



## Assam Accord Road Map

For Prelims: [Clause 6 of the Assam Accord](#), [Section 6A into the Citizenship Act, of 1955](#), [1971 Bangladesh Liberation War](#), [Bodoland Territorial Autonomous District](#), [Sixth Schedule autonomous councils in Assam](#), [Inner Line Permit](#).

For Mains: 52 recommendations of Justice Biplab Kumar Sharma Committee, Assam Accord clause 6 impact.

[Source: TH](#)

### Why in News?

The Assam government plans to develop a road map for implementing the **recommendations of the Justice Biplab Kumar Sharma Committee** regarding [Clause 6 of the Assam Accord](#) by 25th October, 2024.

### What is Clause 6 of the Assam Accord?

- **Clause 6:**
  - Clause 6 of the accord promises **Constitutional, legislative and administrative safeguards**, to preserve and promote the **cultural, social, linguistic identity and heritage of the Assamese people**.
  - The main aim was to **protect the indigenous identity of the Assamese people**.
    - The clause was added in response to **changes in population ratios** and the influx of [migrants from Bangladesh](#).
- **Assam Accords:**
  - The Assam Accord, **signed in 1985**, was a **tripartite agreement** between the Central Government, the Assam State Government, and leaders of the Assam Movement, aimed at stopping the **influx of illegal migrants** from Bangladesh.
  - It led to the introduction of [Section 6A into the Citizenship Act, of 1955](#), exclusively for Assam.

### What is the Biplab Sarma Committee Report?

- **Background:**
  - In **July 2019**, the **Union Home Ministry constituted a 14-member committee** to suggest ways to implement Clause 6 of the accord.
    - The committee was **chaired by retired Assam High Court Justice Biplab Kumar Sarma** and included judges, retired bureaucrats, writers, AASU leaders, and journalists.
- **Definition of Assamese:**
  - The committee **completed its report in February 2020**, and recommended that the definition of "Assamese people" should include:
    - Indigenous Tribals

- Other Indigenous Communities of Assam,
- Indian citizens residing in Assam on or before January 1, 1951, and their descendants,
- Indigenous Assamese people.
- **Recommendations:**
  - The **52 recommendations** primarily **focus on safeguards related to language, land, and cultural heritage.**
  - **Key Points:**
    - **Land:**
      - Establish Revenue Circles where only "**Assamese people**" can own and **transfer land, and implement a three-year program** to grant land titles to those **occupying land without proper documentation.**
      - Conduct a **special survey of char areas (riverine regions along the Brahmaputra)** and **prioritize erosion-affected people** in land allotment.
    - **Language:**
      - Establish an Autonomous Language and Literature Academy/Council to preserve and promote Assam's indigenous languages.
      - Make Assamese a compulsory subject up to Class VIII or X in all English medium schools under the state board and CBSE.
    - **Cultural Heritage:**
      - Establish an **autonomous authority** for the development of **sattras (neo-Vaishnavite monasteries)** with financial assistance.
      - Create **multipurpose cultural complexes** in each district to uplift the cultural heritage of all ethnic groups.
  - The **Sixth Schedule autonomous councils in Assam** — **Bodoland Territorial Council, North Cachar Hills Autonomous Council, and Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council** — will decide on implementing these 52 recommendations.
    - The primarily Bengali-speaking Barak Valley is exempted from these recommendations, along with the Sixth Schedule areas.
  - **Recommended reservations** for "Assamese people" in Parliament, the state Assembly, local bodies, and jobs.

## Recommendations that have been Left Out

- Some of the most **sensitive recommendations by the committee are not included** in the 52 points listed by the state government.
- Key missing recommendations include:
  - The **introduction of an Inner Line Permit for entry into Assam**, similar to those in Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, and Mizoram.
  - Reservations for "Assamese people".
  - Creation of an Upper House (Legislative Council of Assam), fully reserved for "Assamese people."

## What are the Challenges in Implementation of the Assam Accords?

- **Complexity of Defining Assamese Identity** : The committee's recommendation to define "Assamese people" can **lead to disputes over who qualifies for protections** under Clause 6 and this may foster resentment among different ethnic groups.
- **Land Ownership and Rights:** Establishing Revenue Circles for exclusive land ownership by "Assamese people" may create significant **legal and administrative issues**. Conducting a survey for land allotment in char areas presents logistical challenges
- **Language Policies:** The requirement to make **Assamese the official language and compulsory in schools may face resistance, especially in Bengali-dominant areas** like the Barak Valley.
- **Funding and Management:** Establishing an **autonomous authority for sattras and cultural**

**complexes** may require substantial **funding and effective management structures**.

- **Political and Bureaucratic Resistance:** Recommendations requiring concurrence from the Central Government may face **delays or resistance, complicating the implementation process**.
- **Exemptions for Barak Valley:** Exempting the **Barak Valley and Sixth Schedule areas** from these recommendations **may create perceptions of inequity and division** within the state, potentially exacerbating existing regional tensions.

## Way Forward

- **Stakeholder Engagement:**
  - Foster continuous dialogue with all stakeholders, including various ethnic groups, civil society organizations, and political entities, to build consensus on the definition of "Assamese people" and ensure inclusive implementation of the recommendations.
- **Phased Implementation:**
  - Adopt a **phased approach to implementation, prioritizing recommendations that are less contentious and can yield quick wins**, such as **language policies** in education, while gradually addressing more complex issues like land ownership and identity definitions.
- **Capacity Building:**
  - Invest in **capacity building for local authorities and community leaders to manage land surveys** and title distributions effectively. This will ensure transparency and build trust within communities.
- **Resource Allocation:**
  - Secure adequate funding and resources to support the establishment of **cultural authorities and education reforms**, ensuring that these initiatives are sustainable and effectively managed.

### **Drishti Mains Question:**

Critically analyze the key recommendations of the Assam Accord committee, highlighting the political, cultural, and legal complexities in their implementation.

## UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question (PYQ)

**Q. With reference to India, consider the following statements:**

1. There is only one citizenship and one domicile.
2. A citizen by birth only can become the Head of State.
3. A foreigner once granted citizenship cannot be deprived of it under any circumstances.

**Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) 1 and 3
- (d) 2 and 3

**Ans: (a)**

