

Tribes in India – SSC Notes

1. Definition of Tribes

- **Tribe / Adivasi:** Indigenous groups living in forests, hills, and remote areas, often preserving distinct culture, language, and customs.
- **Characteristics:**
 - Small population
 - Distinct language & culture
 - Dependence on forests & natural resources
 - Usually live in remote or hilly regions

2. Classification of Tribes in India

A. Based on Location

1. **Himalayan Tribes** → Ladakh, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand
 - Examples: Ladakhi, Bhotia, Gujjar
 - Occupation: Agriculture, animal husbandry
2. **Indo-Gangetic Plains Tribes** → Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal
 - Examples: Santhal, Oraon, Munda
 - Occupation: Farming, forest produce
3. **Central India / Plateau Tribes** → Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand
 - Examples: Gond, Baiga, Bhil
 - Occupation: Agriculture, hunting, forest produce
4. **South Indian Tribes** → Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka
 - Examples: Toda, Kota, Irula
 - Occupation: Agriculture, pastoralism
5. **North-Eastern Tribes** → Assam, Nagaland, Mizoram, Arunachal Pradesh
 - Examples: Naga, Mizo, Khasi, Garo, Apatani
 - Occupation: Shifting cultivation, handicrafts

B. Based on Socio-Economic Status

- **Scheduled Tribes (STs)** → Recognized in Constitution → Special benefits, reservations
- **Primitive Tribes / Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs)** → Isolated, small population, low literacy
 - Examples: Sentinelese, Birhor, Jarawa, Shompens

3. Distribution of Tribes in India

Region	Major Tribes	States
North-East	Naga, Mizo, Khasi, Garo	Nagaland, Mizoram, Meghalaya
Central India	Gond, Baiga, Bhil	MP, Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Maharashtra
Western India	Bhil, Warli	Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra

Southern India	Toda, Kota, Irula, Kadar	Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka
Himalayan Region	Bhotia, Lepcha, Gujjar	Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Uttarakhand

4. Important SSC Points – Tribes

- Total ST population → ~8.6% of India (Census 2011)
- States with highest ST population → Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra, Odisha
- PVTGs → Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups → Isolated, primitive → e.g., Jarawa, Sentinalese, Birhor, Shompens
- Tribal economy → Agriculture, hunting, forest produce, handicrafts
- Cultural traits → Distinct language, religion, festivals, music & dance

5. Constitutional Provisions for Tribes

- Articles 15 & 46 → Protection & promotion of STs
- Scheduled Tribes List → Official recognition for reservations
- Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act (PESA), 1996 → Tribal self-governance
- Fifth & Sixth Schedule → Administration of tribal areas

