Census 2026 in Manipur

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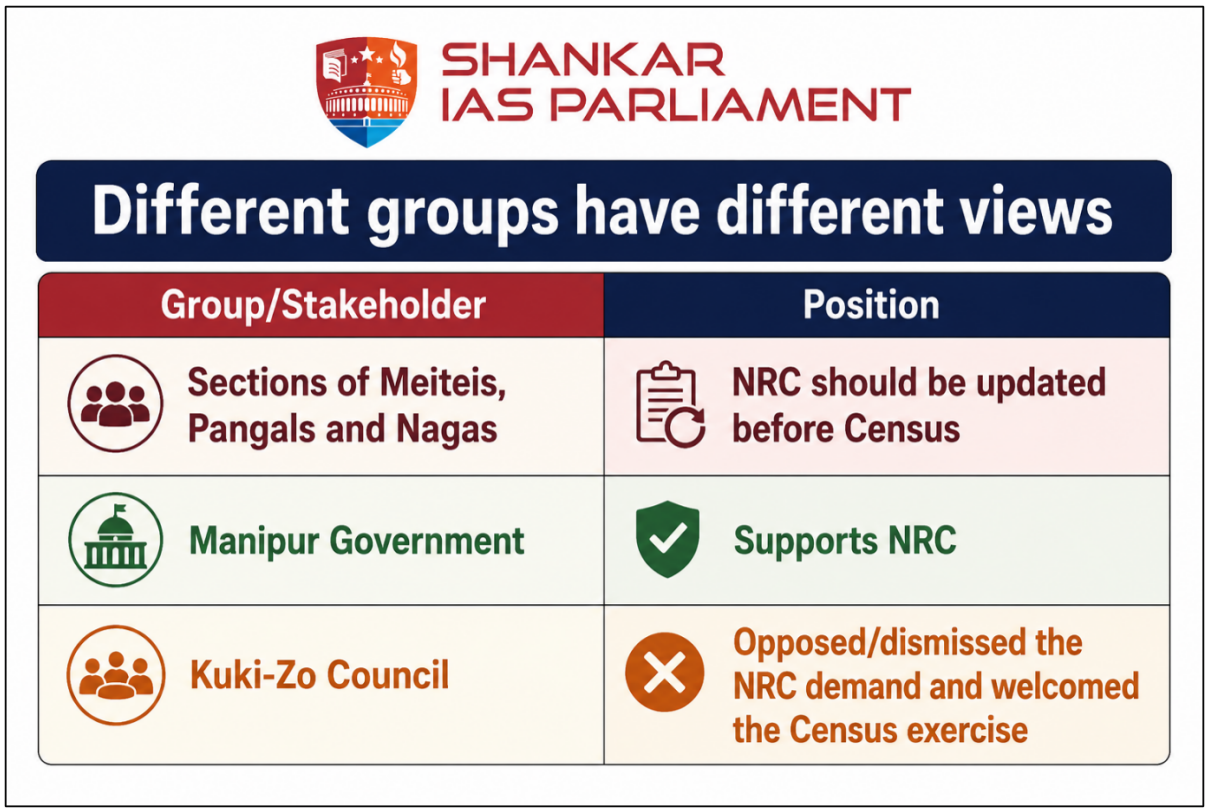
Why in News?

A recent high-level meeting in Delhi agreed to defer the Census exercise in the State, taking into account the feelings and aspirations of the people of Manipur.

- **Demands –** First, conduct the State's National Register of Citizens (NRC) exercise with 1951 as the base year.
- The demand has been raised by sections of:
  - Meiteis
  - Pangals (Meitei Muslims)
  - Naga groups



- **Legal intervention –** Petitions filed before the Manipur High Court have sought directions to:
  - Update or revise the NRC using 1951 as the base year.
  - Address concerns about illegal migration from Myanmar.
  - Conduct the Census only after resolving these issues.

- **Key Issues –** The Census is increasingly associated with broader societal concerns, including:
  - Migration
  - Identity
  - Demographic change
  - Citizenship
  - Ethnic tensions
  - Political representation

Census

• The Union Government has the power to order a census via a notification in the official Gazette.
• **Operationalisation –** Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner, under the Ministry of Home Affairs.
• **Legal framework**
- Census Act, 1948
- Union List as per the 7th Schedule of the Indian Constitution.

National Register of Citizens (NRC)

• **NRC –** It is an official record that documents individuals recognised as Indian citizens or residents based on established eligibility criteria.
• **Historical background**
- The origins of the NRC can be traced to India's first Census conducted after Independence in 1951.
- All Indian states were initially expected to compile similar registers.

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CENSUS	NRC
Counts and collects demographic information about the population	A register related to citizenship/residency eligibility under applicable laws and procedures
Focuses on population characteristics	Focuses on identifying eligible citizens/residents
Conducted periodically by the Union Government	Has specific legal and administrative processes
Includes information such as age, sex, occupation, etc.	Citizenship-related verification becomes important

All States were mandated to compile an NRC, but it was done only in Assam.

Reference

The Hindu | Census in Manipur

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