

Register of Indigenous Inhabitants of Nagaland

Why in news?

The Nagaland government has initiated a move to implement its own version of the citizenship register.

What is Nagaland's initiative?

- The Government of Nagaland has decided to set up a Register of Indigenous Inhabitants of Nagaland (RIIN).
- [This comes 4 years after Assam started revising its National Register of Citizens (NRC). Click [here](#) to know more]
- The aim is to prevent fake 'indigenous inhabitants' certificates.
- The RIIN will be the master list of all indigenous inhabitants of the state.
- The process will be conducted across Nagaland and will be done as part of the online system of *Inner Line Permit (ILP)*, which is already in force in Nagaland.
- The entire exercise will be monitored by the Commissioner of Nagaland.
- In addition, the state government will designate nodal officers of the rank of a Secretary to the state government.
- Their role will be to monitor the implementation, and will have no say in the adjudication process.

How does it work?

- **Survey** - The RIIN list will be based on "an extensive survey".
- The preparation of the list will start from July 10, 2019, and the whole survey process will be completed within 60 days from the start.
- The list would be prepared under the supervision of the district administration.
- It will involve official records of indigenous residents from rural and (urban) wards.
- **Provisional list** - The database will note each family's original residence, current residence as well as the concerned Aadhaar numbers.
- This provisional list will then be published in all villages, wards and on government websites.
- **Review procedure** - Over the next 30 days (from provisional list), claims and

objections can be made.

- Respondents will be given an opportunity to make their case before the authorities.
- Eventually, respective Deputy Commissioners will adjudicate on the claims and objections based on official records and the evidence produced.
- This process will be completed before December 10, 2019.
- **RIIN** - Based on the adjudication and verification, a list of indigenous inhabitants will be finalised.
- The final list or the RIIN will be created and its copies will be placed in all villages and ward.
- Electronic copies of the list will also be stored in the State Data Centre.
- A mechanism or electronic and SMS-based authentication will be put in place.
- Each person will be given a unique ID.
- All indigenous inhabitants of the state would be issued a bar-coded and numbered Indigenous Inhabitant Certificate.
- **Updation** - Once the RIIN is finalised, no fresh indigenous inhabitant certificates will be issued.
- The only exception is newborn babies of the indigenous inhabitants of Nagaland.
- Those left out of the RIIN will have to file an application before Home Commissioner.
- S/he will get the matter verified and take necessary action for updating the RIIN if needed.

What are the likely challenges?

- The Assam experience shows that in the complex demographics of the Northeastern States, the registration process may not be that easy.
- As many as 40 lakh people were left out of the NRC listing in Assam, in the alleged process to filter out 'illegal immigrants'.
- Indeed, in Nagaland, various local attempts have been made to determine non-locals, non-tribals and non-Nagas.
- Efforts have been taken to identify what some people refer to as the 'Illegal Bangladeshi Immigrant', but not full-fledged.
- The situation on the ground is already volatile and the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act is routinely extended there too.
- All these pose significant challenges to the citizenship registration process.

What lies ahead?

- Other than deepening the existing differences, the registration process in

Assam has not led to any substantial gains.

- Given this, the Nagaland government should facilitate the right to appeal and a humane hearing for those who are left out.

Source: Indian Express, The Hindu

Quick Fact

Inner Line Permit (ILP)

- ILP is an official travel document required by Indian citizens residing outside certain “protected” states while entering them.
- The ILP is issued by the Government of India.
- With the ILP, the government aims to regulate movement to certain areas located near the international border of India.
- ILP’s origin dates back to the Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulations, 1873, which protected the British Crown’s interest in tea, oil and elephant trade.
- It prohibited “British subjects” or Indians from entering into these protected areas.
- After Independence, in 1950, the word “British subjects” was replaced by Citizens of India.
- Also, the focus of the ban on free movement was explained as a bid to protect tribal cultures in northeastern India.

