

# National Register of Citizens of India



## WHAT IS NRC?

The National Register of Citizens (NRC), is the list of Indian citizens in Assam.

It was prepared in 1951, following the census of 1951.



The purpose of NRC update is to identify illegal migrants residing in Assam who entered Indian territories after the midnight of 24 March 1971 and to determine the citizenship of the applicants who have applied for inclusion of their names in the updated NRC.





## TIMELINE

Influx of immigrants was a major concern for inhabitants of Assam. The state saw two major episodes of large-scale migrant influx around Partition and in run-up to Bangladesh war in 1971.



1978 - A student group called the All Assam Students Union, called for putting off the election till 'names of foreigners' were struck off the electoral rolls. This was the start of a six-year agitation that culminated in the Assam Accord



## The Nellie Massacre

As many as 2,191 people, mainly Muslims, from Nagaon villages were killed. The perpetrators were believed to be Assamese tribals.

THE ILLEGAL MIGRANTS (DETERMINATION BY TRIBUNALS) ACT 1983  
Parliament passed the Act to stem the inflow of immigrants.



## OTHER CLAUSES OF ACCORD

- \*Restricting acquisition of immovable property by foreigners
- \*Registration of births and deaths
- \*Prevention of encroachment of government lands
- \*Promoting cultural, social, linguistic identity and heritage of Assamese
- \*Economic development, stress on education, science and technology
- \*Citizenship certificates to be issued only by central authorities
- \*Border security to be ensured





## ASSAM ACCORD

The Assam Accord (1985) was a Memorandum of Settlement (MoS) signed between representatives of the Government of India and the leaders of the Assam Movement in New Delhi on 15 August 1985.



The accord brought an end to the Assam Agitation and paved the way for the leaders of the agitation to form a political party and form a government in the state of Assam soon after.



Some of the key demands were – All those foreigners who had entered Assam between 1951 and 1961 were to be given full citizenship, including the right to vote.

Those who had done so after 1971 were to be deported; the entrants between 1961 and 1971 were to be denied voting rights for ten years but would enjoy all other rights of citizenship.



A parallel package for the economic development of Assam, including a second oil refinery, a paper mill and an institute of technology, was also worked out. The central government also promised to provide 'legislative and administrative safeguards to protect the cultural, social, and linguistic identity and heritage' of the Assamese people.



**Filed in 2009, the case really picked up steam in 2013 as the Supreme Court directed the Union and State governments to speed up the process. A deadline of January 2016 was initially fixed to come up with the draft of the NRC though that was missed and after much delay, the eventual deadline of July 31, 2018 for the final draft of the NRC has been adhered to. All 3.3 crore residents of Assam were required to submit documents from a list prescribed by the government to prove that they were indeed citizens of India in accordance with the rules — a process that has been fraught with complexity and confusion.**



**who will be unable to prove Indian citizenship. The immediate consequence is that they will lose their right to vote (which temporarily ends the public interest litigation). But that only results in the beginning of a new problem: what will be the status of the several lakh individuals who would have suddenly lost Indian citizenship with no recourse in sight?**



**As scholar Niraja Gopal Jayal has observed, this was probably because Indian nationalism during the freedom movement had not attempted to define itself on exclusive racial or ethnic bases. Seventy years later, India's approach to citizenship is once again going to be scrutinised by the world. The subcontinent has seen multiple, large-scale humanitarian crises erupt over questions of nationhood, citizenship and identity.**



## Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016.

With The Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016, the government plans to change the definition of illegal migrants. The Bill, introduced in the Lok Sabha on July 15, 2016, seeks to amend the Citizenship Act, 1955 to provide citizenship to illegal migrants, from Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan, who are of Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain, Parsi or Christian extraction. However, the Act doesn't have a provision for Muslim sects like Shias and Ahmediyas who also face persecution in Pakistan.

The Bill also seeks to reduce the requirement of 11 years of continuous stay in the country to six years to obtain citizenship by naturalisation.





## Who are illegal immigrants?

According to the Citizenship Act, 1955, an illegal immigrant is one who enters India without a valid passport or with forged documents. Or, a person who stays beyond the visa permit.



## Why and who all are opposing the Bill in Assam?

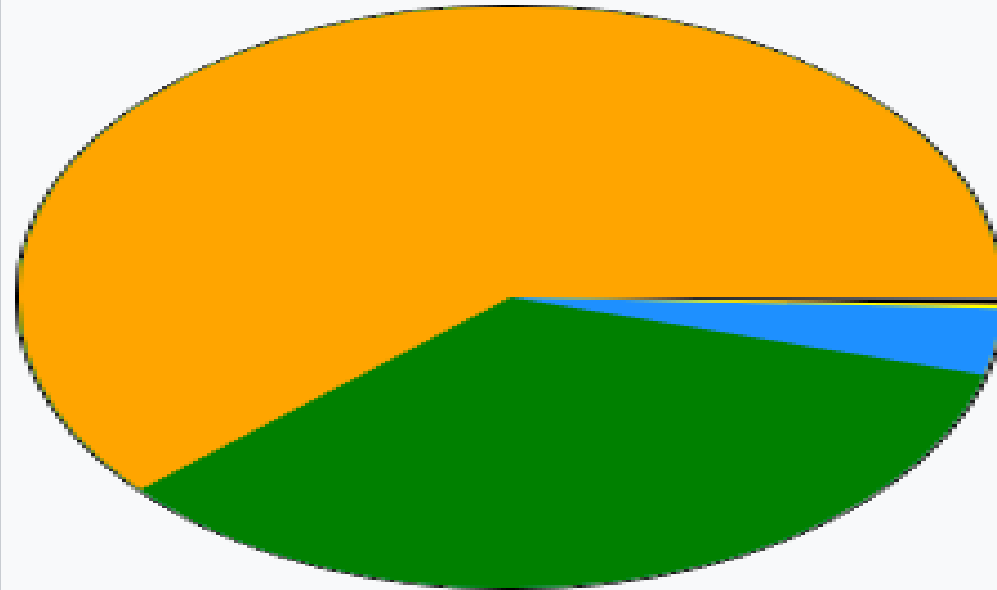
. It considers the Bill to work against the cultural and linguistic identity of the indigenous people of the State. NGOs such as The Krishak Mukti Sangram Samiti and students' organisation All Assam Students' Union also have come forward opposing the Bill.



## Key Issues and Analysis

**The Bill makes illegal migrants eligible for citizenship on the basis of religion. This may violate Article 14 of the Constitution which guarantees right to equality.**





Religion in Assam (2011)<sup>[82]</sup>

