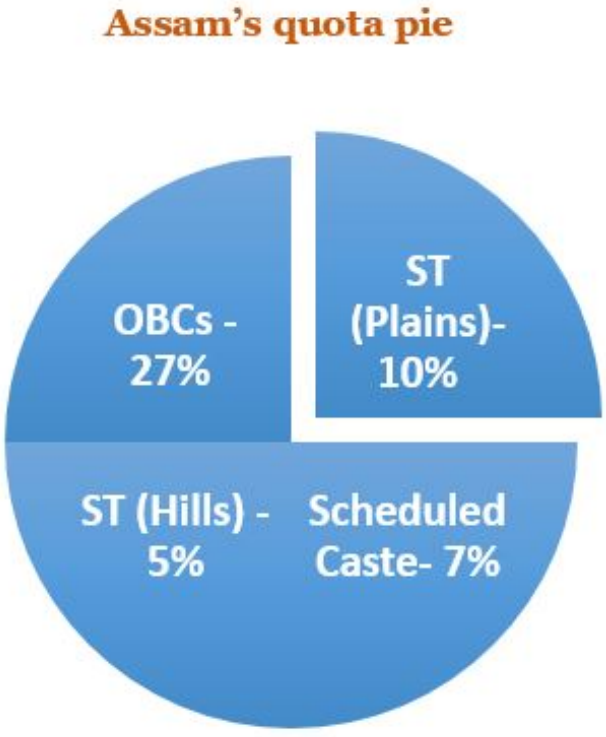
Koch-Rajbongshis

Why in News?

Leaders of the Koch-Rajbongshi Sanmilita Joutha Mancha recently submitted a 15-point memorandum to the Bharatiya Janata Party's Assam unit president Dilip Saikia highlighting their demands.

> *Mancha is an umbrella body comprising 12 organisations of the Koch-Rajbongshi community, which once ruled large swathes across present-day Assam, West Bengal, and Bangladesh.*

- **Demands**
  - They demanded Scheduled Tribes status for their community.
  - Re-establishment of the historic Kamatapur State.
  - Creation of a Chilarai Regiment in the armed forces in honour of the community's legendary warrior.



- **Related Committees –** Mahesh Kumar Singla Committee.
- **Koch-Rajbongshis –** Koch Rajbongshi is an ancient tribe originally from

the ancient Koch kingdom.

- Koch Rajbongshi are an indigenous tribe of South Asia who live in Assam, Bengal, Bihar, Bangladesh, Nepal, and Bhutan. They are also known as the Rajbanshi or Rajvanshi.
- The Koch-Rajbongshis are one of 6 ethnic groups seeking ST status for decades and currently enjoy Other Backward Classes status.
- The others are Adivasis, Ahoms, Chutias, Mataks, and Morans.
- **Origin -** The Koch Rajbongshi's called themselves *Kamateshwars* (the rulers of Kamata/Kamatapur Kingdom).
    - But their influence and expansions were so extensive and far reaching that their kingdom is sometimes called the Koch kingdom.
- **Language -** Rajbongshi/Rajbanshi language spoken by one crore people, according to a 2001 census report for West Bengal.
- **Religion -** The Rajbongshi were primarily animist, but later on they followed Hinduism/Sanatana (both Shaiva and Vaishnabhite).
- A few section of Rajbongshi pleople were also found to be followers of Christianity, both Roman Catholic and protestant.

Reference

[The Hindu | Koch-Rajbongshis]

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