Karbi Anglong Agreement

Why in news?

Karbi Anglong peace deal was recently signed

What has been the history?

- Naga insurgency has been an inspiration for separatist movements in the North-Eastern region to protect their culture.
- Bodoland movement and the ULFA movement aimed for a sovereign Assam.
- But many smaller groups have also fought to protect their distinct ethnic, linguistic and cultural identity from being subsumed within a broader Assamese identity.
- Karbi Anglong, is the largest district in Assam and comprises various tribal and ethnic groups including the Kukis, Dimasas, Garos, Rengma Nagas, Tiwas and Karbis,
- Karbis were the majority among them and demanded a separate state of Karbi Anglong and North Cachar Hills.
- But on the negative side they exploit alienation caused by an insensitive and exploitative state, and engage in extortion, ethnic violence, killings, etc.

What has been the approach of Centre?

- The Centre offered autonomy under the Constitution on the one hand while using security forces to crush militancy on the other.
- Insurgents who negotiate for peace are accommodated in state legislatures or Autonomous Councils.
- This approach has had various degrees of success, in Mizoram, Tripura, the Bodo areas.
- However, Karbi Anglong separatists rejected Sixth Schedule status.
- They demanded for an autonomous state under Article 244(a) of the Constitution.

What is Karbi Anglong Agreement?

- It is tripartite agreement signed between the Centre, five insurgent groups active in Karbi Anglong, and the Assam government.
- It marks the culmination of an extended process of negotiation to end insurgency in the region.
- It will ensure greater devolution of autonomy to the Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council (KAAC).

  KAAC is an autonomous district council in Assam for development and protection of tribals of Karbi Anglong and West Karbi Anglong district.

- It proposed to notify Karbi as the official language of KAAC.

- English, Hindi & Assamese will continue to be used for official purposes.
- A Special Development Package of Rs. 1000 crores over 5 years will be given by the Union and Assam for the focussed development of KAAC areas.
- It also provides for rehabilitation of cadres of the Karbi armed groups, who have agreed to renounce violence.
- Assam Government shall set up a Karbi Welfare Council for focussed development of Karbi people living outside KAAC area.
- The Consolidated Fund of the State will be augmented to supplement the resources of KAAC.
- Over a thousand armed insurgents have surrendered their arms.

Does the agreement satisfy the local demands?

- The current Karbi Anglong agreement signed falls short of fulfilling the demand for autonomous.
- Yet it promises more autonomy than currently enjoyed by the Autonomous Council under the Sixth Schedule.
- 10 seats on KAAC has been marked for people from any community, paving the way for other community representation.
- Autonomy and funds alone may not be sufficient to improve the condition of the people.
- Autonomous Councils are often captured by vested interests, who invoke fears of a militant past.
- The enhanced development funds are oftern diverted to private parties.

Source: The Hindu, The Indian Express

SHANKAR IAS PARLIAMENT
Information is Empowering