

# “The Sundry Responses on the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016 in the North Eastern Indian States especially in Assam”

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## Abstract:

*In this Study bring the light and provide knowledge about the Sundry Responses on the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016 in the North Eastern Indian States especially in Assam. This Bill amends the Citizenship Act of 1955 and defines who can be a citizen of India. The three salient features of this Bill are – the Bill amend the Citizenship Act, 1955 to make illegal migrants who are Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis and Christians from Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan, eligible for citizenship; under the Act, one of the requirements for Citizenship by Naturalisation is that the applicant must have resided in India during the last 12 months, and for 11 of the previous 14 years. The bill relaxes these 11 years requirements to six years for persons belonging to the same six religions and three countries; and the Bill provides that the registration of Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) cardholders may be cancelled if they violate any law. It is first and second features which has come under heavy criticism in the North Eastern Indian States like Assam, Meghalaya and Tripura. Apart from the migrants on the basis of religion, as most of the other communities except the Muslims become eligible for citizenship in India, it also makes it easy for the illegal immigrants to become Indian citizen, if they belong to any of the six communities mentioned. The study focused and tries to analyses the mix responses of the proposed Bill. In this regards to carrying out the paper works, it has been followed the data collection on the basis of primary and secondary sources.*

Key Words: Citizenship, Bill, Rights, Protest, Migrants, Amendment, Oppose, Propose

## Introduction

Citizenship constitutes the indispensable foundational principles of democratic polity. A citizen means a person owing allegiance to and entitled to the protection of a sovereign state. According to Blackwell, “Citizenship means a full and responsible membership of State”. A citizen enjoys fundamental rights including right to work, right to vote, right to return, are also subjected to duties or obligation, such as paying taxes. It reflects that the right to citizenship is not absolute one, and the legislature may impose reasonable restrictions on the enjoyment of one’s citizenship.

Like any other modern state, India has two kinds of people- citizens and aliens. Citizens are full members of the Indian States and owe allegiance to it. They enjoy all civil and political rights. Aliens, on the other hand, are the citizens of some other state and hence, do not enjoy all the civil and political rights. They are of two categories- friendly aliens and enemy aliens. Friendly aliens are the subjects of those countries that have cordial relations with India. Enemy aliens are subjects that country that is at war with India, they do not enjoy protection against arrest and detention (*Article 22*).

In India, Citizens enjoys full civil and political rights. There are certain fundamental rights which are available only to the Indian citizens. An Indian citizen has the right not to be discriminated against any citizen on ground of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth (*Article 15*); the right to equality of opportunity in the matter of public appointment (*Article 16*); the right to six freedoms (*Article 19*); cultural and educational rights (*Articles 29 and 30*). Furthermore, there are certain constitutional positions which belong to only Indian citizens like the office of the President (*Article 58*); Vice-President (*Article 67*); Judges of the Supreme Court (*Article 124 (3) or of High Court, Article 217*); Attorney-General (*Article 76 (1)*); Governor of the State (*Article 157*); Advocate General of a State (*Article 165*).

The matter of the citizenship was discussed in detail at the time of the making of the Indian Constitution. The Constitution makers considered the willingness and unwillingness of all people regarding their stay in India. It was strictly determined whether they want to settle permanently in India or not. However, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar recommended that the Parliament should make a law over the matter of citizenship. But he further emphasized on one of the fact that such law should not be permanent. The Indian Constitution does not define citizenship. It describes classes of person, who became automatically the citizens of India at the time of the commencement of the Constitution. It is the parliament who has an authority to make law on citizenship. In exercise of its power the parliament has enacted the *Indian Citizenship Act, 1955*. The Constitution of India deals with the citizenship from *Articles 5 to 11 under Part II*. However, it contains neither any permanent nor any elaborate provisions in this regard. It only identifies the persons who became citizens of India at its commencement, that is, on January 26, 1950. It does not deal with the problem of acquisition or loss of citizenship subsequent to its commencement.

### 1. The rationale of the present study

The rationale lies in the fact that till now no proper study has been conducted on the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016 in the Northeast especially for the Assam State. At this point, let's illustrate upon the varied responses on the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016. The Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016 was introduced by the centre in Lok Sabha in July 2016 to amend the Citizenship Act, 1955 to make illegal migrants who belong to *six communities' viz. Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis and the Christians from Bangladesh, Pakistan and Afghanistan*, eligible for citizenship of India. The present Citizenship Act allows an immigrant to apply for citizenship if she/he has lived in India for 12 months immediately before the application, and for 11 of the last 14 years. On July 19, 2016, the Government introduced the Amendment Bill in the Lok Sabha, relaxing 11 year cut-off to six years out of 14, for immigrants of the six religions from the three countries. Also, in 2015 and 2016, the Government passed two notifications exempting such immigrants from the Foreigners Act 1946 and the Passport (Entry into India) Act 1920 – which provide for deportation – and enabling them to continue living in India if they had arrived before December 31, 2014.

There have been two waves of protests, for or against the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016. During and after the visit of a Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC comprising 16 members headed by BJP MP Rajendra Agrawal) to Assam and Meghalaya (May 7-10) to collect the feedback, the Brahmaputra Valley saw protest opposing the Bill while the Barak Valley saw counter-protests in the Bill's support. In Guwahati, 135 groups submitted memorandums – one was signed in blood – objection the Bill. In Silchar, hundreds of organisations pushed for the Bill. In Shillong, the Meghalaya Cabinet decided to oppose the Bill.

Two stands in Assam, opponents feel the Bill will aggravate the problem of illegal migration. Those in favour felt it will help end alienation of Bengali Hindus living in Assam, many of them in Barak Valley. *Brahmaputra Valley*, the opponents stress Assam cannot accommodate any more immigrants and felt the Bill goes against the Assam Accord, 1985 signed between the Rajiv Gandhi led Government and leaders of the Assam movement spearheaded by the All Assam Students' Union (AASU) against illegal Bangladeshi immigrants – irrespective of religion. Under the Accord, any person who came into Assam after midnight of March 24, 1971, would be identified as a foreigner. A non-obstante clause was inserted in the Citizenship Act, 1955 under Section 6A. AASU general secretary, Lurin Jyoti Gogoi says, *"This basically meet the cutoff date for citizenship to migrants in Assam was March 24, 1971, while for the rest of the country it was 1950"*. Barak Valley, the linguistic divide between the two regions can be traced back to 1947, when most parts of Bengali-speaking Sylhet joined East Pakistan, while one part was retained in India and is part of Barak Valley. Those pressing for the Bill express concern about *"Pakistan Victims"* who have been displaced and persecuted. *"Where will they go? No other country will give them shelter"*, says Haridas Dutta, General Secretary of Nagorik Satro Rokhya Songram Parishad. Again Dutta says, *"We want the six-year naturalisation period to be relaxed to six months"*.

### 2. Statement of the Problem

In view of the above, the statement of the problem of the study can be stated as under *"The Sundry Responses on the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016 in the North Eastern Indian States especially in Assam"*.

### 3. Objective of the Study

The main objective of the paper is to show that how the peoples/citizens and different groups' is going to responses on the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016 and participation, view, agitation, protests, sundry, etc. in the present proposes Bill. To explore facts and find out the nature of the problems and to understand the problem, and suggest the measure is the central study of this paper.

### 4. Methodology

The Study follows descriptive method. In this Study the data have been collected by using both primary and secondary source. The present study is delimited only to North Eastern Indian States especially for the Assam region and also to secondary data, collected through internet, books, TV news, and newspapers. The primary data will be collected with the help of interview, observation as well as discussion. A total number of 550 peoples will be selected from the area of Assam State. For the data collection self structured questionnaire will be distributed to the selected respondents. Along with these, informal interviews and focused group discussion will also be conducted with the people and locally available different organisations.

### 5. Result and Discussion

In this Study collected secondary data are analysed by descriptive method by using data and diagram. In the data are analysed in relation to the objective of the paper as under:

#### Total Population of Northeast India

Northeast India which is officially known as North-Eastern Region, NER, is the easternmost region of India representing both a geographic and political administrative division of the country. It comprises eight states- Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Meghalaya, Tripura and Sikkim. The states of NER are officially under the North Eastern Council (NEC), constituted in 1971 as the acting agency for development of the north eastern states. Long after induction of NEC, Sikkim formed part of the North Eastern Region as the Eight State in 2002. The region is the home of extraordinary diverse mosaic of ethnic groups having distinctive social, cultural and economic identity. As per census data from 1971 to 2011 about four percent of India's total population has been contributed from the north-eastern region. According to the census 2011, the total population of the region is about 45 million, of which Assam contributes the highest 68 percent of the total population followed by Tripura 8

percent. The population of Assam is 31 million compared to only 3.67 million in Tripura, 2.96 in Meghalaya and 2.72 million in Manipur. Sikkim records the least with 0.61 million population. The following table shows the figure:

**Table 5.1 Population of North East Indian States from 1971 to 2011 (in thousands)**

| States            | 1971          | 1981          | 1991          | 2001           | 2011           |
|-------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|----------------|
| Assam             | 14625         | 18041         | 22414         | 26656          | 31169          |
| Arunachal Pradesh | 468           | 632           | 865           | 1098           | 1383           |
| Nagaland          | 516           | 775           | 1210          | 1990           | 1981           |
| Mizoram           | 332           | 494           | 690           | 889            | 1091           |
| Manipur           | 1073          | 1421          | 1837          | 2294           | 2722           |
| Tripura           | 1556          | 2053          | 2757          | 3199           | 3671           |
| Meghalaya         | 1012          | 1336          | 1775          | 2319           | 2964           |
| Sikkim            | 210           | 316           | 406           | 541            | 608            |
| North East Total  | <b>19792</b>  | <b>23788</b>  | <b>31954</b>  | <b>38986</b>   | <b>45588</b>   |
| India             | <b>548160</b> | <b>683329</b> | <b>846303</b> | <b>1028737</b> | <b>1210193</b> |

Source: Census of India 1971, 1981, 1991, 2001 and 2011.

The above table shows that the total population of the North Eastern Indian States. During the field survey it was founded that the responses of the people on the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016 are not appreciable. To examine the Government efforts on Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016, asked to respondents, "How do you evaluate government's performance on the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016 for Assam State? The following table shows in the reality:

**Table 5.2 How do you evaluate government's performance on Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016 for Assam State?**

| Sl. No            | Excellent         | Good               | Poor                | Total      |
|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------|---------------------|------------|
| All Communities   | 15                | 50                 | 210                 | 275        |
| Some organisation | 02                | 15                 | 259                 | 275        |
| <b>Total</b>      | <b>17 (3.09%)</b> | <b>65 (11.81%)</b> | <b>469 (85.27%)</b> | <b>550</b> |

Source: Field Survey

In this data in table shows and reveals that a majority of people 85.27 percent were not satisfied of Government's performance on the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016. Only 11.81 percent says that the Government's performance on the Bill is good and another 03.09 percent says it is excellent.

### Scribes' body opposes Citizenship Bill

On May 5, 2018, a meeting was held of the All Assam Journalists' Union (AAJU) with editors of various newspapers vehemently opposed the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill and said that a delegation of editors would visit New Delhi and submit a memorandum to Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The editors were unanimous in their opposition to the Centre's move and said that it would trigger an existential crisis for the indigenous populace of Assam. It may be recalled that a mass convention was held at Tezpure under the aegis of AAJU on March 12, where 52 organisations, including representative bodies of indigenous communities, made a strong pitch against the Centre's proposed Bill. The meeting had also resolved to launch a drive aimed at garnering public support against the Bill.

### Bill will frustrate Assam Accord

On May 7, 2018, making a case to oppose the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016, former CM Prafulla Kumar Mahanta of Assam said the proposed law has the potential to make the indigenous people minorities in Assam and frustrate the very purpose of the Assam Accord. Mahanta said in his memorandum to the Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC), "It violates the main clause of the Assam Accord. While we are pressing for Constitutional safeguard to the indigenous people, the proposed amendment has posed a threat to the language, culture, heritage and economy of Assam". He maintained that if religious minorities are given citizenship, Assam would have to bear the largest burden with 2-3 lakh Bangladeshi Bengalis likely to settle in each Assembly Constituency of the state. Importantly he added, the indigenous people of the state will be reduced to minority in terms of linguistic, political and cultural numbers. The Asom Gana Parishad (AGP), an ally of the ruling BJP-led coalition government in Assam, also made a separate representation opposing the Bill. AGP President and State Agricultural Minister Atul Bora claimed that the amendment was against the spirit of the preamble of the constitution, which defines India as a Secular State.

### All in State opposed to Bill

On May 7, 2018, reiterating that there has been widespread resentment in Assam after the Bill to amend the Citizenship Act was tabled in the Parliament; the Congress told JPC that all parties and organisations in Assam, except for the BJP, is opposed to the Bill. "The Bill has created distrust and division among different sections in the State. It is also against the principles of the Constitution," a congress delegation led by APCC president Ripun Bora told the JPC during its day-long public hearing. Asking the JPC to keep intact the provision of the Assam Accord for the interest of the Assam and the Country, the Congress said the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016 is going to destroy the basic principle of the State Reorganisations Act, 1956 which was enacted on the recommendation of the State Reorganisation Commission of 1953 constituted by the Government of India under



which states were created on linguistic basis. The Congress also pointed out to the process of updating the NRC which is being done to ensure that illegal influx of migrants cannot pose a threat to the unique identity of the people of Assam.

### **Writes to PM over Citizenship issue**

Leader of opposition in the Assam Legislative Assembly Debabrata Saikia has called upon Prime Minister to take steps for protection of members of linguistic minority community who are genuine Indian Citizens residing in Assam, while adding that adoption of the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016 would jeopardize the identity, land rights, culture and way of the life of the local people of the state. Saikia has sent a letter to the PM in this regard. He said, *“At the present time, there is widely pervasive disquiet in Assam regarding the ramifications of the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016, brought in by the Government of India. It is being justifiably feared that the provisions of the Bill would nullify the cut-off deadline of 1971 which was adopted via the Assam Accord of 1985 for the purpose of detecting and deporting the illegal migrants present in Assam. Such a development, by way of consequence, would eventually jeopardise the identity, land rights, culture and way of life of the local populace.”* In the letter, the senior Congress leader cited cases pertaining to some suspected ‘D’ voters being sent to detention camps, among which there were some centenarians as well as relatives of senior political leaders. He added that since the obvious goal of the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016 is to help the Hindu Bangladeshi migrants, among others, the Central Government’s immediate priority should be to protect the rights and interest of those migrants who have already become genuine citizens of India. There is no objection per se to the resettlement of any refugees by the Government of India in any state “except those neighbouring Assam.”

### **JPC on Citizenship Bill starts hearing amid protest**

Thirty-three years after the culminating of the Assam Agitation, people of the State came out in their hordes yet again, this time to protest the proposed amendment to the citizenship law before a Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) which held a public hearing here on 7 May, 2018. Since in the morning, the venue of the hearing, Assam Administrative Staff College, witnessed spontaneous outrage of people who even shouted slogan at the gate and display placards making clear their disapproval to the proposed new law that seeks to give Indian citizenship to illegal migrants who belong to six communities- Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis and Christians.

### **Meghalaya Govt. to oppose Citizenship Bill**

The Meghalaya Democratic Alliance (MDA) government decided to oppose the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016 proposed by the Centre to make migrants of six communities eligible for citizenship of India. The unanimous decision was taken at a Cabinet meeting chaired by CM Conrad K Sangma ahead of the May 10 visit by the JPC on the Bill, to solicit views from the state government and stakeholders. Asked the reason behind the decision by the Meghalaya government in which the BJP is one of the coalition partners, Tynsong said the Cabinet has decided to oppose the Bill as it does not serve the purpose of the people of the State, which is a small tribal one. The CM Sangma has expressed the view that the Government of India should reconsider its decision on the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill as it would have serious impact in the North Eastern states having long international boundary with Bangladesh. It is primary responsibility of any Government or political party to protect the interests of their own people. We felt that the Bill would affect the interest of our own citizens and that is why we took a decision opposing the Bill. The identity of the indigenous people of the state must be protected at any cost and hoped that the centre would reconsider its decision in the interest of the people of not only of Meghalaya but also of the other states off the region.

### **Govt. will never allow foreigners to become rulers in State (Assam)**

Virtually isolated politically in the Assam State over the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016, the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) believes that the protests that have been generated against the proposed legislation is due to incitement by its political opponents, and that these are temporary in nature and will peter out soon. The senior leaders of the saffron party ‘Leftist’ and ‘Left-wing’ forces are trying to incite the people against the BJP in the name of the Bill. State BJP general secretary Rupam Goswami said, *“Some forces are trying to incite the people. Some people atmosphere will not sustain for long.”* He added that the government headed by CM Sarbananda Sonowal would not let any threat come to the local people as well as their culture and way of life. *The BJP will never allow foreigners to become rulers of Assam.”*

### **Citizenship Bill will have serious impact**

The Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016 may have a serious impact on the social, economic and political scenario of the State, warned former Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) HS Brahma. He also questioned how a Government can give citizenship to someone on the basis of religion in a secular democratic country. Brahma pointed out that Assam has a very high density of population and a huge number of indigenous people do not their own land. A large number of indigenous people were also rendered homeless because of natural calamities like flood, erosion etc and they are forced to live on embankments, roadsides etc. Under the circumstances, Assam is not in a position to take any more burdens of people. He also said that before trying to give citizenship to foreign nationals, the Government should first try to rehabilitate the indigenous people who do not have their own land. He asked the Government to clarify whether the State has spare land to accommodate foreigners. He further pointed out that it is illogical to provide citizenship to someone on the basis of religion in a secular democratic country. He expressed the view that any foreign national should be treated as a foreigner irrespective of his or her religion in a secular country like India. Does any nation distinguish a foreigner on the basis of religions, he added.

### **Arunachal Pradesh Govt. criticise for not insisting on JPC visit to State**

Congress in Arunachal Pradesh has criticised the Pema Khandu Government for its failure to insist that the JPC visit the State to collect views and suggestions from the stakeholders of the State on the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill. A State which is encountering major problems due to Chakma, Hajong, Tibetans and illegal immigrants, is left untouched by the JPC, Arunachal Pradesh Congress Committee (APCC) vice-president Minkir Lolen said in a statement. He condemned the state Government for keeping the people of the state in the dark about the JPC visit on Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016. Since the 70s, the refugee problem is a burning issue in a state,. The issue has been always taken casually and the centre did not address proactively keeping in mind the sentiment of indigenous people till date, Lolen alleged.

### **A torchlight rally in protest against Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016**

Tinsukia District Committee of Asom Jatiyatabadi Yuva Chatra Parishad (AJYCP) in collaboration with several national and ethnic organisations brought out a torchlight rally in Doomdooma town protesting against the proposed Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016. Hundreds of people including women spontaneously participated in the rally. The rally began from Doomdooma town field and after passing through the main streets of the town ended at Gandhi Chowk where a protest meeting was held. Addressing the meeting, the leaders strongly opposed the proposed Bill and urged all to come forward to protest the Bill.

### **No decision against people's interest**

The CM of Assam Sorbananda Sonowal heading the BJP-AGP-BPF alliance government in the State asserted that he would not take any decision on the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016 that would go against the wishes and interest of the people of Assam. Interacting with 21 senior editors of print and audio-visual media at the Brahmaputra State Guest House, he appealed to the media editors to ensure that communal harmony is maintained in the State and the atmosphere in the State is not vitiated.

### **NESO launches agitation against Bill**

Launching a joint protest against the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016, the North East Students' Organisation (NESO) – a forum of Students' organisations of North-eastern states- staged a protest demonstration. The NESO leaders asserted that the Northeast would never accept the discriminatory Citizenship (Amendment) Bill that would put additional burden of migrants on the 'Seven States'. NESO advisor Samjjal Bhattacharya said, *"New Delhi has always exploited the Northeast politically and economically. Now, constitutional safeguard for the entire Northeast is the only way to protect our languages, cultures and indigenous identities. We would never accept any illegal migrants who have come here after 1971"*. The member organisation of NESO would launch a series of agitation activities throughout the region. The AASU has also announced various protest activities at the district and subdivision level to mobilise public opinion against the Bill.

### **ATEU strongly opposes the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill**

The Assam Tribune Employees' Union (ATEU) has strongly opposed the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016, and called upon the government to withdraw the proposed legislation without any delay. In a statement issued ATEU president Santanava Hazarika and general secretary Dugdha Ram Kalita said the Bill poses a serious existential threat to the people of Assam and to the State's socio-economic situation. Instead of solving the foreigners issue and other burning problems like flood and erosion, the government is now trying to put more burdens on the State by providing citizenship to the Bangladeshi Hindus. This shows the irresponsible attitude of the government and its utter incompetence and Assam is not position to bear the burden of more foreigners. So, it is illogical to provide citizenship to the people on the basis of religion and it is against the Indian Secularism.

### **Citizenship Bill opposed**

The Manipuri National Council (MNC) has opposed the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016. In a statement issued the MNC said it will take part in any movement organised to oppose the proposed legislation. It called upon the Centre to withdraw the Bill and said the proposed legislation is a clear violation of the historic Assam Accord and against the spirit of secularism enshrined in the Constitution of India.

### **Protest against Citizenship Bill continues**

On May 12, 2018 the several people took part in the two hour-long protest organised in Rajgarh town intersection by the journalists of Tingkhong Assembly constituency against the proposed Bill. The journalist body said that the proposed amendment in the Act is highly inimical to the indigenous people of Assam and to the federal structure of the state and, therefore, it need to be withdrawn. Local people in collaboration with different organisation and students' bodies and a large number of women spontaneously participated in it.

### **NE journalists' body opposes Citizenship Bill**

The Union government's move to amend the Citizenship Act, 1955, to confer citizenship to the religious minorities from Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh has hit another roadblock in the region with the Northeast India Federation of Journalists (NIFJ) vehemently opposing the centre's proposed legislation, Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016. The federation strongly condemned the Central Government's move and demanded that the proposed amendment be scrapped. NIFJ was of strongly conviction that the Centre's move will jeopardise the survival and very existence of the small indigenous communities of the NE states.

### **Writers, Artistes stage protest against Citizenship Bill**

With protest the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016 gaining momentum throughout the state, the writers, artistes and a number of other conscious citizens came out to register their support to the movement for opposing the Bill. The Lekkak Shilpi Samaj, Assam, anew forum, held a public meeting and took out a procession in the city to mobilise public opinion against the Bill as well as to unite artistes and writers of the state to form a strong deterrence so that this proposed legislation could not succeed in altering the socio-demographic pattern of Assam.

### **AGP launches signature campaign**

Under the banner of Rangiya district Committee of Ason Gana Parishad (AGP), a signature campaign was launched in protest against the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016. The Committee would send a memorandum along with the signatures to the PM of India in this connection.

### **Leading bodies oppose Citizenship Bill**

Several organisations including AASU, AJYCP, Tai Ahom Yuba Parishad, Sonowal Kachari Students' Union, Deori Students' Union, Mising Students' Union, Gorkha Students' Union, Asam Chah Janagosthi Jatiya Mohasabha, etc have opposed the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016 and took out a torch rally registering their anger and protest.

### **State BJP yet to make stand clear on Citizenship Bill**

While the BJP has all along been in favour of granting citizenship to Hindu Bangladeshi and other minorities from neighbouring countries, the State unit of the saffron party refused to openly back the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016, even as it hinted that party workers, who come out openly against the proposed legislation, may face disciplinary action. Asked repeatedly during a press conference about the BJP Assam unit's position on the Bill, State party president Ranjeet Kumar Dass refused to give a direct answer and only said it will hold talks with various organisations and individuals on the issue after the final draft of the NRC is out.

### **Assam Sahitya Sabha UK Chapter strongly opposes Citizenship Bill**

The Assam Sahitya Sabha UK Chapter (ASSUK), in a letter addressed to the Chairman of the Joint Parliamentary Committee on Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016, has strongly opposed the government's move on the proposed Bill, state a press release. In a letter dated May 12, 2018, president of ASSUK Manjira D Chowdhary said, "On behalf of Assam Sahitya Sabha UK, which was established in 1998 in the UK to promote and propagate the Assamese language, literature and culture, we would like you to know that we, the diasporas of Assam strongly oppose the amendment of the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016. We all are shocked and sadden by such a move to undermine the needs of the indigenous people of Assam. Our old Assam has already been divided into seven small states. What Assam has faced today, no other states have ever faced this situation. *"We vehemently oppose this Bill. We urge you to totally abolish this Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016 with immediate effect"*.

### **Human chain protest against Citizenship Bill**

The local units of AASU, AJYCP, ATSU and Manab Adhikar Sangram Samiti form a human chain protest at Raha Chariali (Assam) against the Bill. The organisations, in a press release, have appealed to all to join them to form a massive human chain and register their protests. Talking to correspondent, the leaders of the organisations said, *"We feel the Bill will affect our language and culture. Besides, it will ruin our greater Assamese society. We therefore, opposed the Bill and request all to do the same"*. Organisation further said that they have decided to launch a series of agitations if the BJP-led government in the state and at the centre fail to take a positive decision in the interests of people of Assam.

### **Citizens' meet asks Sonowal CM of Assam to clear stand**

The citizens' meeting held at Nalbari (Assam) AASU office called upon CM Sonowal to clear his stand on the proposed Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016 immediately. The meeting held under the presidentship of Pankaj Govinda Medhi, a popular write felt that the proposed Bill has created a tense situation in the State. If the Bill turns into law it will pose a serious threat to the language, literature and culture of this region. The meeting strongly opposed the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill and called upon the State government to join hands with the people of the State respecting their sentiments.

### **AICC directs State Cong to oppose Bill**

Division within the Assam Congress over Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016, led the AICC to intervene, as it decided to oppose the Bill and support 1971 as the cut-off date as agreed in the Assam Accord. The two factions of the Congress representing the Brahmaputra and Barak Valley agreed to a truce brokered by the AICC. The two faction in the end arrived at a consensus to take a united stand on the Bill and follow the directions of the AICC, in this regard. Congress leader Gautam Roy had stressed on supporting the Bill on humanitarian grounds, but said the entire country should take the responsibility of those granted citizenship by the Bill, not Assam alone.

### **GUTA opposes Bill**

The Gauhati University Teachers' Association (GUTA) has said that the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016, violates the secular spirit of the Constitution of India and goes against the interest of the people of Assam. In an executive body meeting held, the Association said the Bill provisions dilute the spirit of the Assam Accord. It is said the Bill would jeopardise the very identity of the indigenous people of the state. Possibilities are very high of the indigenous people getting alienated from their own land



and losing hold over the economy, which has already been eroded to a great extent due to lack of any Constitutional safeguards, in spite of a clear mention in the Assam Accord, Association added.

### **Demand for error-free NRC, scrapping of Citizenship Bill**

The AASU and SAKP organisations announced a series of programmes throughout the state, demanding concrete measures to secure the future of the indigenous people of Assam and opposing the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016. In a joint meeting of the SAKP office-bearers and representatives of the Students body held at Swahid Nyas, both the organisations decided to take up the issue of an error-free NRC in the state and register strong protest against granting citizenship to illegal migrants in the name of religion. The Students body said, “The second draft of the NRC will be published on June 30 and hardly a few days are left for the verification process and other related activities. Government officers and employees are making every possible effort to bring out an error-free NRC. We request the state government to provide adequate security of the official and employees associated with the NRC update work in vulnerable areas.

### **Chief Minister Sonowal: falling short on hopes**

“*Sarbananda Sonowal will be the worthiest chief minister; the people of Assam have ever got after Gopinath Bordoloi*”. This was our assumption at the time when Sonowal was projected as the chief ministerial candidate in the Assam Assembly elections in 2016. Then we tried to find out some obvious contrasts between Tarun Gogoi, the then chief minister of Assam and Sarbananda Sonowal and we placed the latter a few rungs above the former. We hoped that he could bear in him the characteristic of the “National Hero” as he was branded by the people of Assam and will do his best to protect *jati, mati* and *bheti*. But as the days have passed, his bold protesting voice has gone. Putting on the straightjacket of the saffronites, he like obedient students obeys the high command’s diktat on anything he is asked to do, giving a cold shoulder to the problems of the common masses. He could have expressed his dissensions over the issues of handing over the KNP and the three historical monuments to the private companies, the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016 before a commotion grew up among the multitude. People of Assam do not want to hear the voice of Delhi oozing out through his throat. We expect to see a daring personality in him like his Meghalaya counterpart (Girin Gogoi, Sunpura, Sibsagar).

### **ULFA leaders oppose citizenship Bill**

The pro-talk ULFA leaders have strongly opposed the proposed Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016. Leaders opined, it will pose a serious threat to Assamese people if the Bill turns into a law. They said that the militant outfit has been working for the interest of the indigenous people of the State and is committed to continue their work.

### **AMSU protest citizenship Bill**

Protest against the Bill continues to pour different part of the State. In a major development in Upper Assam the All Moran Students’ Union (AMSU) announced that a memorandum before the JPC is being prepared for despatch. Union’s president announced that their memorandum opposing the Bill will be accompanied by signatures of one lakh persons and demanded an immediate halt to “*colonial exploitation*” of the North East by the Centre, and desist from any steps that would disturb social, religious and linguistic harmony in the North East.

### **Bill will help those who entered India illegally**

The statement objects and reasons for bringing the citizenship (amendment) Bill, 2016 reveals the foreign nationals who entered India even without any valid documents can apply for Indian Citizenship. This can lead to serious complications as there is no mechanism to determine who entered India from which country and the date for his or her entry into India, in the statement of objects and reasons for the Bill, the Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh said, “*Under the provisions of the Citizenship Act, persons belonging to the minority communities such as Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis and Christians from Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan who have either entered India without valid travel documents or the validity of their stay have expires, are treated as illegal migrants and hence ineligible to apply for Indian Citizenship. It is proposed to make them eligible to apply for Indian Citizenship*”. Moreover, such persons would have to stay in India for at least six years to become eligible to apply for Indian Citizenship. Highly placed official sources told The Assam Tribune that the decision to allow those who entered India without valid travel documents to apply for Indian Citizenship may lead to serious complications. Sources pointed out that as there is no mechanism in India to determined which illegal migrants entered India at what point of time, any illegal migrants belonging to the said communities can apply for Indian Citizenship if the Bill is passed and till date, the Government of India does not have any mechanism to determine whether the persons are giving correct information.

### **Left-Democratic March to march to Raj Bhavan**

The left-Democratic March, Assam, a conglomeration of 11 Left and Democratic parties of the Stat, has decided to take out a march to the Raj Bhavan on 11 March next as part of its State-wide agitations in support of its demand for scrapping the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016. The March said in a statement that its constituent parties – CPI, CPI-M, CPI-ML, NCP, Janata Dal, Assam Sangrami Mancha, Liberal Democratic Party, Aam Admi Party, Samajwadi Party, RCPI and AIFB – opposed the Bill in a meeting held on May 13, 2018. They were of the opinion that the Bill is against the secular spirit of the Indian Constitution.

### **Citizenship Bill tramples on sacrifice of martyrs'**

Chhaygaon MLA Rekitabuddin Ahmed has vehemently opposed the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016 saying that the bill will trigger an existential crisis for the indigenous populace of Assam. Addressing a public meeting held at Kolohipar (Assam), Ahmed said that the Bill brought out by BJP-led Union Government has violated the Assam Accord signed between then PM Rajiv Gandhi and AASU and poses a threat to the identity of the indigenous citizens of the State. The Bill has trampled on the sacrifice of the 800 martyrs of Assam during the Assam agitations. "Assam is treated as the dumping ground for foreigners which would not be allowed, he added.

### **Citizenship Bill opposed continues**

Talking a strong exception to the proposed Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016, the Assam Tribune Sports Club demanded immediate withdraw of the Bill and asserted that Assam is not under any compulsion to take the burden of foreigners. At a meeting held here, members of the Club expressed serious apprehension about the fallout of the proposed Bill.

### **Cong stages protest against Bill**

On May 18, 2018, the INC organised a protest march against the proposed Citizenship (Amendment) Bill in different parts of the district and submitted memorandum to chairman of the JPC on Bill through their respective circle officers and developmental blocks. Several people came out to protest in their respective areas despite the scorching heat. During the protest march, the Congress workers said through posters and slogans that they will not allow granting of citizenship to Hindu Bangladeshi in the State.

### **Citizenship (Amendment) Bill will nullify Assam Accord**

Expressing concern over the Centre's move to rehabilitate illegal Bangladeshi migrants through the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016, the Natun Sahitya Parishad (a literary body) said the proposed Act would nullify the Assam Accord, the all-accepted document for determination and deportation of illegal migrants based on the cut-off date of March 25, 1971. *"The Assam Accord clearly mandates detection and deportation of illegal migrants without discriminating on religious basis. The new Bill goes against the secular tenets of the country's Constitutional and is communal in nature. Assam in particular will be the worst hit by the Bill, as it would pave the way for large-scale settlement of Hindu Bangladeshi migrants as Indian Citizens in the State"*, it said in the statement.

### **Scribes oppose Citizenship Bill**

On May 19, 2018, members of Kaziranga Regional Journalists' Association in collaboration with leading local citizens held a demonstration at Kohora (Assam) to oppose the proposed Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016. In a meeting AGP leader said, *"The Government should implement provisions of the Assam Accord clause by clause. The BJP Government has blatantly ignored the regional interests. We are conducting door to door visits as part of our Signature Campaign and people have supported us"*.

### **Citizenship Bill violates Assam Accord**

Raising the issue of the citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016, at the North East Democratic Alliance (NEDA) platform AGP president Atul Bora said the proposed legislation will violate provisions of the Assam Accord and pose threat to the indigenous people of the State while calling upon BJP Chief Amit Shah to ensure that the Centre does not proceed further in this regard. *"The Assam Accord is the fruit of the six-year-long Assam Agitations. If the citizenship Bill is passed, it will change Assam's demography. We feel that there should not be any division of people on religious lines. The Centre should not proceed further with the Bill"*, Bora added.

### **KMSS stages protest against Citizenship Bill**

Activities of Krishak Mukti Sangram Samity (KMSS) led by Akhil Gogoi stage protest at various places in the city (Guwahati) coinciding with the visit of BJP president Amit Shah. KMSS had called upon the public to stage protest against the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016.

### **Mahasangha begins three days fast**

On May 21, 2018, a three day long token fast began under the aegis of the Asom Sanmilita Mahasangha near the Judges' Field in protest against the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016. In a statement, the Mahasangha urged organisations and political parties opposing the Bill to lend their support to the case filed by the Mahasangha in the Supreme Court. *"The Bill is based on the notification of September 7, 2015, and the Mahasangha had filed a case challenge it in January 2016. The Supreme Court Bench, after three hearing, referred the case to the Constitutional Bench on March 10, 2016, which is still pending"*, the Mahasangha said in the statement. The Mahasangha also said that those who had been protesting against the Bill should also agree to the cut-off year of 1951 instead of 1971 for determining illegal Bangladeshi migrants.

### **Citizenship Bill opposed**

Members of Dhemaji District Citizens' Association and Dhemaji District Senior Citizens' Association have vehemently opposed the proposed Bill. The meeting attended by around 500 people and addressing the organisers that the Narendra Modi-led BJP Government has brought the Citizenship (amendment) Bill, 2016 at the Centre to grant citizenship to the Hindu Bangladeshi



migrants. This move will destroy the indigenous identity of Assam and the Assamese people. The BJP government has ignored the regional interest and called upon the people to be united against this Bill.

### **Mizoram, Manipur join protest against Citizenship Bill**

Joining their counterpart across North East, Mizoram's apex Students' body Mizo Zirlai Pawl (MZP) staged a sit-in protest against the proposed Citizenship (amendment) Bill. About 500 activities, with banners, placards in hand, raised slogans against Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, demanding the centre to immediately withdraw the Bill. The MZP also appealed to people to join them in their protest against the Bill. Speaking at the sit-in organised in front of Vanapa Hall, MZP president L Ramdinliana Renthlei said, "*The proposed Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016, if passed in the Parliament, will pose a serious threat to the indigenous people of NE and Mizoram. It will open a wide door for social assimilation to the people, who are already facing such threats from Bangladesh.*"

A sit-in protest against Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016 was held under the aegis of All Manipur Students' Union (AMSU). AMSU, a constituent body of North East Students organisation (NESO) which had termed the Bill unconstitutional and not acceptable as the identity of the indigenous people was at stake, also submitted a memorandum to Chief Minister N Biren Singh and urged him to oppose the proposed Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016.

### **Mass hunger strike against Bill on May 29, 2018**

Demanding withdrawal of the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016 constitutional safeguard for the indigenous people of Assam, implementation of the Assam Accord and sealing of the Indo-Bangladesh border, the AASU and other 28 organisations representing different ethnic communities of the state would sit for a mass hunger strike on May 29, 2018. As part of the AASU's multi-pronged strategy to protest the Bill and demand an error-free NRC for Assam, a vigorous mass movement would be started throughout the state with support from the 28 ethnic bodies from June, which has been named as '*Gana Satyagraha*'. All Bodo Students' Union (ABSU) leader Promod Boro asserted that the amendment being sought by the Union Government is lilted towards the illegal foreigners and existing Indian Citizens as the small ethnic groups of the Northeast are bound to suffer because of it.

### **CPM expresses concern over Citizenship Bill**

The politburo of the Communist Party of India-Marxist (CPI-M) has expressed serious concern over the development in Assam and the North East on the issue of the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016. In a press statement the CPM politburo said that the fragile unity of people belonging to immense diversity in the region has come under a severe strain due to the central government's efforts to amend the Citizenship Act on the basis of religious affinity of the people. This has come at a time when the linguistic minorities are under severe pressure due to incomplete and deliberate discriminating in the process of the updating of the National Register of Citizens (NRC) and the category of doubtful voters, it added.

### **Sabha team meets CM on Citizenship Bill**

A five-member Assam Sahitya Sabha delegation, led by its president Dr Paramananda Rajbongshi, called on Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal at his office and held a threadbare discussion on issues concerning the citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016, and some other burning topics connected with the safeguard of Assam's State language and other recognised indigenous languages, said the Sabha in a press release. The Sabha clearly appraised the CM of its views on the proposed Bill and the process of updating the NRC, and made an appeal to the State Government to take firm steps in the greater interest of indigenous languages, literatures, culture and demographic pattern of Assam.

### **Citizenship Bill will violate Assam Accord**

The Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016 will violate the provisions of the Assam Accord and the Government should stick to the Accord for the purpose of detection and deportation of foreigners. This was the view expressed by former Union Home Secretary GK Pillai. He said that it is not correct to classify foreigners on the basis of their religion and it is not possible for a State like Assam to take additional burden of foreigner nationals.

### **Bihar CM extends support to AASU**

Bihar CM and Janata Dal (United) president Nitish Kumar has extended his full support to the All Assam Students' Union's move to oppose the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016. Kumar would write to Prime Minister Narendra Modi about the imminent threat to the identity of indigenous population of Assam and the Northeast if the Bill is passed.

### **Cong hits the streets in Kokrajhar against Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016**

Along with rest of the State, Kokrajhar district committee of the INC under the leadership of Biswajit Ray, general secretary of APCC and in charge of Kokrajhar district committee, organised a protest rally against the proposed Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016. A good number of party workers joined the rally with different posters, banners and shouted slogans against the Bill. He said, "It is pertinent to mention that after the Assam Accord, the people of the State irrespective of caste, creed, community and religion have been living in peace and harmony. The proposed Bill is going to destroy the basic principle of the state Reorganisation Act, 1956, which was enacted on the recommendations of the State Reorganisation Commission of 1953, constituted by the Union Government under which states were created on linguistic basis".

### Mahanta-led delegation to meet MPS in Delhi

The Asom Andolan Sangrami Mancha, under the leadership of former CM Mahanta has decided to meet MPs from different political parties in New Delhi to garner support against the proposed Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016. *"We are in touch with some political parties in this persuade them to oppose the bill on the floor of the Parliament,"* he said.

### KMSS, AJYCP hold protest march on June 12, 2018

KMSS and AJYCP will jointly organised a massive protest march dubbed as *"Raj Bhavanaloi Boulak"* in Guwahati on June 12 to submit over 10,000 memoranda to the JPC through the Governor demanding withdrawal of the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016. KMSS advisor Akhil Gogoi said that the Centre's decisions to enact a law by passing the bill which will grant citizenship to Hindu illegal migrants from the neighbouring country on the basis of religion was part of the strategy to garner votes across India during 2019 Lok Sabha polls in the name Hindu religion.

### Citizenship Bill opposed

Arup Borbora senior advocate of Gauhati High Court observed that the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016 is going to destroy the greater Assamese community and the Central Government has made all arrangement for it. The people of Assam have been forced to struggle for its survival from time to time. The persecution of Hindus in Bangladesh is baseless and there is a hidden agenda behind it for the expansion of Hinduism in the State in the interest of setting up a vote bank, he claimed.

### Cong will approach SC if Citizenship Bill is passed

Assam Pradesh Congress Committee (APCC) president Ripun Bora said if the BJP Government enforces the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016 as law the Congress will approach the Supreme Court against it.

### Over 130 organisations extend support to mass movement

More than 130 organisations from across the State, besides prominent public activities, intellectuals and citizens extended their support to a democratic mass movement against controversial Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016 in a public convention organised by Asam Sahitya Sabha.

### PPA asks Khandu Govt. to hold meet on Citizenship Bill

Launching a scathing attack on the ruling dispensations, People's Party of Arunachal (PPA) has criticised the Pema Khandu-le BJP Government in the State for maintaining stoic silence on the issues of Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016 and the Chakma-Hajong and Tibetan refugees. The regional outfit has suggested the State Government to convene a meeting of all stakeholders, including all political parties, representatives from refugee affected areas, students unions, and subject experts from Rajiv Gandhi University or other institutions at the earliest to discuss the possible implications of the Bill on Arunachal Pradesh.

In the above mention lines are the some reminiscent sundry responses of the peoples and different organisations on the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016 in the North Eastern Indian states especially in Assam. In this occasion it is not answerable about the situation because the mass movement agitation is still continuing in the region. In addition, an in-depth field survey has been taken in this study area. To examine the Government's decision or efforts on the proposed Bill, asked to respondents, *"How do you calculate Central and States Government's decisions on the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016?"* The following table depict the reality:

**Table: 5.3 "How do you calculate Central and State (Assam) Government's decisions on the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016?"**

| Sl. No            | Very Satisfied     | Satisfied          | Not-Satisfied       | Total      |
|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|------------|
| All Communities   | 02                 | 05                 | 268                 | 275        |
| Some organisation | 00                 | 00                 | 275                 | 275        |
| <b>Total</b>      | <b>02 (00.36%)</b> | <b>05 (00.90%)</b> | <b>543 (98.72%)</b> | <b>550</b> |

Source: Field Survey

The data in table shows that the most of the communities and organisations (98.72 percent) were not satisfied of Government's decisions on the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016. Only (00.90 percent) says that, Government's efforts on the proposed Bill is satisfied and another (00.36 percent) were highly satisfied. On the basis of the data analysis might conclude that the majority of the peoples and organisations were not satisfied of Government's proposed on the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016.

### Conclusion

After Examination of the overall opinion about the situation of the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016, we can conclude with proved conviction on Citizenship Bill has become a matter of serious concern. The decades of anti-foreigners agitations in Brahmaputra Valley was spearheaded by All Assam Students' Union (AASU). It finally culminated into the signing of Assam Accord by the then Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi. As per the Accord signed in 1985, the immigrants, who, came too Assam after March 24, 1971, has to be detected and deported. The National Register of Citizen (NRC) is being updated by the State Government based on the cut- off date. But the new proposed Bill threatens to divide that. This would allow the Bengali Hindu immigrants to get citizenship, something which is being strongly opposed by the parties in Brahmaputra Valley. The peoples and the different organisational groups are vehemently against the New Bill and are now threatening to quit the alliance if the centre goes forward with the Bill. Numerous leaders, including the former CM and firebrand youth leader Prafulla Kumar Mahanta, have

threatened to quit the government over the Bill. Finally, it is not easy to explain the situation like this and it cannot be accept and reject any decision from the both side (Government and Agitators). It's also important to realise that India does not have the resources to absorb anyone and everyone who crosses the border. The demography of the Indian Territory is a large one. Population wise too, India stands in second position. Therefore, we need think and plan wisely before opening our borders to every single refugee out of there. Needless to say, giving asylum to refugees on humanitarian ground and providing permanent citizenship to them are two very different things. For a state like Assam to prosper economically, socially and ethnic harmony also have to be maintained not through any hasty actions. As it is the state has lost several years' worth of progress to movements, bandhs culture and militancy – and these have affected the economy badly. So, it is politely important the Government needs to deal with the Bill with maturity and wisdom and now we have to wait the final resolution.

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**APPENDEX-I****Approximate numbers of immigrants already in India**

1. Bangladeshi refugees (who fled during the 1971 Bangladesh Liberation War: not including illegal immigrants): 10 million
2. Refugees from Tibet: 150,000
3. Kashmiri Pandits (internally displaced): 100,000
4. Afghan refugees: 11,000
5. Hindus from Pakistan: 1,500
6. Muslims from Myanmar: 30,000
7. Sri Lankans: 60,000

| Religion in India (2011 census) |            | Religion in Pakistan (2014) |            | Religion in Bangladesh (2011) |            | Religion in Afghanistan (2018) |            |
|---------------------------------|------------|-----------------------------|------------|-------------------------------|------------|--------------------------------|------------|
| Religion                        | In Percent | Religion                    | In Percent | Religion                      | In Percent | Religion                       | In Percent |
| Hinduism                        | 79.8       | Islam(State Religion)       | 96.24      | Islam                         | 90.39      | Islam                          | 99.7       |
| Islam                           | 14.2       | Hinduism                    | 1.60       | Hinduism                      | 8.54       | Others                         | 0.3        |
| Christianity                    | 2.3        | Christianity                | 1.59       | Buddhism                      | 0.60       |                                |            |
| Sikhism                         | 1.7        | Ahmadi                      | 0.22       | Christianity                  | 0.37       |                                |            |
| Buddhism                        | 0.7        | Others                      | 0.07       | Others                        | 0.14       |                                |            |
| Jainism                         | 0.4        |                             |            |                               |            |                                |            |
| Other religious                 | 0.7        |                             |            |                               |            |                                |            |
| Religion not stated             | 0.2        |                             |            |                               |            |                                |            |

