

Internet voting for the out-of-station Asamese



Comments 3



pallavibarua 13 January 2010 13004 views

On January 9, on the occasion of Pravasi Bharatiya Divas, PM Manmohan Singh expressed the hope that Indians living abroad would be able to vote in the next general elections. Responding to the frequent plea for voting rights to non-resident Indians, most recently made by members of his global advisory council for overseas Indians, Dr. Singh termed the desire legitimate.

He said of the ongoing work on this issue and sincerely hoped that non-resident Indians will get a chance to vote by the time of the next regular general elections. In fact, he assured to go a step further and asked why more overseas Indians should not return home to join politics and public life as they are increasingly doing in business and academia.

The Government of Assam can work on similar lines. Voting provisions for non-resident Assamese should be made available. Not only to those who stay abroad, the Assamese staying in different parts of the country should be provided provisions to vote in elections with the use of Information Technology. In this era of Internet, when the world is inter-connected, voting through a website especially designed and equipped for non-resident Assamese votes should be launched during election times. As it is, the illegal migrant vote-bank is increasing by leaps and bounds in Assam. On the other hand, the number of voters in the middle-class section of the society is dwindling. Numerous youths of thousands of Assamese families are working in different cities of the country or studying (necessarily or unnecessarily) in Delhi, Bangalore etc. That way, a huge chunk of voters is wasted. This resource should not be wasted and the state government should tap and channelize it through Information Technology.

Also, hundreds and thousands of students and professionals who migrate to the city of Guwahati from their home towns and villages in Assam do not travel to their respective homes to vote on the day of election. Not that they don't want to cast their vote, but because of a single day holiday, it is not feasible to take a leave of three days (to and fro and the day of election included). The government should chalk out means to rope in the votes of the literate and educated section of the society who are on the move owing to work or study.

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BY PALLAVIBARUA

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