Society & Social Justice · GS - I

Given the diversities among tribal communities in India, in which specific contexts should they be considered as a single category?

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
2022	GS - I	Society & Social Justice

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Despite their linguistic, cultural, geographical and economic diversity, tribal communities may be considered a single category when addressing shared experiences of historical marginalisation, land alienation, exploitation, developmental disadvantages, political representation and constitutional protection. Such classification must not erase their distinct identities.

Model Answer

Introduction

India’s tribal communities differ significantly in language, customs, livelihood, religion and levels of development. Nevertheless, certain common historical and socio-economic circumstances justify treating them as a single category.

Body

1. Constitutional and Legal Protection: Tribes can be considered collectively while implementing Scheduled Tribe safeguards, reservations, and protections under the Fifth and Sixth Schedules.

2. Historical Marginalisation: Many tribal communities have experienced exclusion from mainstream institutions, exploitation by intermediaries and limited access to public services.

3. Land and Forest Rights: Displacement, land alienation and restrictions on traditional forest-based livelihoods create shared concerns addressed through laws such as the Forest Rights Act, 2006.

4. Developmental Disadvantages: Poor access to healthcare, education, infrastructure and employment supports targeted welfare measures.

5. Political Representation: Collective categorisation facilitates representation and participation in policymaking concerning tribal welfare and self-governance.

Limitations

A uniform approach may overlook differences between particularly vulnerable groups, relatively developed communities and distinct cultural traditions. Policies must therefore remain sensitive to local needs.

Conclusion

Tribal communities should be treated as a single category for constitutional protection, social justice and addressing common structural disadvantages, while preserving their cultural diversity and community-specific rights.

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