



VISHNU

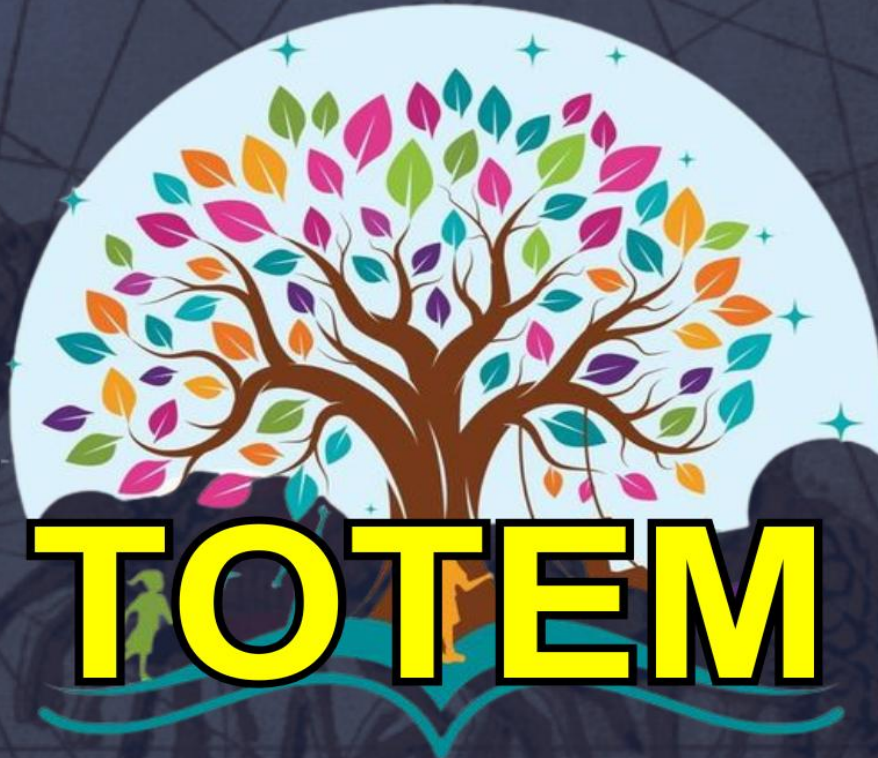
★ I A S ★

MODERN GURUKUL FOR CIVIL SERVICES

TGPSC G 1 | UPSC - CSE | APPSC G 1

ANTHROPOLOGY CURRENT AFFAIRS MAGAZINE

DECODING CURRENT EVENTS FOR UPSC SUCCESS



APRIL 2026

ANTHROPOLOGY ENRICHED CONTENT- PAPER 1 & 2

ALSO USEFULL FOR OTHER COMPETITIVE EXAMS

🌐 WWW.VISHNUIAS.COM

☎ 9000400939 | 9000350939

📍 GANDHI NAGAR, HYDERABAD

➔ Join our
Telegram Channel



CONTENTS

PAPER -1

PHYSICAL & ARCHAEOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY

1. Marriages in India – Legal Interventions and Reforms
2. New Insights into Human Evolution
3. ecDNA Challenging Genetics Principles
4. Challenges regarding Sickle Cell Eradication

SOCIO – CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY

1. UGC New Rules Against Caste Discrimination

PAPER - 2

INDIAN & TRIBAL ANTHROPOLOGY

1. Nicobarese migration to the Nicobar Islands
2. Misaal Project (MP Tribal Leadership)
3. Anamaya – The Tribal Health Collaborative
4. Denotified Tribes to be Enumerated in Census 2027
5. What needs to be done for tribal development?
6. Khelo India Tribal Games (KITG) 2026
7. Lanjia Saora Tribe
8. Tribal Urbanism
9. Definition of ‘Tribe’ in India
10. The Barker Hypothesis (Developmental Origins of Health and Disease - DOHaD) and Nutritional Anthropology
11. Educational complexes for tribal students
12. Challenges Faced by Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs)
13. Food Insecurity and Malnutrition in Tribal Communities of India
14. Bnei Menashe from India
15. SEED Scheme for DNT Communities
16. National Capacity Building Programme for Tribal Healers in Hyderabad
17. Aadi Karmayogi

18. 23rd Foundation Day of National Commission for Scheduled Tribes
19. Education: Initiatives for empowerment of tribal communities
20. Bridging the Gap in Tribal Welfare
21. Gujarat Launches India's First Tribal Genome Sequencing Project
22. Key points of 'PM-PVTG Development Mission'
23. Jharkhand Tribes Fight for Rights

PHYSICAL & ARCHAEOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY

1. Marriages in India - Legal Interventions and Reforms

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

- Over the years, there have been significant changes in marriage and maintenance laws. Marriage – It is a legally recognized, socially sanctioned union, typically between a man and a woman, forming a partnership with rights, obligations, and the purpose of creating a family and continuing lineage.
- Types – The two main forms of marriages are Monogamy, Polygamy .
 Monogamy – One man marries one woman at a time, and it is most common globally. Polygamy – Marriage with two or more spouses simultaneously. This includes two types Polygyny, Polyandry

How the monogamous family emerged?

- Prior to emergence of monogamy – Before the monogamous family, there existed a state of unregulated sexual relations. Influence of economic conditions – In *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* (1884), Friedrich Engels argues that changes in material conditions shape the organisation of family relations. Engels looks at the emergence of the monogamous family as an economic institution designed to ensure the inheritance of private property. Indian context of sambandham – Anthropologist Kathleen Gough's extensive work on the Nayars of Kerala shows that they followed a matrilineal kinship system in which property and lineage were traced through women. Their marital practices were not monogamous but based on sambandham.
- Sambandham is a form of visiting relationship with the husband without involving cohabitation. Children belonged to the mother's matrilineal joint family, known as the taravad, and the maternal uncles were the key male authority figures. A woman was also allowed to have more than one husband. However, Gough saw the practice of sambandham as a form of legitimate marriage. Cases of polyandry in India – It has also existed in several parts of India, such as among the Hatti community in the Sirmaur district in Himachal Pradesh and the Jaunsar Bawar region in Uttarakhand. The members of the Hatti, community see themselves as descendants of Pandavas from the Mahabharata.
- They practice jodidara – a form of polyandry to prevent land fragmentation. The Hindu Marriage Act, 1955 – Prohibits polyandry. But it is protected by the Himachal Pradesh High Court as part of customary law for the Hattis, who are a Scheduled tribe (ST) community. Such cases highlight the tensions between customary and constitutional laws, with opposition from women's organisations.

2. New Insights into Human Evolution

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

- A recent study challenges the long-held belief that modern humans (*Homo sapiens*) evolved from a single ancestral population, suggesting instead that they emerged through the admixture of two distinct populations.
- The research analyzed modern human DNA to trace population splits and reunions, relying on data from the 1000 Genomes Project rather than ancient fossils.
- The 1000 Genomes Project is a global initiative that sequenced DNA from populations across Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Americas.

Key Findings:

- Multiple Ancestry & Evolution: Modern humans (*Homo sapiens*) likely evolved from 2 ancestral populations, with one majority (~80%) experiencing a significant decline before recovering, while the other minority (~20%) contributed genes linked to brain function and cognition.
- Some genes from the minority group underwent purifying selection, indicating evolutionary pressures that shaped human development.
- This genetic exchange contributed nearly 10 times more material than the later Neanderthal-Denisovan interbreeding (~50,000 years ago), which accounts for only ~2% of non-African human DNA.
- Genetic Mixing: These populations diverged around 1.5 million years ago and later interbred approximately 300,000 years ago, forming the genetic foundation of modern humans.

3. ecDNA Challenging Genetics Principles

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

- Recently, a study published in *Nature* has revealed that extrachromosomal DNA (ecDNA), a previously overlooked component of genetic material, plays a significant role in cancer progression and drug resistance. These findings challenge the conventional understanding of genetics and open new avenues for understanding and treating cancer.

What is ecDNA and How It Challenges Conventional Genetic Principles

- About: ecDNA is a type of DNA that exists outside of chromosomes in the nucleus of cells.
- DNA stores genetic information crucial for an organism's growth, function, and reproduction. In eukaryotic cells, it is coiled into chromosomes. Humans have 23 pairs of chromosomes, with genes on them encoding proteins and determining traits. Formation: ecDNA forms when portions of DNA break away from chromosomes due to processes like chromothripsis (chromosomes are

broken and rearranged) or errors in DNA replication, creating circular structures that exist independently within the nucleus.

- Significance: ecDNA is commonly found in cancer cells, where it can contain multiple copies of oncogenes, contributing to tumor growth, genetic diversity, and drug resistance.
- Disruption of Random Gene Distribution: Traditional genetics holds that genes are distributed randomly and independently during cell division. ecDNA defies this principle by forming clusters of multiple genes that are passed as intact packages, allowing cancer cells to inherit advantageous genetic combinations reliably.

How ecDNA Contributes to Cancer and Drug Resistance

- ecDNA can carry multiple copies of oncogenes, leading to increased expression of cancer-promoting genes and tumor growth. It can take regulatory elements (enhancers) from other parts of the genome, causing abnormal gene activity that promotes cancer.
- The non-Mendelian inheritance of ecDNA creates genetic diversity within tumors, complicating targeted treatments. ecDNA can increase the number of genes that help cancer cells pump out drugs or change their targets, making it harder for chemotherapy to work.

4. Challenges regarding Sickle Cell Eradication

(Use this content in the topic of syllabus – Unit 9.4 Paper I)

- The initiative aligns with India's broader commitment to eradicating sickle cell anemia, a hereditary blood disorder, by 2047, particularly focusing on tribal communities, which are disproportionately affected.
- Sickle Cell Disease (SCD) is a genetic blood disorder causing abnormal haemoglobin (the protein that carries oxygen through the body), resulting in sickle-shaped red blood cells. This leads to blocked blood flow, severe pain, organ damage, and reduced life expectancy.

Challenges Regarding SCD in India:

- India has the world's highest tribal population density, with 67.8 million people (8.6%) as per the 2011 Census. MoHFW highlights SCD among the top ten health issues impacting tribal communities disproportionately.
- Limited diagnostic and treatment facilities in remote tribal areas and lack of knowledge among communities about genetic counseling and preventive measures. Long-term SCD management can be financially taxing due to medication costs, regular check-ups, and hospitalisations.
- Treatments like CRISPR cost USD 2-3 million, and finding bone marrow donors is challenging.

Some Government Initiatives Related to SCD

- National Sickle Cell Anaemia Elimination Mission: Vision: The National Sickle Cell Anaemia Elimination Mission, announced in the Union Budget 2023, targets the health challenges posed by Sickle Cell Disease (SCD), especially among tribal populations. The mission aims to eliminate SCD as a public health issue in India by 2047.
- Strengthen Healthcare Infrastructure: Establish more specialised diagnostic and treatment centres in tribal regions. Educational Campaigns: Increase awareness about genetic diseases among tribal populations.

Conclusion

- India's focus on addressing health inequities in vulnerable populations, especially those affected by Sickle Cell Disease (SCD), reflects the government's commitment to public health and tribal welfare. This initiative aligns with UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to create a healthier and more equitable society.

SOCIO – CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY

1. UGC New Rules Against Caste Discrimination

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

- The University Grants Commission (UGC) has notified the University Grants Commission (Promotion of Equity in Higher Education Institutions) Regulations, 2026, aimed at tackling caste-based discrimination in higher education institutions (HEIs).
- These regulations replace the similarly named UGC (Promotion of Equity in Higher Educational Institutions) Regulations from 2012.

What are the Key Provisions of the UGC (Promotion of Equity in Higher Education Institutions) Regulations, 2026?

- Broad Coverage of Caste-Based Discrimination: The regulations define caste-based discrimination as any unfair or biased treatment against Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs), and Other Backward Classes (OBCs), thereby explicitly extending legal protection to OBCs and correcting a major omission in the earlier draft framework.
- Expanded Definition of Discrimination: Discrimination is defined as any unfair, biased, or differential treatment, whether explicit or implicit, on grounds such as caste, religion, race, gender, place of birth, or disability, including acts that impair equality in education or violate human dignity.
- Mandatory Equal Opportunity Centres (EOCs): Every higher education institution is required to establish an Equal Opportunity Centre (EOC) to promote equity, social inclusion, and equal access, and to address complaints related to discrimination on campus.

Concerns

- Lack of Safeguards Against False Complaints: The 2025 draft UGC equity regulations had a provision for penalties or disciplinary action in cases of false or malicious complaints of discrimination, but this safeguard was removed in the final 2026 regulations, raising concerns about misuse and lack of procedural balance.
- Critics argue that the framework could unfairly target upper-caste students and portray them as presumptive offenders in discrimination complaints.

PAPER - 2

INDIAN & TRIBAL ANTHROPOLOGY

1. Nicobarese migration to the Nicobar Islands

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

- A study published in the European Journal of Human Genetics has revised the timeline of Nicobarese migration to the Nicobar Islands.
- Key Findings of the Study on Nicobarese Tribe Revised Migration Timeline: Previous studies estimated that the Austroasiatic ancestors of the Nicobarese arrived to Nicobar Islands over 11,000 years ago.
- The new study, using advanced Deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) analysis, corrected this estimate to approximately 5,000 years ago.
- Genetic Link: The study found that the Nicobarese share ancestral ties with the Htin Mal community (ethnic group native to Laos-Thailand region).
- This supports the idea that their ancestors migrated from Southeast Asia, rather than South Asia.
- Preservation of Genetic Identity: Due to their geographical isolation, the Nicobarese have maintained their genetic identity with minimal external influence. This has allowed researchers to trace their ancestry more precisely.
- Linguistic Continuity: Despite their genetic ties to Southeast Asia, the Nicobarese have retained their Austroasiatic language roots (Khmuic branch), linking them to other Southeast Asian populations.

What are the Key Facts About the Nicobarese Tribe?

- Geography: The Nicobarese live on the Nicobar Islands in the Bay of Bengal, part of India's Andaman and Nicobar Islands Union Territory. The Nicobar Islands consist of 19 islands, the major islands are Car Nicobar, Kamorta, Nancowrie, and Great Nicobar, which have both hilly and flat terrains. Great Nicobar is the southernmost and largest of the Nicobar Islands.
- Ethnic Group: The Nicobarese belong to the Mongoloid ethnic group and have a

population of over 27,000. While not divided into tribes, they are classified into six territorial groups: Car Nicobar, Chowra, Teressa with Bompoka, Central Group, Southern Group, and the Shompen (inland tribe of Great Nicobar).

- Social Structure: Patriarchal joint family system known as Tuhet. With no individual ownership, the Tuhet collectively owns land, coconut trees, and pigs.

2. Misaal Project (MP Tribal Leadership)

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

- The Madhya Pradesh Higher Education Department has launched the Misaal Project, an ambitious initiative aimed at fostering leadership qualities among tribal youth.
- Governor Mangubhai Patel inaugurated the programme virtually, stressing its role in shaping role models and instilling values of social responsibility.
- Youth Empowerment: Iska mukhya lakshya tribal students mein atmavishwas (confidence) aur problem-solving skills ko jagrut karna hai.
- Leadership Development: Yuvaon ko bhavishya ke role models aur ethical leaders ke roop mein taiyar karna.
- Capacity-Building: Isme workshops, training camps, aur community engagement programs shamil hain.
- Community-Centric Approach: Yuvaon ko apne ilake ki chunautiyon ko pehchane aur unka practical solution nikalne ke liye protsahit kiya jata hai.
- Social Responsibility: Iska uddeshya yuvaon mein samajik zimmedari aur seva ki bhavna bharna hai.
- Inter-state Collaboration: Madhya Pradesh ne iske liye Gujarat ke safal youth programs se seekh lekar sajhedari ki hai.
- Three-Level Process: Is project mein teen mukhya stages hote hain: Essay writing/Orientation, Group Dialogue, aur Project Work.
- Character Building: Iska ek mukhya pehlu selfless giving (nishwarth bhav se dena) aur charitra nirman hai.
- Skill Enhancement: Students ko industry-relevant skills aur nayi technology se jodna.
- Networking: Yuvaon ko professionals aur apne sathiyon ke saath networking ka ek platform milta hai.

3. Anamaya – The Tribal Health Collaborative

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

- Launch & Date: The Anamaya Initiative was launched in April 2021 by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA) in collaboration with the Piramal Foundation and other partners.
- Meaning of “Anamaya”: The word “Anamaya” is derived from Sanskrit, meaning

- “free from disease” or “healthy”, symbolizing holistic tribal well-being.
- Objective: To create a sustainable, inclusive, and integrated health ecosystem for India’s tribal population, addressing long-term gaps in healthcare access, quality, and outcomes.
 - Coverage: Initially implemented in 50 tribal-dominated districts across 16 states, with plans to scale nationwide depending on performance and outcomes.
 - Collaborating Agencies: Implemented by MoTA, with technical and field support from Piramal Foundation, UN agencies (UNICEF, UNDP, WHO), and state health departments.
 - Focus Areas: Maternal and child health. Nutrition and anemia control. Infectious and non-communicable diseases. Water, sanitation & hygiene (WASH). Mental health and traditional medicine integration
 - Community-Based Approach: Emphasizes tribal self-governance in health, using Gram Sabhas, local healers, and tribal youth volunteers (Arogya Mitras) for awareness and last-mile health delivery.
 - Data and Evidence Driven: Focus on tribal health data mapping through the Tribal Health Index (*THI*), enabling targeted interventions and impact measurement at village level.
 - Integration of Traditional & Modern Health Systems: Promotes synergy between AYUSH practices (traditional tribal medicine) and modern healthcare, respecting indigenous knowledge systems.
 - Gender and Inclusion Focus: Addresses tribal women’s health, reproductive rights, and menstrual hygiene management — areas with high mortality/morbidity rates in tribal areas.
 - Expected Impact: Aims to reduce health inequities between tribal and non-tribal populations, improve nutrition, and strengthen local health governance through community ownership.

4. Denotified Tribes to be Enumerated in Census 2027

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

- The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has recommended the inclusion of Denotified Tribes (DNTs) in the upcoming Census 2027, marking their 1st official enumeration in independent India and the first since the colonial-era 1911 census.
- The last enumeration was in the 1911 Census under the colonial category of criminal tribes. Since then, no official Census has recorded their population.
- About Denotified Tribes: Denotified Tribes were communities branded as "criminal tribes" under the repressive Criminal Tribes Act, 1871, which was repealed in 1949.
- They were labelled as criminal tribes because they were believed to

- be “addicted to the systematic commission of non-bailable offences.”
- Classification Issues: Many of these communities are not classified as Scheduled Tribes (STs), Scheduled Castes (SCs), or Other Backward Classes (OBCs), leaving them outside the ambit of reservation benefits and targeted welfare schemes.
 - Findings of Government Committees: The Renke Commission (2008) estimated the population of denotified tribes at around 10–12 crore.
 - The Idate Commission (2014) identified over 1,200 communities as denotified, nomadic, and semi-nomadic tribes.
 - Nomadic tribes maintain a mobile lifestyle, moving periodically without permanent settlements to sustain livelihoods via pastoralism, trade, or services. e.g., Banjara, Rabari.
 - Semi-nomadic tribes combine seasonal migration with partial settlement, often practicing transhumance (maintaining a base while migrating livestock seasonally), e.g., Gaddi, Maldharis.

5. What needs to be done for tribal development?

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

- Ministry of Tribal Affairs has launched an outreach programme, targeting around 1 lakh tribal-dominated villages, to ensure doorstep delivery of two welfare schemes.
- Status of tribal population in India : Population of Scheduled Tribes - The 2011 census indicates that there are 705 Scheduled Tribes in India, comprising about 8.6% of the country's total population. Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) - There are 75 officially recognised PVTGs across various states in India. Tribal Diversity - Tribal communities in India have diverse cultural practices, languages, and social structures. Tribal Development - Among Scheduled Tribes, communities are at varying stages of social, economic, and educational development. While some have adopted modern lifestyles, others still live at a pre-agricultural stage, relying on hunting and gathering for survival.
- Problems faced by tribals : Loss of Ancestral Lands – Tribes are often displaced from their traditional lands due to large-scale development projects (dams, mines, industries), deforestation, and urban expansion. Exploitation and Indebtedness - Tribals often fall prey to moneylenders and middlemen who exploit them through high-interest loans and unfair trade practices, leading to a cycle of debt. High Incidence of Diseases - They suffer from higher rates of malnutrition (especially among women and children), infectious diseases, and poor maternal and child health outcomes. Illiteracy - The literacy rate for Scheduled Tribes (STs) in India, according to the 2011 Census, was 59% which is significantly lower than the overall national literacy rate of 73%.
- Challenges in tribal development : Remote Location - Most reside in ecologically

fragile and inaccessible regions such as forests, hills, and remote rural areas. These settlements often make it difficult for government welfare schemes to reach them. Subsistence Livelihood - Their livelihoods depend primarily on subsistence agriculture, forests, and traditional occupations.

- What needs to be done for tribal development : The development of tribal communities in India is a complex, ongoing process that requires a multi-pronged and sensitive approach. Effective Implementation of PESA (Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996) to grant self-governance to tribal communities. Recognition of individual and community forest rights can be strengthened. Providing demand-driven skill development and vocational training programs tailored to their specific needs.

6. Khelo India Tribal Games (KITG) 2026

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

- India is hosting its first national multi-sport event for tribal athletes, Khelo India Tribal Games (25th March – 3rd April 2026) in Chhattisgarh (Raipur, Jagdalpur and Surguja), bringing tribal athletes from across the country onto a national platform.
- About: The Games are jointly organised by the Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports, SAI, IOA, National Sports Federations and the Chhattisgarh government, with international-level technical standards.
- Objective: It aims to integrate tribal talent into mainstream sports by providing exposure, structured competition and pathways for future development.
- The Games are part of the Khelo India programme, which promotes grassroots participation, talent identification and inclusive expansion of India's sporting ecosystem.
- Mascot: "Morveer" symbolises tribal pride, identity and bravery.
- Sports Included: The Games feature seven medal sports—athletics, football, hockey, weightlifting, archery, swimming and wrestling—along with indigenous sports like kabaddi and mallakhamb, with over 60,000 athletes competing for 338 medals.
- Selection Process: Athlete selection follows a two-stage process: state/UT trials followed by national-level trials by sports federations, ensuring merit-based participation. A dedicated Talent Identification and Development Committee (TIDC) scouts promising athletes for further training under the Khelo India framework.

7. Lanjia Saora Tribe

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

- Recently, the Lanjia Saora tribe, a Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG) in Odisha, was highlighted for its evolving cultural practices.

- About Lanjia Saora: The Lanjia Saora are a subgroup of the Saora tribe, inhabiting the forested hills of Rayagada and Gajapati districts in Odisha.
- The Saora are considered among the ancient tribal communities of India and are also found in states like Andhra Pradesh, Jharkhand, and Madhya Pradesh.
- The tribe includes groups such as Lanjia Saora (hill-dwelling, shifting cultivation) and Sudha Saora (plains, settled agriculture and wage work).
- Language: They speak Saora, a Mundari language belonging to the *Austroasiatic family*.
- Lifestyle and Culture: The community sustains itself through shifting cultivation, foraging, and small-scale farming. Their belief system is closely tied to nature, with rituals, music, and dance forming an integral part of daily life.
- Traditional Ornaments: They are known for large metal earrings fixed into stretched earlobes and tattoos with geometric and nature-inspired motifs, which hold spiritual significance.
- Younger members are adapting traditions by using detachable ornaments and temporary tattoos, reflecting a balance between tradition and modernity.
- Dance & Music: They perform vibrant dances with spontaneous songs, using instruments like brass pipes, cymbals and gongs, with distinctive attire such as turbans with crane feathers, umbrellas, swords and peacock plumes.

8. Tribal Urbanism

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

- Tribal urbanism is how tribal people and cultures interact with city life. It's about tribal people moving to cities, adapting to urban life while often facing challenges, and still keeping their cultural connections alive. It also includes the struggles over land as cities grow, the economic hardships many tribal people face in cities, and how urban planning often ignores their needs. Tribal urbanism can also lead to exciting mixes of traditional and modern cultures. And importantly, it's about tribal communities actively fighting for their rights in cities. It's a complex mix of adaptation, cultural preservation, and the ongoing struggle for a place in the urban world.
- Migration and Adaptation: Many tribal people migrate to cities like Mumbai, Delhi, or Bengaluru seeking better opportunities. For example, members of the *Gond* community from Maharashtra might move to Mumbai for work in construction or the service industry.
- Maintaining Identity: Even in urban settings, tribal communities often maintain strong ties to their cultural heritage. The *Santhal* community in Kolkata, for example, might celebrate their traditional festivals like *Baha Parab* or *Sohrai* in the city, forming associations to preserve their cultural practices and language. They might also maintain connections with their villages in Jharkhand or Odisha.

- Land and Resource Issues: The rapid expansion of cities like Ranchi (Jharkhand) has led to encroachment on tribal lands. The *Munda* and *Oraon* communities around Ranchi have faced displacement and loss of agricultural land due to urbanization and industrial development. Legal battles over land rights are a common occurrence in such situations.
- Socio-economic Disparities: Tribal people in cities often experience significant socio-economic disparities. For instance, *Adivasi* communities in cities like Ahmedabad (Gujarat) often live in slums and face high rates of unemployment and poverty. Access to quality education and healthcare can be limited, perpetuating cycles of disadvantage.
- Cultural Hybridity: Tribal urbanism can lead to interesting forms of cultural hybridity. For example, tribal artists in cities like Bhopal (Madhya Pradesh) might blend traditional art forms with contemporary urban themes, creating new styles of painting or music. This fusion of cultures is a dynamic aspect of tribal urbanism.

9. Definition of 'Tribe' in India

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

- At the recent Indian Anthropology Congress officials from the Anthropological Survey of India (AnSI) and National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST) called for a shift in defining tribes. Instead of a rigid binary classification—tribe or not—they advocate for a “spectrum of tribalness”.

Scheduled Tribes (STs)

- STs are defined under Article 366(25) of the Indian Constitution as “such tribes or tribal communities or parts of or groups within such tribes or tribal communities as are deemed under Article 342 to be Scheduled Tribes for the purposes of this Constitution.” Under Article 342, the President notifies STs for each State/UT after consultation with the Governor, and modifications can only be made by Parliament through legislation.
- Currently, 705 STs are notified across 30 States/UTs, comprising 8.6% of India’s population (2011 Census).
- They are mainly concentrated in Central India (Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, etc.) and the North-East.
- Criticisms of Existing Criteria: Termed obsolete, condescending, and colonial by scholars. Many communities today do not fully meet all criteria. Fails to reflect regional diversity, historical coexistence, and social changes. Overly dependent on a binary view of ‘tribe’ vs. ‘non-tribe’, leading to inclusion-exclusion conflicts (e.g., Meitei ST demand in Manipur).
- Proposal for a ‘Spectrum of Tribalness’
- Recent academic and policy discussions (e.g., at the Indian Anthropology Congress) advocate for a paradigm shift: Replace binary classification with a “spectrum of tribalness” or matrix of indicators.

- Use a broader set of 100-150 indicators, including: Marriage, kinship systems, language, rituals, governance structures, cultural materiality (e.g., headgear, weaponry) etc.
- Assign weightage to each indicator to determine the degree of tribalness.

10. The Barker Hypothesis (Developmental Origins of Health and Disease - DOHaD) and Nutritional Anthropology

(Use this content in the topic of syllabus – Unit 12 Paper II)

- The "Thrifty Phenotype" Mechanism: The Barker Hypothesis suggests that if a foetus experiences undernutrition in the womb, it undergoes "nutritional programming." It adapts by slowing growth and prioritizing brain development over metabolic organs (like the pancreas), preparing for a world of scarcity.
- Mismatched Environments: Problems arise when a "thrifty" foetus, programmed for scarcity, is born into an environment of caloric abundance (the "mismatch"). This significantly increases the risk of Type 2 diabetes, hypertension, and cardiovascular disease in adulthood.
- Epigenetics as a Biological Bridge: Social inequality is biologically translated through epigenetic markers. Stress and poor nutrition in a mother can "silence" or "activate" certain genes in the foetus, creating a molecular memory of poverty that persists throughout the individual's life.
- Intergenerational Cycle of Poverty: Nutritional anthropology highlights that a mother's own childhood nutrition affects her reproductive health. This creates a cycle where the biological effects of social inequality are passed from one generation to the next, independent of DNA sequences.
- Stunting as a Social Map: In nutritional anthropology, stunting (low height-for-age) is seen not just as a medical issue, but as a biological record of ecological and social stress. It reflects chronic exposure to poor sanitation, infection, and food insecurity.
- The "Double Burden" of Malnutrition: Many developing societies face a paradox where undernutrition (stunting) and overnutrition (obesity) coexist in the same household. This is often driven by the high cost of nutrient-dense food and the cheap availability of "empty" calories (highly processed foods)
- Political Economy of the Gut: Anthropologists argue that dietary choices are rarely just "cultural preferences." They are constrained by political ecology—who owns the land, how food is distributed, and how global markets prioritize cash crops over local subsistence.

11. Educational complexes for tribal students

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

- The Odisha government is planning to come up with three mega educational complexes exclusively for tribal students. These complexes will have both academic and sports facilities. These mega educational complexes will be established at Keonjhar, Sundargarh and Mayurbhanj with a capacity to accommodate 3000 students. These campuses will have state-of-the-art facilities to improve educational and sporting skills of tribal students from Standard I to XI. The funds for these mega complexes will come from Odisha Mineral Bearing Areas Development Corporation (OMBADC), which was formed for focused development of mineral-rich districts and these belts have a dominant tribal population.

Tribal population:

- According to the 2011 Census, tribal people constitute 8.6% of the nation's total population i.e. over 104 million people. Odisha's tribal population constitutes 9.17% of the country's tribal population and the tribal population is 22.85% of the state's total population. With 62 tribal communities, Odisha has the most diverse tribes in India and out of India's total 75 Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs), 13 reside in Odisha.

Problems of Tribal Education:

- There are many critical issues and problems in the field of tribal education: Medium of language – Language is one of the important constraints of tribal children which prevents them access to education. The Location of the Village – The physical barriers create a hindrance for the children of a tribal village to attend the school in a neighbouring village. Economic Condition – The economic condition of tribal people is so poor that they do not desire to spare their children or their labour power and allow them to attend schools.
- Way Forward: Literacy campaign – Proper awareness campaign should be organized to create awareness about the importance of education. Extensive literacy campaign in the tribal-dominated districts may be undertaken on a priority basis to literate the tribal. The XaXa Committee recommended a greater focus on removing gender disparity in education. Attitude of the tribal parents – The attitude of the tribal parents toward education should be improved through proper counselling and guidance.

12. Challenges Faced by Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs)

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

- Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) are a distinct sub-classification

within Scheduled Tribes, identified as the most vulnerable tribal communities in India. Earlier known as Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs), this category was created to ensure focused protection and targeted development interventions.

- The idea was first recommended by the Dhebar Commission. Acting on its recommendations, the Government of India identified 52 PTGs during the Fifth Five-Year Plan (1974–79). In 2006, the term PTGs was officially replaced with PVTGs to adopt a more appropriate and sensitive terminology. PVTGs continue to face deep-rooted socio-economic and governance challenges. Identifying these gaps is crucial to understand why targeted interventions often struggle to achieve full impact on the ground.

1. Geographical Isolation & Poor Connectivity :Most PVTGs live in remote forested and hilly regions.Lack of roads, transport, and digital access limits service delivery. Administrative outreach remains weak in scattered habitations.
2. Health Crisis & Malnutrition : High rates of infant and maternal mortality. Severe malnutrition and anaemia. Limited access to hospitals and trained medical staff. Prevalence of diseases like malaria, tuberculosis, and sickle cell anaemia.
3. Land Alienation & Habitat Insecurity : Delays in recognition of habitat rights under the FRA, 2006. Displacement due to mining, infrastructure, and conservation projects. Conflict between conservation policies and community rights.
4. Education Gaps & High Dropout Rates : Very low literacy levels, especially among women. Language barriers in formal schooling. High dropout rates due to poverty and migration.
5. Livelihood Vulnerability : Dependence on minor forest produce and subsistence farming. Low market access and exploitation by middlemen. Climate change affecting forest-based livelihoods.
6. Administrative & Implementation Gaps : Slow implementation of schemes like PM-JANMAN. Lack of updated and reliable data on PVTG populations. Poor coordination between state and central agencies.

13. Food Insecurity and Malnutrition in Tribal Communities of India

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

- Food insecurity and undernutrition are ongoing issues in tribal communities in India, even with government welfare programs in place.

Recent Findings in Malnutrition regarding Tribal Communities

- National Food Security Act, 2013 (NFSA) report – It reveals the alarming poverty rates and malnutrition among Odisha’s tribal population. Severe impacted districts – Kandhamal, Rayagada and Koraput.
- Kandhamal district – Due to mango kernel (a waste product of mango fruit canning industry) consumption the dire state of food insecurity among Odisha’s tribal communities. It reminds the earlier incidents of illnesses and multiple deaths in Kashipur, Rayagada in 1987, 1995 and 2001 due to the consumption

of mango kernels.

Features of the Koraput Model

- The Koraput Model – It is a community- based Approach to Food Security.
- To address these issues, the MSSRF implemented a community-driven intervention from 2013 to 2022 in Koraput, focusing on nutrition literacy, sustainable farming, and collective decision-making.
- Community Nutrition Literacy -Training programs educated villagers on dietary diversity and balanced diets.
- Women and children received priority in access to better nutrition. Local champions were trained to promote healthy eating.
- Government Initiatives related to Tribal Communities Food Insecurity and Malnutrition
- Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) Development Program – Targets the most vulnerable tribal communities on improving access to healthcare, education, clean water, and electricity.

What lies ahead

- The Koraput model illustrates that a community-driven approach, combined with sustainable farming and nutrition education, can effectively address food insecurity and malnutrition.
- This model can serve as a valuable blueprint for improving food security and health outcomes in other tribal areas across India.

14. Bnei Menashe from India

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

- Recently, Israel flew around 240 individuals from Mizoram to Tel Aviv under “Operation Wings of Dawn” amid ongoing security concerns in West Asia.
- This was the first of multiple batches with settlement planned in absorption centres such as Nof HaGalil in northern Israel.
- India clarified that it did not facilitate the operation, limiting its role to ensuring legal migration and preventing trafficking.
- Bnei Menashe Community
- The Bnei Menashe (meaning “sons of Manasseh”) claim descent from one of the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel, exiled around 722 BCE after the Assyrian conquest.
- They are primarily part of Mizo and Kuki tribal groups, with a population of about 7,000 in Northeast India. Their migration belief traces a journey through Persia (Iran), Afghanistan, and into Northeast India over centuries.
- Originally, most of the community had converted to Christianity under missionary influence, before a Judaising movement emerged in the late 20th century, shaped by local beliefs and organisations such as Amishav and Shavei Israel. By the 1980s, many had adopted Jewish practices.
- In 2005, Israel’s Chief Rabbinate recognised them as a “Lost Seed of Israel”,

based on cultural claims and inconclusive genetic evidence, enabling phased migration.

- Migration takes place through Aliyah (return migration), supported by agencies like the Jewish Agency for Israel (JAFI) and Israeli government programmes.
- Despite relocation, the community has faced integration challenges and instances of discrimination in Israel.

15. SEED Scheme for DNT Communities

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

- Recently, the Development and Welfare Board for De-notified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Communities (DWBDNC) reported significant progress under the SEED Scheme during FY 2025–26, highlighting enhanced outreach and impact.

About SEED Scheme

- About: It is a central sector scheme launched in February 2022 by the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment for economic empowerment of DNT, NT and SNT communities. The scheme has an outlay of 200 crore over five years (from 2021–22) and is implemented by DWBDNC through an online portal for registration and monitoring.
- Components: It focuses on four major components: Free coaching for competitive exams and professional courses. Health insurance coverage through PMJAY. Livelihood support for income generation. Housing assistance through schemes like PMAY

About DNT, NT and SNT Communities

- About: The term De-notified Tribes refers to communities that were once classified under the Criminal Tribes Acts, 1871 which were implemented by the British Government.
 - The Acts were abolished by the Government of India in 1952, leading to the De-Notification of these communities. A few of these communities which were listed as de-notified were also nomadic. Nomadic and semi-nomadic communities are defined as those who move from one place to another rather than living in one place all the time. While most DNTs are spread across the SC, ST and OBC categories, some DNTs are not covered in any of the SC, ST or OBC categories.
- Distribution: India has around 150 Denotified Tribes and ~500 Nomadic communities, accounting for nearly 10% of the population.
- Challenges: Various committees (e.g., Kaka Kalelkar Commission, Mandal Commission, NCRWC) have highlighted their historical marginalisation, stigma and need for targeted welfare measures.

16. National Capacity Building Programme for Tribal Healers in Hyderabad

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

- The Ministry of Tribal Affairs has launched a National Capacity Building Programme for Tribal Healers in Hyderabad, Telangana.
- Key Points
- Launch venue: The Programme for Tribal Healers was held in January 2026 at Kanha Shanti Vanam, Hyderabad, to enhance tribal health services.
- Addressed by: The event was addressed by Jual Oram, Union Minister of Tribal Affairs.
- Objective: The programme aims to
 - Recognise and engage tribal healers as collaborative partners in public health outreach and tribal health transformation.
 - Strengthen last-mile health service delivery in geographically and culturally isolated tribal regions.
 - Eliminate communicable diseases such as malaria, tuberculosis and leprosy in tribal areas.
- National Tribal Health Observatory: A MoU with ICMR-Regional Medical Research Centre, Bhubaneswar was signed to establish India's first Bharat Tribal Health Observatory (B-THO) under Project DRISTI for tribe-disaggregated health data and research.
- Project DRISTI: A national initiative by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs in collaboration with ICMR to create a tribe-disaggregated health information system.
- Aimed at improving healthcare planning, disease monitoring, and policy decisions for tribal populations.
- Bharat Tribal Health Observatory (B-THO): A first-of-its-kind national health observatory established under Project DRISTI. To collect, analyse, and share health data of tribal communities, integrate tribal healers into the health system, and support disease prevention and research in tribal areas.

17. Aadi Karmayogi

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

- Aadi KARMAYOGI is a National Mission for Responsive Governance, designed to build a cadre of 20 lakh tribal grassroots functionaries and village-level change leaders, who will drive inclusive development and strengthen last-mile service delivery in tribal areas.
- The mission aligns with Pradhan Mantri Janjati Adivasi Nyaya Maha Abhiyaan (PM JANMAN) and Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan (DAJGUA), emphasizing convergence, community involvement, and capability enhancement.
- Objectives:
 - Build Local Leadership: Develop State Master Trainers (SMTs), District

- Master Trainers (DMTs), and Block-level trainers.
- Strengthen Last-Mile Delivery: Enhance service delivery and implementation of tribal welfare schemes in remote areas.
 - Promote Community-Centric Governance: Empower tribal communities with dignity, empathy, and purpose.
- Implementation: SMTs from five southern states Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, and Telangana are being trained at the RPL in Bengaluru.
 - These trainers will go on to lead State Process Labs (SPLs), which will then train DMTs. The programme also involves civil society organisations to encourage participatory learning and ensure the training fits local contexts, supporting ongoing learning and leadership.
 - The Aadi Karmayogi Mission supports responsive governance through local-level planning, quick grievance redressal, and joint implementation. It brings together departments like Tribal Affairs, Rural Development, Women and Child Development, Jal Shakti, Education, and Forests.

18. 23rd Foundation Day of National Commission for Scheduled Tribes

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

- The Ministry of Tribal Affairs observed the 23rd Foundation Day of the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST), highlighting NCST's constitutional mandate and objectives to protect and promote the rights of Scheduled Tribes (STs).

National Commission for Scheduled Tribes

- About: NCST is a constitutional body established under Article 338-A of the Constitution through the 89th Constitutional Amendment Act, 2003, which bifurcated the earlier combined National Commission for SCs and STs to provide focused attention on the distinct problems and developmental needs of tribal communities.
- Composition: Consists of Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and 3 other members (including at least one woman Member) appointed by the President by warrant under his hand and seal; their conditions of service and tenure are determined by the President.
- Tenure and Service Conditions: The Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and other Members serve a 3-year term, with the Chairperson holding the rank of Union Cabinet Minister, the Vice-Chairperson the rank of a Minister of State, and other Members the rank of Secretary to the Government of India.
 - Members are not eligible for appointment for more than two terms.
- Core Functions: Investigate and monitor constitutional/legal safeguards for STs; inquire into specific complaints regarding deprivation of rights; participate in socio-economic development planning; evaluate development progress; submit reports to the President; make recommendations to Union/state governments.

- Additional Functions (Specified by President in 2005): Include measures for minor forest produce ownership rights, safeguarding rights over mineral and water resources, preventing land alienation, implementing the PESA Act, 1996, improving relief and rehabilitation for displaced tribals, and eliminating shifting cultivation.
- Reporting Mechanism: Submits annual/periodic reports to President; President places reports before Parliament with memorandum on action taken; state-related reports forwarded to Governor for presentation before state legislature.

19. Education: Initiatives for empowerment of tribal communities

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

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

Tribal Education Plan

- The department of tribal affairs, for the first time, initiated an exercise to assess the state of education viz a viz tribal students, literacy levels prevalent among the tribal population, and based on such surveys development of a comprehensive education plan to address specific educational needs besides the core efforts being made by the Education departments.
- There are several scholarship schemes for tribal students, including the National Scholarship Scheme (Top Class) For Higher Education of ST Students, the National Fellowship Scheme For Higher Education of ST Students, and the National Overseas Scholarships for Scheduled Tribe Students.
- Menstrual hygiene awareness :This program focuses on adolescent girls in rural and tribal areas to address misconceptions about menstruation and female health. The program aims to improve the girls' health and raise their self-esteem.
- Karta Initiative :This initiative from Tata Trusts aims to improve access to educational and employment opportunities for talented youngsters from low-income backgrounds.

Way Forward :

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

20. Bridging the Gap in Tribal Welfare

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

Significance of Tribal Communities for India

- Custodians of India's Biodiversity and Forest Conservation: Tribals play a crucial role in preserving forests, wildlife, and biodiversity through their traditional knowledge and sustainable practices.
- Rich Cultural and Linguistic Heritage: India's tribal communities preserve diverse languages, art forms, folklore, and indigenous knowledge systems, enriching national identity.
- Vital for India's Economic and Agricultural Diversity: Tribals contribute significantly to agriculture, minor forest produce (MFP) collection, and traditional crafts, strengthening India's rural economy. Significant Political Influence in Indian Democracy: With a population of over 104 million (Census 2011), tribals form a crucial voting bloc, impacting state and national elections.
- Essential for Climate Change Adaptation and Sustainable Development: Tribals possess deep traditional knowledge of climate adaptation, water conservation, and sustainable agriculture, which is crucial in combating climate change. Backbone of India's Traditional Medicine and Ayurveda: Tribal communities hold vast knowledge of herbal medicine, Ayurveda, and ethno-botanical practices, contributing to India's healthcare system. Critical for Sustainable Tourism and Eco-Tourism: Tribal regions are home to some of India's most biodiverse landscapes, making them key players in sustainable and eco-tourism.
- Key Issues Faced by Tribal Communities in India
- Land Alienation and Displacement: Tribal communities face large-scale displacement due to industrial projects, mining, and conservation efforts, leading to loss of traditional livelihoods.
- Poor Health and Malnutrition: Tribal populations suffer from higher mortality rates, malnutrition, and lack of healthcare access, worsened by poor infrastructure in remote areas.
- Lack of Quality Education and EMRS Implementation Gaps: Tribal students face language barriers, poor infrastructure, and high dropout rates, especially in higher education. Loss of Indigenous Culture and Linguistic Marginalization: Tribal languages and cultural heritage are fast disappearing due to urbanization, lack of institutional support, and mainstreaming policies.

21. Gujarat Launches India's First Tribal Genome Sequencing Project

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

- Gujarat became the first Indian state to launch a Tribal Genome Sequencing Project to build a reference genetic database aimed at improving healthcare

access for tribal populations.

Gujarat Launches India's First Tribal Genome Sequencing Project:

- A pioneering genomic research initiative to sequence the genomes of 2,000 tribal individuals across 17 districts of Gujarat to enhance precision medicine.
- Launched By: Implemented by the Gujarat Biotechnology Research Centre (GBRC).
- Objectives: To identify genetic risk markers linked to inherited disorders like: Sickle cell anaemia, Thalassemia, Hereditary cancers.
- To develop personalised healthcare protocols based on tribal genetic profiles. To bridge the health equity gap using science-led tribal empowerment.

Key Features: Involves advanced infrastructure for sample collection, sequencing, and data analysis. Focus on natural immunity markers and customised medical care.

- Engagement with tribal communities for inclusive consultation and awareness. Covers diverse tribal groups from 17 districts to ensure representation and diversity.

Significance:

- Healthcare Equity: Enables early detection and tailored treatment for genetic diseases in underserved communities.
- Data-Driven Public Health: Establishes a baseline genomic database for long-term health research and policy planning.
- National Replicability: Serves as a model for other Indian states to follow in building region-specific genomic policies.

22. Key points of 'PM-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.

Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs):

- The Ministry of Home Affairs has classified 75 tribal groups in 18 states of the country and the Union Territory of Andaman and Nicobar Islands as

Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs).

- PVTGs are the most vulnerable among the tribal groups. In 1975, the Government of India took the initiative to identify the most vulnerable tribal groups as a separate category called PVTGs .
- Initially 52 tribal groups were classified as PVTGs. In the year 1993, 23 additional tribal groups were included in this category, due to which there are currently 75 tribal groups under PVTG.
- Of the 75 listed PVTGs, the highest number are found in Odisha (13), followed by Andhra Pradesh (12).

23. Jharkhand Tribes Fight for Rights

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

- Tribals have played a vital role in Jharkhand’s socio-political landscape and their struggles have sparked numerous historical movements.

Key Points

- British Control and Tribal Resistance in Jharkhand:
 - Geographical Context: Jharkhand, primarily located on the Chota Nagpur Plateau in eastern India, came under British control in 1765 when the Mughals granted Diwani rights over Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa to the British, allowing them to collect revenue.
 - Tribal Inhabitants: Jharkhand’s plateau region has long been inhabited by tribes like the Munda, Santhal, Oraon, Ho, and Birhor, with agriculture forming the primary livelihood for over half of these tribal workers, exceeding the national Scheduled Tribe average of 44.7%.

Colonial Policies and Tribal Revolts:

- The British introduced commercial agriculture and mining, displacing many tribes from their lands. This exploitation led tribal leaders to organize movements to protect their rights and resist British rule.
- Scholars Ram Dayal Munda and Bisheshwar Prasad Keshari identified 1769-93 as the initial phase of resistance, followed by a period of open revolt in the succeeding decade.

Jharkhand Movement and Statehood:

- The late 1980s saw a resurgence of Jharkhand’s identity, with the formation of the All Jharkhand Students Union (1986) and the Jharkhand Coordination Committee (1987), leading to the Jharkhand Movement and eventual statehood in 2000.
- The Jharkhand Movement highlighted the gradual disintegration of Jharkhand culture over 200 years, particularly under British rule. Today, tribal communities continue to face challenges like land disputes, low literacy rates, poverty, and exploitation amidst industrial growth.