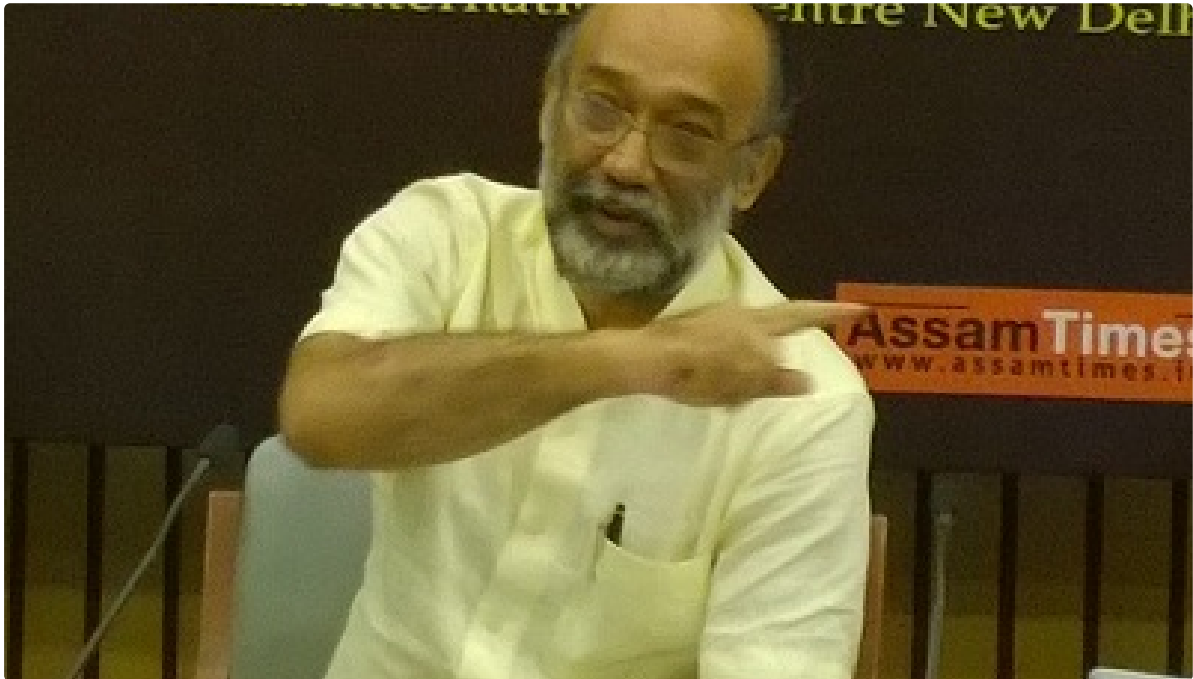


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Bg Gogoi 9 September 2015 Updated 9 Sept 8785 views

Amid simmering protest [over](#) the NDA government's move for Indian citizenship to the non-Muslim intruders from Bangladesh and Pakistan, veteran journalist and north east expert [Sanjay Hazarika](#) said that it cannot be objected if there has been due process of law and adequate checking of individual cases before citizenship is granted.

Talking to Assam Times on Wednesday, [Prof.](#) Hazarika, the director of the [Centre for North East Studies and Policy Research](#) with the Jamia Milia Islamia said, “On the issue of religious minorities ([Hindus](#) etc) being given refuge in this country, one is not surprised at all by the decision by this Government, given its propensities in such matters.”

According to the award winning author of *The Strangers of the Mist*, “it should be underscored that these are persons specifically fleeing religious persecution. What about those facing political persecution? Will the Government also not consider their cases.”

“The classic definition of a refugee is a person who is forced to flee his or her country and is unable to return because of her political or religious beliefs. Today our understanding of refugees has been expanded to include environmental refugees [as](#) well, those fleeing their lands because of a natural or human-induced catastrophe such [as](#) a famine, drought, flood or earthquake,” said the north east analyst.

He finds it an interesting issue [as](#) neither India or any other nation of South Asia is a signatory to the [UN](#) Covenant on Refugees. He observed, “although we host lakhs of them from Tibet, Sri Lanka, [Myanmar](#) and even Afghanistan. Pakistan and other parts of the world including Africa.”

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