

Over 110 declared foreigners sent to detention camps in Assam; families claim Indian citizens being harassed

Agency
Guwahati May 10,

Police in Assam have sent more than 110 declared foreigners to detention camps in the last fortnight as it looks for more than 72,000 such people, who remain untraceable, sources have said. The state government has also directed that people who are absconding and declared foreigners must be booked by police, according to a letter sent to the Border Organisation of Assam police. It has also reached out to the office of the state coordinator of the National Register of Citizens (NRC) for details of around 11,000 declared foreigners who have been traced as they tried to enrol in the register, commissioner and secretary of the home and political department Ashutosh Agnihotri said. "We reactivated the task force in April and since then the number of people who have been detained is higher in Lower Assam districts," an official familiar with the development said on condition of anonymity. This rush by the police's special task force to detain

declared foreigners comes in the backdrop of the Supreme Court hearing a petition on the abysmal condition of detention centres in Assam. Families of the some of those who have been picked up claim Indian citizens are being harassed. The family of Tasar Ali, one of the 10 declared foreigners who has been apprehended in the last two days in Kokrajhar, claimed police refused to look at the opinion of the foreigners tribunal which declared him an Indian Citizen in 2012, the voters list naming his as a voter among other documents as they took him away. His son Shafiqul Islam said the 84-year-old Ali was in tears and unwell when he visited him in detention on Wednesday. "I could not stay there for more than five minutes. He wouldn't stop crying," Islam said adding how his father has all the documents and has been declared as an Indian citizen. He had a copy of Ali's voters ID card, PAN card, his name and photo in the voters' list from 2019 among other documents. Mukut Rabha, Kokrajhar's additional superintendent of

police (border), said Ali was detained based on an opinion of the foreigners' tribunal in 2017 against one Tasan Ali from the same Simaltapu village. "Both Tasar Ali and Tasan Ali are the same people, they have the same father's name and are from the same village," Rabha claimed, adding that the 2017 verdict declaring Ali as an illegal immigrant was pronounced ex parte. "We were never served a notice if there was another case on the same charges," Islam said. For Ali and others, it may mean indefinite detention as most of these declared foreigners like him claim to be Indians and thus not accepted by Bangladesh. Only four out of more than 1,03,000 declared foreigners have been repatriated to Bangladesh even as just around 900 are in detention. Aman Wadud, a lawyer who has represented declared foreigners, said if the ultimate intention of detention is deportation, then the action is futile and claimed most of those declared foreigners are in fact Indians. "Almost every declared foreigner is a citizen of India. They have been declared a

foreigner because of hyper-technical reasons like inaccuracies in age and name in documents. Even typographical error can cost you your citizenship," Wadud said. "No country will accept these so-called foreigners just because they have been stripped of Indian citizenship," he added. The actions, including reactivating the task force in districts, follows the deliberations of a joint committee formed by the Union ministry of home affairs. The committee monitors the progress of detection, detention, nationality verification and deportation of illegal migrants, including those declared as foreigners by foreigner tribunals, according to minutes of the meetings. The committee formed in March includes officials of the home ministry, the ministry of external affairs and the state government. It followed the ongoing hearings in the Supreme Court on a petition originally filed by activist Harsh Mander on the abysmal conditions of the detention

centres in Assam which work out of six district jails. Mander had recently claimed in the top court that the petition seems to have been turned on its head by the Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi as he sought his recusal from the case, which was rejected by the bench and Mander removed as a petitioner. "He (CJ) by his remarks and observations in a series of hearings, appears to use the same petition instead to seek detention of tens of thousands of more persons in these detention centres..." Mander told the court. He also recounted oral observations made by CJ where he questioned why only 900 declared foreigners were in detention and so few have been deported and questioned the state government's proposal of the conditional release of some declared foreigners. There are 100 foreigner tribunals active in Assam and the number is proposed to be increased to 1,100 were those marked as suspected illegal immigrants either by the Border Organisation of Assam police or the local election officials have to prove they are Indian citizens.

Your horoscope today

ARIES

Accept challenges that life offers you and keep going through ups and downs realizing that 'this too shall pass'. Change is the constant in life and one has to learn to flow with it. Enjoy every moment - the peak and the valley without getting addicted to it. Lucky number 6. Colour saffron.

TAURUS

You plan a journey with family or friends. Investment in land, home or property is gainful. You make fortunate changes and the right choices. Business deals and financial transactions are conducted smoothly. A special person or relationship is nourishing. Lucky number 1. Colour greens.

GEMINI

You have tiger by the tail today as you control relationships and have a handle on professional projects. You invite loyalty and friendship by giving support. A youthful person or daughter has you wrapped around her little finger. Sporty pastimes can be fun. Lucky number 15. Colour magenta.

CANCER

There is a song in your heart and lightness to your step. Good luck attends material affairs. Triangular personal relationships can cause some havoc in your heart but should be taken in your stride. A close friend can be exciting but intense and demanding. Lucky number 9. Colour green.

LEO

A smoother and easier path has to be chosen in business or you waste time going through obstacles and conflicts. Compromises in personal relationships are advisable for peace and harmony at home today. Be ready for changes with good plans and sound investments. Lucky number 2. Colour reds.

VIRGO

You resolve conflicts with a wise and subtle approach today. You are applauded for your professional expertise in a business venture. Personal relationships need to be infused with tender, loving care. A frivolous friend takes advantage of your good nature. Lucky number 6. Colour pastels.

LIBRA

You retain a position of power and move projects with dynamic energy towards completion and financial gain. Relationships are marked with deep feelings, love and romance. Overweening ambition or obsession can lead you to murky waters; take one step at a time. Lucky number 5. Colour blue.

SCORPIO

You share joy and laughter with friends and a special person in your life. Your strong points are persistence, adaptability and authority with which you win many a battle at work and at home. Your heart center is now open for healing, loving and sharing. Lucky number 13. Colour scarlet.

SAGITTARIUS

You are happy and relaxed, as there is balance and harmony at home and synergy in the work area. You start a new business project while rejuvenating an old one. Beware of over indulgence in emotion, food or drink. Yoga and walking are great for you. Lucky number 2. Colour yellow.

CAPRICORN

Earthy and practical matters take priority! You are affectionate, kind and caring in personal relationships during a crisis. People around you tend to be sensitive and moody while you maintain balance and stability. Delegate responsibility to specialists! Lucky number 13. Colour green.

AQUARIUS

You are sensitive and loyal; however, refrain from compromising your truths and values. Relationships are full of fun and romance. Faithful friends and loved ones support you through an ordeal. A residential or professional change is possible if you want it. Lucky number 7. Colour blue.

PISCES

You mediate effectively in a family conflict with the older members on one side and the young ones on the other. You are generous and giving in personal relationships. Your roots are deep in 'the tree of life' formation and you value old friendships. Lucky number 10. Colour rusty red.

Corrigendum

A news item appeared in this newspaper under the heading 'CM returns' was an inadvertent error committed by this paper due to negligence. The Imphal Times learnt that Chief Minister left Imphal for New Delhi only yesterday in connection with Election campaign. However, news report regarding the possible change in the Ministry after the result of the 17th Lok Sabha stands true. The error is regretted.

Editor

'Why would one holiday on an aircraft carrier?': Rahul Gandhi on PM's INS Viraat remark

Agency
New Delhi May 10,

Congress president Rahul Gandhi admits that he did visit INS Viraat with his father, late prime minister Rajiv Gandhi, but adds that was an official trip, not a holiday. "Why would anyone holiday on an aircraft carrier? It's not a cruise ship!" he said in an interview. Gandhi was responding to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's comment at a rally in New Delhi that Rajiv Gandhi misused INS Viraat as his "personal taxi" during a vacation to Lakshadweep (in 1987) and also hosted foreigners on board. Gandhi says he doesn't want to respond to the flurry of attacks on his father during the election campaign of 2019. "Mr Narendra Modi is obsessed with my family. I'm

not obsessed with my family. I don't think about my father, grandmother or great-grandfather as much as Mr Modi does. He thinks that that's the place where he's going to find his escape. Best of luck to him!" Responding to Aam Aadmi Party leader and chief minister Arvind Kejriwal saying that he would back Gandhi for prime minister if he supported full statehood for Delhi, the latter said he is "fond of all these leaders" and respects them, but that the "only voice that has a right to decide who becomes the PM of India" is that of the people. When HT asked specifically about Kejriwal, with whose party the Congress failed to arrive at an arrangement with despite elaborate talks, Gandhi said, "Mr Kejriwal too represents a voice just as Mr



Stalin does or Jayalalithaji (late Tamil Nadu chief minister) did. India is a sum total of all these voices and that is something I absolutely respect." Delhi goes to the polls on Sunday. The Congress president also attacked the prime minister's image of working 24x7. "I will bet you, whatever you want, that as far as thinking about

Barack Obama was probably having him on! The Americans do psychological profiles of all leaders and they tell you exactly what you want to hear. And Mr Narendra Modi bought it hook, line and sinker." In response to a specific question on the day he tore up a copy of the ordinance passed by UPA 2 that circumvented the Supreme Court-ordered ban on convicted candidates - resulting in the perception that he and then prime minister Manmohan Singh were not on the same page, something various leaders of the Bharatiya Janata Party, including the PM, have commented on - Gandhi said that "may be it was the prime in a way that was too aggressive. But see, I would never learn without regret."

Conflict made Naga People Suffer for too Long: Neiphiu Rio

Courtesy: The Assam Tribune
Kohima May 10;

Nagaland Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio on Thursday said the Indo-Naga political conflict has created challenges and hurdles for generations in realising their ambitions and made the Naga people suffer for too long. He said the resolution of the Indo-Naga political conflict is at the top of the People's Democratic Alliance government's agenda. Speaking at the inaugural session of the 28th general conference of the Naga Students Federation (NSF) at Bhandari town in Wokha

district, Rio said the State government has taken significant steps in playing the role of an active facilitator in the ongoing peace process so that unity and reconciliation and a final honourable, inclusive and acceptable settlement comes at the earliest. He also said the Nagaland Assembly unanimously passed a resolution recognising the sacrifices and sufferings of the Naga "nationalists" and their families. He stressed that unity amongst all sections, both overground and the "national organisations", is the need of the hour.

"Nagas are at a crucial juncture in our history, unless we live in peace and arrive at the political solution our future may not be bright," said the CM, adding, "we should not only support the peace process but we have to make sacrifices by rising above individualism, clanism, tribalism and instead uphold Nagatism," he added. Rio expressed dismay that the Nagas are unable to find the way forward in a unified manner in the civil society movement on the issue of peace and political solution to the Naga issue. The tribal hohos, women and tribal organisations do not have a unified platform to carry the

Naga voice in a manner that transcends tribes, districts, States and countries, he observed. Rio lauded the arrangements made for the conference and called upon the student community to remember and honour all the pioneers who made untold sacrifices to enable the present generation to carry on the mantle with vision and commitment to continue to inspire the future generation. He said the NSF being the apex body of the student community has made significant contributions to the Naga society in multiple aspects and greatly

contributed towards the unification of the Naga people beyond man-made boundaries. Reminding that the youths and the student fraternity are the backbone and foundation of all societies in today's world, he said there is nothing that should not be out of reach for any individual. The only merit should be the determining factor for a person to succeed, he added. Rio exhorted the students to have the right skills and attitude, along with education, to be able to find jobs, be it in private or government sectors or for self-employment.

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