



Manipur Government Withdraws from SoO Agreement

For Prelims: Suspension of Operations (SoO) agreement, Kuki National Army, Zomi Revolutionary Army (ZRA).

For Mains: Insurgency issues in Northeast India.

Why in News?

On **March 10, 2023** the Manipur government decided to withdraw from the [Suspension of Operations \(SoO\) agreement](#) with two militant groups, [Kuki National Army \(KNA\)](#) and **Zomi Revolutionary Army (ZRA)**, alleging their involvement in inciting agitation among **forest encroachers**.

What is Kuki Insurgency?

- The **Kuki insurgency began after ethnic clashes** with the [Nagas of Manipur](#) in the early 1990s, with the **Kukis** arming themselves against Naga aggression.
- The major reason for clashes is the land claimed by the Kukis as their "**homeland**" in the **Manipur hills overlaps with the imagined Naga homeland** of Greater Nagaland or Nagalim.
- Nearly 30 Kuki insurgent groups operate in Manipur, of which **25 are under tripartite SoO** with the **Government of India and the state**.
 - As many as 17 are under the **umbrella group Kuki National Organisation (KNO)**, and 8 are under the [United People's Front \(UPF\)](#).
- The Kuki outfits initially demanded a **separate Kuki state** but now seek a '**Kukiland territorial council**.'

What is the Zomi Revolutionary Army (ZRA)?

- The **ZRA** is a militant group operating in the northeastern Indian state of Manipur.
 - The group was formed in 1996 with the aim of **securing greater autonomy** for the Zomi people, an indigenous community living in the region.
- The ZRA is believed to be a splinter group of the larger **Zomi Nationalist Movement (ZNM)**, which was active in the 1980s and 1990s.

What is the Suspension of Operations (SoO) Pact?

- **About:**
 - The **SoO agreement with Kuki was signed in 2008 as a ceasefire agreement between the Indian government and various Kuki militant groups** operating in the northeastern states of Manipur and Nagaland.
 - Under the agreement, **the Kuki militant groups agreed to stop carrying out violent activities** and come to designated camps to be monitored by security forces.
 - In return, the **Indian government agreed to suspend its operations** against the Kuki groups.
- **Terms of SoO Pact:**
 - The **Joint Monitoring Group (JMG)** oversees the effective implementation of the pact.

- Security forces, including **state and central forces**, cannot launch operations, nor can the underground groups.
- Signatories of **UPF and KNO abide by the Constitution of India**, laws of the land, and territorial integrity of Manipur.
 - They are prohibited from **committing atrocities and extortion**.
 - The militant cadres are confined to designated camps, with arms deposited in a safe room under a double-locking system.
 - The groups are given arms only to **guard their camps and protect their leaders**.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question:

Q. The North-East 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. **(2017)**

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