President rule in Manipur

Why in news?

Recently, large scale violence has erupted again in Manipur.

What are the needs of president rule provisions in Indian context?

- **President's Rule** –It is a provision under Article 356 of the Indian Constitution that allows the central government to assume direct control over a state's governance.
- It also known as State emergency or Constitutional emergency.
- **Origin** - Emergency power of President in present Constitution can be traced from section 93 of the Government of India Act, 1935.
- Government of India Act, 1935 empowered both the Governor General (at the Federal level) and the Governor (at the provincial level) to deal with the failure of the Constitutional machinery.
- **Need of president rule**

B.R.Ambedkar , Alladi Krishnaswami Ayyar, K. Santhanam, Thakur Das Bhargava stressed the necessity of president's rule provisions.

- **Protect unity and integrity of the nation** - Parliamentary democracy is vulnerable to diverse and complex society of India.
- **Address governance breakdown** - Union intervention might be needed to ensure that states adhere to constitutional norms and maintain law and order when required.
- **Strengthen federalism** – To prevent federal units of the union resisting the central government and ensure cooperation among the states.

Article 365 empowers the union government to impose presidents rule when states fail to comply with, or to give effect to, directions given by the Union.

- **Protect individual's liberty** – when a state's machinery fails, depriving citizens of basic liberties, Union intervention becomes essential to safeguard their rights and restore peace
- **Uphold constitution** – To ensure values and principle of the constitution is respected and obeyed by the states.
- **Protect states** – To protect states against external aggression and internal disturbance.

Article 355 provides that it is the duty of the Union to protect States against external aggression and internal disturbance.

Article 356

• **President's Proclamation** (1) - If the President, by the report from the Governor of the State or otherwise, is satisfied that a situation has arisen in which the government of the State cannot be carried on in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution, the President may, by Proclamation.
  - (a) Assume to himself all or any of the functions of state
  - (b) Allow Parliament to exercise the powers of the State Legislature.
  - (c) Make provisions necessary to enforce the Proclamation, including suspension of certain Constitutional provisions relating to State authorities.
• **Revocation** (2) – Any such Proclamation may be revoked or varied by a subsequent Proclamation.
• **Parliamentary Approval** (3) – Must be presented to both Houses of Parliament and will cease to operate after two months unless approved.
• If issued during Lok Sabha dissolution, it remains *valid for 30 days* after the new Lok Sabha's first session, pending its approval.
• **Duration** (4) – Proclamation so approved shall, be operate six months from the date of issue of the Proclamation.
• **Extension beyond one year** (5) – The Proclamation can be extended beyond **one year** only in the following cases.
  - (a) A National Emergency in effect.
  - (b) Election Commission certification that elections to the State Assembly cannot be held due to difficulties.

Why is Manipur violence unique?

- **Continuous violence** – No State in India has seen such continuing violence among the common people.
- **Common man violence** – Unlike other violence in north eastern states common man is involved in Manipur violence.
- Ordinary people have become the victims of violence and also forced to indulge in violence to protect themselves.
- **Involvement of police force** – State police force began to divide based on ethnicity which increased the hostility between Meitei and Kukis.

What are the necessities of president rule in Manipur?

- **Breakdown of constitutional machinery** – The government has failed to protect its citizen's basic liberties and maintain law and order.
- **Deprival of fundamental rights** - 3 million people of Manipur are deprived of fundamental rights and their lives, liberty, dignity, and peace.
- **Judiciary failure** – In spite of Various judicial orders and directives the violence have not been controlled depriving.
- **Failure of governance** – Inability of the state government to control the violence in the state.
- **Internal disturbance** – The violence caused killing of more than 250 people and displacement of over a lakh of people.
- Hundreds of temples, churches, homes and other places have been destroyed.

Article 355 imposed in 2023 which empowers the Union government to protect the state under any internal and external threat.

Manipur Issue

• Meiteis are the valley people , constituting 65% of state population and Kuki are tribes living in hills constituting 35% of Manipur population.
• 90% of the state's geographical area comprises hills.
• **Sectarian violence** – Conflict between the dominant Meitei and Kuki communities is majorly due to the imbalance in development across and protecting the ethnic rights of their community on the state.
• **Meitei demands** – They demand for ST status to preserve their ancestral land, tradition, culture, and language.
• They argue that they were scheduled tribes before 1949 and lost the status after the merger with India.
• The reduction their population invokes fear of marginalization among the community.
• **Refugee intrusion** – Influx of Kuki refugees from Myanmar have heightened tensions over demographic shifts and resource competition.
Manipur shares nearly 400-km border with Myanmar.
• **The sudden trigger** – In April 2023 the Manipur High Court recommended the state government should consider the demand of Meitei communities.
• **Kuki's objection** – As Meitei account for half of Manipur's population and extending ST status to them would mean they would get a share of education and government jobs reserved for Kukis and Nagas.
The conflict began after a peaceful protest march organized by the All Tribal Student Union of Manipur (ATSUM) against the Manipur High Court's recommendation to recognize the Meitei as a Scheduled Tribe (ST).
To know more about this, click here.

What lies ahead?

- Restore governance and protect citizens' rights in the state by curbing the violence.
- The government should act decisively to bring back peace, harmony, justice, relief and rehabilitation.
- Engage both parties to peace talks to stop the violence.

Reference

The Hindu | Manipur as A Case for Imposing Article 35

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