



NCST Survey on Tribal Displacement

Why in News?

[The National Commission for Scheduled Tribes \(NCST\)](#) has directed the governments of **Telangana, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, and Odisha** to conduct **surveys to identify the exact number of tribal people displaced** from **Chhattisgarh** due to **Maoist violence** and now living in difficult conditions in neighboring states.

Key Points

- **Identification of Displaced Tribal People:**
 - The panel emphasized the need to **determine the exact number and locations of displaced tribal people** in Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, and Maharashtra to plan the next course of action effectively.
- **Coordination for Survey and Data Compilation:**
 - The NCST directed the Chhattisgarh government to **appoint a nodal officer to coordinate with the governments of Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, and Maharashtra** for conducting the surveys.
 - After collecting data from these states, the **Chhattisgarh government must compile a consolidated report and submit it to the NCST** for further action.
- **Petition Highlighting the Issue:**
 - The commission received a **petition in March 2022**, stating that members of the **Gottikoya community**, who fled Chhattisgarh in 2005 due to violence between Maoist guerrillas and **Indian security forces**, are facing severe hardships in their new locations.
- **Estimated Number of Displaced Tribals:**
 - Tribal rights activists **estimate that around 50,000 tribals were displaced** from Chhattisgarh due to **left-wing extremism**.
 - They are **currently residing in 248 settlements in the forests** of Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, and Maharashtra.
- **Land Reclamation and Displacement Concerns:**
 - Reports indicate that the Telangana government has reclaimed land from **internally displaced people (IDPs)** in at least 75 settlements, endangering their livelihoods and making them more vulnerable.
 - The commission, citing the petition, noted allegations that forest department officials demolished IDPs' homes and destroyed their crops.

National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST)

- **About:**
 - NCST was set up in 2004 **by amending Article 338** and by inserting a **new article 338A** in the **Constitution** through the **89th Constitution Amendment Act, 2003**. Hence, it is a **constitutional body**.
 - By this amendment, the erstwhile National Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes was **replaced by two separate Commissions namely:**
 - the **National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC)**, and the **National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST)**
- **Objective:**

- Article 338A inter-alia gives powers to the NCST to oversee the implementation of various safeguards provided to **Scheduled Tribes (STs)** under the Constitution or under any other law for time being in force or under any other order to the Government and to evaluate the working of such safeguards.
- **Composition:**
 - It consists of a Chairperson, a Vice-Chairperson and 3 other Members who are appointed by the **President** by warrant under his hand and seal.
 - At least **one member should be a woman.**
 - The Chairperson, the Vice-Chairperson and the other Members **hold office for a term of 3 years.**
 - The Chairperson has been **given the rank of Union Cabinet Minister**, the Vice Chairperson has the **rank of a Minister of State** and other Members **have the rank of Secretary to the Government of India.**
 - The **members are not eligible for appointments for more than two terms.**

Gotti Koya Tribe

- **About:**
 - Gotti Koya are one of the few **multi-racial and multi-lingual tribal communities** in India.
 - They live in the forests, plains, and valleys on **both sides of the Godavari River**, in the states of Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, **Chhattisgarh**, and Odisha.
 - They are said to have migrated to central India from their original home in **Bastar, northern India.**
- **Language:**
 - The Koya language, also called **Koyi, is a Dravidian language.** It is closely **related to Gondi** and has been strongly **influenced by Telugu.**
 - Most Koyas speak either Gondi or Telugu, in addition to Koyi.
- **Occupation:**
 - **Traditionally**, they were **pastoralists and shifting cultivators**, but now-a-days, they have **taken to settled cultivation** supplemented by **animal husbandry and seasonal forest collections.**
 - They grow Jowar, Ragi, Bajra, and other millets.
- **Society and Culture:**
 - All Gotti Koya belong to one of **five subdivisions called gotrams. Every Gotti Koya is born into a clan**, and he cannot leave it.
 - They have a **patrilineal and patrilocal family.** The family is called "Kutum". The nuclear family is the predominant type.
 - **Monogamy** is prevalent among the Koyas.
 - They practice their **own ethnic religion**, but also worship a number of **Hindu gods and goddesses.**
 - **Many Gotti Koya deities are female**, the most important being the "mother earth."
 - They **maintain community funds and grain banks at the village level** to help the needy families and provide food security.
 - They either bury or **cremate the dead.** They erect menhirs in memory of the dead.
 - Their main **festivals are Vijji Pandum** (seeds charming festival) and **KondalaKolupu** (festival to appease Hill deities).
 - They perform a robust, **colourful dance called Permakok (Bison horn dance)** during festivals and marriage ceremonies.