

Delimitation Dilemma: Assam Members Quit Panel



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NEW DELHI: All ten members from Assam have come out of the delimitation panel saying they will not be responsible if anything happens in future even as the Commission gets ready for public hearing in the state on June 15 and 18.

Talking to the press here on Wednesday, the members Dr Arun Kumar Sarma, Kirip Chaliha, Chandra Mohan Patowary and Parimal Suklabaidya rue, “we the members from Assam are hailing from members from various political parties and we have been assisting the panel but to our utter dismay our suggestions are being ignored.”

They further suggested the Assam Government to expedite the creation of the legislative council to address the aspirations of smaller tribes and communities.

The entire process be started anew and number of new seats should be created, they say adding that all the political parties of the state have arrived at a consensus that the current delimitation process without any increase in total number of constituencies failed to yield good results.

They say they narrowed down their differences to evolve a consensus in the preparation of the seven working papers. But strangely enough the Commission ignored all of these suggestions.

The major development came at a time when the all-party delegation of the state assembly called on Union law minister, HR Bhadrachari demanding immediate halt to the exercise. They also called on Home minister Shivraj Patil and the Commission chairman on Tuesday and demanded a halt till the works on the National Registrar of the Citizen are completed.

In earlier development, an all party delegation on Tuesday reiterated its

demand for Central intervention to stall the process.

Led by Speaker of Assam Assembly, Tanka Bahadur Rai the delegation called on Union home minister, Shivraj Patil and chairman of the Delimitation Commission, Justice (retd) Kuldeep Singh and demanded steps to defer the entire process citing the incompleteness of the National Register of Citizens.

The delegation comprises Dr Bhumidhar Barman, Bharat Narah, former Chief Minister, Prafulla Kumar Mahanta, Chandra Mohan Patowary, Nurul Hussain, Dr Kamala Kalita, Dhruv Borgohain, Parimal Suklabaidya and Pramila Rani Brahma, among others.

Our Sivasagar Correspondent adds:

The normal life in upper Assam districts comes to a grinding halt following a 12 hour bandh which ended peacefully on Wednesday afternoon.

Called by an all party forum to oppose the draft of the delimitation process, the bandh evokes total response in Dibrugarh, Tinsukia, Sivasagar, Jorhat and Golaghat.

Banks, schools and colleges remained closed due to the bandh call. Only police vehicles were seen plying on the streets. No untoward incidents have been reported so far.

Speaking to Assam Times, the Ujani Asom Samasti Surakshya Committee officials say the delimitation of constituencies will mark an end to a Assembly constituency each in Jorhat, Sivasagar and Dibrugarh.

“We have nothing to oppose the delimitation exercise but we are against accepting the draft proposal in its present form. It is further impractical to run the delimitation process on the basis of the Census 2001,” they say.

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