

YOJANA SUMMARY

TRIBALS IN INDIA

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POLICIES ON SCHEDULED TRIBES

- The framers of the Constitution took note of the fact that certain communities in the country were suffering from extreme social, educational and economic backwardness on account of the primitive agricultural practices, lack of infrastructure facilities and geographical isolation.
- In order to uplift such communities, a provision was made in the Constitution of India, in the form of reservation for them in education, employment and in the governing bodies, as Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs).

Constitutional & Legal Provisions

- The Constitution of India in **Article 366 (25)** prescribes that the Scheduled Tribes mean such tribes or tribal communities as are deemed under Article 342 of the Constitution to be Scheduled Tribes.
 - STs are notified in 30 States/UTs and the number of individual ethnic groups, etc., notified as STs is 705.
- **Article 46** provides that the State shall promote with special care, the educational and economic interest of the weaker section of the people, and, in particular, the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes, and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation.
- Similarly, **Articles 15 and 16** empowered the Government for making special provisions for the Scheduled Tribes.
- Parliament has passed the **Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989** to prevent the commission of offenses or atrocities against the members of SCs & STs.
- **The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006** recognises and vests forest rights and occupation on forest land to Scheduled Tribes.

BIRSA MUNDA

A peerless protagonist of tribal rights, he made the Munda people unite for their political emancipation and infused in them the spirit of nationalism.

JATRA BHAGAT

The founder of **Bhagat Movement in Chota Nagpur** (Jharkhand), Jatra guided his fellow mates to disobey regulations imposed by the British. His followers are called 'Tana Bhagats'. Around 1921, they also took part in the Non-Cooperation Movement.

Institutions Created To Safeguard Rights Of STs

- For the purpose of protecting these rights, the makers of the Constitution created the **National Commission for Schedule Tribes (NCST)**.
- NCST is duty-bound to act as a watchdog and think tank for the STs. NCST as a **constitutional body has been established under Article 338A** of the Constitution.
- Its organisational structure comprises a Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and three Members, appointed by the President of India.
- The Commission has a permanent Secretariat in New Delhi, six regional offices across the country, and has the **powers of a Civil Court**.
- In accordance with **Clause 9 of Article 338A** of the Constitution, the Union and every State shall consult the Commission on all major policy matters affecting the Scheduled Tribes.

Steps Taken By NCST

- NCST has **identified ten areas for policy implementation** related to the tribal communities. This includes - forest rights R&R, mining related issues financial issues and implementation of development schemes,

atrocities, grievances, inclusion and exclusion, health and nutrition, education, legal and constitutional issues, Scheduled Tribes Component in welfare schemes.

- **Grievance Redressal**

- ✓ NCST has played a key role in the advancement and in securing the rights of STS in India.
- ✓ NCST has launched an **e-portal www.ncstgrams.gov.in** for the public to register their complaints.

- **Planning**

The Commission is committed to associated itself with the planning process to fulfill the responsibility entrusted by the constitution of India.

Characteristics of Tribal People/Communities

- A tribal person *is usually not a hitagraahi*, i.e., self-centered or individualistic one; he/she is generally a *aparmaarathi* (altruist).
- The tribal people accord priority to the community before pursuing individual gains.
- Tribal communities in India are unique in nature, owing to their distinct cultural pattern and systems across different regions.
- Wherever they live, they have been following a developmental approach **ensuring ecological balance along with economic development**, which is termed as Sustainable Development in the modern world.
- Various studies reveal that the basic principles of life and culture of the tribal communities in India, broadly center around the values, such as:
 - Identification with nature,
 - Coexistence, amity and empathy with other living beings.
 - Collective living or collective subsistence and the principle of sharing.
 - Non-accumulation of personal property Restraint and resolving disputes by withdrawal.

HEALTHCARE CHALLENGES

Health of Indigenous People: Defined By UN

- The United Nation's **State of the World's Indigenous Peoples Report** states that "for indigenous peoples, health is equivalent to the harmonious co-existence of human beings with nature, with themselves and with others, aimed at integral well-being, in spiritual, individual, and social wholeness and tranquility.
- It goes on to declare that when it comes to appropriate health systems for the indigenous context, models of healthcare must take into account the indigenous concept of health and preserve and strengthen indigenous health systems as a strategy to increase access and coverage of health care.
- The report further said that it is necessary to ensure that the human resources respond to the epidemiological profile and socio-cultural context of indigenous communities.
- However globally, most health **systems struggle at different degrees to reach adequate and appropriate healthcare to their indigenous people.**

Challenges Faced By Health System For Indigenous People In India

- In India, region to region, one tribal community to another, we recognise challenges both in terms of reaching care, and in moving beyond disease-centred healthcare to integrated approaches to health and development of the tribal people.

- **Unavailability Of Disaggregated Data**
 - ✓ While the distinct socio-cultural-political context of each tribe dictates a focused understanding on their health status and planning for appropriate health services, in India, **little data is available to allow such reflection.**
 - ✓ The main sources for health data for tribal people in India are the demographic health surveys. The routine health information systems of the government also **do not capture the tribal identity.**
 - ✓ So, while much detailed data on services utilisation and programme implementation are available, they do not allow for disaggregation of data based on tribal status.
 - ✓ As a result, various health problems and health system deficiencies in reaching tribal people remains hidden for many years till the census or national survey reveals the significant gaps.
- **Lack of Proper Research Among Tribal Populations**
 - ✓ Research among tribal populations in India are often limited to cross-sectional surveys focusing on specific diseases like malaria, pregnancy and related outcomes.
 - ✓ It seldom focuses on the larger socio-political issues that underlie the poor reach and access to health services for many tribal people.
- **Inadequate Govt Survey**
 - ✓ Currently, the efforts of gathering and visualising information on tribal health is undertaken by government taskforces like the Tribal Health Report published by the expert committee in 2018, or through local civil society.
 - ✓ These surveys generally do not attempt to answer the 'why' or 'how' questions related to the health of tribal people in a particular region or landscape.
 - ✓ The impact of various critical social determinants of health are often ignored.
 - ✓ E.g., a tribal family that does not yet have legitimate ownership over ancestrally cultivated and owned lands, lives in a state of perpetual food and livelihood insecurity.
 - ✓ These stark living conditions and chronic lifelong stress hardly reflect in conventional measures of morbidity and mortality.

Health Status

- Severe deficiencies for access to antenatal, delivery and postnatal services across all tribal communities are still there.
- A **uniform family welfare approach across the country** prevents adaptation to family welfare needs of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTG) and other tribal communities.
- Appropriate treatment for **childhood illnesses in tribal** children is poor. Infant mortalities and under-five mortalities are higher among tribal children in most States.
- **Tribal nutritional intake** varies from one region to another. Prevalence of undernutrition among school children is generally poorer than non-tribal counterparts.
- Food security schemes have lesser coverage and poor quality in most tribal areas.
- Incidences of infectious diseases such as **malaria are more frequent** and have higher morbidity and mortality in most tribal areas.
- Prevalence of HIV/AIDS is comparatively higher in the northeast Indian tribal areas.
- Disease surveillance and epidemiological data on infectious diseases are inadequate. Focus on **infectious diseases control in tribal areas has not been accompanied by a systematic approach to Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) in tribal areas.**

- Mental health illnesses and substance abuse are poorly studied in these communities.
- Environmental health is a neglected area in general but in these communities, it is a key social determinant of health. Tribal areas are undergoing rapid transition due to pressures of mining, resource extraction. However tribal health systems are not prepared to deal with health problems arising out of such transitions.

Health Systems

- A health system lens as advocated by the WHO helps us provide an understanding of the health system in terms of financing, resource utilization, and governance.
- However, there is a need to explore the inter-linkages of health with other dimensions of human development like education, land tenure, etc.
- Poor governance in tribal districts accounts for various deficiencies in delivery of health programmes, schemes and services. **Tribal health services are severely underfinanced.**
- There is a **disproportionate shortage** of health workers in tribal areas; moreover, **tribal representation in the health workforce is considerably inadequate.**
- Rich traditional health knowledge exists in tribal communities; however, the health systems do not harness the potential of positive traditional health practices.
- Several social determinants severely affect tribal health such as geographical isolation, migration, displacement and armed conflict requiring targeted approaches.
- Tribal health has no special or additional focus in the overall national and State health plans thereby it finds no explicit focus in the corresponding policies and programmes.

Need for a Special Focus

- The term Scheduled Tribes (STs) is a broad category that has over 700 communities with wide differences in genetic, ethnic, cultural and social differences between them.
- While this categorization is useful for identifying the group for affirmative action, it does not help to recognise the differences in approaches needed to reach the different tribal people and the significant differences in health outcomes from one tribe to another, from one geographical region to the other.
- A special approach towards our tribal people, especially their health is needed.
- Such a focus needs to emerge from the grassroots, meaning that districts and local bodies at block levels ought to be sensitized.

Conclusion

The need of the hour is to go beyond describing problems in health services, and focusing on collaborative partnerships with civil society and community-based organisations to customise and implement local health reforms in partnership with the communities.

THE NORTH EASTERN MILIEU

Tribal Population: Statistics

- Tribal communities in India inhabit all parts of the country except the States of Punjab, Haryana and Delhi, and the Union Territories of Chandigarh and Puducherry.
- They constitute **8.6 per cent of India's total population** and are classified into about seven hundred communities which includes both 'major tribes' and 'sub-tribes'.

- Around 12 per cent of the total tribal population in India lives in the North Eastern States.
- But unlike central Indian States, where the tribal population is a minority, tribal communities constitute more than eighty per cent of the State population in Mizoram, Meghalaya and Nagaland.

Ecology and Inhabitants

- NER has remained backward and less-developed region of the Indian subcontinent though it covers 7.9 per cent geographical area of the country.
- It shares as much as 4200 km of international boundary with four nations- Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, and Myanmar.
- It is joined with the rest of India by means of a narrow route popularly known as the Siliguri corridor or the 'Chicken's Neck'.
- The North Eastern tribal economies are **distant and remote from the mainstream national economy**. Agriculture being the main occupation and source of livelihood for the farmers.
- Two distinct types of agricultural practice in NER may be observed (i) settled agriculture in the plains, valleys and gentler slopes and (ii) slash and burn cultivation (called jhum cultivation) elsewhere.
- In the lowland areas of the Brahmaputra and Barak valleys, three agricultural systems of rice are followed, namely **Sali kheti, Ahu kheti, and Bao kheti**.

Rani Gaidinliu

A Naga political leader, Rani Gaidinliu joined the freedom movement at the age of 13. She was arrested during Salt Satyagraha in 1932 and was sentenced to life imprisonment. From 1933-1947, she stayed in different jails and was released only after Independence in 1947 after spending 14 years in jail.

Culture and Tradition

- North East can be regarded as repository of traditional knowledge systems.
- On the basis of one or the other factor like socio-cultural similarity, linguistic affinity, ethnic affiliation and common territory, these tribal communities may conveniently be put under certain groups like the Boro, the Khasi, the Naga, the Lushei Kuki, the Arunachali and others.
- The tribal communities of the North East have their **own traditional system of governance**. Among these, chieftainship is prevalent, while others prefer to be ruled by the village council.
- Each society has its own cultural tradition, social system, set of values, custom and different colourful mode of festivities which are mostly related to agriculture.
- Few of them may be mentioned as:
 - ✓ **In Arunachal Pradesh:** Moh-Mol (Tangsa), Mopin & Solung (Adi), Oriah (Wancho), Nyokum (Nyishi), Reh (Mishmi), Lossar (Monpa), Boori-Boot (Hill Miris);
 - ✓ **In Assam** - Magh Bihu, Bohag Bihu, Ali-Ai-Ligang (Mishing), Baikho (Rabha) and Baishagu (Dimasa);
 - ✓ **In Nagaland:** Moatsu (Ao), Ngada (Rengma), Monyu (Phom), Naknyulum (Chang), Sekrenyi (Angami) and Suhkruhnye (Chakhensang);
 - ✓ **In Manipur:** Lai Haraoba dance, Thabal Chongba dance and Rasilila and others;
 - ✓ **In Mizoram** - Chapchar Kut, Mim Kut and Cheraw (the Bamboo Dance);
 - ✓ **In Tripura** - Kharchi Puja, Garia Puja, Ker Puja and others
 - ✓ **In Meghalaya** - Wangala Festival (Garo), Shad Suk Mynsicum (Khasi) and Behdienkhlam (Jaintia).
- In socio-political life of tribal communities, monarchy and democracy co-exist in principle. The members of the tribes are united by the kinship and marriage, thus it becomes difficult to differentiate between the political and domestic matters.

- Lineage segmentation is the chief principle of the political structure of the tribal communities.

Current Status

- Recent data from standard sample surveys find that women's participation in decision making was higher even than the Southern States.
- As per 2011 Census, sex ratio is highest in Manipur (992), followed by Meghalaya (989) and Mizoram (976), and lowest in Sikkim (890).
- Special attention is being paid to achievement of SDGs in the North East, with a **North Eastern Region (NER) District SDG Index 2021-22 developed by NITI Aayog.**
- The index will facilitate in identifying crucial gaps and inform interventions to fast-track progress towards achieving the SDGs in the region.
- Globalisation has serious implications on culture of the tribal communities. It imposes a homogeneous consumerist culture and value system on each society.
- Thus, the tribal communities' exposure to the forces of change, both indigenous and exogenous, has serious implications on the lifestyle and culture of the tribal communities consequently.
- Their means of livelihood tends to change from subsistence agricultural income towards diversified modern market-oriented employment.

TRIBALS IN GUJRAT

- There are 26 Scheduled Tribe groups in the State.
- The major tribal communities are Bhil, Garasia and Dholi Bhils; Talavia, Halpati; Dhodia; Rathwa; Naikda or Nayaka and Gamit, Gamata.
- Tribal communities including Kathodi, Padhar, Siddi, Kolgha, and Kotwalia belong to the **Primitive Tribal Groups.**

Tribals of Gujrat

- **Halpati**
- **Rathwa**
- **Dhodia**
- **Nayak-Naikda**
- **Chaudhri**
- **Dhanka**
- **Parghi**
- **Charan**
- **Kokna/kukna**
- **Bharwad**
- **Rabari**
- **Barda**

NANA JAGTAP

A Bhil tribal leader, he took a prominent part in the 1857 uprising against British rule. Nana Jagtap led his followers in the battle against the British forces at Beejagarh. He was captured by the British and was martyred at Khargone, Madhya Pradesh.

- **Gamit** – The Bhils who settled in the village, in one place are considered to be called Gamit.
- **Bhil** - The word Bhil comes from the Dravidian word Billu- which means bow to shoot arrows.
- **Warli** - Warli is a community cultivating small plots of land. Warli painting is made on the walls of dung marti with soaked rice water, using acacia and bamboo sticks. These paintings portray socio-cultural beliefs and style of work as the subject Eastern Districts, matter.
- **Patelia** - After the fall of Patai Rawal in Pavagadh, those Rajputs and Kshatriyas who settled in different forest areas of Dahod, Limkheda, Santrampur, etc., were known as Patelia. They became leaders of the village and were managing village affairs, thus becoming 'Patel' of a village. The 'Patel' in long run was converted into 'Patelia'. The whole tribe is now known as 'Patelia'.
- **Pomla** - Based on the Census of Baroda, it can be said that this tribe might have migrated from Madras (Tamil Nadu) to this place about 200 years ago.

Primitive Tribes

There are **5 PVTGs (Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups) in Gujrat.**

- **Siddi** - Siddis reside across many States of India, especially in Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Kerala. Besides, they are also based in Karnataka. The African tribe of Anglo-Indian descent who migrated and settled in urban and rural areas of other Indian States are Siddis. **They are popularly known for their Dhamal Dance.**
- **Padhar** - They live in houses made of clay, grass, and wood known as kuba.
- **Kotwalia** – Since bamboo is a traditional occupation, it is considered as kalpavriksha.
- **Kathodi**: Kathodi are also known as Katkari. This name has been derived from their occupation of preparing Catechu. Kathodis believe themselves to be heirs of the deity Hanuman.
- **Kolgha** – It is a primitive tribe districts of South Gujrat.

Tribal Culture

- **Art-Pithora and Warli Paintings:**
 - ✓ The Rathwa tribes of Central Gujarat have their bamboo walls plastered with clay and the local deity Pithoradev is painted on the wall to celebrate a joyous occasion.
 - ✓ Paintings of Warlis of South Gujarat are ritual decorations during weddings. The village women draw patterns on the walls of the bride's house with rice-powder after clay-plastering.
- **Tribal Healing System- Bhagat Bhava:** They play an important part in religion, health and society of the tribals.

TRIBAL SONGS OF CHHATTISGARH

- Traditional songs and music form the identity of the tribal culture. They reflect their natural spirit, unconditional love, and innate energy at every stage of their life.
- The forest areas and tribal settlements of Chhattisgarh, began the revolt against the British at the very beginning of the freedom struggle, much before the urban areas. Initially, the tribal songs in their dialects, reverberated with the rebellion of their area, and then with the movement that was prevalent in the country.
- These tribal songs, on one hand, glorified their hero and on the other, inspired their fellow tribesmen to participate in the freedom struggle.
- The national awareness of the tribal communities emerges in the songs of different dialects- Halbi, Bhatri, Muria, Gondi, Oraon, Korku, Baiga, etc.

- The two biggest incidents of tribal revolt in Chhattisgarh emerge with the most poignant details in these songs.
 - ✓ The first incident is related to Sonakhan's landlord, Veer Narayan Singh, taking an army of tribal farmers to war with the British army and his public hanging in 1857.
 - ✓ The second one is related to the great upsurge 'Bhumkal' in Bastar in 1910, under the leadership of Gundadhur.

NARAYAN SINGH

One of the earliest known tribal leaders, Singh is considered the first known hero of the War of Independence in Chhattisgarh.

He was arrested in 1856 by the British authorities for looting a trader's grain stocks and distributing it amongst the poor during famine. He escaped from prison in 1857 and formed an army of 500 gunmen and fought with tremendous courage against the British.

RICH HERITAGE OF GONDS

- Everything which the **ancestors bequeath may be called heritage** - social structure, religious beliefs, cultural aspects, etc.
- It is imperative to highlight the socio-cultural nuances of the tribes of India with a special emphasis on the cultural aspects of the Gonds of Central India.
- According to the 2011 Census, the tribals account for 109 million and represent 8.6 per cent of country's total population. The **Gonds are the largest in number among other tribes of the country**.
- There are many sub-tribes under the Gonds, but they share common ethnic origins. It is believed that the name 'Gond' was given to them by other communities. They do not call themselves by that name, instead, they called and still **call themselves 'Koi' or 'Koithur'**.
- **Social Life:** The social structure of the Gonds is one of the oldest and most unique systems established by their chief preceptor Pahandi Pari Kupa Lingo.
- **Family:** The Gond family is the smallest social unit. An aggregate of families constitutes the clan. The Gond family is patrilineal and patrilocal.
- **Pari (Clan)** - Gonds use the term 'pari' to express their group. The clan among the Gonds is a unilateral group consisted of family members of which bear the same clan-name.
- **Status of Women:** In a customary Gond society, most of the domestic work is centered around a woman. A woman is excluded from certain ritual observances.
- **Marriage:** Among the Gonds, marriage is forbidden between blood relatives. The Raj Gonds, the ruling Gonds, are married according to Hindu customs, while in the common Gonds, the marriage ceremonies are conducted by doshi, or Baiga. Widow marriage is allowed in the Gond society.
- **Religious Life:** The Gonds are firm believers in omens and myths. The diviner is called by different names among different sub-groups of Gonds. He is called as Pujar, Bhagat, Baiga, Gunia, or Panda, etc.
- **Festivals:** There are several religious festivals of the Gonds such as Akhari, Jiwati, Pola, Diwali Nawo tindana, Dussera, and Phag or Shimga. Many of these are connected with agricultural season.
- **Cultural Aspects:** The Gonds had evolved their own cultural practices in the process of their social formation without much interaction with the other culture.

- **Songs & Dance**

- ✓ The main dances are Karma, Ri-na, Ri-lo, Re-la, Sela Danda (stick), Mandari, Hulki, and Suwa, etc.
- ✓ These songs and dances are accompanied by various musical instruments like drums, kikir, flute, cymbals and others.
- ✓ The dance movements are very fast in many forms which keep them physically fit. Even the rhythm played on instruments is of high note which regulates their activities in a faster motion.

- **Art & Craft**

- ✓ The Gonds are expert in arts and crafts. They also have an expertise in beautiful wall paintings and floral designs that depict geometric designs and stylistic figures of plants and animals on the walls of their houses.
- ✓ The geometric and symbolic designs carved on wall and door, on comb and tobacco-case are thousands of years old, going back to the ancient civilisation of the Indus Valley.

- **Gotul**

- ✓ The traditional Gotul institutions of the Gonds used to inculcate a sense of discipline and co-operative endeavour among its members.
- ✓ It was not just a club for meeting the boys and girls at night, as it was depicted by some scholars. It was the centre of learning and had a religious affiliation to it.
- ✓ When there were no educational institutions, the Gotul used to be an educational and cultural centre. It inculcated integrity and uniqueness among all the members of the Gotul.
- ✓ However, with time, the Gotul system had lost its originality.

- **Gondi Language:** The language spoken by the Gonds in their daily life, Gondi, a pre-Dravidian language

TRIBALS IN JHARKHAND

- The State may be merely two decades old, but Jharkhand, the land of the Chhotanagpur plateau, has been there forever. An early mention of the term 'Jharkhand' was found in the Sanskrit scriptures of India.
- Jharkhand was also shown by **Abul Fazl in his Ain-i-Akbari**, as the land between present Madhya Pradesh and Bihar. Interestingly, the Britishers never used the term 'Jharkhand' in administrative parlance.
- Even the word has not been part of the vocabulary of the ethnic tribals. It was in the resistance movements for the grant of Diwani to the East India Company that the colonial power was forced to demarcate the region as a separate administrative system, which gave birth to a separate identity of the region.
- The mineral-rich plateau is inhabited by different tribal populations, of which Santhals, Hos, Kharias, Mundas and Oraons are greater in number.
- Whereas, **Oraons**, the most populous tribal groups in north-east India, are considered to be related to **proto-Australoid** and have been inhabiting the land since the pre-Dravidian era.
- On the other hand, the Santhal society has the most primitive caste system among the oldest tribes of India. They are also one of the largest tribal groups in India.
- Many of the agricultural implements mentioned in Vedic literature viz. *langala*, or *hala* (plough) and *kuddala* (spade), are of the etymological origin of the Munda tribe, which is the agriculturist tribal group.

CENTRAL ASSISTANCE FOR WELFARE OF SCHEDULED TRIBES

The Government presently makes the bulk of its contribution for ST welfare through **Scheduled Tribe Component (STC)** whereby many Ministries under Gol make fund provisions exclusively for tribal welfare.

Scheduled Tribe Component or Development Action Plan for STS (STC or DAPST)

- Before 2017-18, funds from the Central Government were being earmarked by the Ministries/Departments against their plan allocation under the broad strategy of the **Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP)** as per the criteria recommended by a Task Force in 2010, constituted by the erstwhile Planning Commission.
- In the new Budgeting System, 2017-18, after the **merger of Plan and non-Plan funds**, TSP was renamed as '**Development Action Plan for STS' (DAPST), or Scheduled Tribe Component (STC)**.
- Some of the important Central Sector and Centrally Sponsored Schemes/Provisions for tribal welfare are:
 - ✓ **Special Central Assistance to Tribal Sub-Plan or Tribal Sub-Scheme of States:** given by the Central Government to States to support their efforts in bridging the gap.
 - ✓ **Grant-in-aid under Article 275(1):** Grants-in-aid from the Union to certain States, charged on the Consolidated Fund of India, are provided to promote the welfare of the STs in that State or raise the level of administration of the Scheduled Tribes' Areas to that of the administration of the remaining area of the State.
 - ✓ **Scholarship and Fellowship schemes:** The Central Government has made provisions for scholarships to Scheduled Tribe students of the country which are available at various levels of education, viz. pre-matric education and post-matric education.
 - ✓ **Special Fund for Protection of PVTG - Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs)** are those tribal communities with a pre-agriculture level of technological expertise, a stagnant or declining population, an extremely low level of literacy, and a subsistence economy.
 - ✓ **Around 75 such PVTGs have been identified by the Government** of India in 18 States and the priority is to accord protection and improvement in the social indicators like livelihood, health, nutrition, and education to improve their situation.
 - ✓ **National Scheduled Tribes Finance and Development Corporation:** The Public Sector Undertaking under the Ministry of Tribal Affairs extends concessional loans to eligible ST persons for undertaking income generation activities or self-employment as per the norms.
 - ✓ **Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS)** - The Centre is giving much emphasis to the development of Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS), for filling the gap in the education of tribal children.
- Further, to celebrate the contributions and sacrifices of tribal freedom fighters, the Centre announced to commemorate **15th November as 'Janjatiya Gaurav Diwas'** which is the birth anniversary of tribal leader Birsa Munda.
- Understanding the rights of the tribals on forest produce, Gol has recently given stress on the **establishment of Agro/Forest/Natural resource-based micro industries**.
- A recently launched scheme to provide a mechanism for marketing of minor forest produce through the development of a value chain through MSP is called '**Van Dhan Vikas Karyakram**'.
 - ✓ It essentially imparts training to the tribals in marketing their minor forest produce and in developing value chain components.

United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

- Recognizing their skills to sustainably use local, cultural and natural resources forging a balanced nature-culture relationship, in 2007, the **UN General Assembly adopted the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples**.
- This Declaration establishes a universal framework of minimum standards for the survival, dignity and well-being of the indigenous peoples of the world, and elaborates on existing human rights standards and fundamental freedoms as they apply to the specific situation of indigenous peoples.
- It is estimated that there are more than 476 million indigenous people in the world, spread across 90 countries and representing 5000 different cultures.
- They make up **6.2 per cent of the global population** and live in all geographic regions.
 - ✓ The cultures and diversity of indigenous people in India are fascinating. Roughly 104 million people, which is 8.6 per cent of the national population, live in such communities.
- **A World Bank Report on indigenous peoples** states that, While Indigenous Peoples own, occupy, or use a quarter of the world's surface area, they safeguard 80 per cent of the world's remaining biodiversity. They hold vital ancestral knowledge and expertise on how to adapt, mitigate, and reduce climate and disaster risks.

The Adis of Arunachal Pradesh

- The Adis constitute one of the numerous indigenous communities of Arunachal Pradesh. Adis speak the Sino-Tibetan language. They are traditionally nature worshippers and follow the faith of Donyi-Polo.
- All their resources come from the forests which they also protect as their life source.
- Adis live in typical raised houses which are usually rectangular and are built on stilts. These traditional houses are constructed with different types of bamboos, woods, canes, leaves, etc., and no nails are used in their construction.

The Tangsas of Arunachal Pradesh

- The Tangsa community inhabit the Changlang district of eastern Arunachal Pradesh, located in the lap of Patkai hills.
- One of the most fascinating practices that they actively continue till date is that of **indigenous bamboo tea-making**. The Tangsas along with the Singphos, are believed to be the original tea-makers in India, much before the British introduced it commercially.
- The staple diet of Tangsas and their traditional cuisine consisting of rice, meat, and fish are all cooked in bamboo tubes directly placed on fire.

The Kalbelias of Rajasthan

- Kalbelia is a unique community of traditional **snake-charmers by profession**. They belong to the family of Navnaths, a nomadic community from the Yogi sect.
- The masters or Gurus of Kalbelia song, music and dance, who live in Chopasni are Kalunath Kalbelia, Appanath Kalbelia, Asha Sapera, Suwa Devi, and Samda Sapera.
 - ✓ Kalunath is considered a living legend of this folk-art form.
- Since the enactment of the Wildlife Act of 1972 and subsequent ban on snake-handling, the Kalbelias have lost their traditional profession and pursued their performing art for their livelihoods.

- The striking features of their gorgeous costumes with swirling movements of the dancers and **snake-like movements make Kalbelia** one of the most stunning folk dance forms.
- Kalbelia is **inscribed in the UNESCO 2003 Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage** of Humanity.

The Rajbongshis of West Bengal

- Rajbongshi is an indigenous community living in West Bengal, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya and various North Eastern parts of India.
- Rajbongshis have diverse a repertoire of indigenous art forms such as Bamboo and Dhokra crafts, performing arts like **Gomira Dance** (Mukha Nach) and the **satirical folk drama, Khon**.
- **Gomira dance**, locally known as **Mukha Nach**, is a form of ritualistic dance or musical folk theatre, practised by this community by putting on Gomira wooden masks of different forms of deities.
- Every village organises at least one Gomira dance festival customarily during the months of Chaitra-Ashad (April-July), at a central location, which is usually the village temple. Gomira dance is mainly organised to appease the village deity, Goddess Chandi, and usher in her blessings.
- **Dhokra or jute mat** weaving is an indigenous tradition practised by the Rajbongshi women.
- The Rajbongshi community also practises a **satirical improvisational folk drama called Khon**, which is believed to be a nearly 200 years old traditional art form.
- Stories are based on local incidents which are dramatised with a comical style of presentation. **Khon songs are said to have evolved from Ramayana songs**.
- The uniqueness of Khon is that there is usually no pre-written script.
- The art form has been integral to local festivals and rituals.