

Indigenous Muslims discuss Congress apathy



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Syed Miraz Ahmed 27 March 2011 9061 views

The perplexity involving the crisis associated with the privileges of the different communities which form the indigenous Muslim populace of Assam was broadly discussed Thursday at Natya Mandir, Sivsagar. This was an effort to gather consensus regarding uplift, recognition and representation of the indigenous Muslims spread across upper Assam, mid Assam and lower Assam in politics, education, socio-economic policy making and community centric development programs.

The conference which attracted some 300 people from different parts of upper Assam had Senior Advocate Guwahati High Court and invited speaker Nekibur Zaman saying that it was during his association with the Assam Agitation that he realized the appalling fate of the communities which contribute to the indigenous Muslim bulk of Assam. It has become most necessary to seriously assemble, discuss indigenous concerns and strategize despite political affinity regional or otherwise else we shall die like cats and dogs he said. He condemned the Tarun Gogoi led Government's inability of offering candidature to a single indigenous Muslim from among 30 lac and by now more of the population share of indigenous Muslims of the state for the forthcoming Assembly Elections.

Under the Ahom definition of Assamese and the Constitutional description of Religious Minority the indigenous Muslims have nevertheless been forced into a circle of confusion regarding their identity in their pursuit for socio-economic development. To claim satisfactory share of Government Funds for socio-economic development the All Assam Goria-Moria-Desi Jatiya Parishad (AAGMDJP) have long launched a crusade to press for the Constitutional Recognition and Safeguard of the Goria, Moria, Desi, Julha and other communities which predate the Constitutional definition of Minority or Religious Minority as indigenous.

Sohiruddin Ali Ahmed President AAGMDJP ranted that indigenous Muslim figures like Bagh Hazarika, Bahadur Gaonburha, Syed Abdul Malik and many from the time of Ahom-Assam to independent India are deprived of mentionable credence for shaping the socio-political sphere of Assam. He added that AAGMDJP was first to demand separate community centric Development Parishads to help address issues. We will gather capacity to press and voice our demands at Dispur to expedite steps for Constitutional Recognition and Safeguard of the various indigenous Muslim communities of Assam and also for the formation of Development Parishads. If the Kalitas of Assam are privileged with a Kalita Development Parishad then why not the indigenous Muslims he queried. Assam is a land of indigenous tribes and communities who came to accept different belief systems with time. Divisive policies of the East India Company divided the Indian populace into two watertight compartments called 'Hindus' and 'Muslims' degrading the various strong indigenous identities and their associated development concerns. We are victim to repeated scapegoatism of poll politics he exclaimed.

Pro-Congressman and President of Upper Assam Muslim Welfare Parishad, M I Bora echoed that elections will come and elections will go while Political Parties will retain capacity with votes from immigrant Muslims. Indigenous peoples are certainly approaching an age of modern day obscurity he concluded.

Meantime to attract indigenous Muslim votes the Asom Gana Parishad and the Bharatiya Janata Party in its Election Manifestos for the first time ever have aimed to address the concerns of the different indigenous Muslim communities through the formation of Development Parishads. The All India United Democratic Front on the other hand has offered candidature to a number of indigenous Muslim candidates in an effort to outdo the Congress loyalty.

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.

BY SYED MIRAZ AHMED

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