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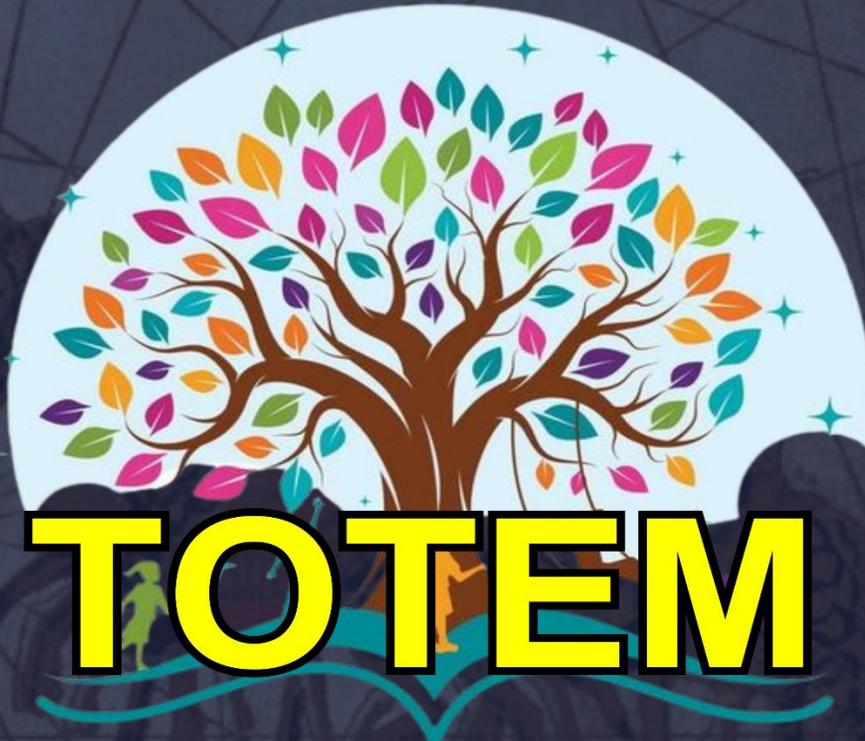
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PAPER - 1

PHYSICAL & ARCHAEOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY

1. Australopithecus

(Use this content in the topic of syllabus – Unit 2 Paper I)

- Australopithecus had a variable but plant-based diet, according to an analysis of stable isotope data from seven hominin specimens dating back 3.5 million years from Sterkfontein in South Africa.

Australopithecus:

- Australopithecus, (genus Australopithecus) is a **group of extinct primates** known from a series of fossils found at numerous sites in eastern, north-central, and southern Africa.
- They are the **closest known relatives of our genus, Homo**.
- The various species of Australopithecus lived **4.4 million to 1.4 million years ago** (mya), during the Pliocene and Pleistocene epochs (which lasted from 5.3 million to 11,700 years ago).
- The genus name, **meaning “southern ape,” refers to the first fossils found**, which were discovered **in South Africa**.
- Perhaps the **most famous specimen** of Australopithecus is **“Lucy,”** a remarkably preserved fossilized **skeleton from Ethiopia** that has been dated to 3.2 mya.

Features:

- As characterized by the fossil evidence, members of Australopithecus bore a **combination of humanlike and apelike traits**. Members of this species had **apelike face proportions** (a flat nose, a strongly projecting lower jaw) and **braincase** (with a **small brain**, usually less than 500 cubic centimeters - about 1/3 the size of a modern human brain), and long, **strong arms with curved fingers** adapted for climbing trees.
 - They also had **small canine teeth like all other early humans**, and a body that **stood on two legs** and regularly **walked upright**.
 - They were roughly 1.2-1.5 m tall and probably weighed about 30-50 kg.
 - **Males** were almost **twice the size of females**, a level of difference, or **sexual dimorphism, greater than modern chimpanzees or humans** but less than gorillas or orangutans.
 - They had mainly a **plant-based diet**, including leaves, fruit, seeds, roots, nuts, and insects.

2. Human Evolution and Migration

(Use this content in the topic of syllabus – Unit 1.4 Paper I)

- Scientists have established that **Homo sapiens evolved in Africa** and **later migrated to various parts of the world**. The routes and timing of these migrations are still debatable among the scientists. The **coastal dispersion theory** suggests migration along coastlines, though it lacks strong archaeological evidence.

Route of Human Migration

- **Genetic studies** have provided **insights into human evolution and migration patterns**. By analyzing **mitochondrial DNA mutations**, scientists confirmed that Homo sapiens evolved in Africa over millennia before migrating globally. While scientists widely accept the **out-of-Africa theory**, they differ on the timing and routes of migration.
- **Two Theories of Dispersion: Coastal Dispersion Theory:** Studies suggest **humans migrated along coasts**, benefiting from **warm climates, abundant food, and tropical conditions**.
- **Challenges to the Theory:** Archeological evidence in **India contradicts** this model. **Inland**

Palaeolithic sites dominate, with **no archeological traces along the Indian Ocean coastline** to support coastal dispersion.

- **Saurashtra Peninsula Study:** Recent research analysed **Middle Palaeolithic tools** in the **Bhadar and Aji river basins of Gujarat**. Using relative dating methods, the **tools** were found to be **56,000–48,000 years old, indicating inland migration**. Middle Palaeolithic tools revealed advanced flaking techniques, contrasting with sharper blade tools of the **Late Palaeolithic**. Studies suggest Saurashtra was connected to **Kutch, Makran, and the Western Ghats during the Middle Palaeolithic**, indicating the region was farther from the coast. **No evidence of marine resource dependence** (e.g., fish, shellfish) was found, further supporting inland migration.

Conclusion

- The **study offers new data but** emphasizes the need for precise dating. Evidence challenges purely coastal migration theories but **requires careful interpretation due to submerged sites and undated regions**. The study also highlights broader dispersal in Saurashtra, covering coastal, hinterland, and inland areas, **suggesting a multifaceted migration pattern**. This detailed analysis of inland vs. coastal migration patterns continues to evolve, emphasizing the need for integrating genetic and archeological findings.

3. Epigenetics

(Use this content in the topic of syllabus – Unit 9.1 Paper I)

- Epigenetics is the study of how cells control gene activity without changing the DNA sequence. Epigenetics is the study of how cells control gene activity without changing the DNA sequence. “Epi-” means on or above in Greek, and “epigenetic” describes factors beyond the genetic code.
- Epigenetic changes are modifications to DNA that regulate whether genes are turned on or off. These Epigenetic modifications are attached to DNA and do not change the sequence of DNA building blocks. Within the complete set of DNA in a cell (the genome), all of the modifications that regulate the activity (expression) of the genes is known as the epigenome. Because epigenetic changes help determine whether genes are turned on or off, they influence the production of proteins in cells.
- This regulation helps ensure that each cell produces only proteins that are necessary for its function. For example, proteins that promote bone growth are not produced in muscle cells. Patterns of epigenetic modification vary among individuals, in different tissues within an individual, and even in different cells within a tissue. Environmental influences, such as a person’s diet and exposure to pollutants, can impact the epigenome.
- Epigenetic modifications can be maintained from cell to cell as cells divide and, in some cases, can be inherited through the generations. Errors in the epigenetic process, such as modification of the wrong gene or failure to add a chemical group to a particular gene or histone, can lead to abnormal gene activity or inactivity.
- Altered gene activity, including that caused by epigenetic errors, is a common cause of genetic disorders. Conditions such as cancers, metabolic disorders, and degenerative disorders have been found to be related to epigenetic errors.
- DNA, or deoxyribonucleic acid, is the hereditary material in humans and almost all other organisms. Nearly every cell in a person’s body has the same DNA. Most DNA is located in the cell nucleus (where it is called nuclear DNA), but a small amount of DNA can also be found in the mitochondria (where it is called mitochondrial DNA or mtDNA). Mitochondria are structures within cells that convert the energy from food into a form that cells can use.

4. Junk DNA

(Use this content in the topic of syllabus – Unit 9.1 Paper I)

- In genetics, the term junk DNA refers to regions of DNA that are noncoding. In genetics, the term junk DNA refers to regions of DNA that are non coding.
- DNA contains instructions (coding) that are used to create proteins in the cell. However, the amount of DNA contained inside each cell is vast, and not all of the genetic sequences present within a DNA molecule actually code for a protein.
- Some of this non coding DNA is used to produce non-coding RNA components such as transfer RNA, regulatory RNA and ribosomal RNA.
- However, other DNA regions are not transcribed into proteins, nor are they used to produce RNA molecules, and their function is unknown. These are known as junk regions of DNA.
- The proportion of coding versus non coding DNA varies significantly between species. In the human genome, for example, almost all (98%) of the DNA is non coding, while in bacteria, only 2% of the genetic material does not code for anything. However, over the years, researchers have found evidence to suggest that junk DNA may provide some form of functional activity.
- Some lines of evidence suggest that fragments of what were originally non-functional DNA have undergone the process of exaptation throughout evolution. Exaptation refers to the acquisition of a function through means other than natural selection.
- DNA, or deoxyribonucleic acid, is the hereditary material in humans and almost all other organisms. Nearly every cell in a person's body has the same DNA.
- Most DNA is located in the cell nucleus (where it is called nuclear DNA), but a small amount of DNA can also be found in the mitochondria (where it is called mitochondrial DNA or mtDNA). Mitochondria are structures within cells that convert the energy from food into a form that cells can use.

5. Lamarckian Inheritance and Epigenetics Evolution

(Use this content in the topic of syllabus – Unit 9.1 Paper I)

- The recent discovery of **heritable cold tolerance in rice plants** through **epigenetic changes** marks a historic validation of **Jean-Baptiste Lamarck's theory** that **environmental influences** can affect **heredity** — a concept once dismissed but now supported by **modern science**.
- **Epigenetics** refers to **heritable changes in gene expression** caused by **external factors** that switch genes on or off **without altering the DNA sequence**.
- **Lamarck's Theory (1809)**: It proposed that **traits acquired** during an organism's lifetime through **use, disuse, or environment could be inherited**. It was dominant until **Darwin's natural selection (1859)** and **Mendel's laws of inheritance** disproved it.
- A study showed that **exposing rice plants to cold triggered epigenetic changes in the gene**, which conferred **cold tolerance and was heritable** for five generations.

Scientific Challenges to Lamarck:

- **Darwin's Natural Selection (1859)**: It argued **genetic variations** (not **acquired traits**) drive **evolution** via "**survival of the fittest**."
- **Weismann's Experiment (1890s)**: **Tailless mice** produced **normal-tailed offspring**, disproving **inheritance of acquired traits**.
- **Gregor-Johann Mendel**: It showed **genes (DNA)** are the **stable units of heredity**, not **environmental adaptations**.

Epigenetics Emerges:

- **Royal Brink's Maize Study (1956)**: It revealed that **gene expression**, not just **DNA sequence**,

- could be **heritable**, demonstrating **non-DNA-based inheritance**.
- **Arthur Riggs' Hypothesis (1975):** It proposed **epigenetic marks (chemical tags on DNA)** could pass **traits** across **generations** without changing their DNA sequence. It is **easier** to change **epigenetic marks** than to **mutate DNA**.

6. Ancient fossil discovery in Ethiopia rewrites human origins

(Use this content in the topic of syllabus – Unit 1.8 Paper I)

- The fossils found in northeastern Ethiopia date between 2.6 to 2.8 million years ago and shed new light on human evolution. In the deserts of Ethiopia, scientists uncovered fossils showing that early members of our genus Homo lived side by side with a newly identified species of Australopithecus nearly three million years ago. These finds challenge the old idea of a straight evolutionary ladder, revealing instead a tangled web of ancient relatives.
- A team of international scientists has discovered new fossils at a field site in Africa that indicate Australopithecus, and the oldest specimens of Homo, coexisted at the same place in Africa at the same time -- between 2.6 and 2.8 million years ago. The paleoanthropologists discovered a new species of Australopithecus that has never been found anywhere. The Ledi-Geraru Research Project is led by scientists at Arizona State University and the site has revealed the oldest member of the genus Homo and the earliest Oldowan stone tools on the planet.
- We know what the teeth and mandible of the earliest Homo look like, but that's it. This emphasizes the critical importance of finding additional fossils to understand the differences between Australopithecus and Homo, and potentially how they were able to overlap in the fossil record at the same location."The team cannot name the species yet based on the teeth alone; more fossils are needed before that can happen.

How old are the fossils?

- The Afar region is still an active rifting environment. There were a lot of volcanoes and tectonic activity and when these volcanoes erupted ash, the ash contained crystals called feldspars that allow the scientists to date them. And we know that these fossils are interbed between those eruptions, so we can date units above and below the fossils. We are dating the volcanic ash of the eruptions that were happening while they were on the landscape."
- Finding fossils and dating the landscape not only helps scientists understand the species - it helps them recreate the environment millions of years ago. The modern faulted badlands of Ledi-Geraru, where the fossils were found are a stark contrast to the landscape these hominins traversed 2.6 - 2.8 million years ago. Back then, rivers migrated across a vegetated landscape into shallow lakes that expanded and contracted over time. More fossils will help us tell the story of what happened to our ancestors a long time ago -- but because we're the survivors we know that it happened to us."The paper "New discoveries of Australopithecus and Homo from Ledi-Geraru, Ethiopia.

SOCIO - CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY

1. Understanding Endogamy in India: Cultural Practice & Health Implications

(Use this content in the topic of syllabus – Unit 2.3 Paper I)

- Endogamy, the practice of marrying within one's community, has deep social and genetic implications in India. A recent CSIR-CCMB study links it to population-specific diseases. Recently a study on the topic of Endogamy in India conducted by CSIR Bhatnagar Fellow at the CSIR-Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB) and senior scientist K. Thangaraj has been published. It is deeply rooted in the country's cultural and social structures, particularly within caste and tribal communities. While endogamy has historically been seen as a way to preserve community identity, customs, and social cohesion, modern studies have highlighted its significant implications for genetic health.
- **Endogamy in India: A Cultural and Social Perspective:** Endogamy has traditionally played a vital role in maintaining social hierarchy and group identity in India. Some of the key factors influencing its practice include:
- **Caste System & Social Structure:** The varna (caste) system in Hindu society promotes marriage within one's caste and sub-caste to maintain social status and hereditary occupations. Similar trends are observed among Muslim, Christian, and tribal communities, where intra-group marriages are encouraged to maintain religious and cultural identity.
- **Regional & Linguistic Endogamy:** Certain linguistic groups in India also practice regional endogamy, restricting marriage within their own community to preserve cultural traditions and dialects. Example: The Tamil Brahmins, Gujarati Patels, and Marwari business communities follow strict endogamy.
- **Economic & Political Influence :** Endogamous marriages help preserve family wealth, political power, and business interests by preventing external influences from diluting family assets and decision-making. Many business families in India, such as those in Gujarat and Rajasthan, prefer marrying within their communities for financial stability.
- **Genetic Implications of Endogamy :** While endogamy has historically served as a means of cultural preservation, recent genetic research highlights its potential drawbacks. The CSIR-CCMB study found that marrying within small communities leads to a higher prevalence of genetic mutations, which increase the risk of hereditary diseases.

2. DNA Polymorphism & Fingerprinting

(Use this content in the topic of syllabus – Unit 1.7 Paper I)

- DNA (Deoxyribonucleic Acid) is the hereditary material present in nearly all human cells, including blood, skin, bone, and teeth. DNA (Deoxyribonucleic Acid) is the hereditary material found in almost all human cells – blood, skin, bone, teeth, etc.
- **Humans have 46 chromosomes:** 23 inherited from the father (via sperm). 23 inherited from the mother (via egg). Genes within chromosomes determine physical traits and biological identity.
- **DNA Polymorphisms :** DNA polymorphisms are variations in DNA sequences unique to individuals.
- Useful for:
 - (i) Parentage identification
 - (ii) Genetic lineage tracing
 - (iii) Identity verification in forensic science. Enable accurate matching between body samples

and known relatives.

Short Tandem Repeats (STRs)

- STRs are short, repeating sequences of DNA bases (e.g., GATCGATC). Each individual has a unique STR pattern, making them ideal for: Criminal investigations Forensic victim identification, Ancestry and paternity testing. STRs are inherited, providing strong evidence for genetic relationships.

PCR (Polymerase Chain Reaction) in DNA Amplification

- PCR is a technique to amplify small amounts of DNA for analysis. Steps involved: DNA Extraction from bones, blood, or tissue. Denaturation (95°C): DNA strands are separated. Annealing (60°C): Primers bind to specific DNA sequences. Extension (72°C): DNA polymerase builds new strands. Cycling: Steps are repeated to create millions of DNA copies

DNA Fingerprinting

- A DNA fingerprinting is a unique genetic profile built using STR variations. Capillary Electrophoresis separates STR fragments based on size using electric current. Final output is a distinct DNA profile, unique to each person (except identical twins). Sources for DNA: blood, saliva, bone, teeth, skin cells, sweat, semen.

PAPER - 2

INDIAN & TRIBAL ANTHROPOLOGY

1. Issues faced by Tribal population in India

(Use this content in the topic of syllabus – Unit 7.1 Paper II)

- Acute Poverty: Many of indigenous communities live in extreme poverty. They suffer from malnutrition and lack access to basic education and health facilities. Ex. Melghat in Maharashtra.
- Dwindling Population: Indigenous communities are facing a dwindling population. Most of them are desolated from their native places.
- Forest Rights Issues: Inability to recognize indigenous communities' rights to forest resources is also a concern. This has given rise to left wing leanings.
- Displacement: Acquisition of tribal land by the government for 'development' purposes has led to large scale displacement and alienation of tribal population.
- Discrimination: The tribal people were compelled to perform duties that were considered inferior because of their economic backwardness and illiteracy.

Major challenges in the tribal areas

- Remoteness: The tribal hamlets and habitations are located either in a valley or on the hill tops in most of the places. Due to which they are excluded from major developmental activities, improved cultivation practices, education and health facilities.
- Exploitation: The agriculture produces, local non timber forest produce and other valuable forest resources are being siphoned out by the middlemen from the innocent tribals for the paltry prices thus leaving the tribals exploited financially.
- Superstition: Poverty, health issues, illiteracy and underdevelopment is often ascribed to the fate, star and supernatural events. Even preventable deaths are sometimes construed as may be due to bad omen; the scientific temper is a remotest aspiration.
- Lack of health awareness: Unscientific practices, local beliefs, self-medication, customary doctor etc. have deprived them from availing the institutional health facilities.
- Illiteracy: It is the main hurdle in improving living standards of tribals in the tribal belts. The spill over effect of illiteracy is 'lack of confidence' to adopt progressive steps.

2. Denotified, Semi-Nomadic and Nomadic Tribes (DNTs)

(Use this content in the topic of syllabus – Unit 6.1 Paper II)

- At an event in New Delhi, Denotified, Semi-Nomadic and Nomadic Tribes (DNTs) strongly demanded a permanent National Commission to address their long-standing marginalisation. Denotified, Nomadic, and Semi-Nomadic Tribes (DNTs) Denotified Tribes (DNTs): Colonial Tag: Branded “criminal by birth” under the Criminal Tribes Act, 1871. Legal Reversal: Act repealed in 1949; tribes de-notified in 1952. Persistent Stigma: Continue to face police profiling and social exclusion.

Nomadic Tribes (NTs):

- Lifestyle: No fixed habitation; move cyclically for livelihood.
- Occupations: Animal herding, salt trading, performing arts, traditional healing.
- Semi-Nomadic Tribes (SNTs):
- Hybrid Living: Alternate between mobile and semi-settled life.
- Movement: Shift seasonally but often retain a base settlement.

Current Status in India:

- Population Share: Around 10% of India’s population.
- Communities: 150+ Denotified, 500+ Nomadic tribes.
- Major States: Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh.
- Examples of Communities (not exhaustive):
- Denotified: Bedia, Pardhi, Sansi, Kanjar, Lodha, Nat, Chhara, Bhantu
- Nomadic: Banjara, Gadia Lohar, Rabari, Madari, Kalbelia, Nat
- Semi-Nomadic: Abor, Adi, Aka, Apatani, Dafla, Galo, Nishi, Tagin

3. Habitat Rights of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG)

(Use this content in the topic of syllabus – Unit 9.1 Paper II)

- Baiga community, a Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG), became the second PVTG to get habitat rights in Chhattisgarh, after the Kamar tribal group.
- Habitat rights recognition grants communities the right to their traditional territory, socio-cultural practices, livelihoods, ecological and traditional knowledge, and the protection of their natural and cultural heritage. (Habitat rights don’t grant ownership to property).
- Habitat rights are given to PVTGs under section 3(1) (e) of The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 or Forest Rights Act (FRA).
- According to FRA, “Habitat comprises the customary habitat and such other habitats in reserved forests and protected forests of primitive tribal groups and pre-agricultural communities and other forest dwelling Scheduled Tribes.”
- How the Government Fixes a Habitat
- The procedure is based on guidelines from the Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA) in 2014. The tribal leaders are consulted about the extent of their culture, traditions, and occupation.
- The government corroborates it, and then a habitat is declared.
- The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) provides technical assistance to the administration to implement the habitat rights law. Four state-level departments, i.e., Forest, Revenue, Tribal, and Panchayati Raj, coordinate with the UNDP team to ascertain habitats.
- PVTG (previously known as a Primitive Tribal Group) is a sub-classification of Scheduled Tribes considered more vulnerable among the tribal groups.

- Dhebar Commission (or Tribal Panchsheel Committee) recommended the creation of Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs). Based on this, the Indian Government created PTGs in 1975. In 2006, PTGs were renamed as PVTGs. At present, there are 75 PVTGs out of 705 Scheduled Tribes. Odisha has the highest number of PVTGs.

4. World Tribal Day

(Use this content in the topic of syllabus – Unit 9.1 Paper II)

- The Adivasi Girijana Sangham has urged tribal representatives, youth, and elected leaders to actively participate in World Tribal Day celebrations on August 9 and commit to resolving tribal issues.

World Tribal Day

- It is observed on August 9 every year to support and protect the rights of the world's indigenous people. Also referred to as World Indigenous Day or International Day of World's Indigenous People, this day offers an excellent chance to effectively work towards defending the fundamental rights of tribal communities around the world. World Tribal Day 2025 Theme: "Indigenous Peoples and Artificial Intelligence – Defending Rights, Shaping the Future"

World Tribal Day History

- The observance of this day originates from a worldwide movement pointed toward recognizing the rights and significant commitments of tribal people.
- Regardless of comprising around 6% of the worldwide population, tribal communities are often marginalized, despite the fact that they have wealthy cultural diversity.
- The origins of the International Day of the World's Indigenous People date back to December 1994, when the United Nations General Assembly designated 9 August for this annual observance.
- This date holds symbolic significance as it marks the first meeting of the UN Working Group on Indigenous Populations of the Sub-commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights. This meeting took place in Geneva in 1982

5. Sahariya Tribe & PM-JANMAN

(Use this content in the topic of syllabus – Unit 6.3 Paper II)

- The Sahariya community, a Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG), in a remote area of Rajasthan's Baran district has received electricity for the first time in 78 years.
- This development aligns with the PM-JANMAN (Pradhan Mantri Janjati Adivasi Nyaya Maha Abhiyan) initiative, which focuses on improving the socio-economic conditions of tribal groups.

Key Points

- **Sahariya Tribe:** The Sahariya tribe is one of the 12 notified tribes in Rajasthan and is classified as a PVTG. The Sahariyas are considered a sub-branch of the Kolariyan family and Bheels. Sahariya community is also called by the names Seher, Sair, Savar, Saonar, Sahra etc. Around 7% of India's tribal population lives in Rajasthan.
- **Demographic Status:** According to the 2011 Census, the Sahariyas are the fourth-largest tribal community in Rajasthan, following the Meena, Bhil, and Garasia communities. In Rajasthan, the Baran district, especially the Kishanganj and Shahbad tehsils, hosts the core Sahariya population. Sahariyas also reside in Morena, Shivpuri, Bhind, Gwalior, Datia, Vidisha, and Guna districts of Madhya Pradesh.
- **Traditional Practices & Skills:** Sahariya is also very fond of hunting and fishing. Along with the knowledge of herbs, Sahariyas are also very skilled in collecting honey from beehives. Apart from this, making baskets, ropes, brooms, cutting wood from the forest etc. are some other

traditional works.

- PM-JANMAN Scheme: PM-JANMAN, launched on 15th November 2023, on Janjatiya Gaurav Diwas, focuses on 11 critical interventions through 9 ministries to improve the socio-economic welfare of PVTGs.
- PM-JANMAN comprises Central Sector and Centrally Sponsored Schemes to improve the socio-economic conditions of PVTGs.
- The scheme has a total outlay of Rs 24,104 crore to be spent over a three-year period, of which nearly 80% is only for the construction of houses and roads.

6. Lepcha Tribe

(Use this content in the topic of syllabus – Unit 6.1 Paper II)

- Lepchas are an indigenous people of eastern Nepal, western Bhutan, Sikkim state, and the Darjeeling district of West Bengal. Sikkim recently celebrated Tendong Lho Rum Faat, the traditional nature-worshipping festival of the primitive Lepcha tribe.

Lepcha Tribe

- They are an indigenous people of eastern Nepal, western Bhutan, Sikkim state, and the Darjeeling district of West Bengal. They are classified as a Scheduled Tribe in the state of Sikkim
- The Lepchas call themselves 'Rongs' or 'Rongkups'. They occupy the southern and eastern slopes of Mt. Kanchenjunga (world's third highest mountain).
- The region Lepchas inhabit varies in elevation from 230 m (750 ft) in the Sikkim basin to the summit of Kanchenjunga at 8,586 m (28,168 ft) above sea level.
- They are thought to be the earliest inhabitants of Sikkim but have adopted many elements of the culture of the Bhutia people, who entered Sikkim from Tibet in the 14th century and afterward. While some intermarriage has occurred between the two groups, they tend to stay apart and to speak their own languages, which are dialects of Tibetan. They speak the language of Lepcha, which has its own script based on Sanskrit.
- They are a vanishing tribe with a dwindling population. Lepcha has an estimated population of around 42,909 individuals at the time of the Indian Census 2011. Livelihood: Traditionally hunters and gatherers, the Lepchā now also engage in farming and cattle breeding.

Religion and Beliefs:

- Originally, Lepchas were nature worshipers and had belief in witch-craftship and spirits. But in due course they embarrassed Buddhism.
- The community would traditionally have worshiped Mt. Kanchenjunga, which they regard as their guardian deity. They have regular festivals involving singing and dancing, as well as archery contests.

7. Dard-Shin Tribe

(Use this content in the topic of syllabus – Unit 6.1 Paper II)

- In recent years, community member few activists have emerged documenting and preserving Dard-Shin heritage.
- Dard-Shin Tribe: Origin: Ancient Indo-Aryan group from migrations (2000–1500 BCE). Historical Mentions: Herodotus, Pliny, Ptolemy, Kalhana's *Rajatarangini*.
- The word 'Dard' is derived from a Sanskrit word, 'Daradas', which means people who live on hillsides". They inhabit Dha, Hanu, Beema, Darchik and Garkone villages in Leh and Kargil districts and are together called the Aryan valley. The people of this region have unique physical features, social life, ethnic culture and language.

- Researchers believe that the 'Aryans of Ladakh' or the 'Brokpas' are descendants of Alexander's army and had come to the region over 2,000 years ago. They do not document their history. They participate in a six-day festival, 'Arya Utsav', wherein the tribe follows liberal customs and kissing in the public is considered normal.

What are their customs?

- They are mainly dependent on agriculture and the apricots grown here are considered among the best in the world. There are 12 varieties of grapes in the region and Grape-wine is very popular in the "Aryan valley". They rear goat and sheep for milk and meat. Their festivals are based on the solar calendar. They worship trees, rivers and mountains.

What are their concerns?

- The tribe is considered threatened due to their depleting numbers, which, at present, is around 4,000. They are "educationally and economically backward". They perceive threat to the heritage of the community owing to modernisation, migration and religious conversion.
- Over the last few decades, many of them have embraced Islam or Buddhism. The community prohibits marriage with outsiders to keep the gene pool intact. Of late, the Dard men have been migrating to other parts of the region (in search of livelihood) and marrying outside the tribe. Thus, the tribe is struggling to find a balance between modernity and traditional values. Also, after the Kargil War, development work in this region has been restricted, since it borders Pakistan-occupied Kashmir.

8. Kerala's Muthuvan Tribe

(Use this content in the topic of syllabus – Unit 6.1 Paper II)

- The Muthuvan Adivasi Samudaya Sangam organised a convention on the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples.

Muthuvan Tribe:

- The Muthuvans, or Mudugars, live on the border hill forests of Kerala and Tamil Nadu. There are two different groups among the Muthuvan, and they speak slightly two different dialects. Hence, they call each other Malayalam Muthuvan and Pandi Muthuvan. They are known for coexisting with the wildlife with their traditional knowledge and understanding of hills. They have expertise in traditional medicines which are very effective and these medicines and the medicine men are confidentially preserved and passed on to the generations.

Social Organization:

- The Muthuvan have six clans known as Koottams. Each koottam is again divided into sub clans. The functions of these divisions are mainly for marriage alliance, to keep up the social status, and to indicate descent and ancestry. The Muthuvan adhere to community endogamy and clan exogamy.
- These tribal people follow a unique system of governance called the 'Kani System'. Under this system, each village is headed by a 'Kani', who is responsible for the administration of the village. They have various punishment methods for breaking their traditions and moral standards.

Religion and Beliefs:

- They are animists and spirit worshippers and also worship the forest gods. They believe that the spirits of their ancestors are to be the first migrants to the hill forests.

Occupation:

- Virippukrishi (a form of shifting cultivation) is their traditional means of livelihood, and they cultivate a wide variety of food grains that are used only for consumption. Ragi (Little Millet), Maize (Sorghum), Thina (Italian Millet), Varagu, Chama Rice, Tomato, Carrot, Sweet Potato, Potato, Cheeni Vala, Toppi, Mocha, etc., are principal food crops cultivated by the Muthuvan

community.

9. Toda Tribe – Preserving India’s Endangered Languages

(Use this content in the topic of syllabus – Unit 6.2 Paper II)

- The Toda tribe of the Nilgiri Hills is leading preservation efforts for India’s endangered languages under the Scheme for Protection and Preservation of Endangered Languages (SPPEL).
- A pastoral tribal community of the Nilgiris, Tamil Nadu, speaking the Toda language — a proto-South-Dravidian tongue without a native script.
- Engaged with SPPEL (CIIL, Ministry of Education) to document, digitise, and promote literacy in Toda using the Tamil script.

Features:

- Language: They have their own language, which does not have a script. They live in a closed community or hamlet called mund.
- Society: It is a patrilineage descent group whose membership is based upon a rule of patrilineal descent. Their community is divided into two endogamous groups, namely Tharthazoll and Theveioll.
- To maintain the social harmony or solidarity among the Toda tribal population of Todas are controlled for many generations by their own traditional Government called ‘Noim’. This Noim is headed by a Toda tribal head-man called Monegar. He has the full power to control the Todas and he also dispenses justice in the Toda community
- Occupation: This tribe is largely dependent on buffalo herding and embroidery for its livelihood. Its members are incredibly skilled artisans known for the red-and-black embroidery on white fabrics that has even earned them a GI (geographical indication) tag.
- Festival: They celebrate ‘Modhweth’ festival, which is also called buffalo festival every year during the last Sunday of December or on the first Sunday of January.
- Significance: Cultural Identity – Protects intangible heritage and traditional ecological knowledge. Linguistic Diversity – Strengthens India’s status as a multilingual nation with over 1,300 recorded languages.

10. Kerala’s Muthuvan tribe comes together to protect their language, culture

(Use this content in the topic of syllabus – Unit 7.1 Paper II)

- Community organises three-day assembly as part of the International Day of the World’s Indigenous Peoples. A rare convention of the Muthuvan community has taken on a novel mission to protect their language and culture.
- The Muthuvans, or Mudugars, live on the border hill forests of Kerala and Tamil Nadu. There are two different groups among the Muthuvan, and they speak slightly two different dialects. Hence, they call each other Malayalam Muthuvan and Pandi Muthuvan. They are known for coexisting with the wildlife with their traditional knowledge and understanding of hills. They have expertise in traditional medicines which are very effective and these medicines and the medicine men are confidentially preserved and passed on to the generations.

Social Organization:

- The Muthuvan have six clans known as Koottams. Each koottam is again divided into sub clans. The functions of these divisions are mainly for marriage alliance, to keep up the social status, and to indicate descent and ancestry. The Muthuvan adhere to community endogamy and clan exogamy.
- These tribal people follow a unique system of governance called the ‘Kani System’. Under this system, each village is headed by a ‘Kani’, who is responsible for the administration of the

village. They have various punishment methods for breaking their traditions and moral standards.

Religion and Beliefs:

- They are animists and spirit worshippers and also worship the forest gods. They believe that the spirits of their ancestors are to be the first migrants to the hill forests.

Occupation:

- Virippukrishi (a form of shifting cultivation) is their traditional means of livelihood, and they cultivate a wide variety of food grains that are used only for consumption. Ragi (Little Millet), Maize (Sorghum), Thina (Italian Millet), Varagu, Chama Rice, Tomato, Carrot, Sweet Potato, Potato, Cheeni Vala, Toppi, Mocha, etc., are principal food crops cultivated by the Muthuvan community.

11. The role of tribal women in balancing family, community, and environment in Araku Valley, India

(Use this content in the topic of syllabus – Unit 6.2 Paper II)

- Women in the tribal communities of Araku Valley in Andhra Pradesh, India are taking a lion's share of responsibility to balance family, community, and environment. Their role in preserving traditional knowledge and environment is exemplary and needs to be acknowledged at international forums. Non-tribal people living in urban areas must learn from tribal women how to lead a simple yet fulfilling life in a sustainable way.
- Araku Valley is a hill station in India, 111 km west of Visakhapatnam city. It is a valley in the Eastern Ghats inhabited by different tribes, mainly Araku Tribes. Tribal communities are forest dwellers living in harmony with their environment. They depend on plants and plant products for their day-to-day life and survival.
- Though both men and women of the community work for survival, women have the additional responsibility of household tasks. This paper briefly describes Araku Valley tribal women's role in supporting their family, tribal community, and the environment.
- Women take a lead role in collecting forest products of various forms. Firewood collection, liquor making, religious ceremony preparation, and the construction of household implements are their primary responsibility. Several kinds of traditional knowledge are involved - such as traditional medicines and clothing designs - and are passed from one generation to the next, with women at the center of it all.
- Festivals, religious ceremonies, and magico-religious rituals are an essential part of tribal communities. The ways of celebration are different across various tribal communities and even different clans within the same community. Women take a central role in these events, uniting the community at large and preserving the culture of the clan and community.
- The close association and dependency of tribal people on the forest and nature is at the heart of their effort in its preservation. They are much more careful with the preservation of forests and are more in harmony with nature than urban communities. Tribal community practices ensure that nature is not exploited beyond repair. Women take on a big role in mitigation strategies.

12. Pradhan Mantri PVTG Development Mission

(Use this content in the topic of syllabus – Unit 9.1 Paper II)

- The PM-PVTG Development Mission program aims to improve the socio-economic status of Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs). For this, availability of Rs 15,000 crore for Scheduled Tribes has been envisaged in the Union Budget. The mission includes providing basic facilities like safe

housing, clean drinking water and sanitation, education, health and nutrition, better access to roads in settlements for backward scheduled tribes.

Prime Minister PVTG Development Mission:

- It may be noted that Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had announced 'Pradhan Mantri PVTG Development Mission' under the Union Budget 2023-24 on February 1, 2023.
- The Central Government has allocated Rs 15,000 crore under the 'Development Action Plan for Scheduled Tribes' to implement this mission in the next three years.
- Tribals

PVTG (Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups)

- PVTGs are more vulnerable among the tribal groups who are in need of greater support and development. Out of the 705 Scheduled Tribes in India, 75 have been identified as PVTGs and are spread across 17 states and one Union Territory.
- Government of India follows the following criteria for identification of PVTGs
- Pre-agricultural level of technology
- Low level of literacy
- Economic backwardness
- A declining or stagnant population. In 1975, the Government of India initiated to identify the most vulnerable tribal groups as a separate category called PVTGs and declared 52 such groups. An additional 23 groups were added to the category in 1993. Some Examples: Cholanaikayan (Kerala), Kathodi (Gujarat), Jarawas (Andaman & Nicobar Islands), Koraga (Karnataka)

13. Role of Rajasthan's Tribal Communities in tackling global challenges

(Use this content in the top of syllabus – Unit 7.2 Paper II)

- A High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) on Sustainable Development was held at the United Nations headquarters in New York. The UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), through its outcome on "The Future We Want", established the HLPF in 2012. The HLPF is the central platform for follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the SDGs. It was held under the auspices of the U.N. Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).
- Theme – 'Reinforcing the 2030 agenda and eradicating poverty in times of multiple crises: The effective delivery of sustainable, resilient and innovative solutions'
- Indigenous solutions not only meet their own needs but also contribute to broader sustainability goals. E.g., recently, various events were held in southern Rajasthan for preservation of indigenous seed varieties to restore links between crop diversity and climate resilience. The forum emphasized that the global community is facing unprecedented crises, including climate change and socio-economic consequences, which are exacerbating challenges like economic inequality and environmental degradation.
- It highlighted that the tribal communities in Rajasthan have adopted innovative approaches guided by sustainable and resilient solutions across environmental, social, cultural, and economic systems.
- The initiatives based on seed sovereignty, soil sovereignty, food and nutrition sovereignty, water sovereignty and cultural sovereignty had empowered tribal communities in the State to collectively overcome critical challenges.
- Best practices of tribals highlighted at the forum
- The best practices of tribals highlighted at the forum included: The production of local seeds, water conservation at source, use of animals in agriculture, checking soil erosion through mixed cropping, and the use of uncultivated food for nutritional security.
- These practices have helped tribal communities reduce their dependence on the market and survive during the difficult phases, including the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020-21.

14. NCST Survey on Tribal Displacement

(Use this content in the topic of syllabus – Unit 7.1 Paper II)

- The National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST) has directed the governments of Telangana, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, and Odisha to conduct surveys to identify the exact number of tribal people displaced from Chhattisgarh due to Maoist violence and now living in difficult conditions in neighboring states.

Key Points

- Identification of Displaced Tribal People: The panel emphasized the need to determine the exact number and locations of displaced tribal people in Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, and Maharashtra to plan the next course of action effectively.
- Coordination for Survey and Data Compilation: The NCST directed the Chhattisgarh government to appoint a nodal officer to coordinate with the governments of Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, and Maharashtra for conducting the surveys. After collecting data from these states, the Chhattisgarh government must compile a consolidated report and submit it to the NCST for further action.
- Petition Highlighting the Issue: The commission received a petition, stating that members of the Gottikoya community, who fled Chhattisgarh in 2005 due to violence between Maoist guerrillas and Indian security forces, are facing severe hardships in their new locations.
- Estimated Number of Displaced Tribals: Tribal rights activists estimate that around 50,000 tribals were displaced from Chhattisgarh due to left-wing extremism. They are currently residing in 248 settlements in the forests of Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, and Maharashtra.
- Land Reclamation and Displacement Concerns: Reports indicate that the Telangana government has reclaimed land from internally displaced people (IDPs) in at least 75 settlements, endangering their livelihoods and making them more vulnerable. The commission, citing the petition, noted allegations that forest department officials demolished IDPs' homes and destroyed their crops.

15. Tharu people

(Use this content in the topic of syllabus – Unit 6.2 Paper II)

- The Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) homes bring smiles to women of the Tharu tribe in Kheri district near the Indo-Nepal border.

Tharu Tribe:

- The Tharu tribe is one of the indigenous groups living in the Terai plain on the Indo-Nepal border.
- They live in both India and Nepal.
- In the Indian terai, they live mostly in Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, and Bihar.
- In 1967, this tribe was documented as a Scheduled Tribe by the Government of India.
- Language: They have their own language called Tharu or Tharuhati, a language of the Indo-Aryan subgroup of the Indo-Iranian group of the Indo-European family.
- Economy: Most Tharu practice agriculture, raise cattle, hunt, fish, and collect forest products.
- Most of their food involves rice, lentils, and vegetables.
- They build their homes from bamboo and mud.

Society:

- Despite their patrilineal social system, women have property rights greatly exceeding those recognized in Hindu society.

- Tharu marriages are patrilocal within the tribe.
- A common feature of the Tharu community is the joint family system of living in long houses.
- Tharus live in compact villages, usually in the middle of a forest clearing. Each village is governed by a council and a headman.

16. Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan

(Use this content in the topic of syllabus – Unit 7.2 Paper II)

- Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan aims to foster holistic development in tribal villages, bringing transformative changes to the socio-economic landscape of the region
- It aims to foster holistic development in tribal villages, bringing transformative changes to the socio-economic landscape of the region.
- The Abhiyan will cover around 63,843 villages, benefiting more than 5 crore tribal people in 549 districts, and 2,911 blocks spread across all tribal majority villages and aspirational blocks in 30 States/UTs.
- It envisions saturation of critical gaps in social infrastructure, health, education, and livelihood through 25 interventions implemented by 17-line ministries of Govt of India by convergence and outreach; and ensures holistic and sustainable development of tribal areas and communities.
- The scheme has a total outlay of Rs.79,156 crores (Central Share: Rs.56,333 crore and State Share: Rs. 22,823 crore).
- It has been planned based on the learning and success of Pradhan Mantri Janjati Adivasi Nyaya Maha Abhiyan (PM JANMAN), which was launched in November, 2023. With a budget outlay of Rs. 24,104 crores, the PM-JANMAN focuses on the Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTG) population.
- PVTG : Initially known as Primitive Tribal Groups, the PVTGs are defined by the government as tribal communities that show either a declining or stagnant population, use of pre-agrarian technology, economic backwardness, low literacy etc.
- They are found to be living in some of the remotest and most inaccessible areas in the country. There are 75 such communities which are spread over 18 States and Union Territories, according to government figures.

17. Key findings on the study of denotified Tribes

(Use this content in the topic of syllabus – Unit 7.1 Paper II)

- A comprehensive study has categorized 268 denotified, semi-nomadic, and nomadic tribes, recommending their inclusion in SC, ST, and OBC lists. The classification could reshape welfare benefits and political dynamics. After three years of research, the Anthropological Survey of India (AnSI) and Tribal Research Institutes (TRIs) have for the first time systematically categorized 268 denotified, semi-nomadic, and nomadic tribes across India. Out of these, 179 communities are now recommended for inclusion in the Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST), and Other Backward Classes (OBC) lists.

Historical Background and the Need for Classification

- Denotified tribes were once labeled as “criminal” under the Criminal Tribes Act of 1924, which was repealed in 1949. However, since then, various commissions—including the Kaka Kalelkar Commission (1955), the Mandal Commission (1980), the Renke Commission (2008), and the Idate Commission (2017) have attempted but failed to fully classify these communities. The Idate Commission’s 2017 report identified 1,200 denotified, semi-nomadic, and nomadic tribes

and highlighted 267 unclassified communities. This led the Indian government to form a Special Committee under the NITI Aayog in 2019, which assigned AnSI and TRIs the task of ethnographic classification.

Key Findings of the Study

- 268 communities classified: For the first time, these tribes have been systematically documented. 179 communities recommended for SC/ST/OBC inclusion: This inclusion aims to provide reservation benefits. 63 communities found untraceable: These groups may have merged with other communities, changed names, or migrated. Political and legal implications: The classification has sparked debates on reservations and special status.
- Impact on Reservation and Welfare Policies : With this classification, denotified tribes could access government welfare schemes reserved for SCs, STs, and OBCs, including education and employment opportunities. However, this move has also raised political concerns. There are two competing views within the Development and Welfare Board for Denotified, Nomadic, and Semi-Nomadic Communities: Challenges and Concerns : Political Controversies: Activists in states like Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, and Gujarat are questioning the basis of classification, fearing it may impact existing reservation structures.

18. Kolam Tribes

(Use this content in the topic of syllabus – Unit 6.2 Paper II)

- Kolam tribes, also known as Kolamboli, Kulme and Kolmi, occupy a major portion of Madhya Pradesh. Kolam tribes, also known as Kolamboli, Kulme and Kolmi, occupy a major portion of Madhya Pradesh.
- The main concentration of this tribe is on the plains and in the mountainous region. These tribal groups are reckoned as scheduled tribes and apart from Madhya Pradesh they reside in some parts of Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh.
- They are listed as Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG) in the state of Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh.

History:

- Around the twelfth century, the Kolam served as priests for the Gond, representing some of their important gods. It is generally accepted that the Kolam descended from the original population in the area.
- Since they now live near the Gond, they have adopted much of the Gond lifestyle. The Kolam people are divided into different clans, like Chal Deve, Pach Deve, Saha Deve, and Sat Deve. Marriages between the same clans are not permissible.
- The Kolams use the name of their clans as their surnames. Their society is patrilineal, meaning that the line of descent is traced through the males.
- The Kolam are mainly farmers and forest workers. In times past, they used shifting cultivation on the hill slopes. Today, they primarily live as settled farmers and use plow cultivation.
- They speak a Dravidian language called Kolami, and nearly all of the adults also speak Marathi, Telugu, or Gondi. They also speak other languages like Marathi, Telugu or Gondi. For writing, this Kolma tribal community uses the famous Devnagari script