Delay in Aadhaar Enrolment due to Incomplete NRC: Assam

drishtiias.com/printpdf/delay-in-aadhaar-enrolment-due-to-incomplete-nrc-assam

Why in News

The **Aadhaar** enrolment of more than 27 lakh people in Assam has become uncertain/delayed because of the delay in completing the process of the **National Register of Citizens (NRC).**

- The **biometrics of these people were frozen after the publication of the NRC in August 2019.**
- The **Centre had earlier been asked to unfreeze the biometrics** since the NRC was yet to be recognised as a document for citizenship.

Aadhaar

- It is a **12 digit individual identification number** issued by **UIDAI (Unique identification authority of India)** on behalf of Government of India.
  UIDAI is a **statutory authority established in July 2016** by the Government of India under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, following the provisions of the **Aadhaar Act 2016.**
- It **serves as identity and address proof** anywhere in India. It is **available in 2 forms, physical and electronic form i.e. (e-Aadhaar).**
- **Any resident** (a person who has resided in India for 182 days, in the one year preceding the date of application for enrollment for Aadhaar) **of India irrespective of age, sex, class can avail it.**

Key Points

- **National Register of Citizens:**
  - NRC is a **register prepared in respect of each village,** showing the houses or holdings in a serial order and indicating against each house or holding the number and names of persons staying therein.
  - The **register was first prepared after the 1951 Census of India** and since then it has not been updated until recently.
  - It **has been updated in Assam only** for now and the **government plans to update it nationally** as well.
  - Its **purpose** is to **separate "illegal" immigrants from "legitimate" residents.**
  - Registrar General and Census Commissioner India is the Nodal Agency for NRC.
- **NRC Issue in Assam (Background):**
  - The issue of its update assumed importance as **Assam witnessed large-scale illegal migration from erstwhile East Pakistan and, after 1971,** from present-day Bangladesh.
  - This led to the **six-year-long Assam movement from 1979 to 1985,** for deporting illegal migrants.
  - The movement culminated in the signing of the **Assam Accord in 1985.** It set **25th March, 1971,** as the cut-off date for the deportation of illegal migrants.
    - Since the **cut-off date prescribed under articles 5 and 6 of the Constitution was 19th July, 1949** - to give force to the new date, an amendment was made to the **Citizenship Act, 1955,** and a new section was introduced. It was made **applicable only to Assam.**
    - **The Assam Accord** was signed between the **All Assam Students Union (AASU),** the **All Assam Gana Sangram Parishad** and the **Central Government.**
  - A petition was filed in the **Supreme Court (SC)** in **2009** by an **Non-governmental Organization (NGO)** called Assam Public Works demanding the identification and deportation of illegal Bangladeshis in Assam.
  - In December **2014,** a division bench of the **SC** ordered that the NRC be updated in a time-bound manner.
  - In **2018,** the **SC** mentioned the prospect of sample re-verification in an order, saying that it could **consider re-verifying 10% of the names included in the NRC.**
  - In July **2019,** the **state government gave an affidavit in the SC** seeking a **re-verification of 20% included names** in the districts bordering Bangladesh and 10% in the rest of the districts.

    However, **it was dismissed** after the erstwhile coordinator of the NRC submitted that re-verification was already done.
  - The Assam government is **firm on its demand of 10-20% re-verification** of the nationality claims made by some of the people included in the final NRC, published in 2019.

- **Current Scenario:**
    - The **state government of Assam has provided the latest data regarding 'foreigner' detection** in the state.
    - There is a **need for re-verification because people of Assam want a correct NRC.**
    - Also, there has been a **delay in issuing the rejection slips** to the over 19 lakh excluded people so that they can move court to claim nationality.
        - Officials have cited the **Covid-19 pandemic** and the **floods** in the state as reasons for the delay.
        - The **rejection slips would carry the reason of rejection, which would differ from person to person** and based on the reason they would be able to challenge their exclusion in the Foreigners' Tribunals.
            Every individual, whose name does not figure in the final NRC, can represent his/her case in front of the **Foreigners Tribunals.**

Source: TH