Polity & Governance · GS - II

Explain the major provisions of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019. Discuss its implications for citizenship policy, constitutional principles and administrative implementation in India.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 01/11/2026	GS - II	Polity & Governance

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Citizenship Act 1955; CAA 2019; eligibility conditions; constitutional equality; administrative implementation; citizenship and migration

Model Answer

Introduction:

Citizenship determines an individual's legal membership of a state. The Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019 introduced a special eligibility route for specified migrant communities from three neighbouring countries.

Major provisions

- **Eligible communities:** Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain, Parsi and Christian migrants from Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan.
- **Entry-date condition:** The specified migrants must have entered India on or before 31 December 2014 and satisfy the applicable statutory requirements.
- **Naturalisation:** The amendment relaxes the prescribed naturalisation requirement for eligible applicants.
- **Exemptions:** Certain areas protected under the Constitution's Sixth Schedule and areas covered by the Inner Line Permit regime are excluded as provided by law.

Implications and challenges

Implementation requires transparent verification, accessible application procedures and coordination among the designated authorities. The Act has also generated constitutional debate concerning equality, religious classification and the relationship between citizenship policy and secularism. Its provisions and their constitutional validity must be assessed through the applicable law and judicial process.

Way Forward

Authorities should ensure consistent implementation, timely decisions, clear communication and access to legal remedies. Public discussion should distinguish statutory eligibility from automatic citizenship.

Conclusion

The CAA represents a significant change in India’s citizenship framework. Fair administration, legal clarity and constitutional scrutiny remain essential to its implementation.

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