

Detention centres in India



A signboard showing directions to an under-construction detention center in Matia, Assam, India, on Friday, Jan. 17, 2020. (www.bloomberg.com)

A report by



Collective Against the Violation and Abuse of Civil and Human Rights

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The Detention Centres

Introduction

The 2003 amendment to the Citizenship Act 1955, [empowers](#) the government to maintain a **NRC** (National Register of Citizens) 'containing details of Indian Citizens living in India and outside India.' The 'Citizenship (Registration of Citizens and Issue of National Identity Cards) Rules' provides [guidelines](#) and requirements for NRC preparation, but leaves specificities of procedure at the discretion of the 'Registrar General of Citizen Registration.' Detention centres are meant to house illegal immigrants after they are declared 'foreigners' by tribunals/courts. **The tenure of these tribunal members is decided based on the number of people each of them declare as [illegal](#).**

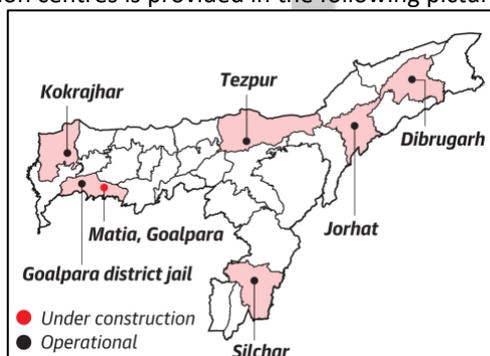
Each state and Union territory has been instructed to [construct](#) at least one detention centre.

Assam

As of now the NRC has been implemented in Assam (state in the North East of India). In [Assam](#) it led to the construction of **6 detention centres, 970 detainees, 29 deaths** (in last three years) in them and **1.9 million people** being declared stateless. It has also [costed](#) the Indian tax payers **150 Million Euros**.

Location of Detention Centres in Assam

There are currently 6 operational detention centres in Assam, housing 970 detainees. The location of these detention centres is provided in the following picture:



Detention Centres in Assam (Source: the Hindu)

Information of detainees

Based on gender & country of origin (Source: the Hindu)

Name	Male	Female	Total	Name	Bangladesh	Myanmar
Goalpara	186	15	201	Goalpara	99.1	0.9
Kokrajhar	9	131	140	Kokrajhar	100	0
Silchar	57	14	71	Silchar	91.9	8.8
Dibrugarh	38	2	40	Dibrugarh	100	0
Jorhat	132	64	196	Jorhat	100	0
Tezpur	224	98	322	Tezpur	97.1	3
Total	646	324	970	Total	98.3	1.8

Living Conditions at operational Detention Centres:

Union government has provided a manual to serve as a guide for maintenance of Detention Centres. The manual [covers](#) amenities to be provided in the detention centres to "maintain standards of living in consonance with basic human needs".

Far from the guidelines set in manual, [harrowing](#) tales of conditions in these detention centres has been recorded by an Amnesty documentary. **A new-born baby died** in one of these centres and it was later discovered that his mother

was not foreigner. Forty-seven-year-old Momiran Nessa, spent 10 years in a detention centre and alleges that officials [killed](#) her baby in her womb. Reports show that she had her father's and grandfather's documents, **but the family was too poor to be able to afford a lawyer and this led to her being sent to detention centre.**

There have been nearly **100 deaths in total in these centres since 2008**, including suicides by the inmates. A [study](#) by activist Harsh Mander has found that the detainees have been denied parole and waged labour. Apart from deportation the detainees also do not have any other hope of being released. There is no clear legal framework pertaining to their rights and entitlement.

Nationwide construction of Detention Centres

The Home Minister has declared in the Parliament and NRC will be [implemented](#) in the whole of India. This claim has been supported with the instructed given to each state of build at least one detention centre. **The authorities in Assam were however instructed to [free non-Muslim detainees](#) from these centres.**

Including the already existing 6 detention centres in Assam, a total of 10 such centres are operational across the country. More of them are under [construction](#).

Other Detention centres in the country

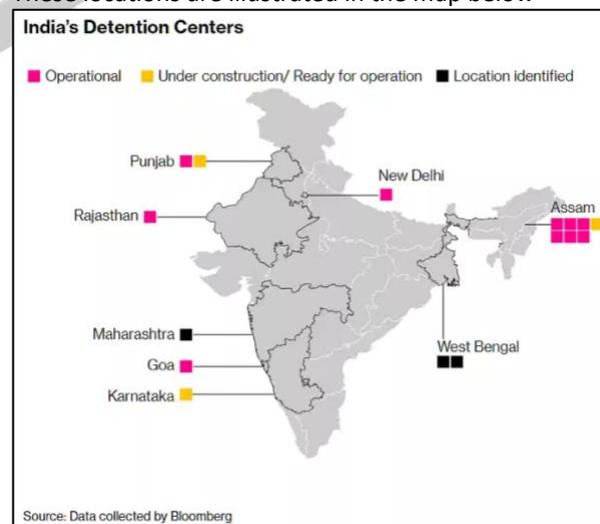
Other operational detention centres in the country are [located](#) in

1. Lampur in Delhi
2. Mapusa in Goa
3. Alwar Central Jail in Rajasthan
4. Amritsar Central Jail in Punjab

In addition, more detention centres [under construction](#) are located in

1. Goalpara in Assam
2. Tarn Taran in Punjab
3. Bengaluru in Karnataka
4. Nerul in Maharashtra
5. New Town in West Bengal
6. Bongaon in West Bengal

These locations are illustrated in the map below



Source: Data collected by Bloomberg

If Ministry of Home Affairs' directions are followed by states then more than [35 detention centres](#) can be built in the future.