

FOREIGNERS CAN APPLY UNDER CAA AFTER RULES ARE NOTIFIED: CENTRE

Relevant for: Indian Polity | Topic: Indian Constitution - Features & Significant Provisions related to The Preamble, Union & its Territories and The Citizenship

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) on Tuesday told the Lok Sabha that “foreigners” covered under the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA), 2019, “may submit applications for grant of Indian citizenship after appropriate rules are notified by the Central government”.

Union Minister of State for Home Nityanand Rai said in a written reply in the Lower House that the CAA was notified on December 12, 2019 and came into force from January 10, 2020.

“The foreigners covered under this Amendment Act may submit applications for grant of Indian citizenship after appropriate rules are notified by the Central government. The Committees on Subordinate Legislation, Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha have granted time up to April 9, 2021, and July 9, 2021, respectively to frame these rules,” the reply said.

Without the rules being notified, the Act remains ineffective.

The CAA is one of the major issues in poll-bound West Bengal and Assam. Union Home Minister Amit Shah had earlier said the CAA rules will be framed after the COVID-19 vaccination drive was concluded. The election manifesto of the BJP in West Bengal said it will be implemented in the first State Cabinet meeting if the party came to power.

The CAA provides citizenship on the basis of religion to six undocumented non-Muslim communities from Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh who entered India on or before December 31, 2014.

Foreigners Tribunal

In a separate reply, the Minister said the final National Register of Indian Citizens (NRC) in Assam had not been issued.

To a question by Congress member Abdul Khaleque in the Lok Sabha about the number of appeals made to the Foreigners Tribunal [FT] within the stipulated 120 days by those who were excluded from the Final NRC list, the Minister said, “Any person, not satisfied with the outcome of the decisions of claims and objections under paragraph 7 of the Schedule to the Citizenship (Registration of Citizens and Issue of National Identity Card) Rules, 2003 may prefer an appeal before the designated Foreigners Tribunal within 120 days from the date of such orders.

However, the final National Register of Indian Citizens in Assam has not been issued. Consequently, a certified copy of the rejection order has not been issued to the persons excluded. Hence, the number of appeals made to the Foreigners Tribunal by those excluded from the final NRC list is ‘Nil’ as on date.”

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