



Chakma and Hajong Communities

Why in News

The Chakma organisations have **opposed the proposed deportation of 60,000 people belonging to the Chakma and Hajong communities from Arunachal Pradesh.**

Key Points

- They are ethnic people who **lived in the Chittagong Hill Tracts**, most of which are located in **Bangladesh**.
 - **Chakmas** are predominantly **Buddhists**, while **Hajongs** are **Hindus**.
 - They are found in northeast India, West Bengal, Bangladesh and Myanmar.
- They **fled erstwhile East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) in 1964-65 and came to India** and settled in Arunachal Pradesh. **Reasons:**
 - **Chakmas lost their land to** the development of the **Kaptai Dam** on the Karnaphuli River, Bangladesh.
 - **Hajongs faced religious persecution as they were non-Muslims** and did not speak Bengali.
- In **2015**, the **Supreme Court directed the Centre to grant citizenship to Chakma and Hajongs** who had migrated from Bangladesh in 1964-69.
- They did not directly come into the ambit of the [Citizenship Amendment Act, 2019](#) (CAA) because Arunachal Pradesh is among the states exempted from the CAA since it has an [Inner Line Permit](#) to regulate entry of outsiders.
 - The 2019 CAA amended the Citizenship Act of 1955 allowing Indian citizenship for Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain, Parsi, and Christian religious minorities who fled from the neighboring Muslim majority countries of Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan before December 2014 due to "religious persecution or fear of religious persecution". However, the Act excludes Muslims.
- Even as the original immigrants await citizenship, many of their descendants born in India who are eligible for citizenship by birth are struggling to enroll as voters. The **refugees were given voting rights in 2004**.
- For a very long time local people have been protesting against Chakmas and Hajongs because of their differing ethnicity.
 - If the Chakmas and Hajongs are ejected from Arunachal Pradesh, **Assam shall be the dumping ground for all the unwanted communities in the States covered by the Inner-Line Permit** (Manipur, Mizoram and Nagaland besides Arunachal Pradesh) **and the Sixth Schedule areas** (Meghalaya).

[Source: TH](#)

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