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Important Facts for Prelims (31st July 2018)

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Parkinson's disease

- Parkinson's disease is a chronic, degenerative neurological disorder that affects the body's motor system, often causing shaking and other difficulties in movement. Worldwide, about 10 million people have the illness.
- A research team in Japan has announced their plan to conduct the first human trial to treat Parkinson's disease by injecting stem cells into brains. The trial is a follow up to successful trials on monkeys.
- The primates with Parkinson's symptoms regained significant mobility after iPS cells were inserted into their brains.
- The human trial will include plans to inject five million induced Pluripotent Stem (iPS) cells, which have the potential to develop into any cell in the body, into a patient's brain.

NOTE: Induced Pluripotent Stem (iPS) cells

- Induced pluripotent stem cells (iPSCs) are pluripotent stem cells, i.e., capable of becoming any cell in the human body or behave like an embryonic stem cell.
- They are generated from adult cells by reprogramming them.
- iPSCs can self-renew and can differentiate into all cell types of the body except for cells in extra-embryonic tissues such as the placenta.
- This capability enables the development of an unlimited source of any type of human cell needed for therapeutic purposes.

Dhangar: A Nomadic Tribe

- The Leaders of the Dhangars community claim Dhangars in Maharashtra are the same as those who are called "Dhangad" elsewhere in the country and are listed as a Scheduled Tribe.

- Dhangars are currently on the list of Vimukta Jati and Nomadic Tribes (VJNT) in Maharashtra. However, they have been demanding Scheduled Tribe (ST) status for the past several decades.
- The Dhangars, a 'Nomadic Tribe, is a shepherd community who live mostly in Western Maharashtra and Marathwada and make up about 9% of Maharashtra's population.