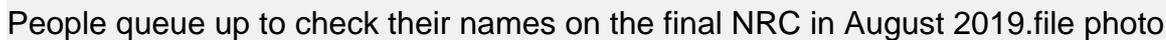


NRC-EXCLUDED TO GET REJECTION SLIPS

Relevant for: Developmental Issues | Topic: Government policies & interventions for development in various Sectors and issues arising out of their design & implementation incl. Housing

People queue up to check their names on the final NRC in August 2019.

The Centre has told the Assam government that “rejection slips” to those excluded from the final National Register of Citizens (NRC) published in 2019 should be issued immediately.

More than 19 lakh of the 3.29 crore applicants in Assam were left out of the final register that took five years to be compiled and cost Rs. 1,220 crore.

The office of the Registrar General of India (RGI) under the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) wrote to Assam Home Secretary S.R. Bhuyan on March 23 that the supplementary list of exclusions and inclusions were published on August 31, 2019 on the directions of the Supreme Court. “However, the process of issuing rejection slips to those excluded from the NRC is yet to start.”

The MHA had earlier said that “non-inclusion of a person’s name in the NRC does not by itself amount to him/her being declared as a foreigner” as they would be given adequate opportunity to present their case before the Foreigners Tribunals (FTs). The time limit to appeal before the FTs, the quasi judicial bodies unique to Assam, has been increased from 60 to 120 days.

Assam is the only State where an NRC was compiled under the supervision of the top court.

“In a meeting held under the chairmanship of the Union Home Secretary on February 22, 2020 it was decided that the rejection slip for the cases which are correct may be issued to the persons left out of the supplementary list of inclusion and exclusion immediately and cases where mismatch in results recorded in hard copy and entered in computer has been found by the SCNR [State coordinator, National Registration] may be referred to the concerned deputy commissioners for clarifications,” the letter by Jaspal Singh, Joint Director, office of the RGI, said. The State Coordinator of the NRC is a secretary rank officer of the Assam government who assists the RGI.

Several meetings

The letter added that the NRC coordination committee has been insisting since its meetings held on January 30, 2020 and July 2, 2020 to complete the activities under the approved budget of Rs. 1,602 crore.

The letter mentions that the State coordinator of the NRC in the July 2 meeting had mentioned that rejection slips would be issued by the end of December 2020.

The BJP-ruled Assam government has rejected the NRC in its current form and demanded re-verification of 30% of names included in the NRC in areas bordering Bangladesh and 10% in remaining State. The Assembly election is under way in Assam and the results are to be announced on May 2.

According to Article 6 of the Constitution, the cut-off date for migration to India from Pakistan is July 19, 1948 whereas according to the 1985 accord, in Assam, that borders Bangladesh, it is March 24, 1971.

In the letter, the joint director asked the Assam government to assess the software used for managing the register and discontinue the ones not required.

The letter said the State government's requirement of Rs. 3.22 crore per month for the upkeep of records appeared to be "too high". It also asked to discontinue the additional staff.

END

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