

Restore Chakma-Hajong rights: Civil body to government



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Syed Miraz Ahmed 24 September 2017 10729 views

The present imbroglio on the [Chakma](#)-Hajong Rights issue is a reflection of monumental [failure](#) and mismanagement by the government. Civil organizations urge restoration of all [rights](#) to vulnerable Chakmas and Hajongs without further delay as 90 per cent of them are already citizens by birth and hence the restoration of Citizenship [Rights](#) is out of question.

Right Cause, an organization working for the marginalized and vulnerable tribal groups is concerned with the continuing denial and deprivation of legitimate democratic [rights](#) of the Chakmas and Hajongs of [Arunachal](#) Pradesh.

The issue of citizenship in [Arunachal](#) Pradesh is a fall out of the anti-foreigner agitation in Assam and is politically motivated. Citizenship has been already granted implicitly to them when the Government rehabilitated them and allotted 5 acres of land per family in the 1960s. The issue has been unnecessarily politicized and has become like the proverbial goose that lays golden eggs at the cost of vulnerable [Chakma](#) and Hajong tribal population. The population of 47, 471 (as per 2011 Census) has been blown out of proportion to 1 lakh in order to create [fear](#) and xenophobia in the [state](#) claims Mahendra [Chakma](#), [President](#), Right Cause.

According to him, the present problem is also a result of misidentification of Tibetan [refugees](#) who have not accepted [India](#) Citizenship and decided to go back once Tibet is free and [Chakma](#) and Hajong [refugees](#) who have come with the intent of making [India](#) their permanent home as they are anyway persons of Indian origin. Blanket labeling of [refugees](#) under one bucket and [failure](#) to recognize this distinction has led to the present [crisis](#). The [Chakma refugees](#) who came in 1986 and were camped in Indo-[Bangladesh](#) borders in [Tripura](#) and repatriated in 1997 are different and not to be confused with that of [Chakma](#) and Hajong [refugees](#) who are permanently rehabilitated in the [North East](#) Frontier Agency (NEFA) formerly the [North East](#) Frontier Tracts.

[Chakma](#) during a press meet Saturday, demanded immediate restoration of all [rights](#) like public employment banned in 1980, issue of ration card in 1991, and reinstate the Gaon Burah/Panchayati Raj institution which was canceled in 1984.

“We at Right Cause also urge all stakeholders and political [leaders](#) not to politicize the issue further and work together towards a permanent solution to the problem. It is sad to see that the patriotism of the Chakmas and their loyalty to [India](#) has been exploited by the governments, the it settled them in NEFA to safeguard China border but 50 years after rehabilitation continue to face this ordeal suspended between the mirage of citizenship and threat of deportation,” he said.

Syed Miraz Ahmed

Writes, edits and researches. In 2013 he was conferred the Rotary International District 3240 Young Achiever Award for his work in the area of environment and digital journalism. In 2006 he was awarded first in the category of Wildlife Photography by the Department of Environment & Forests and Tourism, Government of Assam.

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