# Challenges to Nagaland's RIIN Initiative

## What is the issue?

- The Nagaland government has initiated a move to compile a Register of Indigenous Inhabitants of Nagaland (RIIN).
- In this context, here is an overview of the challenges that are likely to come up in the process.

## What are the likely challenges?

- **Naga peace talks** - The negotiators engaged in the ongoing Naga peace talks could now articulate new and hardened positions.
- The talks on the contentious issue of integration of contiguous Naga-inhabited areas (of Assam, Nagaland, Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh) could take pace now.
- **NSCN(I-M)** - The National Socialist Council of Nagalim (Isak-Muivah) is engaged in peace talks with the government of India since 1997.
- The self-styled government of the People's Republic of Nagalim is the parallel government run by the NSCN(I-M).
- This has opposed the compilation of RIIN, saying that all Nagas, wherever they are, were indigenous in their land by virtue of their common history.
- So it sees the RIIN process as being contradictory to the inherent rights of the Nagas.

- **Cut-off date** - Since 1977, to be eligible to obtain a certificate of indigenous inhabitants of Nagaland, a person has to fulfil either of the below conditions:

i. the person must be settled permanently in Nagaland prior to December 1, 1963
ii. his or her parents or legitimate guardians were paying house tax prior to the cut-off date (December 1, 1963)
iii. the applicant, or his/her parents or legitimate guardians, acquired property and a patta (land certificate) prior to this cut-off date

- The compilation of RIIN involves the complexities of deciding on the claims of the children of non-Naga fathers as well as non-Naga children adopted by Naga parents.
- In this regard, the Nagaland government may choose to go ahead with the above cut-off date.

- In such case, all Naga people who have migrated to the State after this day will have to be excluded.
- These include migrants from the neighbouring Assam, Manipur and Arunachal Pradesh and elsewhere in India.
- The public opinion is still divided on compiling RIIN without a consensus on the cut-off date.
- **ILP** - There is a proposal to link RIIN with the ILP (Inner Line Permit) system.
- [The ILP is a travel document issued by the government of India to allow a 'domestic tourist' to enter Nagaland, and is valid for 30 days.]
- The complexity is that unless otherwise officially clarified, the RIIN proposal may require large numbers of non-indigenous inhabitants to obtain an ILP to carry out day-to-day activities.
- Notably, most of them are migrated ones from other States and have been carrying out trade, business and other activities for decades, especially in the Dimapur district.
- **Certificates** - There is the limitation of non-issuance of domicile certificates or permanent residence certificates to a large number of non-Naga, non-indigenous inhabitants.
- This could also make the RIIN task even more difficult for the Nagaland government.

**Source: The Hindu**

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