



India Rejects UK Proposal for DNA Tests on 'Illegal Migrants'

India rejected a proposal by the United Kingdom to use DNA sampling to establish the nationality of illegal migrants living there.

Key Highlights

- As per a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) proposed between India and UK, security agencies in India were to verify the antecedents of illegal migrants without documents in the UK within 72 days and those with documents within 15 days.
- If no report was given within the stipulated time frame, the illegal migrant would be deported automatically.
- However, the agreement was put on indefinite hold after Indian authorities conveyed that the 15-day limit was unworkable.
- UK had also suggested that the nationality of document-less illegal migrants suspected to be Indians could be established by matching DNA samples of their family members living in the country. But the Indian government raised objections that this was unethical and a breach of privacy.

Background

- According to the British government's estimates, there are around 1,00,000 Indians overstaying their visa in the U.K. However, India has contested this and claims the number to be not more than 2,000.
- In 2016, the UK stated that it would consider an improved visa deal if at the same time India and the UK can step up the speed and volume of return of illegal migrants from India.

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