

Anti-migrant bill: Trouble for Biren government



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Trouble for the N Biren Singh government in [Manipur](#) could be in horizon in the coming days as the Joint Committee on Inner Line Permit [System](#) (JCILPS) has renewed its campaign to demand constitutional protection to the [indigenous](#) people of the [state](#).

The previous three anti-migrant bills passed by the [Manipur](#) Assembly on August 31, 2015, during the previous [Congress](#) government headed by three-time Chief Minister Okram [Ibobi](#) Singh, were eventually rejected by the Centre for various reasons, one of them apparently being the two diametrically opposing stand on the bills in the [state](#).

Then [President](#) Pranab Mukherjee refused his assent to the three bills. [Manipur](#) was on the boil for months due to protests demanding the conversion of the three anti-migrant bills into law.

Earlier, JCILPS had led a sustained stir which lasted for months throwing [normal](#) life out of gear and that had finally forced the then [Ibobi](#) government to introduce and pass the anti-migrant bills.

The contentious bills are the [Manipur](#) Land Reforms and Land Revenue (7th Amendment) Bill, 2015, the [Manipur](#) Shops and Establishment (2nd Amendment) Bill, 2015 and the [Manipur](#) Protection of Peoples Bill, 2015.

JCILPS, a conglomerate of different social organisations, [demands](#) an [ILP](#)-type protection for the [state](#) which has been encapsulated in the previous three anti-migrant bills passed by the [state](#) assembly.

After there had been a lull in the campaign, the joint committee took up again its movement from September 4. Under the banner of the Kangleipak Students' Association (KSA), similar movement was recently [launched](#) with an objective to reinvigorating the pressing demand of constitutional protection to the [indigenous](#) people of [Manipur](#).

On July 28 last, at the height of the KSA sponsored intensified protest in [Imphal](#), Chief minister N Biren Singh had assured the [Manipur](#) Assembly his government would make efforts to introduce a bill in the House to safeguard the interest of the [indigenous](#) people.

But his promise was not fulfilled fueling anger among the groups, especially the KSA which pledged to intensify the stir.

The government could be in the wind if a fresh anti-migrant bill is not introduced in the ensuing winter session of the [state](#) assembly, according to sources.

“Outsiders have outnumbered [indigenous](#) people, the Meitei, in the valley. We now have a captive market in our own land because of the non-Manipuris,” JCILPS convenor Arjun Telheiba told journalists on the sidelines of a silent public rally here on Sep 4.

Telheiba had said the [state](#)’s culture and way of life have been heavily influenced by the outsiders affecting the people by such intermixing of cultures.

The rally reiterated that the [Manipur](#) government should debar all non-locals from contesting elections and exercising their franchise, and introduction of a fresh anti-migrant bill in the ensuing winter session of the [Manipur](#) Assembly to protect the interests of [indigenous](#) people.

Inner Line Permit [System](#) ([ILP](#)) is an attempt to protect the tribal culture that prevails all [over](#) the Northeast [India](#). It helps in keeping a record of the number of people who are native to the [state](#) and the number of people who are coming from outside [state](#).

For the same reasons, [Manipur](#) has been demanding [ILP](#), the sources said.

[ILP](#) is an official travel document issued by the Government of [India](#) to allow inward travel of an Indian citizen into a protected area for a limited period.

It is obligatory for Indian citizens from outside those states to obtain a permit for entering into the protected [state](#). [ILP](#) is an offshoot of the British era Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulations, 1873. It is still used in [India](#) to protect tribal cultures of the [North East](#).

It serves as a means to protect the [indigenous](#) tribes from exploitation and preserve their fragile cultures and traditions. [ILP](#) can [stop](#) a mass [influx](#) of non-residents.

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