Expat Quota Bill Approved in Kuwait

Recently, the legal and legislative committee of Kuwait’s National Assembly has approved the draft expat (expatriate) quota bill. According to the bill, Indians should not exceed 15% of the population and if it is enacted into law, over 8 lakh Indians could be forced out of Kuwait. Kuwait is a country located in the Persian Gulf region.

- The draft expat quota bill has been deemed constitutional and will be transferred to the respective committee so that a comprehensive plan is created.
- Lawmakers and government officials including the Prime Minister of Kuwait have been calling to reduce the number of expats from 70% to 30% of the population.
- The draft law will impose a cap on the number of expats and gradually reduce them by almost 5% on a yearly basis.

Data Analysis:

- In Kuwait, expats account for 3 million out of the total population of 4.3 million.
- Indians constitute the largest expat community in Kuwait, totalling 1.45 million.
- About 28,000 Indians work in various government jobs like nurses, engineers in national oil companies and as scientists.
- Majority of Indians (around 5 lakh) work in the private sector.
- There are about 1.16 lakh dependents out of which about 60,000 are students studying in various Indian schools in the country.

India’s Perspective

- The Indian community in Kuwait has always played an important factor in bilateral ties.
- Indians are present in all segments of society in Kuwait and are largely considered disciplined, hardworking and law-abiding.
- Kuwait is a top source of remittances for India. In 2018, India received nearly USD 4.8 billion from Kuwait as remittances.
- The Indian embassy has been closely following developments related to the proposed legislation. However, India has so far not made any statement on the issue.