

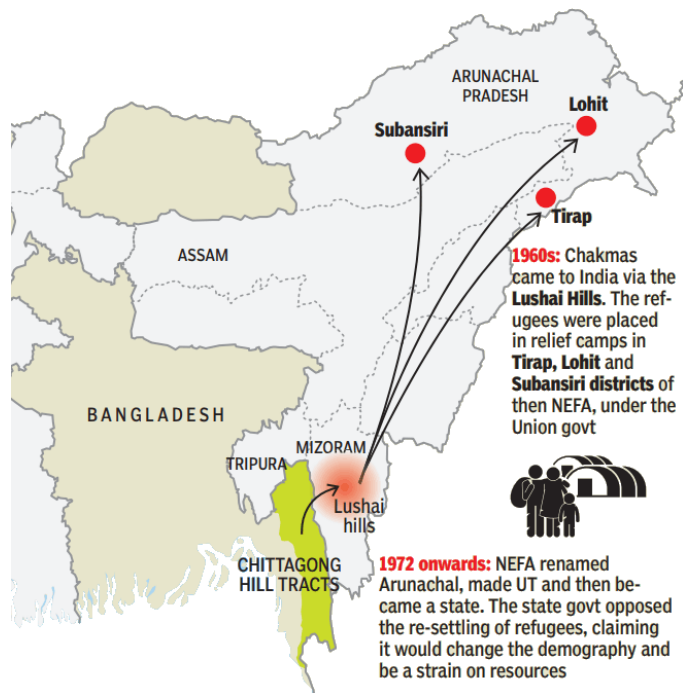


For a civic solidarity

The Chakma/Hajong people deserve citizenship and not racial profiling

Highlights:

1. The NHRC has done the right thing in directing the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Arunachal Pradesh government to submit an action taken report against the racial profiling and relocation of the Chakma and Hajong communities in the northeastern State.
2. They had fled their homes in the Chittagong Hill Tracts in erstwhile East Pakistan (present-day Bangladesh) after losing land to the construction of the Kaptai Dam on the Karnaphuli River in the early 1960s. They had sought asylum in India and were settled in relief camps in Arunachal Pradesh.
3. Since then they have been well integrated in villages in the southern and south-eastern parts of the State. In 2015, the Supreme Court directed the State to grant them citizenship, but this had not yet been implemented.
4. In a judgment in 1996, the Court had stated that the “life and personal liberty of every Chakma residing within the State shall be protected”.
5. In light of these orders and given that most of the Chakma/Hajong community members were born in the State and have been living peacefully, the Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister’s announcement, in August 2021, that they would be relocated outside the State and that steps would be taken for a “census” of the communities was clearly unwarranted.
6. The so-called State-driven census would have amounted to racial profiling of the two communities that have also been the subject of an antagonist and





nativist campaign by organisations such as the All Arunachal Pradesh Students' Union.

Integration of refugees:

1. It is difficult, but not impossible, for any State government in the northeast to balance the interests of native tribal communities and those of legitimately settled refugees and their progeny.
2. Special rights guaranteed in the Indian Constitution in these States in order to protect the tribal people, their habitat and their livelihoods, have more than occasionally been misinterpreted as favouring tribal nativism with overblown demographic fears fanning hatred for communities such as the Chakma/Hajong in Arunachal Pradesh and Mizoram.

Chakma and Hajong: A Brief History

The Chakma are a Buddhist tribe who fled the Chittagong Hill Tracts in erstwhile East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) after being displaced by a hydel power project

The Hajong are a Hindu tribe who left mainland East Pakistan due to religious persecution, and are settled in Mizoram, Meghalaya and Assam

The Chakma and Hajong entered India through present-day **Mizoram and Tripura in 1964-69, and 14,888 were settled in NEFA**, which is now Arunachal

Nearly 1.8 lakh Chakma live in Mizoram, Tripura, Assam, Meghalaya and West Bengal where they have ST status. These Chakma had been there long before the influx from East Pakistan

In 1996, in response to a writ petition filed by the NHRC, **SC ruled that the Chakma and Hajong cannot be evicted from Arunachal and their citizenship applications should be processed**

Between 1999 and 2002, **4,637 of Chakma and Hajong refugees applied for citizenship**, but have still not got it

Some descendants of the refugees have got government ID like passport and voter card based on the fact that they were born in India



1,497 Chakma and Hajong people were included on electoral rolls for the first time in 2004

In September 2015, the SC ruled **in favour of citizenship to eligible Chakma and Hajong refugees** and said they should not be discriminated against

The issue of citizenship concerns only refugees, of whom there are **only around 6,000 alive, and their kids born on or after July 1, 1987**

Last week, Kiren Rijiju, MoS for Home and an MP from Arunachal, **said the Centre would grant citizenship to the refugees, while keeping in mind the rights of indigenous communities**



Rijiju later said the SC order is not implementable and that the government would approach the court for the order to be modified

3. Unfortunately, political forces have also limited themselves to using ethnic fissures for power and sustenance. Uprooting communities that fled their



homelands under duress and have since been well settled in their adopted areas, contributing to the diversity of culture and the economy, would be a violation of their rights and repeating a historic wrong.

4. A dialogue between the State government, civil society and those of the Chakma/Hajong communities would go a long way in addressing concerns in implementing the Court judgment of 2015, rather than the course currently adopted by Itanagar. Implementing the NHRC directive should be a step in the process to reverse that course.

Towards low emissions growth

For climate and development's sake, India needs to bring back industrial policy, only differently this time.

The defining challenges of this century

1. Climate change is one of the defining challenges of this century. Without a global effort to rapidly reduce greenhouse gas emissions, average global temperatures are likely to exceed 2°C even with current policies in place.
2. While many developing countries made net-zero pledges at COP26, they face enormous challenges in their attempts to grow in a climate-constrained world.
3. In India, there is high youth unemployment and a hunger for substantial investments in hard infrastructure to industrialise and urbanise.
4. Unlike the energy-intensive growth trajectories of the industrialised world, India's economic growth in the last three decades, led by growth in the services sector, has come at a significantly lower emissions footprint.
5. But in the coming decades, India will have to move to an investment-led and manufacturing-intensive growth model. India needs to do this with a low emissions footprint.

A green industrialisation strategy

1. While Prime Minister Narendra Modi's announcement that India will strive to reach net-zero emissions by 2070 is commendable, it is essential to follow through with short-, medium- and long-term guiding strategies to ensure that India can maximize developmental gains in this transition.

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2. What India needs is a green industrialisation strategy that combines laws, policy instruments, and implementing institutions to steer its decentralised economic activities to become climate-friendly and resilient.
3. A market-steering approach rather than a hands-off approach would encourage private sector investments in technologies needed to industrialise under climate constraints.
4. While India has provided a high level of policy support to deploy renewable energy, its industrial policy efforts to increase the domestic manufacturing of renewable energy technology components have been affected by policy incoherence, poor management of economic rents, and contradictory policy objectives.
5. Academic research provides evidence that policies to develop local innovation capabilities alongside linking with global production networks create the most job opportunities.

Across the world: Global examples of techno-industrial policy strategies

1. China's techno-industrial policy strategy to strategically align RD&D, manufacturing, and deployment of solar and wind technologies paid off not only in its global competitiveness to produce clean energy technologies but also in creating more domestic job opportunities than India's approach to prioritising only deployment.
2. China has created more jobs in manufacturing solar and wind components for exports than domestic deployment. India could have retained some of those jobs if it were strategic in promoting these technologies.
3. Besides China, Korea's green growth strategy and the U.S.'s Endless Frontier Act, passed in the Senate in 2021 to make significant RD&D investments in emerging future technologies, are examples of techno-industrial policy strategies.

A decarbonized economy:

1. Recent decarbonisation modelling studies point to a significant role for battery, green hydrogen, carbon capture and storage technologies to decarbonise India's transport and industry sectors.

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2. While India may have lost the bus in terms of catching up on solar PV innovations, technologies needed to decarbonise the transport and industry sectors provide a significant opportunity.
3. However, India's R&D investments in these emerging green technologies are non-existent. The production-linked incentives (PLIs) under 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' are a step in the right direction for localising clean energy manufacturing activities.
4. Nevertheless, they still do not address Aatmanirbhar's economic goal to move from incremental changes to quantum jumps in economic activities. Aligning existing RD&D investments with the technologies needed for green industrialisation is crucial for realising quantum jumps.
5. Besides, India also needs to nurture private entrepreneurship and experimentation in clean energy technologies.
6. An industrial policy approach is necessary for gaining development co-benefits from the structural transition that climate change demands.

The way forward

1. India's energy transition should be development-focused and aim to extract economic and employment rents from decarbonisation. The government should neither succumb to international pressure to decarbonise soon nor should it postpone its investment in decarbonisation technologies.
2. Instead, India should set its pace based on its ability to capitalise on the opportunities to create wealth through green industrialisation.
3. India should follow a path where it can negotiate carbon space to grow, buying time for the hard-to-abate sectors; push against counterproductive WTO trade litigations on decarbonisation technologies; all while making R&D investments in those technologies.



INDIA Timeline of Policy Reforms

