



Bru Refugee Crisis

Why in News

A **four party agreement** among the Centre, Mizoram Government, Tripura Government and Mizoram Bru Displaced People's Forum (MBDPF) which seeks to end the **22-year-old Bru refugee crisis may be signed on 16th January 2020**

Background

- **Bru or Reang** is a community **indigenous to Northeast India**, living mostly in **Tripura**, Mizoram and Assam. In Tripura, they are recognised as a **Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group**.
- In Mizoram, they have been targeted by groups that do not consider them indigenous to the state. In **1997**, following **ethnic clashes**, nearly **37,000 Brus fled** Mamit, Kolasib and Lunglei districts of **Mizoram** and were **accommodated** in relief camps in **Tripura**.
- Since then, 5,000 have returned to Mizoram in eight phases of repatriation, while 32,000 still live in six relief camps in North Tripura.
 - In **June 2018**, **community leaders from the Bru camps signed an agreement with the Centre** and the two state governments, providing for repatriation in Mizoram. But **most camp residents rejected the terms of the agreement**.
 - The camp residents say that the **agreement doesn't guarantee their safety in Mizoram**.
- In October 2019, the supply of ration to relief camps was stopped on instructions of the Home Ministry in a bid to hastily complete the repatriation of refugees to Mizoram. Civil society outfits had alleged that at least six refugees died due to starvation.

Proposed New Agreement

- According to the 2018 agreement, the Bru tribals would have settled in Mizoram, but according to the new agreement, **they will now settle in Tripura**.
- The stakeholders in the issue expect **a package of Rs 600 crore from the Centre which includes:**
 - Plots of 2,500 sq ft for each Bru family in addition to agricultural land.
 - A stipend of Rs 5,000 per month and free ration for each family for the next two years.
 - Bru tribals would be included in Tripura's voter list.

Source: IE