



Peace Pact in Tripura

For Prelims: Tripura and Other [North Eastern states of India](#), [Key Agreements in North East India](#), [Armed Forces Special Powers Act](#), National Liberation Front of Tripura (NLFT), All Tripura Tiger Force (ATTF).

For Mains: [Key Peace Developments Initiatives in North East India](#), [Challenges in Establishing Peace in North-Eastern State of India](#), **Significance of North East India, Role of Bordering Countries in Peace Development in North-Eastern States**

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Why in News?

Recently, the **Central Government**, the **state government of Tripura**, and two major **insurgent groups** namely the **National Liberation Front of Tripura (NLFT)** and the **All Tripura Tiger Force (ATTF)** signed a **peace agreement to end violence in the state**.

- This agreement will end a 35-year-long conflict in the state, renouncing violence and committing to build a prosperous and developed Tripura.

What are the Key Highlights of Peace Agreement?

- **Reintegration of Armed Cadres:** Over 328 armed cadres from NLFT and ATTF will **surrender and reintegrate into society**.
- **Financial Package:** A special financial package of **Rs 250 crore** has been approved for the **development of Tripura's tribal population**.
- **Broader Initiative:** This is part of a larger effort, with **12 significant agreements signed** in the Northeast between 2014 and 2024, including 3 related to Tripura.

NLTF and ATTF

- **National Liberation Front of Tripura (NLFT)** was formed in 1989.
 - The purported objective of the NLFT is to establish an **'independent' Tripura through an armed struggle** following the liberation from **'Indian neo-colonialism and imperialism'** and furtherance of a 'distinct and independent identity'.
 - There were multiple splits within the NLFT due to personal ambitions of leaders and parochial religious considerations.
 - It was outlawed in April 1997 under the [Unlawful Activities \(Prevention\) Act, 1967](#), and is also proscribed under the [Prevention of Terrorism Act \(POTA\), 2002](#).
 - The NLFT split into two groups in February 2001, one headed by **Biswamohan Debbarma and the other by Nayanbasi Jamatiya**.
- **Tripura Tiger Force (ATTF)** was founded in 1990.
 - It demands removal of illegal migrants from electoral rolls and implementation of the 1949 Tripura Merger Agreement.

- It operated in **North and South Tripura districts** and emerged as a formidable terrorist group by 1991.
- It was banned in April 1997 under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967.

What is the Significance of the Peace Pact Between the Government And Insurgent Groups in Tripura?

- **Restoration of Peace and Stability:** The armed groups pledging to end violence, is a key step toward peace and stability in Tripura, aiming to break the violence cycle and foster a safer environment for development.
- **Mainstream Integration:** The agreement facilitates the integration of former insurgents into mainstream society, addressing issues of alienation and disenfranchisement among tribal communities. It provides an opportunity for these individuals to positively contribute to society.
- **Development Initiatives:** The Central Government has approved a special development package **for the tribal population in Tripura**. This financial commitment highlights the government's focus on socio-economic development as a strategy to prevent future conflicts.
- **Cultural Preservation:** The pact supports the preservation of the cultural heritage, languages, and identities of Northeast tribal groups. This is crucial for fostering a strong sense of belonging and community among these populations.

What are the Reasons for Insurgency in North East India Including Tripura?

- **Inter-Tribal Conflicts:** Changes in the religious composition of tribal groups, particularly the Jamatias, fueled newer inter-tribal tensions, compounding existing tribal-non-tribal conflicts.
- **Demographic Changes:** The mass **migration from East Pakistan (now Bangladesh)** post-1947 altered Tripura's demographic profile, turning a predominantly tribal region into one **dominated by Bengali-speaking plainsmen**. This demographic inversion fueled **discontent among the indigenous tribes**.
- **Proximity to Mizoram Insurgency:** Tripura's geographical proximity to Mizoram exposed the state to the **"side effects" of the insurgency** there, further exacerbating local tensions.
- **Formation of Insurgent Groups:** Discontent over land and demographic changes led to the formation of **insurgent groups** like the **Tripura Upajati Juba Samiti (TUJS)** in 1971, the **Tripura National Volunteers (TNV)** in 1981, and the **National Liberation Front of Tripura (NLFT)** in 1989, which intensified the insurgency.
- **Economic Factors:** The lack of development and limited economic opportunities in Northeast India, especially for the youth, has led to widespread poverty and unemployment which has led to recruitment by insurgent groups, offering a means of livelihood and social status.
- **Geographical Factors:** The north-eastern region including tripura shares **98% of its borders** with other countries, highlighting **weak geographical links with the rest of India**.
 - The north-eastern region's population is only 3% of the national total, it **grew by over 200%** from 1951 to 2001, **straining livelihoods and land resources**.
- **Loss of Tribal Lands:** Tribals were deprived of their **agricultural lands**, often sold at throw-away prices, and pushed into the forests, leading to widespread resentment and tensions. The deprivation of land became a major driver of insurgency.
- **Political Factors:** Northeast India **including tripura ethnic communities** sometimes feel neglected by the central government due to **geographic distance and limited political representation**, driving demands for **autonomy or independence to protect their cultural identity** and resources.

What are the Government Initiatives to Establish Peace in North East India Including Tripura?

- **Dialogues and Negotiation:** The government has negotiated and signed numerous peace accords with various insurgent groups, leading to the surrender of militants and the formation of autonomous councils. Example: the recent peace agreement signed between the government and

insurgents groups **NLFT** and the **ATTF**.

- **Important Agreements:**
 - **Naga Peace Accord:** The ceasefire agreement between the Government of India and the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (K)/Niki group **has been extended for one year**, from September, 2024 to September, 2025 further advancing the [Naga Peace Accord](#).
 - **Assam-Meghalaya Boundary Agreement, 2022:** Resolves disputes in 6 sectors, allocating 18.51 sq. km to Assam and 18.28 sq. km to Meghalaya.
 - [Karbi Anglong Agreement, 2021](#)
 - [Bodo Accord, 2020](#)
 - [Bru-Reang Agreement, 2020](#)
 - [NLFT-Tripura Agreement, 2019](#)
- **Development Initiatives:** The government has focused on infrastructure, economic, and skill development in the Northeast region with projects like the [Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Project](#) and various railway and highway initiatives aimed at improving connectivity.
 - Economic schemes, including the [North East Industrial Development Scheme](#) and [Prime Minister's Development Initiative for North Eastern Region \(PM-DevINE\)](#) are designed to boost growth.
 - Additionally, efforts like the [North East Special Education Zone](#) and [Skill India Mission](#) are geared towards enhancing education and employment opportunities.
- **Cultural and Social Initiatives:** The government promotes regional languages and cultural festivals, and supports cultural centres to preserve heritage. Interstate cooperation is enhanced through the Northeastern Council, joint development projects, and improved connectivity, with cultural exchange programs fostering mutual understanding.
- **Other Initiatives for the North East Development**
 - **Infrastructure:**
 - [Bharatmala Pariyojana](#)
 - [Regional Connectivity Scheme \(RCS\)-UDAN](#)
 - **Connectivity:**
 - India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway
 - **Tourism:**
 - [Swadesh Darshan Scheme](#)
 - **Other:**
 - [Digital North East Vision 2022](#)
 - [National Bamboo Mission](#)

What are the Challenges to Peace Restoration in North-Eastern States Including Tripura?

- **Trust Building:** Establishing **trust between the government and former insurgents** is crucial. Historical grievances and mistrust may hinder cooperation and integration efforts.
- **Monitoring and Compliance:** **Ensuring compliance with the terms of the agreement**, including the disbandment of armed groups and the cessation of violence, will require **robust monitoring mechanisms**.
- **Socio-Economic Integration:** **Integrating former insurgents into the socio-economic fabric poses challenges, including providing adequate job opportunities, vocational training, and psychological support.**
- **Political Dynamics:** The **political landscape** in the north-eastern state including Tripura is **complex with various stakeholders involved**. Navigating these dynamics while ensuring **inclusive governance** will be critical for sustainable peace.
- **Continued Militancy:** Continued Militancy in the region remains a **risk of splinter groups** or other insurgent factions refusing to comply with the peace agreement, potentially leading to renewed violence and instability.

Way Forward

- **Effective Policing:** The absence of effective law enforcement has contributed to the rise of armed violence. Efficient policing, **supported by good governance and civil rights**, is essential

to restore order and security.

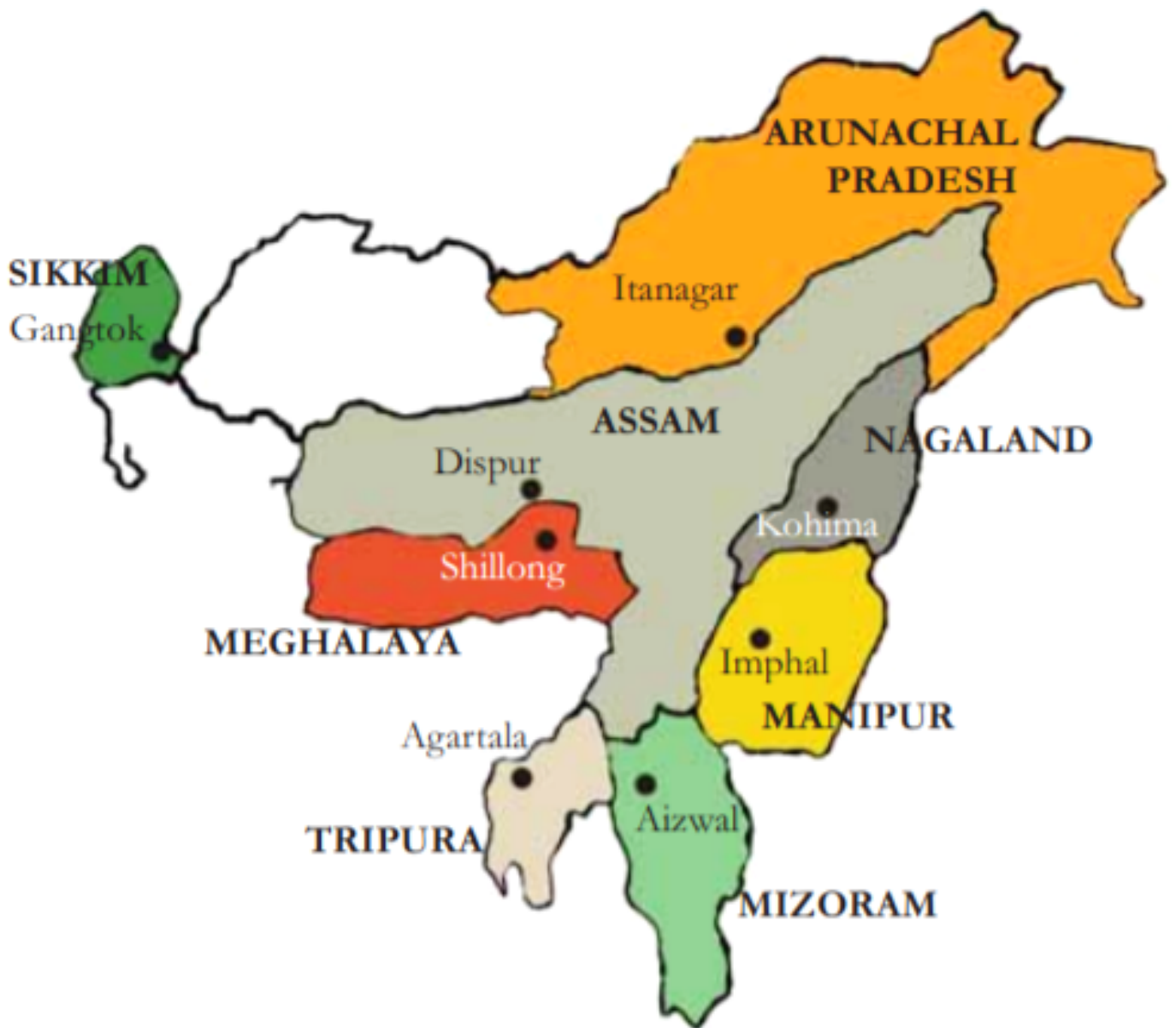
- For example, **community policing initiatives in Tripura** involving **local leaders** can build trust and improve safety.
- **Dialogue and Negotiation:** A peaceful resolution can only be achieved through **dialogue and negotiation** with the insurgent groups.
 - Tripura's government can sustain dialogue with **ethnic groups** and **establish a formal platform with civil society** to ensure all voices, especially marginalized ones, are heard.
- **Economic Development:** Investing in economic development and creating employment opportunities can address the root causes of insurgency by providing alternative livelihoods and reducing poverty.
 - Expanding initiatives like the [Tripura Bamboo Mission](#) and **improving infrastructure** can **create jobs, offer alternative livelihoods to youth**, and boost economic conditions in rural areas, reducing susceptibility to insurgency recruitment.
- **Political Representation:** Ensuring adequate political representation for the ethnic communities can help build trust and address their concerns.
 - **Including indigenous leaders in local governance**, as with [Tripura's Autonomous District Councils](#), ensures community representation. Fair electoral processes and state assembly representation also empower communities and address disenfranchisement.
- **Cultural Preservation:** Respecting and promoting the **unique cultural heritage of the Northeast's ethnic communities** can foster a sense of belonging and reduce feelings of marginalisation.
 - Promoting festivals like the **Kharchi Festival** and **integrating local history and culture** into school curricula.

Conclusion

The recent peace pact in Tripura signifies a hopeful turn towards stability and development in the region. However, successful implementation will depend on addressing the underlying issues that have fueled insurgency for decades.

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UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Prelims

Q. Which Schedule of the Constitution of India contains special provisions for the administration and control of Scheduled Areas in several States? (2008)

- (a) Third
- (b) Fifth
- (c) Seventh
- (d) Ninth

Ans: (b)

Mains

Q1. Human rights activists constantly highlight the fact that the Armed forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958 (AFSPA) is a draconian act leading to cases of human rights abuses by security forces. What sections of AFSPA are opposed by the activists? Critically evaluate the requirement with reference to the view held by the Apex Court. **(2015)**

Q2. The North-East region of India has been infested with insurgency for a very long time. Analyse the major reasons for the survival of armed insurgency in this region. **(2017)**

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