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Q19

What are the major challenges to internal security and peace process in the North-Eastern States? Map the various peace accords and agreements initiated by the government in the past decade.

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2025 · GS III · 15 marks · Internal Security and Extremism

Linkages between development and spread of extremism.

Core demand of the question

- **Challenges:** insurgency remnants, ethnic clash, drugs, migration, China-Myanmar, governance
- **Map 2015-2025 accords by State:** Naga framework, Bodo, Karbi, Bru, UNLF, border deals

Revision summary

The Northeast's security problems mix leftover insurgency, ethnic conflict, drugs, migration and Myanmar-China borders.

The 2020 Bodo Accord and 2021 Karbi Accord were the big Assam settlements of the decade.

The 2015 Naga framework agreement is still not a final peace.

The 2020 Bru-Reang deal and 2023 UNLF pact sit beside Manipur's 2023 ethnic violence.

Assam's border agreements with Meghalaya and Arunachal tried to quiet inter-State maps.

Introduction

The Northeast is **eight States** and many **nations of memory**. Peace is not one ceasefire. It is a **stack of accords** on a **difficult map**: hills, a chicken's neck, a long Myanmar and Bangladesh edge, and **China** on Arunachal's horizon. The last decade added **signed papers**. It also added **Manipur's 2023 wound**, which no accord had prepared the country to watch.

Body

Challenges to security and peace

Insurgent remnants (NSCN factions, ULFA-I, some Manipur groups) still tax and bomb even as the map of violence has shrunk since the 1990s. **Ethnic conflict** - Bodo history, Bru displacement, and **Meitei-Kuki-Zo violence in Manipur from 2023** - can explode faster than a peace table. **Drugs and arms** ride the **Golden Triangle** into Mizoram and Manipur. **Illegal migration** and **identity laws** (Assam NRC politics, Inner Line) keep a permanent anxiety. **Governance:** AFSPA's thinning is real in some districts and still present in others. **Connectivity** is better (roads, rail to Agartala, waterways) but **jobs** for educated youth lag. **Myanmar's post-2021 war** spills refugees and weapons. **China** is a military and a narrative pressure on Arunachal.

Peace processes fail when an accord is a **photo with one armed group** while a rival faction and a valley community are left out.

Accords of the past decade, as a map

- **Read the map** west to east. Assam: the **Bodo Peace Accord, January 2020**, with NDFB factions, creating a stronger Bodoland Territorial Region; **Karbi Anglong Agreement, September 2021**; **Adivasi and other smaller settlements**; **Assam-Meghalaya border pact, 2022**; **Assam-Arunachal Pradesh border settlement, 2023**. Nagaland / Naga talks: the **Framework Agreement with NSCN-IM, 2015**, still **without a final public settlement**; other Naga groups signed a **2017** agrees-on-talks track - the unfinished core of the hills. **Tripura**: NLFT-related surrenders and talks in the late 2010s-2020s. **Mizoram-Tripura-Cachar**: the **Bru-Reang agreement, January 2020**, to settle Bru families in Tripura. **Manipur**: **UNLF (P. A. Meitei) peace pact, 2023**, a valley-group ceasefire that did not stop the hill-valley clash the same year. **Meghalaya and Arunachal** have seen **surrender ceremonies** more than grand accords.
- **The map's lesson: paper in Kokrajhar and Diphu, open file in Kohima, fire in Imphal valley and hills.** A peace process is only as wide as the communities it seats.

Flow diagram

Assam belt
 Bodo Accord 2020
 Karbi Accord 2021
 Assam-Meghalaya 2022
 Assam-Arunachal 2023
 Naga hills
 NSCN-IM Framework 2015 unfinished
 Tripura Mizoram Manipur
 Bru-Reang 2020
 UNLF 2023
 Manipur ethnic crisis 2023
 Bodo Accord 2020 -- Karbi Accord 2021
 Karbi Accord 2021 -- NSCN-IM Framework 2015 unfinished
 Bru-Reang 2020 -- UNLF 2023

Conclusion

Internal security in the Northeast is insurgency plus ethnicity plus a hard border. The decade's accords - Bodo, Karbi, Bru, Assam's border deals, UNLF - shrank some guns. Naga talks and Manipur's 2023 violence show the map is not finished.

Facts & figures

Bodo Accord 2020

A tripartite settlement that strengthened the Bodoland Territorial Region and brought NDFB factions into peace.

Naga Framework 2015

The Union's framework with NSCN-IM; a complete accord on a separate flag and constitution remains the sticking public dispute.

Manipur 2023

Large-scale ethnic violence that displaced tens of thousands and showed that a ceasefire with one group is not a social peace.

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