A coordination committee of the indigenous groups in Assam has demanded the reservation of 21 “immigrants-controlled” Assembly seats for indigenous communities.

It also sought the formation of a Legislative Council to let numerically weaker communities be represented in the 126-member Assembly.

“Many indigenous groups have been affected by the Assam Accord that settled for March 24, 1971, as the cut-off date for detecting illegal migrants instead of 1951. But we can somewhat undo the damage by insisting on 1951 as the basis for ensuring the constitutional rights of the Assamese and other indigenous groups via the implementation of Clause 6 of the accord,” said Syed Muminul Awal, leader of the Janagosthiya Samannwoy Parishad, Assam.

The Parishad is an umbrella body of 21 organisations representing indigenous communities.

Hifazul Haque, Parishad’s coordinator, said the Assam Accord had legitimised 50 lakh migrants from East Pakistan and Bangladesh between 1951 and 1971.