

Goa Bhumiputra Adhikarini Bill, 2021

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In news- The Goa recently passed the Goa Bhumiputra Adhikarini Bill, 2021. However, the state government agreed to reintroduce the controversial bill in the next assembly session after the legislation in its present form drew flak from various quarters

Provisions of the bill-

- It recognised **anyone living in the state for 30 years or more as a 'Bhumiputra (son of the soil)'**.
- It gave such a person the **right to own his or her 'small dwelling unit'** if ownership was undetermined so far.
- Once recognised as a Bhumiputra, an individual can stake claim to ownership of their **house of not more than 250 sq m, built before April 1, 2019.**
- The objective, as stated, was to enable the 'mool Goenkar (original Goan)' to live with dignity.
- The Bill provided for the **constitution of the Bhumiputra Adhikarini – a committee** consisting of the Deputy Collector as its Chairperson, and officials from the departments of Town and Country Planning, Forest and Environment and Mamlatdars of respective talukas as its members.
- The Bhumiputra may apply to the committee if his house has been built before the cut-off date.
- The committee would invite objections within 30 days, including from the land owner which could also be a local body, and then take a decision of granting ownership to the Bhumiputra.
- The Bhumiputra Adhikarini may, by an order, "declare a Bhumiputra to be the owner of the dwelling unit occupied by him **upon payment of an amount equivalent to the value**

of land calculated at the market rate”.

- An appeal against the Bhumiputra Adhikarini’s decision can be filed before the Administrative Tribunal within 30 days.
- No court shall have jurisdiction “to entertain, decide or deal with any question which is to be decided by the Bhumiputra Adhikarini and Administrative Tribunal under the Act”.

The Opposition had blamed that there was not enough time in the curtailed Assembly session to study or debate the Bill. The Bill would have opened the floodgates for the migrant population that has been staying in densely populated areas in Goa and has no legality.