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## PAPER - 1

### PHYSICAL & ARCHAEOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY

#### 1. Over 57,000 Years Old – Scientists Discover Oldest Known Neanderthal Cave Engravings

- Finger marks on a cave wall in France were created prior to the arrival of *Homo sapiens* in the region.
- According to a recent study published in the journal *PLOS ONE* by Jean-Claude Marquet and colleagues from the University of Tours, France, the oldest engravings made by Neanderthals have been discovered on a cave wall in France.
- Over the past few decades, research has shed light on the cultural sophistication of Neanderthals. However, our understanding of their symbolic and artistic expression remains limited.
- Only a short list of symbolic productions is attributed to Neanderthals, and the interpretation of these is often the subject of debate. In this study, Marquet and colleagues identified markings on a cave wall in France as the oldest known Neanderthal engravings.
- The cave is La Roche-Cotard in the Centre-Val de Loire of France, where a series of non-figurative markings on the wall are interpreted as finger-flutings, marks made by human hands.
- The researchers made a plotting analysis and used photogrammetry to create 3D models of these markings, comparing them with known and experimental human markings.
- Based on the shape, spacing, and arrangement of these engravings, the team concluded that they are deliberate, organized, and intentional shapes created by human hands.
- The team also dated cave sediments with optically-stimulated luminescence dating, determining that the cave became closed off by infilling sediment around 57,000 years ago, well before *Homo sapiens* became established in the region.
- The authors add: “Fifteen years after the resumption of excavations at the La Roche-Cotard site, the engravings have been dated to over 57,000 years ago and, thanks to stratigraphy, probably to around 75,000 years ago, making

this the oldest decorated cave in France, if not Europe!"

## 2. Key role of ice age cycles in early human interbreeding

- Recent paleogenomic research revealed that interbreeding was common among early human species. However, little was known about when, where, and how often this hominin interbreeding took place.
- Using paleoanthropological evidence, genetic data, and supercomputer simulations of past climate, a team of international researchers has found that interglacial climates and corresponding shifts in vegetation created common habitats for Neanderthals and Denisovans, increasing their chances for interbreeding and gene flow in parts of Europe and central Asia.
- A study published in *Science* indicates that climatic shifts over the past 400,000 years have influenced Neanderthal and Denisovan interbreeding.
- Recent paleogenomic research revealed that interbreeding was common among early human species. However, little was known about when, where, and how often this hominin interbreeding took place.
- Using paleoanthropological evidence, genetic data, and supercomputer simulations of past climate, a team of international researchers has found that interglacial climates and corresponding shifts in vegetation created common habitats for Neanderthals and Denisovans, increasing their chances for interbreeding and gene flow in parts of Europe and central Asia.
- Contemporary humans carry in their cells a small amount of DNA derived from Neanderthals and Denisovans. "Denny," a 90,000-year-old fossil individual, recently identified as the daughter of a Denisovan father and a Neanderthal mother, bears testimony to the possibility that interbreeding was quite common among early human species. But when, where, and at what frequency did this interbreeding take place?
- The researchers found that Neanderthals and Denisovans had different environmental preferences to start with.
- While Denisovans were much more adapted to colder environments, such as the boreal forests and the tundra region in northeastern Eurasia, their Neanderthal cousins preferred the warmer temperate forests and grasslands in the southwest.
- However, shifts in the Earth's orbit led to changes in climatic conditions and hence vegetation patterns. This triggered the migration of both these hominin species towards geographically overlapping habitats, thus increasing the chance of their interbreeding.
- "Pronounced climate-driven zonal shifts in the main overlap region of

Denisovans and Neanderthals in central Eurasia, which can be attributed to the response of climate and vegetation to past variations in atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> and northern hemisphere ice-sheet volume, influenced the timing and intensity of potential interbreeding events," remarks senior author Axel Timmermann, Director, ICCP and Professor at Pusan National University, South Korea.

- In summary, the study shows that climate-mediated events have played a crucial role in facilitating gene flow among early human species and have left lasting impressions on the genomic ancestry of modern-day humans.

### 3. How ancient, recurring climate changes may have shaped human evolution

- Shifting habitats implicate a disputed ancestor in the rise of *Homo sapiens* and Neandertals. Recurring climate changes may have orchestrated where *Homo* species lived over the last 2 million years and how humankind evolved.
- Ups and downs in temperature, rainfall and plant growth promoted ancient hominid migrations within and out of Africa that fostered an ability to survive in unfamiliar environments, say climate physicist and oceanographer Axel Timmermann and colleagues.
- Based on how the timing of ancient climate variations matched up with the comings and goings of different fossil *Homo* species, the researchers generated a novel – and controversial – outline of human evolution. Timmermann, of Pusan National University in Busan, South Korea, and his team present that scenario April 13 in *Nature*.
- Then, after traveling north to Eurasia, *H. heidelbergensis* possibly gave rise to Denisovans around 430,000 years ago, the researchers say. And in central Europe, harsh habitats created by recurring ice ages spurred the evolution of *H. heidelbergensis* into Neandertals between 400,000 and 300,000 years ago. Finally, in southern Africa between 310,000 and 200,000 years ago, increasingly harsh environmental conditions accompanied a transition from *H. heidelbergensis* to *H. sapiens*, who later moved out of Africa.
- The new scenario derives from a computer simulation of the probable climate over the last 2 million years, in 1,000-year intervals, across Africa, Asia and Europe. The researchers then examined the relationship between simulated predictions of what ancient habitats were like in those regions and the dates of known hominid fossil and archaeological sites. Those sites range in age from around 2 million to 30,000 years old.

- The new habitat simulations also indicate that *H. sapiens* was particularly good at adjusting to hot, dry regions, such as northeastern Africa and the Arabian Peninsula.
- It has proven difficult to show more definitively that ancient environmental changes caused transitions in hominid evolution.
- For instance, a previous proposal that abrupt climate shifts resulted in rainy, resource-rich stretches of southern Africa's coast, creating conditions where *H. sapiens* then evolved still lacks sufficient climate, fossil and other archaeological evidence.
- The new findings need to be compared with long-term environmental records at several well-studied fossil sites in Africa and East Asia before rendering a verdict on variability selection, Potts says.
- The new model "provides a great framework" to evaluate ideas such as variability selection, says paleoclimatologist Rachel Lupien of Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory in Palisades, N.Y.
- That's especially true, Lupien says, if researchers can specify whether climate and ecosystem changes that played out over tens or hundreds of years were closely linked to ancient *Homo* migrations.

#### 4. Forensic Anthropology in a Changing Climate

- In 2018, a wildfire swept through Northern California. Forensic anthropologists were called in to identify skeletal remains in a devastated recovery scene.
- The devastating effects of this fire are inextricably tied to both climate change and behavior. The western United States has experienced warmer temperatures and prolonged dry seasons with interspersed winter rain that serves to increase the fuel load through plant growth.
- These climatic variables coupled with increased development in once rural areas set the stage for wildfires to have a devastating impact, with
- They can also explore the global impacts of climate change on human migration and conflict.
- Through our combined efforts, anthropologists are in an excellent position to assist in the immediate mitigation of challenges as well as speak to past climate change, biological impacts, and the cultural consequences of this devastating global crisis.
- Forensic anthropologists are increasingly being called on for their skills to assist in mass fatality incidents. With escalating devastation related to



climate change and human behavior, demand will only continue to grow.

- For example, in some cases animal remains such as pets or other wildlife were found in the same area as cow bones from a kitchen refrigerator or deer antlers used as home decoration.
- It was important for recovery teams to quickly identify material as nonhuman remains and be able to move to the next area of interest. Once human remains were identified, anthropologists were embedded with coroner, sheriff, or search and rescue units to assist in the recovery
- Each of these skills supports efficient recovery efforts as well as providing necessary documentation to assist in subsequent osteological analyses. Forensic anthropologists were also involved in overall planning and logistics to support recovery efforts, including helping to manage individual teams from the incident command center.

## 5. Endogamy may be the cause of the Persistence of harmful genetic variants in India

- A study by Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology, Hyderabad has recently found causes of cardiac failure at younger ages in the Indian population.
- Deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) of such individuals lacked 25 base pairs in a gene crucial for the rhythmic beating of the heart (scientists call it a 25 base-pair deletion).

About 25 base pair deletions:

- 25 base pair deletion is a risk allele for late-onset left ventricular (LV) dysfunction, hypertrophy, and heart failure.
- A 25-base pair (25bp) deletion in the MYBPC3 gene is enriched in South Asians, being unique to the Indian and Southeast Asian population and not found elsewhere.
- This affects about 4% of the Indian population.

Key findings of the study:

Genetic differences among populations:



- Whole-genome sequencing of individuals from India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh found genetic differences between people from different regions of the subcontinent.
- These genetic differences were even found at the level of smaller geographies within India.
- There was little mixing between individuals from different communities.
- Endogamous practices (including caste-based, region-based, and consanguineous marriages) in the subcontinent are responsible for such conserved genetic patterns at the community level.
- In ideal conditions, there would have been random mating in a population, leading to greater genetic diversity and lower frequency of variants linked to disorders.
- The cultural aspects of Indians might need mending to improve the population's health.

#### About Human Genome Sequencing:

- The Human Genome Project (HGP) was an international scientific research project for determining the base pairs that make up human DNA, and identifying, mapping, and sequencing all of the genes of the human genome.
- It was started in 1990 and was completed in 2003.
- The human genome has approximately 3.1 billion base pairs.
- There are approximately 22,300 protein-coding genes in human beings.

#### Significance of the study:

- The study of sequenced human genes was helpful to identify the genetic variants that increase the risk for common diseases like cancer and diabetes.
- The study has shown that identifying unique genetic variants can help develop interventions for major health concerns.

## **SOCIO – CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY**

1. 'Animism' recognizes how animals, places and plants have power over humans – and it's finding renewed interest around the world

- A movement known as “new animism,” which seeks to secure personhood rights for nonhuman beings through legal means, is gaining a following around the globe.
- New animist environmental activists are not the only ones using the term. Animism itself has become fashionable. Some spirituality bloggers talk about animism as a way to deepen one’s spiritual relationship to nature.
- The term animism was coined by an early anthropologist, Edward Burnett Tylor, in 1870. Tylor argued that Darwin’s ideas of evolution could be applied to human societies; he classified religions according to their level of development.
- He defined animism as a belief in souls: the existence of human souls after death, but also the belief that entities Western perspectives deemed inanimate, like mountains, rivers and trees, had souls.
- Why, then, are environmental activists embracing this concept Animism is not a religion one can convert to but rather a label used for worldviews and practices that acknowledge relationships between nature and the animal world that have power over humans and must be respected.
- These practices can be religious rituals, but they can also be forms of environmental care, farming practices or protests
- Additionally, when Indigenous practices are labeled animist religion, it is easy to overlook the very real biological and ecological scientific knowledge of these communities.
- Animist practices are as variable as the peoples and places engaging in such relationships. Indigenous and animist perspectives illustrate that there are many different relationships possible between humans and the world around them, and many environmentalists are finding these alternatives instructive, despite the troubled history of the term.

## 2. Shattering the myth of men as hunters and women as gatherers

- Analysis of data from dozens of foraging societies around the world shows that women hunt in at least 79 percent of these societies, opposing the widespread belief that men exclusively hunt and women exclusively gather.
- A common belief holds that, among foraging populations, men have typically hunted animals while women gathered plant products for food.

- However, mounting archaeological evidence from across human history and prehistory is challenging this paradigm; for instance, women in many societies have been found buried alongside big-game hunting tools.
- Some researchers have suggested that women's role as hunters was confined to the past, with more recent foraging societies following the paradigm of men as hunters and women as gatherers.
- To investigate that possibility, Anderson and colleagues analyzed data from the past 100 years on 63 foraging societies around the world, including societies in North and South America, Africa, Australia, Asia, and the Oceanic region.
- These findings suggest that, in many foraging societies, women are skilled hunters and play an instrumental role in the practice, adding to the evidence opposing long-held perceptions about gender roles in foraging societies.
- The authors note that these stereotypes have influenced previous archaeological studies, with, for instance, some researchers reluctant to interpret objects buried with women as hunting tools. They call for reevaluation of such evidence and caution against misapplying the idea of men as hunters and women as gatherers in future research.
- The authors add: "Evidence from around the world shows that women participate in subsistence hunting in the majority of cultures."

### 3. Combat or Climate: The Real Cause of Small-Scale Societies' Collapse

- A new study concludes that social fragmentation and aggressive conflicts were instrumental in molding the population dynamics of early farming society during the Neolithic period in Europe.
- The enigma that researchers have been trying to decipher for years is why Neolithic farmer communities experience periods of rapid growth and decline, encompassing instances of "collapses" where entire regions are abandoned.
- According to one common explanation, climate fluctuations are the main driver, but empirical tests do not fully support this claim.
- Previous simulations for this period have been conducted by dividing the area into a few large regions, but we wanted to examine interactions at the village level," explains CSH scientist Dániel Kondor, who's the first author of the study.
- In the study, the researchers focused on the period from the first evidence of agriculture in Europe to the beginning of the Bronze Age - between 7000 BCE and 3000 BCE.

- The simulation begins with each small unit of the map either empty or occupied by a village of independent farmers.
- The simulation combines two components: population change in each unit based on climate variability during the time period; and interactions, which include populations in each unit splitting, migrating, or coming into conflict with each other.
- Based on the study's findings, climate variation is not capable of explaining boom-bust dynamics during the time period.
- In contrast, simulations taking into account the social conflict produced patterns similar to those observed in radiocarbon dating.
- "Additionally, the study indicates that humans and their interactions, whether friendly or violent, form a complex system, regardless of their political or economic organization.
- It doesn't matter if you don't want to organize into a state, you are still affected by your neighbors and their neighbors as well," adds Kondor.

#### 4. Resilient Roots: Study Shows How Ancestors Thrived Amid Climate Shifts



- New research conducted by an international team, published in the journal *Science*, reveals that early human species were capable of adapting to a variety of landscapes and food resources.
- This adaptability would have strengthened our ancestors' resilience against historical climate changes.
- Our genus *Homo* evolved over the past 3 million years - a period of increasing warm/cold climate fluctuations.

- The mystery of how early human species adjusted to these intensified climate extremes, ice ages, and sweeping changes in landscapes and vegetation continues to baffle scientists.
- Eventually, *H. sapiens* emerged around 200,000 years ago in Africa, quickly becoming the master of all trades.
- Mobile, flexible, and competitive, our direct ancestors, unlike any other species before, survived in harsh environments such as deserts and tundra.
- When further looking into the preferred landscape characteristics, the scientists found a significant clustering of early human occupation sites in regions with increased biome diversity.
- The climate and vegetation model simulations, which cover the Earth's history of the past 3 million years, were conducted on one of South Korea's fastest science supercomputers named Aleph. "Supercomputing is now emerging as a key tool in evolutionary biology and anthropology," said Axel Timmermann.

#### 5. 300,000-Year-Old Weapon Reveals Early Humans Were Woodworking Masters

- New research on a 300,000-year-old throwing stick reveals advanced woodworking techniques among early humans, suggesting communal hunting practices involving the whole community.
- The artifact, demonstrating high craftsmanship, indicates early humans' deep knowledge of wood properties. Newly conducted research has revealed that early humans were proficient masters of woodworking.
- This insight came from the detailed analysis of a 300,000-year-old double-pointed wooden throwing stick, discovered three decades ago in Schöningen, Germany. Research indicates that the stick was meticulously scraped, seasoned, and sanded before being used for hunting, suggesting a more advanced level of early human woodworking skills than previously believed.

#### Intimate Connection Between the Tool and Its User

- The fine surface, carefully shaped points, and polish from handling suggest this was a piece of personal kit with repeated use, rather than a quickly made tool that was carelessly discarded.
- Principal investigator Thomas Terberger said: "The systematic analysis of the wooden finds of the Schöningen site financed by the German Research

Foundation provides valuable new insights and further exciting information on these early wooden weapons can be expected soon.”

#### 6. In affidavit in SC, Centre defends exclusion of Dalit Christians, Dalit Muslims from scheduled castes' list

- The Centre has defended the exclusion of Dalit Christians and Dalit Muslims from the list of scheduled castes, saying historical data shows no backwardness or oppression was ever faced by them
- The Centre has defended the exclusion of Dalit Christians and Dalit Muslims from the list of scheduled castes, saying historical data shows no backwardness or oppression was ever faced by them.
- The ministry also submitted that the identification of scheduled castes is centred around a specific social stigma that is limited to the communities identified in the Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order, 1950.
- The Constitution (Scheduled Caste) Order, 1950, "does not suffer from any unconstitutionality inasmuch as the exclusion of Christianity or Islam was due to the reason that the oppressive system of untouchability that leads to economic and social backwardness of some Hindu castes was not prevalent in Christian or Islamic societies", the affidavit said.
- The Order "was based on historical data which clearly established that no such backwardness or oppression was ever faced by members of Christian or Islamic society", it said.
- "In fact, one of the reasons for which people from scheduled castes have been converting to religions like Islam or Christianity is so that they can come out of the oppressive system of untouchability which is not prevalent at all in Christianity or Islam," the affidavit said.



## PAPER - 2

### INDIAN & TRIBAL ANTHROPOLOGY

#### 1. Baiga Woman Turns Hut Into 'Beej Bank' for 150+ Rare Millets, Named Brand Ambassador

- Lahari Bai, a Baiga tribal woman from Madhya Pradesh, was declared the brand ambassador for the 'International Year of The Millet'. So far, she has conserved over 150 varieties of rare millet seeds in her beej bank.
- After getting lessons from her grandmother on the health benefits of millet, the grain that has started disappearing, Lahari Bai dedicated her life to preserving its seeds.
- She belongs to the *Baiga* (healer) tribal community, a particularly vulnerable tribal group (PVTG) in Madhya Pradesh. It is believed that the people from this tribe possess a deep knowledge of their environment and its biodiversity, which they pass on from one generation to the next through oral traditions.

#### The voice of millet

- Millet is a storehouse of nutrition, rich in protein, fibre, and abundant vitamins.
- Their consumption helps protect cardiovascular health, prevent diabetes, and lose weight. The tribal woman, who never went to school, understood the importance of conserving these seeds long ago.
- "These are *taakat wala anaaj* (the powerhouse of nutrition). People do not get sick after their regular consumption. It saves them from the expense of medicines," she says.
- The *Baiga* woman leads a simple life with her old parents in a two-room mud house in her village that has no network connectivity.
- The family uses one room as the living room and kitchen. Their clothes are hung on a wooden pin in one corner, and in another corner is a *chulha* (stove) arranged along with a few utensils and all their belongings. The second room of the mud house is dedicated to storing varieties of millet seeds.
- Lahari is very enthusiastic about her work. Her *beej* bank is praiseworthy," says Vikas, who is also promoting millet by organising cookery shows,



where women make cakes, pastries, and biscuits from millet, and also process them into healthy soups.

## 2. Chenchu tribals

Recently, the Chenchu tribals, joined the drive to make Nallamala forests of Andhra Pradesh free of plastic.

- Eco-tourism, nature trails, jungle safaris and wildlife tourism brought the menace of plastic pollution.
- The native Chenchu tribals have been roped in for a drive to become the green warriors of the Nallamala forests of Andhra Pradesh.

Chenchu tribals:-

- The Chenchu are a tiny migratory forest tribe from
- They migrate over the state lines of Andhra Pradesh and Odisha in search of work.
- They are a Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG).
  - PVTG: is a sub-classification of a Scheduled Tribe or section of a Scheduled Tribe that is considered more vulnerable than a regular Scheduled Tribe.
- Language: they talk in the Chenchu language, a member of the Dravidian language family.
- Dravidian languages family: a language family spoken by people, mainly in southern India, northeast Sri Lanka, and south-west Pakistan.
  - It includes Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, and Malayalam.
- Distribution: They are forest dwellers whose hamlets or Pentas dot the Nallamala forest range spread across four to five districts in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh states.
  - They dwell in little homes with wattle dividers that look like colonies.
  - They are magnificent climbers.
- Features: they are low in height, with a long head, clear-cut foreheads, and a level nose.
  - Their coloring goes from wheat dark to brown, and they have ebony wavy hair.
- Occupation: Their traditional way of life has been based on hunting and gathering.

- They make leaf cups and leaf plates out of tobacco leaves, tamarind, and mahua flowers and sell them in the local market.
- They also make use of the mahua flower in making the liquor.
- They are also master bamboo cutters and honey catchers.

### Nallamala Forest Area

- They are the largest stretches of undisturbed forest in South India, apart from the Western Ghats.
- Location: It is located in Nallamala Hills, which is a part of the Eastern Ghats.
  - It lies south of the Krishna River.
  - Nallamala Forest Reserve is located in the Nallamala Ranges of the Eastern Ghats.
- A part of the forest reserve belongs to the Nagarjunsagar-Srisaïlam Tiger Reserve which is the largest Tiger Reserve in India.
- Climate: It has a warm to hot climate throughout the year.
  - Summer is especially hot and winters are mostly cool and dry.
  - It gets most of its rain during the South West monsoon.
- Vegetation: Tropical dry deciduous.
- Fauna: tigers, leopards, such as black buck, wild hog, peacock, pangolin, Indian Python King Cobras and several rare bird species.

### 3. Zo peoples of Manipur & Mizoram

Mizoram chief minister called for peace in Manipur, saying the situation had only "worsened."

#### Zo people

- The Zo peoples include all tribes of the Chin-Kuki-Mizo ethnic group spread across Myanmar, India, and Bangladesh, along with many sub-tribes and clans such as the Chin, Kuki, Mizo, Lushei, etc. based on geographic distribution.
- In North-Eastern India, they are present in Tripura, Nagaland, Mizoram, Manipur, Meghalaya and Assam.

Chin homeland:

- The Chin Hills, or Indo-Chin hill ranges, is a thickly forested region with an elevation of 2,100-3,000 metres in northwestern Myanmar.
- The Hills are home to a large number of tribes that come under the Zo umbrella.

About Zo people of North-East India:

- Manipur's Kuki-Zomi peoples come under the larger umbrella of the Zo ethnic tribes, one of the largest of which are the Lushei of Mizoram.
- The tribes are believed to have migrated from China through Tibet to settle in Myanmar, and speak a group of Tibeto-Burman languages.
- Constant feuds among the tribal clans and their kings (chieftains) drove many of the clans westward to modern-day Mizoram and parts of Manipur in the 17th century.
- They settled in new villages, but even so, remained socially and emotionally enmeshed with the Chin tribes of Myanmar.
- Apart from ethnicity and religion, the tribes are knit together by Christianity.
- The Kuki-Zomi of Manipur share the history and memories of the violent Mizo nationalist movement of the 1960s.

Zo reunification:

- The movement for "Zo reunification" has largely petered out in the face of the political implausibility.
- It has carved out areas from Manipur and Tripura, and from Arakan in Myanmar and the Chittagong Hills of Bangladesh, to integrate with Mizoram.

#### **4. Rajasthan's Kalbeliya Dance**

- Recently, at the Rajasthan International Folk Festival, performers showcased the Kalbeliya dance.
- Kalbeliya Dance is a traditional Indian dance form that originated in the state of Rajasthan.
- It is a vibrant, energetic dance that is performed by members of the Kalbeliya, a nomadic tribe of snake charmers in Rajasthan.
- It is a highly sensuous dance, with the dancers performing intricate footwork and swaying movement of their arms and body.

- In 2010, the Kalbelia folk songs and dances of Rajasthan were declared a part of its Intangible Heritage List by the UNESCO.

#### Performance details

- The dancers are women in flowing black skirts who dance and twirl, replicating the movements of a serpent.
- They wear an upper body cloth called an anrakhi and a headcloth known as the odhani; the lower body cloth is called a lehenga.
- All these clothes are of mixed red and black hues and embroidered.
- The male participants play musical instruments, such as the 'pungi', the duffli, been, the khanjari – a percussion instrument, morchang, khuralio and the dholak to create the rhythm on which the dancers perform.
- The dancers are tattooed in traditional designs and wear jewelry and garments richly embroidered with small mirrors and silver threads.
- As the performance progresses, the rhythm becomes faster and faster and so does the dance.

#### Features of the Kalbeliya Dance

- Rapid footwork: The fast, intricate footwork of the Kalbeliya dance is the highlight of this folk dance. The dancers move their feet in quick, sharp movements that form intricate patterns on the floor.
- Swirling skirts: The colorful skirts of the female dancers swirl gracefully as they move, adding to the beauty of the dance.
- Hand and arm movements: The dancers use their hands and arms to create graceful, fluid movements that are integral to the dance.
- Singing: Kalbeliya dancers often sing along to the music as they dance, adding to the atmosphere of the performance.
- Cymbals and drums: Traditional Kalbeliya music is accompanied by drums and cymbals, which help to create a lively, energizing atmosphere.

#### □ Kalbeliya Tribe:

- Kalbeliya tribe people were once professional snake handlers, today they evoke their former occupation in music and dance that is evolving in new and creative ways.
- They live a nomadic life and belong to the scheduled tribes.

- The largest number of the population of Kalbeliyas is in Pali district, then Ajmer, Chittorgarh and Udaipur district (Rajasthan).

## 5. Delimitation Commission for Tribal Communities

- The Supreme Court recently asked the government to set up fresh Delimitation Commission for ensuring a proportional representation of the Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs).

Why did the Supreme Court ask for a Delimitation Commission?

- The Supreme Court (SC) held the plea for proportionate representation of the Limbu and Tamang tribal communities in the assemblies of Sikkim and West Bengal.
- It asked the government to set up the delimitation panel as it cannot direct Parliament to amend or make laws for proper representation to other communities that form part of the STs.
- This would lead to addition in the reservation and the judiciary intervening into the legislative domain, against Article 50 of the Constitution.

Constitutional and legal mandates for proportional representation of STs:

- Additional seats have to be made available in the state Assembly of West Bengal for the Scheduled Tribes in order to accommodate the principle of proportional representation.
- The Union government must take recourse to power under the Delimitation Act, 2002 to ensure that the provisions under articles 332 and 333 of the Constitution are duly implemented.
- It had said the demand of the communities for the grant of proportional representation has a constitutional foundation, which can be found in articles 330, 332 and 14.
- Article 330: Reservation of seats for SCs and STs in the House of People.
- Article 332: Reservation of seats for SCs and STs in legislative assemblies of states.
- Article 333: Representation of the Anglo-Indian community in *About the Tribes of West Bengal and Sikkim*:
- Population of the Limbu and Tamang communities in Sikkim was 20.6% in 2001 and had risen to 33.8% in 2011.

- The ST population rose to 21.5% in 2011 from 12.69% in 2001 in Darjeeling area of West Bengal.

#### Limbu Tribe:

- The second numerous tribe of the indigenous people called Kiranti, who live in Nepal (east of Arun River) and Indian states of Sikkim, West Bengal, and Assam.
- They are of Mongolian origin and speak Kiranti group of Tibeto-Burman languages using the Kirat-Sirijonga script, believed to be invented in the 9th century.
- They built stone houses surrounded by dry-cultivated fields of rice, wheat, corn and cattle.
- Divided into patrilineal clans, the families are led by a headman, or subba, who is often a returned Gurkha soldier and follow Tibetan Buddhism under chief god, Niwa Buma.

#### Tamang Tribe:

- It is the largest ethnic group predominantly based in Nepal, but some communities reside in Sikkim and Darjeeling District, West Bengal, migrating from Tibet around 3000 years ago.
- They are mostly farmers and grow millet, corn, potatoes, wheat and barley along with cattle.
- Their territory was controlled with the kiptat land system, where a clan had permanent communal rights over its settlement and cultivation area but later abolished.
- They celebrate Tamang New Year in Sonam Lhochhar Festival, Saga Dawa- the holiest Buddhist festival and Dashain in September-October based on Nepal Sambat calendar.

### **6. PM-JANMAN Scheme for PVTG's**

- A recent announcement of the Pradhan Mantri-Janjati Adivasi Nyaya Maha Abhiyan (PM-JANMAN) aims to address the developmental needs of PVTGs with a substantial financial allocation.

#### Issues:

- Population Contradictions:

- Discrepancies in population data between the Tribal Affairs Ministry and the Census data raise concerns.
- The State-wise Census data indicated a 40% decline in PVTG numbers in nine States and Union Territories.
- PVTG Distribution:
  - PVTGs are present in 18 States and Union Territories, with Odisha having the highest number.
  - The last comprehensive Census in 2001 reported around 27.6 lakh PVTG individuals.

#### Significance:

- PM-JANMAN Scheme:
  - A 24,000 crore initiative to uplift PVTGs by providing basic facilities like roads, power, housing, and connectivity.
  - Aims to address the specific needs of 22,000 PVTG villages across India.
- Development Mission Goals:
  - Allocation includes building pucca homes, constructing roads, providing water, medical units, anganwadi centers, hostels, and more.
  - Emphasis on vocational and skill training, forest produce trading, solar power, and street lights.
- Presidential Involvement:
  - President Droupadi Murmu's special interest in overseeing plans demonstrates high-level commitment.
- As announced in the Budget Speech 2023-24 to improve socio-economic conditions of the Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs), Pradhan Mantri PVTG of Development Mission will be launched.
- This will saturate PVTG households and habitations with basic facilities such as safe housing, clean drinking water and sanitation, improved access to education, health and nutrition, road and telecom connectivity, and sustainable livelihood opportunities.
- An amount of Rs.15,000 crore will be made available to implement the Mission in the next three years under the Development Action Plan for the Scheduled Tribes (DAPST).
- India has ST population of 10.45 crore as per 2011 census, out of which 75 communities located in 18 States and the Union Territory of Andaman and Nicobar Islands have been categorized as Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs).



## 7. Gujjar, Bakerwals call off agitation against Paharis' ST status

- The centre's decision to grant ST status to Paharis, and other groups like the "Paddari tribe," "Kolis," and "Gadda Brahmans" has drawn the ire of the Gujjar-Bakerwal community, who are the third largest ethnic group in Jammu Kashmir, after Kashmiris and Dogras.

### Socio economic characteristics of these 'Communities'

- The Gujjar-Bakerwal tribes and the Pahari community share a similar social and cultural milieu and together form a majority in the Pir Panjal region.
- The Gujjars mostly live a nomadic life by shuttling between Kashmir and Jammu regions with their livestock of buffaloes, sheep and goats.
- On the other hand, Paharis are a socially stratified - a mostly financially well-off and culturally moored - community with caste and other ethnic divisions, who are joined by the thread of language.
- A delegation of Paharis met the Union home minister seeking ST status for the community. In January 2020, the Paharis were given a 4% reservation in the OBC category.
- The tribal group's contention is that the inclusion of these groups into the ST category is not justified as "these groups don't fit the criteria to fall into the ST category and upper castes can't be tribals."
- They contend that opportunities for education and employment may be lost due to the inclusion of Paharis and other castes in the ST category.
- They fear that if Paharis are given the ST status, they will have to compete for jobs, scholarships, and other benefits under the category that was previously their domain.

## 8. Hornbill Festival

- The United States of America, Germany, and Columbia are the country partners and Assam is the partner state for this year.

### About Hornbill Festival:

- The Hornbill Festival is an annual festival celebrated from 1 to 10 December in Nagaland.
- It represents all ethnic groups of Nagaland, thus also called the Festival of Festivals.
- It has been organised by the government of Nagaland since the year 2000.
- Aim: To encourage inter-ethnic interaction and to promote cultural heritage of Nagaland.
- The festival is named after the Indian hornbill but it is not the state bird of Nagaland.
  - State bird of Nagaland is the Blyth's tragopan, an endangered species of pheasant.

Hornbill is displayed in most of the state's tribes, tribal traditions, dances, and songs and symbolises fidelity, beauty, and grace in Naga folklore.

- The inaugural day of Hornbill Festival also coincides with Nagaland's statehood day.
  - Nagaland became the 16th state of the Indian Union on December 1, 1963.
- This festival ensures that locals make good money just before Christmas, which is biggest and most-anticipated festival of Nagaland.
  - 96% of its population is Christian.

### 9. Garo Dakmanda and Larnai pottery

Garo Dakmanda and Larnai pottery has recently received GI (Geographical Indication) tag.

#### About the Garo Dakmanda:

- The Garo Dakmanda is a handwoven, ankle-length lower garment that is part of the traditional attire of women of the Garo community in Meghalaya.
- It consists of a thick, unstitched cloth with a 6-10-inch border at the bottom.
- It is worn mostly on formal occasions as a wraparound skirt.
- It was traditionally woven from a long-staple cotton "khildig", which is native to the Garo hills.

- With time, it was made from fibres such as acrylic yarn or silk, particularly Mulberry, Eri and Muga silks.
- Its border typically features a woven pattern with concentric diamond shapes called the muikron, meaning “eye” in Garo.

About the Larnai pottery:



- The Larnai pottery is a traditional pottery produced in Jaintia Hills of Meghalaya.
- It is locally known as khiew larnai or khiew ranei.
- The 2 kinds of clay used are khyndew long (black Clay) which is obtained from Sung valley and khyndew khluit.
- The clay is mixed and then pounded using a wooden pounder known as synrai.
- The clay is then moulded and sundried.
- When the pots are ready, they are fired, after which they are coloured using the bark of the “Sohliya” tree.

## 10. Hatti Community

- Members of the Hatti community have demanded tribal status and given a seven-day ultimatum to the Himachal Pradesh government.

### Hatti Community:

- Hatti is a close-knit community, that derived their name from their traditional occupation of selling home-grown crops, vegetables, meat, and wool at markets known as 'haats'.
- Hatti men traditionally don a distinctive white headgear on ceremonial occasions.
- Over the years, they suffered topographical disadvantages and even neglect.
- They are settled mainly in Shillai, Sangrah, and Kamrau (trans-Giri areas), bordering the Jaunsar-Bawar hilly region of Garhwal region of Uttarakhand.
- They live in 154 panchayat areas and numbered 2.5 lakh members as per 2011 Census.
- Their present population is estimated at around 3 lakh.
- They follow a very rigid hierarchy, broadly divided into two categories of Bhat and Khash (higher status) and Badhois in the lower ranking.
- The community is governed by a traditional council called Khumbli, similar to the 'khaps' of Haryana.
- Their agitation started in 1968 when the government declared Jaunsar-Babur as a Scheduled Tribe area and ignored Trans Giri area people of the same region.
- The recent government has granted tribal status to the Hatti community.
- There are two Hatti clans, in Trans-Giri and Jaunsar Bawar, have similar traditions, and inter-marriages are common.
- However, a fairly rigid caste system operates in the community – the Bhat and Khash are upper castes, and the Badhois are below them, and inter-caste marriages have traditionally been discouraged.
- The Hattis are governed by a traditional council called 'khumbli' which, like the 'khaps' of Haryana, decides community matters.
- The Khumbli's power has remained unchallenged despite the establishment of the Panchayati raj system.

- They have sizeable presence in about nine Assembly seats in the Sirmaur and Shimla regions. According to the 2011 Census of India, the total tribal population of Himachal Pradesh is 3,92,126, which is 5.7% of the total population of the state.