

Fury at French Immigration Law

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Noopur Tiwari

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The French Parliament has passed a bill that will make immigration laws tougher for foreigners hoping to join their family members working in France.

The controversial law requires prospective immigrants to pass tests in French and respect what it calls "the values of the republic".

What is causing a furore is that the law allows DNA tests to prove family links. Critics say the use of genetics for the selective immigration policy of the Sarkozy government stirs up memories of the Nazi occupation.

"What is serious is that this law is trying to say that immigrants can't have basic rights and the right to have a family life has been criminalised with this law that supports DNA tests," said Moulud Aounit, President, Movement Against Racism.

Most immigrants fear that this law will add fuel to the anti-immigrant sentiment making it even harder for them to find jobs and housing.

Presuming that most immigrants provide fraudulent documents, the DNA tests, they feel, are a derogatory way to ask for proof of their family links.

"It's ok to ask immigrants to be well integrated and law abiding but these conditions are not human," said an immigrant.

While some have gone to the extent of calling this law xenophobic propaganda, others feel it's just an additional bureaucratic procedure.

The fact that the law has already been passed in Parliament proves that even though the French have broad notions of how a family can be composed, for immigrants waiting to unite with their families the laws of genetics and descent will rule.