

RENEWED PUSH FOR STATEHOOD IN NORTHEAST

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Statehood movements have gathered momentum across the Northeast, with a renewed push for Bodoland, a proposed State comprising areas beyond the four districts under the Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC).

On Sunday, organisations such as All Bodo Students' Union, Peoples' Joint Action Committee for Bodoland Movement, and two factions of the National Democratic Front of Boroland organised a pro-Statehood rally at the BTC headquarters in Kokrajhar in western Assam.

"Ours has been one of the oldest movements, since the 1960s, when the credo was to divide Assam 50-50. But we continue to be ignored while many new States have been created in under Articles 2 and 3 of the Constitution. More than 5,000 people have died for this cause but we have not veered from the democratic path," ABSU president Pramod Boro said.

The Eastern Nagaland People's Organisation, a tribal body with sway in four of Nagaland's most backward districts, has stepped up its demand for the creation of the Frontier Nagaland State.

"We believe that the creation of Frontier Nagaland will bail us out of 50 years of underdevelopment and neglect since Nagaland attained Statehood," ENPO president Kekongchim Yimchunger said.

The Indigenous Peoples Front of Tripura, the BJP's ally in Tripura, raised pro-Statehood slogans while observing the 10th Twipraland Demand Day on August 23. The demand for carving out a separate State has been intermittent since 1997.

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