Adivasis and Lambada conflict in Telangana

What is the issue?

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Adivasis and the Lambadas of Telangana are in dispute over share of government benefits.

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Who are Lambadas?

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- The Lambadi (0r) Lambada community is a part of the Banjara or the nomadic tribes.
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- These people are forest wanderers or Gypsies originally from Rajasthan.
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- Many centuries ago these people moved in large groups towards the south of the sub-continent viz. Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Maharashtra, for trade and agriculture.
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- They speak in a Lambada dialect (which is a combination of Sanskrit, Rajasthani and Guajarati), and many of them have also learnt to speak the languages predominantly used in their respective areas of settlement.
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- The Lambadas prefer not to mingle with other people and live is small settlements in the outskirts of a town.
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What is the conflict between Adivasis and Lambada?

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- Before 1976 there were only nine aboriginal tribes in the Telangana incorporated through Article 342, in which Lambadas where not present.
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- The inclusion of the Lambadas in the list of Scheduled Tribes in 1976 was

done through an ordinance.
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- The Adivasis claim that the Lambadas do not qualify as a Scheduled Tribe because the process of their inclusion in the ST list in 1976 was incomplete.
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- According to the ordinance the Telangana Lambadas were identified as a plains tribe with reservation restricted to education.
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- But due to political and bureaucratic influences the Lambada community has advantages in employments over the Aboriginals.
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- The aboriginal people claim they have been overlooked in employment and education.
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How Lambadas are privileged?

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- In 1976 due to the pressure from Lambada leader this community was included in the ST list.
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- The Amendment Act in question removed the regional boundaries so that the Lambadas in Telangana also got to be categorised as Scheduled Tribes.
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- Apart from this the Lambadas make use of many of their favourable men in various ministries and in departments of the governments.
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What are the actions taken by the state government?

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- The State government is “quantifying” the alleged disparity in development by collecting district-wise figures of tribal employment at all levels, especially revenue and education.
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- The process of shifting Lambada officials from key posts has begun with the transfer of Collector and District Revenue Officers.
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Source: The Hindu

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