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US to Limit Visas to Curb Birth Tourism

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Why in News

The **United States of America** is planning to bar pregnant women from attaining visas for **“birth tourism”**.

The measures are to be adopted to curb the number of foreigners who use the visa to secure **automatic permanent citizenship** for their children **by giving birth on American soil**.

Birth tourism

It is technically defined as a pregnant woman's decision to travel to another country for the specific reason of giving birth in that country and hoping to gain citizenship.

Key Points

- **B1/B2 visitor visas** would no longer be issued to “aliens seeking to enter the United States for birth tourism”.
- Pregnant women will need to **provide a specific reason** for travel, like **medical necessity**, beyond giving birth to travel to the US.
- The crackdown on “birth tourism” is **for public safety and national security** as well as to maintain the integrity of our immigration system because the birth tourism industry **threatens to overburden valuable hospital and national resources**.
- **Currently, US law does not bar foreign women from travelling to the US to give birth**. However, women need to prove that they have the financial means to pay for a medical procedure if that is the reason for the trip.
- The US considers this **“a glaring immigration loophole”**.

B1/B2 Tourist Visa

It is a temporary, non-immigrant visa, allowing the holder to travel to the US for business and tourism purposes.

Requirements for becoming a U.S. citizen

- **At birth:**
 - Have been born in the US or certain territories or outlying possessions of the US and subject to the jurisdiction of the US; OR
 - Had a parent or parents who were citizens at the time of birth (if the person was born abroad) and meet other requirements.
- **After birth:**
 - Apply for “derived” or “acquired” citizenship through parents.
 - Apply for naturalization.

Acquisition and Determination of Indian Citizenship

There are four ways in which Indian citizenship can be acquired: **birth, descent, registration and naturalisation**. The provisions are listed under the **Citizenship Act, 1955**.