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JUNE 2025

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Mahua Tree

Why in News?

The **Mahua tree** (*Madhuca longifolia*), deeply interwoven with the life of <u>tribal communities</u> in Central India, is gaining attention for its socio-economic and ecological significance amid efforts to document traditional knowledge and conserve native flora.

It is commonly found in West Bengal, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Bihar, parts of Northern and Central India, and also in Maharashtra, Gujarat, Telangana, Tamil Nadu, and Kerala.

Key Points

- About Mahua:
 - Botanical Identity:
 - The Mahua tree grows as a medium-sized deciduous species, reaching heights of 16–20 metres.
 - It thrives predominantly in the forested regions of Central India.
 - The tree blooms between March and April, producing creamy-white flowers that fall before dawn.
 - Its fruits mature and ripen from June to August, supporting seasonal harvesting.
 - Cultural and Religious Significance:
 - Tribal communities revere Mahua as the "Tree of Life", treating it as sacred.
 - They use every part of the tree—flowers, leaves, fruits, seeds, and even fruit shells in daily rituals and significant ceremonies, including funeral rites.
 - Nutritional and Economic Importance:
 - Tribals consume Mahua flowers raw or dried, valuing them for their high nutritional content.
 - These flowers are traditionally fermented into a local alcoholic beverage, which provides a crucial source of livelihood.
 - Ecological Role in Forest Ecosystems:
 - Mahua's night-blooming, fragrant flowers attract bats, promoting pollination and seed dispersal.
 - Sloth bears and other wildlife feed on its flowers, highlighting its role in the forest food chain.

- ★ Support for Tribal Livelihoods and Innovation:
 - The collection, drying, and processing of Mahua flowers form a major seasonal occupation, especially for tribal women.
- This activity ensures <u>food security</u>, income generation, and local employment.
 - Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED), in collaboration with the Foundation for Innovation and Technology Transfer (FIIT), has developed the Mahua Nutra Beverage to enhance the commercial value of Mahua products.
- This initiative aims to boost tribal income through innovation.
 - This is India's first scientific innovation involving Mahua, starting in Jharkhand, and reflects TRIFED's focus on value addition of <u>Minor Forest Produce (MFP)</u> through technology transfer and innovation.

Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED)

- TRIFED came into existence in **1987**. It is a national-level apex organisation functioning under the administrative control of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs.
- The objective of TRIFED is the socio-economic development of tribal people in the country by way of marketing development of the tribal products such as metal craft, tribal textiles, pottery, tribal paintings and pottery on which the tribals depend heavily for a major portion of their income.
- TRIFED acts as a facilitator and service provider for tribes to sell their product.
- The approach by TRIFED aims to empower tribal people with knowledge, tools and a pool of information so that they can undertake their operations in a more systematic and scientific manner.
- It also involves capacity building of the tribal people through sensitization, formation of <u>Self</u> <u>Help Groups (SHGs)</u> and imparting training to them for undertaking a particular activity.
- TRIFED has its Head Office located in New Delhi and has a network of 15 Regional Offices located at various places in the country.



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Revised Jharia Master Plan (JMP)

Why in News?

The <u>Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA)</u> approved the **Revised Jharia Master Plan (JMP)** for addressing issues related to fire, land subsidence, and rehabilitation of affected families at the <u>Jharia coalfield</u> <u>in Jharkhand.</u>

Key Points

About Revised Jharia Master Plan (JMP)

- **Total Financial Outlay:** The total financial outlay for the implementation of the revised plan is ₹5,940.47 crore.
 - The phase-wise approach will prioritize handling fire, subsidence, and the rehabilitation of families from the most vulnerable sites.
- Livelihood Grant and Support: The revised plan provides a livelihood grant of ₹1 lakh to both legal title holders (LTH) and non-legal title holders (non-LTH) families.
 - In addition, credit support of up to ₹3 lakh will be available through an institutional credit pipeline for both LTH and non-LTH families.
 - The plan focuses on generating sustainable livelihoods through targeted skill development programs and income-generating opportunities to ensure economic self-reliance for the rehabilitated families.
- Infrastructure Development: The resettlement sites will be developed with essential infrastructure and amenities, including roads, electricity, water supply, sewerage, schools, hospitals, skill development centers, community halls, and other common facilities.
- Implementation and Support: The implementation of these provisions will be carried out in accordance with the recommendations of the Committee for Implementation of the Revised Jharia Master Plan.
 - To support livelihood initiatives, the Jharia Alternative Livelihoods Rehabilitation Fund will be established, promoting livelihoodrelated activities.
 - Skill development programs will also be conducted in collaboration with Multi-Skill Development Institutes operating in the region.



About Jharia Coalfield

- **Historical Background:** The Jharia Coalfield, located in Jharkhand, India, has been **operational since 1916**, with coal mining dating back to this period.
 - It has faced persistent issues with <u>coal mine</u> <u>fires</u>, particularly due to <u>unscientific mining</u> <u>methods</u> used before nationalization.
- Fires in Jharia: Since the first fire was reported in 1916, Jharia has been plagued by underground coal fires, mainly caused by the unsystematic mining practices of earlier private operators.
 - These fires have severely impacted the environment and the local population, causing health hazards, <u>land degradation</u>, and subsidence.
- Nationalization and Government Intervention: After the nationalization of coal mines in India, experts, including a Polish team and Indian specialists, studied the fires in 1978.
 - The Government of India constituted a High-Power Committee in 1996 to address fire and subsidence issues in the region.
- Jharia Master Plan (2009): The Jharia Master Plan was approved by the Government of India in 2009 with an estimated investment of Rs. 7112.11 crores.
 - The plan aimed to manage coal fires, rehabilitate affected communities, and ensure safe coal

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extraction, spanning a ten-year period with a two-year pre-implementation phase.

- ★ Post expiration of the Master Plan in 2021, the Ministry of Coal continued to monitor and fund fire management and rehabilitation projects.
- ★ A committee in 2022 recommended further actions to extinguish fires, offer compensation, and provide essential infrastructure for resettled families.
- **Progress in Fire Management:** Through scientific measures and technology, the number of fire sites in Jharia was reduced from 77 to 27.
 - ★ The fire-affected area shrunk from 17.32 sq. km to 1.80 sq. km by implementing techniques such as surface sealing, trenching, and inert gas infusion.
- **Rehabilitation and Resettlement:** The plan focused on relocating families affected by fire and subsidence, with BCCL (Bharat Coking Coal Limited) constructing houses for the displaced population.
 - ★ Rehabilitation faced resistance from landowners, and difficulties arose due to the lack of a legal framework for land rights transfer, complicating resettlement efforts.
 - 🖈 Technological challenges in assessing underground fires and public skepticism about land acquisition for coal extraction added to the complexity.
- **Coal Extraction:** -
 - The region holds substantial coal reserves, with approximately 43 million tons of coal extracted as of June 2023.
 - Coal extraction remains a priority, with ongoing efforts to balance environmental and safety concerns with production goals.

Multitracking Projects Under PM Gati Shakti

Why in News?

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs approved two multitracking railway projects worth Rs 6,405 crore, covering seven districts across Jharkhand, Karnataka, and Andhra Pradesh.

Key Points

- Petails of Approved Projects:
 - ★ Koderma-Barkakana Doubling (133 km) -Jharkhand
 - The project passes through Jharkhand's key coal belt and provides the shortest, most efficient rail link between Patna and Ranchi.
 - Ballari–Chikjajur Doubling (185 km) Karnataka & Andhra Pradesh
 - The line covers Ballari and Chitradurga districts in Karnataka and Anantapur district in Andhra Pradesh.
 - These projects are part of the PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan, which enables integrated, multi-modal connectivity through better planning.

Operational and Economic Benefits:

- ★ The increased line capacity will boost train mobility, reduce congestion, and improve service reliability.
- These routes play a vital role in transporting key commodities like coal, iron ore, steel, cement, fertilizers, agricultural goods, and petroleum products.
- The capacity upgrade is expected to generate additional freight traffic of 49 MTPA (Million Tonnes Per Annum).
- **Environmental and Sustainability Gains:** -
 - ★ The railway upgrades will help reduce oil imports by 52 crore litres, cutting CO₂ emissions by 264 crore kg, equivalent to planting 11 crore trees.
 - ★ The shift to rail a cleaner, energy-efficient mode of transport - supports India's climate goals and helps lower the country's logistics cost.
- About Jharkhand Coal Belt:
 - ★ Jharkhand has large deposits of minerals.
 - The region comprising seven districts Bokaro, Chatra, Dhanbad, Giridih, Hazaribagh, Koderma and Ramgarh is also known as the state's coal belt.
 - 40% of the total minerals of the country are available in the state.



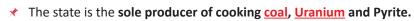
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★ It ranks first in the production of coal, mica, Kyanite and copper in India.

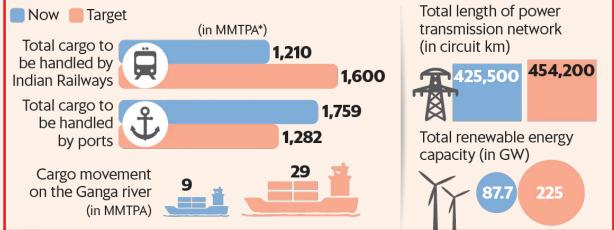
PM GatiShakti National Master Plan

- The PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan, launched in October 2021 is a transformative Rs. 100 lakh crore initiative aimed at revolutionising India's infrastructure over the next five years.
- It has been developed as a Digital Master Planning tool by BISAG-N (Bhaskaracharya National Institute for Space Applications and Geoinformatics).
 - ✓ It has been prepared in a dynamic <u>Geographic Information System (GIS)</u> platform wherein data on specific action plans of all the Ministries/Departments have been incorporated within a comprehensive database.
- The plan seeks to accelerate project completion, reduce timelines, and enhance India's global competitiveness by breaking down inter-ministerial obstacles.
- The vision of PM GatiShakti is to create a world-class infrastructure that improves the ease of living, boosts economic growth and makes Indian businesses more competitive.

The master plan

The PM Gati Shakti aims to break inter-ministerial silos in infrastructure development. It will be achieved through integrated planning and coordinated implementation between different government departments.

Key targets by FY25



Birsa Munda Martyr's Day

Why in News?

On 9th June 2025, the Prime Minister paid tribute to Bhagwan Birsa Munda on the occasion of his Martyr's Day.

Key Points

- About Birsa Munda:
 - ★ <u>Birsa Munda</u> was a tribal leader, religious reformer, and freedom fighter who led a strong

resistance against British colonial policies in the Chotanagpur region.

- Also known as Dharti Abba (Father of the Earth), he is remembered for mobilising Adivasi communities around land rights, social reform, and spiritual unity.
- Early Life: Born on 15th November 1875 in Ulihatu (Khunti district, Jharkhand) to a poor Munda tribal sharecropper family, Birsa was initially named Daud Munda due to his father's temporary conversion to Christianity.

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MAJOR TRIBAL REVOLTS IN INDIA

TRIBE (REVOLT)	REGION	YEAR	LEADER/S
Ours.			
Pahariya	Rajmahal Hills	1778	Raja Jagannath
Chuar (Jungle Mahal Rebellion)	Jungle Mahal (b/w Chota Nagpur & Bengal plains)	1798	Durjan/Durjol Singh, Madhab Singl Raja Mohan Singh, Lachman Singh
Oraon and Munda (Tamar Revolt)	Tamar (Chhotanagpur)	1798; 1914-15	Bholanath Sahay/Singh (1798) Jatra Bhagat, Balram Bhagat (1914-15)
Ho and Munda	Singhbhum and Ranchi (Chhotanagpur region)	1820-37; 1890s	Raja of Parahat (Ho) Birsa Munda (1890s)
Ahom	Assam	1828-30	Gomdhar Konwar
Khasi	Hilly region b/w Jaintia and Garo hills	1830s	Nunklow ruler – Tirath Singh
Kol	Chhotanagpur (Ranchi, Singhbhum, Hazaribagh, Palamau)	1831	Buddho Bhagat
Santhals	Rajmahal Hills	1833; 1855-56	Sidhu Murmu and Kanhu Murmu
Khond	Orissa, Andhra Pradesh	1837-56	Chakra Bisnoi
Коуа	Eastern Godavari track (Andhra) Rampa (Andhra)	1879-80; 1886 1916; 22-24	Tomma Sora, Raja Anantayyar Alluri Sitarama Raju <mark>(Rampa revol</mark> t
Bhil	Western Ghats, Khandesh (MH), south Rajasthan	1817-19; 25; 31; 46 & 1913	Govind Guru (1913 Mangarh Massacre)
Gond	Adilabad (Telangana)	1940	Komrum Bheem



- Education: Educated at the German Mission School, Birsa was initially influenced by Christian teachings but rejected them due to cultural alienation.
 - He was inspired by Vaishnavism, he founded the Birsait religion and was revered as Bhagwan by his followers.
- Beliefs and Teachings: He preached monotheism through the worship of Singhbonga (sun god), denounced alcoholism, black magic, superstitions, and forced labour

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(beth begari), and promoted hygiene, spiritual unity, pride in tribal identity, and community land ownership.

- Resistance Against British Rule: British land revenue policies dismantled the traditional <u>Khunt Katti land system (collective land</u> ownership within a clan), empowering <u>zamindars</u> and thikadars who exploited tribal peasants.
 - Birsa mobilised tribal masses against these injustices and campaigned to reclaim their rights.

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- The Ulgulan Movement (1895–1900): In 1895, Birsa Munda was arrested for rioting and jailed for 2 years; after his release in 1897, he resumed mobilising support across villages for a tribal-led self-rule movement.
 - In 1899, he launched the Ulgulan (The Great Tumult) movement, which included guerrilla warfare tactics to resist British authority and promote the establishment of a self-governed tribal state known as "Birsa Raj"
- Aftermath and Legacy: He was captured in February 1900 and died in British custody on 9th June 1900 at the young age of 25, under mysterious circumstances, officially attributed to cholera.
 - His movement led to the Chotanagpur Tenancy Act (1908), which recognised tribal land rights (Khuntkatti), banned land transfer to non-tribals, and abolished beth begari (forced labour).
 - Since 2021, 15th November is observed as Janjatiya Gaurav Divas (Tribal Pride Day).

Key Initiatives Related to Tribal Communities

- Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan is an umbrella initiative that targets integrated development across 63,000 Scheduled Tribemajority villages.
- PM-JANMAN was initiated in 2023 to support Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) with targeted schemes, including healthcare, financial inclusion, and community support.
- Pradhan Mantri Adi Adarsh Gram Yojana (PMAAGY) aims to provide basic infrastructure in villages with a significant tribal population.

Parasnath Hill

Why in News?

The Jharkhand High Court directed the state government to enforce a pre-existing ban on the sale and consumption of meat, alcohol, and intoxicants on Parasnath Hill, a site sacred to both Jains and the Santal Adivasi community.

Key Points

- Significance of Parasnath Hill: It is known as Parasnath to Jains and Marang Buru (literally "the Great Mountain") to Santals.
 - For Jains: It is the site where 20 of 24 tirthankaras including Parshvanatha, attained nirvana, many Jain temples and dhams are situated on the hill.
 - For Santals: Marang Buru is the supreme animist deity and seat of justice. The Jug Jaher Than (sacred grove) on the hill is the most sacred dhorom garh (religious site) of the Santals.
 - Lo Bir Baisi, the traditional Santal tribal council, convenes at the base of the hill to resolve inter-village disputes.
 - The Santal Hul of 1855, led by Sidhu and Kanhu Murmu, was a major tribal uprising launched from Marang Buru.
- Parasnath Hill Dispute: A major flashpoint is the Sendra festival, a traditional ritual hunt held by the Santals on the hill.
 - This practice, a rite of passage for Santal men, starkly contrasts with Jain values of nonviolence and vegetarianism, leading to a legal battle between the Santals and the Jains.
- Santals: The Santal tribe, one of India's largest indigenous communities, primarily resides in Jharkhand, West Bengal, Bihar, Odisha, and Assam.
 - They speak Santali, a constitutionally recognized language (Eighth Schedule) with its own script Olchiki, created by Pandit Raghunath Murmu.
 - Dance (enej) and music (sereng) remain core to their cultural expression during festivals and social gatherings.

Jharkhand Demands Increased Tax Devolution for Development Needs

Why in News?

The Jharkhand government has urged the <u>Sixteenth</u> <u>Finance Commission</u> to increase the state's share in central tax devolution from the current 41% to 50%, citing its economic contributions and unique developmental needs.

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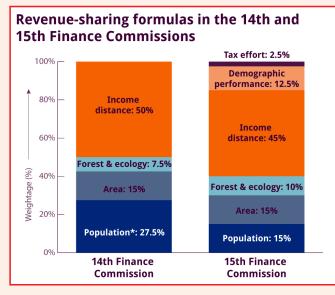


Key Points

- Higher Tax Devolution for Developmental Needs: Jharkhand, contributing significantly through mining and bearing its environmental and social costs, stressed the need for increased financial support to improve key sectors like agriculture, health, education, and livelihoods.
 - The state highlighted its large farmingdependent population and potential for agricultural growth, calling for flexible fund usage to address local needs effectively.
- Issues Related to Mining Activities: The state emphasized planned land reclamation, proposing that mined land be returned after operations end. It also seeks the release of ₹1.40 lakh crore owed by mining companies operating in the region.
- State Budget and Welfare Initiatives: Jharkhand's ₹1.45 lakh crore budget allocates ₹62,844 crore for social welfare targeting the poor, women, and vulnerable groups. ₹13,363 crore is dedicated to women's financial support schemes, and ₹5,000 crore for free electricity to eligible residents.

16th Finance Commission

- The <u>16th Finance Commission</u>, established under <u>Article 280</u> of the Indian Constitution, will cover the fiveyear period starting 1st April 2026.
- It is chaired by Dr. Arvind Panagariya, with members Ajay Narayan Jha, Annie George Mathew, Manoj Panda, and Soumya Kanti Ghosh (part-time).
 - ★ Ritvik Ranjan Pandey serves as Secretary.
- Role and Terms of Reference: The Finance Commission is a <u>constitutional body</u> formed every five years to maintain fiscal federalism and recommend:
 - ★ **<u>Tax revenue distribution</u>** between the Union and the States.
 - ★ Principles for grants-in-aid to revenue-deficient States.
 - Support for local bodies (<u>Panchayats</u> and <u>Municipalities</u>).
 - Review of disaster management financing under the <u>Disaster Management Act, 2005</u>.
 - Measures to strengthen the <u>Consolidated Fund</u> of States.



• Importance:

- ★ Ensures equitable resource allocation to address regional disparities.
- ★ Supports grassroots governance and local development.
- Advises on **fiscal discipline**, expenditure efficiency, and public finance reforms.

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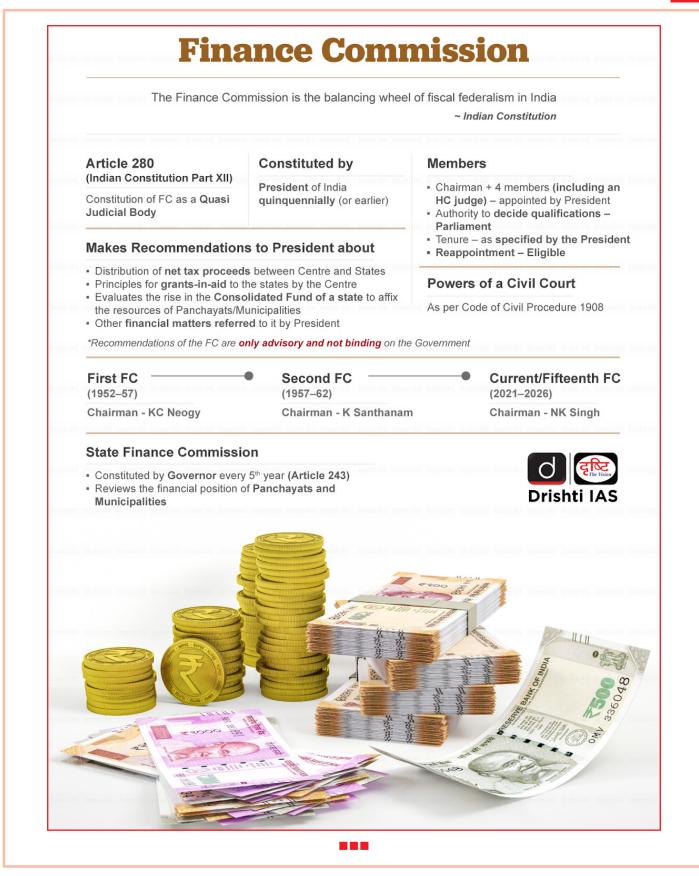


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Key Points	Details

Summary

Key Points	Details

Summary