

The Assam Tribune

Response from other states poor: Hajela

Staff Reporter



GUWAHATI, Aug 1 - The State NRC authority has so far received lukewarm response from state governments across the country with regard to official documents sent to them for verification.

Prateek Hajela, State Coordinator of NRC Assam, said today that 2,68,395 documents have been sent to 28 states and in return verification have been received in case of only 5,029 documents till now.

He added that the NRC Assam will eventually send around 5.25 lakh documents in total to other states for verification. Those documents have been issued by the respective state governments and their agencies and copies of such papers have been submitted for verification by citizens for inclusion of their names in the updated NRC being prepared in Assam.

The maximum number of documents, totalling 64,547, has been sent to West Bengal and replies have been received for only 30 of the documents. Similarly, of the 49,692 documents sent to Nagaland for verification, Kohima has so far responded to only 542 documents.

Another 34,438 documents have been sent to Meghalaya and replies have been received with regard to 493 of them.

Of the 33,486 documents sent to Arunachal Pradesh for verification, replies have been received for only 290.

Bihar has not yet responded to even one of the 31,380 documents sent by NRC Assam.

The highest number of verifications has been received from Tripura. The state has sent responses with regard to 1,049 of the total 25,008 documents sent to it, Hajela said.

Among other States, Rajasthan has sent responses for 858 of the 6,709 documents sent to it, Uttar Pradesh to 479 of 7,025 documents, Manipur to 103 of 6,302, Delhi to only four of 3,025 documents, Odisha to 47 of the 100, Sikkim to 47 of 50, and Mizoram has responded to 345 of the 1,953 documents sent to it from NRC Assam.

Himachal Pradesh has been sent only one document and it has already verified it, while the union territory of Chandigarh has verified both the documents sent to it.

Hajela said that NRC authority will take up the matter with all the state governments and the Centre, as well. It will raise the issue with the Supreme Court, so that documents issued outside the State are verified faster.

He added that NRC Assam has sought a total funding to the tune of Rs 793 crore for the updation process. The Central Government has already sanctioned Rs 288.18 crore and of that amount, barring Rs 4 lakh, the rest has been spent.

The NRC Coordinator added that 137 cases have so far been registered for submission of fake or forged documents.

The highest number of 33 cases has been registered in Nalbari district, followed by 17 in Barpeta and 14 in Nagaon. Another five cases have been registered in Dhubri, six in Cachar, two in Chirang, five in Morigaon, six in Bongaigaon, five in Karbi Anglong, nine in Kamrup, 11 in Darrang, six in Kokrajhar, four in Goalpara, three in Hailakandi, three in Sonitpur, one in Karimganj, two in Dima Hasao, one in Jorhat, one in Golaghat and three in Dibrugarh.

With regard to minorities, including Hindus from Bangladesh, for whom the Centre has recently formulated a new policy, Hajela said that as per the law such people will not be deported. "But citizenship to such people will be as per law and there is no special permission to grant them citizenship," he added.

Regarding D-voters, Hajela said the Supreme Court has allowed such people to apply for inclusion of their names in the updated NRC but the final decision will depend on their cases being tried by the Foreigners' Tribunals.

Asked about the progress of the NRC updation, Hajela said that 97 per cent of field verification work has been completed.

As far as [office](#) verification of the documents submitted by the applicants is concerned, he said 4.5 crore of the 6.63 crore documents have been verified so far.

Digitization of data regarding family tree verification have been completed and sent to NRC Seva Kendras, Hajela added.

"We are trying to speed up work as quickly as possible but without compromising on the quality of verification," he added.

Hajela said that certain misgivings seem to have been developing amongst some persons about the provision of "Original Inhabitant" identification under NRC updation.

"In this regard, it is reiterated that the process of updating of NRC, Assam, is being carried out on the basis of transparent modalities and statutory provisions, particularly 'The Citizenship (Registration of Citizens and Issue of National Identity Cards) Rules, 2003'," he said.

As per the provisions of Clause 3(3) of Schedule framed under the Rules, "The names of persons who are originally inhabitants of the State of Assam and their children and descendants, who are citizens of India, shall be included in the consolidated list if the citizenship of such persons is ascertained beyond reasonable doubt and to the satisfaction of the registering authority."

Hajela said, "As the law provides for the original inhabitants to be included in NRC, this provision is being implemented to ensure that no original inhabitant is deprived of this legal protection and is excluded from NRC due to unavailability of document or any such reason."

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