13/04/2024

TOPICS COVERED

1. **Data for better education, a brighter future for students (13 April) (GS Paper II: Education Sector)**
2. **Risky premise: On Asian Development Bank forecast, India's GDP growth (13 April) (GS Paper III: Economy)**
3. **The blurry lines between wildlife 'capture' and 'rescue' (13April) (GS Paper III: Environment)**
4. **Third of land conflicts in constituencies where forest rights key issue for election (13 April) (GS Paper I: Society)**
5. **Lost in the woods (13 April) (GS Paper I: Society)**

Data for better education, a brighter future for students (13 April) (GS Paper II: Education Sector)

Learning outcomes data in the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) 2023 is, unarguably, cause for concern, but rather than lament, ASER, complemented by other data, must be used for corrective action

ASER
- **The largest citizen-led household survey in India.** ASER provides a yearly snapshot of children's schooling and learning outcomes in rural districts across the nation.
- **Conducted by Pratham Education Foundation.** Pratham is a well-respected, non-governmental organization working in the field of education in India.
- **Focuses on children's foundational skills.** ASER assesses basic reading and arithmetic abilities of children ages 5-16.

Why is ASER important?
- **Provides reliable data on learning outcomes.** While school enrollment data is often available, ASER digs deeper into actual learning levels, highlighting areas where improvement is needed.
- **Informs policy:** ASER findings are used by governments, NGOs, and researchers to understand the state of education in rural areas and design targeted interventions.
- **Citizen-led model:** ASER's methodology relies on volunteers, showcasing the power of community participation in assessing the educational landscape.

- The **Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) 2023 was released in mid-January, continuing a tradition since 2005,** except for the COVID-19 years.

- The report has garnered significant attention, as usual, for its insights into various aspects of education.
- One notable focus of the report has been on the **foundational skills of 14-18 year olds.**
- Learning outcomes data presented in the report is concerning, highlighting areas where students are struggling.
- Practitioners and policymakers are urged to delve deeper into the data to extract actionable insights.
- The goal is to use these insights to improve education and overall outcomes for India's adolescents and youth.

On foundational learning trajectories

- The ASER 2023 Beyond Basics survey was conducted in 28 rural districts across 26 states of India.
- While the sample is not nationally representative, it still reflects district-level trends and gives an idea of the activities, abilities, including digital abilities, and aspirations of 14-18 year olds.
- The report reveals that overall, 26% of 14-18 year olds cannot read a standard two level text in their regional language, which is concerning.
- The situation reflects the consequences of past failures in education, as an 18-year-old in 2023 would have been a 13-year-old in 2018, likely at a standard seven or eight level.
- **In 2018, around 32% of standard seven and 27% of standard eight children could not read a standard two level text, indicating a lack of foundational skills in primary grades.**
- Foundational learning trajectories tend to be flat and become flatter in upper grades, meaning children are unlikely to acquire these skills later without focused interventions.
- **About 57% of 14-18 year olds surveyed who lack basic reading skills are enrolled in standard 10 or below, while another 28% are not enrolled in any educational institution.**
- The NSSO 75th round in 2017-18 revealed that attendance in secondary grades (standards nine and 10) in rural India was as low as 60%.
- Among 14-18 year olds who struggle with reading fluency, even those enrolled in school may not attend regularly.
- **Focusing solely on school-based reading improvement programs may not be effective without addressing issues of school attendance and motivation to read.**
- ASER 2022 shows that many children in standard eight who struggle with reading can read a simpler level of text, indicating they need guidance and encouragement to improve.
- **Lack of access to reading materials other than school textbooks is a significant issue in rural households, hindering the development of reading habits.**
- Community libraries can play a crucial role in promoting reading habits, creativity, and critical thinking.
- However, the success of libraries depends on effective management and leadership by committed individuals who can create a supportive reading environment for people of all ages and backgrounds.

Children and careers

- ASER 2023 sheds light on the aspirations and perspectives of 14-18 year olds regarding their future.
- **More than 60% of surveyed children aim to pursue at least a college education, with a higher percentage of girls (65%) aspiring for college compared to boys (59%).**
- Regarding work aspirations, one in five children hadn't thought about it, while others mentioned joining the police or defence forces as prominent options for boys, and becoming a teacher or doctor for girls.
- While developing aspirations is crucial, **youth require support, mentorship, and inspiration to evaluate and pursue their goals effectively.**
- Nearly half of surveyed 14-18 year olds with work aspirations **don't know anyone working in their desired profession, limiting their exposure to career paths.**
- Focus group discussions in Sitapur and Dhamtari revealed negative perceptions of vocational education as a fallback option for those unable to secure white-collar jobs.
- However, in **Solan, vocational courses like tourism and hotel management** introduced in schools gained aspirational value, with on-the-job training, certification, and career prospect information encouraging students to pursue related professions.

Technology use

- ASER 2023 and the **State of Elementary Education in Rural India Report** emphasize the increasing access of youth to smartphones.
- **Teenagers primarily use smartphones for entertainment and social media rather than educational purposes.**
- **Digital technology** can be leveraged to align with youth's motivations and interests, providing them with the foundations of their desired professions and connecting them with relevant professionals.
- For instance, students aspiring to become nurses can take **online courses on nursing and related subjects or short modules like administering first aid.**
- Collaboration among educational technology agencies, industries, and professional groups is crucial for this initiative.
- Schools and colleges should take the lead in understanding and cultivating youth's aspirations, guiding them to appropriate platforms and avenues for learning.
- **Rigorously designed and collected data, including ASER data,** not only highlight problems but also provide crucial insights for action.
- Instead of lamenting over the issues, it's essential to delve deeper **into identifying where to act, how to act, and who should take action.**

Risky premise: On Asian Development Bank forecast, India's GDP growth

(13 April) (GS Paper III: Economy)

Policymakers must simplify trade rules to boost exports

- The Asian Development Bank (ADB) raised India's GDP growth forecast for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2025, to 7% from 6.7%, attributing it to robust public and private investment.
- The ADB also projected India's economy to expand by 7.2% in fiscal year 2025-26.
- However, the ADB's forecast is slower than the 7.6% pace estimated by India's National Statistical Office for the previous 12 months.
- Last year's growth was primarily driven by strong investment, while consumption remained subdued.
- Global risks such as a sharp rise in oil prices or high interest rates in the West could impact India's growth, with the rupee being sensitive to Western interest rates.
- The ADB highlighted strong capital expenditure by the government but noted that project completions in the private sector have not kept pace with rising project announcements.
- The report did not address controversies surrounding India's national income data integrity or concerns about the heavy influence of government tax receipts on GDP.
- Structural reforms in India, especially post-COVID-19, were not mentioned by the ADB, despite questions about the reported strong growth numbers amid a lack of reforms.
- The ADB's assumption of a rebound in consumer spending is at risk due to stretched household savings, as flagged by BMI.
- The ADB suggests creating large-scale special economic zones with an easier policy environment to boost exports, emphasizing the need for India to integrate better with global supply chains and improve logistics infrastructure.

Free the messenger: On the Julian Assange case (13 April)

The U.S. should drop charges against Assange and hold up free speech

- President Biden's informal remarks at the White House have raised hopes for Julian Assange's family and supporters by indicating that the administration is considering a request by Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese to drop charges against Assange.
- Assange, an Australian citizen, is currently in the UK's Belmarsh Prison, awaiting a British court decision on whether he can appeal a 2022 extradition order to face serious charges in the US related to the publication of classified US government and diplomatic cables in 2010.
- The British court's decision is expected on May 20, with a request to the US for assurances that Assange will not face the death penalty.
- Assange has already faced challenges, seeking asylum and under arrest, and is reportedly ill and anxious about extradition.
- He faced a Swedish warrant for rape and assault, which was later dropped.

- In the US, Assange faces 18 charges, 17 under the Espionage Act, which could lead to 175 years in prison, **related to the publication of classified US documents about the Iraq and Afghanistan wars.**
- The decision to publish documents without proper scrutiny put lives at risk, although WikiLeaks did partner with media organizations in some cases to ensure public interest.
- The US faces criticism for targeting Assange as the publisher while not prosecuting his source, Chelsea Manning.
- The Biden administration's emphasis on global democracy protection seems contradictory if it continues to prosecute Assange, seen as a transparency activist, while advocating for whistle-blower protection and free speech.

The blurry lines between wildlife 'capture' and 'rescue' (13April) (GS Paper III: Environment)

The subject is a nuanced challenge in India given the escalating frequency of human-wildlife interactions

- Rescue in wildlife involves saving animals from danger or difficulty.
- In India, **human-wildlife interactions are increasing, leading to conflicts.**
- Traditional approaches like capture and relocation are often unsustainable or harmful to animals.
- Distinguishing between true wildlife rescue and capture is a nuanced challenge.
- **Successful capture requires expertise and specific techniques, like chemical or physical immobilization.**
- **Actual rescue scenarios include animals trapped in wells, irrigation tanks, homes, or separated from their herds.**
- Not all wildlife sightings or presence outside their habitat require rescue; some conflicts can be managed without capture.
- Effective conflict management is demonstrated when tense situations are resolved without capturing or relocating animals.

Advice on 'capture' that is ignored

- Wildlife rescue involves saving animals from danger or difficulty.
- Human-wildlife interactions are increasing in India, leading to conflicts.
- **Solutions should focus on preventative measures rather than reactive capture and relocation.**
- Capturing animals should be a last resort, but often ignored in practice.

- Guidelines discourage capturing leopards or elephants on mere sight, recommending preventative measures instead.
- Recent cases highlight the blurred lines between rescue and capture, leading to negative outcomes for the animals.
- Actual rescue scenarios include animals trapped in wells, tanks, or homes, or separated from their herds.
- Presence of wildlife outside their habitat may not always require rescue, especially if they're not posing immediate danger.
- Every capture should not be termed as a rescue, as it may not always result in the animal's well-being.

The rescue of snakes

- Conflict management with snakes often involves poor handling, unnecessary removal, and relocation in the name of 'rescue'.
- **Snakes are frequently used as props in social media posts**, further complicating the issue.
- **Relocated snakes have low survival rates and may not resolve the conflict, potentially increasing future conflicts.**
- 'Rescue' operations can cause **physical trauma, injuries, and stress to the animals,** reducing their chances of survival post-release.
- The term 'rescue' implies one species is threatened by another, creating a **villainizing narrative and eroding public trust** in conservation efforts.
- Viewing communities holistically, integrating both humans and animals, is crucial for effective wildlife management and long-term conservation goals.

The Karnataka example

- Resolving conflicts between humans and animals requires a realistic assessment of the situation.
- Identify the problem and minimize stress on the animal.
- Exhaust proactive measures before intervention.
- Interventions should prioritize ethical considerations, considering both animal and human welfare.
- Proactive mitigation strategies should be the first line of defense.
- Promising approaches (Karnataka Forest Department) include **early warning systems, regular monitoring, fencing, better lighting, public education, and improved waste management.**
- More resources are needed for research and implementation of innovative strategies.
- Relocation disrupts ecosystems and has significant animal welfare implications.
- Solutions should aim to benefit both humans and animals involved.

Third of land conflicts in constituencies where forest rights key issue for election

(13 April)   (GS Paper I: Society)

Provisions

- **Title Rights:** Forest dwelling Scheduled Tribes and traditional forest dwellers have the **right to own and live on forest land for habitation or self-cultivation**. This includes individual or common occupation for livelihood.
- **Community Rights:** This includes rights like nistar used in different regimes, **access to minor forest produce traditionally collected within or outside village boundaries, and other community entitlements like fishing and grazing.**
- **Rights to Protect and Manage Forest Resources:** Communities have the right to protect, regenerate, conserve, and manage any community forest resource traditionally protected and conserved for sustainable use.
- **Rights Recognized under State Laws:** These are rights recognized under any state law or laws of any **Autonomous District Council or Autonomous Regional Council, as well as traditional or customary laws of concerned tribes**.
- **Access to Biodiversity and Traditional Knowledge:** This includes the right of access to biodiversity and community rights to intellectual property and traditional knowledge related to biodiversity and cultural diversity.
- **Other Traditional Rights**: Any other traditional rights customarily enjoyed by forest dwelling Scheduled Tribes or other traditional forest dwellers, excluding the traditional right of hunting or trapping.

Eligibility criteria

- **Forest Dwelling Scheduled Tribe (FDST)**:
    1. Must belong to a Scheduled Tribe in the area where the rights are claimed.
    2. Must have primarily resided in forest or forest land before December 13, 2005.
    3. Must depend on the forest or forest land for genuine livelihood needs.
- **Other Traditional Forest Dweller (OTFD)**:
    1. Must have primarily resided in forest or forest land for three generations (75 years) before December 13, 2005.
    2. Must depend on the forest or forest land for genuine livelihood needs.
- **Community Recognition for OTFD**:
    - If **an Other Traditional Forest Dweller (OTFD) village proves its eligibility under the Act, every individual member doesn't need to establish eligibility separately.**

Process of recognition of rights

Recognition of Rights Process:

- **Initiation**: Gram sabha (village assembly) passes a resolution recommending whose rights should be recognized.
- **Approval Process**:
    - Resolution is screened and approved at the sub-division (or taluka) level.
    - Further approval is sought at the district level.
- **Committee Composition**:
    - **Committees include government officials (Forest, Revenue, and Tribal Welfare departments) and elected local body members.**
    - Committees also handle appeals.

Resettlement for Wildlife Conservation:
- **Procedure**:
  - Scientific necessity and lack of alternatives for relocation must be demonstrated through public consultation.
  - Local community consent is required.
  - Resettlement must provide compensation and secure livelihood.

2022 Forest Conservation Amendment:
- **Introduction**:
  - Amends the Forest Conservation Act of 1980.
  - Shifts forest rights from tribal communities to large corporations.
- **Key Points**:
  - District collectors can override Gram Sabha approvals and transfer forest land to private entities.
  - Forest dwellers lose participatory rights, while corporations gain development rights.
- **Rationale**:
  - Aimed at simplifying forest clearance and streamlining land transfer approvals.
- **Concerns**:
  - Viewed as prioritizing business interests over environmental protection and indigenous rights.
  - Raises fears of exploitation of forest resources and harm to forest-dependent communities.
- **Calls for Action**:
  - Many demand repeal of the amendment and implementation of the Forest Rights Act to safeguard communities and the environment.

Misunderstanding the Act as a land distribution scheme

- Common misunderstanding: Belief that the Act aims to distribute forest land to forest dwellers or tribals, allocating 4 hectares per family.
- Actual purpose: Intended to recognize lands already under cultivation as of December 13, 2005, not to grant title to new lands.

Opposition:
- Concerns from environmentalists and wildlife conservationists.
- Some view the Act as a land distribution scheme leading to forest handover to tribals.
- Strongest opposition from wildlife conservationists fearing interference with creating "inviolate spaces" for wildlife conservation, especially concerning tiger habitats.

Interpretation Regarding Deadline Cut-off Date:
- Proposal for inclusion of a "deadline cut-off date" by M. Sai Sampath, emphasizing completion of forest rights recognition process.
- Correlation between forest land decline/encroachment and FRA 2006 implementation, with an extent of 16.21 lakh hectares of encroached forest land reported post-Act implementation.

Supporters' Perspective:
- Act not seen as a land distribution measure but as a transparent law to prevent land grabbing.
- Provides clear procedure for resettling people when necessary for wildlife protection, with safeguards against arbitrary actions.
- Provisions for community conservation believed to strengthen forest protection by granting legal rights for communities to safeguard forests.

Criticism by forest rights supporters
- Supporters endorse the principles of the Forest Rights Act (FRA) but express dissatisfaction with the final version of the law.

- Joint Parliamentary Committee's recommendations were partly rejected, with some crucial clauses being left out.
- Concerns raised about the final law making **it easier to exclude certain categories of tribal and non-tribal forest dwellers.**
- Democratic processes within the Act are believed to have been undermined.
- **Additional bureaucratic restrictions imposed on people's rights** are criticized.
- The **Campaign for Survival and Dignity characterized the final law as "both a victory and a betrayal"** in their official statement.

- **Land Conflict Watch** analyzed land-related conflicts in India.
- They found that almost **one-third of these conflicts occur in Lok Sabha constituencies where the implementation of the Forest Rights Act (FRA) is a significant election issue**.
- Out **of 781 conflicts analyzed, 264** were mapped to constituencies where FRA is important.
- Among these conflicts, **117 directly affect forest-dwelling communities, involving nearly 2.1 lakh hectares of land and 6.1 lakh people**.
- Around 44% of these conflicts were triggered by **conservation and forestry projects, such as plantations, involving the forest administration.**
- The **Forest department appears to be the main adversarial party** in many of these conflicts, according to Anmol Gupta, one of the authors of the report.
- **Approximately 88% of the conflicts analyzed involve the non-implementation or violation of key provisions of the Forest Rights Act (FRA).**
- Other major points of conflict include the lack of legal protection **over land rights, forced evictions, and dispossession of land.**
- **Around 110 conflicts are located in constituencies reserved for Scheduled Tribes, and 77 are in constituencies reserved for Scheduled Castes.**
- **Maharashtra, Odisha, and Madhya Pradesh** have the highest number of "core" FRA constituencies, where more than 20% of the resident electorate are eligible to claim rights under the FRA.
- The states with the maximum number of conflicts involving forest rights issues in FRA-critical constituencies are **Odisha, Chhattisgarh, and the union territory of Jammu and Kashmir.**
- According to the latest estimates from the Centre, as of February 2024, **2.45 million titles have been accorded to tribal and forest dwellers, while five million claims to title have been received. About 34% of claims have been rejected by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs.**

MAINS PRACTICE QUESTION: GS PAPER I: Society

Question: Why are the tribals in India referred to as 'the Scheduled Tribes'? Indicate the major provisions enshrined in the Constitution of India for their upliftment. (200 Words/12.5 Marks) (UPSC 2016)

Question: What are the two major legal initiatives by the State since Independence addressing discrimination against Scheduled Tribes (STs)? (150 words/10 marks) (UPSC 2017)

ANSWER APPROACH

- **Introduce bringing the problem of historical and ongoing discrimination faced by ST communities.**
- **Then discuss the key legal Initiatives such as Protective Discrimination (Reservations) and Prevention of Atrocities Act (PoA), 1989:**
- **Further, mention implementation gaps, continued discrimination or marginalization.**
- **Also, briefly acknowledge the Forest Rights Act (2006) for land rights, PESA (Extension to Scheduled Areas), 1996 for local self-governance.**
- **Conclude by Underscoring the need for effective implementation and continued efforts for true social equality.**

ANSWER

The problem of historical and ongoing discrimination faced by Scheduled Tribes (ST) communities in India is deeply rooted in centuries of marginalization, exploitation, and neglect. It has been hindering their socio-economic development and perpetuating marginalization. Two major legal initiatives by the State have been implemented to address this issue.

1. **Protective Discrimination (Reservations):**
   - **The Constitution of India provides for reservation of seats in legislatures, both at the central and state levels, as well as in educational institutions for Scheduled Tribes. This initiative aims to provide representation and opportunities for ST communities in decision-making processes and access to education.**
   - **Article 330 of the Constitution reserves seats for STs in the House of the People (Lok Sabha), while Article 332 reserves seats in the legislative assemblies of states.**
   - **Additionally, Article 15(4) and Article 16(4) provide for reservation in educational institutions and public employment, respectively, to promote the welfare of STs and ensure their adequate representation.**

2. **Prevention of Atrocities Act (PoA), 1989:**
   - **The PoA Act was enacted to prevent atrocities against Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes (SCs) and to provide for special protection to members of these communities.**
   - **The Act lists various offences against STs, including atrocities such as assault, intimidation, and humiliation, and prescribes stringent punishment for perpetrators.**
   - **It also provides for special courts for the trial of offences under the Act and lays down procedures for investigation and prosecution to ensure speedy justice for victims.**

Despite these legal initiatives, implementation gaps and continued discrimination against ST communities persist.

- **Many STs still face barriers in accessing education, healthcare, and employment opportunities.**
- **Instances of atrocities and violence against STs are reported, indicating the failure of the PoA Act to fully protect them from discrimination and violence.**
- **The reservation policy has also faced challenges, including inadequate representation in decision-making bodies and allegations of tokenism in the implementation of reservation policies.**

While Protective Discrimination and the Prevention of Atrocities Act are the major legal initiatives, it is essential to acknowledge other measures aimed at addressing the rights and welfare of ST communities.

- **The Forest Rights Act (2006) recognizes the rights of forest-dwelling STs over ancestral lands and forest resources, providing them with legal recognition and ownership.**

- **The Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996 (PESA)** grants autonomy to tribal communities in scheduled areas, empowering them with self-governance and decision-making authority over local resources and development initiatives.

Thus, effective implementation of legal initiatives and continued efforts are crucial for achieving true social equality and addressing the discrimination faced by Scheduled Tribes. While Protective Discrimination and the Prevention of Atrocities Act have been significant steps, bridging the implementation gap and ensuring access to justice and opportunities for ST communities remain imperative for their inclusive development and empowerment.

Lost in the woods (13 April) (GS Paper I: Society)

Muria tribe of Chhattisgarh

- **Location:** Primarily in the Bastar district of Chhattisgarh, India, with some communities in neighboring Maharashtra.
- Within the Gondi people.
- **Language:** Muria, classified as a Dravidian language within the larger Gondi linguistic group.
- **Livelihood:** Traditionally a mix of agriculture, hunting, fishing, and forest-based activities.
- **Religion:** Predominantly animistic beliefs centered around nature and ancestral worship.

Social Structure and Notable Cultural Practices

- **Ghotul System:** A unique tradition where adolescents live in **mixed-sex dormitories (Ghotuls).** This system is intended for exploration of sexuality, socialization, and learning tribal customs.
    - **Important Note:** While the Ghotul system is a core part of Muria culture, it's essential to avoid oversimplification or presenting it through an exoticizing lens.
- **Vibrant Dance Forms:** Gaur dance is a prominent form of artistic expression during festivals and celebrations.
- **Strong Community Bonds:** Muria society emphasizes collective work and decision-making through village councils.

Challenges & Government Initiatives

- **Socioeconomic Issues:** The Muria, like many tribal communities, face challenges related to poverty, limited access to education, and healthcare.

- The settlement of Chukkalapadu is home to the Muria tribe in Chhattisgarh, located within 'India's Red Corridor' near the A.P.-Chhattisgarh border affected by Naxalism.
- Despite being within a reserved forest, the Muria tribe has made Chukkalapadu their permanent abode after facing multiple fires set by the Andhra Pradesh Forest department.
- The settlement houses 34 Muria tribal families who fled from their native village in Bastar during the conflict between left-wing extremists and the State-sponsored Salwa Judum.
- **Salwa Judum, initially claimed to be a "peace mission" by the government, was declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court in July 2011,** leading to the disbandment of the group.
- Despite the government's invitation to return to their ancestral villages, Murias settled in united Andhra Pradesh opted to stay due to an uncertain future.
- Muria settlements in Andhra Pradesh are considered as habitations of Internally Displaced People (IDPs), with a population of around 6,600.
- Murias migrated from districts like Sukma, Dantewada, and Bijapur in the Dandakaranya region of Chhattisgarh and settled in the erstwhile East and West Godavari districts of Andhra Pradesh.
- There are 54 settlements of Murias in Andhra Pradesh, according to tribal rights activist Venkatesh Jatvi, who works with Murias in the state.

Identity crisis

- **Murias have cleared forest cover within reserve forests to cultivate food crops, which has been a major issue raised by the Forest department.**
- After a decade-long legal battle, some Muria settlements have obtained a stay order, but if lifted, the Forest department can enforce Acts aimed at protecting the reserve forests, potentially leading to their eviction.
- **Despite being issued voter cards, ration cards, and NREGA cards by the Andhra Pradesh government, Murias have been denied a Scheduled Tribe certificate, making them ineligible for associated benefits.**
- **Muria is not officially recognized as a tribe in Andhra Pradesh but is on the official list in Chhattisgarh.**
- The absence of a caste certificate makes Murias ineligible for social welfare pensions, including old-age, widow, and differently-abled pensions.
- Many Muria students, including Madakam Rakesh, have been unable to pursue higher education due to the lack of a caste certificate, preventing them from enrolling in college and hostels.
- Rakesh, a farmer and cattle rearer, highlights that more than 200 Muria students who completed class 10 have halted further studies due to the mandatory requirement of a caste certificate.

Education a dream

- Ravva Suresh, 8 years old, helps care for goats and cows and assists his parents in collecting Mahua flowers from the forest.
- Suresh dropped out of school two years ago, as did his sister Irmamma after completing class 4, to assist their grandparents in Sukma district, Chhattisgarh, with Mahua flower collection.
- Many families from the Dandakaranya region, including Suresh's, maintain contact with relatives in their ancestral villages, which still face left-wing extremist activities.
- Ravva Deve, Suresh's mother, mentions that all her children, except the eldest who is married, have dropped out of school due to the **lack of functional schools.**
- The settlement, with more than 30 children aged 6-14, built a house for a school, but the government advised them to send children to a state-run school 3 kilometers away, accessible via a paramilitary camp.
- A temporary teacher once managed the settlement's school, but it does not exist according to Education department records.
- In Chinna Edugurallapalli village, 10 school-age children are out of the education system, and villagers express concerns about securing access to drinking water.
- Lack of schools forces children, especially girls, to work in chili fields along the Andhra-Telangana borders, while dropout youth migrate to cities for menial jobs.
- As of 2024, 23 out of 54 Muria settlements in Andhra Pradesh have no schools, and single-teacher schools cater to children aged 6-14 in the rest.
- ASR District Collector M. Vijaya Suneetha emphasizes the right to education for Muria children and pledges to address the lack of schools with a detailed study. The absence of schools also deprives Muria children of nutritional food provided by the government through the mid-day meal scheme.

Minimal healthcare

- Muria settlements are difficult to access for political leaders due to the terrain, so they often avoid campaigning there.
- Despite challenges, Murias exercise their right to vote in Andhra Pradesh to safeguard against displacement.
- Murias do not have affiliations with other native tribes like Koya and Konda Reddi, classified as Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups.
- Cattle are vital for Murias, serving as their lifeline during financial and health emergencies.
- Healthcare in the village is minimal, with occasional visits from a lone government nurse.
- Many Murias lack caste certificates, making them ineligible for social welfare pensions and educational opportunities.
- Ravva Koinde, a nursing student, highlights the struggles faced by Murias and their desire for recognition and opportunities.
- Murias have faced evictions and rebuild their homes from scratch using forest resources.
- Access to clean drinking water is a challenge for Muria settlements, with limited borewells and dry streams.
- The Jal Jeevan Mission, aimed at addressing water scarcity in rural areas, has not reached many Muria settlements.

- Murias living in reserve forests often lack basic facilities, and government support is limited due to legal restrictions on settlement in forest areas.

PRELIMS PRACTICE QUESTION:

Question 1: Which of the following states is home to a significant population of the Muria tribe?
(A) Jharkhand
(B) Odisha
(C) Chhattisgarh
(D) Assam

Question 2: The Ghotul system is a unique social institution associated with which of the following tribes?
(A) Bhil
(B) Muria
(C) Santhal
(D) Naga

Question 3: Consider the following statements about the Muria tribe:
1. They are traditionally associated with shifting cultivation.
2. Their language belongs to the Indo-Aryan linguistic group.
3. They have a strong tradition of animistic religious beliefs.

Which of the statements above are correct?
(A) 1 and 2 only
(B) 2 and 3 only
(C) 1 and 3 only
(D) 1, 2, and 3

Question 4: Which of the following dance forms is prominently associated with the Muria tribe?
(A) Bihu
(B) Chhau
(C) Gaur
(D) Garba

Question 5: Where is the headquarters of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) located?
(A) Tokyo, Japan
(B) Manila, Philippines
(C) Beijing, China
(D) New Delhi, India

Question 6: Consider the following statements regarding the Asian Development Bank (ADB):
1. India is a founding member of the ADB.
2. The ADB exclusively provides loans to governments of its member countries.
Which of the above statements is/are correct?
(A) 1 only
(B) 2 only
(C) Both 1 and 2
(D) Neither 1 nor 2

Question 7: Which of the following countries is the largest shareholder in the Asian Development Bank (ADB)?
(A) India
(B) China
(C) United States

(D) Japan	
Question 8: Which of the following is a key objective of the Forest Rights Act (FRA), 2006? (A) Promotion of commercial forestry on reserved forest lands (B) Facilitation of industrial access to forest resources (C) Recognizing the rights of forest-dwelling communities (D) Expansion of protected areas under the Wildlife Protection Act	
Question 9: Consider the following rights granted under the Forest Rights Act (FRA): 1. Right to collect minor forest produce 2. Right to in-situ rehabilitation in case of displacement 3. Right to convert leases into titles Which of the above are correct? (A) 1 and 2 only (B) 2 and 3 only (C) 1 and 3 only (D) 1, 2, and 3	

Question 1: Which of the following states is home to a significant population of the Muria tribe? (A) Jharkhand (B) Odisha (C) Chhattisgarh (D) Assam	Answer: (C) Chhattisgarh **Explanation**: The Muria are primarily concentrated in the Bastar district of Chhattisgarh.
Question 2: The Ghotul system is a unique social institution associated with which of the following tribes? (A) Bhil (B) Muria (C) Santhal (D) Naga	Answer: (B) Muria **Explanation:** The Ghotul, with its focus on adolescent socialization and learning, is a distinctive aspect of Muria tribal culture
Question 3: Consider the following statements about the Muria tribe: 1. They are traditionally associated with shifting cultivation. 2. Their language belongs to the Indo-Aryan linguistic group. 3. They have a strong tradition of animistic religious beliefs. Which of the statements above are correct? (A) 1 and 2 only (B) 2 and 3 only (C) 1 and 3 only (D) 1, 2, and 3	Answer: (C) 1 and 3 only **Explanation**: Statement 1 is correct. Historically, the Muria practiced forms of shifting cultivation. Statement 2 is incorrect. The Muria language belongs to the Dravidian linguistic group. Statement 3 is correct. Animism is the dominant religious belief system among the Muria.
Question 4: Which of the following dance forms is prominently associated with the Muria tribe? (A) Bihu (B) Chhau (C) Gaur	Answer: (C) Gaur **Explanation:** Gaur dance is a vibrant form of artistic expression commonly performed during Muria festivals and celebrations.

(D) Garba	
Question 5: Where is the headquarters of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) located? (A) Tokyo, Japan (B) Manila, Philippines (C) Beijing, China (D) New Delhi, India	Answer: (B) Manila, Philippines **Explanation:** The ADB, since its inception, has been headquartered in Manila, Philippines.
Question 6: Consider the following statements regarding the Asian Development Bank (ADB): 1. India is a founding member of the ADB. 2. The ADB exclusively provides loans to governments of its member countries. Which of the above statements is/are correct? (A) 1 only (B) 2 only (C) Both 1 and 2 (D) Neither 1 nor 2	Answer: (A) 1 only **Explanation:** Statement 1 is correct. India was one of the founding members of the ADB. Statement 2 is incorrect. The ADB also works with private sector entities and provides various financial instruments beyond traditional loans.
Question 7: Which of the following countries is the largest shareholder in the Asian Development Bank (ADB)? (A) India (B) China (C) United States (D) Japan	Answer: (D) Japan **Explanation:** While the voting shares are close, Japan holds the largest proportion of shares in the ADB.
Question 8: Which of the following is a key objective of the Forest Rights Act (FRA), 2006? (A) Promotion of commercial forestry on reserved forest lands (B) Facilitation of industrial access to forest resources (C) Recognizing the rights of forest-dwelling communities (D) Expansion of protected areas under the Wildlife Protection Act	Answer: (C) Recognizing the rights of forest-dwelling communities **Explanation:** The FRA is a landmark legislation that aims to correct historical injustices faced by forest-dwelling communities, by recognizing their rights to land and forest resources.
Question 9: Consider the following rights granted under the Forest Rights Act (FRA): 1. Right to collect minor forest produce 2. Right to in-situ rehabilitation in case of displacement 3. Right to convert leases into titles Which of the above are correct? (A) 1 and 2 only (B) 2 and 3 only (C) 1 and 3 only (D) 1, 2, and 3	Answer: (D) 1, 2, and 3 **Explanation:** The FRA grants a wide range of rights, including those mentioned in all the options provided.