

## **1. Current procedure for inclusion of communities in ST list adequate**

**Prelims Syllabus:** Policies

**Mains Syllabus:** GS-II Functions and responsibilities of the Union and the States, issues and challenges pertaining to the federal structure, devolution of powers and finances up to local levels and challenges therein.



### **Why in News?**

- The Tribal Affairs Ministry has insisted once again that the current procedure for inclusion of communities in the Scheduled Tribes list was “adequate”.

### **What are the Essential Characteristics for a Community to be Identified as Scheduled Tribe?**

- **According to Lokur Committee (1965), the essential characteristics are:**
  - ✓ Indication of Primitive Traits
  - ✓ Distinctive Culture
  - ✓ Shyness of Contact with the Community at Large
  - ✓ Geographical Isolation
  - ✓ Backwardness

### **What are the Basic Safeguards Provided by Indian Constitution for Scheduled Tribes?**

- The Constitution of India does not endeavor to define the term 'tribe', however, the term 'Scheduled Tribe' was inserted in the Constitution through Article 342 (i).
- It lays down that 'the President may, by public notification, specify the tribes or tribal communities or parts of or groups within the tribes or tribal communities or parts which shall, for the purposes of this Constitution, be deemed to be Scheduled Tribes.

- The Fifth Schedule of the Constitution provides for the setting up a Tribes' Advisory Council in each of the States having Scheduled Areas.

### **Educational & Cultural Safeguards:**

- **Article 15(4):** Special provisions for advancement of other backward classes (it includes STs)
- **Article 29:** Protection of Interests of Minorities (it includes STs)
- **Article 46:** The State shall promote, with special care, the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people, and in particular, of the Scheduled Castes, and the Scheduled Tribes, and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation.
- **Article 350:** Right to conserve distinct Language, Script or Culture,

### **Political Safeguards:**

- **Article 330:** Reservation of seats for STs in Lok Sabha,
- **Article 332:** Reservation of seats for STs in State Legislatures
- **Article 243:** Reservation of seats in Panchayats.

### **Administrative Safeguard:**

- **Article 275:** It provides for the grant of special funds by the Union Government to the State Government for promoting the welfare of Scheduled Tribes and providing them with a better administration.

### **What are the Recent Government Initiatives For Scheduled Tribes?**

- TRIFED
- Digital Transformation of Tribal Schools
- Development of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups
- Pradhan Mantri Van Dhan Yojana
- Eklavya Model Residential Schools

### **What are the Problems Faced By Tribes in India?**

- **Loss of Control over Natural Resources:** As India industrialized and natural resources were discovered in tribal inhabited areas, tribal rights were undermined and state control replaced tribal control over natural resources.
  - ✓ With the concepts of protected forests and national forests gaining currency, the tribals felt themselves uprooted from their cultural moorings and with no secure means of livelihood.

- **Lack of Education:** In tribal areas, most schools lack basic infrastructure, including minimal learning materials and even minimal sanitary provisions.
  - ✓ Due to the lack of immediate economic return from education, tribal parents prefer their children to be engaged in remunerative employment.
  - ✓ Most tribal education programs are designed in official/regional languages, which are alien to tribal students.
- **Displacement and Rehabilitation:** Acquisition of tribal land by the government for the development process of core sectors like huge steel plants, power projects and large dams led to large scale displacement of the tribal population.
  - ✓ The tribal pockets of Chotanagpur region, Orissa, West Bengal and Madhya Pradesh suffered the most.
  - ✓ The migration of these tribals to the urban areas causes psychological problems for them as they are not able to adjust well to the urban lifestyle and values.
- **Problems of Health and Nutrition:** Due to economic backwardness and insecure livelihood, the tribals face health problems, such as the prevalence of disease, like malaria, cholera, diarrhea and jaundice.
  - ✓ Problems associated with malnutrition like iron deficiency and anemia, high infant mortality rates, etc. also prevail.
- **Gender Issues:** The degradation of the natural environment, particularly through the destruction of forests and a rapidly shrinking resource base, has its impact on the status of women.
  - ✓ The opening of the tribal belts to mining, industries and commercialization has exposed tribal men and women to the ruthless operations of the market economy, giving rise to consumerism and to commoditization of women.
- **Erosion of Identity:** Increasingly, the traditional institutions and laws of tribals are coming into conflict with modern institutions which create apprehensions among the tribals about preserving their identity.
  - ✓ Extinction of tribal dialects and languages is another cause of concern as it indicates an erosion of tribal identity.