

ASSU Urges Santhal Community to Boycott PM, CM Public Meetings



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The All Santhal Students' Union (ASSU) has called upon members of the Santhal/Adivasi community to boycott public meetings of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma during their upcoming visits to the Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) region and Upper Assam.

Speaking to reporters at Habrubil in Gossaigaon on Tuesday, ASSU vice president Durga Soren expressed dissatisfaction with the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), alleging that the party has failed to address the welfare and development concerns of the Santhal community in Assam.

Soren said that during the 2014 Indian general election campaign, Prime Minister Modi had promised that the Santhal/Adivasi community of Assam, along with six other communities, would be granted Scheduled Tribe status in India within six months. However, he alleged that more than six years have passed and the promise remains unfulfilled.

He further claimed that the Prime Minister has not raised the issue of granting ST status to the community during his visits to Assam. “Therefore, we have no interest in listening to the speeches of the Prime Minister or the Chief Minister,” Soren said, appealing to the Santhal community to stay away from their public meetings, including those organised during the upcoming Assembly election campaign.

The student body also warned that any member of the Santhal community who attends such meetings would be viewed as acting against community interests.

Soren also alleged that the Santhal community in the Gossaigaon Legislative Assembly Constituency has been politically weakened by the division of its voters across four constituencies. He criticised Assam minister Ashok Singhal, claiming that an “outsider minister” had politically weakened the community. He added that if Singhal visits Gossaigaon for election campaigning, he would be greeted with black flags.

The ASSU also criticised the earlier Bodoland People's Front (BPF)-led administration in the Bodoland Territorial Council, headed by Hagrama Mohilary, alleging that no nominated council member or CSB member from the Santhal community was appointed during its tenure.

Reiterating its stance, the students' union said the Santhal/Adivasi community would boycott public meetings of the Prime Minister, the Chief Minister, or other BJP leaders during the upcoming Assembly elections.

The organisation further urged the BPF not to carry out election campaigning in Santhal/Adivasi villages, warning that the party could face protests if it ignores the appeal.

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