# Issuance of birth and death certificates hit as Centre's portal faces snag

**States say malfunction has led to delays in issuance of birth, death registration certificates, drawing the ire of people**

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According to the Registration of Births and Deaths (Amendment) Act, all reported births and deaths in the country occurring from October 1, 2023 are to be digitally registered through the Centre's portal — dc.crsorgi.gov.in/crs

The Union government's centralised portal — the Civil Registration System (CRS) — to register births and deaths is facing glitches since the past four months, several State government officials told *The Hindu*. The malfunction has led to delays in issuance of birth and death registration certificates.

According to the Registration of Births and Deaths (Amendment) Act enacted in 2023, all reported births and deaths in the country occurring from October 1, 2023 are to be digitally registered through the Centre's portal — https://dc.crsorgi.gov.in/crs/. The digital birth certificates will be a single document to prove the date of birth for various services such as admission to educational institutions, government jobs, marriage registration among others. The centralised database will also update the National Population Register (NPR), ration cards, property registration and electoral rolls. The NPR, first collected in 2010 and updated in 2015 through door-to-door enumeration, already has a database of 119 crore residents. The NPR is the first step to the creation of National Register of Citizens (NPR), as per the Citizenship Act.

So far, 23 States and six union territories have migrated to the new portal. States such as Tamil Nadu which have their own portals send the data compulsorily to the Centre in real-time basis as mandated by the 2023 amendment.

*The Hindu* has accessed an August 5, 2024 letter by the Chief Registrar (Birth and Death), Bihar government, addressed to the Registrar General of India (RGI) flagging the issues faced by district authorities while registering births and deaths. Bihar migrated to the new portal on June 10.

## Error message

"Due to the revamped CRS portal being extremely slow, the OTPs (one-time password) not being generated in time and continuous display of error message on the page, there has been a huge backlog in all the registration units in the State. As a result, the Registrars are forced to face the ire of the people and public representatives. The glitches are leading to disruption of the entire system," said the letter in Hindi.

It added, there is a mismatch between 1,408 registration IDs in the State and those available on the portal and despite informing the RGI multiple times, several difficulties remain on the ground.

An official in Nagaland said sometimes they were not able to issue certificates for three days in a row.

"Nagaland migrated to the new portal on May 13. Since then, many complaints are piling up. We have complained to the RGI office in Delhi. District authorities are not able to generate certificates," said an official.

## 'Teething problems'

A district official in Chhattisgarh said ever since the State started using the new portal in March this year there "appears to be teething problems" with the system.

The system often freezes up for hours while registering a birth or death and sometimes it might even take a day for the system to resume working, the official said.

A source in a Bihar district added that they have been facing problems in entering corrections into the system, which crashes every time an operator tries to make corrections. They said the transfer to the new system has also led to inconsistencies in the data of some people, such as addresses getting mixed up in the syncing process.

At Noida in Uttar Pradesh, the portal has been down for over a month.

Pappan Singh, a local said he had been trying to get his wife's death certificate for the past one month but the hospital turned him away saying the portal was down.

An official in Uttar Pradesh said, "After the portal was launched on June 18, there have been technical issues. A private firm is the technical partner and the problem largely appears to be while feeding the data. There are issues but certificates are being issued," the official said.

A Central government official said thousands of certificates are being generated through the portal on a daily basis and as and when a State migrates to the new system they may face minor issues due to the revamping of the system.

Some of the problems flagged by the States are that after the registration data is entered, instead of saving the information, the system reloads the page and shows an error message. Further, OTPs were taking too much time; and some forms such as the ones for summary monthly reports on births, deaths, and stillbirths were not available on the dashboards of the Chief Registrar and District Registrars. Another issue highlighted was

that the portal, at the stage of attaching documents, seemingly requires a mandatory Aadhaar e-sign-in. Many also called for the new portal to display daily registration numbers as the older portal did.

The officials also noted that a comment box that appears for seeking clarifications does not have enough space and should have room for at least 100 words.

The Chief Registrar of Births and Deaths is the implementing authority and the registration is done by the local registrars appointed by the State governments. In respect of birth or death occurred in a hospital or a health centre, the medical officers are responsible for reporting the event to the registrar.