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Namath Basai, a big hit among Kerala tribal children

The Kerala State government is carrying out a unique programme called “**Namath Basai**” of **teaching tribal children in their mother tongue.**



Key Points

- The programme is being implemented by the Samagra Shiksha Kerala (SSK).
 - SSK is an overarching programme for the school education sector extending from pre-school to class 12.
 - It aims at improving school effectiveness measured in terms of equal opportunities for schooling and equitable learning outcomes.
- It has succeeded in retaining **hundreds of tribal children in their online classes** using their mother tongue as language of instruction.

- Teaching in the tribal language has to a good extent stopped students from dropping out, which is quite usual in hamlets
- It offers pre-recorded classes through a YouTube channel in three tribal languages in **Attappady** valley in Palakkad District Kerala.
 - These languages belong to the **Irula, Muduka and Kurumba tribes**.
- It is being introduced in the tribal belts of Wayanad and Idukki as well. Classes are offered in the Oorali, Muthuvan and Paniya languages in Idukki.
 - Wayanad has the highest number of tribals in Kerala followed by Idukki.

Kurumba Tribe

- Popularly known as Mala Pulayans, Hill Pulayans and Pamba Pulayans.
- Traditional occupation : Foraging and shifting cultivation
 - Collect forest products like honey, wax, soapnut, turmeric, ginger and wild cardamoms.
 - Art of **body tattooing**.
 - Skilled in manufacture of baskets and mats
- **Religion: Animism** (belief in spirituality of objects, places, and creatures) and **Totemism** (Worship of any species of plants or animals thought to possess supernatural powers)

Irula or Irular Tribe

- **Occupation:** Agriculturists

- Grow Paddy, Ragi, dhal, plantains, chillies and turmeric
- **Religion:** The majority worship **Vishnu** under the name of Rangaswami and Siva without differentiation.
 - Some practice **animism** and worship the tiger.

Mudugars or Muduka

- Have social divisions at kal (clan) level.
- **Traditional Occupation:** Food gatherers and hunters.
- **Religion: Hinduism**
 - Worship Shiva