



Concern Over Meghalaya's Rail Connectivity

Source: IE

After years of opposition from **Khasi pressure groups**, citing concerns that **rail connectivity** may lead to a significant **influx of outsiders** in Meghalaya, **Indian Railways** has **decided to abandon the pending railway projects for Byrnihat and Shillong**.

- With this, Shillong will **remain the only state capital in the country without railway connectivity**.
 - Meghalaya has **only one railway station (operational since 2014)**, at Mendipathar in the **North Garo Hills**.
- **Demand for Inner Line Permit (ILP):** Pressure groups are demanding the implementation of the ILP regime in the state **to regulate the influx of outsiders**, as the **indigenous tribal population** fears marginalization.
 - The **Garos** population is approximately 10 lakh, while the **Khasi population ranges between 13-14 lakh**.
 - ILP is an effort to regulate movement to certain areas located near the international border of India. It is already in place in **Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Mizoram, and Manipur**.
- **About & Origin of ILP:** It is an **obligatory official travel document** issued by the concerned State Government **to allow inward travel of an Indian citizen into a protected area for a limited period**.
 - Under the **Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation Act, 1873**, the British framed regulations restricting the entry and regulating the stay of outsiders in designated areas.
 - This was **to protect the Crown's own commercial interests by preventing "British subjects" (Indians) from trading** within these regions.
 - In 1950, the **Indian government replaced the term "British subjects" with "Citizens of India."**



Read More: [Inner Line Permit, Northeast India](#)

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