Dawoodi Bohra Community

Prelims – ***Current events of National Importance | History of India.***

Mains (GS I) – *Indian Heritage and Culture.*

Why in News?

A delegation from the Dawoodi Bohra community met Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently to express their gratitude for the recently enacted Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025.

- The Dawoodi Bohras are a religious denomination within the ***Ismaili branch of Shia Islam.***
- **Key populations -** They are primarily from West India, with members settled in over 40 countries worldwide.
- **Heritage -** The community traces its heritage to the Fatimid Imams, direct descendants of the Prophet Muhammad, in Egypt.
- **Leader-** Throughout the world they are guided by their leader known as the ***al-dai al-mutlaq (unrestricted missionary),*** who first operated from Yemen and then, for the last 450 years, from India.
    - The present leader is the 53rd al-Dai al-Mutlaq, His Holiness Syedna Mufaddal Saifuddin.
- **Occupation -** They are generally highly educated, mostly self-reliant, typically traders, businesspersons, and entrepreneurs.
- **Faith** - The foundation of their faith is based on peace, love and humanity.
- **School of Thought –** They follow the Fatimi Ismaili Tayyibi school of thought.
- Their faith is based on the belief in one deity, Allah Ta'ala, in the Holy Quran as the word of Allah and in the sacred mission of the Prophets and their successors.
- **Language -** ***Lisan al-Dawat***, a distinct language commonly known in the community as dawat ni zaban.
- **Power to excommunicate -** The members of the Dawoodi Bohra community acknowledge their leader's authority to excommunicate individuals from the community.
    - Excommunication entails being barred from entering the community's mosque or accessing its designated burial sites.

Female genital mutilation (Khatna)

• Female genital mutilation (FGM) comprises all procedures ***that involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia***, or other injury to the female genital organs ***for non-medical reasons.***
• It has no health benefits for girls and women.
• It can result in severe bleeding and problems urinating, and later cysts, menstrual difficulties, infections, as well as complications in childbirth and increased risk of newborn deaths.
• FGM is mostly carried out on young girls between ***infancy and age 15.***
• FGM is a *violation of the human rights of girls and women*.
• The reasons for following this practice vary from one region to another as well as over time and include a mix of sociocultural factors within families and communities.
• In India it is predominantly ***followed by the Bohra community.***
• More than 230 million girls and women alive today have undergone female genital mutilation (FGM) in 30 countries in Africa, the Middle East and Asia where FGM is practiced.
• **UNICEF and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)** collaboratively spearhead the largest global initiative in 2008, aimed at ***eradicating female genital mutilation (FGM).***
- It works alongside communities to educate them about the detrimental effects of FGM and to promote a change in social norms that encourages collective abandonment of the practice.

References

1. PIB | Dawoodi Bohras
2. Times of India | Dawoodi Bohras

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