

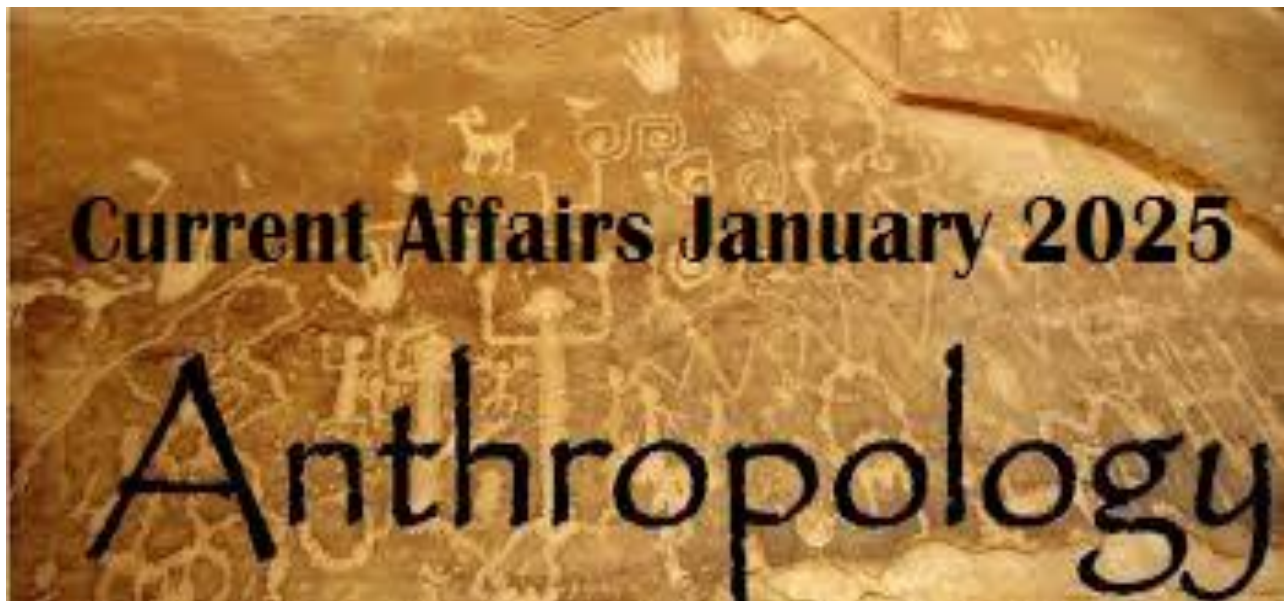
**ANTHROPOLOGY CURRENT AFFAIRS MAGAZINE  
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## PAPER - 1

### PHYSICAL & ARCHAEOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY

#### 1. Which species made and used early stone tools?

Topic in syllabus - 1.8 Principles of Prehistoric Archaeology

- Recent research, has uncovered Oldowan stone tools dating to around three million years ago. This discovery extends the known geographic range of these tools by over 800 miles and pushes their earliest use back by up to 400,000 years. The tools, found alongside cut-marked hippo bones, suggest they were used for butchering.
- Oldowan tools have traditionally been linked to *Homo habilis*, which was discovered at Olduvai Gorge in Tanzania alongside similar tools in 1964.
- However, fossils of *Paranthropus boisei* have also been found at sites with Oldowan tools in eastern Africa, including at Olduvai Gorge. At Nyayanga, two *Paranthropus* molars were found in the same layer as the tools and butchered bones, but no *Homo habilis* fossils were found at this site.
- This evidence suggests that it is premature to exclude *Paranthropus* as a potential maker and user of these early stone tools, given the presence of multiple hominin species in the region at that time.

#### 2. Homo sapiens originate from two or more African paleo-populations

Topic in syllabus - 1.6 Phylogenetic status, characteristics and geographical distribution of the following

- Aaron Ragsdale and colleagues analyzed modern African genomes to explore the origins of *Homo sapiens*.
- **Origin Evidence:** Genetic and fossil data confirm that *Homo sapiens* originated in Africa, but the interactions among early populations are not fully understood.
- **Methodology:** The study examined 289 modern human genomes from across Africa, using Great Britain genomes as an outgroup, and a Croatian Neanderthal genome as an additional outgroup for comparison.

- **Findings:** Computer modeling suggests that *Homo sapiens* emerged from at least two interacting and interbreeding African populations.
- **Implications:** The study challenges the idea that our species originated from a single, geographically isolated population in Africa, proposing a more complex, multi-regional African origin.
- **Physical and Genetic Similarity:** Fossils from these interacting populations would likely be similar in both physical appearance and genetic makeup.

### 3. First case of Down syndrome in Neanderthals documented in new study

Topic in syllabus - 9.4 Chromosomes and chromosomal aberrations in man, methodology

- An international team of researchers, including faculty from Binghamton University, documented the first case of Down syndrome in Neanderthals, revealing their capacity for altruistic care.
- **Discovery Location:** The skeletal remains, named "Tina," were found at Cova Negra, a cave in Valencia, Spain, known for significant Neanderthal discoveries.

#### Research Findings:

- **Analysis:** Researchers used micro-computed tomography scans to analyze a cranial fragment, revealing Tina had a congenital inner ear pathology associated with Down syndrome, leading to severe hearing loss and vertigo.
- **Implications:** Tina survived to at least 6 years of age, implying she received extensive care from her social group, suggesting Neanderthals were capable of providing altruistic care.
- **Significance of Discovery:** The study provides evidence that Neanderthals cared for individuals unable to reciprocate, demonstrating true altruism, unlike previous cases involving adult individuals who could potentially return favors.
- **Historical Context:** Previous evidence of Neanderthal care involved adults, leading some scientists to view it as reciprocal rather than altruistic. Tina's case challenges this view by proving care was extended to vulnerable individuals without the expectation of reciprocity.

#### 4. Wild orangutan treats wound with pain-relieving plant

Topic in syllabus - 1.5 Characteristics of Primates

- Researchers from the Max Planck Institute of Animal Behavior and Universitas Nasional observed self-medication in a male Sumatran orangutan. A male orangutan named Rakus had a facial wound, likely from a fight. Rakus used sap from a climbing plant (*Fibraurea tinctoria*), known for its anti-inflammatory and pain-relieving properties.

- 

##### **Behavioral Insights:**

- **Intentionality:** Rakus selectively treated his wound with the plant juice multiple times, indicating intentional behavior.
- **Potential Innovation:** The behavior might have emerged through individual innovation, possibly due to accidental contact with the plant.

##### **Implications:**

- **Evolutionary Insight:** This behavior may indicate that active wound treatment with biologically active substances has evolutionary significance.
- **Comparison to Humans:** Historical records show that wound treatment in humans dates back to around 2200 BC. The findings suggest that such behaviors may have a common evolutionary origin in great apes.

##### **Cultural Implications:**

- **Not Culture in Traditional Sense:** While this behavior demonstrates advanced cognitive abilities and innovative problem-solving, it is not necessarily cultural in the human sense because it has not been observed consistently across the population or passed down through social learning.
- **Potential for Cultural Transmission:** If this behavior becomes more widespread among the orangutan population and is learned and replicated by others, it could develop into a form of cultural practice within the species.
- **Future Research:** This discovery opens avenues for further study on self-medication in great apes and its evolutionary implications.

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

**Topic in syllabus - 1.6 Phylogenetic status, characteristics and geographical distribution**

- 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.
- 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.
- 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.

## 6. Gene Editing: Do We Have The Right to Genetically Enhance Our Children?

**Topic in syllabus - 1.7 The biological basis of life:**

- Technological advancements have blurred the borders of natural biological processes by giving humans more control. One such area is that of gene editing that allows us to modify the child's genetic make up to not only prevent diseases, and lead to a healthier life, but also personality traits for a more fulfilling life.
- However, this raises question on ethics, consent of the child and rights of parents. Lawmakers, thus, need to solve the ethical dilemmas brought about by such giant scientific leaps. Even though it may sound like science fiction,



the future is here.

- Gene editing for therapeutic purposes (namely gene therapy) is being conducted for the removal of diseases in humans and foetuses both. When changes are made to the somatic cells, the modifications aren't hereditary. However, when the changes are made to the sperm, egg, or embryo, the modifications are transferred on to the next generation. It is done through a process called 'germline' gene editing.
- Law and Gene Editing Somatic gene editing has been approved in countries like the United States, although with restrictions. It is for the Courts and lawmakers to decide whether this right to 'enhance' children for their own welfare falls within the right to privacy of the parents, or whether the state has a right to curtail such an action.
- The American Courts have held that an individual whether single or married has the right to privacy which the state cannot infringe. Thus, even a single parent, out of wedlock, can bear such a child and the right to genetically edit unborn babies would be extended to them. The mother and father would be on an equal footing while deciding whether to genetically edit the baby or not.

## **SOCIO – CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY**

### **1. Study finds field of forensic anthropology lacks diversity**

#### **Topic in syllabus - 12. Applications of Anthropology**

- The field of forensic anthropology is a relatively homogenous discipline in terms of diversity (people of color, LGBTQ+ individuals, people with mental and physical disabilities, etc.) and this is highly problematic for the field of study and for most forensic anthropologists.
- At the core of the forensic sciences are basic sciences and the STEM fields, which have struggled with increasing diversity and inclusion.
- The lack of diversity in the STEM fields and the forensic sciences is concerning because it can limit the types of questions being asked in research. "As forensic practitioners, we do not reflect the demographics of the highly dynamic populations that we serve across the country.
- Relevant and successful research relies on a diversity of ideas, perspectives and experiences, and without such diversity, the field stagnates and does



not keep up with important issues that are relevant to society

- "Striving for a culture of diversity through inclusion in forensic anthropology helps to reflect the greater populations that we serve and encourages us to challenge our own assumptions and inherent biases that can complicate the analysis of skeletal remains in forensic casework.
- Diversity and inclusion initiatives should be substantial and well-supported, rather than merely token gestures to increase the number of minorities or underrepresented groups."

## 2. UD anthropology professor rebukes notion that only men were hunters in ancient times

Topic in syllabus - 1.4 Human Evolution and emergence of Man:

- **Paleolithic Division of Labor:** They reviewed archaeological evidence and literature from the Paleolithic era (approximately 2.5 million to 12,000 years ago).
- **Female Physiology:** Found that women were physically capable of hunting and that evidence supporting their exclusion from hunting is lacking.

### Key Findings:

- **No Sex-Based Division:** Little evidence of strict gender roles in prehistoric hunting and gathering.
- **Equality in Evidence:** Ancient tools, diet, art, burials, and anatomy show no significant sex-based differences in roles.
- **Anatomical and Physiological Evidence:** Women's endurance abilities and estrogen-related advantages suggest they could participate in hunting activities.
- **Trauma Patterns:** No significant difference in trauma patterns between males and females, indicating similar activity levels.

### Historical Context:

- **Man the Hunter Theory:** Popularized in 1968 by Richard B. Lee and Irven DeVore, suggesting that men were primarily hunters, which influenced both academia and popular culture.
- **Gender Bias:** Previous theories were biased towards male-centric views of hunting, dismissing evidence of female participation.

Impact and Future Directions:

- **Revising Default Assumptions:** Lacy advocates for a shift away from the “man the hunter” paradigm to a more egalitarian view of prehistoric subsistence roles.
- **Need for Further Research:** Emphasizes the importance of continued research to understand the roles of both sexes in prehistoric societies.

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

Topic in syllabus - 9.1 Human Genetics

- The study by the Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB), Hyderabad, highlights a significant example of how endogamy can contribute to the persistence of harmful genetic variants in India. Here’s a detailed elaboration on this issue:

#### Role of Endogamy in Genetic Persistence

- **Endogamous Practices**
- **Types:** Endogamy in India includes caste-based, region-based, and consanguineous marriages. These practices limit gene flow between different communities and perpetuate genetic variants within closed populations.
- **Cultural Factors:** Social and cultural norms reinforce these endogamous practices, making it challenging for individuals to marry outside their immediate community or caste.

#### 2. Genetic Homogeneity

- **Reduced Mixing:** Limited inter-marriage between different communities results in a lack of genetic diversity. This genetic homogeneity allows harmful variants like the MYBPC3 mutation to become more prevalent and persist over generations.
- **Founder Effect:** The MYBPC3 mutation may have originated in a specific population and, due to endogamy, has been maintained and amplified within that population.

#### 3. Impact on Health

- **Cardiac Failure:** The MYBPC3 gene is critical for proper cardiac function. Mutations in this gene can lead to conditions such as hypertrophic cardiomyopathy, which is characterized by abnormal thickening of the heart muscle and can result in early-onset cardiac failure.

## Broader Implications and Solutions

### 1. Health Implications

- **Public Health Burden:** The persistence of harmful genetic variants due to endogamy poses a public health challenge. It can lead to increased healthcare costs and necessitate targeted interventions to manage and prevent genetic disorders. **Genetic Counseling:** Increased genetic counseling and screening can help identify individuals at risk and provide guidance on reproductive choices to minimize the impact of genetic disorders.

### 2. Cultural and Social Considerations

- **Challenging Norms:** Addressing the impact of endogamy requires cultural sensitivity and engagement with communities to gradually shift practices and promote genetic diversity. **Education:** Raising awareness about the genetic risks associated with endogamy can encourage individuals and communities to consider the long-term health implications of marrying within a closed group.

## PAPER - 2

### INDIAN & TRIBAL ANTHROPOLOGY

#### 1. New evidence suggests Harappan civilisation is 7,000 to 8,000 years' old

Topic in syllabus - 1.1 Evolution of the Indian Culture and Civilization

- Researchers from Deccan College Pune and the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) discovered human remains dating back 7,000 to 8,000 years in **Rakhigarhi**, a village in Hisar district, Haryana. This suggests the Harappan civilization is much older than previously thought.

#### Key Findings:

- Human and animal remains, along with a large burial ground. Artifacts including utensils made of gold, silver, copper, and beautiful clay pots were uncovered. Advanced houses with courtyards, drainage systems, and multiple bedrooms (2 to 6-bedroom houses) were found. Evidence of clothing fashion, including a colorful shawl and skirt.

Research Conclusion:

- Human DNA has remained the same for 8,000 years. Strong evidence supports human habitation in India 8,000 years ago, showing a highly advanced civilization.

## 2. Preservation of Tribal Languages

Topic in syllabus - 1.1 Evolution of the Indian Culture and Civilization

- The **Ministry of Tribal Affairs**, under its **Support to Tribal Research Institutes (TRIs) scheme**, provides financial aid for initiatives aimed at preserving and promoting tribal languages and dialects across States and Union Territories. Here are the key projects and activities under this scheme:

### Key Activities:

- **Bilingual and Trilingual Resources:** Development of **bilingual dictionaries** and **trilingual proficiency modules** in tribal languages to enhance linguistic accessibility.
- **Educational Primers:** Creation of **primers** for tribal students in Class I, II, and III under the **Multi-Lingual Education (MLE) intervention**, in line with the **New Education Policy (NEP) 2020**. These include **Varnamala (alphabet books)**, **local rhymes**, and **stories**.
- **Promotion of Tribal Literature:** Publishing **books and journals** on various tribal languages to foster and promote **tribal literature**.
- **Documentation of Folklore:** Preservation of tribal **folktales**, **songs**, **riddles**, and **ballads** to ensure the transmission of oral traditions and **folk traditions**.
- **Health Awareness:** Translation and publication of training modules on **Sickle Cell Anaemia** awareness and treatment in local tribal dialects.
- **Conferences and Workshops:** Organizing **seminars**, **workshops**, and **poetic symposiums** to facilitate the sharing of knowledge on tribal languages.

### Role of Tribal Research Institutes (TRIs):

- TRIs collaborate with **language experts** and **teachers** to develop educational materials in tribal dialects and organize training for **field functionaries** like front-line workers. They play a key role in **cultural preservation** and ensuring that **tribal students** have access to learning resources in their native languages from an early age.
- **Tribal Research, Information, Education, Communication, and Events (TRI-ECE) Scheme:** This scheme funds reputable institutions to conduct

research and develop **AI-based translation tools** for converting English/Hindi text or speech into selected tribal languages. Some projects include

- This initiative supports the cultural preservation and inclusion of tribal communities by promoting their languages and facilitating their integration into educational and governmental frameworks.

### 3. Marketing Support for Tribal Produce

Topic in syllabus - 9.1 History of administration of tribal areas

- The **Pradhan Mantri Jan Jatiya Vikas Mission (PMJVM)** and the **Van Dhan Yojana** are two key initiatives aimed at enhancing the livelihood of tribal communities in India through improved marketing support for tribal produce.

#### Pradhan Mantri Jan Jatiya Vikas Mission (PMJVM)

- **Objective:** The PMJVM merges two previous schemes: “Mechanism for Marketing of Minor Forest Produce (MFP) through Minimum Support Price (MSP) and Development of Value Chain for MFP” and “Institutional Support for Development and Marketing of Tribal Products/Produce.” It aims to provide marketing support and infrastructure development for minor forest products.
- **Key Components: Minimum Support Price (MSP):** MSPs have been declared for 87 MFPs/commodities. State agencies are responsible for procurement and marketing at the MSP if the market price falls below it.

#### Van Dhan Yojana

- **Objective:** Van Dhan Yojana focuses on creating a livelihood for tribal communities by leveraging forest resources through the establishment of Van Dhan Self-Help Groups (VDSHG) and Van Dhan Vikas Kendras (VDVK).
- **Structure: Van Dhan Self-Help Groups (VDSHG):** Each group consists of up to 20 forest dwellers involved in gathering, processing, and adding value to MFPs, agricultural produce, and medicinal plants.
- **Van Dhan Vikas Kendras (VDVK):** 15 VDSHGs are combined to form a VDK, which supports up to 300 members. VDKs facilitate economies of scale in training, aggregation, branding, and marketing.

- Both initiatives aim to improve the economic status of tribal communities by enhancing their access to markets, supporting sustainable practices, and promoting entrepreneurship.

#### 4. Preserving Tribal Culture

Topic in syllabus - 6.1 Tribal situation in India

- The vision of inclusive growth and community-led development is not an idea but an actionable strategy for **Odisha in its 5T (transparency, technology, teamwork, time-limit, leading to transformation)-driven** development model.

#### Tribal population in India

- India comprises 8.6% tribal population, has access to an enormous indigenous knowledge, which through recognition, adoption, and mainstreaming has the potential to provide sustainable solutions.
- According to **article 342 of the Indian Constitution**, the President may with respect to any State or Union territory specify the tribes, tribal communities, parts of, or groups within tribes or tribal communities as **Scheduled Tribes in relation to that State or Union territory**.

#### Challenges faced by tribals in performing their lifestyle

- **Discrimination:** Tribal communities often face discrimination and prejudice from the dominant society, including limited access to education, healthcare, and other basic services.
- **Land rights:** Tribal communities have been displaced from their traditional lands due to industrialization, and mining, which has resulted in the loss of cultural identity, and social and economic marginalization.

#### Government initiatives to conserve tribal culture:

- **National Scheduled Tribes Finance and Development Corporation (NSTFDC)**, an apex Organization under the **Ministry of Tribal Affairs** in 2001 was brought into existence with the sole aim of economic upliftment of the Scheduled Tribes by way of extending concessional financial assistance to the target group under its various schemes.
- **TRIFED's Initiatives for Tribal Population:** The Government plans to establish **50,000 Van Dhan Vikas Kendras, 3000 Haat Bazaars, etc.**

- **Central Sector Scheme:** Institutional Support for Development & Marketing of Tribal Products / Produce.
- **Pradhan Mantri Van Dhan Yojana:** It is a market-linked tribal entrepreneurship development program for forming clusters of tribal Self Help Groups (SHGs) and strengthening them into Tribal Producer Companies.
- **Development of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs):** The scheme covers activities like housing, land distribution, land development, agricultural development, animal husbandry, construction of link roads, etc.

## 5. Malaiyali Tribe Evolution

### Topic in syllabus - 6.1 Tribal situation in India

- The Malaiyali tribe, scattered across Tamil Nadu's hilly regions, has undergone a remarkable transformation over two centuries.
- From their initial foraging lifestyle to settling atop the Yelagiri hill and constructing traditional clay huts, the tribe has transitioned into a more modern way of life. Amidst the evolving landscape, one old-fashioned hut remains as a testament to their history.

#### Malaiyali Tribe

- **Historical Settlement:** Over 200 Malaiyali tribespeople established a comprehensive system on Yelagiri hill with clay huts for shelter, storage, farming, and cattle.
- **Modern Evolution:** Today, only one antiquated hut endures, belonging to tribesman Govinthasamy, while the rest have given way to brick-and-mortar homes.
- **Malaiyali Tribe:** "Malai" means hill and "yali" means people, depicting the tribespeople who settled across Tamil Nadu's hilly regions.

#### Distinctive Hut Features

- **Roofing:** A 12-foot thatched roof made of dry bamboo leaves, waxed with cow dung to prevent leaks during monsoons.
- **Interior Space:** Deceptively small from outside, the hut accommodates eight people and an attic for storing household items.
- **Functional Evolution:** Originally meant for living, the hut transformed into a storage space for seeds during sowing and grains post-harvest.



- **Elevated Structure:** The hut stands on a teak wood stilt to prevent flooding during heavy rains and deter rodents.
- **Storage Space:** Stilts create additional storage beneath the house for grains or poultry.
- **Traditional Living:** The one-room structure housed various activities, highlighting the tribe's reliance on agriculture.

## 6. Assam's Chandubi Festival

**Topic in Syllabus: 8.1 Impact of Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity, Islam and other religions on tribal societies**

- The 14<sup>th</sup> Chandubi Festival was recently held near the Chandubi Lake in Assam's Kamrup district from January 1 to January 5.

### Chandubi Festival

- The Chandubi Festival **happens every year for five days**, starting on New Year's Day, by the Chandubi Lake in Assam.
- Chandubi Lake was **formed by a earthquake** in 1897.
- The name "Chandubi" comes from "Chand" meaning "**five**" and "Dubi" meaning "**sinking**" in the *Khasi language*.
- At the festival, one can enjoy local culture, try ethnic food, see handcrafted clothes, and go boating.
- The festival's main goal is to encourage **eco-tourism and protect the lake**, which has been losing water.
- Preserving the lake and helping the **tribes like Rabhas, Garos, Gorkhas**, and tea tribes are reasons for holding the festival.

### Course of events

- During the festival, many attractive ethnic sports competitions were organized by the festival celebration committee which includes the Baghbol competition, Chagalchari competition, Khutikhel, Lewatana etc.
- Performances of different tribe's folk dances are held including Garo, Boro, Hajpong, Bihu, Rabha and many others.

## 7. Wancho Tribe of Arunachal

### Topic in syllabus - 6.1 Tribal situation in India

- The Wancho tribe of Arunachal resides in the Eastern part of Arunachal Pradesh amidst the Patkai range and occupies the district of Longding.
- According to mythology, the word Wancho is derived from local term *Wang-cho* means the hill man of Wang follower or hill man lived under the ruler of king. The word Wang stand for *Wang* (king) and the *Cho* means Hillman.
- The Wancho tribe resides in the Eastern part of Arunachal Pradesh amidst the Patkai range and occupies the district of Longding. They have a population of 35,000. Culturally Naga, they are ethnically related to the Nocte tribe of Arunachal Pradesh and Konyak tribe of Nagaland.
- The Wancho tribe of Arunachal and Konyak tribe still today share similar names and tradition. Konyak is the largest ethnic group in Nagaland and known for their tradition of headhunting and tattoos.
- The wancho society is characterized by the existence of the class distinction the “Wangham” or the chief and “ Wangpan ” the commoner. The chief enjoys special facilities and are honoured in every sphere of life.

### Culture of the Wancho Tribe of Arunachal

- Tattooing plays a major role among the Wancho tribe of Arunachal. According to tradition, a man is tattooed on his four limbs and his entire face, with the exception of certain regions around the eyes and the lips. The women adorn themselves with necklaces and bangles, along with some light tattooing as well.
- The prime festival of the Wancho is Oriah, a festival between March to April, for a period of six to twelve days interspersed with prayer, songs and dances. Villagers exchange bamboo tubes filled with rice beer as a mark of greeting and goodwill.
- The Wancho tribe of Arunachal are traditionally governed by a council of elderly chieftains, known as Wangham or Wangsa. Like most neighbouring tribes, the Wancho construct houses made out of wood and bamboo, and roofs were thatched with dry leaves.

## 8. Unying Festival of Adi community of Arunachal Pradesh

Topic in syllabus - 6.1 Tribal situation in India

- Recently, the Union Minister of Ports, Shipping & Waterways and Ayush attended the colourful Siang Unying Festival.

### About the festival:

- The festival of Unying is celebrated to herald the season of cultivation, beginning of the Adi community's new year, arrival of spring seasons as well as a great way to strengthen the bond among the community.
- The Adi tribes celebrate a number of festivals, but Unying Aaran is the prime festival for them.
- **Unying Aran is one of the oldest festivals of the Adi community commemorating the arrival of spring season.**
- In this festival, it is tradition for all male members of a family to go on a hunting and stays in the jungles for a week.
- The majority of Adi traditionally follow the tribal Donyi-Polo religion. Worship of gods and goddesses like Kine Nane, Doying Bote, Gumin Soyin and Pedong Nane, etc.

### About the tribe:

- **The Adi people are one of the most populous groups of indigenous peoples in the Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh.**
- A few thousand are also found in the Tibet Autonomous Region, where they are called the Lhoba together with some of the Nishi people, Na people, Mishmi people and Tagin people.
- **All the ethnic groups recognizing themselves as "Adi" are believed to be descendants of the Abutani/Abotani.** The older term Abor is an exonym from Assamese and its literal meaning is "independent". The literal meaning of adi is "hill" or "mountain top".

## 9. Involving indigenous people in environmental governance – the Sixth Schedule way

### Topic in syllabus - 9.1 History of administration of tribal areas

- Customary practices of the North East's tribal population are harmonious with nature. Extensive recognition and conferment of rights over the forest are belated legislative actions
- In most indigenous societies, people believe humans and nature are deeply connected and inter-dependent, almost like kin to one another. Indigenous people across the world have often been regarded as exemplars of environmentally sustainable living.
- The impact of their subsistence livelihoods was apparently kept in check by customary laws to ensure they lived by the laws of nature. Solutions to a lot of current environmental problems lie in these traditions.
- The Sixth Schedule Provisions over the administration of tribal areas in Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Tripura are contained in the Sixth Schedule. It provides for the establishment of autonomous district and regional councils.
- The district and regional councils almost function as autonomous states with significant executive, legislative and judicial powers. The councils have powers to legislate over several matters including land use, management of forests (except reserved forests and sanctuaries), inheritance, tribal customs, marriages, personal laws, appointment and succession of headmen, etc.
- Despite its few shortcomings, the Sixth Schedule holds the potential to redefine community engagement and restore forest management to a co-dependent existence once stolen from these tribes by foreign powers. The future lies in restoring the past.

## 10. Home gardens are key to better lives for vulnerable tribes in India, finds research

### Topic in syllabus - 9.1 The concept of PTGs (Primitive Tribal Groups),

- The forested hills and rolling fields in the state of Odisha are home to some of India's most vulnerable tribal groups, but a growing number of studies show that small home gardens—producing millet, pulses, fresh fruits and vegetables—could be key in the fight against the food insecurity, malnutrition and poverty found there.

- In 2020, 828 million people globally went hungry and almost 3.1 billion people could not afford a healthy diet, according to World Health Organization (WHO) statistics.
- Despite India now being a middle-income country, it continues to struggle with food security, malnutrition, and rising levels of anemia among women and children.

### **A bright future for home gardens**

- "Home gardens can also complement government programs, such as the National Nutrition Mission, to improve nutrition and also contribute toward achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, especially those related to poverty, zero hunger, and good health and well-being.
- "Promotion of home gardens in India can help curb widespread malnutrition problems, such as anemia in women, by improving the quality of diets that are typically less diverse, dominated by cereals, and/or characterized by low intakes of fruits and vegetables," James Garrett, a co-author, said.
- An Indian government program aims to reach over 27,300 beneficiaries with home garden interventions to help increase their production and consumption of highly nutritious home-produced foods, and ultimately improve their food and nutrition security by improving the quality of their diet.

## **11. Education: Initiatives for empowerment of tribal communities**

Topic in syllabus : 9.1 tribal policies, plans, programmes of tribal development and their implementation.

- **Education is the only mode to empower a community and help the youth to access unexplored opportunities offered by the global village.**
- **The Right to Education and inclusiveness of educational policies have always endeavoured to bridge the educational gaps particularly among the vulnerable communities.**
- **Tribal education in Jammu and Kashmir is receiving special focus both at school and higher education level, however, there's a long journey ahead which requires concerned efforts of all stakeholders.**

### **Tribal Education Plan**

- The department of tribal affairs, for the first time, initiated an exercise to assess the state of education viz a viz tribal students, literacy levels prevalent among the tribal population, and based on such surveys development of a comprehensive education plan to address specific educational needs besides the core efforts being made by the Education departments.

### Way Forward

- These initiatives have acknowledged the need for very robust and focussed system of tribal education, need for inclusive education and development of special plans for different tribal areas and sections of communities given the poor educational and literacy levels

### **12. Technology And Exhausted Nomads in J&K**

Topic in syllabus : 6.3 Developmental projects and their impact on tribal displacement and problems of rehabilitation.

- **The nomadic Gujjar and Bakarwal communities of Jammu and Kashmir have been given smart cards and free transportation to help with their biannual migration.**

#### **Gujjar-Bakarwal Community Information:**

- The nomadic pastoralists of Jammu and Kashmir, also known as the Gujjar-Bakarwal community, are a Himalayan transhumance community.
- Bakarwals are primarily pastoral nomads who spend their summers raising goats and sheep at high altitudes in the Great Himalayas and their winters in the plains and foothills of the Shivaliks.

#### **Government Community Initiatives:**

- For centuries, Jammu and Kashmir's nomadic community, known as Gujjars and Bakerwals, have undertaken arduous journeys on foot as part of their seasonal migration to find better pastures for their livestock.
- However, this year, the UT administration has offered technological solutions and transport services to help them cover long distances in less time.

**13. Tribal students urge govt to give them better facilities for quality education**

Topic in syllabus : 6.2 Problems of the tribal Communities

- Tribal students have appealed to the Centre to ensure “quality education” and proper facilities, including schools and hostels, for those belonging to scheduled tribes and said that reservation in government institutions and jobs alone is not the solution to their problems.
- Tribal students, who had come from faraway villages of Jharkhand, West Bengal, Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan, Karnataka, Tripura, and other states, also complained about poor hostel facilities at residential government schools.
- “The Centre is cutting down on the number of schools based on the number of students attending the classes. Now, in tribal areas, this is proving to be disastrous.
- According to a recent survey conducted by the Adivasi Adhikar Manch and the Centre for Adivasi Research and Development, some tribal areas have recorded an increase in the dropout rate among girl students, as not many parents feel safe to send their daughters to the schools far-off.