

OpenVoiceNews India

Transparent. Unbiased. Yours.

Assam Launches Largest Eviction Drive in Golaghat District

July 30, 2025

– Categories: Human Rights



Download IPFS

The Assam government on Tuesday carried out its largest eviction drive in Golaghat district, targeting more than 3,600 acres of what authorities describe as illegally encroached forest land in Uriamghat, near the Assam–Nagaland border. Officials say the operation is part of a statewide campaign to reclaim government-owned land and protect forest reserves, while critics have raised concerns about the humanitarian impact on displaced residents.

According to state authorities, the operation was planned after surveys indicated large-scale encroachment on protected forest areas. Heavy security deployment, including personnel from Assam Police and Forest Department teams, was reported to ensure that the eviction proceeded without resistance. The drive is one of several carried out across the state in recent months, underscoring the administration's firm stance on reclaiming public land.

Officials maintain that the eviction process followed established procedures, including issuing prior notices to occupants and giving them time to vacate voluntarily. "The forest belongs to the people of Assam, and it is our responsibility to protect it for future generations," an official from the Forest Department said during the operation.

However, human rights activists and opposition leaders have criticised the drive, arguing that it disproportionately affects Bengali-origin Muslim families and other marginalised groups. Several residents claimed they were not given adequate rehabilitation or alternative housing arrangements. Critics contend that while environmental protection and land reclamation are legitimate goals, due process and the rights of displaced persons must be safeguarded.

The displacement has drawn attention from neighbouring Nagaland, where local authorities have increased surveillance to monitor potential cross-border migration. Concerns have also been voiced about possible demographic and social changes in border areas as a result of large-scale evictions.

This eviction is part of a broader policy initiative by the Assam government aimed at removing what it considers illegal settlements from forest and government land. Similar drives have been conducted in districts such as Dhubri and Goalpara, with the state leadership emphasising that land laws must be upheld without exception.

While the government maintains that such measures are necessary for ecological preservation and lawful land use, the controversy surrounding the impact on affected communities is likely to persist. The debate now centres on whether development and conservation objectives can be achieved without undermining humanitarian obligations and constitutional rights.