

CM gives away welfare aid to members of Irula, Narikurava communities

TN CM MK. Stalin distributed house pattas and other welfare aid to members of the Irular and Narikurava communities.

Irular

- Irula is found in the southwest states of Tamil Nadu and Kerala.
- The Irula are a Dravidian ethnic group who live in the Nilgiri Mountains
- Individuals of the Irula ethnicity are known as Irular and speak Irula, a Dravidian language.

Narikurava

- The Narikuravar are a semi-nomadic tribe from Northern India who moved south to Tamil Nadu.
- Many Roma groups in Europe share religious, cultural, and political features with them.

Nomadic tribal group gets Aadhaar

Kattupaniya → enrolled for Aadhaar cards.

Kattupaniya Tribe

- A nomadic tribal group of Kerala.
- The tribe was rehabilitated from caves near **South Wayanad-Nilambur Forest** in Kerala a few years ago.
- Among the 7 ST in Malappuram district.



* PM reaches out to tribal people, unveils schemes

↳ The Central government has announced that Birsa Munda's birth anniversary (November 15) will be celebrated as Janjatiya Gaurav Divas

↳ About Birsa Munda

- He was born in 1875 in Chhottanagpur region
Belong to the Munda tribe
- He led tribals to prevent non-tribals from taking land and forcing them to work as bonded labourers on their own property.
- First protest - remission of forest due
- 1894 - Birsa announced Munda Ulgulan.
 - ✓ Brought tribal community under a single umbrella.
 - ✓ Advocated tribal people to reject the missionaries and return to their traditional ways
 - ✓ Asked people not to pay taxes.

June 9th 1900 - Birsa died while lodged at the Ranchi jail aged just 25.

* UN tourism body's honour for weavers hub Pochampally

↳ Pochampally village is selected as one of the Best Tourism Villages by United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO)

↳ About Pochampally Village

- Often referred as the silk city of India.
- Known for exquisite sarees that are woven through a unique style called Ikat.

Pochampally Ikat, received a Geographical Indicator (GI Status) in 2004.

- Pochampally is also known as Bhoodan
- Pochampally to commemorate the Bhoodan Movement that was launched by Acharya Vinobha Bhave from this village on 18th April, 1951

↳ United Nations World Tourism Organisation

- It is the United Nations Specialised Agency responsible for the promotion of responsible, sustainable and universally accessible tourism.

* An Outreach to tribals that checks all the boxes

↳ Recently, the government commemorated November 15, the birthday of Bhagwan Birsa Munda, as Janjatiya Gaurav Divas

↳ Effort to Improve Tribal life

- Efforts have been made since independence to improve the social, political and economic conditions of the tribal populations.

- Political Well-Being

By reserving electoral seats with high tribal populations

- Eight Scheduled Tribes Ministers were recently added to the Union Council of Ministers.

They represent the communities of the Gond, Santal, Miji, Munda, Tea Tribe, Kokana, and Sonowal-Kachari.

↳ Economic Well-Being

- Ministry of Tribal Affairs in 1999

- Increased in budgetary allocation

What is the Affinity Test to Identify STs?

The SC wants to fix foolproof parameters to determine if a person belongs to a Scheduled Tribe and is entitled to the benefits due to the community as it is no longer sure about an "affinity test".

What is the Affinity Test?

- Affinity Test is used to sift through anthropological and ethnological traits to link a person to a tribe.
- There is the likelihood that contact with other cultures, migration and modernization would have erased the traditional characteristics of a tribe.
- The claim by an applicant that he is a part of a ST and is entitled to the benefit extended to that tribe, cannot be disregarded on the ground that his present traits do not match his tribes.
- These include peculiar anthropological and ethnological traits, deity, rituals, mode of marriage, death ceremonies, method of burial of dead bodies etc.
- Worship is an integral part of the life of a community and tribes have specific modes which

need to be ascertained by the officers who decide the claims (for ST status).

Who are the Scheduled Tribes?

- The term 'Scheduled Tribes' first appeared in the Constitution of India.
- Article 366 (25) defined STs as "such tribes or tribal communities or parts of or groups within such tribes or tribal communities as are deemed under Article 342 to be STs for the purposes of this constitution".
- Article 342—
 - The first specification of ST in relation to a particular State/ UT is by a notified order of the President, after consultation with the State govts concerned.
 - These orders can be modified subsequently only through an Act of Parliament.
 - It also provides for listing of STs State/UT wise and not on an all India basis.

What did the SC say?

- It has been considered it best to refer the question of fixing the parameters to a larger Bench.
- The affinity test may be used to corroborate the documentary evidence and **should not be the sole criteria** to reject a claim.
- It realised that the courts were faced with varied opinions about the efficacy of the affinity test.

Status of STs in India

- The Census 2011 has revealed that there are said to be 705 ethnic groups notified as STs.
- Over 10 crore Indians are notified as STs, of which 1.04 crore live in urban areas.
- The STs constitute 8.6% of the population and 11.3% of the rural population.

Precursor to this Judgements

- Bombay HC in **Shilpa Vishnu Thakur v State of Maharashtra** accepted the "relevance and importance of the affinity test".

- It held that the affinity test was an "integral part" of the verification process for caste certificates.
- Scrutiny committees could easily determine the authenticity of a claim by running an affinity test on the basis of ethnicity and anthropology.
- The HC had said that the term 'affinity' meant the 'association' of the applicant for a caste certificate with a ST into which he or she has been born.
- However, two years later, in 2011, the SC adopted a cautionary note.
- It indicated that the affinity test may have run its course.

Being Sarna: a fight to define tribal identity

In News

- Tribal men and women in traditional attire sat on a fast and staged a protest at Jantar Mantar in New Delhi
 - For inclusion of the Sarna code in the religion column in the next census.
- In Nov 2020, the Jharkhand Govt passed a resolution to send the Union a letter
 - To recognise the Sarna religion and include it as a separate code in the Census of 2021.

Sarna religion

- The followers of Sarna are nature worshippers who believe in protecting the forest areas.
- The holy grail of the faith is "Jal, Jungle, Zameen".
- 50 lakh tribal people in the entire country put their religion as 'Sarna' in the 2011 census, although it was not a code.



Religion History:

- There was a separate code during 1871-1951 which was dropped later.
- The National Commission for Scheduled Tribes recommended the addition of this code for the Census 2011.

Why need Sarna Code:

- Tribals in Jharkhand are Sarna followers and do not consider themselves Hindus.
- Enactment of a separate code in census surveys would allow the tribals to be identified as followers of the Sarna faith during Census 2021.
- With the Union Govt dropping the "Others" option from the religion column for Census 2021
 - Sarna followers would be forced to either skip the column or declare themselves

members of one of the six specified religions:

- Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Buddhist, Jain and Sikh
- The population of tribals in Jharkhand had declined from 38.3% in 1931 to 26.02% in 2011.
- Help in recording their population as the declining numbers affect the constitutional rights given to them, mentioned in 5th Schedule of the Constitution
- Help in the preservation of separate tribal identity both culturally and in terms of religion.

Launch a national tribal health mission

International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples observed on 09th August.

Census of India, 2011: Tribal population

- Around 11 crore Schedule Tribes (ST).
- Constitute 8.6% of India's population.
- 2nd largest country in the world in terms of tribal population.

First national report on India's tribal's health:

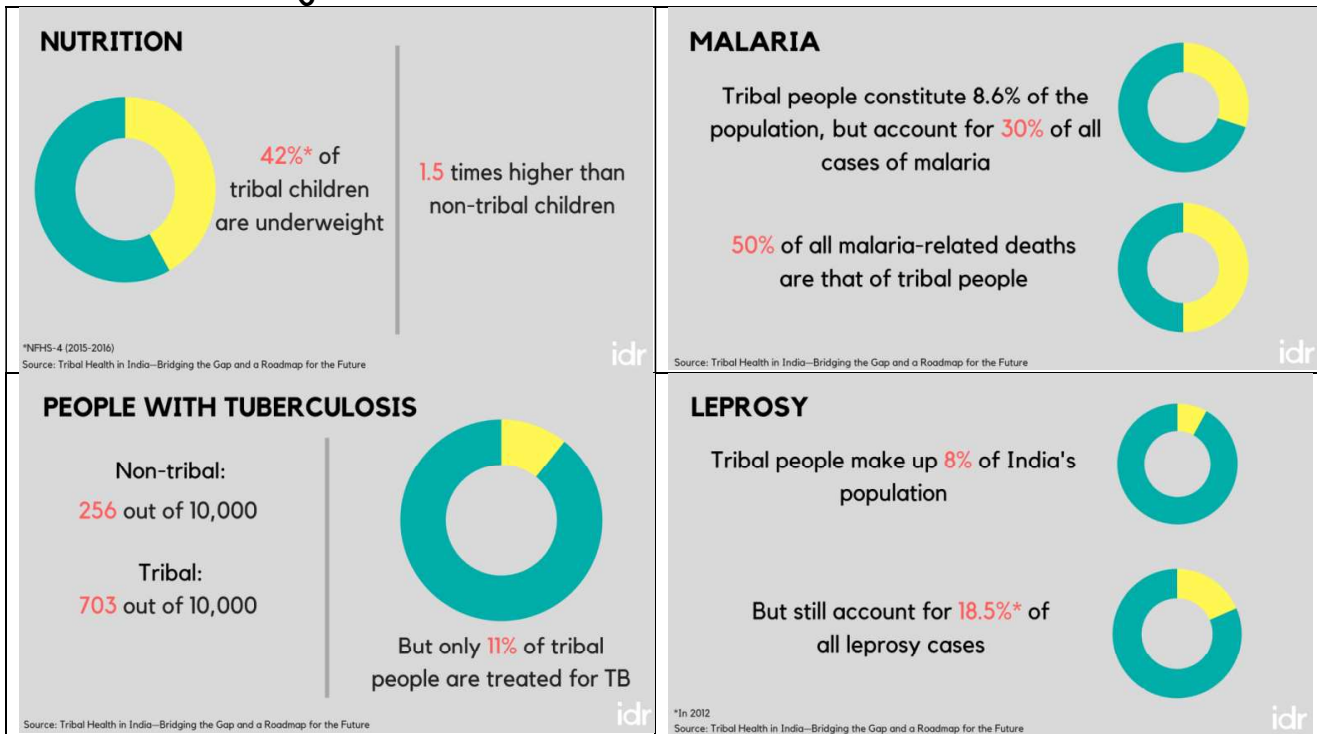
- 13-member Expert Committee on Tribal Health was jointly appointed by
 - Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) and the Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA), GOI.
 - Took 05 years to make a report and was finally submitted in 2018.

Key Findings:

- Tribal people are concentrated in 809 blocks designated as Scheduled Areas.
- More than half of India's tribal population (5.5 cr approx.) lives outside the Scheduled Areas, as a scattered and marginalized minority.
- Though there is a decline in the under-five child mortality rate

NFHS-1 (1988)	NFHS-4 (2014)
135	57

- Percentage of excess under-five mortality among STs in comparison to others has widened.



- Non-communicable diseases like hypertension, diabetes and cancer along with mental health problems such as depression are rising.
- 27% to 40% deficit in the number of Primary healthcare facilities, 33% to 84% deficit in medical doctors in tribal areas.
 - Government health care for the tribal people lacks funds and human resources.
- Lesser participation of the tribals in designing, planning, or delivering health care facilities for themselves.

Recommendations by Committee:

- Launch a National Tribal Health Action Plan with a goal

- To bring the status of health and healthcare at par with the respective State averages in the next 10 years.
- Need to work on 80 measures to address the 10 priority issues like
 - Health problems, the health care gap, the governance problems and the human resource gap.
- Allocation of additional money so that the per capita health expenditure on tribal people becomes
 - Equal to the set target of the National Health Policy (2017), i.e. 2.5% of the per capita GDP.

Conclusion:

- Tribal healthcare system is weak, and tribal people are in need of significant solutions.
- The election of a Tribal person gives a positive signal in this regard.