

## Tensions between hill and valley people in Manipur

### Why in news?

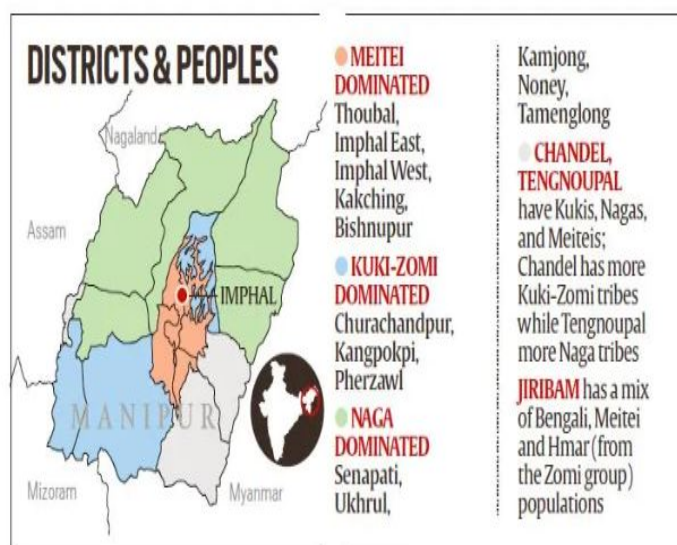
The clashes in Manipur corresponds to the genesis of the decades-old Meitei-Kuki divide.

### What is the demographic dividend of Manipur?

- Manipur is bounded by Assam, Nagaland, Mizoram, and Myanmar.
- Most of Manipur is surrounded by hills with a fertile saucer shaped valley in the middle.
- It has 10 hill districts inhabited by various tribes.
- About 40% of the state's 28 lakh people (2011 census) live in the hills.

### Which are the major communities residing in Manipur?

- The central valley in the state accounts for about 10% of the landmass of Manipur.
- The majority Meitei community (Hindus) and the Meitei Pangal (Muslims) who constitute roughly 64.6% of the state's population, live in the densely populated valley.
- This is because of the power centre from a time when Meitei Kings rules the region.
- The remaining 90% of the state's geographical area comprises hills surrounding the valley, which are home to the recognized tribes, making up about 35.4% of the state's population.
- There are 34 recognized tribes, which are broadly classified as 'Any Kuki Tribes' and 'Any Naga Tribes'.



### Who are Meitei people?

- Meiteis, are the valley people present predominantly in the Imphal valley, and they are Hindus.

- Meiteis speak Meitei language which is one of the 22 schedule languages of the constitution.
- Meitei enjoyed tribal status even before September 1949 when the princely state of Manipur signed merger agreement with Indian union.
- Meiteis also get more representation in the state assembly as 40 of the total 60 assembly seats in Manipur are from the Imphal Valley region.

### What are the reasons for the clash?

- Dominant status of Meitei people since Meiteis are the largest community in Manipur and constitute 64.6% of the Manipur population.
- Part of Meitei's also enjoy the status of backward caste (OBC).
- Meitei population which was 59% of the total population of Manipur in 1951 has now been reduced to 44% as per 2011 Census data.
- Protections given to hill areas and restrictions on non-tribals buying land in hill districts led to a demand seeking ST status for the Meiteis 12 years ago.
- Recently the Manipur high court directed the Manipur government to submit a report on the granting ST status to Meitei.
- Land survey conducted in the hills areas have created fear of eviction to the tribes in the hilly region fueling the tension in the Manipur.

*Article 371C of the Indian Constitution deals with the Special provision with respect to the State of Manipur.*

### Quick Facts

#### Scheduled Tribes (STs)

- **Article 366** - Defines schedule tribe as any tribe deemed under article 342.
- **Article 342** - Provides for specification of tribes which are deemed to be for the purposes of the Constitution the Scheduled Tribes in relation to that State or Union Territory.
- **Criteria** - To specify any community as ST the following are the criteria
  - Indications of primitive traits,
  - Distinctive culture,
  - Geographical isolation,
  - Shyness of contact with the community at large, and
  - Backwardness.
- These criteria are not spelt out in the Constitution.

To know about National Commission for Scheduled Tribes [click here](#).

#### References

1. [The Indian Express | Violence In Manipur](#)
2. [Hindustan Times | Cause Of Manipur Violence](#)



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