

Historic Agreement to end the Bru-Reang Refugee Crisis

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Union Minister for Home Affairs presided over the signing of an agreement between the Government of India, Governments of Tripura and Mizoram and Bru-Reang representatives in New Delhi, to end the 23-year old Bru-Reang refugee crisis.

Key highlights of the agreement

- Under the new agreement, around 34,000 Bru refugees will be settled in Tripura and would be given aid from the Centre to help with their rehabilitation and all round development, through a package of around Rs 600 crores.
- These people **would get all the rights that normal residents of the States get** and they would now be able to enjoy the **benefits of social welfare schemes of the Centre and State governments.**
- The settlement has been reached after detailed discussions held by Union government with the State governments of Mizoram and Tripura and the representatives of Bru tribes
- The Home Minister informed that under the new arrangement, each of the displaced families would be given 40×30 sq.ft. residential plots, in addition to the aid under the earlier agreement of a fixed deposit of Rs. 4 lakhs, Rs. 5,000 cash aid per month for 2 years, free ration for 2 years and Rs. 1.5 lakhs aid to build their house. The government of Tripura would provide the land under this agreement.

Background

In 1997, following ethnic tension, around 5,000 families

comprising around 30,000 Bru-Reang tribals were forced to flee Mizoram and seek shelter in Tripura. These people were housed in temporary camps at Kanchanpur, in North Tripura.

Since 2010, the Government of India has been making sustained efforts to permanently rehabilitate these refugees. The Union government has been assisting the two-State governments for taking care of the refugees. Till 2014, 1622 Bru-Reang families returned to Mizoram in different batches.

About Bru-Reang refugees

- The Brus—spread across Tripura, Mizoram and parts of southern Assam—are the **most populous tribe in Tripura.**
- **Also known as Reangs in the state, they are ethnically different from the Mizos,** with their own distinct language and dialect and form one of the 21 scheduled tribes of Tripura.
- While Mizoram has as many as 40,000 Brus living in the state, in Tripura, their numbers stand at approximately 32,000, spread across six refugee camps in the state.
- In 1997, roughly half the Bru population fled to Tripura, following violent clashes with the Mizo population, which led to the Brus' demand for an Autonomous District Council (ADC), under the 6th Schedule of the Constitution, in western Mizoram, where they were the more dominant lot, outnumbering the ethnic Mizo population.