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## Those excluded will get a window of 10 months

Other senior police officers did not rule out "complications for months" after the final list.

"The post-NRC scenario will be highly challenging, because of monitoring of the people to be excluded from the list, following up on their cases and sending people failing the legal proceedings to detention centres," said an officer above the rank of Inspector-General of Police, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Apprehending a critical situation after the NRC, the Centre had in June decided to help Assam create e-Foreigners' Tribunals and increase the number of Foreigners' Tribunals - quasi-judicial establishments headed by members who are lawyers and retired judges and bureaucrats - from the existing 100 to 1,000. At least 200 of the ad-

ditional Foreigners' Tribunals are expected to be set up by September with the government already having appointed 221 new members.

"It is not as if the NRC-rejects would be shoved into the detention centres immediately after the final list is published. The process will take months, if not years, to complete as the people struck off the citizens' list can go to the High Court and the Supreme Court if they fail to establish their citizenship at the Foreigners' Tribunals," the police officer said.

Each person excluded will have a maximum of 120 days or four months from the date of publication of the final NRC to challenge his or her case at a Foreigners' Tribunal, which has to dispose of the case within six months.

## Russia may offer India conventional submarines

The Russian submarine will likely be based on the Amur 1650 conventional submarine, modified to suit Indian requirements.

The contenders for Project-751 are the Naval Group of France, Rosoboronexport Rubin Design Bureau of Russia, ThyssenKrupp Marine Systems of Germany and Saab Group of Sweden.

In June, the Navy issued the Expression of Interest (EOI) for short-listing potential Indian strategic partners for the project put at ₹45,000 crore. The potential strategic partners were asked to respond within two months. The Indian partners will be shortlisted based on the technical and financial capability to execute the project and absorb the technologies. The foreign manufacturer will be selected separately. However, the strategic partnership is a

long-drawn process with many uncertainties, as this model is being attempted for the first time.

The Russian FGFA has completed its development cycle, and the first batch is being produced for delivery to the Russian Air Force. Russian officials said at the ongoing MAKS air show that the jet was also ready for export. India was to have jointly developed its FGFA based on the Russian jet. But after protracted negotiations, India decided last year not to go ahead with the project. Speaking to reporters, Victor N. Kladov, Director for International Cooperation and Regional Policy at Ros-vec, said Russia had never cancelled any agreement with India.

(The writer is at MAKS 2019 air show at the invitation of the Russian government.)

## Poor demand hobbling animal spirits, says RBI

The RBI stressed on continued policy focus on reforms in factors of production, faster implementation of capital expenditure by public authorities, among others. While the central bank's analysis confirms that a broad-based cyclical downturn is underway in several sectors like manufacturing, trade, hotels, transport, communication and broadcasting, construction; and agriculture, it added that the growth trend has witnessed slight moderation since 2016-17, contributed mainly by the services sector.

### Push for spending

The central bank said reviving consumption demand and private investment has assumed the highest priority in 2019-20. This involves

strengthening the banking and non-banking sectors, a big push for spending on infrastructure and implementation of much needed structural reforms in the areas of labour laws, taxation, and other legal reforms.

All these measures will also enhance ease of doing business in pursuit of fulfilling the vision of India becoming a \$5 trillion economy by 2024-25, the RBI said.

On the financial sector, the banking regulator said several measures had resulted in a decline in gross non-performing assets (GNPA) ratio of the banking system to 9.1% at end-March 2019, from 11.2% in the previous year, apart from a decline in fresh slippages and an improvement in provision coverage ratio.

## Kandla, Adani ports put on security alert

They also directed that all suspicious activity should be reported to the Marine Control Station, the nerve centre of all maritime forces, or the Coast Guard or the marine police stations.

A statement issued by the Adani Port and SEZ in Mundra says, "... inputs had been received from coast guard station that Pakistani commandos are likely to infiltrate into Indian territory through Kutch area preferably via sea route to create communal disturbance or terrorist attack in Gujarat. All stakeholders are requested to institute preventive measures to militate hostile attacks and assume highest state of readiness and be vi-

gilant towards any attempts to breach our coastal security."

An alert signed by the Signal Superintendent of Deen Dayal Port Trust in Kandla asked for enhanced security measures that include "highest state of readiness and vigilance, the use of maximum possible assets and personnel to plug vulnerable areas, the tracking of suspicious individuals or boats, and patrolling along the coast."

On Monday, Navy Chief Admiral Karambir Singh cited intelligence reports to claim that Pakistan-based Jaish-e-Mohammad was training members for underwater attacks in India.

## More re-verification notices days before NRC publication

'Nothing unusual about such notices; people may be summoned today too'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
GUWAHATI

People included in the draft National Register of Citizens (NRC) published in July 2018 but suspected to be foreigners continue to receive notices for re-verification of their documents, days before the publication of the final citizens' list.

On Thursday, Nazir Ahmed of No. 4 Kumalia, Jan Mohammad of North Bagma and Suruj Ali and Achar Ali of Japorguri - all three villages in north-eastern Assam's Biswanath district - appeared for a hearing at their assigned NRC service centres. They had received the re-verification notice on Wednesday, about 72 hours before the publication of the final NRC.

According to the notice, a member each in their families was found to be ineligible because of discrepancies discovered while scrutinising their names in the draft NRC of July 2018. The discrepancy was outlined as "family tree reject".



Close scrutiny: Workers at the NRC office checking documents submitted by people ahead of the release of the register's final draft in Guwahati. •AFP

Each NRC applicant has to establish his or her family tree so that they are not linked with the wrong legacy person - meaning someone figuring in the legacy data comprising a set of documents, including the first NRC of 1951 and voters' lists up to March 24, 1971.

"This is not only the case of four persons in Biswanath district. Many others in the district and elsewhere such as Kamrup, Morigaon and Barpeta have been receiving re-verification notices. We don't know what the motive is behind this when the NRC deadline is round the bend," Azizur Rahman, adviser to

All-Assam Minority Students' Union, told *The Hindu*.

The NRC authority said there was nothing unusual about such notices. "Some people may be summoned on Friday too. The process will continue until the deadline fixed by the Supreme Court," a spokesperson said.

## No visible rush of foreigners after 1971, says rights group

'Assam saw a huge influx of immigrants from 1901 to 1971'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
GUWAHATI

A Delhi-based rights group, citing Census reports, says there has been no noticeable influx of foreigners into Assam after 1971, the base year for filtering out non-citizens from the updated National Register of Citizens (NRC), which is to be published on August 31.

A report titled "Foreigners in Assam: a blast from the past" released by the Rights and Risks Analysis Group on Thursday says the State witnessed a huge influx of immigrants from 1901 to 1971. But the influx reduced drastically thereafter.

"As per the Census of India, Assam's average decadal population growth rate was

23.95% from 1901 to 1971 against the all-India average of 12.9%. During these 70 years, the average decadal growth rate of population in Assam was almost double that of India and it changed the demographic character of Assam. But the All Assam Students Union (AASU) had accepted the immigrants of this period as citizens of India under the Assam Accord," the report says.

"The Census of India's 'Decadal Variation in Population Since 1901 to 2011' also states that Assam's decadal population growth has been consistently lower (20.9% than the national average of 21.94% from 1971 to 2011," the report says. "In fact, from 1971 to 2011, Assam had

the lowest average decadal population growth rate in the north-eastern region with Nagaland having the highest average decadal population growth rate of 42.52%, followed by Mizoram with 35.14%, Arunachal Pradesh with 31.25%, Meghalaya with 30.88%, Manipur with 27.78%, and Tripura 24.27%," the report says.

"If abnormal population growth rate as reflected in census reports is the determinant for the influx of foreigners, Assam did not witness any noticeable influx of foreigners in the post-1971 period. At least, major influx is not supported by Census statistics," says the rights group's director, Suhask Chakma.

## Don't treat children as collateral damage, NGO tells authorities

'Government should protect them from all forms of abuse'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
GUWAHATI

An Assam-based NGO specialising in child rights has warned of the psychological impact of the National Register of Citizens (NRC) on children, and asked the authorities not to treat them as "collateral damage" from the expensive exercise.

The final NRC is scheduled to be published on August 31. There are fears that at least 20 lakh people - many of them children - would be labelled foreigners after being excluded from the list.

The Universal Team for Social Action and Help (UTSAH) took to social media to remind the government of the need to honour India's commitment to the United

Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

"We support NRC as a local organisation, but a violation of children's rights cannot be treated as collateral damage acceptable in pursuit of an exercise deemed to be in national interest. The government should ensure the protection of children from all forms of physical and psychological abuse without discrimination of any kind," Utsah executive director Miguel Das Queah said.

### Fact-finding panel

He said his NGO would constitute a fact-finding committee after the publication of the final NRC list and suggest rectification if any violation

of children's rights was found.

In a 2018 report, Amnesty International said there were 31 children in Assam's detention centres for declared foreigners and some of them had come of age in captivity without access to counselling. It said that girls were allowed to stay with their mothers while boys above the age of six were sent out of the centres.

A 2018 National Human Rights Commission report on Assam's detention centres underlined the need for caring and protecting children of "foreigners" in detention camps under the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015.

## BJP now has 7 crore new members: Nadda

'The number exceeded the target as there is great enthusiasm about the BJP among the masses'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The BJP on Thursday announced that it had, through a six-week membership drive, managed to increase the recruitment into the party by nearly 50%, or nearly seven crore new members. The conclusion of the drive on August 20 signalled the start of its internal election process.

At a press briefing at the BJP headquarters, its working president, J.P. Nadda, said a new party president would be elected by December. Mr. Nadda said the process of collection of data on the new members was on and once it ended, the party's total membership would be 18 crore.

"The online registration



BJP leaders J.P. Nadda, left, and Shivraj Singh Chouhan at a press conference in New Delhi on Thursday. •PTI

for membership is at 5,81,34,242 crore, which is already 50% more than our current membership; offline registrations are at 62,32,957 lakh; and matched up with

the missed call membership drive, the total number of new members will be around 7 crore," he said.

The target of new membership was at 2.2 crore over

the 11-crore membership that was done in 2015. The number exceeded the target as there was "great enthusiasm" about the BJP among the masses.

### Exceeding expectations

Among the States where the membership drive exceeded expectations was West Bengal, where 80 lakh new members have joined. In Jammu and Kashmir, it was six lakh (no separate figures were provided for Jammu and the Valley).

Former Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, who has been in charge of the membership drive, to a query on Jammu and Kashmir, said young women in the proposed Union Territory had shown enthu-

siasm in joining the party. "The Sher-e-Kashmir Convention Centre in Srinagar was packed when our drive was on," he said.

"At the conclusion of the membership drive, the process of internal election will begin in September from the booth level onwards, and once 50% of these booth, district and State level polls are done, a new national party president will be elected, around December," Mr. Nadda said.

The latest membership drive started on July 6, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi and BJP president Amit Shah launching it from Varanasi and Telangana, respectively, on party ideology Syama Prasad Mookerjee's birth anniversary.

## No need to show full evidence: ED

Chidambaram would have wiped out all shared proof, says agency

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL  
NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) said the "art of investigation" does not oblige it to reveal to former Union Finance Minister P. Chidambaram the entire gamut of evidence collected during investigation into the INX Media case.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, for ED, told the Supreme Court that complete transparency towards an accused, especially one so high-profile like the senior Congress leader, would have

been an open invitation to him to tamper with evidence of money laundering. A tell-all policy in favour of accused persons destroys cases.

Mr. Mehta said it was "preposterous and absurd" for Mr. Chidambaram to claim that only evidence he was privy to should have been shown to the Delhi High Court. Such an approach, if adopted, would affect other sensitive investigations into Vijay Mallya, Mehul Choksi, Nirav Modi, Saradha chit fund and terror funding cas-



P. Chidambaram

es. "It will result in disastrous consequences," Mr. Mehta submitted on Thursday.

"The art of investigation is

that we reveal only certain things. If we confront him with 15 money trails when he really has 30, he will do his best to wipe out the rest," Mr. Mehta reasoned.

At the end of the fourth day of arguments, a Bench of Justices R. Banumathi and A.S. Bopanna reserved for orders the appeal made by Mr. Chidambaram for protection from arrest.

The court said its order would be given on September 5 and extended the interim protection from arrest till then.

## Former Haryana CM Hooda meets Sonia

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Former Haryana Chief Minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda met Congress president Sonia Gandhi on Thursday amidst speculation of a leadership change in the State ahead of the Assembly elections in a few months' time. Senior leader Ghulam Nabi Azad, the Congress in-charge for Haryana, was also present at the meeting. Neither of them spoke to the media.

This is the first time since the August 18 Rohtak rally - where Mr. Hooda indicated

that he would leave the party - that the former Chief Minister has called on Ms. Gandhi.

Mr. Hooda has been insisting on changing State Congress chief Ashok Tanwar, who was appointed by former Congress president Rahul Gandhi five years ago. Supporters of Mr. Hooda, who have always questioned Mr. Tanwar's leadership, have demanded the Haryana Congress chief's removal after the party failed to win even one of the 10 Lok Sabha seats in the election earlier this year.