

### **3. Bodoland Dispute**

**Prelims Level: Governance - Institutional Reforms**

**Mains Level: GS-II Functions and responsibilities of the Union and the States, issues and challenges pertaining to the federal structure, devolution of powers and finances up to local levels and challenges therein.**

#### **Why in News?**

- A historic agreement between Government of India, Government of Assam and Bodo representatives to end the over 50-year old Bodo crisis was signed Recently.

#### **About the Bodoland:**

- Bodos are the single largest tribal community in Assam, making up over 5-6 per cent of the state's population. They have controlled large parts of Assam in the past.
- The four districts in Assam — Kokrajhar, Baksa, Udalguri and Chirang — that constitute the Bodo Territorial Area District (BTAD), are home to several Ethnic Groups.



#### **What is the Dispute?**

- The Bodos have had a long history of separatist demands, marked by armed struggle.
- In 1966-67, the demand for a separate state called Bodoland was raised under the banner of the Plains Tribals Council of Assam (PTCA), a political outfit.
- In 1987, the All Bodo Students Union (ABSU) renewed the demand. “Divide Assam fifty-fifty”, was a call given by the ABSU.
- The unrest was a fall out of the Assam Movement (1979-85), whose culmination — the Assam Accord — addressed the demands of protection and safeguards for the “Assamese people”, leading the Bodos to launch a movement to protect their Own Identity.
- Many riots and killings were happened regarding the dispute and more than lakhs of people were displaced.

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### **Key Highlights of the Agreement:**

- Increase the scope and powers of the Bodo Territorial Council (BTC) and to streamline its functioning.
- Set up a commission under Section 14 of the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution of India, to recommend the inclusion or exclusion of tribal population residing in villages adjoining Bodoland Territorial Area Districts (BTAD) areas.
- The Government of Assam will establish a Bodo-Kachari Welfare Council.
- The Assam government will also notify Bodo language as an associate official language in the state and will set up a separate directorate for Bodo medium schools.
- Promote and protect Bodo's social, cultural, linguistic and ethnic identities.
- Providing legislative protection for the land rights of Tribals.
- A Special Development Package Rs. 1500 crores over three years will be given by the Union Government to undertake specific projects for the development of Bodo areas.
- Rehabilitate members of National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB) factions (With this agreement, over 1500 armed cadres will abjure violence and join the mainstream).