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## **JULY 2026**

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## **PAPER - 1**

### **PHYSICAL & ARCHAEOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY**

#### **1. Anthropological survey of India(AnSI) : Rakhigarhi Research**

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

- The Anthropological Survey of India (AnSI) recently received human skeletal remains excavated from Rakhigarhi, one of the largest sites of the Indus Valley Civilization, for advanced anthropological and genetic research. The study is expected to provide deeper insights into the ancestry, health, lifestyle, and migration patterns of Harappan populations.

What is the Anthropological Survey of India (AnSI)?

- The Anthropological Survey of India (AnSI) is the premier research institution of India for anthropological studies. It functions under the Ministry of Culture. Established in 1945. Headquarters: Kolkata.
- Vision: To study India's biological and cultural diversity and document the country's rich anthropological heritage.
- Objectives of AnSI: Study human biological diversity. Research tribal and indigenous communities. Conduct ethnographic and socio-cultural studies. Preserve anthropological collections and records. Support archaeological and historical investigations through scientific analysis.

Role in the Rakhigarhi Research

- About Rakhigarhi: Located in Haryana. One of the largest known urban centres of the Indus Valley Civilization. Older and larger than many other Harappan sites. Research Significance: The skeletal remains transferred to AnSI may help scientists understand: Genetic ancestry of Harappans. Dietary habits. Disease patterns. Migration and population movements. Biological characteristics of ancient inhabitants.
- Important Contributions of AnSI Conducted extensive surveys of tribal communities across India. Prepared ethnographic profiles

of numerous Scheduled Tribes. Preserved rare anthropological specimens and archives. Contributed to studies on human adaptation, migration, and diversity. Supported national heritage and cultural preservation efforts.

## 2. Homo Juluensis

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

- Evolution of Homo Juluensis : The fossils lived approximately 300,000 years ago in eastern Asia. This species hunted wild horses in small groups, and made stone tools and possibly processed animal hides for survival before disappearing around 50,000 years ago.
- Specifications Known as “big-head people”. Includes mysterious groups like the Denisovans (Denisova hominins are an extinct species or subspecies of archaic humans that ranged across Asia during the Lower and Middle Paleolithic. Their histories are still being uncovered). The fossils show facial and jaw features similar to Neanderthals and braincases 30% larger than modern humans.
- Coexisting Human Species
- Four human species coexisted: Homo floresiensis, Homo luzonensis, Homo longi, and Homo juluensis.
- Fossil Evidence and Characteristics The fossils forming the basis of this new classification were recovered from sites in Xujiayao and Xuchang in northern and central China. Excavations at Xujiayao in the 1970s yielded over 10,000 stone tools and 21 fossil fragments, representing at least 10 individuals. Four additional ancient skulls discovered at Xuchang exhibit similar features.
- Significance : The findings indicate a likely continuity of hybridization among Middle Pleistocene hominins, which shaped human evolution in eastern Asia. The discovery underscores the intricate relationships within ancient hominin groups and their evolutionary significance.
- Who were Neanderthals? Neanderthals were primitive people

who went extinct around 40,000 years ago. They appear to have originated in Europe and then spread to Southwest, Central, and Northern Asia.

### **3. Indian Archaeology: The Rakhigarhi Skeletal Handover** (Use this content in the topic of syllabus – Unit 1.3 Paper I)

- The News: The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) formally transferred freshly excavated human remains to AnSI. This interdisciplinary move was executed under a newly established Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) aimed at pooling national bio-anthropological expertise Focus of the Destination Laboratory
- The Update: The physical assets—including three complete human skeletons and associated bone fragments—were securely transferred to AnSI's state-of-the-art Ancient Human Skeletal Repository and Laboratory in Kolkata.
- This centralized facility specializes in deep molecular extraction and preservation Excavation Context: The 2025–26 Field Season The Context: The skeletons were unearthed during the 2025–26 winter field season by the ASI's Excavation Branch-II, based out of Greater Noida. This underlines that the data is completely fresh and distinct from earlier decades of excavation at the site Spatial Provenance: Mound No. 7
- The Location: The remains were recovered specifically from Mound Number 7 (RGR 7). In Harappan archaeology, RGR 7 is structurally mapped and globally recognized as the dedicated cemetery and burial plot of the ancient township Scale of the Rakhigarhi Site. The Objective: AnSI's primary mandate is to move beyond mere cultural artifacts to construct a comprehensive biological history of the Harappans.
- The Innovation: A major highlight of the June 2026 scientific pipeline is the deployment of 3D forensic facial reconstruction technology. By digitally mapping skeletal tissue thickness over the recovered skulls, scientists will visually recreate the exact facial features and physiognomy of these ancient individuals Ancient

### DNA (aDNA) and the Out-of-Africa Migration Mapping

- The Genetics: The skeletons will undergo rigorous ancient DNA extraction. Building on past discoveries at Mound 7 (where a 4,600-year-old female skeleton revealed a total absence of the Steppe Pastoral gene), this new batch will provide statistical volume to map the indigenous genetic baseline of the subcontinent Settlement Continuity Mapping

## 4. Intercaste Marriages and the Unfinished Law

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

- Coinciding with Dalit History Month, reports of violence and coerced nullification of intercaste marriages in Gujarat have highlighted the persistent gap between constitutional guarantees and social reality. Intercaste marriage refers to a union between two individuals belonging to different castes. While the Indian Constitution and the Special Marriage Act of 1954 provide the legal framework for such unions, the law remains unfinished because the social machinery—ranging from community councils to local police—often prioritizes caste-based customs (endogamy) over individual constitutional rights, leading to honour crimes and social boycotts

### Key Data & Statistics:

- Low Prevalence: Despite 75 years of independence, various surveys indicate that intercaste marriages in India still hover around a meager 5% to 6% of total marriages. Judicial Directive (2018): The Supreme Court in the Shakti Vahini v. Union of India case declared interference by Khap Panchayats in consensual marriages of adults as absolutely illegal.
- Violence and Impunity: In 2025-26, states like Gujarat reported multiple instances of honour killings and community-led abductions to return women to their natal castes. Special Marriage Act (1954): This law has existed for 72 years, yet its requirement

for a 30-day public notice is often criticized for tipping off hostile families and community mobs

#### Intercaste Marriage Laws in India:

- Article 21 of the Constitution: The Supreme Court recognizes the Right to Marry as an integral part of the Right to Life and Personal Liberty. Special Marriage Act, 1954: Enables any two Indian citizens to marry regardless of their religion or caste without needing to convert.
- The Hindu Marriage Act, 1955: While originally focused on intra-community rules, it does not prohibit inter-caste marriages between two Hindus (including Sikhs, Jains, and Buddhists).
- SC/ST Prevention of Atrocities Act, 1989: Provides a legal shield against violence or harassment directed at intercaste couples where one partner belongs to a Dalit or Tribal community.
- Incentive Schemes: Various states and the Central government (Dr. Ambedkar Scheme) provide financial incentives (up to 2.5 lakh) to couples in intercaste marriages involving a Dalit partner.

### 5. New Insights into Human Evolution

**(Use this content in the topic of syllabus – Unit 1.4 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.

## 6. Human skeletal remains from Rakhigarhi Transferred for Scientific Research

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

- Human skeletal remains from **Rakhigarhi**, a major Harappan archaeological site in Haryana, have been formally handed over by the **Archaeological Survey of India** to the **Anthropological Survey of India**, a national research institute under the Union Ministry of Culture, for detailed scientific study.
- **Transfer:** The handover was carried out under a recently signed **Memorandum of Understanding** between the two institutions. Three complete skeletons and related skeletal fragments have been shifted to the Anthropological Survey of India's Kolkata laboratory.
- **About:** Rakhigarhi, spread across about 550 hectares, is considered one of the largest known settlements of the **Harappan Civilisation**, also referred to as the **Indus Valley Civilisation** or **Indus-Saraswati Civilisation**.
- **Evidence:** Excavations at the site have revealed **planned**

**settlements, drainage systems, craft production centres, trade networks, and burial grounds, indicating continuous habitation from the Early Harappan to the Mature Harappan periods.**

- **Burials:** Mound Number 7 at Rakhigarhi has been **identified as a major burial area**, from where 56 human skeletons were recovered, including the remains of a woman dated to around 4,600 years ago.
- **Ancestry: Deoxyribonucleic Acid** analysis of the Rakhigarhi woman indicated the **absence of the Steppe Pastoralist genetic component**, contributing to debates on Aryan or Indo-Aryan migration into India.
- **Methods:** Researchers will study the remains using techniques such as ancient **Deoxyribonucleic Acid** analysis, stable isotope studies, osteological assessment, palaeopathological investigation, and environmental reconstruction, in collaboration with institutions such as the **Birbal Sahni Institute of Palaeosciences, University College London, and Banaras Hindu University.**

## **7. Centre Brings Advanced Cell & Gene Therapies Under CLAA Framework**

**(Use this content in the topic of syllabus – Unit 9.3 Paper I)**

- The Central Government has **amended the Drugs Rules, 1945** to bring **Cell or Stem Cell-derived products, Gene Therapeutic Products, and Xenografts** under the **Centrally License Approving Authority (CLAA)** framework, ensuring uniform regulation across India.

### **What is the Amendment?**

- Expands the **CLAA framework** to include: Cell or Stem Cell-derived products, Gene therapeutic products and Xenografts. These products will now be subject to **joint oversight** by the Central and State Licensing Authorities.

## What is the CLAA Framework?

- Established under the **Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940**. Provides **joint regulatory supervision** by Central Licensing Authority and State Licensing Authorities. Earlier covered critical biological products such as Vaccines, Large Volume Parenterals (IV solutions >100 ml), and Recombinant DNA (r-DNA)-based medicines. The amendment expands its scope to emerging advanced therapies.

- Emerging Therapies Covered**

**1. Cell or Stem Cell-derived Products :** Therapies developed using stem cells or other living cells.

- Used in Regenerative medicine. **CAR-T cell therapy** for blood cancers such as leukemia and lymphoma.

**2. Gene Therapeutic Products :** Modify or replace defective genes to treat diseases. Include Gene replacement therapy and Gene editing therapies. Used for Genetic disorders and Certain cancers.

**3. Xenografts : Animal tissue or organ-derived products** transplanted into humans. Examples: Animal-derived heart valves. Applications: Cardiology and Orthopedics.

## Why is the Amendment Important?

- Ensures **uniform regulatory standards** across all States. Enhances **patient safety** through stricter oversight. Strengthens regulation of rapidly evolving medical technologies. Aligns India's regulatory framework with **global best practices**. Promotes innovation while ensuring safe adoption of advanced therapies.

## 8. The Genetic Legacy of Neanderthals in the Human Nose

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

- Recent research conducted by a team of scientists from the University College London and Fudan University, in collaboration with researchers worldwide, has shed light on the **genetic factors influencing the human nose**.
- The study identified **genetic loci associated with the nose**, including one locus influenced by **Neanderthal ancestry**.

## What are the Key Highlights of the Research?

- **The Genetic Study:** The study analyzed **2D images** and measured **distances between facial landmarks** in over 6,000 Latin American individuals. The research identified **42 new genetic loci associated with the nose**, with **26 of them being replicated in diverse populations including Asians, Europeans, and Africans**. A 'locus', plural 'loci', is the **position of a particular gene** on the human chromosome. One specific locus, **1q32.3**, previously linked to **Neanderthal** genetic contributions, was found to influence **midface height**. The **1q32.3 locus contains the gene ATF3 (activating transcription factor 3)**, which is regulated by the **forkhead box L2 (FOXL2) gene involved in skull and facial development**.
- **The Legacy of Neanderthals:** Genetic evidence suggests that **Neanderthals and early humans interbred**, leading to the **introgression of Neanderthal genomic sequences** into the **human population**. The influential work of evolutionary geneticist **Svante Pääbo, who won the Nobel Prize for Physiology and Medicine in 2022**, has provided key insights into the interbreeding events between **archaic hominids, such as Neanderthals and Denisovans, and modern humans**. This interbreeding has left lasting genetic imprints on our species, affecting various traits and disease susceptibilities.
- Apart from nose shape, Neanderthal genetic contributions have been implicated in the **way humans respond to pathogens** and their susceptibility to certain skin and blood conditions, cancers, and even depression. The study highlights the growing body of evidence indicating **the profound impact of Neanderthal and Denisovan genomes** on modern human biology and health.

## APER - 2

### INDIAN & TRIBAL ANTHROPOLOGY

#### **1. Double Helix Model of DNA**

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

- **Discovery:** The DNA double helix model was discovered by James Watson and Francis Crick in 1953, revolutionized the field of biology, laying the foundation for modern genetics, biotechnology, and medical research. This milestone remains a cornerstone in the understanding of heredity, evolution, and genetic diseases. Watson and Crick deciphered DNA's structure as a double helix based on Rosalind Franklin's critical X-ray crystallography (Photo 51).
- **Structure:** DNA consists of two long strands that twist around each other to form a helical shape, creating the "double helix." Each strand is made up of sugar and phosphate molecules, which form the backbone of the structure. The majority of DNA is found in the cell nucleus so it is called nuclear DNA.
- **Base Pairs:** The two strands are connected by nitrogenous base pairs, with Adenine (A) always pairing with Thymine (T), and Cytosine (C) pairing with Guanine (G). These base pairs form the "rungs" of the helical ladder.
- **Antiparallel Strands:** The two strands of DNA run in opposite directions, a feature known as "antiparallel," which ensures that the base pairs align correctly for complementary bonding.
- **Core Features:** Complementary Base Pairing: The two strands are noted as being connected through specific base-pairing rules where Adenine pairs with Thymine, and Guanine pairs with Cytosine. This pairing is highlighted as a fundamental principle of DNA stability. Mechanism of Accurate Replication: This complementary pairing is emphasized for explaining how DNA replicates with high accuracy, ensuring faithful transmission of

- genetic information across generations.
- **Significance of Discovery:** It gave rise to fields such as Molecular Biology, Biotechnology, and Genetic Engineering. Awarded the Nobel Prize (1962) in Physiology or Medicine (Watson, Crick, and Maurice Wilkins) for their DNA model, highlighting its foundational importance.
  - Paved the way for the Human Genome Project (2003), CRISPR gene editing tool, and personalized medicine. In agriculture, DNA analysis reshaped farming practices by enabling the creation of genetically modified crops and pest-resistant plant varieties. DNA has also become indispensable in forensic science, assisting in crime-solving.

## **2. Issues Faced by the Tribes in India**

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

- **Land Rights:** One of the most significant issues faced by tribal communities is the lack of secure land rights. Many tribes live in forest areas or remote regions where their traditional rights to land and resources are often not recognized, leading to displacement and land alienation.
- **Socio-economic Marginalisation:** Tribal populations often experience socio-economic marginalisation, including poverty, lack of access to quality education, healthcare, and basic amenities like clean water and sanitation facilities.
- **Education Gap:** Education levels among tribal populations are generally lower than the national average. Lack of access to quality education, cultural barriers, and language differences can hinder the educational development of tribal children.
- **Exploitation and Bonded Labor:** Some tribal communities are vulnerable to exploitation, bonded labor, and human trafficking, especially in remote regions where law enforcement is weak.
- **Cultural Erosion:** Rapid urbanisation and modernisation can lead to the erosion of tribal cultures, languages, and traditional

practices. The younger generation may face challenges preserving their cultural identity.

- **Lack of Representation:** Despite protective measures, tribal communities often face inadequate political representation and lack a strong voice in decision-making processes that concern their welfare and rights.

### Way Forward

- **Land and Resource Rights:** Recognising and securing land and resource rights for tribal communities is crucial to their well-being. Displacement and land alienation have been significant issues faced by tribes, and addressing these concerns is essential for their sustenance.
- **Education and Skill Development:** Providing quality education and skill development programs tailored to the needs and cultural context of tribal communities can enable them to access better livelihood opportunities and participate more actively in the mainstream economy.
- **Healthcare and Sanitation:** Ensuring access to proper healthcare facilities and sanitation is essential to improving the overall health and well-being of tribal communities, who often face unique health challenges due to geographical isolation and limited access to services.
- **Empowerment of Women:** Recognising the crucial role of women in tribal societies and promoting their active participation in decision-making processes, economic activities, and community development.

### **3. Objectives of Adi Vaani**

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

- The Ministry of Tribal Affairs launched the beta version of “Adi Vaani”, India’s first AI-powered translation platform for tribal languages, as part of Janjatiya Gaurav Varsh (JJGV) celebrations.

#### **Key Points**

- Adi Vaani has been developed by a national consortium led by IIT

Delhi, in collaboration with BITS Pilani, IIIT Hyderabad, IIIT Nava Raipur, and the Tribal Research Institutes of Jharkhand, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, and Meghalaya. The Beta version currently supports Santali, Bhili, Mundari, and Gondi, while languages like Kui and Garo are under development.

- Key Features: Real-time text & speech translation between Hindi, English, and tribal languages. Interactive language learning modules for students & early learners. Digitization of folklore & oral traditions to preserve heritage. Government advisories & health messages in tribal languages with subtitles.
- Jan Jatiya Gaurav Varsh (JJGV)
- It commemorates the 150th Birth Anniversary of Bhagwan Birsa Munda (Dharti Aaba) and honours the extraordinary legacy of tribal heroes.
- It is being celebrated from 15 November 2024 to 15 November 2025, as a year-long extension of Janjatiya Gaurav Divas (declared in 2021).
- It is linked with flagship programmes like Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Utkarsh Gramme Abhiyan and Pradhan Mantri Janjati Adivasi Nyay Maha Abhiyan (PM JANMAN).
- Objectives:
  - Highlight the cultural, spiritual, and social contributions of tribal communities to India's identity and freedom struggle. Promote tribal welfare through a whole-of-government approach.
  - Encourage Jan Bhagidari (people's participation) in initiatives aimed at tribal development.
  - Foster awareness and recognition of tribal heroes and their role in nation-building.

#### **4. Objectives of Adi Vaani**

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  - Foster awareness and recognition of tribal heroes and their role in nation-building.

## 5. Key features of VB-G RAM G Act, 2025

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

- The VB-G RAM G Act, 2025 provides a statutory guarantee of wage employment to eligible rural households. It aims to strengthen village economies, generate sustainable livelihoods, and align rural development with the vision of Viksit Bharat @2047.
- Evolution of Rural Employment Programmes: India's rural employment initiatives evolved from the Rural Manpower Programme (1960s) and Crash Scheme for Rural Employment (1971) to Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (1993), and Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana (1999).
- Maharashtra Employment Guarantee Act, 1977 first introduced the statutory right to work, laying the foundation for MGNREGA, 2005, which provided a nationwide legal guarantee for rural employment. Focus Areas: The Act places Gram Panchayats at the center of rural transformation, emphasizing durable asset creation, natural resource management, water conservation, and women's empowerment through Self Help Groups (SHGs).

### Key Features of the Act

- Enhanced Income Security: The statutory legal entitlement is expanded from 100 days to 125 days of guaranteed wage employment per financial year for households volunteering for unskilled manual work.
- 60-Day Pause: To balance the rural economy, an aggregated 60-day no-work period (blackout) is instituted during peak sowing and harvesting seasons to safeguard agricultural labor supply; workers receive their 125 guaranteed days within the remaining 305 days.
- Interim Minimum Wage Floor: For the first time, a nationwide minimum wage floor of Rs 300 per day has been introduced, ensuring no state wage under this program can fall below this statutory mark.
- Strict Wage Timelines: To enforce fiscal accountability and income stability, daily wages must be disbursed weekly, or within

a strict statutory ceiling of a fortnight (14 days) after the work is performed.

- New Identification: Workers will be issued Gramin Rozgar Guarantee Cards. Existing e-KYC verified job cards will remain valid during the transition period to ensure uninterrupted access to work.
- Integration with PM Gati Shakti: Planning is bottom-up through localized Viksit Gram Panchayat Plans, which are spatially integrated with national systems like PM Gati Shakti to prevent fragmented asset creation.

## 6. Reassessing Tribal Classification in India

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

- Recent anthropological research challenges the outdated Lokur Committee criteria (1965) for identifying Scheduled Tribes (STs), advocating for a spectrum-based classification that better reflects India's diverse tribal identities.

### Existing Tribal Classification System

- Lokur Committee (1965) defined STs based on five criteria: Primitive Traits, Distinctive Culture, Geographical Isolation, Shyness of Contact, Backwardness
- Criticism of the Existing Criteria: Considered outdated, impractical, and derogatory in modern contexts. No tribal community fully aligns with all five parameters. Despite expert recommendations, the government continues using these outdated parameters for ST classification.
- Challenges in Defining 'Tribalness' : Subjectivity in Indicators: Assigning weight to social, cultural, and economic factors remains complex. Regional Variations: Tribal communities differ widely across India, making standardization difficult.
- Ethnic Conflicts: Inclusion of new groups may trigger disputes, such as the Meitei-ST demand in Manipur. Institutional Delays: Government inertia in updating classification methods despite

growing consensus.

- Potential Implications of a New Classification System
- Policy Reform: A refined classification ensures fairer distribution of reservations and welfare benefits. Academic Contribution: Strengthens the link between anthropological research and policymaking. Legal & Administrative Adjustments: Requires revised research methodologies and legal frameworks. Community Relations: Potential risk of tensions between groups over ST recognition.
- Key Institutions Involved : Anthropological Survey of India (AnSI): Conducting research to redefine ST classification. National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST): Evaluating policy implications and recommendations. Indian Anthropology Congress: Hosting expert discussions on tribal classification frameworks.
- Way Forward : Reassessment of ST Criteria: Move towards a dynamic, evidence-based classification. Consensus-Based Framework: Engage tribal communities, scholars, and policymakers in defining 'tribalness'. Periodic Re-Evaluation: Regularly update ST classifications to reflect socio-economic changes.

## **7. Socio-Economic Challenges of PVTGs**

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

- Health and Nutrition: High rates of malnutrition, communicable diseases (e.g., tuberculosis among Saharias in Madhya Pradesh), and genetic disorders like sickle cell anemia. Limited healthcare access exacerbates these issues.
- Education: Literacy rates are low, especially among women.
- Livelihood: Deforestation and displacement from development projects disrupt traditional food sources, causing food insecurity (e.g., Baigas in Chhattisgarh).
- Reproductive Health: Lack of access to contraceptives and safe

maternal care leads to high mortality rates.

- Discrimination: Social exclusion and humiliation cause psychological trauma, worsened by inadequate rehabilitation post-displacement.

#### Importance of Separate Census Enumeration

- Enabling Targeted Policies: Precise data will guide schemes like PM JANMAN.
- Improving Resource Allocation: Ensures funds reach the most marginalized, unlike broader ST-focused schemes.
- Preserving Culture: Captures unique demographic and cultural data to protect PVTG heritage.
- Monitoring Progress: Provides baseline data to evaluate welfare programs.
- Challenges: Logistical issues in remote areas, risk of stigmatization, and outdated criteria like geographical isolation need addressing.

#### Government Schemes for PVTGs

- PM JANMAN (Janjati Adivasi Nyaya Maha Abhiyan): Focusing on housing, roads, health, education, and livelihoods. Involves 11 interventions across 9 ministries, including Jal Jeevan Mission and Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana.
- Sickle Cell Anemia Elimination Mission: Awareness, universal screening of 7 crore people (0-40 years) in affected tribal areas, and counseling.

## 8. GUTTI KOYA TRIBALS

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

- Koya are an Indian tribal community found in the states of Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Chhattisgarh, and Odisha.
- Koyas call themselves Koitur in their dialect. The Koyas speak the Koya language, also known as Koya basha, which is a Dravidian language related to Gondi.
- Most important fair celebrated by Koyas is the Sammakka Saralamma Jatra once in two years on full moon day of the Magha

Masam (January or February) at Medaram village in Mulug taluk of Warangal district.

- Podu is a form of shifting cultivation, as practiced by various tribal groups in forest areas has for long been an economical survival versus environmental sustenance issue.
- The tribal community faces the new threats of development and conflicts, posing a serious questions on its existence and civilization. For instance, the displacement and migration of Gotti koyas tribals taking place in Andhra Pradesh. In the absence of land and access to a forest, the Koyas depend on wage labour in farm lands. The scarcity of these jobs lead to malnutrition of children and instances of anemia in women.

## **9. Support to Tribal research Institute scheme**

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

- The Support to Tribal Research Institutes (TRIs) scheme is a Ministry of Tribal Affairs program that provides financial assistance to TRIs in states and union territories. Its goal is to strengthen TRIs as knowledge hubs for tribal development by supporting research, documentation, training, and capacity building.
- The Ministry of Tribal Affairs provides 100% grant-in-aid to TRIs on a need basis.
- The scheme supports various activities, including: Preserving and promoting tribal languages and dialects. Documenting folklore and folktales. Collecting oral literature. Conducting conferences, seminars, workshops, and poetic symposiums. Organizing cultural festivals and exchange programs. Maintaining and preserving art and artifacts. Setting up tribal museums

Heritage Preservation:

- Proposed activities include robust research and documentation to record and preserve the heritage and traditions of tribal communities in Jammu and Kashmir.

- TRI was asked to initiate programs safeguarding tribal art, traditions, and languages to ensure their continuity for future generations.

#### Capacity Building:

- TRI was instructed to conduct capacity-building programs to equip tribal communities with skills and resources to adapt to evolving socio-economic challenges.
- Youth Empowerment:
- Measures aim to close educational gaps and promote career readiness among tribal youth through targeted interventions.
- Directed activities focus on skill development, livelihood enhancement, and educational support for tribal youth.
- Special emphasis is on coaching for tribal students, preparing for competitive exams and creating fellowship opportunities for action research proposals.

### **10. On the method of caste enumeration**

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

- The pre-test for the second phase of Census 2027 began on July 6, 2026, in 16 States and Union Territories, using an “open column” for respondents to record their caste. The outcome of this pre-test will decide the final methodology for India’s first statutory caste enumeration since 1931.
- What has changed in this pre-test, and why does its outcome carry more weight than the 2011 exercise?
- Pre-test scope: The rehearsal for the second phase of Census ran in 16 States and Union Territories from July 6 to July 20, 2026, and included an open column for respondents to record their caste.
- Statutory shift: Unlike the 2011 Socio Economic and Caste Census (SECC), which was conducted outside the purview of the Census Act, caste in 2027 will be enumerated within the second and final phase of the Census itself, giving the count statutory backing.
- Methodology still open: Census officials stated that the final caste

enumeration methodology will be prepared based on feedback from this pre-test, not fixed in advance. Historical gap: Caste-wise population, other than Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, has not been enumerated in independent India since the 1931 Census. Limited rehearsal access: Self-enumeration was permitted, with the portal accessible only from July 1 to 5, and only in the specific area undergoing the rehearsal.

- Conclusion : The process of granting ST status requires a modernizing framework and multi-layered procedure with transparent identification criteria to ensure constitutional safeguards reach the most deserving communities and promote inclusive development.

### **11. Four Tribal Crops of Madhya Pradesh Receive GI Tag**

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

- Four traditional tribal crops of Madhya Pradesh have been granted the Geographical Indication (GI) Tag, recognising their unique regional identity and traditional agricultural heritage.
- Key Points
- GI-Tagged Crops: The four crops are Sitahi Kutki, Nagdaman Kutki, Baigani Arhar, and Mahakoshal Chhatriya Chawal (Chhatriya Paddy).
  - Sitahi Kutki and Nagdaman Kutki (Dindori Millets): Kutki (Little Millet) is a staple food of the Baiga and Gond tribes of Dindori.
  - Baigani Arhar (Dindori Pigeon Pea): This indigenous variety of pigeon pea (toor dal) is deeply rooted in the heritage of the Baiga tribe and is cultivated entirely through traditional organic farming practices.
  - Mahakoshal Chhatriya Chawal (Jabalpur & Katni Rice): This traditional rice variety is cultivated in the fertile wetlands of Jabalpur and Katni and is renowned for its resilience,

superior quality, and culinary excellence.

- Traditional Heritage: These indigenous crop varieties have been preserved and cultivated for generations by tribal communities using traditional farming practices.
- Geographical Indication (GI) Tag:
  - The Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999 provides for the registration and protection of Geographical Indications (GIs) in India.
  - The GI framework is governed by the WTO Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS).
  - GI registration in India is administered by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
  - A registered GI enjoys legal protection for a period of 10 years and can be renewed thereafter.

## **12. Benefits & Safeguards for Scheduled Tribes**

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

- Inclusion in the ST list provides communities with access to a range of constitutional safeguards and affirmative action policies aimed at their upliftment.
- Political Safeguards : Reservation of seats in Lok Sabha (Article 330) and State Legislative Assemblies (Article 332). Reservation of seats in Panchayats (Article 243D) and Municipalities (Article 243T).
- Educational & Economic Safeguards : Reservation in government educational institutions (Article 15(4)). Reservation in government jobs and services (Article 16(4), 16(4A)). Special welfare schemes, scholarships, and financial assistance for education and entrepreneurship (e.g., Post-Matric Scholarship, National Overseas Scholarship). Promotion of educational and economic interests by the State (Article 46).

- Protective Safeguards : Special provisions for administration under the Fifth and Sixth Schedules of the Constitution. Protection of land rights and prevention of land alienation through state-specific laws. Implementation of laws like the PESA Act, 1996, and the Forest Rights Act, 2006.

### Challenge

- Outdated and Subjective Criteria: The 1965 Lokur Committee criteria are widely considered outdated. Terms like "primitive traits" are condescending, and "geographical isolation" is increasingly irrelevant. Rigidity of the Process: The RGI's strict adherence to the old criteria acts as a major bottleneck, leading to the rejection of many state-backed proposals.
- Political Mobilization: Political aspirations often drive the demand for ST status, as it shifts electoral dynamics by granting reservation to large communities. Opposition from Existing STs: Existing tribal groups often oppose adding new ones, fearing their reservation benefits will dilute and competition for scarce resources will increase.
- Way Forward : Modernize Criteria: Review and update the criteria for inclusion, incorporating recommendations from the Prof. Virginius Xaxa Committee (2014), which emphasize socio-economic disadvantage over obsolete traits like "primitiveness." Ensure a Transparent, Time-Bound Process: Establish a clear and time-bound framework for the disposal of state recommendations to reduce delays and potential political manipulation.

## 13. Great Nicobar Project: Strategic Imperative vs Ecological and Tribal Concerns

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

- Mega infrastructure push in ecologically sensitive zone : The Great Nicobar Project as a strategic and economic initiative aimed at

enhancing India's maritime power, trade connectivity, and regional influence, while raising serious environmental and indigenous rights concerns. Strategic and geopolitical significance : Project located near key international shipping routes (Malacca Strait proximity) . Enhances India's presence in Indo-Pacific and counters China's influence. Strengthens maritime security and naval logistics

- Economic and developmental potential : Aims to create transshipment port, airport, and urban infrastructure. Expected to boost trade, employment, and regional development . Positions India as a global logistics hub Environmental and ecological concerns : Threat to fragile island ecosystem, biodiversity, and forests. Potential damage to coastal regulation zones and marine ecology. Long-term sustainability risks highlighted
- Impact on indigenous communities : Particularly affects Shompen and Nicobarese tribes. Concerns over displacement, cultural erosion, and rights violations. Questions over adequacy of consultation and consent
- Strategic advantage in Indo-Pacific : Enhances India's maritime footprint and geopolitical leverage. Reduces dependence on foreign ports for transshipment. Economic growth and connectivity: Potential to transform Andaman & Nicobar into a logistics hub. Generates employment and infrastructure development
- Sustainability and disaster vulnerability : Island ecosystems are fragile and disaster-prone (tsunami, earthquakes). Large-scale infrastructure may increase long-term risks. Governance and procedural concerns : Questions over environmental clearances and impact assessments. Potential dilution of regulatory safeguards

## **14. Key Provisions of the UGC (Promotion of Equity in Higher Education Institutions) Regulations, 2026**

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

- **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. Each institution must form an Equity Committee under the EOC, chaired by the head of the institution, with mandatory representation from SCs, STs, OBCs, persons with disabilities, and women, ensuring inclusive decision-making.
- **The Equity Committee is required to meet within 24 hours of receiving a complaint and submit its report within 15 days, after which the head of the institution must initiate action within 7 days.** The framework also mandates mobile Equity Squads, a 24×7 helpline, and Equity Ambassadors to ensure continuous monitoring and promotion of equity on campuses.
- **National-level Monitoring Mechanism:** UGC will establish a national monitoring committee comprising representatives from statutory bodies and civil society to oversee implementation, review complaints, and suggest preventive measures, meeting at least twice a year.

- **Significance:** They strengthen the legal and institutional framework against caste-based discrimination in higher education, addressing a serious concern highlighted by a 2019 IIT Delhi study, which found that 75% of students from historically disadvantaged castes faced discrimination on campus. Inclusion of OBCs marks a more comprehensive approach to social justice. Strict penalties signal a shift from advisory guidelines to enforceable regulation.

### **15. Lanjia Saora Tribe**

**(Use this content in the topic of syllabus – Unit 6.1 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.

## 16. Significance of Sacred Groves

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

- UNESCO (1996) defined Sacred Groves as an area of natural vegetation preserved through local taboos and sanctions that entail spiritual and ecological values. They are areas of natural vegetation resembling small forests protected by local communities for their religious and cultural significance. These are important sites for worship and community gatherings. Logging and hunting are strictly prohibited in these territories.
- Sacred groves are found all over India - especially in states like Maharashtra, Karnataka, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu. There are around 14,000 sacred groves reported across India. However, experts believe that the total number of sacred groves could be as high as 100,000.
- They are known by different names in different parts of India like – Devban in Himachal, Devbhoomi in Uttarakhand, Gumpa forest in Arunachal, Sarna in Jharkhand and Chattisgarh, Deorai/Devrai in Maharashtra, Kavu/Sarpa Kavu in Kerala, Devarakadu/ Devkad in Karnataka, Jahera/ Thakuramma in Odisha, etc.
- Significance: It acts as a repository for various Ayurvedic medicines. It is a source of replenishable resources like fruits and honey.
- Sacred groves often contain plant and animal species that have become extinct in neighboring areas. They therefore harbor great

genetic diversity. They have become biodiversity hotspots, as various species seek refuge in the areas due to progressive habitat destruction and hunting elsewhere.

Why is this directive significant?

- The Centre has usually maintained that the management of wildlife and its habitat is primarily the responsibility of the States. The Centre had noted that the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, empowered States for declaration of any private or community land, as a community reserve, for protecting fauna, flora and traditional or cultural conservation values and practices. The judgment aligned the preservation of sacred groves with the cultural and traditional rights of entire communities.

## **17. Uplifting Tribal Communities in India through Digital Entrepreneurship**

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

- India's Scheduled Tribe (ST) population, comprising 10.42 million people (8.6% of the total population) across over 705 distinct groups, often resides in remote areas. To uplift these communities, the government has introduced various welfare schemes aimed at socio-economic empowerment, sustainable development, and the preservation of their rich cultural heritage. These initiatives are designed to improve living standards, promote education, and ensure inclusive growth for tribal populations. Honouring and Celebrating India's Tribal Communities
- As part of its commitment to tribal empowerment, the government has launched several initiatives. Further, to honor the legacy and heritage of tribal communities, it began celebrating Janjatiya Diwas on November 15th.
- Over the years, several schemes have been introduced to support the socio-economic development of tribal communities, with

special attention to the needs of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs). These programs are designed to help improve their living conditions and ensure their inclusion in mainstream society.

#### Launch of Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan :

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan in Hazaribag, Jharkhand. With an outlay of over 79,156 crore, this ambitious program aims to address critical gaps in social infrastructure, health, education, and livelihood development across approximately 63,843 tribal villages.

#### Pradhan Mantri Janjati Adivasi Nyaya Maha Abhiyan (PM-JANMAN) :

- During Janjatiya Gaurav Divas in Khunti, Jharkhand, the Prime Minister launched the Pradhan Mantri Janjati Adivasi Nyaya Maha Abhiyan (PM- JANMAN) to uplift Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs). PM-JANMAN aims to improve the quality of life for PVTG communities through targeted support in areas such as safe housing, clean drinking water, education, health, road and telecom connectivity, electrification, and sustainable livelihoods.

### **18. PARTICULARLY VULNERABLE TRIBAL GROUP (PVTG)**

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

- Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG) is a classification used by the Government of India for the most disadvantaged sub-sections of the Scheduled Tribes (ST). These groups are identified based on their extreme socio-economic backwardness, stagnant or declining population, and fragile livelihoods. As of April 2026, there are 75 officially notified PVTGs residing in 18 States and the Union Territory of Andaman & Nicobar Islands.

#### **Criteria for Identification**

- PVTGs are not a constitutional or statutory category but an administrative classification. The following four criteria (established via the Dhebar Commission) are used for their

identification: Pre-agricultural technology: Use of rudimentary tools, hunting-gathering, and shifting cultivation. Stagnant or declining population: High mortality and low fertility rates leading to demographic fragility. Extremely low literacy: Often below 10–20%, with limited access to formal schooling. Subsistence level of economy: Dependence on forest produce and local barter systems with very little market surplus.

- PVTGs in the Nicobar Context
- The status of the Shompen and Nicobarese (though the Nicobarese are an ST, not a PVTG, they share the same habitat) is a central point of the 2026 Great Nicobar Project debate.
  - The Shompen (PVTG): A Mongoloid tribe of semi-nomadic hunter-gatherers living in the interior forests of Great Nicobar. Their population is estimated at only 229-300.
  - Habitat Rights: Under Section 3(1)(e) of the Forest Rights Act (FRA), 2006, PVTGs have “Habitat Rights.” These rights go beyond land ownership and include the right to traditional territory, socio-cultural practices, and traditional knowledge.
  - The 2026 Conflict: As of April 4, 2026, there is significant legal friction in the Calcutta High Court regarding whether the Great Nicobar Project’s draft “Relocation Plan” violates the Habitat Rights of the Shompen.
- Major Welfare Initiatives: PM-JANMAN : The government is currently implementing the PM-JANMAN (*Pradhan Mantri Janjati Adivasi Nyaya Maha Abhiyan*), a 24,104 crore flagship mission launched in late 2023 to saturate PVTG habitations with basic facilities by 2026.

## 19. Santhal Hul of 1855

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

- Historical Background: The Santhal Hul of 1855 was one of the earliest peasant uprisings against British colonial rule in India.

Led by four brothers - Sidho, Kanho, Chand, and Bhairav Murmu - along with sisters Phulo and Jhano, the revolt began on 30th June 1855.

- The revolt targeted not only the British but also upper castes, zamindars, darogas, and moneylenders, collectively termed 'diku'. It aimed to protect the economic, cultural, and religious rights of the Santhal community.
- Genesis of the Uprising: In 1832, certain areas were designated as 'Santhal Pargana' or 'Damin-i-Koh', which includes present-day Sahibganj, Godda, Dumka, Deoghar, Pakur, and parts of Jamtara, in present-day Jharkhand.
- The area was given to the Santhals who were displaced from various regions under the Bengal Presidency. The Santhals were promised settlement and agriculture in Damin-i-Koh, but instead they faced repressive land-grabbing and begari (bonded labour). Two systems of bonded labour emerged in Santhal territory, known as kamioti and harwahi.
- Under kamioti, the borrower had to work for the lender until the loan was repaid, while under harwahi, the borrower had to provide personal services and plough the lender's field as needed.
- Santhal Tribe
- It is the third largest scheduled tribe in India after the Gonds and Bhils, known for their calm and peaceful nature. They originally led a nomadic life but settled in Chota Nagpur plateau and migrated to Santhal Parganas in Bihar and Odisha. They are located in Jharkhand, Odisha, and West Bengal, and are involved in cultivation, industrial labour, mining, and quarrying.
- They follow an autonomous tribal religion and worship nature at sacred groves. Their language is *Santhali* and they have their own script called '*OL chiki*' is recognised as one of the scheduled languages in the Eighth Schedule.

## 20. Toda Tribe – Preserving India's Endangered Languages

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

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

### Features:

- Cultural Preservation – Oral traditions, songs, and folklore integrated with linguistic material.
- Digital Tools – Use of high-end recording, linguistic software, and the Sanchika online repository for public access.
- Educational Integration – Toda primers for children, trilingual dictionaries, and multilingual literacy promotion.

Significance: Cultural Identity – Protects intangible heritage and traditional ecological knowledge.

- Linguistic Diversity – Strengthens India's status as a multilingual nation with over 1,300 recorded languages.

### About Toda Tribe:

- It is one of the oldest ethnic groups residing in the Upper Nilgiris plateau in Tamil Nadu. The Todas are divided into five clans, namely: Paiki, Pekkan, Kuttan, Kenna and Todi. Language: They have their own language, which does not have a script. They live in a closed community or hamlet called mund. Society: It is a patrilineage descent group whose membership is based upon a rule of patrilineal descent. Their community is divided into two endogamous groups, namely Tharthazoll and Theveioll.
- To maintain the social harmony or solidarity among the Toda tribal population of Todas are controlled for many generations by their own traditional Government called 'Noim'. This Noim is headed by a Toda tribal head-man called Monegar. He has the full

power to control the Todas and he also dispenses justice in the Toda community

- Occupation: This tribe is largely dependent on buffalo herding and embroidery for its livelihood. Its members are incredibly skilled artisans known for the red-and-black embroidery on white fabrics that has even earned them a GI (geographical indication) tag.

## **21. Denotified, Nomadic, and Semi-Nomadic Tribes (DNTs)**

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

- The Union Social Justice Ministry report for 2025-26 highlights a significant lack of state support in issuing community certificates and identifying beneficiaries for denotified, nomadic, and semi-nomadic tribes (DNTs).

Who They Are?

- Communities that were officially labeled as criminal by the colonial British administration under the Criminal Tribes Act (CTA) of 1871. Groups that maintain a mobile or semi-mobile lifestyle, traditionally moving for livelihoods such as trade, pastoralism, or entertainment. Current Status: These groups were denotified in 1952 when the CTA was repealed, though many were subsequently monitored under various Habitual Offenders Acts.

Origin and History:

- Colonial Stigma: The British codified the criminal label based on the belief that certain castes were addicted to crime by heredity and usage. Repeal and Transition: Following independence, the CTA was repealed in 1952, transforming Criminal Tribes into Denotified Tribes. Enumeration History: These communities were specifically discussed in Census reports from 1911 to 1931, but specific accounting was halted after 1931.

Regional Spread:

- National Presence: There are nearly 1,200 such communities spread across various parts of India. State Issues: Currently, only

seven states are actively issuing the DNT community certificates required to access central benefits. **Unclassified Groups:** While many have been assimilated into SC, ST, or OBC lists, approximately 268 communities remain unclassified in any category.

#### Key Features:

- **Social Marginalization:** Despite denotification, they face persistent social stigma and are often treated as habitual offenders by local authorities. **Economic Backwardness:** Most remain socially and educationally backward; the SEED scheme, intended for their upliftment, has seen minimal spending due to identification hurdles.
- **Identity Issues:** Many DNTs are misclassified into existing SC/ST/OBC lists, which community leaders argue dilutes their specific needs and leads to further marginalization within those groups.

## **22. The National Scheduled Tribes Finance and Development Corporation (NSTFDC)**

**(Use this content in the topic of syllabus – Unit 7,1 Paper II)**

- The National Scheduled Tribes Finance and Development Corporation (NSTFDC) is celebrating its 25th Foundation Day in New Delhi to mark a quarter-century of tribal empowerment.

#### What it is?

- NSTFDC is a Public Sector Undertaking (PSU) operating under the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India. It serves as the apex national organization specifically dedicated to the economic upliftment and financial inclusion of Scheduled Tribes. **Established in:** The corporation was established in 2001.
- **Aim:** The primary goal of NSTFDC is to catalyze the economic development of Scheduled Tribes by providing them with the necessary financial means to start income-generating activities

and improve their quality of life.

**Key Functions:**

- **Concessional Financial Assistance:** Extending low-interest loans to ST individuals and groups to help them start or expand small businesses.
- **Livelihood Promotion:** Funding a wide variety of sectors including handicrafts, poultry, dairy, fisheries, retail, and healthcare services to create sustainable local jobs.
- **Channelizing Resources:** Operating through State Channelizing Agencies (SCAs) to ensure that financial aid reaches tribal communities in remote and underserved areas.
- **Entrepreneurial Support:** Providing the capital required for tribal youth and women to transition from traditional labor to independent business ownership.
- **Capacity Building:** Assisting beneficiaries in establishing sustainable enterprises through structured financial schemes and guidance.

**Significance:**

- Over the last 25 years, it has transformed thousands of ST individuals from job seekers into entrepreneurs.
- By targeting the most marginalized sections of society, the corporation ensures that tribal communities are not left behind in India's national growth story.