

Massive Land Acquisition in Karbi Anglong Sparks Protests Among Indigenous Communities



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In the hilly district of Karbi Anglong, Assam, anxiety looms large among the indigenous communities as the state government plans to acquire 18,000 bighas of land for a 1,000-megawatt solar power project. This proposed project threatens to displace nearly 20,000 Karbi, Naga, and tribal residents from 23 villages in the Khatkhathi-Longkathar area. For over two centuries, these indigenous communities have lived on this land, cultivating crops and sustaining their livelihoods through agriculture.

Assam's Rajya Sabha MP, Ajit Kumar Bhuyan, raised the issue in the Upper House, highlighting that the government is proceeding with the land acquisition without consulting the local communities, violating the provisions of the Sixth Schedule of the Indian Constitution. He also pointed out that no environmental impact assessment or approval from the National Wildlife Board has been conducted for the project. Additionally, the feasibility of a solar power project in Assam's predominantly cloudy and rainy climate remains questionable.

Local residents fear that the land acquisition will strip them of their only means of survival. For generations, they have relied on this land for farming and raising their families. They are now demanding that the government halt the project to protect their lives and livelihoods.

Land rights activists and local organizations have strongly opposed the government's decision, arguing that development should not come at the cost of indigenous rights. MP Bhuyan has urged the Rajya Sabha to intervene and stop the project, emphasizing the need to safeguard the lives and livelihoods of the affected communities.

Indigenous groups and human rights organizations continue to pressure the government to abandon the land acquisition process. They assert that any development initiative must prioritize the protection and consent of local communities, warning of severe consequences if their voices are ignored.

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Assam Times Staff. editor@assamtimes.org

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