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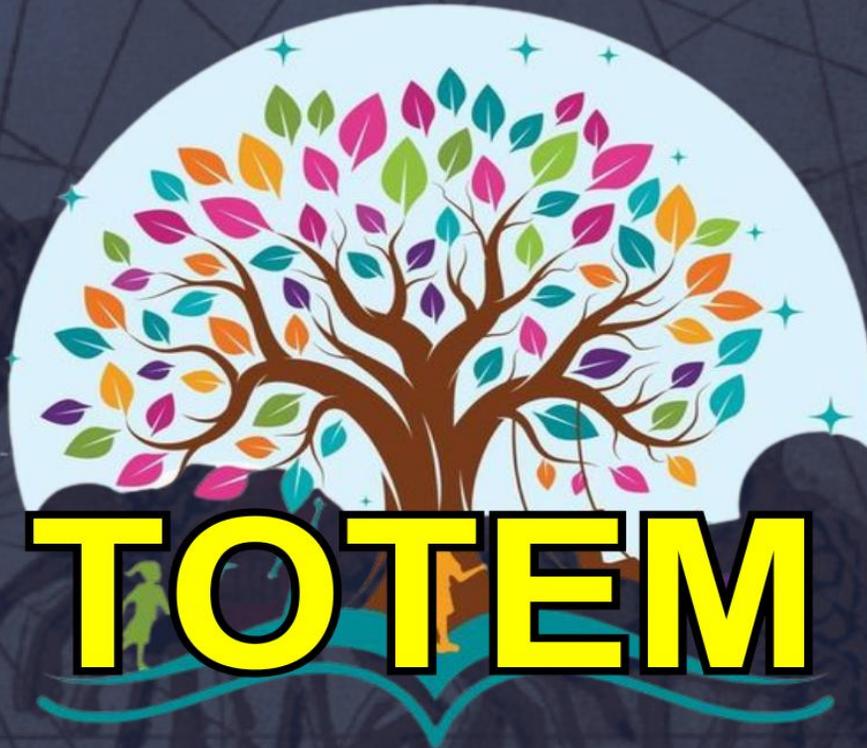
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PAPER - 1

PHYSICAL & ARCHAEOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY

1. Genetic Study of Indian Population

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

- Old genetic study published recently continue to unveil the deep ancestral roots of Indian populations, offering insights into major human migrations and the historical impact on social structures like the caste system.

Findings

- **"Out of Africa" Migration** - 50,000 years ago, all present-day humans trace their lineage back to a single major migration out of Africa forming the foundational genetic component for populations worldwide, including India. **Major Ancestral Indian Populations** - 2009 study identified 2 primary, genetically divergent ancestral populations that contributed to most modern Indians: **Ancestral North Indians (ANI)** - Genetically similar to populations from West Asia, Central Asia, and Europe. **Higher ANI ancestry** - Predominant in northern Indian states. "Upper caste" groups across India show a significant proportion (39-71%) of ANI ancestry.
- **Ancestral South Indians (ASI)** - Based on a deeper study of ancient genetic information from over 500 individuals in Central Asia and Northern South Asia. It's been concluded that ASI are genetically distinct from the ANI, originating from East Eurasia, and that modern tribal groups in South India are considered their direct descendants. **Admixture** - These ANI & ASI populations are believed to have largely mixed over 3,000-4,000 years ago, forming the complex genetic mosaic seen across India today as Dravidians & Aryans.
- **Ancient Ancestral South Indians (AASI)** - Older than the ASI. Adivasi's of Andaman-Nicobar Islands are considered the "true ASIs" or AASI, having migrated from the East Asian-Pacific regions over 60,000 years ago. They largely remained socially and genetically isolated from mainland Indians.
- **Genetic Stratification** - Researchers in 2003 used 'haplogroups' (genetic markers of common parenting), indicates correlation with the caste system: Certain ancestral genetic components are highest in tribal groups. These components are somewhat less common in "lower castes." They are least common in "upper castes."
- **Social barriers** - Are slowly eroding with increasing education, democracy & modernization. **Inter-caste marriages & Inter-faith marriages** - Rose to 6% & 1% respectively by 2011 Census.
- **Future Outlook** - These numbers are expected to have risen significantly, in urban areas, reflecting increased social mobility and integration, with clearer data anticipated from the forthcoming 2027 Census.

2. We need to move from a caste census with a capital C to one with a small c (Use this content in the topic of syllabus – Unit 3.2 Paper I)

- The government's announcement of a caste census has reignited the social justice debate. After decades of delay, the exercise promises to redefine India's path toward

equality. However, scholars like Anand Teltumbde and sociologist Trina Vithayathil caution that unless thoughtfully designed, the census could become a token gesture perpetuating caste divisions instead of dismantling them.

- For the first time in over 90 years, India appears poised to conduct a **comprehensive caste enumeration**, a long-standing demand of social justice movements. The announcement marked a **political and social milestone**, yet it raised concerns over methodology, intent, and execution. The last major caste data collection was the **Socio-Economic and Caste Census (SECC) 2011**, whose data was never released. Hence, this move represents both **continuity and rupture**, an opportunity for social reform, but also a test of political sincerity.

Significance of a caste census

- **Historical Backdrop:** The last caste enumeration occurred in **1931**, and SECC 2011 failed to release its caste data. **Social Justice Milestone:** Seen as the next big step in India's march toward reducing structural caste inequalities. **Relevance to Policy:** Data essential for designing **targeted affirmative action** and **inclusive public welfare** policies.

The Peril of a Caste Census

- **Tokenism Risk:** Scholars warn against viewing the caste census as a **panacea** for social justice without structural reform. **Reinforcement of Hierarchies:** Poorly designed enumeration could **re-entrench caste identity** rather than diminish it. **Ambedkarite Vision:** Real emancipation lies in **annihilating caste**, not merely counting it.

How do recent scholarly works shape the debate?

- **Teltumbde's "The Caste Conundrum":** Advocates linking caste enumeration with **transformative social change**. **Vithayathil's "Counting Caste":** Based on **bureaucratic fieldwork**, highlighting how technical details can determine whether enumeration promotes inclusion or exclusion. **Common Ground:** Both scholars stress **reflection and purpose**, not mechanical data gathering.
- **Conclusion :** The caste census, if executed thoughtfully, can become a historic step toward **data-backed equality**. But if reduced to political arithmetic, it risks becoming a **bureaucratic ritual reinforcing caste privilege**. The challenge is to move from enumeration to emancipation from a Census that counts people to one that makes people count.

3. Shaping India's Future through Biomedical Research Programme

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

- The Union Cabinet has approved **Phase-III of the Biomedical Research Career Programme (BRCP)**, shaping **India's next frontiers in science through biomedical research** and strengthening the nation's innovation capacity in line with **Viksit Bharat 2047**.

Biomedical Research Career Programme (BRCP)

- The **BRCP** is a flagship **Indo-UK initiative** launched in **2008-09**, the programme is **jointly implemented by the Department of Biotechnology (DBT), Government of India, and the Wellcome Trust, UK**. **Main Objectives** Build a **world-class biomedical research ecosystem** in India. Support **scientists at all career stages** from early-career to senior researchers through **fellowships and grants**.
- Encourage **interdisciplinary, ethical, and translational research** that directly

improves healthcare and public health outcomes. **Phase-III targets training 2,000 researchers, advancing 25–30% projects to Technology Readiness Level (TRL-4) and above**, promoting patentable research, and increasing women scientist participation by 10–15% for greater inclusivity. **Achievements:** The BRCP has supported **721 research grants** and played a **key role in shaping India's COVID-19 research response**.

India's Emerging Frontiers in Biomedical Research and Innovation?

- **Genomics & Human Genetics:** Initiatives like **GenomeIndia** and **UMMID (Unique Methods of Management and Treatment of Inherited Disorders)** map India's genetic diversity to enable **precision medicine** and early diagnosis of rare diseases.
- **dbGENVOC**, developed by **DBT-National Institute of Biomedical Genomics (NIBMG)**, is the world's first public **oral cancer genomic database**, hosting over **24 million variants** to support **prevention, diagnosis, and treatment** in India.
- **Infectious Disease Biology:** India's research on **Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), Tuberculosis (TB), malaria, Covid-19, and dengue**, led to innovations like the **Dengue Day 1 test** and **HIV Tri-Dot+Ag test**. **Vaccine Development:** Supported by the **Indo-US Vaccine Action Programme (VAP)**, India has developed key indigenous vaccines such as **ROTAVAC** and **Covaxin**. Current efforts target diseases like dengue, malaria, and pneumonia, enhancing **self-reliance** and export potential.
- **Conclusion :**The **BRCPI**, alongside initiatives like **BioE3**, is propelling India towards becoming a **global hub for affordable and impactful biomedical innovation**. Aligned with **DG-3 (Good Health and Well-being)** and **SDG-9 (Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure)**, it strengthens healthcare, fosters inclusivity, and advances scientific leadership on the world stage.

4. Applications of DNA Fingerprinting

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

- **DNA fingerprinting** - It is a forensic technique, also known as DNA profiling, that identifies individuals based on unique patterns in their DNA, particularly in repetitive DNA segments called short tandem repeats (STRs).
- **DNA Sample** - Fingerprint can be established using DNA from teeth, bones, blood (a drop is enough), spit, semen, skin cells, etc.
- **DNA polymorphisms** - It refers to variations in DNA sequences, including single nucleotide differences (SNPs), that occur among individuals or populations. A nucleotide is the basic building block of nucleic acids (DNA and RNA), composed of a sugar molecule (deoxyribose in DNA, ribose in RNA), a phosphate group, and a nitrogen-containing base. It serves as genetic markers for analysis and can be used to differentiate one person from another. It is most often (but not exclusively) used together with technologies like PCR, capillary electrophoresis, and fingerprinting.
- **DNA profiles**- They are typically generated using polymorphisms in parts of the DNA called short tandem repeats (STRs).

Applications of DNA Fingerprinting

- The ability of DNA fingerprinting to analyze and match genetic markers makes DNA fingerprinting an invaluable tool across science, medicine, law enforcement, and more.
- **Biological identification** - Just like the Aadhaar number is used to uniquely identify an

individual for social security purposes, a person's DNA fingerprint can be used for biological purposes.

- **Forensic science** - By comparing DNA found at crime scenes with that of suspects, authorities can establish links or rule out individuals. **Paternity and family testing** - DNA fingerprinting can confirm biological relationships, such as identifying parents, siblings, or other relatives.
- **Medical diagnostics** - It helps in identifying genetic disorders, mutations, or predispositions to certain diseases, enabling early diagnosis and personalized treatment plans.
- **Anthropology and evolutionary studies** - Scientists use DNA profiling to study human evolution, migration patterns, and historical connections between populations.

5. 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**.
- **Research in 2005** using mitochondrial DNA of **260 Orang Asli individuals (Tribe of Malaysia)** indicated **rapid coastal migration around 65,000 years ago, reaching Australia via the Indian Ocean**. A **2020 study on 2,700-year-old DNA in Japan** linked coastal migration to genetic affinities with **Taiwanese tribes**.
- **Andaman Islands' settlements** also correlate with coastal journeys. **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. **Inland Dispersion Model:** The inland dispersal model suggests that **early humans migrated through interior terrestrial routes** rather than coastal ones.

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.

PAPER - 2

INDIAN & TRIBAL ANTHROPOLOGY

1. UP to Curb Caste-Based Practices

(Use this content in the topic of syllabus – Unit 3.2 Paper II)

- The Uttar Pradesh government has issued a notification to curb caste-based glorification by banning caste-based political rallies, removing caste signboards, and prohibiting caste mention in police records to promote social harmony.
- This decision follows a ruling by the Allahabad High Court in the Praveen Chetri v State of UP case, which criticized caste recording in police records as regressive and against the principles of a modern, secular India.

Key Points

- **Ban on Political Rallies:** The notification imposes a blanket ban on political rallies based on caste identity, stating they promote social conflict and threaten “public order” and “national unity.”
- **Display on Vehicles:** Vehicles displaying caste-related stickers, slogans, or identifiers will be subject to penalties under the Central Motor Vehicles Act, 1988.
- **Ban on Signboards:** Public signboards that glorify any particular caste or declare geographical areas as caste-based territories or estates must be removed immediately.
- **Revised Police Record Procedures:** The order mandates the deletion of caste details from police records such as FIRs, arrest memos, and recovery documents.
- **The caste column in police databases (CCTNS portal) will be removed.** Instead, the mother’s name will be recorded alongside the father’s name in all related documents.
- **Monitoring of Social Media:** The government has instructed authorities to monitor social media platforms and take action against individuals spreading caste-based hatred or glorifying any caste group.
- **Exemption for Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes (SC/ST) Act, 1989:** The only exemption to the caste prohibition will apply to cases related to the SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989, where caste identification remains essential.

2. Key Points of Janjatiya Gaurav Varsh Pakhwada

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

- Starting 1st November 2025, the Ministry of Tribal Affairs has rolled out a two-week national celebration titled “Janjatiya Gaurav Varsh Pakhwada.”
- The observance not only concludes the year-long Janjatiya Gaurav Varsh, but also honours the 150th birth anniversary of Bhagwan Birsa Munda, the revered tribal

icon whose birth on 15th November, 1875 is celebrated as Janjatiya Gaurav Diwas.

- **Nationwide Celebration:** The fortnight-long event will be held across India through the combined efforts of Tribal Research Institutes (TRIs), Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRSs), TRIFED, and NSTFDC, showcasing the rich culture, legacy, and achievements of tribal communities.

Major Initiatives Featured:

- **PM JANMAN (Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups Development Mission):** Launched in 2023, it focuses on the holistic development of 75 Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) across 18 States and UTs. It provides housing, healthcare, nutrition, education, clean water, and livelihood opportunities, ensuring that the most marginalised tribal communities are integrated into the nation's growth story.
- **DAJGUA (Digital Archives of Janjatiya Gaurav and Unique Achievements):** An innovative digital platform documenting tribal freedom fighters, folklore, art, and oral traditions. The archive aims to make tribal heritage accessible to students, researchers, and the public, thereby preserving India's indigenous narratives for future generations.
- **Livelihood and Entrepreneurship Programs:** Under TRIFED and NSTFDC, several schemes such as Van Dhan Vikas Kendras and micro-enterprise models have empowered tribal producers through value addition, branding, and digital marketing. These initiatives have increased rural incomes and connected tribal artisans to national and international markets.

3. Ramnami Tribe

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

- **Ramnami Tribe** are a unique sect from Chhattisgarh, India, who tattoo the name "Ram" on their bodies and faces. Two members of the Ramnami tribe became emotional when the Prime Minister broke the protocol allowing them to adorn him with their traditional headgear- peacock feather crown- recently.

About Ramnami Tribe

- The Ramnamis are a unique sect from Chhattisgarh, India, who tattoo the name "Ram" on their bodies and faces.
- The Ramnami Samaj is a movement that came up in what is now central and northern Chhattisgarh in the 19th century as an act of peaceful resistance against the caste system in India that denied many of them entry to temples.
- According to a popular legend, it was started by Parsuram Bhardwaj, the son of a low-caste sharecropper. More than 100 years ago, the sect decided to tattoo their bodies and faces with the name of nirgun (unmanifest) Ram to show that Ram, or God, was omnipresent and everywhere.
- In 1910, the Ramnami Samaj was taken to court by upper-caste Hindu groups over this unique practice, but they won the case and the right to inscribe Ram's name on their bodies, clothing, and living spaces.
- Ramnamis emphasize worshipping Ram in any form, whether in saffron robes or with a shaved head. They prioritize gender equality and adorn themselves with

'ghungroos' and a crown crafted from peacock feathers. In Chhattisgarh, 'ghungroos' play a vital role in their dances and Bhajan performances.

- Their white attires were also decorated with the name of Ram, while the peacock feathers on their headgear held a rich mythological significance. At one time, their population stood anywhere near 6 lakh, but it has come down to 100,000, with some estimates suggesting only 20,000 Ramnami remain.

4. Ensuring Rights of Forest-Dwelling Communities: Ministry of Tribal Affairs Intervenes (Use this content in the topic of syllabus – Unit 6.3 Paper II)

- Ministry of Tribal Affairs has underscored the importance of protecting forest-dwelling communities.
- The Ministry of Tribal Affairs has underscored the importance of protecting forest-dwelling communities from unlawful eviction, as mandated by the Forest Rights Act.
- The Ministry's action comes in response to multiple complaints from villages located within tiger reserves in states such as Madhya Pradesh (MP), Maharashtra, and West Bengal.
- Residents alleged that they were being pressured to vacate their traditional lands without proper recognition of their rights under the FRA and the Wildlife Protection Act.
- Madhya Pradesh: In December, 52 Gram Sabhas from the Durgavati Tiger Reserve submitted representations, prompting the Ministry to request the state tribal development department to address these issues.
- Maharashtra: In October, similar complaints were raised by Rantalodhi village residents in the Tadoba Tiger Reserve. These grievances have highlighted the need for greater accountability and adherence to legal provisions in relocation efforts.

Ministry's Directives to States

- To address these concerns, the Ministry has instructed state tribal development and forest departments to submit detailed reports on: Villages in Tiger Reserves: Names and numbers of villages located within tiger reserves.
- Demographic Information: Tribes and forest-dwelling communities residing in these villages. Forest Rights Claims: Data on claims received, vested, and rejected under the FRA.
- Consent and Compensation: Processes for obtaining free and informed consent of gram sabhas and the compensation plans for relocation. The Ministry reiterated that Section 4(2) of the FRA explicitly safeguards forest-dwelling communities by legally recognizing their rights, prohibiting unlawful eviction, and ensuring that resettlements are voluntary and conducted with informed consent.

5. Tribes Contribution to India's Cultural Heritage and Socioeconomic Progress (Use this content in the topic of syllabus – Unit 6.3 Paper II)

- **Cultural Sentinels of India's Civilizational Identity:** Tribes preserve India's intangible cultural heritage through their oral traditions, folk art, spiritual practices, and ecological worldviews. They serve as living links to India's prehistoric past and plural ethos. Their distinct lifestyles showcase India's cultural continuity amid change.
- **Original Inhabitants and Natural Custodians of Land:** Tribal groups are rooted in India's geography, often in forests and highlands, forming a civilizational bond between land and people. Their territorial affinity defines indigenous sovereignty and natural stewardship.
- **Symbols of Resistance and Self-Rule in Indian History:** Adivasis have long resisted external domination from colonial rule to resource exploitation — asserting indigenous models of self-governance. Their struggle is central to India's anti-colonial and decentralization narratives. Example: Birsa Munda's Ulgulan movement challenged British land laws; Janjatiya Gaurav Divas commemorates this spirit. Tribals were involved in over 80 anti-colonial uprisings, including the Bhil, Kol and Santhal rebellions.
- **Pillars of National Integration in Strategic Borderlands:** Tribes inhabiting remote and border regions strengthen India's territorial integrity and cultural unity. Their presence in sensitive zones affirms India's sovereign identity and fosters grassroots national belonging.
- **Shapers of India's Local Knowledge Systems:** India's indigenous medical systems, agricultural methods, ecological knowledge, and storytelling traditions have deep tribal roots. They enrich local epistemologies and diversify India's intellectual heritage. **Architects of Communitarian Social Models:** Tribes exhibit egalitarian social relations with collective land ownership, decision-making through tribal councils, and decentralized leadership — reflecting India's indigenous democratic ethos.
- **Example: Khasi tribes in Meghalaya follow matrilineal succession and community consensus.** PESA Act (1996) constitutionalized such indigenous governance in Scheduled Areas.
- **Defenders of Pluralism and Tolerance:** Tribal worldviews allow co-existence of animism, nature-worship, and polytheism — reinforcing India's syncretic identity. Their inclusive spiritual ethos strengthens India's secular fabric. Example: The Rabari tribe follows a syncretic blend of Hinduism and animistic beliefs.

6. Xaxa Committee Recommendations for Tribal Welfare in India

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

- Strengthen implementation of the Forest Rights Act (FRA), 2006, and protect against displacement due to development projects. Ensure prior informed consent of tribal communities for land acquisition.
- Promote mother-tongue education at the primary level, recruit more tribal teachers, and establish residential schools closer to habitations with better infrastructure and culturally sensitive content.
- Enhance access to quality healthcare in tribal areas through mobile clinics,

community health workers, and integration of traditional tribal healing practices with public health systems.

- Support tribal livelihoods by improving access to forest produce markets, promoting agroforestry, and extending credit and skill development schemes tailored to tribal needs.
- Establish a dedicated National Commission on Tribal Development to monitor schemes, collect disaggregated data, and recommend course corrections.

Other Key Committees on Tribal Welfare:

- Elwin Committee (1959): Assessed tribal development blocks and advocated cultural preservation.
- Dhebar Commission (1960): It acknowledged the issue of land alienation in tribal areas, where tribal populations were losing their ancestral lands due to various factors, including government acquisition for development projects. It also outlined specific criteria for designating a region as a 'Scheduled Area' under the Fifth Schedule of the Constitution.
- Lokur Committee (1965): Proposed five criteria to identify STs for better inclusivity. These criteria include indications of primitive traits, distinctive culture, geographical isolation, shyness of contact with the larger community, and backwardness
- Bhuria Committee (1991): Recommended democratic decentralization, led to the PESA Act.
- Mungekar Committee (2005): Focused on governance issues in tribal areas.
- Bandopadhyay Committee (2006): Addressed development in Left-Wing Extremist-affected tribal regions.

7. Forest Rights Act (FRA), 2006

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

- The Chhattisgarh High Court for the first time, addressed the question of whether forest rights granted under the 2006 Forest Rights Act (FRA) can be revoked or cancelled, given that the law does not explicitly provide for any such measure. Landmark legislation: The Forest Rights Act, 2006 (officially known as the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act) is a landmark legislation aimed at recognizing and securing the rights of forest-dwelling communities in India.
- Reasons behind bringing the Act: The FRA, 2006 was implemented to recognize and vest the forest rights and occupation in forest land in forest dwelling Scheduled Tribes and other traditional forest dwellers who have been residing in such forests for generations but whose rights could not be recorded.
- The Act also aimed to undo the historical injustice occurred to the forest dwelling communities due to the forest management policies of colonial and post-colonial India, which did not acknowledge their symbiotic relationship with the forests. The Act further intended to empower the forest dwellers to access and use the forest resources in a sustainable manner, to conserve the biodiversity and ecological balance, and to protect them from unlawful evictions and displacement.
- Major provisions of the Act: The Act recognizes and vests the forest rights and

occupation in Forest land in Forest Dwelling Scheduled Tribes (FDST) and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (OTFD) who have been residing in such forests for generations. Forest rights can also be claimed by any member or community who has for at least three generations (75 years) prior to the 13th day of December, 2005 primarily resided in forest land for bona fide livelihood needs.

- The Gram Sabha is the authority to initiate the process for determining the nature and extent of Individual Forest Rights (IFR) or Community Forest Rights (CFR) or both that may be given to FDST and OTFD.
- Four types of rights, identified by the Act: Title rights: It gives FDST and OTFD the right to ownership to land farmed by tribals or forest dwellers subject to a maximum of 4 hectares.
- Ownership is only for land that is actually being cultivated by the concerned family and no new lands will be granted. Use rights: The rights of the dwellers extend to extracting Minor Forest Produce, grazing areas etc. Relief and development rights: To rehabilitate in case of illegal eviction or forced displacement and to basic amenities, subject to restrictions for forest protection. Forest management rights: It includes the right to protect, regenerate or conserve or manage any community forest resource which they have been traditionally protecting and conserving for sustainable use.

8. V-SAT (Very Small Aperture Terminal) Stations

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

- The Ministry of Tribal Affairs is partnering with ISRO for a pilot project, deploying V-SAT (Very Small Aperture Terminal) stations in approximately 80 tribal villages across Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, and Maharashtra. This initiative aims to provide internet services to these tribal areas.

V-SAT (Very Small Aperture Terminal) stations

- It is a two-way satellite ground station enabling communication for voice, data, and video signals. VSATs handle both narrowband data and broadband data. Narrowband data: Credit card transactions, polling, RFID data, or SCADA Broadband data: Satellite Internet access, VoIP, or video. They find use in providing connectivity to remote locations, supporting transportable or on-the-move communications and enabling mobile maritime communication.

How does VSAT work?

- VSAT operates with a transceiver and an indoor device. A user's computer connects to an outdoor antenna via a indoor device (box). The transceiver in the antenna sends and receives signals to and from a satellite transponder through a hub station on Earth. All transmissions pass through the hub station before being retransmitted via the satellite to reach the end user's VSAT.

Advantages

- VSAT is cost-effective, lightweight, and operates with low transmission power. It utilizes satellite signals, eliminating the need for physical links like Ethernet cables, reducing structural risks. VSAT serves as a backup for wired networks during failures and functions independently for local telecommunication networks. It can be easily installed in remote locations with minimal

infrastructure needs, redirecting satellite signals through a central hub to various locations.

Disadvantages

- VSATs suffer from latency due to the time delay in signals traveling between space and the ground, especially noticeable in two-way communication. Weather conditions and obstructions like buildings or trees can cause signal distortion between the satellite and earth station.

9. Plan to relocate forest tribes

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

- The Union Ministry of Tribal Affairs has drafted a new policy framework titled “Reconciling Conservation and Community Rights” to ensure that any relocation from tiger reserves aligns with the Forest Rights Act, 2006 (FRA) and ensures community consent, accountability, and post-relocation monitoring. This follows increasing complaints from Scheduled Tribes that relocations are being conducted without proper consent, despite the FRA granting them rights to reside within traditional habitats.

Significance of the new policy framework

- Institutional reform: The framework proposes a National Framework for Community-Centric Conservation and Relocation involving both the Environment and Tribal Affairs Ministries. Integration of agencies: Suggests joint procedural standards, timelines, and accountability mechanisms across ministries. Centralized database: Recommends creation of a National Database on Conservation-Community Interface (NDCCI) to record data on relocations, compensation, and post-relocation outcomes. Independent audits: Mandates annual independent audits by empanelled agencies to ensure FRA compliance and voluntary consent in relocation projects.

Policy needed

- Implementation gaps: Multiple representations from States and tribal groups highlighted “serious concerns” about non-implementation of FRA in tiger reserves. Violation of rights: Tribes alleged coercion into relocation despite the FRA allowing habitation within reserves. Poor monitoring: The Ministry noted lack of data and follow-up on families relocated from reserves since 2007. Scale of issue: Over 1,566 villages have been relocated from tiger reserves since 2007, affecting 55,000 families; another 94,000 families remain within reserve areas.

What safeguards does the framework propose?

- Voluntary relocation: Relocation only if consent is obtained at both Gram Sabha and household levels. Right to reside: Reaffirms that forest-dwelling communities cannot be relocated without exercising FRA rights to remain in traditional habitats. Scientific validation: Any relocation must be justified through demonstrable ecological necessity
- Conclusion: The proposed framework is a crucial step toward redefining India’s conservation ethics by embedding human rights into environmental protection. Its success will depend on genuine participation of tribal communities, transparent auditing, and strict accountability from both central and state

authorities. Only then can India achieve inclusive conservation that respects both its people and its tigers.

10. Bamboo Project Launched for Kolam Tribe in Adilabad under Green India Challenge

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

- A pilot bamboo plantation project has been launched in Mullagutta 2 village, Adilabad district (Telangana), to support the Kolam tribal community. The initiative, part of the Green India Challenge, aims to restore livelihoods and combat environmental degradation. It addresses the bamboo shortage faced by the Kolam tribes, a Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG).

Green India Challenge

- The Green India Challenge (GIC) is a nationwide environmental movement aimed at promoting afforestation and sustainable practices across India. It engages citizens and organisations in tree planting and environmental conservation efforts to combat climate change and enhance biodiversity.

Kolam Tribe

- The Kolam are a tribal group primarily found in Maharashtra, Telangana, Chhattisgarh, and Madhya Pradesh. They are classified as a Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG) and have a patrilineal society, with their traditional occupations being agriculture and forest work. The Kolam people speak the Dravidian language of Kolami and are culturally similar to the Gond tribe.

Key characteristics

- **Language:** Speak their own Dravidian language, Kolami, which does not have its own script. Many adults are also fluent in Marathi or Telugu. **Society:** Organized into various clans (such as Chal Deve, Pach Deve, Saha Deve, and Sat Deve), and their society is patrilineal, meaning descent is traced through males.
- **Occupation:** Traditional livelihoods include agriculture (both settled and shifting cultivation), animal farming, fishing, and forest labor. **Culture:** Share cultural similarities with the Gond tribe in terms of rituals and ceremonies. They consider themselves descendants of Bhima and Hidimbi from the epic Mahabharata.
- **Traditions:** Practice customs like the levirate, where a widow marries her deceased husband's brother.
- **Government support:** Have received government support through initiatives focused on improving health, education, and infrastructure, as noted in documents from Bamboo plantation project.

11. The legal hoodwinking of adivasis

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

- The Chhattisgarh High Court upheld the cancellation of Ghatbarra's community forest rights, a rare instance where formally recognised CFRs were later withdrawn. This marks a significant departure from the FRA's legal protection of settled rights and reveals how administrative technicalities can override Gram Sabha authority. The case is significant because lakhs of trees were felled after diversion was cleared, villagers' objections were repeatedly sidelined, and legal

rights were dismissed as “mistakes”, revealing systemic weakening of Adivasi rights in mineral-rich regions.

Why was Ghatbarra’s CFR status revoked?

- **DLC unilateral action:** The District Level Committee cancelled CFRs in 2016 while villagers were preparing to litigate. Claim dismissed as ‘mistake’: Authorities argued earlier recognition of rights was erroneous, contradicting FRA’s foundational principle. Failure to meet legal standards: Court held that land had already been diverted and thus claims did not meet FRA criteria. Judicial reliance on technicalities: Court questioned whether legal procedures for settling rights and obtaining Gram Sabha consent were fulfilled, placing burden on petitioners.

Why does this case matter for Adivasi self-determination?

- **Erosion of Gram Sabha authority:** CFRs, intended as a safeguard against arbitrary diversion, were overridden through administrative orders. Contradiction with Niyamgiri precedent: Supreme Court’s 2013 verdict upheld the primacy of Gram Sabha decisions; Ghatbarra marks a deviation. Expansion of extractive model: Mines continue to operate even when rights are unsettled; recognition does not ensure control. Undermining of democratic forest governance: Decision signals that settlements of rights can be reversed for developmental imperatives.

Conclusion

- The Ghatbarra judgment illustrates how forest governance mechanisms can be used to dilute, rather than protect, Adivasi rights. Although the FRA envisions community autonomy and ecological stewardship, the ruling demonstrates how institutional language and procedural manoeuvres can sideline these safeguards. The case underscores the urgent need to re-establish statutory primacy of Gram Sabha consent and ensure that rights, once settled, cannot be reversed to accommodate extractive interests.

12. Janjatiya Gaurav Varsh Pakhwada

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

- Starting 1st November 2025, the Ministry of Tribal Affairs has rolled out a two-week national celebration titled “Janjatiya Gaurav Varsh Pakhwada.”
- The observance not only concludes the year-long Janjatiya Gaurav Varsh, but also honours the 150th birth anniversary of Bhagwan Birsa Munda, the revered tribal icon whose birth on 15th November, 1875 is celebrated as Janjatiya Gaurav Diwas.

Key Points

- **Nationwide Celebration:** The fortnight-long event will be held across India through the combined efforts of Tribal Research Institutes (TRIs), Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRSs), TRIFED, and NSTFDC, showcasing the rich culture, legacy, and achievements of tribal communities.

Major Initiatives Featured:

- **PM JANMAN (Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups Development Mission):** Launched in 2023, it focuses on the holistic development of 75 Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) across 18 States and UTs. It provides housing, healthcare, nutrition, education, clean water, and livelihood opportunities, ensuring that the most marginalised tribal communities are integrated into the nation’s growth story.

- **DAJGUA (Digital Archives of Janjatiya Gaurav and Unique Achievements):** An innovative digital platform documenting tribal freedom fighters, folklore, art, and oral traditions. The archive aims to make tribal heritage accessible to students, researchers, and the public, thereby preserving India's indigenous narratives for future generations.
- **Livelihood and Entrepreneurship Programs:** Under TRIFED and NSTFDC, several schemes such as Van Dhan Vikas Kendras and micro-enterprise models have empowered tribal producers through value addition, branding, and digital marketing. These initiatives have increased rural incomes and connected tribal artisans to national and international markets.

13. Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs): Separate Enumeration

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

- The Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA) has asked the Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India (RGI) to count Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) separately in the upcoming Census. It wants details on their households, population, and socio-economic conditions. The Ministry says such data is crucial to ensure that schemes like the Pradhan Mantri Janjati Adivasi Nyaya Maha Abhiyan (PM JANMAN) reach the most vulnerable communities effectively.

Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs)

- PVTGs are the most marginalised among Scheduled Tribes (STs). They are marked by: Declining or stagnant population, Geographical isolation, Pre-agrarian level of technology (hunting, gathering, shifting cultivation), Economic backwardness, Very low literacy levels

Have PVTGs ever been counted separately?

- No. PVTGs have never been enumerated separately in any Census. They are usually merged under the broader Scheduled Tribe category. Out of 75 PVTGs, 40 are listed as 'single entry' tribes under Article 342 of the Constitution, meaning they are explicitly recognised in the notified ST list.
- In the 2011 Census, the Baigas of Madhya Pradesh were counted separately, but groups like Abujh Marias, Bharias, Hill Korbas, and Kamars were not. In 2013, Abujh Maria and Hill Korba were formally added to Chhattisgarh's ST list through legislation. By practice, the Registrar General of India (RGI) only publishes data for main STs, with sub-groups automatically included. This has prevented separate and focused data collection on PVTGs so far.

Why Separate Enumeration now?

- **For targeted welfare :** The PM JANMAN scheme (2023), with an allocation of Rs. 24,104 crore, aims to improve housing, health, education, and livelihoods for PVTGs in more than 200 districts.
- **For reliable population estimates:** A Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA) 2023 survey estimated the total PVTG population at 47.5 lakh. Madhya Pradesh: 13.22 lakh (highest), Maharashtra: 6.7 lakh, Andhra Pradesh: 5.18 lakh. Many groups are extremely small: Sentinelese (Andaman & Nicobar Islands): barely 15 individuals, Jarawas, Onges, Shompens, Raji, Kota, Birhor, Kamar, Korwa, Parhaiya, etc.: less

than 1,000 each.

14. India's FRA vs. Global Conservation Laws

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

- At CBD COP-16 (2025), a permanent subsidiary body for Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs) was created to uphold rights in biodiversity conservation. Amid global exclusionary trends, India's Forest Rights Act (FRA) 2006 stands out for linking community forest governance with conservation.

India's FRA vs. Global Conservation Laws:

- **FRA – A Rights-Based Conservation Model:** The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 legally recognizes 13 categories of forest rights, empowering gram sabhas for community-led biodiversity conservation.
 - **Global Trends – Fortress Conservation Model:** Many global laws (e.g., Wildlife Acts in Africa and Latin America) adopt an exclusionary “protected area” model, displacing 10–20 million IPLCs worldwide (g.: Batwa in Uganda, Masai in Kenya). This “fortress conservation” criminalizes traditional users and centralizes forest control under the state or private actors.
- Constitutional and Legal Backing in India:** India's Constitution provides Articles 244 & 244A, enabling tribal governance in Scheduled Areas. Complemented by PESA (1996) and BDA (2002), the FRA remains a rare global example linking local autonomy with biodiversity stewardship.

Limitations of FRA Implementation:

- **Weak Institutional Convergence:** Despite FRA's decentralized vision, updated National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans (NBSAPs 2024) still prioritize forest departments, marginalizing gram sabhas.
- **Incomplete Recognition of Rights:** Over 1.4 crore claims filed under FRA; however, only a fraction has been approved, often diluted or denied by forest authorities.
- **Non-Recognition of “Indigenous”:** India avoids using “indigenous” in law, weakening its alignment with UNDRIP (2007) which India supported globally.

Conclusion:

- India's Forest Rights Act 2006 remains globally unique for integrating community rights with conservation goals. Aligning global safeguards with FRA's democratic spirit and ensuring institutional coherence can foster inclusive, sustainable forest governance rooted in justice and ecological wisdom.

15. Key features of Onge Tribe

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

- Onges, a primitive Negrito tribe of India, inhabit Little Andaman. They are semi-nomadic and fully reliant on nature for food and survival.
- The Andaman and Nicobar Islands administration recently set up a Van Dhan Vikas Kendra for the Onge tribe at Dugong Creek under Pradhan Mantri Janjati Adivasi Nyay Maha Abhiyan to make them self-sustainable through coconut-based products.

About Onge Tribe

- Onges are one of the most primitive tribes in India. They belong to the Negrito racial stock. They are inhabiting Little Andaman Island, the most southerly island in the Andaman archipelago. They are semi-nomadic tribes and fully dependent on the food provided by nature.
- The religion of the Onges is simple animism. Neither ceremonial worship nor any kind of propitiation is practiced by them. They believe in different classes of spirits-spirits of the wood, the sea, disease, storm, and ancestors. The Onge speak their own language, which has no script.
- The colour of the teeth has a unique interpretation among Onges, who consider pearly white teeth a symbol of death. They continue to chew the bark to impart a red colour to their teeth. They decorate their bodies and their faces with white and ochre clay. On special occasions, they place a greater emphasis on body ornamentation.
- Until the 1940s, the Onge were the sole permanent inhabitants of Goubalambabey (the Onge name for Little Andaman). They now share the 732 sq km island with around 17,000 settlers from India, Bangladesh, and the Nicobar Islands. ‘
- The Onge population was also decimated following contact with British colonists and Indian settlers; it fell from 670 in 1900 to only 96 members by the early 2000s. In 1976, the Onge were settled in order to have ‘the basic facilities for hygienic living and protection against elements of nature’.
- They now live in a reserve in Dugong Creek (Little Andaman) that is a fraction of the size of their original territory. The Onge tribe is also one of the world’s least prolific and infertile communities. Infertility affects somewhat more than 40% of married couples.

16. Measures can India Adopt to Enhance Tribal Welfare and Development

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

- Effective Implementation of the Forest Rights Act (FRA), 2006: Ensuring timely recognition of Individual and Community Forest Rights (IFR & CFR) will empower tribals to manage their land and natural resources.
- Digitizing land records (as envisioned in Budget 2025-25), setting up fast-track FRA tribunals, and involving local Gram Sabhas in claim verification can speed up the process. Strengthening the link between FRA and MGNREGA can provide sustainable employment in afforestation and conservation.
- Expanding and Strengthening Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS): While the ₹7,088 crore budget allocation for EMRS (2025-26) is a welcome move, ensuring infrastructure, quality teachers, and modern pedagogy is crucial. Introducing tribal-language textbooks, digital learning platforms, and vocational training can improve educational outcomes. Linking EMRS with PM Daksh Yojana will ensure skill-based training alongside academic education.
- Revamping Tribal Healthcare through Mobile Health Units and AYUSH Integration: Tribal regions suffer from high malnutrition, maternal mortality, and endemic diseases, requiring decentralized healthcare solutions. Deploying mobile health clinics with telemedicine in remote areas can bridge healthcare

gaps. Strengthening the National Health Mission (NHM) and Poshan Abhiyan in tribal belts can improve child and maternal health indicators.

- **Ensuring Sustainable Livelihoods through Minimum Support Price (MSP) for Minor Forest Produce (MFP):** Tribal livelihoods depend on minor forest produce (MFP) like tendu leaves, mahua, and honey, yet market exploitation leads to distress sales.
- **Expanding MSP coverage for more MFPs and strengthening Van Dhan Vikas Kendras (VDVKs)** can enhance tribal incomes. Encouraging community-led forest produce cooperatives will ensure fair pricing and reduce dependence on middlemen. Integrating PM Vishwakarma Yojana with VDVKs can further promote value addition and tribal entrepreneurship.
- **Empowering Tribal Women through SHGs and Microfinance:** Tribal women face economic marginalization and social exclusion, requiring targeted financial inclusion policies. Strengthening Self-Help Groups (SHGs) under the National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM) will improve their access to credit and entrepreneurship opportunities.

