

# UPSC PREPARATION

## World Tribal Day

On 9th August 2021 (World Tribal Day), **Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues** will organize a virtual commemoration for speakers to discuss redesigning a new social contract for indigenous peoples, where their own forms of governance and ways of life must be respected and based on their free, prior and informed consent.

### Why is it celebrated?

- Every year, August 9 is celebrated as the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples or World Tribal Day.
- 1st meeting of the UN Working Group on Indigenous Populations in Geneva in 1982 was held on this day.
- World Tribal Day is observed in order to promote and protect the rights of the world's indigenous population, acknowledging the achievements and contributions that indigenous people make to improve world issues such as environmental protection.
- The theme for the year 2021 is '**Leaving no one behind: Indigenous peoples and the call for a new social contract.**'

### What is the importance of social contract to tribals?

- A social contract is an unwritten agreement that societies make to cooperate for social and economic benefits.
- Tribals are in several parts of the world are not included in the social contract. A social contract including tribals would help in the development of their cultures and languages, which are denigrated.
- This would enhance their abilities to actively participate in the political and economic activities of a nation.
- Knowledge transfer from other societies would provide access to information, resources and bring about changes in the living conditions, health and economy of the tribal people.

### Global Efforts for Social Inclusion

- Over recent years and decades, many societies have been trying to address the issue through apologies, legislative reforms, truth and reconciliation efforts and constitutional reforms.
- At the international level, these efforts have included the adoption of the **United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples** and advisory bodies such as the **Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues**.

## Tribes in India

- Tribals in India are around 8.6% of the total population according to 2011 census.
- There are around 700 tribal groups in India and 75 Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs).
- The Gonds are the largest tribal group in India.
- The largest number of tribal communities (62) are found in Odisha.
- No notified tribe in Haryana, Punjab, Chandigarh, Delhi, and Puducherry.

## Constitutional Provisions

- 5th and 6th Schedule - Administration and control of Scheduled and Tribal Areas.
- Article 15 - Prohibition of discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth only.
- Article 342(1) - specification of tribes or tribal communities or part of or groups within tribes or tribal communities as Scheduled Tribe in relation to that State or Union Territory.
- Article 16 - Equality of opportunity in matters of public employment
- Article 46- Promotion of educational and economic interests of scheduled castes, Scheduled tribes and other weaker sections,
- Article 335- Claims of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes to services and posts.
- Article 338A - setting up of National Commission for Scheduled Tribes .

## Legal Provisions

- Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955 protects rights against Untouchability.
- Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989 prevents the commission of offences of atrocities against the people of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes.
- Provisions of the Panchayats (Extension to the Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996 provides for the extension of the provisions of Part IX of the Constitution to the Panchayats to the Scheduled Areas.
- Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 recognizes the rights of scheduled tribes and other forest dwellers.

## Some Committees Related to Tribal communities

- **Xaxa Committee** (2013) was set up to improve the socio-economic, health and educational status of the tribal communities in India.
- **Bhuria Commission** (2002-2004) was tasked with investigating and reporting on the problems of the Scheduled Tribes (STs) in India, formulating a comprehensive tribal policy and outlining a vision for the future of STs.
- **Lokur Committee** (1965) was tasked with advising the government on proposals by the states and union territories (UTs) to revise existing Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST) lists in a “rational and scientific manner.”

## Conclusion

The new social contract must be based on genuine participation and partnership that fosters equal opportunities and respects the rights, dignity and freedoms of all. Indigenous peoples' right to participate in decision-making is a key component in achieving reconciliation between indigenous peoples and States.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Who are Scheduled Tribes?

The communities in the country were suffering from extreme social, educational and economic backwardness on account of the primitive agricultural practices, lack of infrastructure facilities and geographical isolation. The Constitution prescribes that those Tribes that are deemed under Article 342 of the Constitution be Scheduled Tribes.

### Who can declare tribal area?

President is empowered to declare an area as Scheduled Area with the consultation of the governor of the state, the President can alter, add, diminish the boundary of a Scheduled Area.