

Free Movement Regime (FMR)

March 28, 2025 • vajiramandravi.com



Free Movement Regime Latest News

Should the free movement regime between India and Myanmar remain?

Why in the News?

- In **February 2024**, **Union Home Minister Amit Shah** announced that the **Free Movement Regime (FMR)** along the **India-Myanmar border** would be **scrapped**.
- The decision was reportedly influenced by **former Manipur CM N. Biren Singh**, who blamed **unregulated cross-border movement** for fueling **ethnic conflict in Manipur**.
- However, **Mizoram and Nagaland opposed the decision**, and no official notification or bilateral agreement has been made yet.
- The **FMR was introduced in 1968** and initially allowed movement up to **40 km**, later **reduced to 16 km in 2004**, with additional **regulations enforced in 2016**.

About Free Movement Regime (FMR)

- **The FMR is a bilateral arrangement** between **India and Myanmar** that permits unrestricted movement **within 16 km** on either side of the **1,643 km Indo-Myanmar border (IMB)**.
- **Eligibility:** Any member of the **hill tribes** (whether an **Indian or Myanmar citizen**) can cross the border **with a border pass valid for one year** and **stay for up to two weeks per visit**.
- **Objective:**
 - To maintain **historical, cultural, and social ties** between the trans-border communities.
 - To **boost local trade** and facilitate **familial visits**.
 - To serve as a **unique case of cross-border cooperation** under **India's Act East Policy**.
- **Implementation:**
 - Introduced formally in **2018**, although movement existed **informally for centuries**.
 - Inspired by **India's Act East Policy**, which aims to **strengthen ties** with Southeast Asian nations.

Free Movement Regime FAQs

Q1. What is the Free Movement Regime (FMR)?

Ans. FMR is an agreement between India and Myanmar that allows border residents to travel visa-free within a specified range for social and economic interactions.

Q2. What is the distance limit for movement under FMR?

Ans. Indian and Myanmar residents living within 16 km of the border can cross freely with a border pass for up to two weeks.

Q3. Why is the FMR important for India-Myanmar relations?

Ans. FMR facilitates people-to-people connectivity, trade, and cultural exchanges while addressing security concerns like insurgency and illegal activities.

Q4. Which Indian states benefit from the FMR?

Ans: The FMR applies to Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur, and Mizoram, which share a border with Myanmar.

Source: TH

Source: <https://vajiramandravi.com/current-affairs/what-is-the-free-movement-regime-fmr/>

© Vajiram & Ravi. For personal use only.