

# Rajnath to call meeting of Northeast CMs, discuss safeguards to protect regional identity

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AMID PROTESTS in Assam and some other Northeastern states over the Citizenship Amendment Bill, the Centre said on Monday that Home Minister Rajnath Singh will soon call a meeting of the Northeast chief ministers to discuss safeguards required to protect the region's cultural and linguistic identity.

The meeting assumes significance as concerns have been expressed by various stakeholders over the Centre-nominated committee — of which five of nine members have dropped out — to assess the implementation of Clause 6 of the Assam Accord and other matters related to the Northeastern states.

“Union Home Minister will soon be calling a meeting of chief ministers of the concerned states. They will further discuss about the safeguards that need to be provided for protecting the interests of these states and protecting their cultural and linguistic identity,” the ministry said in a statement.

A delegation from Assam led by Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal met Singh and discussed issues related to implementation of Clause 6 and grant of tribal status to six communities. Singh is learnt to have conveyed that the Bill is not meant for individuals be-

## ‘Consultations on with panel members’

*New Delhi:* Days after five members dropped out of the high-powered committee on implementation of Clause 6 of Assam Accord, sources said that consultations are on with the remaining members of the panel. There is no immediate move to appoint new members, they added. **ENS**

longing to six minority communities from one particular country. It is also not meant for individuals living in one particular state.

“It is a fact that Assam has borne the disproportionate burden of migration due to religious persecution in our neighbouring countries...the burden should also be shared by the entire country. We are committed to helping the persons belonging to six minority communities, who have been compelled to come to India because of religious persecution in the three neighbouring countries...,” Singh said.

Singh also met representatives of Bodo groups and assured them that grant of tribal status to six communities would be implemented only after ensuring that political and employment-related privileges and rights of existing tribes are fully protected.