



# ILLEGAL IMMIGRANT IN NORTH EASTERN REGION OF INDIA

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## ABSTRACT:

An illegal migrant in India is an outsider who has entered India either without legitimate records or who at first had a substantial report, however has exceeded past the allowed time, according to the general arrangements of the Citizenship Go about as corrected in 2003. Such people are not qualified for citizenship by enrollment or naturalisation. They are likewise obligated to be detained for 2-8 years and fined.

The minority groups of Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Afghanistan that were forced to seek refuge in India because of religious persecution or fear of religious persecution were granted an exception in 2015. They aren't considered undocumented immigrants, therefore they can still apply for citizenship. The 2001 Indian Census provides data on migrants, though not just illegal immigrants. According to the 2001 Census, Pakistanis and Bangladeshis make up the majority of immigrants in India.

It is crucial to stop illegal immigrants from entering India because they put strain on locals and provide a security risk, particularly in sensitive areas like Jammu and West Bengal. The Indian security establishments, for instance, claimed that some Rohingyas sympathising with many militant group's ideologies may be active in Jammu, Delhi, Hyderabad, and Mewat and can be a potential threat to internal security.

Legal immigrants in India are not considered refugees. Since India did not ratify the 1951 Refugee Convention, the non-refoulement and impediment to expulsion principles of the UN do not apply in India. If an illegal immigrant does not meet the host country's legal definition of a legitimate refugee, they are not given an impediment to expulsion. Illegal immigrants are those who enter a nation in contravention of its immigration laws or those who remain there after being denied legal permission to do so. Illegal immigration typically moves upward in terms of wealth, from poorer to richer nations. The Supreme Court of India overturned the unlawful Migrants (Determination by Tribunal) Act, 1983 in 2005, stating that it "has created the biggest hurdle and is the main impediment or barrier in the identification and deportation of illegal migrants." During a Supreme Court hearing on a public interest litigation petition for the deportation of illegal migrants on August 9, 2012, it was stated that the Indian government's policy does not support any type of illegal migration, either into its territory or the illegal immigration of its citizens, and that the government is committed to deporting illegal Bangladeshi migrants, but only in accordance with the law.

In the past, the Indian government has recognised immigrants from Tibet and Sri Lanka as refugees, giving the former free education and some form of identification. By amending the Citizenship Act of 1955, the Citizenship Amendment Act of 2019 made it possible for immigrants from minority communities—including Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Christians, and Parsis—who fled religious persecution in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, and Pakistan to obtain Indian citizenship as long as they arrived on or before December 31, 2014—while excluding members of the Muslim community, which makes up the majority in those countries.

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## INTRODUCTION :

Of all kinds of migration, illegal migration has become the most volatile and contentious issue in Indian polity today because of the socio-political conflicts it has brought in its wake. Illegal migration comprises of people across national borders in a way that violates the immigration laws of the destination country.

The illegal influx of Bangladeshis from the east has altered the population of the upper east, especially Assam. More recently, there has been a concentration of Rohingyas who are being tried in Myanmar. Fundamentally mistreated strict minority from Pakistan and Afghanistan have entered India from the north. It has frequently posed a security risk for India, especially in Kashmir where attackers cross the Line of Control.

### Issue of illegal immigration into India

1. Due to Bangladesh's rapid population growth, there is an increasing demand for land and rising unemployment. Another significant element is the 4,096 kilometres of porous border between India and Bangladesh.

2. Economic Growth Stagnation and Employment Shortage: Because industrialization in India's neighbouring countries was unable to keep pace with the expanding labour force, the unemployment rate is decreasing. People of working age who are unable to find employment in the country search abroad for companies with open doors.

3 Illegal voters: Most of the Bangladeshi immigrants have got their names enlisted in the voting list illegally, thereby claiming themselves as citizens of the state.

4. Religious Discrimination: In Bangladesh, dishonest officials and vested interest groups further used the discriminatory land laws to evict and alienate the Hindus from their own land and possessions. The Rohingya experience a specific impact as a result of religion.

5. Pakistan's state sponsored terrorism: The biggest security concern comes from state-sponsored terrorism in Pakistan, where militants and civilians are infiltrating Kashmir to sow unrest and keep India involved in the long-running conflict.

6. Issue of psychological oppression: The ISI of Pakistan has been active in Bangladesh, aiding Assamese militant movements. According to reports, among the illegal immigrants there are also militants who travel to Assam to engage in terrorism.

As of late, the Ministry of home affair has informed in the Lok Sabha that as per a few reports some Rohingya immigrants are enjoying criminal operations.

## Rohingya

The remark was given in response to questions regarding the Rohingya population now living illegally across the nation. The Rohingya are an Indo-Aryan ethnic minority that lives without a state in Rakhine State, Myanmar. They are listed as one of the most persecuted minority in the world by the United Nations (UN). The Rohingya people have long endured violence and persecution in Myanmar, which has contributed to the current catastrophe. They are listed as one of the most persecuted minority in the world by the United Nations (UN). For decades, the minority Rohingya Muslims have left the predominantly Buddhist nation of Myanmar to neighbouring Bangladesh and other nations, notably India, in order to avoid persecution and bloodshed.

One of the main points of entry for illegal Rohingyas into India is its northeastern border. There are 16,000 Rohingya who have registered with the UN in India, but many more are reportedly living without documentation. A total of 40,000 Rohingya are thought to live in the nation, with 5,000 of them residing in the northern Jammu and Kashmir region.

## METHODOLOGY:

This study with a descriptive analysis of the Illegal immigration in India with special reference to the North eastern region of India will be based on the secondary as well as the primary methods. In this study i will briefly analyse the the problems faced the northeast states of India from immigration .

## ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS IN MIZORAM:

On February 2, 2023, The Mizoram government has issued an order against the issuance of birth and death certificates to illegal immigrants and refugees in the state with immediate effect.

According to from the data collected from the local people of Mizoram. The illegal immigrants first located them in schools as camps. Later then after acquiring jobs – started to settle among the people. Also Without proper government approval they can't set up business in Mizoram. They can't settle in any area they want in Mizoram. They were restricted to some areas only. They can settle in areas designated by the area village council. They must not create ID card illegally. If there r any refugees in the area the village council must inform the villagers or citizens about them. The CM of Mizoram in a meeting with the joint secretary said they want peace and harmony for Myanmar and to establish democracy again.

Over 40,000 refugees from Myanmar have taken shelter in Mizoram since a military coup in the neighbouring country in February 2021, according to K. Vanlalvena, a Rajya Sabha member from the ruling Mizo National Front (MNF). He said the refugees are prohibited to take up any kind of work or employment, however the State government is providing them with basic amenities in camps.

Mr. Vanlalvena told *The Hindu* that Chief Minister Zoramthanga, who was in Delhi, met Prime Minister Narendra Modi on September 14 and requested him to take necessary steps to restore normalcy in Myanmar. He said India is in a position to resolve the refugee crisis because of its neutrality. "India is neither on the side of (Myanmar) military nor the refugees. The Chief Minister, therefore, requested the Prime Minister to discuss the matter with Myanmar," Mr. Vanlalvena said.

The Tatmadaw or Myanmar military took over the country after a coup on February 1, 2021. Since then, thousands of refugees from Myanmar, belonging to the Chin ethnic group comprising the Lai, Tidim-Zomi, Lusei and Hualngo tribes who are closely related to the Mizo community, have crossed over to Mizoram. India and Myanmar share 1,643-km border and people on either side have familial ties.

The parliamentarian said that the State government has registered around 30,000 refugees and there were close to 60 camps where the refugees were staying in. There are many refugees who are living with their relatives and friends, so they have not been registered officially, but the total count stood at over 40,000 so far. It is difficult to give an exact number.

Though the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) in a letter last year asked the Chief Secretaries of Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh to "take appropriate action as per law to check illegal influx from Myanmar into India", none of the refugees settled in Mizoram for more than a year have been deported so far. The MHA had said that State governments have no powers to grant "refugee" status to any foreigner and India is not a signatory to the United Nations Refugee Convention of 1951 and its 1967 Protocol.

Mr. Zoramthanga met Union Home Minister Amit Shah on September 22. A tweet by his office said that the two "discussed various important issues including the state of Myanmar refugees in Mizoram."

The CM of Mizoram has announced that The government has already issued orders that the refugees cannot settle here and the orders prohibiting them from taking up any kind of work has also been issued. The refugees are expected not to leave their camps. However, if the government can make arrangements for work, it will be good. The Central government has given funds to Mizoram.

A Free Movement Regime (FMR) exists between India and Myanmar under which every member of the hill tribes, who is either a citizen of India or of Myanmar and who is a resident of any area within 16 km on the either side of the Indo-Myanmar Border (IMB) can cross the border with a border pass (with one-year validity) issued by the competent authority and can stay up to two weeks per visit.

## ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS IN NAGALAND:

Nagaland doesn't share an immediate land border with Bangladesh, however unlawful immigrants are penetrating into the state from Assam, with which Nagaland shares an almost 500-kilometer-long land line. It has turned into one more Bangladeshi objective in India.

Unabated unlawful migration of Bangladeshis into Nagaland is arising as a significant issue in the state, taking steps to expect extents that enjoy currently disturbed populaces and harmony in the Northeastern area. Better monetary possibilities and a lack of nearby work are intensified by a basic shortfall of components to forestall such a deluge. Notwithstanding their serious segment, monetary, security and political repercussions on a small state like Nagaland, these improvements keep on excess considerably outside the domain of the security talk in the country.

Regions around Dimapur town and the lower regions along the Assam-Nagaland line have arisen as the ideal objectives of movement, spreading steadily from that point into other far off districts. The extremely cosmopolitan nature of the Dimapur region makes location of unlawful transients a troublesome undertaking. More regrettable, the unlawful travelers are likewise possessing legitimate authority records like proportion cards and elector character cards secured from the provinces of Assam or West Bengal, where these are accessible against a little pay off. The way that Dimapur town and its encompassing regions are not covered under the Inward Line License (ILP) framework, which restricts all non-Naga untouchables (counting Indian residents) to get comfortable the region, is apparently being taken advantage of by the migrants before they stream into different region of the state.

Once in Nagaland, the unlawful immigrant figure out how to get consumed in broadly accessible occupations, including agrarian work, homegrown aides, cart pullers, unskilled workers in building locales and shop orderlies. Plus, a part among local people disparage them by giving area to development and brief settlements. Bangladeshis, giving modest work, have turned into the favored choice, as opposed to the moderately costly and insufficient pool of neighborhood laborers.

Exact appraisals of the quantities of unlawful immigrants remaining in Nagaland are difficult to obtain. Accessible assessments shift somewhere in the range of 75,000 and 300,000. In spite of the shortfall of an exact figure, these evaluations highlight the greatness of the emergency in this little state, which has an all out populace of scarcely 2,000,000. Shockingly, the Dimapur region alone is accepted to have in excess of 100,000 unlawful immigrangts. Way back in February 1999, the previous Nagaland Boss Clergyman and right now the Legislative leader of Goa, S.C. Jamir expressed that there were around 60,000 Bangladeshis illicitly remaining in Dimapur.

The proceeding with flood of unlawful immigrants has made a serious danger of destabilisation in the state, with immigrants logically usurping the monetary base of the Nagas. In significant promoting region of the state like Dimapur, they have proactively gotten extensive impact in exchange and business and this is growing quickly. Muslim immigrants today run close to half of the shops in Dimapur, the greatest business center point of the state. In 2003, a nearby paper publication noted briefly, "There is no denying the way that on any Muslim strict day, a big part of the shops in Kohima and exactly 75% in Dimapur, stay shut. The fact is that this is an obvious sign of how much the travelers an affect exchanging."

A review led by the Nagaland state Directorate of Horticulture in 2003 uncovered that around 71.73 percent of the complete business foundations in the state were controlled and run by 'non-local people's including both lawful and unlawful immigrants. As per the report, out of the 23,777 shops in the express, the neighborhood individuals own main 6,722 shops (that is 28.27 percent). While the report put forth no attempt to independently recognize unlawful travelers among the retailers, there is an enormous group of valuable proof that proposes their sizeable presence. Unlawful transients are likewise gaining land and other resolute properties in conspiracies with their nearby supporters.

The effect of Bangladeshi transients is likewise apparent in the shaky segment profile of the state. With a populace of 19,88,636 under the Evaluation of 2001, Nagaland kept the most noteworthy pace of populace development in India, from 56.08 percent in 1981-1991 to 64.41 percent in the 10 years, 1991-2001. Essentially, the populace development was been uniform all through the state. A few regions in the Dimapur and Wokha Locale lining Assam have recorded uncommonly high populace development. Wokha region, lining the Golaghat Locale of Assam, recorded the most elevated populace development of 95.01 percent somewhere in the range of 1991 and 2001, the most elevated figure for any area in the whole country. Clearly, the quiet and unrestrained flood of unlawful transients in the Locale, plays had a significant impact in this unusual development.

Immigrants wed local people to get legitimate and social adequacy for their visit in the state. As another local area privately called 'Sumias' has arisen in certain pieces of the state. These 'Sumias' are assessed in the few thousands and are amassed essentially in the Dimapur and Kohima Locale. There are rising feelings of trepidation among local people that electors' rundown are presently being doctored to oblige the "Sumias" as well as different travelers. These anxieties have been additionally supported by the way that, as the Statistics 2001 records, the number of inhabitants in Muslims in the state has more than trebled in the previous ten years, from 20,642 out of 1991 to more than 75,000 out of 2001. Unlawful immigrants are broadly accepted to represent a mind-boggling extent of this recorded increment.

Stressed by such improvements the vocal Naga Understudies' Organization (NSF) has looked to force limitations on Naga young ladies wedding unlawful immigrants. On August 10, 2003, a Naga understudy pioneer said that the NSF has proactively forced a prohibition on Naga young ladies wedding unlawful immigrants from Bangladesh. Nonetheless, he likewise lamented the way that the boycott couldn't be completely carried out. On certain events, the understudy body likewise professed to have 'expelled' unlawful pioneers from the state. Tragically, those expelled purportedly returned after a short stay in adjoining Assam. The state government has additionally professed to have ousted around 20,000 infiltrators somewhere in the range of 1994 and 1997, however the greater part of them were again answered to have returned. Regardless, such cases of 'extradition' have minimal significance as they include just unloading the unlawful immigrants starting with one Indian state then onto the next.

The presence of huge number of unfamiliar nationals has likewise made a vulnerable constituency for exploitation by hostile Bangladeshi and Pakistani Intelligence services. The threat has been further compounded with the emergence of several Islamist extremist groups in the region, who secure support from Pakistan's Inter Services Intelligence and the Bangladeshi Directorate General of Forces Intelligence.

The discussion on relocation from Bangladesh has been politicized previously, contributing straightforwardly to segment destabilization in Nagaland and the more extensive Northeastern area. Progressive focal and state legislatures have demonstrated ineffectual in planning useful measures to stop the progression of unlawful travelers into the country overall and the Nagaland specifically, and this disregard is removing a rising cost in friendly, monetary and security terms as time passes by, and takes steps to get the elements of a significant inward security emergency soon.

The locals on fifth August 2018 chose to hold a gathering against the homicide of a Naga kid Kumugha Chishi by the unlawful workers. The wrongdoing was censured and the locals cautioned every one of the towns to expel the workers before any further violations are carried out by the settlers. The Western Sumi Hoho (WSH) and Kuhuboto Ghakhu Public Association guaranteed that the convict ought to be seriously rebuffed for the grievous wrongdoing. Faults were made to the public authority for not concentrating entirely on ILP. The TIN chose to make mindful the residents of Nagaland about the burden of ILP by starting banner mission on fourth November 2017 in Dimapur against the unlawful settlers. The locals upheld the way that homicide and assault are unfamiliar in Naga customs and are never heard consequently residents ought to meet up to battle against the danger to Naga society.

Most of unlawful immigrants additionally lives in a vile state of climate compounded with absence of cleanliness and are capitulate to specific sicknesses like cholera, measles and transferable illnesses which will clearly influence the soundness of the nearby mass joined by causing weighty costs for therapy and medicine.

## ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS IN ASSAM:

Illegal migration from Bangladesh into Assam should be viewed against the backdrop of past history, present realities and future designs. Migration into Assam has been taking place from the dawn of history. However, after the British annexed Assam, large scale population movement from the South (Bengal, East Pakistan and now Bangladesh) has been an ongoing phenomenon for over a century. Initially, this movement was for economic reasons only but with the approach of Independence, it started developing both communal and political overtones. After Independence, it acquired an international dimension and it now poses a grave threat to our national security.

The Assam tea business was developed by the British. To work in the tea estates, they imported manpower from Bihar and other areas. The Assamese people, who primarily reside in Upper Assam and only cultivate one crop annually, had no interest in working as labourers in the tea gardens or in expanding their land's agricultural production to fulfil the increased demand for food resulting from the enormous labour force employed in the tea gardens. In order to cultivate unused land in Lower Assam, the British encouraged Bengali Muslim peasants from modern-day Bangladesh to relocate there. This started a movement pattern that has persisted even in the face of evolving circumstances. Assam was a province under the control of the Chief Commissioner in 1905, when Lord Curzon divided the former Bengal Presidency. It was combined with East Bengal, a new province with a large Muslim population. This greatly inflamed popular animosity throughout the nation and sparked a political awakening that ultimately resulted in India's independence. The partition of Bengal was cancelled by the British government in 1911. Assam's provincial status was reinstated, and it is presently governed by a Lieutenant Governor. The Assamese fear of losing their identity and being swamped by Bengalis goes back to this merger and even earlier. This fear had been aroused both by the Bengali Hindus dominating the administration and the professions, and the Bengali Muslims altering the demography of the province. The Bengali Muslims were hard working peasants who occupied vacant land and put virgin areas under cultivation. They made a significant contribution to the agricultural economy of Assam.

With constitutional reforms, the nation began to move closer to democracy, which is a numbers game. Now, the Muslim League presented its call for religiously-based partition. This gave this population movement a fresh twist. A deliberate effort was undertaken to facilitate the migration of Bengali Muslims into Assam for political reasons during Sir Mohammad Sadulla's Muslim League Ministry. The Viceroy, Lord Wavell, stated in the Viceroy's Journal, "The chief political problem is the desire of the Muslim Ministers to increase this immigration into the uncultivated Government lands under the slogan of Grow More Food but what they are really after, is Grow More Muslims. When the call for partition arose, it was anticipated that Pakistan would have a majority Muslim population. in the West and Bang-e-Islam comprising Bengal and Assam, in the East. Mr. Moinul Haque Chowdhary the Private Secretary of Jinnah, who after Independence became a Minister in Assam and later at Delhi, told Jinnah that he would "present Assam to him on a silver platter. Jinnah confidently declared at Guwahati that Assam was in his pocket. The Cabinet Mission Plan placed Assam in Group C with Bengal. Both the Congress High Command and the Muslim League accepted the grouping plan but Lokapriya Gopinath Borodoloi vehemently opposed it. He was supported by Mahatma Gandhi. The grouping plan was foiled and Assam was saved from becoming a part of Pakistan.

The main motivation for Assamese illegal migration has been economic. With a population density of 969 people per square kilometre, Bangladesh has the highest population density on earth. That nation's population is growing at a rate of 2.8 million people per year, or 2.2%, according to the United Nations. Every year, floods cover over one-third of Bangladesh, displacing 19 million people. 60% of the population, or 70 million people, are below the poverty level. Bangladesh's annual per capita income is \$170, which is significantly less than India's annual per capita income.. The border between India and Bangladesh is very porous. In these circumstances, the continued large scale population movement from Bangladesh to India, is

inevitable, unless effective measures are taken to counter it. Besides the above considerations, there are other contributory factors facilitating infiltration from Bangladesh. Ethnic, linguistic and religious commonality between the illegal migrants and many people on our side of the border, enables them to find shelter. It makes their detection difficult. Some political parties have been encouraging and even helping illegal migration, with a view to building vote banks. These immigrants are hard-working and are prepared to work as cheap labour and domestic for lower remuneration, than the local people. This makes them acceptable. Moreover, with corruption being all pervasive, corrupt officials, are bribed to provide help. Recently, a racket has been busted in Lakhimpur. Four individuals were found to have been providing forged citizenship certificates and other documents to illegal migrants for the last 14 years.

There is no proof that the Bangladeshi government is orchestrating the migration of people, but they have made no effort to stop it and may even be encouraging it to help with their overpopulation issue. As a result, there is currently an effort to conceal this shift. According to the Assam Accord, illegal migrants are individuals who entered the country after December 24, 1971 without authorization. The unlawful stream that entered between January 1 and December 24, 1971, however, was not to be deported and was instead to be granted Indian citizenship after ten years. No doubt, Hindus required special consideration at the time of Partition and had to be treated as refugees, but this cannot be allowed to continue for ever. Post - 1971 Hindu illegal migrants cannot justifiably claim refugee status. No census has been carried out to determine the number of these illegal migrants. Precise and authentic figures are not available but on the basis of estimates, extrapolations and various indicators, their number runs into millions.

## ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS IN MANIPUR:

The state government on March 26, 2021 directed Deputy Commissioners of five border districts of Ukhrul, Kamjong, Tengnoupal, Chandel and Churachandpur inter alia not to open any camps to provide food and shelter, CSOs should also not be allowed to open camps; but in case of grievous injuries medical attention may be provided on humanitarian considerations and people trying to enter or seek refuge must be politely turned away. It was further directed that Aadhaar enrolment should be stopped forthwith and the enrolment kits must be taken to safe custody. This instruction was however withdrawn on March 29 as it appeared that it was misconstrued and interpreted differently. Despite instructions from the Centre, Mizoram regulated the flow of refugees and they have the number which has by now crossed 30,000 and with some more refugees coming from Bangladesh from Chittagong side due to unrest there the number had increased but the state has the details and biometrics of all those who crossed over to the Indian side in Mizoram. Manipur failed to respond systematically and there was no capturing of biometrics of all those who had entered Manipur illegally. There is policy paralysis and refugees entered freely through the porous border, to escape the harsh political conditions in Myanmar. Due to COVID situation and the detection of illegal immigrants the state was forced to open a temporary detention centre at Churachandpur on April 1, 2021, which is reportedly now under IG (Prisons) but was practically run by some NGOs. The number of inmates varies with time the highest figure being 52, indicating that inmates in the camp had on the sly left the camp and had perhaps merged with the local population. In a number of instances elsewhere illegal immigrants have procured fake Aadhaar Cards and some unfortunate ones have been caught. Most of the illegal refugees are either Chin or Rohingyas.

The state government's response was perplexing in that a large number of people were turned away and forced to return to Myanmar, where their lives are in grave danger. However, due to the porous border and the lack of official machinery at the border, it is impossible to check for or prevent illegal entry, and the illegal immigrants entered Manipur almost freely. Illegal immigration can be detected and somewhat enforced in Moreh or Churachandpur where the state machinery presence is better. The failure of the state government to understand the ground reality is unpardonable which led many to enter surreptitiously and stay with their relatives within Manipur. The lack of clarity of the stand of the state government and the efforts to follow the Centre's directives in contradiction of the ground reality have led to a situation where the state is no wiser on the total number of illegal immigrants who had entered Manipur on the sly. The state government recently suddenly woke up to the problem and had informed that the DCs, SPs and the district machinery will be held responsible for any illegal immigration. This is



despite the fact that there is no SoP for the purpose and hence the detection is unsystematic. The recent detection of 81 illegal migrants who had established a new village by the name New Salbung near Lhangcham village in Tengnoupal District came as no surprise and was expected. It indicates a very poor intelligence network as it took quite some time to come to know about the establishment of a new village. As the threat to life across the border is high and officially it is not possible to enter legally, people are bound to cross the border illegally through the porous border and the inability of the state government to understand the ground reality is disconcerting. Quite a few of those who entered illegally are involved in poppy cultivation as they somehow have to earn for their survival and involvement in poppy cultivation provides easy earnings. This writer had earlier reported that some who are working as labourers in poppy plantations despite claims that they were from Assam just could not understand a word of Assamese thereby inferring that they are not from Assam but are from Myanmar.

The policy adopted by Mizoram was the best alternative despite the directive of the Centre. A figure of 4,000 refugees in Manipur was bandied around in the discussion with the UN Commission for Refugees while those working in the ground indicate that the number may have crossed 10,000. This can change the demographic profile of a region and as many of the small villages in the border just could not support the wave of immigration, there is bound to establish new villages in the border areas, especially in Kuki dominated areas. The situation in Mizoram and Manipur are starkly different. In Mizoram all those who seek refuge are welcome but their details are all recorded while in Manipur there is no data and most entered surreptitiously and after sometime will somehow enrol themselves as Indian citizens and then vote!

It should not have mattered whether India ratified the UN Convention on Refugees or its Protocol. As a human being, it is only natural to assist a neighbour who is in need. India won't take any action to topple Myanmar's military government, but it must make sure that people who came to India for political reasons and intolerable living conditions are supported while they are here. Except for the unfortunate few who are caught, it will be difficult for the administration to track down and take action against illegal immigrants due to the lack of a clear-cut strategy on the subject. The state government ought to have realised that what helps Delhi need not necessarily help Manipur. As an example for India ceding say 20 sq km of land to Myanmar does not have any impact overall but for Manipur it is a huge loss. As the situation in Myanmar does not improve with even aerial bombing within its territory nobody on earth can stop citizens of Myanmar from entering Manipur and Mizoram. And what should Manipur's agenda be? It should be to ensure that all those coming from Myanmar are counted and biometrics recorded and they are kept at designated places so that once the situation normalises they can be made to return. Efforts need to be taken that no citizen of Myanmar reaches Manipur surreptitiously. The census data show that large scale illegal immigration had happened in the past leading to sharp increase in the population in the border districts as the number of young people is low. This has led to communal tension due to demographic changes and if this is not plugged, it can lead to unrest and even violence. The state government had failed to look into the matter holistically when it started by meekly toeing the Centre's line but now it seems that some realisation had dawned about the problems of illegal immigration but the steps to be taken is not easy as the settlement is spread all across the border areas. As there is some linkage of illegal immigrants with forest clearance and poppy plantation, WoD can be a twin attack on both poppy plantation and illegal immigrants. This is not a sweeping charge that all illegal immigrants are involved in poppy cultivation as many are earning through legal means like weaving, working as labourer, carpentry, house building, etc. The State Government must have clear cut guidelines on the matter keeping the interest of the state and its people on priority. Tough talk without substance has no meaning. Governments tend to disregard the dictum "A stitch in time saves nine" including ours, much to their disadvantage later.

Ethnic tensions in insurgency-hit Manipur are on the rise, as a movement has gathered momentum seeking the expulsion of residents that some groups claim are "illegal immigrants from Myanmar, Nepal, and Bangladesh". Leaders of student organisations representing the ethnic Meitei communities of the state's plains protested outside Chief Minister Nongthombam Biren Singh's home Monday, alleging immigration was marginalising "the indigenous people of Manipur".

The crisis has been fuelled by long-standing tensions between the ethnic Meitei or non-tribals in Imphal valley and Kuki tribal communities living in the hills, as well as growing numbers of refugees fleeing

counterinsurgency operations conducted by the junta in Myanmar. Many of these refugees belong to the same ethnic group, the Kuki-Chin-Zomi-Mizo tribe, that live in the hills of Manipur. The six student organisations protesting Monday demanded the updating and implementation of the National Register of Citizens (NRC) in the state and the setting up of a Population Commission. In a statement released Sunday, these bodies alleged there was unnatural population growth in the hills, new villages were emerging in reserved forest lands, and poppy plantations had spread to newer areas.

“The outsiders coming from the other side of Indian boundaries, especially Myanmar, are taking full advantage of possessing similar facial composition, skin colour, and language as they create and expand their own villages, encroaching land which is owned by the state on the hills of Manipur,” the statement claimed, adding that there was a “never-ending threat to the indigenous people of Manipur”.

According to Leishangthem Lamyamba, president of the Democratic Students' Alliance of Manipur (DESAM), illegal immigration is tipping the demographic scales in Manipur, as evidenced by the 2011 census results showing decadal growth of 15.72 percent in the more developed valley and 39.54 percent among tribal communities in the hills. “A huge number of unauthorised immigrants have recently entered Manipur over the porous border with Myanmar. Leishangthem claimed that new villages had sprang up in the hilly regions, encroaching on forest territory.

In february2023, protestors from the Kuki Students Organisation and the Indigeneous Tribal Leaders Forum (ITLF) who represent the hill tribes clashed with security forces in Kangpokpi district, after the government moved to evict alleged encroachments on reserved forest land. The districts of Kangpokpi, Churachandpur, Tamenglong, Chandel, Ukhrul and Senapati are notified as “hill districts” in Manipur. The ethnic Kuki population in Manipur is about 30 per cent of the 28.5 lakh population, according to the 2011 Census.

Leaders of the hills communities have alleged the eviction drive is targeting legitimate residents of the state. Dr Seilen Haokip, spokesperson of the Kuki National Organisation (KNO), noted that “a village by the name of K Songjang in Churachandpur district was evicted on 20 February. This village has records dating back to the 1800s. There is no illegal settlement in the reserved forests or wildlife sanctuaries”.

N Biren Singh, the Chief Minister of Manipur, who is well-known for his War on Drugs campaign, is preparing for a new battle to eliminate the threat of the illegal immigration in the Indian state's northeast. Speaking exclusively to this Correspondent, the Chief Minister claimed that since “foreigner Kuki” immigrants have taken control of the social, political, and economic affairs of the native tribal people of the state, the indigenous people of the state have been reduced to the status of second-class citizens..

The number of Kuki communities along the border has multiplied. Their heaven has become areas like Churachandpur, Kangpokpi, Tengenoupal, and Chandel. The number of villages in the district of Kangpokpi expanded from 179 in 1969 to 534 in 2021 as a result of the increased influx of unauthorised immigrants. The number of villages in Churachandpur district has increased from 216 in 1969 to 544 in 2021. In contrast, Tengenoupal district, which borders the Sagaing Region of Myanmar, has more villages today than it did in 1969—446 as of 2021.

Research Through Innovation

## MEASURES NEEDED:

**1. Diplomatic Effort:** India must use diplomatic means to persuade Bangladesh to collaborate in order to address the issue of illegal immigration. It will be simpler if its people's digital data is shared.

**2. Better Border Management:** A difference will be made by fencing, building border roads, and managing the border effectively. like actively patrolling the international borders between India and Myanmar and Bangladesh.

**3.Unique Identification Number (UID) scheme:** Compilation of data is likely to reduce the comfort level of fresh illegal migrants.

**4.Bar from Voting rights:** Existing Bangladeshis could be permitted to work, but they shouldn't be able to vote because doing so will reduce their power as a political force and their ability to influence policy.

**5.Use of regional forums:** Discussions on issues like illegal migration from nearby countries can be had in forums like BIMSTEC, which can also help members coordinate.

**6.Dispute resolution:** Government should resolve pending border disputes with the neighbouring countries, as they later become matters of national-security threat.

**7.No diversion of security forces:** The border patrol should not be diverted from its main duty and assigned to other internal security responsibilities. For instance, it is not recommended to utilise the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), a force trained exclusively for the India-China border, in Naxalite-infested areas.

**8.Involvement of army:** It is believed that the Indian Army should be in charge of all established borders while the BSF should be in charge of any unresolved or disputed borders, such as the LoC in J&K and the LAC on the Indo-Tibetan border.

The State governments and Union Territory administrations had received instructions from the Centre instructing them to make law enforcement and intelligence agencies aware of the need to act quickly to identify illegal immigrants. There have also been released consolidated directives to address the problem of illegal immigration and overstaying by foreign nationals.

**Foreigners Act, 1946:** The act empowered the government to take such steps as are necessary to prevent illegal migrants including the use of force.

In all States and Union Territories, the idea that the "burden of proof" rests with the individual rather than the authority conferred by this act is still in effect. The Supreme Court's Constitution Bench has upheld this idea. The act gave the government the authority to create tribunals with authority akin to that of a civil court. The Foreigners (Tribunals) Order, 1964 has recently been amended (2019), enabling district magistrates in all States and Union Territories to establish tribunals to determine whether a person residing in India unlawfully is a foreigner or not.

#### **The Registration of Foreigners Act, 1939:**

Registration under Foreigners Regional Registration Officer (FRRO) is a mandatory requirement under which all foreign nationals (excluding overseas citizens of India) visiting India on a long term visa (more than 180 days) are required to register themselves with a Registration Officer within 14 days of arriving in India. Pakistani nationals visiting India are required to register within 24 hours of arrival regardless of the duration of their stay

#### **The Citizenship Act, 1955:**

It outlines the process for obtaining and determining Indian citizenship. Additionally, the Constitution has granted citizenship rights to Persons of Indian Origin, Non-Resident Indians, and Overseas Citizens of India. The state with the largest number of unlawful foreign immigrants detained between 2019 and 2021 is Maharashtra. 182 foreign nationals were detained during this time for entering Maharashtra using a fake Indian passport, according to National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) data. 40% of the 448 total instances that were registered in the nation under the Indian Passport Act are represented by this number.

However, Maharashtra stands at the 4th position with 61 people booked under the Foreigners Act between 2019 and 2021. This list is topped by West Bengal with 2,572 cases, followed by Karnataka with 204 and Tamil Nadu with 63 cases. According to the BJP-led Centre there are 2 crore illegal Bangladeshi immigrants in the country. The cities of Mumbai, Delhi, and Kolkata are the largest destinations for internal migrants in India. The continuance of the

illegal immigration of Rohingyas into India and their continued stay in India is found to be having serious national security ramifications and poses serious security threats. It impacts the interests of local populations in the areas seeing large-scale influxes of illegal immigrants.

## CONCLUSION:

As a result of the socio-political tensions it has sparked, illegal immigration has emerged as the most explosive and divisive topic in Indian politics at the moment. People who cross borders illegally do so in a manner that is against the destination nation's immigration laws. The phenomenon of migration is and will remain a global one. Every nation, including India, strives to control immigration in accordance with its needs. However, not all nations are prosperous, and because of this, they have been concerned about illegal immigration. Due to the relationships that the migrants have with the native population on an ethnic level, illegal migration is particularly difficult to quantify in the Indian setting. In the near future, it will stay that way. In India, efforts to stop illegal cross-border immigration are still woefully ineffective and will continue to be so unless a political solution is found. However, the reality is that continued cross-border immigration has significant demographic and social effects that have the potential to exacerbate tensions and conflict between the natives and the immigrants, particularly among the latter group. In North-East India, which has suffered from illegal immigration for many years, this is especially concerning. Campaigns against such migration in India also create racial and ethnic divisions among its citizens. Consequently, future tensions and conflicts won't just affect both indigenous and immigrants, as well as among them. Bangladeshi immigrants compete with local residents for resources like land, water, services, and jobs because they are in fact "settlers" in the area. As a result, their presence is viewed as a possible threat that has the capacity to change the region's political and demographic makeup. The indigenous frequently claim that the opportunities for low-skilled Indians to find productive employment are dwindling as a result of the ongoing influx of low-skilled immigrants from across the border. Cross-border migration so contributes to local unemployment.

The security issue of illegal immigration into India is another factor. The vast number of immigrant residents has also produced a weak target population that hostile intelligence services from Pakistan and Bangladesh can take advantage of. The ISI and several insurgency organisations are now close friends. The rise of numerous islamist extremist groups in the area has increased the threat. Islamic organisations have not spoken out about the urgent issue of illegal immigration. It will take more than a millennium to deport the estimated 15 million illegal immigrants if deportations continue at their current rate. India must therefore adopt time-limited tactics to control cross-border migration. State and federal administrations have made few efforts to address the issue throughout time. The situation has been made even more difficult by corruption in the local government. Vote-bank politics is currently emerging as a significant obstacle. To reach a national consensus, it is necessary to raise public knowledge of the issue.

After a coup, the Tatmadaw, or Myanmar military, seized control of the nation on February 1, 2021. Since then, tens of thousands of Chin refugees from Myanmar—members of the Lai, Tidim-Zomi, Lusei, and Hualngo tribes, which are closely related to the Mizo people have fled into Mizoram. Families on both sides of the 1,643 km border between India and Myanmar are connected. For decades, the minority Rohingya Muslims have left the predominantly Buddhist nation of Myanmar to neighbouring Bangladesh and other nations, notably India, in order to avoid persecution and bloodshed.

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