

Pahari Ethnic Group

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In news– The National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST) has recently cleared the way for the inclusion of the ‘Pahari ethnic group’ in the Scheduled Tribes list of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

About Pahari ethnic group-

- The Pahari people is a cover term for a number of heterogeneous communities inhabiting the Indian regions of Jammu and Kashmir, Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh, and also parts of Pak occupying Kashmir.
- In Nepal, the Paharis constituted one of the largest indigenous ethnic group at about one-third of the Nepalese population through the 1990s.
- *Pahari* is an **ambiguous term used to describe a variety of Northern Indo-Aryan languages**, most of which are found in the lower Himalayas.
- They are divided into Eastern Pahari (which includes Nepali), Central Pahari, and Western Pahari, consisting of a number of different languages.
- The broadly named *Pahari* is among the regional languages listed in the sixth schedule of the Constitution of Jammu and Kashmir.

Note:

- The proposal green-lit by the commission also called for the inclusion of the “Paddari tribe”, “Koli” and “Gadda Brahman” communities to be included in the ST list of J&K.
- Paddari/Padri a dialect spoken in the Padar valley in Kishtwar district in the Indian territory of Jammu and Kashmir.
- It belongs to the Bhadarwahi group of dialects, and is classified as a member of the Western Pahari branch of

the Indo-Aryan languages.

- The Koli is an Indian caste found in Rajasthan, Himachal Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Karnataka, Odisha and Jammu and Kashmir states in India.
- The Koli caste forms the largest caste-cluster in Gujarat and Himachal Pradesh, comprising 24% and 30% of the total population in those states respectively.

How are tribes added to the list of Scheduled Tribes?

- The term 'Scheduled Tribes' first appeared in the Constitution of India. Article 366 (25) defined scheduled tribes as "such tribes or tribal communities or parts of or groups within such tribes or tribal communities as are deemed under Article 342 to be Scheduled Tribes for the purposes of this constitution".
- The President may, with respect to any State or Union territory, and where it is a state, after consultation with the Governor thereof by public notification, specify the tribes or tribal communities or parts of or groups within tribes or tribal communities which shall, for the purposes of this constitution, be deemed to be scheduled tribes in relation to that state or Union Territory, as the case may be.
- Parliament may by law include in or exclude from the list of Scheduled tribes specified in a notification issued under clause(1) any tribe or tribal community or part of or group within any tribe or tribal community, but save as aforesaid, a notification issued under the said clause shall not be varied by any subsequent notification.