

# De-notified, nomadic and semi-nomadic tribes

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**In news—** The Standing Committee on Social Justice and Empowerment, headed by Lok Sabha MP Rama Devi, recently has criticized the functioning of the development programme for denotified, nomadic and semi-nomadic tribes. It also criticized **the functioning of the Development and Welfare Board for Denotified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Communities (DWBDNC).**

## **About Denotified, Nomadic and Semi-nomadic tribes-**

- **Denotified tribes (DNTs) are communities that were 'notified' as being 'born criminal' during the British regime under a series of laws starting with the Criminal Tribes Act of 1871.**
- These Acts were repealed by the Independent Indian Government in 1952, and these communities were "De-Notified".
- A few of these communities which were listed as de-notified were also nomadic.
- These are communities who are the most vulnerable and deprived.
- **Nomadic and semi-nomadic communities are defined as those who move from one place to another rather than living at one place all the time.**
- The term semi-nomad is mostly used to describe those sections of nomads whose duration, distance and frequency of movement is comparatively less than others.
- On the other hand, Semi-nomadic groups tend to have a fixed abode for a part of the year and are itinerant in the rest of the year.
- It has been estimated that South Asia has the world's

largest nomadic population and In India, roughly 10 percent of the population is Denotified and Nomadic.

- While the number of Denotified Tribes is about 150, the population of Nomadic Tribes consists of about 500 different communities.

### **Committees & Commissions for DNTs-**

- **A National Commission for Denotified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Tribes (NCDNT)** was constituted in **2006** that was **headed by Balkrishna Sidram Renke** and submitted its report in June 2008.
- The Renke commission estimated their **population at around 10.74 crore based on Census 2001.**
- **A new Commission constituted in February 2014 to prepare a state-wise list**, which submitted its report on January 8, 2018, **identified 1,262 communities as de-notified, nomadic and semi-nomadic.**
- While a number of these tribes are categorized under SC, ST and OBC, 269 DNT communities are not covered under any reserved categories because they are less visible and difficult to reach.
- **The Criminal Tribes Inquiry Committee, 1947** constituted in the United Provinces (now Uttar Pradesh), **Ananthasayanam Ayyangar Committee in 1949** (it was based on the report of this committee the Criminal Tribes Act was repealed), and **Kaka Kalelkar Commission** (also called first OBC Commission) constituted in 1953 all have dealt with DNTs.
- **In 1965, an Advisory Committee** constituted **for revision of the SC and ST list** under the chairmanship of B N Lokur referred to denotified tribes.
- **The B P Mandal Commission constituted in 1980** also made some recommendations on the issue.
- **The National Commission to Review the Working of the Constitution** under the chairmanship of Justice M N Venkatachaliah, said in its 2002 report that: "The

denotified tribes/communities have been wrongly stigmatized as crime prone and subjected to high handed treatment as well as exploitation by the representatives of law and order as well as by the general society.”

#### **About DWBDNC-**

- The government set up the DWBDNCs **under the Societies Registration Act, 1860 under the aegis of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment** for the purpose of implementing welfare programmes.
- **The DWBDNC was constituted on February 21, 2019 under the chairmanship of Bhiku Ramji Idate.**
- **Also, a committee has been set up by the NITI Aayog to complete the process of identification of the denotified, nomadic and semi-nomadic communities (DNCs).**
- Ethnographic studies of DNCs are being conducted by the Anthropological Survey of India, with a budget of Rs 2.26 crore sanctioned.