

PM on NRC: No Indian citizen will have to leave the country

Slams politics over incidents of lynching; dismisses unity of Oppn parties

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ASSURING THAT “no citizen of India will have to leave the country” under the ongoing exercise to finalise the National Register of Citizens (NRC) in Assam, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has asserted that NRC is a “promise of ours” and it was his government’s duty to honour “the mandate” they have got for it.

“I want to assure the people that no citizen of India will have to leave the country. As per the due process, all possible opportunities will be given to get their concerns addressed. The NRC was a promise of ours, which we are fulfilling under the guidance of the Honourable Supreme Court. It is not about politics but about people. If someone is making it about *rajneeti* (politics), it is extremely unfortunate. Our job in the political class is to work according to the will of the people and do what they have given us the mandate for,” the Prime Minister said in an interview to ANI news agency.

He said previous governments under the Congress dragged their feet on this issue



Narendra Modi

for its “vote bank politics”.

“The roots of the NRC go back three decades, when Rajiv Gandhi had to bow to public pressure and sign the Assam Accord. Since then, Assam voted the Congress several times but the party did nothing about it and kept misleading the people. The Congress knew a problem exists but allowed it to fester for decades because they were guided by vote-bank politics,” Modi said in his first public remarks on the NRC issue.

Dismissing West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee’s usage of “civil war” and “bloodbath” while voicing her apprehensions over the NRC exercise, the Prime Minister took

a dig at her reminding her disruption of Parliament in 2005 over the issue of illegal migrants. He said, “As far as Mamataji’s stand is concerned, she should remember what she said on the floor of Parliament in 2005. Was that Mamataji correct or is this Mamataji correct?”

Lamenting politics over incidents of lynching and violence against women, the Prime Minister said “a single incident is one too many” and “deeply unfortunate”.

“It would be a great travesty to reduce these incidents to mere statistics and then indulge in politics over them. That shows a kind of perverse mindset that looks at violence and criminality as something to be milked, instead of unitedly opposing. Even a single incident is one too many and deeply unfortunate. Everyone should rise above politics to ensure peace and unity in our society,” he said in response to a question on incidents of lynching and violence against women. “Let there be no doubts about the will of my government to implement the rule of law in its true letter and spirit,” he said.

The Prime Minister made

light of the coming together of Opposition parties in the run-up to the 2019 Lok Sabha elections and suggested that it was a desperate attempt by these parties.

“Let us understand the true character of the mahagathbandhan (grand alliance). The mahagathbandhan is for personal survival, not for ideological support. The mahagathbandhan is for personal ambitions, not for people’s aspirations. The mahagathbandhan is purely about power politics, not about people’s mandate. The mahagathbandhan is about dynasties, not about development. The mahagathbandhan is not about any union of minds or ideas, but about rank opportunism,” he said. “The only question is whether they will break up before the election or after.”

He said the NDA’s victories during the no-confidence motion as well as the election to the post of vice-chairman of Rajya Sabha in the just concluded monsoon session of Parliament “should indicate which coalition is intact and which is falling apart”.

“In fact, we got support even from those parties which are not our allies,” he said.