

## Chin-Kuki-Mizo Refugees

### What is the issue?

1. *Bangladeshi tribal nationals entered Mizoram, trying to flee fighting between Bangladeshi security forces and the Kuki-Chin National Army (KNA), an armed insurgent group in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT).*
2. *The Mizoram Cabinet resolved to give temporary shelter, food and other relief Chin-Kuki-Mizo refugees as per convenience of the state government.*

### What is the refugee problem in Mizoram?

- **From Bangladesh** - The Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) is an impoverished hilly, forested area that is found in the Khagrachari, Rangamati, and Bandarban districts of Bangladesh.
- It borders Mizoram to the east, Tripura to the north, and Myanmar to the south and southeast.
- A significant portion of the **population is tribal**, and culturally and ethnically different from the majority **Muslim Bangladeshis**.
- The tribal population of the CHT has ethnic links with tribal populations in the adjacent areas of India, mainly in Mizoram.
- **From Mizoram** - Mizoram is already hosting about 30,000 refugees who have been fleeing fighting in **Myanmar's Chin state** since July-August 2021.
- A pro-democracy civilian resistance group called the Chin Defence Force has been fighting the forces of the junta ever since the military coup of February 2021.

*Chin Defence Force is backed and trained by the Chin National Army (CNA), an ethnic armed organisation active in Myanmar.*

### What is the stance of the Union Government of India?

*India is not a signatory to the 1951 UN Refugee Convention or its 1962 Protocol, and does not have a domestic policy on refugees.*

- When people began pouring in from Myanmar's Chin State, the Union Home Ministry asked the Northeastern states to act against "the illegal influx".
- But the Mizoram government has openly differed with the Centre on the issue of refugees. It has continued to welcome the refugees.
- The increasing numbers of refugees have, however, put strain on the state's resources, and several NGOs, the church, and youth organisations have joined the effort.

- The Centre has so far not prevented Mizoram from helping the refugees.

### **What is the complex conflict in the CHT?**

- The Kuki-Chin National Front (KNF) is an ethnic separatist organisation that claims to represent the interests of the Kuki-Chin-Mizo communities living in the area.
- The KNF emerged around 2008, with the demand of a separate state in the Chittagong Hill Tracts.
- The Kuki-Chin National Army (KNA), the armed wing of the KNF, is fighting soldiers of the Bangladesh Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) in the CHT.
- The KNF claims all members of the Bawm, Pungkhua, Lushai, Khumi, Mro, and Khyang ethnic groups belong to a greater Kuki-Chin race.
- **Deal** - The amir of the Jama'atul Ansar, Md Anisur Rahman alias Mahmud and the KNF chief Nathan Bom had "struck a three-year agreement" at the beginning of 2021.
- As per the deal, the KNF was providing shelter, training and other support to the militants.
- In return, the militant outfit was giving the KNF Bangladeshi Taka 3 lakh per month and the expenditure for food".
- The Zo Reunification Organisation (ZORO) had told that the Bangladesh Army has entered into a secret pact with Myanmar-based Arakan Army to launch joint operations against KNA.

*The Zo Reunification Organisation (ZORO) is a Mizoram-based association fighting for the re-unification of Chin-Kuki-Mizo tribes of India, Myanmar and Bangladesh.*

### **Reference**

1. [Indian Express | Chin-Kuki-Mizo refugees pour into Mizoram](#)

