



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



JUNE 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. Key facts of Homo juluensis**
- 2. Neanderthal-Sapiens Collaboration**
- 3. Key Insights into Ancient Social Structures and Cognition**

PAPER - 2

INDIAN & TRIBAL ANTHROPOLOGY

- 1. Maram Naga Tribe**
- 2. Ramnami Tribe**
- 3. Plea to enhance social conditions of Paliyar tribes**
- 4. Aadi Karmayogi**
- 5. Enumeration of Andaman and Nicobar Tribes**
- 6. Tribal Food Systems: Recent initiatives like the Grassroots Biodiversity Governance Project**
- 7. AI in Paleoanthropology**
- 8. Key features of KORAGA TRIBE**
- 9. Manipur : Ningol Chakkouba Festival**
- 10. The role of Araku tribal women in balancing family, community, and environment**
- 11. Importance of the Struggle for Indigenous Rights : Dongria Kondh**
- 12. Draft Andaman and Nicobar Islands Tribal Councils Election Rules 2026**
- 13. Tribal Renaissance**
- 14. Key features of Hatti Tribe**
- 15. Role of Tribals in Shaping India's Socio-cultural and Developmental Fabric**

16. Why is the North-East Referred to as "Ashtalakshmi"?
17. Three Language Formula in Nagaland
18. What are the Concerns of Tribal Councils Regarding the Proposed Electoral Model?
19. Great Nicobar Project
20. Key Highlights of the Draft rules for the VB-G RAM G Act
21. Key facts of Nicobarese Tribe
22. Can the decades-old constitutional dispute over Lambadas' Scheduled Tribe status in Telangana be resolved?
23. Scheduled Tribe Status under Article 342 and Adivasi Identity.
24. Chenchu Reserve" vs. Tiger Conservation conflict
25. Forest-Dwelling Tribes and Administrative Representation



PAPER - 1

PHYSICAL & ARCHAEOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY

1. Key facts of Homo juluensis

(Use this content in the topic of syllabus – Unit 1.6 Paper I)

- Researchers have identified a new species of ancient humans, which they have named Homo juluensis, meaning "big head," based partly on a very large skull found in China.

Homo juluensis:

- It is a new species of ancient humans with distinctively large skulls.
- The species, known as "big head people," lived 300,000 years ago and survived in small groups across eastern Asia before disappearing around 50,000 years ago.
- Homo juluensis includes mysterious groups like the Denisovans—ancient human relatives whose histories are still being uncovered.
- Fossils attributed to H. juluensis, primarily consisting of facial and jaw remains, exhibit dental characteristics reminiscent of Neanderthals.
- Initial measurements indicate that their braincases were up to 30% larger than those of Homo sapiens.
- They hunted wild horses in small groups, and made stone tools and possibly processed animal hides for survival.

Key Facts about Neanderthals:

- They were an extinct relative of modern humans once found across Europe, extending into Central and Southwest Asia.
- Species: Homo neanderthalensis
- They are our closest extinct human relative.
- Current evidence from both fossils and DNA suggests that Neanderthal and modern human lineages separated at least 500,000 years ago.

- The last populations of Neanderthals are thought to have died out roughly 40,000 years ago, several thousand years or so after a wave of modern humans migrated deeper into Europe. Although they are long extinct, their genes are still present in modern human DNA.

2. Neanderthal-Sapiens Collaboration

(Use this content in the topic of syllabus – Unit 1.6 Paper I)

- The discovery at **Tinshemet Cave** in Israel (reported in mid-2026) has provided some of the most compelling evidence yet that the relationship between Neanderthals and *Homo sapiens* was defined by **knowledge exchange** rather than just conflict.
- **Challenging the "Replacement" Theory:** For decades, it was believed that *Homo sapiens* simply outcompeted or killed off Neanderthals. This find suggests a **collaborative model** where the two species coexisted and learned from one another. **Shared "Levallois" Technique:** Archaeologists found stone tools made using the sophisticated **Levallois technique** (a method of knapping flint). The tools were so similar in design and execution that researchers concluded the two groups were teaching each other the craft.
- **110,000-Year-Old Context:** The dating of the site is critical. At **110,000 years ago**, the Levant was a "melting pot" where migrating modern humans from Africa met resident Neanderthals from Europe.
- **Spatial Overlap:** Evidence from the cave layers shows that both groups occupied the same site during the same climatic period, sharing the same **hearths (fire pits)** and living spaces.
- **Hybrid Tool Kits:** The tools discovered were "hybrids"—they combined the sturdiness typical of Neanderthal craftsmanship with the refined, blade-like precision associated with early *Homo sapiens*.
- **Cultural Transmission:** Researchers argue that this level of tool

similarity couldn't happen by accident; it required **prolonged social contact** and "active apprenticeship" between the two species

- **Resource Sharing:** Analysis of animal remains (gazelle and fallow deer) at the site indicates that both groups utilized the same hunting grounds and likely **hunted in coordinated parties** to take down larger prey.
- **Shared Symbolic Behavior:** Along with tools, researchers found ochre and perforated shells used by both groups, suggesting they shared similar **aesthetic and symbolic values**.
- **Cognitive Parity:** The find proves that Neanderthals possessed the **social intelligence** and communication skills necessary to interact with and learn from a different human species.

3. Key Insights into Ancient Social Structures and Cognition (Use this content in the topic of syllabus – Unit 2.2 Paper I)

- Recent discoveries in genetics and archaeology are fundamentally revising our understanding of Neanderthal social complexity and the timeline of human creativity
- **Small, High-Density Family Units:** Genetic snapshots from Siberia's Chagyrskaya Cave (approx. 54,000 years ago) revealed the first confirmed Neanderthal family group, including a father and his teenage daughter, living together in small clusters of 10 to 20 individuals
- **Patrilocal Social Rules:** Evidence suggests Neanderthal groups practiced "female dispersal," where women moved between communities to find mates while men remained in their birth groups, a structure similar to many modern human hunter-gatherer societies
- **Fragile Social Connectivity:** A 2026 study suggests that while *Homo sapiens* built expansive, flexible social networks that helped them survive environmental shifts, Neanderthal networks

were more regionally limited and fragile, contributing to their eventual decline

- **Symbolic Art Predates Modern Humans:** Cave paintings in Spain (e.g., La Pasiega) have been dated to at least 64,800 years ago—nearly 20,000 years before *Homo sapiens* arrived in Europe—firmly attributing abstract art like red ladders and dots to Neanderthals
- **Global Origins of Creativity:** The discovery of 67,800-year-old hand stencils in Indonesia challenges the "Eurocentric" narrative of cognitive development, showing that early humans in Southeast Asia were already expressing identity and symbolic thought long before the Ice Age art of Europe
- **Complex Material Culture:** Neanderthals were not just toolmakers; they produced botanical fibre rope, used fire for complex adhesives like birch bark tar, and curated ritual spaces, indicating sophisticated cognitive planning
- **Genetic Isolation and Extinction:** New genomic data from "Thorin," a late Neanderthal in France, reveals his lineage was genetically isolated for 50,000 years despite living near other groups, suggesting that social fragmentation was a widespread vulnerability

PAPER - 2

INDIAN & TRIBAL ANTHROPOLOGY

1. Maram Naga Tribe

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

- Maram Naga Tribe belongs to the Naga ethnic group, inhabiting the Northeastern part of India as well as the Western part of Myanmar. Centre recently sanctioned Rs 9 crore under Jan Man Scheme for Maram Naga tribe development, welfare projects, and cultural preservation in Manipur.
- Maram Naga Tribe
- The Maram Naga tribe belongs to the Naga ethnic group, inhabiting the Northeastern part of India as well as the Western part of Myanmar.
- The Maram habitat falls under the Senapati district of Manipur. The Marams are surrounded by other Naga tribes in all directions. They are considered to be a part of the Tibeto-Burman family of the Mongoloid race.
- Language:
- Linguistically, they belong to the sub-family of the Sino-Tibetan family. The people speak the Maram language. There are some variations in the way the dialect is spoken, corresponding with geographical location. They use Roman script in writing their language.
- Occupation:
- Agriculture is the main occupation of the people. Shifting cultivation is the main cultivation practiced by them. They are also involved in wet cultivation. Hunting is the secondary occupation of Maram tribes.
- Beliefs:
- Maram tribes are the worshippers of supernatural benevolent and malevolent beings. The two major festivals of the Marams are Punghi (celebrated in July) and Kanghi (in December).

- The tribe also celebrates a unique festival called Mangkang around April every year, dedicated to the women folks.

2. Ramnami Tribe

(Use this content in the topic of syllabus – Unit 6.2 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.

3. Plea to enhance social conditions of Paliyar tribes

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

- Recent findings highlight the urgent need for immediate government action to address the socio-economic challenges faced by the Paliyar and other tribes.
- The Paliyan people, also known as Palaiyar or Pazhaiyar, are a Dravidian tribal group living mainly in Tamil Nadu and Kerala.
- The Paliyan tribe historically relied on hunting, gathering, and foraging for their sustenance. They practice shifting cultivation
- The Paliyans speak a Dravidian language closely related to Tamil, emphasizing their cultural heritage and regional ties. The society is patriarchal, with men holding positions of authority.
- They worship nature spirits and deities residing in the forests, mountains, and rivers
- They have customary burial practices where the deceased are buried in designated areas near their residential settlements, commonly on the western side.
- Efforts are made to preserve Paliyan cultural traditions, language, and knowledge systems, including ethnomedicinal practices and ecological wisdom.
- Educational Accessibility: Statistics show that 52% of men and 45% of women have no formal education, largely because secondary schools are too far from their hill settlements. Pleas include the establishment of mobile schools or residential facilities closer to tribal hamlets
- Protection of Livelihoods: Strengthening the Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS) mechanism would ensure they receive fair compensation for the forest produce (like honey and medicinal plants) they traditionally harvest.

- Land Rights (FRA 2006): There is an urgent demand for the proper survey and demarcation of patta land already allotted to them, ensuring they are not evicted from ancestral forest lands by private plantations or department officials

4. 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.

5. Enumeration of Andaman and Nicobar Tribes

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

- The planned 16th Census of India (2026–27) will include an enumeration of the six major indigenous tribes of the Andaman and Nicobar (A & N) Islands namely Great Andamanese, Onge, Jarawa, Sentinelese, Shompen, and Nicobarese. Except for the Nicobarese, all others are classified as Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs).
- Great Andamanese: Once the largest tribe in the Andaman Islands, the Great Andamanese now number just 43 (Census 2001), settled on Strait Island. Their decline began with diseases like influenza post the establishment of the Penal Settlement.
- Onges: One of India's most primitive hunter-gatherer tribes, live in Little Andaman, mainly at Dugong Creek and South Bay. As per Census 2001, the Onges are a semi-nomadic tribe with a population of 96. Traditionally dependent on nature, they now receive government aid and are known for their canoe-making and crafts.
- Jarawa: They are a nomadic, hunting-gathering tribe living along the western coast of Middle and South Andaman. As per Census 2011, their population is 380.
- Sentinelese: A hunting and gathering tribe, inhabit North Sentinel Island and remain hostile to outsiders. Though brief friendly contact was made in 1991, they largely avoid interaction. As per Census 2001, their population was 39.
- Shompens: Shompen have Mongoloid features, unlike the other

Negroid-featured tribes (like Great Andamanese, Onge, Jarawa, and Sentinelese) Shompens inhabit Great Nicobar, They are divided into Mawa Shompens (coastal, river valley dwellers) and hostile Shompens (interior forest areas).

- Nicobarese: Nicobarese live across 19 Nicobar Islands. They are of Mongoloid origin, with a population of over 27,000. Society is organized into six territorial groups and follows a patriarchal joint family system called Tuhet, which collectively owns land and resources.

6. Tribal Food Systems: Recent initiatives like the Grassroots Biodiversity Governance Project

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

- The Grassroots Biodiversity Governance Project (2025–2030) is a landmark five-year initiative by the Government of India, the UNDP, and the GEF designed to empower local communities as primary stewards of their natural heritage.
- Mainstreaming into Local Governance: The project integrates biodiversity conservation directly into Gram Panchayat Development Plans (GPDPs), transforming local village councils into active decision-makers for environmental and food security
- Strengthening BMCs: It focuses on revitalising Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs), ensuring they have the technical and financial support to document and protect local resources
- Landscape-Based Approach: The initiative is piloted in two ecologically rich regions: the Sathyamangalam landscape in Tamil Nadu and the Garo Hills in Meghalaya, specifically targeting forest-fringe and tribal communities.
- Securing Traditional Knowledge: A core goal is documenting indigenous ecological wisdom in People's Biodiversity Registers (PBRs), protecting traditional varieties of crops and medicinal

- plants from exploitation
- **Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS):** The project activates ABS mechanisms, ensuring that tribal communities receive fair financial rewards when their local biological resources or knowledge are used commercially
 - **Nourishing Food Systems:** By championing climate-resilient crops like millets and indigenous pulses, the project enhances local nutritional security and reduces dependency on industrialised food systems
 - **Innovative Financing:** It promotes green micro-enterprises and leverages Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) funding to link conservation efforts directly to sustainable local livelihoods
 - **Inclusive Leadership:** There is a dedicated focus on building the governance and economic roles of women and youth within tribal communities to ensure intergenerational knowledge transfer.
 - **Global Alignment:** The project serves as a practical model for meeting international commitments, such as the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework's "30x30" target

7. AI in Paleoanthropology

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

- **Artificial Intelligence (AI)** is transforming paleoanthropology by automating the analysis of fossil records, improving site discovery, and providing new ways to model human evolution.
Automated Fossil Segmentation: AI models, particularly deep learning, can distinguish between fossilised bone and surrounding rock matrix in CT scans. This drastically reduces the time required for digital "preparation" compared to manual methods.
- **Predictive Site Discovery:** Researchers use machine learning to identify "High Probability Zones" by analysing environmental

data like soil type, proximity to water, and landscape texture from satellite and LiDAR imagery

- **Taphonomic Analysis:** AI algorithms are used to identify microscopic marks on fossils, such as tooth marks from predators. For example, AI recently helped confirm that early humans were likely prey for leopards more often than previously thought.
- **Stone Tool Classification:** Machine learning systems can classify lithic (stone tool) assemblages by recognising subtle patterns in shape and flake morphology, helping to distinguish between different cultural periods or species' capabilities
- **Ancient DNA (aDNA) Analysis:** AI processes massive genomic datasets to reveal migration patterns, interbreeding events with species like Neanderthals, and ancient health information that would be impossible for humans to process manually.
- **Digital Reconstruction:** AI assists in "filling in the gaps" of incomplete or crushed fossils by using predictive models based on known morphology, allowing for more accurate 3D skeletal reconstructions
- **Geometric Morphometrics:** Algorithms automate the measurement of complex biological shapes, such as the curvature of a skull or pelvis, providing a more objective way to compare different hominin species
- **Evolutionary Modeling:** By analysing gaps in the fossil record alongside genetic data, AI generates hypotheses about where and when "ghost lineages" (unfound species) might have existed
- **Public Engagement and Education:** AI-driven platforms, including chatbots and virtual reality (VR) experiences, allow the public to explore virtual excavation sites and interact with digital versions of ancient human ancestors

8. Key features of KORAGA TRIBE

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

- The Revenue department in Kerala has initiated steps to provide land titles (patta) to the Koraga community. The initiative is aimed at addressing longstanding issues of missing land documents and undefined boundaries, which have hindered the Koraga community's access to government housing schemes and left their lands uncultivated and forest-covered.

Key takeaways

- The Koraga tribe is a Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG) found primarily in the southern Indian states of Karnataka and Kerala. Here are some key details about the Koraga tribe:
- Geographic Distribution: Karnataka: The Koraga tribe is mainly found in the Dakshina Kannada and Udupi districts, often referred to as Tulunaad. They are also present in small numbers in Uttara Kannada, Shimoga, and Kodagu districts. Kerala: The tribe is found in the Kasaragod district.
- Current Population: According to the 2011 census, the Koraga population is estimated to be around 16,376.
- Historical Population: The population was recorded as 16,071 in the 2001 census.
- Koraga Language: The Koraga tribe has its own language, which is classified as an independent Dravidian language. However, most Koragas also speak Tulu, Kannada, and Malayalam. The Koraga tribe is classified as a Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG) due to their primitive traits, geographical isolation, low literacy, and backwardness.
- Social Structure: Clans: The Koraga tribe is divided into exogamous clans or sects known as balis. Matrilineal Descent: The family structure is matrilineal, with descent reckoned along the female line. However, residence after marriage is patrilocal. Property Inheritance: Property is equally divided among both sons and daughters.
- Economy: Agriculture: The Koragas are primarily agriculturists, relying on forest produce such as bamboo, cane, and creepers for

basketry. Livelihood: They also engage in basket-making and other traditional crafts.

- **Cultural Practices:** Folklore and Music: The Koragas have rich folklore, songs, and folk dances. Rituals: They perform rituals and magics to appease their deities for bountiful crops and to ward off epidemics. Bhuta Worship: They worship various Bhutas (deities) such as Panjurli, Kallurti, Korathi, and Guliga.

9. Manipur : Ningol Chakkouba Festival

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

- Ningol Chakkouba festival was held with religious fervour and gaiety across the State of Manipur. Ningol Chakkouba Festival: The Ningol Chakkouba Festival is an annual celebration deeply rooted in the culture of the Meitei community of Manipur, India.
- Held on the second day of the lunar month of Hiyangei according to the Meitei calendar, this festival has transcended its community boundaries to embrace a broader spirit of family reunion and societal harmony.

Key Features of the Festival

- **Meaning and Significance:** The term 'Ningol' means 'married woman' and 'Chakkouba' translates to 'invitation for a feast.' This festival centers around the celebration of married women, who are invited to parental homes for a grand feast.
- **Cultural Practices:** It is a tradition for the brother to send a formal invitation to his sister a week before the festival, signaling respect and the importance of the familial bond. The day is marked with lavish meals and the exchange of gifts, fostering family ties and unity.
- **Widespread Celebration:** Originally celebrated by the Meiteis, Ningol Chakkouba has found resonance across various communities, underscoring universal values of family happiness and societal peace.

- The festival is now celebrated by Manipuris living outside the state, including those in different parts of India and abroad, maintaining cultural identity and connection among the diaspora.

The Meitei Community:

- The Meitei community is the dominant ethnic group in Manipur, known for its rich cultural heritage and significant contributions to the cultural mosaic of northeastern India. Cultural and Demographic Overview Language: The Meiteis speak the Meitei language, also officially recognized as Manipuri. It is one of India's 22 scheduled languages and serves as the sole official language of Manipur State.

10. The role of Araku tribal women in balancing family, community, and environment

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

- Women in the tribal communities of Araku Valley in Andhra Pradesh, India are taking a lion's share of responsibility to balance family, community, and environment. Their role in preserving traditional knowledge and environment is exemplary and needs to be acknowledged at international forums. Non-tribal people living in urban areas must learn from tribal women how to lead a simple yet fulfilling life in a sustainable way.
- Araku Valley is a hill station in India, 111 km west of Visakhapatnam city. It is a valley in the Eastern Ghats inhabited by different tribes, mainly Araku Tribes. Tribal communities are forest dwellers living in harmony with their environment. They depend on plants and plant products for their day-to-day life and survival.
- Though both men and women of the community work for survival, women have the additional responsibility of household tasks. This paper briefly describes Araku Valley tribal women's role in supporting their family, tribal community, and the

environment.

- Women take a lead role in collecting forest products of various forms. Firewood collection, liquor making, religious ceremony preparation, and the construction of household implements are their primary responsibility.
- Several kinds of traditional knowledge are involved - such as traditional medicines and clothing designs - and are passed from one generation to the next, with women at the center of it all.
- Festivals, religious ceremonies, and magico-religious rituals are an essential part of tribal communities. The ways of celebration are different across various tribal communities and even different clans within the same community. Women take a central role in these events, uniting the community at large and preserving the culture of the clan and community.
- Tribal community practices ensure that nature is not exploited beyond repair. Women take on a big role in mitigation strategies. Since the turn of the century, coffee arabica has been grown sustainably in the highlands of Araku Valley as a social enterprise project by the Nandi Foundation. Women have taken an active role in the farming of coffee, making Araku coffee a global brand and earning praise and economic prosperity.

11. Importance of the Struggle for Indigenous Rights : Dongria Kondh

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

- The Dongria Kondh tribe is recognised as a Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG).
- Habitat: Indigenous to the Niyamgiri Hills, spanning Kalahandi and Rayagada districts in Odisha. The name “Dongria” comes from “dongar”, meaning hill, highlighting their hill-dwelling identity. They also call themselves Jharnia, or “protectors of streams”.
- They believe in animism—revering nature. Hilltops and forests

are worshipped as living deities.

- Their ancestral deity is Niyam Raja, the mythical god-king and protector of the hills. Niyamgiri festival, an annual cultural celebration held in April, honours Niyam Raja.
- Deeply symbolic art: Triangular mountain motifs adorn shrines dedicated to forest, village & farm gods. They speak Kuyi and Kuvi languages, linguistically distinct from Odia.
- Importance of the Struggle for Indigenous Rights
- Legal Assertion through FRA: Dongria Kondh invoked the Forest Rights Act (FRA), 2006, to assert their ownership and custodianship over the significant Niyamgiri Hills.
- Empowerment of Gram Sabhas: Their resistance demonstrated the decisive role of Gram Sabhas as constitutional bodies empowered to grant or deny consent to development projects on tribal lands.
- Recognition by the Supreme Court: The Supreme Court judgment of 2013 affirmed that the rights of forest-dwelling communities should be central to any development decision.
- Assertion of Tribal Sovereignty: Through democratic resistance, the Dongria Kondh asserted their collective sovereignty over ancestral lands, preserving their identity and autonomy.
- Moral and Legal Precedent for Other Tribes: Their victory provided both legal precedent and moral encouragement for other indigenous communities fighting for their land and cultural survival.
- Call for Inclusive Policy-making: Their movement emphasised the importance of development policies that consult and truly respect indigenous voices and traditional governance systems.

12. Draft Andaman and Nicobar Islands Tribal Councils Election Rules 2026

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

- The administration of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands has

proposed the Draft Andaman and Nicobar Islands Tribal Councils (Preparation of Electoral Rolls and Conduct of Elections) Rules, 2026, introducing a formal electoral framework for Nicobarese tribal councils.

- The proposal has sparked debate among the Nicobarese community, which fears that the move could alter traditional systems of self-governance and weaken customary decision-making structures.

What Changes does the Draft Electoral Model for Nicobarese Tribal Councils Propose?

- **Codified Representation:** Introduces a formalized, legally binding five-year tenure for all Village Councils and Island Tribal Councils, replacing the fluid, need-based customary cycle.
- **Mainland Electoral Mechanisms:** Mandates the systematic delimitation of official electoral constituencies, the formulation of formal electoral rolls, and structured rules for candidate nomination, scrutiny, and withdrawal.
- **Restructured Representative Hierarchy:** Villagers will formally elect five to nine Captains per village.
 - Villagers will cast direct votes to elect the Chief Captain of each Island Tribal Council.
 - The First Captains of all constituent villages on an island will vote to elect the Vice-Chief Captain.
 - The formalized Island Tribal Council will collectively comprise the Chief Captain, the Vice-Chief Captain, and all First Captains.
- **Gender Mainstreaming:** Mandates the institutional reservation of seats and leadership positions for women within both village and island councils.
- **Administrative Veto Clause:** Reinforces a controversial element from the baseline 2009 Presidential Regulation. Under this clause, the local district administration (via the Deputy Commissioner and Assistant Commissioner) retains an absolute, unilateral veto over any council decision deemed a threat to

public order, likely to cause "annoyance" to the public, or lead to a breach of peace.

- Way Forward :Culturally Sensitive Democratic Reforms: While the intent to increase transparency, accountability, and women's representation is progressive, it must not come at the cost of indigenous cultural heritage. Democratic modernization should aim to strengthen customary self-rule, not substitute it entirely. Prior Informed Consent: The UT administration must prioritize the principle of Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC).

13. Tribal Renaissance

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

- Massive Scale: The event brought together over 250 tribal entrepreneurs from 27 states, showcasing a diverse range of sectors beyond traditional handicrafts, including agritech, sustainable fashion, and eco-tourism.
- Focus on "Ethical Branding": A central theme was the global positioning of tribal products. Entrepreneurs were trained on how to use their cultural storytelling as a premium branding tool to compete with mainstream luxury markets.
- Venture Capital Interest: For the first time, a dedicated "Pitch Session" was held where tribal startups presented to angel investors and VCs, focusing on scaling forest-based social enterprises.
- Digital Transformation: The conclave marked the launch of the "Tribal e-Marketplace 2.0," an AI-driven platform designed to connect remote village entrepreneurs directly with international bulk buyers, bypassing middlemen.
- GI Tagging Showcase: Over 50 products with Geographical Indication (GI) tags were featured, highlighting the legal protection of indigenous intellectual property and its role in boosting export value.
- Sustainable Innovation: Many showcased products focused on

circular economy principles, such as biodegradable packaging made from sal leaves and high-end textiles dyed with forest-sourced natural minerals.

- Institutional Tie-ups: Major MoUs were signed between tribal cooperatives and corporate retail giants, ensuring that "Tribes India" products get dedicated shelf space in premium urban malls and airports.
- Knowledge Exchange: The event featured "Masterclasses" where successful tribal exporters shared insights on export documentation and international quality certifications (like ISO and Organic certifications).
- Youth-Led Initiatives: A significant portion of the participants were first-generation college graduates from tribal communities who are blending traditional tribal wisdom with modern business degrees to modernize their family trades.

14. Key features of Hatti Tribe

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

- In Himachal Pradesh, two brothers from the Hatti tribe married one woman in a polyandrous marriage, a traditional practice still seen in some Himalayan tribal communities.
- The Hatti Community:
- About: The Hatti are a close-knit tribal community residing along the Himachal Pradesh–Uttarakhand border.
 - Their name comes from their traditional occupation of selling crops and meat at local haats (marketplaces).
 - The Hattis have two main clans—Trans-Giri (in Himachal Pradesh) and Jaunsar Bawar (in Uttarakhand).
 - They were granted Scheduled Tribe status in August 2023.
- Polyandry: Locally known as “Jodidara” or “Jajda”, is a traditional practice among the Hatti community where brothers marry the same woman.
 - It originally aimed to prevent land fragmentation and maintain family unity.

- Though less common today, it continues to hold cultural significance within the community.
- Polyandry is illegal under Indian law, but the Himachal Pradesh revenue law has upheld the Hatti tribe's tradition of Jodidara, allowing them to continue the practice under customary tribal law.
- Polyandry is a type of polygamy in which a woman has multiple husbands simultaneously.
- Traditional Council: The Hatti community is governed by a local body called the Khumbli, which handles social issues and community decisions.

15. Role of Tribals in Shaping India's Socio-cultural and Developmental Fabric

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

- Cultural Preservation and Rich Heritage: Tribal communities have played a pivotal role in preserving India's rich cultural diversity, contributing significantly to the country's folklore, traditions, and artistic expressions.
 - Their deep connection to nature and unique customs serve as a vital counterbalance to the homogenizing forces of modernization. For instance, the Gond and Bhil tribes are famous for their vibrant art, which is now gaining global recognition.
 - The Warli tribe, known for their distinct folk art, also contributes to the cultural fabric of India, with their intricate wall paintings depicting daily life and nature.
- Environmental Stewardship and Biodiversity Conservation: Tribal communities, especially in forested regions, have been at the forefront of environmental stewardship, protecting biodiversity through traditional knowledge systems. Their sustainable practices in resource management have ensured the survival of crucial ecosystems.

- The tribals' role as the guardians of forests can be seen in regions like Bastar (Chhattisgarh), where local tribal communities have actively opposed deforestation for mining.
- Also, the Dongria Kondh tribe in Odisha is renowned for their efforts in protecting the Niyamgiri hills, fighting against the bauxite mining project that threatened their sacred lands.
- Contribution to India's Agricultural Landscape: Tribal communities have significantly contributed to the evolution of India's agricultural practices, often being the first adopters of organic farming methods.
 - Their deep-rooted knowledge of the land, crops, and natural fertilizers has informed sustainable agricultural practices, which have proven to be resilient in harsh conditions.
 - For instance, the Munda tribe, in Jharkhand, is another example, known for their traditional agricultural practices, such as mixed cropping, which ensures soil fertility and sustainability.
- Economic Contribution through Tribal Entrepreneurship: Tribal populations are increasingly contributing to India's economy, particularly through entrepreneurship and local industries such as handicrafts, textiles, and herbal medicines.

16. Why is the North-East Referred to as "Ashtalakshmi"?

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

- Symbolic Prosperity: In Indian tradition, Goddess Lakshmi has eight manifestations representing different sources of wealth, happiness, and prosperity. Eight Vibrant States: Similarly, the NER consists of eight distinct states: Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, and Tripura.

- **Collective Strength:** The government has branded the eight North-Eastern states as Ashtalakshmi, recognizing their unique cultural, demographic, agricultural, and strategic strengths that collectively contribute to India's growth and development.
- **Shift in Paradigm:** Historically plagued by the "tyranny of distance" and viewed merely as a frontier, the region is now being mainstreamed as India's gateway to Southeast Asia.
- **What are the Major Drivers of Transformation in the Northeast?**
- **The Connectivity Revolution (Bridging the Geographic Divide)**
- **Roads & Highways:** Expansion of the National Highway network from 10,905 km in 2014 to over 16,200 km in 2026, driven by the Bharatmala Pariyojana and Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) for rural last-mile access.
- **Railways:** Massive budget hikes and the extension of broad-gauge networks into hill states. Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Tripura, and Mizoram have achieved 100% electrification of railway tracks, while Assam is nearing completion of full electrification. This expansion is improving operational efficiency and reducing dependence on diesel traction across the region.
- **Airways & Waterways:** The UDAN (Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik) scheme expanded operational airports from 9 in 2014 to 17 in 2026, reflecting a 78% rise. Simultaneously, National Waterways in the Northeast increased from 1 in 2014 to 20 in 2024, reviving the Brahmaputra and Barak rivers for cargo and river-cruise tourism.
- **Digital:** Over 6,350 Gram Panchayats have been made service-ready for high-speed internet, bringing digital inclusivity to remote communities.

17. Three Language Formula in Nagaland

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

- Nagaland has no single common regional language, with 17 major tribes speaking distinct languages. English serves as the official language and medium of instruction, while none of the state's tribal languages is included in the Eighth Schedule.
- Additionally, a lack of trained teachers, textbooks, and standardized curricula makes implementation difficult, especially in linguistically diverse classrooms.

What is the Three-Language Formula?

- Background: The Three-Language Formula was first formulated by the Ministry of Education in 1968 based on the recommendations of the Kothari Commission (1964-66). NEP, 1968 emphasised study of Hindi, English and a modern Indian language (preferably one of the southern languages) in Hindi-speaking States and Hindi, English and a regional language in non-Hindi speaking States.
- Three-Language Formula under NEP 2020: The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 requires students to learn three languages. This policy is designed to promote multilingualism while respecting India's cultural and regional diversity.
 - Native Indian Languages: At least two of the three chosen languages must be native Indian languages.
 - Flexibility and Autonomy: Unlike the NEP of 1968, which rigidly mandated Hindi, English, and a regional language, the NEP 2020 allows for flexibility in language selection. States, regions, and students have the autonomy to choose the languages they wish to study.
 - Foreign Languages: A foreign language can only be taken as the third language (R3) if the other two are native Indian languages. Alternatively, a foreign language can be taken as an optional fourth language.
 - CBSE Mandate: Under the National Curriculum Framework for School Education (NCF-SE), CBSE proposed that students study three languages up to Class 10, with at

- least two being native Indian languages.
- Teacher Accommodations: Schools facing shortages of qualified native language teachers can use existing staff who have "functional proficiency" in the language as an interim measure.

18. What are the Concerns of Tribal Councils Regarding the Proposed Electoral Model?

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

- Erosion of Traditional Governance: Tribal councils fear that formal elections could undermine the community's long-standing consensus-based and customary systems of self-governance.
- Bureaucratization of Leadership: The proposed framework may transform community leadership into a procedure-driven administrative structure, increasing compliance and institutional burdens.
- The underlying 2009 Regulation already grants the district administration (via the Deputy Commissioner) absolute veto power over council decisions deemed a threat to public order. Leaders worry the new rules will expand bureaucratic oversight, rendering "self-governance" illusory.
- Marginalization of the Tuhet System: The draft rules do not adequately recognize the traditional Tuhet system, which forms the foundation of Nicobarese social and political organization.
- Great Nicobar Development Project Subtext: The proposed electoral reforms come amid sustained opposition to the Centre's Great Nicobar Development Project. Analysts suggest the rules may have been fast-tracked to restructure councils and weaken local resistance to the project.
- Jurisdictional Nuance: As a Scheduled Tribe, the Nicobarese are entitled to robust cultural and land protections. However, because the Andaman and Nicobar Islands is a centrally

administered Union Territory, it sits technically outside the formal Fifth Schedule framework of the Constitution, leaving a delicate legal gap regarding tribal self-rule.

Way Forward

- **Culturally Sensitive Democratic Reforms:** While the intent to increase transparency, accountability, and women's representation is progressive, it must not come at the cost of indigenous cultural heritage. Democratic modernization should aim to strengthen customary self-rule, not substitute it entirely.
- **Prior Informed Consent:** The UT administration must prioritize the principle of Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC). Any institutional change should be tailored in deep consultation with the Tuhets and existing Tribal Councils.

19. Great Nicobar Project

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

- Recently, the Andaman and Nicobar Islands administration notified the beginning of the rehabilitation and resettlement census in Great Nicobar Island for the trunk infrastructure component of the mega-infrastructure project.
- **R&R Census:** The rehabilitation and resettlement census aims to identify and verify families affected by the trunk infrastructure component of the project.
- **Trunk Infrastructure:** The trunk infrastructure includes constructing the trunk road and related facilities, marking the first phase of the project, which is planned to extend until 2050 according to the draft Master Plan.
- **Great Nicobar Project**
- **About:** The Great Nicobar Island Project is a major infrastructure initiative aimed at developing an international container transshipment port, airport, power infrastructure and greenfield township on Great Nicobar Island.
- **Project Cost:** The project is estimated at around ₹92,000

crore and has a long-term timeline extending up to 2050. **Key Components:** The draft Master Plan envisions transforming Great Nicobar into a greenfield township with a tourism-based economy, while also providing for defence infrastructure, an airport and an international transshipment container port. **Frontier Infrastructure:** The project has been described as a model for “frontier infrastructure development” in sensitive geographies, given Great Nicobar’s location close to critical sea lanes.

- **Concerns:** Concerns have been raised over the possible impact on indigenous communities, especially the Nicobarese and the Shompen, who have close cultural and ecological links with the island.
- In 2024, the Public Investment Board (Finance Ministry) noted that the proposed Great Nicobar container port lacked clear strategic objectives, but recently, the Defence Ministry reaffirmed the project’s strategic importance for national security and regional development.

20. Key Highlights of the Draft rules for the VB-G RAM G Act

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

- **Shift to a "Normative Allocation" Funding Model:** The draft rules shift away from MGNREGA’s open-ended, demand-driven funding model. Central allocations will now act as a spending ceiling based on the objective horizontal devolution formula recommended by the 16th Finance Commission.
- **Prioritizing Poorer States:** The formula relies heavily on GSDP Distance (42.5% weightage), which measures how far a State’s per capita income falls short of the wealthiest States, ensuring poorer States get a larger share. The next highest weightage is given to population (17.5%), benefiting larger States, while all of the other metrics carry a 10% weightage each in this formula.
- **Revised Cost-Sharing:** Unlike MGNREGA, where the Centre paid

100% of the wage bill, the new framework implements a 60:40 cost-sharing ratio between the Centre and most States (90:10 for northeastern and Himalayan States). Any expenditure beyond the normative allocation must be borne entirely by the State.

- **Performance-Linked Funding:** From the second year of implementation, a portion of the Central allocation will be contingent on State-level performance criteria. These metrics include the timely payment of wages, strict compliance with social audit requirements, and the percentage of completed public works.
- **Governance and Administrative Mechanisms:** National Level Steering Committee: A 16-member committee headed by the Union Rural Development Secretary. Its mandate is to recommend decisions relating to normative allocations to States, set standards, and monitor guidelines. Composition: It will include at least five representatives from State governments (nominated by the Centre), along with representatives from NITI Aayog and other Union Ministries. Central Gramin Rozgar Guarantee (GRG) Council: Headed by the Union Minister for Rural Development, this body is intended to advise the Centre on the overall implementation of the new law.
- **Temporary Validity of Job Cards:** Existing e-KYC-verified MGNREGA job cards will remain valid during the transition phase until new Gramin Rozgar Guarantee Cards are issued to workers.

21. Key facts of Nicobarese Tribe

(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.

22. Can the decades-old constitutional dispute over Lambadas' Scheduled Tribe status in Telangana be resolved?

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

- Supreme Court Verdict: A final, definitive ruling from the Supreme Court on the constitutional validity of the 1976 amendment is essential to end the legal gridlock.
- Quota Sub-Categorization: Splitting the ST quota into distinct compartments (e.g., Adivasis vs. Lambadas) would ensure both groups get fair representation without competing against each other.
- Socio-Economic Survey: Conducting a state-wide, scientific ethnographic audit will provide the objective data needed to assess the actual backwardness of each community.
- Strict 1950 Cut-Off: Enforcing the 1950 cut-off date will verify ancestral residency and filter out benefits for post-migration groups.
- Increasing ST Quota: Raising the total ST reservation percentage in Telangana proportional to the current population could ease the competition for limited seats.
- Weeding Out Fake Certificates: Implementing strict digital verification protocols will eliminate fraudulent ST certificates that fuel Adivasi resentment.
- Exclusive PVTG Packages: Directing targeted, non-quota financial and educational aid to highly vulnerable Adivasi groups (like Kolams and Chenchus) will bridge the developmental gap.
- Uniform National Categorization: The Central Government could classify Lambadas uniformly across states under a dedicated Denotified Tribes (DNT) category with its own budgetary pool.
- Securing Tribal Land Rights: Strict enforcement of land laws and resolving "Podu" (shifting cultivation) land claims will remove a major economic trigger of the conflict.

23. Scheduled Tribe Status under Article 342 and Adivasi

Identity.

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

- The Majoritarian Shadow Over Adivasi Identity, Faith
The editorial critiques demands to delist Christian Adivasis from the Scheduled Tribe category and argues that tribal identity under Article 342 is rooted in ethnicity, ancestry, customary practices and community identity, unlike the Scheduled Castes framework under Article 341.

Core Constitutional and Judicial Debate

- Article 341 - President notifies Scheduled Castes through the Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order, 1950. Initially applicable only to Hindus. Extended to Sikhs in 1956 and Buddhists in 1990. *State of Kerala v. Chandramohan*, 2024: Reaffirmed that SC status is governed by the Presidential Order.
- Article 342- President notifies Scheduled Tribes. ST recognition is based on tribe, ethnicity, distinct culture, customary institutions and community identity, not religion. Therefore, Article 341 logic cannot automatically apply to Article 342.
- Judicial Support for Tribal Identity - *Kartik Oraon Case*, Patna High Court, 1963 “An Oraon remains an Oraon whether Hindu, Christian or Buddhist.” Held that religious conversion does not automatically extinguish tribal identity.
- Oraon / Kurukh Tribe : Found in Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Bihar and West Bengal. Language: Kurukh, a Dravidian language. Forest Rights Act, 2006. Corrects historical injustice against forest dwellers.
- Individual Forest Rights: Cultivated forest land up to 4 hectares. Community Forest Rights: Forest resources, grazing land, water bodies and Minor Forest Produce. Habitat Rights for Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups.
- Way Forward : Do not make religion the basis for ST identification. Strengthen implementation of PESA Act, 1996 and Forest Rights Act, 2006. Empower Gram Sabhas in Scheduled

Areas.

- Protect tribal land from alienation and displacement. Improve education, healthcare and livelihood opportunities. Strengthen Fifth Schedule safeguards and tribal self-governance.

24. Chenchu Reserve" vs. Tiger Conservation conflict

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

- **Core Clash of Laws:** The conflict features a legal battle between the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 (which demands human-free "inviolable" zones for tigers) and the Forest Rights Act, 2006 (which legally protects tribal ancestral lands).
- **Target Population:** The dispute directly impacts the Chenchus, a Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG) native to the Nallamala hills spanning Telangana and Andhra Pradesh.
- **Geographic Flashpoint:** The tension is centered inside India's largest tiger habitat—the Amrabad Tiger Reserve and the adjoining Nagarjunasagar Srisailem Tiger Reserve.
- **The "Chenchu Reserve" Demand:** Tribal rights groups are actively petitioning the President of India to declare the region a dedicated autonomous tribal reserve managed by the indigenous population.
- **History of Coexistence:** Anthropological data highlights that the Chenchus have coexisted with apex predators for centuries, reporting zero history of human-tiger conflict or retaliatory animal killings.
- **Ecocentric Cosmology:** In Chenchu cultural belief, the tiger (*Pedda Puli*) is worshipped as a spiritual sibling and forest guardian, creating an internal cultural taboo against poaching or habitat destruction.
- **Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK):** As expert foragers, Chenchus possess irreplaceable environmental data, acting as the forest's natural defense against wildfires, illegal timber logging, and outside poachers.
- **Development vs. Isolation Dilemma:** The state argues that deep-

forest isolation leaves Chenchus without access to modern healthcare, formal education, and infrastructure, while relocation often leads to economic marginalization on the plains.

- The Relocation Threat: The Forest Department's policy of shifting tribal *pentas* (settlements) outside core areas threatens to cause severe deculturation, destroying their social structures and traditional way of life.

25. Forest-Dwelling Tribes and Administrative Representation (Use this content in the topic of syllabus – Unit 6.3 Paper II)

- Intra-ST Reservation Inequity: The core problem is that dominant, non-forest-dwelling Scheduled Tribes (STs) corner the vast majority of standard reservation benefits, completely bypassing interior forest-dwelling groups
- The 12 Marginalized Fringes: The ongoing crisis directly impacts 12 vulnerable forest-dwelling tribes, including the Jenu Kuruba, Iruliga, Koraga, Soliga, and Yarava, whose combined population does not exceed two lakhs
- The Direct Recruitment Demand: Due to extreme educational and geographical isolation, these tribes are demanding special direct recruitment into the state civil services, bypassing general competitive examinations.
- The Unfulfilled Budgetary Promise: This administrative crisis escalated because the promised direct recruitment quota announced in the state budget was delayed, prompting tribal threats of mass agitation.
- Failure of Decentralized Governance: Although the Forest Rights Act (FRA), 2006 empowers local *Gram Sabhas*, forest-dwelling tribes remain administratively powerless because state bureaucracies often ignore local community resolutions
- Need for Internal Categorization: Anthropologists urge the state to implement internal reservation within the ST category,

mirroring the sub-categorization of Scheduled Castes to safeguard the most primitive groups

- Deculturation of the Educated Elite: Standard administrative representation requires moving to urban centers, which creates an ongoing brain drain where educated tribal youth become alienated from their native forest-based traditions
- The "Ashram School" Barrier: The primary bottleneck to representation is the collapse of secondary education in remote forest *Ashram* schools, which leaves tribal youth completely uncompetitive in standard recruitment models.
- Colonial Administrative Legacy: The ongoing exclusion mirrors the historical transition from British-era forest laws that criminalized forest dwellers, transforming indigenous masters of the ecosystem into administrative dependents