

Birhor Tribe Joins Movement Against Child Marriage | Jharkhand | 17 Dec 2024

Why in News?

Recently, people belonging to <u>the Birhor tribe</u>, a <u>particularly vulnerable tribal group</u> in Jharkhand, have joined a movement against <u>child marriage</u> for the first time.

Key Points

- Birhor Community:
 - The **Birhor people** are a <u>semi-nomadic tribal community</u>, heavily forestdependent, and economically and socially marginalized.
 - For the first time, hundreds of Birhor community members in Jharkhand's Giridih district joined a movement against child marriage, a rampant practice within their community.
- Awareness on Child Marriage Consequences:
 - The **Just Rights for Children Alliance (JRC)** highlighted that the event marked the first awareness drive where the community was informed about the legalities and consequences of child marriage.
 - Youth, children, women, and elders gathered under the glow of candles, taking a collective pledge to end child marriage and to report any such cases.
- Support for Government Campaign:
 - The marches were organized by Banvasi Vikas Ashram as part of the <u>'Bal Vivah Mukt</u> <u>Bharat' campaign</u>, launched by the <u>Union Ministry of Women and Child</u> <u>Development</u>.
 - Banvasi Vikas Ashram is one of 250 partner <u>Non-governmental Organizations</u> (NGOs) under the JRC alliance.
 - The **ill effects of child marriage on children's health, education, and overall wellbeing were discussed** to make the Birhor tribe aware of the social evil.
 - JRC claimed to have stopped over 7,000 child marriages in Jharkhand between April and December 2024 through events in blocks, villages, and schools across all 24 districts.
- High-Prevalence Districts:
 - Jamtara, Deoghar, Godda, Giridih, Koderma, and Dumka were identified as districts with a higher prevalence of child marriage cases.

Birhor Tribe

- Physical appearance: They are short, with long heads, wavy hair, and broad noses.
- Language: Their language is similar to Santali, Mundari, and Ho.
- Religion: They practice a combination of animism and Hinduism. The Sun God is their supreme deity, along with Lugu Buru and Budhimai.
- Economy: The Birhor have a "primitive subsistence economy" based on hunting and gathering, but some have settled into agriculture. They make ropes from vine fibers to sell to nearby agricultural people.
- Socioeconomic status: The Birhor are divided into two groups based on their socioeconomic status: the wandering Uthlus and the settled Janghis.



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