

VISHNUIAS.COM

WE PROVIDE A PATH FOR YOUR SUCCESS

ANTHROPOLOGY SNIPPET-293



(Welcome To Vishnu IAS online)

(Research and Training Institute for the best civil services preparation in India)

<http://vishnuias.com/>

Tribal body flags concerns over Nagaland's version of NRC



'RIIN could have unforeseen and dangerous implications for the Nagas as a people'

An apex body of Naga tribes has asked the Nagaland government not to be hasty with the exercise to prepare the Register of Indigenous Inhabitants of Nagaland (RIIN), seen as a variant of Assam's National Register of Citizens.

The Nagaland government has reportedly been trying to revive the RIIN exercise that was launched in July 2019 with the stated objective of preventing outsiders from obtaining fake indigenous certificates for seeking jobs and benefits of government schemes.

Three-member panel

The State government had formed a three-member panel headed by retired bureaucrat Banuo Z. Jamir for "studying,

examining, and recommending and advising” on the implementation of RIIN. But the exercise was suspended following protests from community-based and extremist organisations.

The Naga Hoho, the apex tribal body that had objected to the RIIN in 2019, has reacted to the State government’s alleged bid to implement RIIN with a tentative timetable for different stages of the updating process.

“The issue of RIIN should be handled with utmost care as it could have unforeseen and dangerous implications for the Nagas as a people,” the Naga Hoho said in a statement.

The State government had tasked the RIIN committee with determining the eligibility criteria to be an indigenous inhabitant, authority to authenticate claims of being indigenous, place of registration as indigenous inhabitant, the basis of claims of being indigenous, and the nature of documents that will be acceptable as proof of being indigenous.

Date quandary

The Naga Hoho said it was apprehensive of “dreadful consequences” if the “advocates of RIIN” implement the identification process with December 1, 1963 – the day Nagaland attained statehood – as the cut-off date for determining the “permanent residents” of the State. This date is likely to exclude Nagas who have come from beyond the boundaries of Nagaland.

According to the Naga Hoho, Naga tribes living in Assam, Manipur and Arunachal Pradesh in India and in Myanmar have a legitimate claim to their ancestral homeland.

“There are thousands of Nagas who have bought lands, built houses and settled down in Nagaland for several decades. In the absence of records such as land pattas, house taxes paid or enrolment in electoral rolls prior to December 1, 1963, many procedural anomalies will crop up even within the so-called pure Nagas of Nagaland,” the apex body said.

The Naga Hoho also feared that the non-indigenous Nagas could be treated as “illegal immigrants” and their lands and property confiscated. “The idea of the Nagas as a people to live together and their aspiration to live with self-determination will be irreparably damaged,” it said.