The Tribal Development Report 2022

December 1, 2022

In news—A first-of-its-kind(since 1947)Tribal Development Report-2022 was released recently.

About the report-

- Th **report looks at the status of tribal communities at an all-India level** and in central India **with respect to livelihoods, agriculture, natural resources**, economy, migration, governance, human development, gender, health, education, art, and culture.
- It was **released by the Bharat Rural Livelihoods Foundation, an independent society set up under the Ministry of Rural Development.**
- **The first volume of the report,** published by Routledge and CRC Press, combines data from government sources, case studies, archival research, and interviews on crucial dimensions of tribal lives and livelihoods.
- **The first volume provides a broad overview of the contemporary macroeconomic situation of tribal communities,** with a focus on the challenges of agriculture, land, energy, and water use, especially groundwater management; and highlights the need to move into a new paradigm of agroecology-based, nature-positive farming and sustainable water use driven by local institutions.
- **The volume also looks at the neglect faced by tribal areas in developing infrastructure,** from irrigation to energy; shares insights on the invisibility of tribal voices in policy processes; and discusses tribal communities in the informal sector and in migration.
- **The second volume of the report, on the other hand, focuses on human development and governance**.

- **It discusses challenges faced by tribal communities** by focusing on the status of health, education, and nutrition; explores issues related to gender and development and the impact of the loss of traditional rights over land and forest resources; and **also presents a progress report on the implementation Panchayat (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act (or PESA), 1996, and the Forest Rights Act (FRA).**
- **It also looks at the state of Denotified Tribes in the country;** and presents an overview and remedial policy actions for upholding tribal arts, crafts, language and literature, and knowledge systems.

What does the report say?

- It said that **India's tribal communities form 8.6 per cent of the country's population** according to the 2011 Census. **But they are at the bottom of the country's development pyramid** even after 75 years of independence.
- The report stated that **indigenous communities of India have been pushed farther away from alluvial plains and fertile river basins into the harshest ecological regions of the country like hills, forests, and drylands.**
- **Of the 257 Scheduled Tribe districts, 230 (90 per cent) are either forested or hilly or dry**. But they account for 80 per cent of India's tribal population.
- Adivasi sub-districts belong to a larger contiguous backward region or Adivasi belt, which goes beyond the frozen administrative categories of state, district and sub-district.
- In fact, mapping of predominantly Adivasi concentrated sub-districts suggests a continuum of pockets of underdevelopment that are connected to one another and to the larger development processes around them.
- It further stated that during British colonial rule, the bond between Adivasis and their relation of symbiosis

with their immediate environment was ruptured.
- After the enactment of the Forest Conservation Act in 1980, the conflict came to be seen as between environmental protection and the needs of local Adivasi communities, driving a wedge between people and forests.
- It was in the National Forest Policy of 1988 that domestic requirements of local people were explicitly recognised for the very first time.
- The Policy emphasised safeguarding their customary rights and closely associating Adivasis in the protection of forests. But the movement towards a people-oriented perspective has not been matched by reality on the ground.

Note: The BRLF was set up the Union Cabinet September 3, 2013 as an independent society under the Union Ministry of Rural Development to scale up civil society action in partnership with central and state governments.