



DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS 31-01-2024

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Kutia Kondh tribe

Syllabus: GS-1; Tribes of India

Context

- *Two persons from the Kutia Kondh community, one of the **Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) in Odisha**, attended the Republic Day parade in New Delhi as special guests.*
- *Every year, representatives from a PVTG are invited by the **Union Ministry of Tribal Affairs** as guests for Republic Day celebrations.*



About

- *The Kutia Kondh are a **sub-section of the larger Kondh tribe**.*
- *They are a primitive section of the Kandha tribe of Odisha. The Kutia Kondh live in the hilltops and valleys of the Kandhamal and Kalahandi districts.*
- *The Ministry of Home Affairs has classified them as a Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG).*
- *The Kutia Kondh are known for their buffalo sacrifice ritual, called "**Kedu**", to worship their Earth Goddess, "**Dharni Penu**".*
- *They are also skilled in making combs from bamboo splits.*
- *The Kutia Kondh have a strong and unified social organization. Their families are mostly nuclear and patriarchal, and women play a bigger role in the family economy.*

- *The Kutia Kondh use the reserve forest close to their habitat for shifting cultivation. However, the depletion of forest due to shifting cultivation has threatened their survival.*

Sapinda marriage

Syllabus: GS-2: Laws, customs and traditions.

Context:

- *The Delhi High Court **upheld the constitutionality of a provision of the Hindu Marriage Act that prohibits marriages between people related to each other through ancestors on their parents' sides unless their custom allows it.***

Sapinda Marriage Definition:

- *A sapinda marriage involves individuals related within a specific degree of closeness.*
- *Defined in Section 3 of the Hindu Marriage Act (HMA).*

Sapinda Relationship Criteria (Section 3(f)(ii)):

- *Sapindas are individuals with a lineal ascendant relationship or a common lineal ascendant within the defined limits.*

Prohibition Under HMA:

- *On the mother's side, a Hindu person can't marry within three generations in the line of ascent.*
- *On the father's side, this prohibition extends to five generations.*

Practical Example:

- *On the mother's side, marriage is prohibited with siblings, parents, and grandparents within three generations.*
- *On the father's side, it extends to grandparents' grandparents within five generations.*

Void Marriage Consequence:

- *If a marriage violates Section 5(v) (sapinda marriage) without an established custom permitting it, the marriage is declared void.*
- *The marriage is considered invalid from the beginning, treated as though it never occurred.*

Exception to Sapinda Marriage Prohibition:

- *The only exception to the prohibition against sapinda marriages is when the customs of each individual involved permit such marriages.*

Custom Definition (Section 3(a) of HMA):

- *A custom must be continuously and uniformly observed for a long time.*
- *It should have gained legitimacy among Hindus in a local area, tribe, group, or family.*
- *The custom should have obtained "the force of law."*

Conditions for a Valid Custom:

- *The rule of the custom must be certain and not unreasonable or opposed to public policy.*
- *In the case of a rule applicable only to a family, it should not have been discontinued by the family.*

Are marriages similar to sapinda marriages allowed in other countries?

France and Belgium:

- *The crime of incest was abolished in France under the Penal Code of 1810 for consenting adults.*
- *Belgium adopted the French code in 1810, and despite a new Penal Code in 1867, incest remains legal.*

Portugal:

- *Portuguese law does not criminalize incest.*

Italy:

- *Incest is a crime in Italy only if it causes a "public scandal."*

Republic of Ireland:

- *Same-sex marriages are recognized since 2015, but the law on incest has not been updated to include individuals in same-sex relationships.*

United States:

- *Incestuous marriages are banned in all 50 states.*
- *In New Jersey and Rhode Island, incestuous relationships between consenting adults are allowed.*

All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) 2021-2022

Syllabus: GS-2: Social sector – Education.

Context:

- *The Ministry of Education has recently unveiled the latest All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) for the academic year 2021-22.*
- *AISHE, a yearly initiative since 2011, encompasses all higher education institutions in India.*

Highlights of AISHE 2021-22:

1. Overall Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) Growth:

- *The GER for higher education in the age group 18-23 rose to 28.4% in 2021-22.*
- *Compared to 27.3% in 2020-21 and 23.7% in the base year 2014-15.*

2. Surge in Female GER:

- *Female GER increased to 28.5% (2.07 crore) in 2021-22.*
- *Up from 27.9% (2.01 crore) in 2020-21 and 22.9% in 2014-15.*

3. Empowering SC and ST Students:

- *GER for Schedule Caste (SC) students increased from 25.6% in 2020-21 to 27.2% in 2021-22.*
- *GER for Schedule Tribe (ST) students rose from 23.4% to 25.8% during the same period.*

4. OBC Enrolment Uplift:

- *Enrolment of OBC students increased to 1.63 crore in 2021-22.*
- *A notable growth from 1.13 crore in 2014-15.*

5. Program Distribution:

- *78.9% of students are enrolled in undergraduate level courses.*
- *12.1% are pursuing postgraduate studies.*

6. Undergraduate Discipline Preferences:

- *Arts holds the highest enrolment at 34.2%.*
- *Followed by Science (14.8%), Commerce (13.3%), and Engineering and Technology (11.8%).*

7. Postgraduate Stream Insights:

- *Social Science leads with 21.1% enrolment at the postgraduate level.*
- *Science follows closely at 14.7%.*

8. Institutional Landscape:

- *Government Universities, constituting 58.6% of total universities, contribute 73.7% of the enrolment.*
- *Private Universities account for 26.3% of total enrolment.*

9. Educational Infrastructure:

- *A total of 1,168 Universities/University-level institutions.*
- *45,473 Colleges and 12,002 Standalone Institutions contribute to the educational landscape.*

10. Faculty Demographics:

- *In 2021-22, the total number of faculty/teachers is 15.98 lakh.*
- *Male faculty members constitute 56.6%, while females make up 43.4% as per the survey results.*

About All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE):

- *The **Ministry of Education** has consistently published the AISHE report since 2011.*
- *The primary objective is to present a comprehensive overview of the current status of higher education in the nation.*
- ***Encompassing all educational institutions** across the country dedicated to providing higher education.*
- *Multiple parameters are scrutinized, including teachers, student enrollment, programs, examination results, education finance, and infrastructure.*
- *The AISHE data serves as the basis for calculating crucial indicators of educational development, such as:*
 - *Institution Density*
 - *Gross Enrolment Ratio*
 - *Pupil-teacher ratio*
 - *Gender Parity Index*
 - *Per Student Expenditure*
- ***Definition of Higher Education:***
 - *For the survey's purpose, higher education is defined as education obtained after successfully completing 12 years of schooling or its equivalent.*

Analysing China's ties with Africa

Syllabus: GS-2: International developments affecting India's interests

Context:

- *From January 13-18, the Chinese Minister of Foreign Affairs, Wang Yi, visited four African countries, Egypt, Tunisia, Togo and the Ivory Coast.*

Objectives of Wang Yi's Visit:

- *Implement outcomes of China-Africa Leaders Dialogue (August 2023)*
- *Execute three initiatives:*
 - *Support for Africa's industrialization*
 - *Agricultural modernization*
 - *Cooperation on talent development*
- *Set precedent for the ninth Forum on China-Africa Cooperation 2024 (FOCAC)*

Peace Mediation in Gaza:

- *China expressed intention to be a global actor mediating peace in Gaza.*
- *In Egypt, emphasized the call for an "immediate and comprehensive ceasefire" in Gaza.*
- *Special attention to the Rafah border shared by Egypt with Gaza.*

Diplomatic Engagements:

- *Wang Yi met with leaders of Egypt, Tunisia, and the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States.*
- *Discussing broader diplomatic issues and cooperation.*

Why is Africa China's first stop for the past 34 years?

Historical Context:

- *Sino-African relations trace back to the 1950s, with China supporting African liberation movements during the Cold War.*

UN Security Council Seat:

- *In the 1970s, African countries' support was crucial for China to secure its seat in the UN Security Council.*

Evolution of Relationship:

- *Initially focused on ideological support, with a shift in 1999 when China encouraged its companies to invest in Africa (Go Out Policy).*

FOCAC and Growth in Cooperation:

- *FOCAC initiated in 2000 to consolidate China-Africa cooperation in diplomacy, investment, and trade.*
- *Relationship progressed from trade to aid and then to "mutual security assistance" under Xi Jinping.*

Belt and Road Initiative (BRI):

- *In 2013, China launched the BRI, significantly expanding its engagement with 52 African countries as signatories.*

Economic Partnership:

- *China is Africa's largest trading partner.*
- *Over one-fourth of Africa's raw material is exported to China.*

Financial Support:

- *Chinese Loans to Africa database indicates loans worth \$170.08 billion granted to 49 African countries between 2000 and 2022.*

Military Presence:

- *China's presence evolved from an investor to a strategic actor.*
- *The People's Liberation Army Navy established its first international base in Djibouti.*

Consistent Engagement:

- *China's consistent annual visits to Africa, exemplified by Wang Yi's 34-year tradition, demonstrate the sustained importance of the continent in their global strategy.*

What are China's objectives in Africa?

Access to Key Resources:

- *China seeks access to vital resources in Africa.*
- *Africa supplies 90% of the world's cobalt and platinum, and 75% of coltan, crucial for electronics.*
- *China has the largest refineries in Africa for rare earths and minerals, supporting its emerging tech industry.*
- *U.S. dependence on China for key minerals from Africa is a result of China's dominance in the mining sector.*

Geopolitical Influence and Alliance:

- *Africa, as the largest bloc in the UN General Assembly, holds sway in key resolutions.*
- *China leverages African support on international issues, such as the South China Sea and backing China's policies on Taiwan and Hong Kong.*

- *Building a strong alliance with Africa enhances China's geopolitical standing.*

Strengthening the Yuan (RMB):

- *China encourages African countries to trade in the Chinese currency (RMB).*
- *Promotes cross-border yuan-based "panda bonds," allowing foreign governments to issue funds from China at lower interest rates.*
- *China's debt restructuring initiatives, like in Zambia, incentivize borrowers to use RMB.*
- *RMB becomes an alternative to the dollar, especially with lower Chinese interest rates and the depreciation of African local currencies.*

Commercial Opportunities:

- *Africa serves as a significant market for Chinese exports, especially finished goods.*
- *China benefits from Africa's young population and cheap labor force, supporting Chinese exports globally and within Africa.*
- *Economic ties with Africa contribute to the growth of the Chinese economy through trade and commercial ventures.*

What does the visit mean for Africa?

Economic Benefits:

- *Africa receives investment, trade, and development aid from China.*
- *Chinese-built infrastructure and industrial parks create employment opportunities, making "Made in Africa" a reality.*
- *China is a significant source of foreign direct investment in the region.*

Agricultural Advancements:

- *Chinese support in advancing hybrid crops contributes to the growth of Africa's agricultural sector.*

Perceived Win-Win Partnership:

- *Cooperation with China is seen in Africa as a 'win-win partnership.'*
- *High degree of mutual trust in the relationship.*

Non-intervention Approach:

- *China-Africa partnership features a non-intervention approach.*
- *Chinese development aid doesn't impose political conditionality, providing African countries with opportunities to secure their interests.*

Debt Concerns and Predatory Investments:

- *Some Western voices express concerns that Chinese investments might be predatory, leading to debt traps.*
- *China's non-interference stance has allowed certain authoritarian regimes in Africa to maintain power.*

Debt Trap Narratives:

- *While some countries like Kenya and Zambia have poorly managed their debt, others have more manageable arrangements with China.*
- *The Chinese debt trap narrative is debated, with some expressing caution.*

Complexities in Chinese Involvement:

- *Chinese involvement has both positive and negative aspects, providing economic benefits but also raising concerns about political implications and debt sustainability.*

Practice Question

Q. "Analyze the multifaceted objectives of China in Africa, emphasizing economic, geopolitical, and diplomatic dimensions, while evaluating the impact on African nations, considering both positive contributions and potential challenges." (15 marks, 250 words)

SIMI

Syllabus: GS-3: Internal Security – Terrorist Organisations.

Context:

- *MHA extends ban on SIMI for further five years.*

Overview of Students Islamic Movement of India (SIMI)

Objectives:

- *Mobilize Muslim support to establish a 'caliphate'*
- *Replace Indian nationalism with an "international Islamic order"*
- *Propagate Islam and obtain support for Jihad*
- *Emphasize the formation of 'Shariat' based Islamic rule through 'Islami Inqalab'*
- *Reject nation-state and the Indian Constitution, including its secular nature*
- *Consider idol worship as a sin and aim to end such practices*

Financial Situation:

- *SIMI's financial situation is described as "sound"*
- *Funding sources include donations and memberships from Gulf countries*
- *Funds within the country come from donations, robberies, and dacoities*

International Connections:

- *SIMI has contacts in Pakistan, Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia, Bangladesh, and Nepal*
- *Influenced and used by various fundamentalist Islamic terrorist organizations*

Infiltration and Activities:

- *Terrorist organizations like Hizb-ul-Mujahideen (HM) and Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) have penetrated SIMI cadres*
- *Active in multiple states including Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, and West Bengal*

Regrouping under Different Names:

- *SIMI has regrouped under various names in different states*
- *Examples include 'Wahadat-e-Islami,' 'Indian Mujahideen,' 'Ansarullah,' 'Muslim Muttahida Mihad,' 'Wahadat-e-Ummat,' 'Nagarik Adhikar Suraksha Manch,' among others*

Front Organizations:

- *Over three dozen front organizations through which SIMI continues its activities*
- *Examples include 'Tahreek-e-Ehya-e-Ummat,' 'Tehreek-Talaba-e-Arabia,' 'TehrikTahaffuz-eSha'aire Islam,' etc.*

Government Concerns:

- *The government expressed concerns about SIMI's influence, financial strength, and connections to anti-national goals*