

## 'GRANT CITIZENSHIP TO ARUNACHAL CHAKMAS'

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The Chakma National Council of India (CNCI) has asked the Centre to comply with two Supreme Court orders prescribing citizenship to the Chakma and Hajong people settled in Arunachal Pradesh six decades ago.

The CNCI and its affiliates such as the All India Chakma Students' Union and the Rashtriya Chakma Tribal Sangh have also expressed solidarity with the Chakmas and Hajongs of Arunachal Pradesh in rejecting the alleged plan to relocate them elsewhere in the country.

Arunachal CM Pema Khandu had in his Independence Day speech said the Chakmas and Hajongs, who number more than 60,000, would be relocated outside the State. The Government of India had settled the Buddhist Chakmas and Hindu Hajongs in Arunachal Pradesh from 1964-1969 after they were displaced by a dam in the erstwhile East Pakistan. Some were victims of religious persecution. "Any plan or proposal to resolve the Chakma-Hajong issue by displacing them or relocating them to some other State or States as being proposed by the Arunachal Pradesh government shall be disastrous and inhuman," the CDCI and its affiliates said in a statement.

"The Chakmas and Hajongs were legally settled there in consultation with the erstwhile NEFA administration and lands were allotted in consultation with local tribes," it said.

The CDCI reminded the government of SC orders in 1996 and 2015 saying Chakmas and Hajongs be granted Indian citizenship with Arunachal Pradesh.

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