

Darlong community

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In news- The Lok Sabha has passed a bill to amend a constitutional order to include Darlong, a tribal clan in Tripura which was among the generic Halam community till now, in the list of Scheduled Tribes (ST).

About Darlong community-

- Darlongs is a small community of around 11,000 people in Tripura.
- Despite its small population, the community has a high prevalence of education, cultural activities and members of the community are serving in different high positions in the local administration.
- Tribal musicologist and Rosem (tribal instrument) maestro Thanga Darlong was conferred the prestigious Padma Shri award a few years back for his contribution to culture.
- Darlongs, despite being Scheduled Tribes, were never given ST certificates.
- Since they were considered a **generic tribe under the Kuki community**, they were handed their tribal certificates as members of 'Kuki' community.
- The subsequent identity crisis among them, especially Darlong youths, who were equipped with modern education, culminated in the demand for a separate statutory identity of their own in 1995.

Tribes of Tripura-

- Tripura, the tiny Northeast state of 37 lakh people houses **19 tribal communities**.
- **These include Tripuri or Debbarma, Reangs or Brus, Jamatia, Noatia, Uchoi, Chakma, Mog, Lushai, Kuki, Munda, Kour, Oram, Santhal, Bhil, Bhutia, Chaimar or Sermai, Garo, Khasi, Lepcha and Halam.**

- **Many of these communities are further divided into sub-tribes.** For example, Kukis have nearly 17-18 sub-tribes within the community.
- It is an umbrella tribal community including many smaller clans like Khasi, Lushai, Hmars and other generic clans.
- In course of time, Lushai, Hmar, Garo etc. came out of Kuki as separate communities.
- **Halam community also has several sub-tribes such as** Rangkhawl, Ranglong, Dab, Chaimar or Sermai, Bong, Korbong, Harbong, Bongcher etc.
- Out of 37 lakh people of Tripura, nearly 30 per cent are tribals, who mostly live in areas under jurisdiction of the **Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council (TTAADC)**, spread in patches across all eight districts and covering 70 per cent of the state's geographical area.
- The state, which was ruled by tribal kings for over 500 years till 1949, when it merged into the Indian Union, saw tribals become minority in their own state due to arrival of East Pakistani refugees who fled their country.