



P.L.RAJ IAS & IPS ACADEMY

Building Bureaucrats Since 2006

3. Inner Line Permit System – Polity

The Union Home Ministry tightened visa registration rules under the Immigration and Foreigners Rules, 2025 for national security, while Arunachal Pradesh witnessed protests demanding a stricter Inner Line Permit (ILP) system to prevent demographic changes and protect indigenous tribal rights. Key concerns driving the agitation include fraudulent acquisition of APST (Arunachal Pradesh Scheduled Tribe) certificates for government job quotas, contentious ILP guidelines allowing unrestricted-duration work permits, mega-project loopholes enabling bulk sponsorship of 200 laborers for infrastructure projects worth ₹500 crore+, and inadequate digital tracking of migrant workers after permit expiry.

1. Key Concerns Fuelling the Agitation

Fraudulent Tribal Certificates

1. Non-locals illegally acquiring APST certificates to wrongfully claim quotas in government jobs, education, land ownership
2. Undermining reservation system designed exclusively for indigenous tribal communities

Contentious ILP Guidelines

1. New rules allowed Secretary (Political) to issue work permits to any person for unrestricted duration
2. Creating loophole enabling permanent settlement disguised as temporary work

Mega-Project Loopholes

1. Infrastructure projects worth ₹500 crore+ can bulk-sponsor up to 200 laborers for up to two years
2. Threatening local demographics through large-scale temporary worker influx
3. Inadequate exit monitoring after project completion

Tracking Deficit

1. Enforcement agencies lacking digital tracking mechanisms
2. Failing to monitor whether migrant laborers exit after permit expiry
3. No real-time database of overstaying non-locals

Communal Anxieties

1. Local youth groups conflating domestic migrant workers with foreign illegal immigrants
2. Sparking protests over religious structures
3. Tensions between indigenous communities and migrants

2. Government Response and Institutional Action

Four High-Powered Committees Formed:

1. **ILP Framework Restructuring:** Review contentious guidelines; recommend stricter evaluation metrics; explore digital tracking tools identifying overstaying non-locals
2. **APST Certificate Audit:** Comprehensive re-verification drive of APST documents; identify, cancel fraudulently obtained certificates
3. **Matrilineal Rights Evaluation:** Examine legal-socioeconomic status including property, reservation rights of children born to APST mothers and non-APST fathers
4. **Anti-Infiltration Strategy:** Border-focused committee investigating "illegal infiltration"; coordinating with central security agencies assessing border vulnerabilities along international frontier (Myanmar, Bhutan, Tibet borders)

3. About the Inner Line Permit (ILP) Regime

Definition

1. Official travel document issued by concerned state governments
2. Regulates entry and stay of Indian citizens from other states
3. Applies to Indian nationals (NOT foreigners — who require Protected Area Permit)

Historical Context

1. Originates from British-era Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation Act, 1873
2. Originally sought to protect British commercial interests (tea gardens, forests)
3. Post-independence: Repurposed to protect indigenous tribal cultures, traditions, land ownership

Post-Independence Objective

1. Preserve culture, traditions, indigenous identities of north-eastern tribes
2. Safeguard tribal land ownership, resources from outsider encroachment
3. Maintain demographic balance in sensitive border regions

Geographical Coverage

1. Currently operational in four north-eastern states:
 1. Arunachal Pradesh
 2. Nagaland
 3. Mizoram
 4. Manipur (added 2020 via Presidential Order)

4. Protected Area Permit (PAP)

1. Entire Arunachal Pradesh falls under Protected Area regime under Foreigners (Protected Areas) Order, 1958
2. Every **foreign national** must obtain PAP from Union Home Ministry to enter
3. PAP rules temporarily relaxed for Nagaland, Mizoram, Manipur (2010–2024) but remained strictly enforced in Arunachal Pradesh due to sensitive borders (Myanmar, Bhutan, Tibet)
4. Neighbouring states like Manipur pushing for stricter reimposition due to political instability in neighbouring countries

5. India's Similar Issues and Earlier Actions

Assam and NRC

1. Assam facing severe demographic anxieties regarding cross-border migration from Bangladesh
2. Led to Assam Accord (1985) and Supreme Court-monitored update of National Register of Citizens (NRC)
3. Identifying illegal immigrants through citizenship documentation

Sixth Schedule Protections

1. Meghalaya, Mizoram, Assam: Autonomous District Councils (ADCs) empowered by Constitution
2. Enact laws regulating land transfers, local trade licensing, inheritance
3. Keeping non-tribal economic dominance in check

Manipur's ILP Induction (2020)

1. Central government extended ILP to Manipur via Presidential Order
2. Following civil society protests anticipating cross-border instability from Myanmar
3. Insulating indigenous population from demographic change

6. Global Best Practices for Border and Migration Management

Biometric Entry-Exit Tracking (Schengen and US Models)

1. **Europe's Entry/Exit System (EES):** Logs biometric data (fingerprints, facial scans) upon entry; automatically flags overstayers when authorized period expires

2. **US-VISIT program:** Similar biometric entry-exit tracking
3. **Application for Arunachal:** Digital ILP system linked to Aadhaar eliminating tracking deficit; real-time overstayer alerts

Sponsorship and Escrow Bonds (GCC Framework)

1. Gulf nations: Companies importing large labour forces must post monetary guarantees
2. **Application for Arunachal mega-projects:** Contractors made legally, financially accountable via compliance bonds ensuring workers exit after permit lapse
3. Financial incentive for employers to ensure worker departure

Tribal Land and Registry Governance (New Zealand Model)

1. **Māori Land Court:** Manages indigenous land registries under strict traditional mandates
2. Land cannot be alienated to outsiders
3. **Application for Arunachal:** Digitalizing APST database; routing through specialized tribal land board eliminating fraudulently acquired tribal certificate loophole

7. Way Forward

1. **Digital ILP system:** Aadhaar-linked real-time tracking of permit status, entry-exit monitoring
2. **APST database digitalization:** Blockchain-based certificate verification preventing fraud
3. **Mega-project compliance bonds:** Financial accountability for contractors sponsoring migrant workers
4. **Stricter exit verification:** Mandatory departure confirmation linked to digital work permits
5. **Community policing:** Engaging local panchayats, tribal councils in monitoring demographic changes
6. **Fast-track courts:** For fraudulent certificate cases ensuring deterrence

8. Conclusion

Arunachal Pradesh's ILP protests reflect deeper tensions between development imperatives and indigenous demographic protection — requiring strengthened digital tracking through Aadhaar-linked ILP systems, APST certificate re-verification, mega-project compliance bonds, and coordination with central security agencies to balance tribal rights protection with necessary economic integration.

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