

# MATUA community

February 16, 2021

**In News:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched his Lok Sabha campaign from Thakurnagar, West Bengal. There he met with Binapani Devi, popularly known as 'Boro Ma' and matriarch of the Matua community.

## About MATUA community

- Matuas, originally from East Pakistan, are weaker section Hindus who migrated to India during the Partition and after the creation of Bangladesh. Many of them have been accorded Indian citizenship but a sizable section of the population has not.
- Matuas are Namasudras, a Scheduled Caste group.
- The Matua Mahasangha, a religious reforms movement and a sect, was formed by Harichand Thakur in East Bengal in the mid-1800s.
- Harichand's grandson P R Thakur established West Bengal's Thakurnagar as headquarters of the sect after 1947.
- Boro Ma belongs to the same family, which still wields influence on the community.

## Importance of community

- While no official count is available, community leaders put their population at 3 crore.
- They are a deciding factor in many Lok Sabha seats in West Bengal which assumes a lot of political significance.