

# Standing Committee Report Summary

## The Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2011

- The Standing Committee on Home Affairs, chaired by Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu, presented its 159<sup>th</sup> Report on 'The Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2011' on March 28, 2012.
- The Bill was introduced in the Lok Sabha on December 08, 2011. It seeks to amend the Citizenship Act, 1955 that lays down provisions for acquisition, renunciation and termination of Indian citizenship.
- The Bill re-designates the 'overseas citizen of India' as the 'overseas Indian cardholder'.
- It also enlarges the categories of persons who are eligible for registration as an overseas Indian cardholder. The Bill proposes to include (i) a great grandchild of a citizen of India; (ii) a minor child of a citizen of India; (iii) the spouse of an Indian citizen who has been married for at least two years before applying for registration.
- Under the Act, certain persons seeking Indian citizenship had to be resident in India for a period of 12 months before application for registration. The Bill substitutes the word 'resident' with 'ordinarily resident'. It also prescribes that the government may relax the requirement of continuous residence by 30 days, if special circumstances exist.<sup>1</sup>

### Recommendations of the Committee

- The Standing Committee recommended that the foreign spouse of an *overseas Indian cardholder* should also be eligible for an overseas Indian card. Under the Bill, only the foreign spouse of an *Indian citizen* is eligible for an overseas Indian card.
- Besides this, the Committee asked the Ministry to examine separately the issues related to Bangladeshi refugees, West Pakistani refugees, Chakma refugees and Riang tribes.

<sup>1</sup> For instance, in cases of unavoidable travel.

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