

# Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR) agreement

January 25, 2021

## In news

The Union Home Minister attended a special function held in Kokrajhar, Assam to celebrate the first anniversary of the historic Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR) agreement.

## Key features of the Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR) agreement

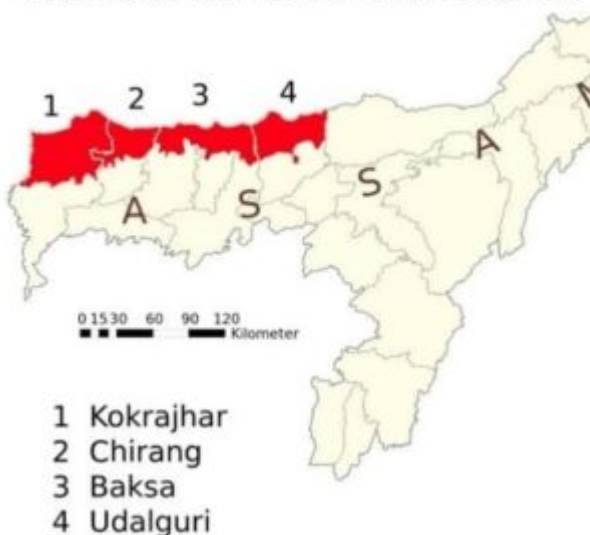
Following are the key features of the agreement and they are proposed to be implemented over a period of time:

- It is a historic agreement between Government of India, Government of Assam and Bodo representatives signed in 2020 to end the over 50-year old Bodo crisis
- With this agreement, over 1500 armed cadres abjured violence and joined the mainstream.
- The state government would give Rs 5 lakh each to the next of kin of those who lost their lives during the agitation for a separate state.
- **Criminal cases** with non-heinous charges against NDFB members **will be withdrawn.**
- Those cases which are heinous will be reviewed on a case-to-case basis as per the existing rules.
- Bodos living in the hills would be conferred a **Scheduled Hill Tribe status.**
- **A Special Development Package** of Rs 1,500 crore will be implemented for the development of Bodo areas in the next three years with equal contribution of Rs 750 crore each from the Central and state governments.
  - The funds would be used to set up industry and employment packages and promote eco-tourism.
- The government will **set up a Central University in the**

**name of Upendranath Brahma and a National Sports University** will be set up.

- A **regional medical institute, hotel management campus**, a Mother Dairy plant, a National Institute of Technology and more Navodaya Vidyalayas will be set up.
- The existing structure of **Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) will be strengthened** with more powers and its seats will be expanded from 40 to 60.
  - The BTC currently has control over 30 subjects such as education, forests, horticulture but no jurisdiction over the police, revenue and general administration departments, which are controlled by the Assam government.
- A **commission** will be set up for inclusion of Bodo-dominated villages in the BTC and exclusion of those where Bodos are not in majority.
- With more administrative powers the Bodoland Territorial Area Districts (BTAD) spread over four districts of Kokrajhar, Chirang, Baksa and Udalguri will be renamed as Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR).

Bodoland Territorial Area Districts



- **Bodo language as in Devanagari script will be notified by the state government as an associate official language of Assam**

## Previous efforts for BODO peace accord

The government tried to sign following pacts to end the insurgency:

1. **The first accord was signed with the All Bodo Students' Union in 1993**, leading to the creation of a Bodoland Autonomous Council with limited political powers.
  - But the accord failed as it failed to consider minorities other than Bodos who were also the residents of those areas.
2. **In 2003, the second accord was signed** with the militant group Bodo Liberation Tigers, leading to formation of Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) with four districts of Assam – Kokrajhar, Chirang, Baska and Udalguri – called Bodoland Territorial Area District (BTAD).
  - However, this too failed due to rising discontent from non-Bodo residents of the BTAD areas, who accounted for nearly two-thirds of its population. The differences between extremist and militant wings of Bodo groups also got added.