



INSURGENCY IN MANIPUR

News:

- Amid fresh **violence in Manipur, the Kuki National Organisation (KNO)** has countered the claims of the Manipur CM that 40 insurgents had been killed by security forces.

How did violent clashes start?

- **Violence erupted in the Kuki-dominated Churachandpur district**, where members of the Kuki tribe were protesting against the Meitei community's demands to be designated as a "Scheduled Tribe".
- The tribes believe granting ST status to the **Meiteis would be an infringement of their rights** as they claim to be the marginalised part of the population.

History of conflict in Manipur:

- Manipur has been in the **cross-currents of India's oldest insurgent movement** – The Naga national movement in the 1950s.

The Valley insurgent groups:

- In 1964, the **United National Liberation Front (UNLF)** was formed, demanding secession from India.
- Subsequently, numerous **Meitei insurgent groups (PREPAK, PLA)** came into being, which received arms and training from China.
- These groups operated with a dual purpose – **independence from India, and warding off Naga insurgent groups.**

The Kuki-Zomi insurgent groups:

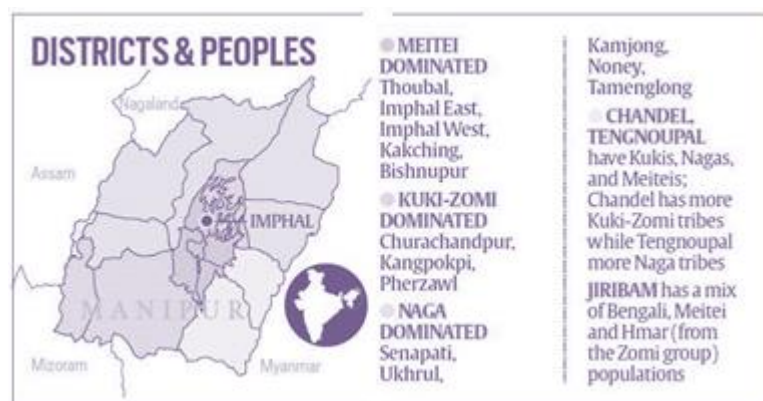
- It started as a defence against aggression by other groups, **but quickly turned to a call for Kukiland** – an imagined country spreading across the Kuki-Zomi inhabited areas of India, Myanmar and Bangladesh.
- Over time, **this was diluted to simply a call for a separate state.**

Government reaction:

- The **Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA)** 1958 was enacted and extended to the entire state.
- In the 1980s, **Manipur was declared a disturbed area.**
- A tripartite **Suspension of Operation (SoO) agreement** between the Centre, the state and the Kuki-Zomi groups was signed in 2008.
- As the law-and-order situation gradually improved, **AFSPA has been repealed in several areas.**
- However, **the Valley insurgent groups** (like the UNLF, which is considered the mother of all Meitei insurgent groups) **have never entered an agreement** with the Centre.

Insurgent groups in society and politics:

- The insurgent groups are **intricately woven into daily life in Manipur.**
- They conduct **strikes, and impose moral codes** such as a ban on Hindi movies and music, etc.
- The groups also levy **‘taxes’** on the public.
- The groups are most visible today in the political life of the state. Candidates, cutting across party lines, stand for **elections with insurgent backing, and the groups dictate to the voters who should win.**



Q.The north-eastern region of India has been infested with insurgency for a very long time. Analyze the major reasons for the survival of armed insurgency in this region. (UPSC 2017)

Q.What is the SoO agreement with tribal insurgent groups that the Manipur government withdrew from?