



Manipur to Implement the NRC

For Prelims: National Register of Citizens, Inner Line Permit, Protection of Indigenous People

For Mains: Reasons for Manipur to Implement NRC

Why in News?

Recently, the **Manipur Assembly has resolved to implement the [National Register of Citizens \(NRC\)](#) and establish a **State Population Commission (SPC)**.**

- The decision has come after at least 19 **apex tribal organisations wrote to the Prime Minister demanding NRC** and other mechanism to **insulate the [indigenous people](#)** from the “ever-increasing number of non-local residents”.

What is the 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.
- **Purpose:** To separate “illegal” immigrants from “legitimate” residents.
- **Nodal Agency:** Registrar General and Census Commissioner India.

Why is Manipur Pushing for NRC?

- According to data presented in the Manipur Assembly, the population of Manipur has increased significantly from 1971 to 2011, pointing to a **strong possibility of a huge [influx of non-Indians](#), especially Myanmar Nationals primarily Kukis-Chin Communities**.
 - Apart from the Kuki-Chin groups, pro-NRC groups have identified “Bangladeshis” and **[Muslims from Myanmar](#)** who have “occupied the constituency of Jiribam and scattered in the valley areas” as well as Nepalis (Gurkhas) who have “risen in tremendous number” as **“outsiders”**.
- The northeastern States have been paranoid about “outsiders”, “foreigners” or “alien cultures” **swamping out their numerically weaker indigenous communities**.
 - Manipur, home to **three major ethnic groups, is no different**.
 - These ethnic groups are the **non-tribal Meitei people** and the tribal **[Naga](#) and [Kuki-Zomi groups](#)**.
- There has been a **history of conflict among these three groups**, but the NRC issue has

seemingly put the Meiteis and the Nagas on the same page.

- They claim that an NRC is necessary because the political crisis in neighbouring [Myanmar](#), **triggered by the military coup in February 2021, has forced hundreds of people into the State** from across its 398-km international border.
- A majority of those who fled or are fleeing belong to the **Kuki-Chin communities, ethnically related to the Kuki-Zomi people in Manipur** as well as the [Mizos of Mizoram](#).

What are the Other Protective Mechanisms in Manipur?

- In December 2019, Manipur became the fourth northeastern State to be brought under the [Inner-Line Permit \(ILP\) system](#) after **Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram and Nagaland**.
 - The ILP - a temporary official travel document to allow inward travel of an Indian citizen into a protected area, was **implemented under the British-era Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation**.
 - However, in less than two years later, an umbrella organisation that spearheaded the ILP movement said the system was flawed and that **Manipur needed a stronger and more effective mechanism for protecting indigenous populations**.
- Following the “intrusion of immigrants” from Bangladesh (East Pakistan formerly), Myanmar and Nepal, **a pass or permit system for Manipur was introduced**, which was abolished later on in 1950.
- In June 2021, Manipur government approved **1961 as the base year for identifying the “natives”** for the purpose of ILP.
 - Most groups are not happy with this cut-off year and insist on 1951 as the cut-off year for the NRC exercise.
- In 2021, the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) directed Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Arunachal Pradesh and Border Guarding Force (BGF), i.e. [Assam rifles](#), to check illegal influx from Myanmar into India.
 - Similar Instructions were Issued in August 2017 and February 2018.

What is the Status of the NRC Elsewhere in the Northeast?

- Assam is the **only State in the region that undertook an exercise to [update the NRC of 1951 with 24th March, 1971](#)**, as the cut-off date for citizenship of a person.
- Nagaland attempted a similar exercise called [RIIN \(Register of Indigenous Inhabitants of Nagaland\)](#) in **June 2019** to primarily sift the **indigenous Nagas from the non-indigenous Nagas**.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Questions (PYQs)

Mains

Q. Analyze internal security threats and transborder crimes along Myanmar, Bangladesh and Pakistan borders including Line of Control (LoC). Also discuss the role played by various security forces in this regard. **(2020)**

Source: [TH](#)