

India Issues First Set Of Citizenship Certificates

Why In News

- The **first set of citizenship certificates** under the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) was issued to 14 people on Wednesday, nearly two months after the Centre notified the rules. Under CAA, minorities persecuted on religious grounds in **Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan** can acquire citizenship in India.
- Union Home Minister Amit Shah said, "Today, the Ministry of Home Affairs has initiated the process of issuing certificates (under CAA). I want to extend my heartfelt congratulations to all 14 refugees. CAA is Prime Minister Narendra Modi's promise to the nation"



What Are Citizenship (Amendment) Rules

- The notification of rules by the Union **Ministry of Home Affairs** (MHA) on March 11 came four years after the Citizenship (Amendment) Act was passed by Parliament in December 2019.



- The CAA was enacted in December 2019 for granting Indian nationality to **persecuted non-Muslim migrants** from Bangladesh, Pakistan and Afghanistan who came to India **on or before December 31, 2014**. These include Hindus, Sikhs, Jains, Buddhists, Parsis and Christians. The Union home ministry said in a press release, "**The Empowered Committee**, Delhi headed by Director (Census Operation), Delhi, after due scrutiny, have decided to grant citizenship to 14 applicants. Accordingly, Director (Census operation) granted certificates to these applicants."



- After the enactment, the **CAA got the president's assent** but the rules under which the Indian citizenship was granted were issued only on March 11 this year after over four years delay.
- It may be noted that the **citizens of India will not be impacted** by CAA. It was introduced only to benefit the six minorities from the neighbouring countries of Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh.



- The **Citizenship (Amendment) Rules, 2024** (CAA) was enacted in December 2019. Under this Act, the government decided to grant Indian nationality to persecuted non-Muslim migrants from Bangladesh, Pakistan and Afghanistan who came to India on or before December 31, 2014. These include Hindus, Sikhs, Jains, Buddhists, Parsis and Christians.
- **After the enactment**, the CAA got the president's assent but the rules under which the Indian citizenship was granted were issued only this year after over four years delay. India had notified the Citizenship (Amendment) Rules, 2024 on March 11, 2024.

Critics And Muslim Groups Protested Against The CAA

- While claiming that the citizenship law will protect non-Muslims who are excluded from the register, while Muslims could face deportation or internment.
- Many believed that the **government could use the law**, combined with a proposed citizenship registry, to marginalize Muslims. However, political leaders, including Union Home Minister Amit Shah, had assured that "no one will face any inconvenience and difficulty.



- You will get **both citizenship and respect in the country.**" Several parts of the country witnessed protests against the decision to implement CAA as some fear the law could be used to declare them illegal immigrants and take away their Indian citizenship.
- The **government denies this and says** the law is needed to help minorities facing persecution in Muslim-majority nations as per the "evergreen generous culture of India to get Indian citizenship for their happy and prosperous future".