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## PVM seeks Constitutional safeguards for locals



[AT News](#) · 11:25, 12 Nov 2019 · 9356 views · 3 min read



Upamanyu Hazarika  
Convener

PRESS RELEASE

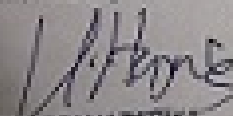
11 November 2019

We have submitted our proposal on implementation of legal and constitutional safeguards under clause 6 of the Assam Accord to the committee constituted in this regard. Our submission is that the safeguards have to be in two stages and two different levels. In the first stage it is necessary to reserve land, employment, trade licence, higher education opportunities for those citizens who were residents in Assam in 1951 or prior there to and their progeny. This will correct the imbalance and injustice to the people of Assam for taking the burden of 23 years of additional migrants, unlike the rest of India and so that the newly granted citizens post 1951 do not enjoy co-equal rights as that of the existing citizens. This will ensure that all resources in Assam will be reserved only for those who are citizens in 1951 and not for those who became citizens after 1951.

There are over 115 ethnic communities in Assam numbering from 5,000 like Tai Phake and Tai Khamyang to 60 lakhs like the Koch Rajbongshis and the Tea Tribes, each facing its own threat to identity and existence. In the second stage, each of these communities have to be enabled to secure their identity and existence.

Implementation of the safeguards have to be by either Parliament or the State Assembly, by framing laws and it is therefore necessary for those who are in Government, particularly Chief Minister Sonowal and other leaders who have built their livelihood and identity on the foreigner's issue. At the first instance, the Chief Minister, MPs and MLAs should have advanced their proposal regarding constitutional safeguards to the committee and the public could have given their suggestions, because regardless of what the public may suggest or the committee may propose if the Government doesn't want to implement it, it will be an exercise in futility. This is the modus followed by the Government in case of the Citizenship Amendment Bill where they came forward with a proposed legislation and then sought the public views. We therefore appeal to the committee to first seek the views of the Government as only then their exercise will be meaningful or otherwise it will be conveniently discarded like the Bhatia

Committee Report. Even though land is the key issue and the key reason for migration and need to be protected first for indigenous people, the Committee has still not been granted the authority and the power to give recommendations on land and trade licences, without which any safeguard is meaningless. The political class is only interested in reservation of constituencies for indigenous people so as to perpetuate themselves even when the State becomes a Bangladeshi majority.

  
UPAMANYU HAZARIKA

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**Upamanyu Hazarika, Convenor, PVM**



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