Kuki Tribes

Why in the News?

An armoured vehicle of the central security forces came under heavy attacks by protesters from the Kuki tribes in Manipur on the first day of the Centre's order to ensure free movement of people.

- The Kukis are an ethnic group including multiple tribes originally inhabiting the Northeastern States of India, including Manipur (30%) and Mizoram, Meghalaya, Assam, Tripura, and Nagaland.
- They also inhabit parts of Burma (now Myanmar), and Sylhet district and Chittagong hill tracts of Bangladesh.

The Chin people of Myanmar, and the Mizo people of Mizoram are kindred tribes of kukis and collectively known as Zo people.

- **Ethnicity** - Kuki-Zomi-Mizo-Chin people migrated from inner Asia or mainland China.
- It is believed that Kuki people are native to the Mizo Hills (formerly Lushai), a mountainous region in the south-eastern part of Mizoram in India.
- Kuki is not a term coined by the ethnic group itself, the tribes associated with it came to be generically called Kuki under the colonial rule.
- They were further divided by the British into ‘old Kukis’ and ‘new Kukis’.
- **Occupation** - They engaged in shifting or Jhum cultivation resulting in their expansion through the forested tracts.
- **Religion** - Kuki-Zomi clans mostly follow Christianity.
- **Social Groups -** Kuki society features rich cultural institutions like Sawm (boys' community center) and Lawm (youth club), fostering social cohesion and practical skills.
- Around 50 tribes of Kuki people in India are recognized as ***scheduled tribes*** based on the dialect spoken and region of origin.

Reference

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