



EMBASSY OF INDIA  
MADRID

PRESS RELEASE

**Developments in India – National Register of Citizens in Assam**

Misleading and counter-factual reports have emerged about the updating of the National Register of Citizens (NRC) in Assam.

Assam, a border State of India, is currently amidst an exercise to determine the bonafide of its residents as citizens / legal migrants.

The National Register of Citizens (NRC) in Assam, with the list of residents as on 24 March 1971, was published on 31 August 2019 in line with the Government of India's commitments under the Assam Accord signed in 1985 with the State Government of Assam, the *All Assam Students Union (AASU)* and *All Assam Gan Sangram Parishad (AAGSP)*. The process began with the gazette notification in December 2013.

The process of preparation of the NRC is a statutory, transparent, legal process mandated, and monitored, by the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India with specific deadlines for implementation. The Government of India, in its efforts towards ensuring compliance with the directives from the Supreme Court of India, has ensured a fair, non-discriminatory and well-calibrated process based on scientific methods without any room for bias or injustice. The application process for inclusion in the NRC did not ask for information on religion of the applicant.

Anyone excluded from the NRC at this stage has a right to file an appeal (individually) within 120 days of receiving a notification of his or her exclusion, to a designated Tribunal. Contrary to popular perception, exclusion from the NRC does not make a person 'stateless' or a 'foreigner' until the judicial process examines the exclusions and appeals. Legal aid to the needy is being extended through the District Legal Service Authorities. The full legal recourse of the judiciary – including approaching the High Court of Assam and the Supreme Court of India – is available to affected persons.

Those who were excluded from the NRC will continue to enjoy all the rights and entitlements as before till they have exhausted all remedies available under the law. The exercise has been done with utmost care to minimize wrongful exclusions and inclusions. The intent is not to expel anyone but to assist them further.

India, as the world's largest democracy, has firmly enshrined 'equal rights for all' and 'respect for the rule of law' in its Constitution and upholds them steadfastly. An independent judiciary and fully autonomous state institutions, working for the defence of human rights, are an integral part of our political fabric and traditions. Any decision that is taken during the process of implementation of the NRC, will be within the four corners of India law and consistent with India's democratic traditions.

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