

PAPER CLIPPING

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National Population Register updation ball set rolling. Amit Shah says it is not at all tied to NRC

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@ New Delhi

THE government on Tuesday gave the go-ahead for undertaking Census 2021 and updating the National Population Register, a decision that sparked fears that it would be followed by a nationwide National Register of Citizens exercise, but the Centre quickly tried to allay them.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah told a news agency in the evening that "there is no link between the NRC and the NPR, I am clearly stating this today." Earlier in the day, I&B Minister Prakash Javadekar said likewise, adding no documents or biometrics would be taken during the NPR process.

Javadekar said the purpose of the NPR was to create a comprehensive identity database of every "usual resident" of the country, underscoring that it was started by the Manmohan Singh government in 2010.

"No new information will be sought this time and there is no link with the NRC. It is a population register, not a citizenship register," he said.

While Javadekar asserted that the NRC and the NPR were not linked, he appeared to contradict what the government had stated in Parliament in November 2014. In a written reply to the Rajya Sabha, the then Minister of State for Home Kiren Rijiju had stated: "NPR is a register of all the usual residents which include citizens and non-citizens as well. The NPR is the



IT WILL BE BASED ON SELF-DECLARATION

Cabinet approves ₹8,754 crore for census and ₹3941 crore for NPR

NPR will be based on self-declaration. Form to fill up won't be long: Javadekar

NPR info will be uploaded through a mobile app

Sharing personal info like passport number, Aadhaar data, DL will be voluntary

No list of doubtful people to be compiled under NPR

first step towards creation of National Register of Indian Citizens by verifying the citizenship status of every usual resident."

A "usual resident" is defined as a person who has stayed in a particular

area for at least six months. The citizenship rules of 2003 also point to a link between the two.

"The Central Government may, by an order issued in this regard, decide a date by which the Population Register shall be prepared by collecting information relating to all persons who are usually residing within the jurisdiction of Local Registrar," the 2003 rules state.

Since rules for the Citizenship (Amendment) Act 2019 have not been framed yet, those of 2003 still apply. Whether the the NPR would be decoupled from the NRC in the new rules for the 2019 law is not clear.

The 2003 rules state, "During the verification process, particulars of such individuals, whose citizenship is doubtful, shall be entered by the Local Registrar with appropriate remark in the Population Register for further enquiry and in case of doubtful citizenship, the individual or the family shall be informed in a specified proforma immediately after the verification process is over."

Earlier in the day, a note from the home ministry stated that there is no proposal "at present" to create the NRC in the country based on the NPR data. When asked if the NRC will be based on the NPR data, a senior government official said, "Government will trust whatever information you fill in the NPR form. No list of doubtful people will be prepared under NPR."

CONTINUED ON: PTI

M'luru police release videos on vandalism

AMIT S UPADHYE @Mangaluru

NEARLY a week after the violent protests in Mangaluru against the Citizenship law resulted in the deaths of two people in police firing, the police have released video clippings purportedly of protesters indulging in vandalism, on their social media accounts.

The videos were uploaded on Monday night and these clippings and telephonic conversations are now being

circulated on various social media platforms. The videos show some people covering their face, pelting stones, blocking roads and even damaging CCTV cameras. Besides videos, the police also released audio clippings and photographs.



Video grab released by M'luru police shows a vandal breaking a CCTV camera

A senior police official said that the videos were procured from the general public after City Police Commissioner P S Harsha had requested the people to share photos, video footage and CCTV recordings related to the rioting. "Though social media users hit back at the police for their action, the police have now got enough videos to show that the protest went violent. Depending on the footage, cases will be filed against those involved in vandalism," said the officer.

"We have collected CCTV footage and more videos of violence are emerging. Several protesters have called police stations and abused the officers," he said.

Register clipping

Cabinet (Central)

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NPR first step towards NRC, says Owaisi

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JAYADEKAR said the Cabinet had approved ₹8,754.23 crore for conducting the census and another ₹3941.35 crore for updating the NPR. "The NPR will only be self-declaration. It will not be a long form. There will be a mobile app for people to upload their details," he said, adding that giving details like passport number, Aadhaar data, driving licence, etc would be voluntary. He emphasised no list of doubtful people would be prepared under the NPR exercise.

The government's current stand is at variance with the position it had taken at various points in time on the NPR, which is why there is confu-

sion. For example, the 2018-19 Annual Report of the Union Home Ministry clearly states the NPR is the first step to the NRC. Also, the Census of India's website, which will carry out the NPR, describes it "the first step towards the creation of a National Register of Citizens".

In response to a question in the Lok Sabha on April 21, 2015, the then Minister of State for Home Affairs Haribhai Parathibhai Chandhary had said, "The objective of creating NPR is to net all usual residents of the country at a given point of time. This would serve as the mother database for creating the National Register of Indian Citizens by verify-

ing the citizenship status of each and every resident."

THE government's announcement drew criticism from the Opposition. "It is very clear that the NPR will lay the foundation for the NRC. At least 12

CMs have said no to the NRC. The Kerala and

West Bengal CMs have decided to not proceed on the NPR as well. We

appeal to all CMs, who have opposed the NRC, to ensure that the NPR exercise is abandoned in their states," CPM leader Sitaram Yechury said.

Yechury also said the NPR would require people to declare their date and place of birth of parents and furnishing of data on 21 points. Most of this data

was not collected in the last NPR exercise in 2010.

"The creation of the National Population Register (NPR) is the first step towards preparation of the NRC. The sun will always rise from the east, but can we say the same about your feelings towards NRC?" tweeted AIMIM's Asaduddin Owaisi.

But former Union home secretary Madhav Godbole said the NPR could kick up a fresh controversy. "There has been a lot of controversy around the Aadhaar data also. One has to be careful how the data is preserved and how its confidentiality is maintained," he said.

"You can never be sure or can never guarantee that it will not be misused."