

Lambada Tribe

Prelims: Current events of national and international importance | Indian Heritage and Culture

Why in News?

The long-standing controversy over whether the Lambada community should be treated as a Scheduled Tribe (ST) in Telangana has once again reached the Supreme Court.

- The Lambadas, also known as Banjaras, are a **Scheduled Tribe community** mainly found in Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh.
- They are one of India's largest tribal groups.
- **Origin and Identity** - Traditionally **nomadic traders** and transporters of goods
- Played a major role in moving grain, salt, and commodities during medieval times
- Known for their distinctive dress, jewellery, and folk culture.
- **Language** - Speak **Gor Boli (Lambadi)**, an Indo-Aryan language, written in **Devanagari or Telugu script**.
- **Settlement** - Live in exclusive hamlets called "**Tandas**"
- Tandas are socially and administratively distinct from nearby villages.
- **Social Structure** - Headed by a Naik (village chief).
- Assisted by Karbhari (administrative officer) and Bhagat (religious head).
- **Livelihood** - Traditionally traders and carriers.
- Now engaged in agriculture, animal husbandry, wage labour and crafts.
- **Famous dances** - Lambadi Dance, Fire dance.
- **Festivals** - Teej, Diwali, Holi.
- **Constitutional Status** - Recognised as a Scheduled Tribe in Telangana, Andhra Pradesh and several other states.
- In some states, they are classified as **Other Backward Classes (OBCs)**.

Reference

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