Prelim Bits 05-12-2021 & 06-12-2021 | UPSC Daily Current Affairs

Konyak Tribes

- The Konyaks are the largest of Naga tribes. They are traditional hunters and warriors of Nagaland. The Konyaks were the last to give up the practice of head-hunting as late as the 1980s.
- They are easily recognized by their tattooed faces. Their main occupation is agriculture.
- They inhabit the area extending from Nagaland into Arunachal Pradesh, Myanmar as well.
- They have institutions of learning like the morung of other Naga tribes.
- **Religion** - Konyaks were animists, worshipping elements of nature, until Christian missionaries arrived in the late 19th Century.
- The society is mostly Christian now.
- **Festivals** - Aoleng Manyu Festival is the biggest festival of the Konyaks. It is celebrated in the first week of April to welcome the spring.
- 'Lao Ong Mo' Festival is the traditional harvest festival celebrated in the months of August/ September.
- **Language** - The Konyak language belongs to the Northern Naga sub branch of the Sal subfamily of Sino-Tibetan.

Reference

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Greater Tipraland

Several tribal outfits in Tripura are demanding for a separate state of 'Greater Tipraland' for indigenous communities in the region.

- 'Greater Tipraland' envisages a situation in which the entire Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council (TTADC) area will be a separate state.
- Among the 19 notified Scheduled Tribes in Tripura, Tripuris (or Tipra or Tiprasas) are the largest in the state, followed by Reangs and Jamatias.
- The parties demanding 'Greater Tipraland' want the Centre to carve out the separate state under Article 2 and 3 of the Constitution.

Article 2 of the Constitution allows the Parliament by law to admit into the Union, or establish, new States on such terms and conditions, as it thinks fit.

Article 3 comes into play in the case of "formation of new States and alteration of areas,

boundaries or names of existing States" by the Parliament.

- Under the 'Greater Tipraland' concept, a Sixth Schedule council would be constituted for the all-round socio-economic development of the tribals residing in the north-eastern states and neighbouring countries.
- The Sixth Schedule council is considered as a mini-legislative assembly of Tripura in terms of its jurisdiction and constitutional power.
- This concept also proposes dedicated bodies to secure the rights of the Tripuris and other aboriginal communities living outside Tripura.
- **Origin of the demand** - Tripura was a kingdom ruled by the Manikya dynasty from the late 13th century until the signing of the Instrument of Accession with the Indian government on October 15, 1949.
- The demand mainly stems from the anxiety of the indigenous communities in connection with the change in the demographics of the state, which has reduced them to a minority.
- It happened due to the displacement of Bengalis from the erstwhile East Pakistan between 1947 and 1971.
- In the intervening decades, ethnic conflict and insurgency gripped the state, which shares a nearly 860-km long boundary with Bangladesh.

Reference

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Western Honey Bee

A new study has shown that the western honey bee species (Apis mellifera) most likely originated in Asia, particularly from Western Asia. Until recently, it was believed that these bees had originated in Africa.

- The western honey bee is one of the first domesticated insects, and is the most common of the 7-12 species of honey bees worldwide.
- They are native to Africa, Europe and Asia. It is used for crop pollination and honey production throughout most of the world.
- The study found that the western honey bees expanded independently from Asia into Africa and Europe creating 7 separate geographically and genetically distinct evolutionary lineages traceable back to Western Asia.
- The study highlights several "hot spots" in the bee genome that allowed honey bees to adapt to new vastly different geographic areas.
- While the bee genome has more than 12,000 genes, only 145 of them had repeated signatures of adaptation associated with the formation of all major honey bee lineages found today.

Reference

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2. https://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/science/question-corner-where-did-the-western-honey-bee-come-from/article37842256.ece
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Welfare of Minorities

- Ministry of Minority Affairs implements schemes for socio-economic and educational empowerment of the 6 centrally notified minority communities - Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, Parsis and Jains.
- **Maulana Azad National Fellowship Scheme** - 5 year fellowships for the minorities in the form of financial assistance to pursue M. Phil and Ph.D.
- Implementing Agency - UGC
- **Naya Savera** is a Free Coaching and Allied Scheme.
- It provides free coaching to students/candidates belonging to minority communities for qualifying in entrance examinations of technical/ medical professional courses and various Competitive examinations.
- **Padho Pardesh** - Scheme of interest subsidy on educational loans to students of minority communities loans for overseas higher studies.
- **Nai Udaan** - Support for students clearing Prelims conducted by UPSC, SSC, State Public Service Commission (PSC), etc.
- **Seekho Aur Kamao** - Skill development scheme for youth of 14 - 35 years age group & aiming at providing employment opportunities, improving the employability of existing workers, school dropouts etc.
- **USTTAD** is the 'Upgrading the Skills and Training in Traditional Arts/Crafts for Development'.
- Under USTTAD, Hunar Haat are being organised across the Country to provide employment opportunities & markets to artisans/craftsmen.
- **Nai Manzil** - A scheme for formal school education & skilling of school dropouts.
- **Nai Roshni** - Leadership development of women belonging to minority communities.

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4. https://minorityaffairs.gov.in/en/schemesperformance/support-students-clearing-prelims-conducted-upscsscstate-public-service-commissionpsc-etc
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Emerging COVID-19 Clusters

Health Ministry said that some of the mutations reported on the spike gene of COVID-19 variant Omicron may decrease the efficacy of existing vaccines. This resulted in few clusters of COVID-19 infection in the country.

- The vaccine protection is by antibodies as well as cellular immunity, which is expected to be relatively better preserved.
- Hence, vaccines are expected to still offer protection against severe disease and vaccination with the available vaccines is crucial.
- It said that the scale and magnitude of rise in cases and, most importantly, the severity of disease that will be caused is still not clear.
- Given the fast pace of vaccination in India and high exposure to Delta variant as evidenced by

high seropositivity, the severity of the disease is anticipated to be low. However, scientific evidence is still evolving.
- Active surveillance and testing were key in the detection of clusters or hotspots.

COVID-19 Clusters

- Cluster refers to an aggregation of cases of a disease.
- A coronavirus cluster occurs when there is a concentration of infections in the same area at the same time.
- In general, the World Health Organization (WHO) uses the following categories to describe transmission patterns: sporadic cases, clusters of cases and community transmission.
- **Sporadic cases** refer to a small number of cases (one or more) that are either imported or detected locally.
- **Clusters of cases** refer to cases that are clustered in time, geographic location and or by common exposures.
- **Community transmission** refers to larger outbreaks of local transmission that can be defined through different approaches, including big numbers of cases not linkable to transmission chains and multiple unrelated clusters in several areas.

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