

Tribal bodies stage protest in Delhi



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Various tribal organisations carried out a [protest dharna](#) programme on Friday at Jantar Mantar, New Delhi on their various demands including comprehensive revision of Tribal land policy and preparation of a [new](#) land policy of [Assam](#), implementation of the [Assam](#) SCs and STs (Reservation of Vacancies in Services and Posts) Ac. 2012 and opposing the inclusion of some [more](#) advanced communities into the [list](#) of Scheduled Tribes (plains) category of [Assam](#) etc.

Representing from various tribal organisations like All [Assam](#) Tribal [Sangha](#) (AATS), Tribal [Youth](#) League (AATYL), [Bodo Students](#)' Union, [Rabha Students](#)' Union, Tiwa [Students](#)' Union, [Sonowal](#) Kachari [Students](#)' Union, Deori [Students](#)' Union, Mech Kachari Jatiya Parishad, Dimasa [Students](#)' Union, [Karbi Students](#)' Union, [Assam](#) Hajong [Students](#)' Union, [Assam](#) Man Tai-speaking [Students](#)' Union and [Assam](#) Singpho [Students](#)' Union staged a sit-in-[protest](#) carrying pycards, festoons and banners from 11 am to 2 pm.

A memorandum was submitted to the Prime minister, Home minister and Tribal Welfare Minister on their demands. The tribal organizations of [Assam](#) vehemently oppose the move for inclusion of some [more](#) advanced communities into the [list](#) of Scheduled Tribes (plains) category of [Assam](#).

They are of the opinion that the Govt. of [Assam](#), once again, has recently forwarded a proposal to the Central Government in this regard, despite on several earlier occasions, the Registrar General of India(RGI) and the National Commission for STs have turned down such a proposal on the ground that these communities, namely – Koch Rajbongshi, Tai-Ahom, Chutia, [Moran](#), Motok and [Tea](#) Tribes, do not fulfill the criterias- Indication of Primitive traits, Distinctive Culture, Geographical Isolation, Shyness of contact with community at large and Backwardness -set for enlisting a tribe as the ST under the Indian Constitution, the tribal leaders said adding “It is to be mentioned here that the RGI had already commented eight (8) times (1981, 1992, 1995, 1997, 2000, 2003, 2005 and 2006) and rejected out rightly the pleas of the above mentioned communities for scheduling as ST”.

‘There are reports that, the [ULFA](#) (pro-talk) group is hijacking the issues of 6 (six) communities as one of the agenda and there are apprehension prevailing among the tribal people that these six communities might be considered for giving ST status which will adversely effected the interest of the existing ST people’ they said and demanded that the [list](#) of Scheduled Tribe (plains) relating to the plains of [Assam](#) should be frozen for good. ‘We have no objection to giving any special status, protection and/or privilege to any ethnic group of [Assam](#) in any other manner which will in no way hamper the rights and interests of the plains tribal people of [Assam](#)’ they said.

They demanded enhancement of quota of reservation for the ST(plains) based on the [latest](#) census data as five [more](#) tribes have been added to the category after 2001 census.

The tribal bodies demanded comprehensive revision of Tribal land policy and preparation of a [new](#) land policy of [Assam](#), saying that the Constitution of India have legally sanctioned the provisions to shield the tribal people by creating tribal belts and blocks from land hungry outsiders and as well as mainstream society of India who exploited tribal people rampantly. 'But the loopholes in the Chapter-X of the [Assam](#) Land and Revenue (Regulation) Act 1886 have given chance to exploit it and use it to further ones self-interests. Therefore major chunk of land from tribal belt and block have already been grabbed by non-bona-fide people or sometimes by the government itself. The Chapter-X of [Assam](#) Land and Revenue (Regulation) Act 1886 has totally failed to protect the land in tribal areas and large scale land alienation is still going on unabated, they said and demanded that the tribal land policy should be comprehensively reviewed after consultation with All [Assam](#) Tribal [Sangha](#) and declared a [new](#) tribal land policy of [Assam](#).

It urged the State Govt. to restore all the lost tribal territories and return it to the legal owners of the land as per U.N. Dhebor Commission [Report](#) 1960, evict all [illegal](#) land [settlers](#) from tribal Belts and [Block](#), two representatives from All [Assam](#) Tribal [Sangha](#) must be appointed in all the District and Sub-Divisional level Land Advisory Committees (LAC) of [Assam](#), create [new](#) tribal Belts and Blocks covering tribal populated areas and create [new](#) Tribal-Sub-plan areas covering tribal populated revenue villages.

It also flayed the state government of not following reservation in promotion violating the existing rules depriving eligible [SC/ST](#) employees of their due and demanded an enquire in the matter of large scale deprivation of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes from reservation in promotion in the services and posts under the State of [Assam](#), clearance of the Promotion Bill in current Session of Parliament through the pending Constitution (117th Amendment) Act for adequate representation of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the services and posts under the States and to do the needful to amend the Constitution for effective and adequate representation of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes in the services and posts under the States.

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Reporting from Kokrajhar

BY HANTIGIRI NARZARY

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