslim minorities, Koch Rajbongshi and Santhal communities with the aim to get the areas belonging to these people vacated. Armed Bodo militants demanded a "liberated" Bodoland "for Bodos only". Several ethnic riots occurred, including the 1993 attacks by the Bodos on Muslim settlers killing 50¹³. Again, in 1994 attacks on Muslim settlers resulted in the burning of 60 villages. Around 100 people were killed. Again, the attacks in 1996 on Adivasi Santhals resulted in the death of 200. As many as 2,62,682 persons (42,214 families) were displaced. Ethnic clashes also took place in 1998 and 1999. The non-Bodos started organising themselves to resist the

onslaught of Bodo extremists and retaliated from time to time. Law and order in the BAC areas was out of control and bloodshed became the order of the day. The Bodo Accord 1993 was actually a non-starter. No election could be held in the BAC area till the BAC was dissolved by the government in 2000.

BTC Accord 2003 and Power Sharing: Power sharing is a main feature in agreements aimed at ending conflicts in ethnically divided societies. The second peace accord with the Bodos, called the Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) Accord in 2003 created a power-sharing transitional government. But while talking peace with the BLT, the government did not consider it necessary to include other important stakeholders like the ABSU and the NDFB in the negotiation table by making them parties to the peace process. Also, the peace process did not include the civil society organizations. It could be argued that provided the civil society organizations representing different strata of the society were also taken into consideration and they were made witness to the Accord, it would have been seen as a holistic comprehensive approach towards framing a peace accord. Besides, in this way, all the stakeholders would have got a chance to review or push the implementation process later.

Nevertheless, the government's piecemeal approach to address the issue resulted in large scale violence and bloodshed. The non-Bodos, under the umbrella of the Sanmilita Janagosthiya Sangram Samiti (SJSS), opposed the BTC accord and threatened to launch an agitation to demand the scrapping of the accord. The SJSS observed bandhs and stated that the accord was 'drafted without taking into consideration the genuine fears of non-Bodos', whose population is more than that of the Bodos, even within the proposed BTC'. A year after the signing of the BTC Accord, ethnic clashes re-occurred between the Bodos and the Santhals. Again, in 2008, violence engulfed Kokrajhar, Chirang, Udalguri and Darrang districts killing over 120 people¹⁴. The mayhem continued – 2012, 2014 and 2016 too witnessed ethnic and insurgency violence in large scale in the BTC area. Among all these, the serial bomb blasts on 30 October 2008, masterminded by NDFB leader Ranjan Daimary came as a rude shock because it took insurgency violence to an all-time high. The bomb attacks killed 100 people and wounded more than 545 in four towns – Guwahati, Barpeta, Bongaigaon and Kokrajhar.

Revival of Statehood Demand: Solution to the Bodo problem became even more complex as demand of statehood was raised once again by mainstream Bodo groups like the ABSU after the creation of Telangana as the 29th state of India in February 2014. The ABSU was joined by the Peoples' Joint Action Committee for Bodoland Movement (PJACBM), a conglomeration of 55 outfits of various ethnic groups in the proposed Bodoland, which announced the revival of the Bodo statehood agitation in July 2013.

The BPF (Bodo People's Front) - the party ruling the Bodo Council - also joined the statehood cry since they did not want

to be left behind and run the risk of being rendered politically irrelevant! This despite the fact that the BPF, an offshoot of the violent BLT insurgency, was already the ruling party in the autonomous Bodo Council, an arrangement they agreed to in order to bring about an end to the Bodo homeland agitation.

Moreover, another aspect to be considered is the lack of an agreed time frame, both for concluding a peace negotiation and then for implementing the peace agreement after it is reached with the militant groups. For example, the peace agreement with the UPDS was signed on 25 November 2011 ending a 12 year long insurgency. Now, more than four years after signing of the Accord, there is hardly any progress regarding the implementation of the provisions. The absence of an agreed timeline, by which the various provisions of the peace agreement would be implemented, shows the level of sincerity on the part of the authorities. One gets an impression that both truce deals and later peace agreements by the Government with insurgent groups are actually part of the establishment's strategy of postponing peace or some ad hoc means to buy time and keep the conflict in abeyance without a resolution.

UPDS Accord 2011: The signatories of both the United People's Democratic Solidarity (UPDS) and the Dima Haram Daogah (DHD) Accord could not form an interim council as both the districts already had existing autonomous councils, unlike in the Bodo area. While after the BTC Accord, the BLT chief Hagrama Mahilary was immediately installed as the head of the interim council and elections were held after a certain period, the case in the state of Mizoram was different. After the Mizo Accord was signed in 1986, the then ruling Congress government in Mizoram, led by Lal Thanhawla stepped down, making way for Mizo National Front (MNF) leader Pu Laldenga to become the interim Chief Minister and form the government. On the other hand, this did not happen in the case of UPDS as the government rejected UPDS's demand for an interim council and at the same time the existing Council was not willing to leave the space and power. The UPDS leaders had to contest elections in 2012, but failed to put up a good show¹⁵. The disbanded outfit complained about not getting a level-playing field and lack of adequate time to reorganise themselves. They also cited paucity of funds for the poor showing in the polls. "The fate of the MoS is, therefore, in serious jeopardy", warned the UPDS chairman after the poll results. Same was the case with the DHD, thus leaving the leadership of both the groups sort of powerless to initiate implementation of the peace accords they signed.

The former General Secretary of UPDS Haren Sing Bey said that any steps towards the accord implementation can be initiated only after the Parliament passes the Bill to facilitate the extension of the Panchayati Raj system to these 6th Schedule areas¹⁶. Moreover, the additional subjects in the Accord can come only through the amendment of the 6th Schedule. The Assam Government could have transferred the additional departments to the Council even without the amendment to the Sixth Schedule but did not take such steps. So when the UPDS

leadership considered the 'handling of the UPDS case a failure' and alleged the State government for 'wilfully refusing to honour the solemn commitment made by the Union Home Minister regarding 'neutral administration' till the polls and a level-playing field during the elections, the point needs to be taken seriously¹⁷. This goes to prove the lack of political will and clarity in actually resolving the issue.

Following the UPDS Accord, a committee headed by the Joint Secretary (Northeast) in the Ministry of Home Affairs was to have been automatically formed to carry out the implementation of the agreement. But that did not happen immediately. This Implementation Monitoring Committee, apart from the JS (NE) in the MHA, includes representative from the state government and the autonomous council. Except some Review Meetings, no progress has been made so far. Besides, the non-passing of the Bill for Panchayati Raj system in the 6th Schedule area has stood as a stumbling block to any further progress. The governments' strategy to await agreement with more rebel groups to take up Constitutional amendments is resulting in the delay in the implementation of the different provisions on the peace agreements already signed. "There was no condition in the MoS that our settlement is dependent on how negotiations with other groups progress", said Wojaru Mukrang, former UPDS member and the only elected member of the Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council¹⁸.

However, though the UPDS Accord in 2011 was closely followed by the DHD Accord in 2012, implementation of both the accords is negligible.

DHD Accord 2012: A tripartite agreement among the two factions of the Dima Halom Daogah (DHD) — DHD (Nunisa) and DHD (Jewel) — the Centre and the state government was signed in October 2012 for the creation of the Dima Hasao Autonomous Territorial Council, the new name for the existing Dima Hasao Autonomous Council. If the Accord unites the two factions of DHD, a third factor that has a major stake in maintaining peace in the hill district is the non-Dimasa tribal groups, which mainly include Nagas, Kukis and Hmars¹⁹. The district experienced several bloody ethnic clashes between the various tribal groups in the past. The various provisions of the DHD Accord are also yet to see implementation initiative.

Inter-Ethnic Council

The need of the provision for an inter-ethnic council in the peace accords signed for territories dominated by diverse ethnic tribes is very much pertinent in all the four peace accords under this study. Such councils can mediate sustained interaction between Ethno-Religious groups or between diverse ethnic groups and the government. They can also handle limited aspects of governance and provide recommendations to governmental bodies on legal and political issues. Absence of such provisions compelled the indigenous minority ethnic groups like the non-Dimasa tribes to raise their voice to form a

separate autonomous district with an autonomous council in order to safeguard their rights²⁰.

Assam is home to many ethnic tribes people and the tribes overlap each other forming a mixed population. It was after the Assam Agitation (1979-85) that agitations by other ethnic groups became prominent. The government's strategy to douse these movements by enacting ethno-exclusive councils increased mistrust and inter group rivalry among the various ethnic groups sharing the same space. Beginning Bodo Accord 1993, the government created another six ethnic based autonomous councils in 1995 under a state act. Again, since 2005, the Government created several other ethnic based autonomous councils²¹. While the story of development in these council areas is rather bleak, the division and mistrust can only be erased by pursuing an inclusive policy for greater stability and integrity.

Decentralisation

If one is to accept that homeland or autonomy agitations in Northeast India are the result of people's desire to protect their identity and further their rights, one would like to believe that such stirs are actually directed at the State and the Centre who are seen as exercising undue control. There is a perception that the panacea lies in a decentralisation of power for these ethnic groups and communities to administer their own areas and plan their progress and development.

Similarly, there is a perception that even below the autonomous councils, there should be Village Council so that decentralisation can be taken to the grass root level. The UPDS and DHD accords do provide for setting up of Village Councils but the process has not begun because the Bill for extension of the Panchayati Raj institutions in the Sixth Schedule areas is yet to be passed by the Parliament.

'Success' of the Mizo Accord

Mizoram was upgraded from a Union Territory to statehood in February 1987, after the Mizo Accord was signed between the insurgent group Mizo National Front (MNF) and the Government of India on 30 June 1986 ending a two-decade-long insurgency in the Mizo hills, then a troubled part of Northeast India. The Accord is cited and celebrated by policy makers as a model of successfully negotiated peace agreement—a settlement that ushered peace and development in the state. The signatories if the Accord compromised in favour of statehood instead of a sovereign state. It was actually a federal arrangement with the Indian Constitution.

Success Factors: It is generally believed that the Mizo Accord has been uniquely successful in bringing peace. Swarna Rajagopalan in her book *Peace Accords in North East India* writes that this success is based on bringing together the factors like Mizo colonial experience, Mizo identity formation, nature

of political mobilization, specific characteristic of the negotiation and state-society relations in post-accord Mizoram. Another noteworthy fact is that the mediators or peace-brokers in the Mizo peace process were the Mizo community leaders that enhanced trust instead of distance. The reality that the mediators are there to live in the post-accord Mizoram makes them accountable to the conflict parties. The collaborative working relation between the Mizo government and the civil society organizations had made possible for lasting peace.

Unity among Insurgent Groups: However, the Accord is not out of criticism. How inclusive is the post-accord Mizo society and politics? The level of people's satisfaction in the post-accord Mizoram varies among different sections. As the Accord left out the demand for a greater Mizoram, this incurred fear of insecurity among smaller ethnic groups like Kuki and Chins, Brus as well as non-tribals regarding their rights. The Hmar People's Convention was formed in 1986—immediately after signing of the Accord—demanding autonomy in north Mizoram. The Mizoram government initiated peace talks with the Hmar tribes between 1992-94 and a Memorandum of Settlement was signed in 1994. On the other hand, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the Bru National Liberation Front and the Mizoram government in 2005, but the accord did not resolve the conflict.

Analysts say the 'apparent success' of the Mizo Accord is only due to 'entrancement of ethnicity'²². There is a lack of unity as well as the tendency of splintering factionalism related to the other insurgency movements in the Northeast—that was not to be seen while signing the Mizo Accord. The aspect of unity among an insurgent group proves to be crucial for the success of any peace accord. Unlike most other present-day insurgent groups in the region, the MNF was a single entity without any break-away factions. This made it easier for the Government to negotiate with it. It must be noted that the demand for separate homeland for the Mizos was based on common geographical location, and not on common ethnic affinity. Participation of Civil society organizations in the peace process is a crucial factor that was present in the Mizo peace process. The accord addressed the root causes of conflict—de-escalation of violence, indigenous mediator and formation of a pan-Mizo identity.

Conclusion

The four peace accords reached by the Government with various insurgent groups in Assam have proved that lack of an inclusive policy in resolving aspiration-induced rebel uprisings is the primary reason for the failure on the part of the state in bringing about permanent and lasting solutions to the problems. For instance, one has seen the BTC Accord reached with the BLT in 2003 even when the NDFB was already active and indulging in large-scale violence. Therefore, although an agitation ended in the Bodo heartland with the clinching of the BTC deal, another, led by the NDFB, was already wreaking havoc. The security

forces, therefore, continued to stay on and the area could not be de-militarized.

Secondly, it has come to light from the four accords that feasibility of the implementation of the provisions have not been taken into account in many cases. The UPDS and DHD accords provided for setting up of Village Councils under the Autonomous Councils. But, five years after the accords were signed, the Village Councils are still not set up because the Centre is yet to pass a relevant Bill extending the provisions of the Panchayat Raj Act to the Sixth Schedule areas. Besides, non-amendment of the Sixth Schedule has prevented the transfer of additional subjects to the Autonomous Councils from the State. Basically, no real change has been visible even after these accords in these two districts. Restive radical elements are already beginning to harp on the lack of success of the peace deals, indicating they could start a new uprising.

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