Concern with Anti-NRC Campaigns

Why in news?

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Strident propaganda against updating NRC has been launched in various parts of Assam.

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What is the brief history behind NRC?

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- It was decided to have an NRC for Assam after the 1951 census after it came to notice that large-scale illegal migration was taking place in the state.
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- Unfortunately, this exercise was abandoned in the subsequent censuses, presumably under the influence of vote bank politics, and illegal migration through the porous border continued.
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- This created a situation in which the indigenous people of Assam were gradually losing their land and economic space, and further becoming almost politically irrelevant in their native land.
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What are the recent concerns with NRC?

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- The draft of the full National Register for Citizens was published recently.
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- Despite the exercise being undertaken under the supervision of the apex court, a massive international campaign was carried out against the exercise even before the final draft was published in the name of human rights.
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- It launched a signature campaign claiming it to be a conspiracy to deprive 70 lakh “Indian Muslims” of their citizenship equating the fate of this imaginary number to that of the Rohingya of Myanmar.
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- Another campaign was carried out by some organisations and intellectuals from the Barak Valley to call it an exercise against the Bangla-speaking population of Assam.
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What are the intentions of the campaigners?

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- They campaigners are attempting to paint NRC as conspiratorial on behalf of the indigenous people, who have ironically been at the receiving end of migration pressure on demography since the time of the British occupation of this region.
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- The indigenous communities will not accept is being a minority in their homeland and be politically beholden to the immigrants, who may, in course of time, try to grab the major portion of the political cake.
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- The anti-NRC campaigns are an attempt not only to communalise the exercise but also to cause an amnesia about the historical fact of continuous loss of political and economic space by the indigenous people.
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- Unfortunately, the ruling party by bringing in an amendment to the Citizenship Act to grant citizenship to illegal migrants of all religious communities barring the Muslims, has provided ammunition to international groups to paint a communal picture of the NRC document.
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- This exercise is not the end of the struggle of the indigenous communities to preserve their native identity.
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- The Clause 6 of the Assam Accord has to be implemented to ensure constitutional safeguards for the future of these communities.
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What is the way forward?

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- If there is some mistake all such aberrations have to be rectified during the ongoing process of submission of complaints.
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- If it is found that any official is indulging in mischief, such official/s have to be taken to task according to procedure.
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- The citizens will have children, and so, there has to be a seamless process for updating the NRC in future to include the new borns.
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- In future, the birth and death registration will have to be linked to the NRC database.
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Source: Indian Express

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