

Congress Demands Parliament Debate on Alleged Targeting of Bengali Migrant Workers



The Indian National Congress has accused the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) of systematically targeting Bengali-speaking migrant workers in BJP-governed states and has demanded an immediate discussion on the issue in Parliament. This accusation follows a series of incidents, including detentions and alleged profiling, that have sparked a political firestorm and reignited debates about migrant worker rights and national identity.

The controversy gained traction after reports emerged of Bengali-speaking migrant workers being detained and, in some cases, allegedly deported to Bangladesh from states like Maharashtra, Odisha, and Assam, without what critics claim was proper verification or communication with the West Bengal government. The Trinamool Congress (TMC), the ruling party in West Bengal, has been at the forefront of these protests, with Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee leading rallies in Kolkata, asserting the dignity of Bengali pride.

Congress leaders, while condemning the alleged harassment, have sought a broader parliamentary debate to address the concerns of these workers. They argue that the issue transcends state-level politics and requires national attention to ensure the fundamental rights of Indian citizens working across the country are protected. Opposition parties contend that these actions by state authorities, particularly in BJP-ruled states, amount to "linguistic discrimination" and the "criminalization of poverty."

The BJP, however, has countered these allegations by citing national security concerns and the need to identify illegal immigrants. BJP leaders have claimed that many of those detained

possessed "fake or unverifiable documents," and have accused the West Bengal government of facilitating infiltration for "vote bank politics." Prime Minister Narendra Modi, speaking at a rally in Durgapur, asserted that the BJP "protects Bengali 'ashmita' (pride)" and criticized the TMC for allegedly enabling infiltration.

The Congress's demand for a parliamentary discussion seeks to elevate the issue to a national forum, where the central government can be pressed for answers and solutions. The opposition believes that a debate in Parliament will allow for a comprehensive examination of the legal frameworks governing migrant workers, the verification processes for citizenship, and the humanitarian concerns arising from such actions.

As the Monsoon Session of Parliament continues, the call for a discussion on the alleged targeting of Bengali migrant workers is likely to intensify, setting the stage for a contentious debate between the government and the opposition on issues of national security, human rights, and inter-state relations.