Manki-Munda system

Prelims: Current events of national and international importance.

Why in news?

Recently, the adivasis from the Ho tribe staged a protest in Jharkhand's West Singhbhum district, for interfering with their Manki-Munda system - traditional self-governance system.

- **The Manki-Munda system** - This is an ***age-old system of self-governance*** among Jharkhand's Ho adivasi community, has been a central feature of the state's administrative apparatus, since British times.
- The Ho tribe of Jharkhand's Kolhan region lived under their traditional, decentralised system of governance.
- **Munda -** The Munda, or the ***head of the village***, was responsible for resolving socio-political disputes at the village level.
- Each village had one Munda, appointed ***hereditarily***.
- **Manki -** The Manki ***headed the pir***, which generally consists of 8 to 15 villages.
- If cases were not resolved by the Munda, they moved upwards to the Manki.
- The Manki and Munda had ***no responsibilities for revenue or land-related issues.***
- The system was purely an internal, self-governing mechanism, with ***no sovereign authority outside or the concept of paying taxes***.
- **Arrival of the British –**
  - In 1793, due to ***Permanent Settlement Act***, in Kolhan, the zamindars began actively seizing Ho lands to bring them under direct control.
  - This system would eventually trigger a number of ***early-19th century adivasi revolts***, such as the Ho revolt (1821-22) and the Kol revolt (1831-32).
  - The British decided to arrive at a compromise by ***recognising and co-opting the Manki-Munda system***.

- **Wilkinson's Rules -**
  - ***Captain Thomas Wilkinson*** has been ***formally codified*** the traditional system of the Ho community or any adivasi community.
  - **Impact -** Influx of dikkus and the concept of private property and land ownership was introduced, led to the issuance of pattas.
- **Current issues with the system -**
  - There are number of vacancies for post of Mankis and Mundas.
  - Some roles in the system were assigned to non-tribal raiyats.
  - There is a section of the Ho community, especially the youth, who want reforms to the Manki-Munda system.
  - Removing the hereditary role of the Munda and giving a fair chance to the educated , competent tenants.
  - Many of traditional leaders are not formally educated, making it difficult for them to navigate the modern, document-based administrative system.

Reference

Indian Express | Kolhan's Manki-Munda system

