



## Bodo Accord

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### Why in News

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Recently, the **central government, the Assam government and the Bodo groups**, including all factions of the militant **National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB)**, signed an agreement to redraw and rename the **Bodoland Territorial Area District (BTAD)** as the **Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR)**, in **Assam**.

- BTAD is spread over four districts of **Kokrajhar, Chirang, Baksa and Udalguri**.
- The BTAD and other areas mentioned under the **Sixth Schedule of the Constitution** have been exempted from the **Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA), 2019**.

### Key Points

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- Bodoland Territorial Region would include the villages which are dominated by Bodos but are outside BTAD presently. Villages with non-Bodo population would be excluded from it.
  - A committee will be formed to decide the exclusion and inclusion of new areas. Subsequently, the total number of Assembly seats will go up to 60, from the existing 40.
  - Both the representatives of the **All Bodo Students Union (ABSU)** and of **Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC)** will be present in the committee.
  - **Bodo-Kachari Welfare Council** will be set up for focused development of Bodo villages outside BTAD.
- Bodos living in the hills would be conferred a **Scheduled Hill Tribe status**.
- **Bodo language with Devanagari script** would be the **associate official language** for the entire **Assam**.
- However, the agreement has **not addressed the issue of “citizenship or work permit”** for non-domiciles in the BTAD yet.

- Around 1500 cadres of **NDFB will be rehabilitated and assimilated** by the Central and the state governments.
  - The criminal cases registered against factions of NDFB members for **non-heinous crimes** shall be **withdrawn** and the cases of **heinous crimes** will be **reviewed**.
- **Comprehensive solutions** have been made to redress the grievances of the people.
  - Families of the people killed during the Bodo movement would get ₹5 lakh each.
  - A **Special Development Package** of ₹1500 crore would be given by the Centre to undertake specific projects for the development of Bodo areas.

## Benefits

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- The accord will successfully **bring together leading stakeholders** under one framework.
- People previously associated with armed resistance groups will enter the mainstream and contribute to the nation's progress.
- It will further **protect and popularise the unique culture of the Bodo people** and will give them access to a wide range of development-oriented initiatives.
- It will bring **peace, harmony and togetherness** in the people of Assam.

## Background

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- Bodos are the **single largest community** among the **notified Scheduled Tribes in Assam**. Bodos are a part of **Bodo-Kachari** and constitute about **5-6%** of Assam's population.
- The **first organised demand** for a Bodo state came in 1967-68.
- The **Assam Accord of 1985**, gave rise to Bodo aspirations and in **1987**, ABSU revived the **Bodo statehood demand**.
- Bodo Security Force which arose in 1986 as an armed group renamed itself NDFB, and later split into factions.
- The **first Bodo accord** was signed with the **ABSU in 1993**. It led to the creation of the **Bodoland Autonomous Council (BAC)** with some limited political powers.
- In **2003**, the **second Bodo Accord** was signed by the extremist group **Bodo Liberation Tiger Force (BLTF)**, the Centre and the state. This led to the **creation of BTC**, which is an **autonomous body** under the **Sixth Schedule** of the Constitution.

**Source: TH**