

Bill to amend the Registration of Births and Deaths Act

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Why in News?

- A Bill to amend the Registration of Birth and Death Act 1969 is among the 21 new Bills listed to be introduced in the ongoing session of Parliament by the Union Home Ministry.

- The Bill is likely to make Aadhaar compulsory for those who possess one in order to register births and deaths.

Background in which this Bill will be Introduced:

- Every individual has the **right to documentation**, a birth certificate or other forms of identification which they need to lead a dignified life.
- **The Registration of Births and Deaths Act 1969** is a simple law that was brought for registration of births and deaths in the country.
- Presently, **Aadhaar is not mandatory** for such registration and the proposed amendment to the 1969 Act will give it legal teeth.
- Recently, the Centre allowed the **Registrar General of India (RGI)** to perform Aadhaar authentication during registration of births and deaths in the country.

About the Bill:

- With new amendments, the Ministry of Home Affairs is proposing to **make Aadhaar mandatory** to track new births and deaths in any family.
- **It also requires States to compulsorily share data** on registered births and deaths with the RGI. However, the RGI will maintain its own register of births and deaths.
 - Presently, States are required to only send annual statistical reports to the RGI.
- The Bill proposes to also **make birth certificates mandatory** for joining schools, registration of votes, marriages, issuance of passports, in applications for government jobs, etc.

How will States share the Data and its Significance?

- As per the amendment, States will have to sign a MoU with the RGI to share the **Application Programming Interface (API)** from where the data can be pulled out.
- While all States are required to use the **Civil Registration System (CRS)** operated by the RGI to issue birth and death certificates, there are some States which have their own applications.
- The database will be used to update the population register or the **National Population Register (NPR)** – the first step towards the creation of the National Register of Indian Citizens (NRIC) or NRC.
 - **The NPR**, which was first prepared in 2010 and revised through door-to-door enumeration in 2015, already has a database of 119 crore residents.

- **The real-time updation** of the data on births and deaths **will eliminate the requirement of such enumeration to a large extent.**
- It will also give a clear picture of population figures in real-time.
- The database will also be used **to update the electoral register**, Aadhaar, ration card, passport and driving licence databases.

Concerns Regarding the Bill:

- The proposed amendments to a 50-year-old law will turn a simple state exercise into a **population controlling mechanism** that can be used against every citizen.
- This simple yet transformative exercise can be weaponised and used to **identify populations that are different and non-confirmative** - fear of a surveillance state.
- The linking of databases and creation of 360° profiles using Aadhaar has always been an issue that was **challenged in courts**, with the SC agreeing and recognising Indians' **fundamental right to privacy** (KS Puttaswamy case).

Q1) What is the National Population Register (NPR)?

NPR is a register containing details of persons usually residing in the country. NPR was first prepared in 2010 and updated in 2015 under the Citizenship (Registration of Citizens and Issue of National Identity Cards) Rules, 2003, framed under the Citizenship Act, 1955.

Q2) What is the duty of the Registrar General of India (RGI)?

The office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India was founded in 1961 by the Ministry of Home Affairs, for arranging, conducting and analysing the results of the demographic surveys of India including Census of India and Linguistic Survey of India.

Source: [Bill to amend Registration of Birth and Death Act likely to make Aadhaar compulsory](#)

Source: <https://vajiramandravi.com/current-affairs/bill-to-amend-the-registration-of-births-and-deaths-act/>

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