

1. Kurmi Community

Why in News?

- The Kurmi Community has recently called off the agitation in Bengal, asking for the inclusion in the ST (Scheduled Tribe) Status from Other Backward Class (OBC).

Highlights

- Kurmis were not included among the communities classified as STs in the 1931 Census and were excluded from the ST list in 1950.
- In 2004, the Jharkhand government recommended the community be added to the ST list rather than be categorized as OBCs.
- Following the recommendation, the matter went to the Tribal Research Institute (TRI), which held that Kurmis are a sub-caste of Kunbis and not tribals. Based on this, the Centre rejected the demand of Kurmis to be considered as ST.
- According to the Tribal Development Department of the state government, the state's tribal population is almost 53 lakhs as per Census 2011, or about 5.8% of the state's total population.
- Kurmis are a landowning farming community whose status varies from place to place.
- Kurmis are referred to as “progressive farmers” who “avail of maximum benefits of all the development schemes available in the area and region.
- Kurmis are distributed across several states — Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Odisha, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal, Jharkhand, Goa, and Karnataka.
- Kurmali language is a language spoken by the Kurmi community, primarily in the Indian states of Bihar, Jharkhand, and Odisha.
- The Kurmali language is a member of the Indo-Aryan language family and belongs to the Bihari language family.
- It shares some similarities with Maithili and Magahi. It has its own script called “Kurmi Kudali” which is a modified version of the Devanagari script.