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Educational Complexes for Tribal Students: Odisha

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Why in News

Recently, the Government of Odisha has announced the establishment of **three mega educational complexes exclusively for tribal students**, where both academic and sporting skills will be harnessed.

Key Points

- **Establishment:**
 - The complexes will be established in **tribal-dominated districts** such as **Keonjhar, Sundargarh and Mayurbhanj**.
Santal and Bhuyan are two dominant tribal groups living in these districts.
 - Each complex will house **3,000 tribal students**, which is a unique initiative in the field of **tribal education**.
 - These complexes will have state of the art facilities to improve educational and sporting skills of tribal students from **Standard I to XII**.
State-of-the-art (cutting edge or leading edge) refers to the **highest level of general development**, as of a device, technique, or scientific field achieved at a particular time.
- **Funding:**

Funds required for mega complexes will be sourced from **Odisha Mineral Bearing Areas Development Corporation (OMBADC)**, which was formed for focused development of **mineral-rich districts**. Incidentally, most mineral-rich districts are tribal-dominated.

- **Tribal Population in Odisha:**

- According to the 2011 Census, tribal people constitute **8.6%** of the nation's total population i.e. over 104 million people.
 - A **tribe** has been defined as a **group of indigenous people** having a common name, language and territory tied by strong kinship bonds, having distinct customs, rituals and beliefs etc.
 - **The President** under **Article 342** is empowered to declare communities as scheduled tribes, while **Parliament** by law can amend the list.
- **Odisha's tribal population** constitutes **9.17%** of the country's tribal population.
- In Odisha, the tribal population is **22.85%** of the state's total population.
 - In terms of **percentage tribal population**, it occupies the **third position** in India.
 - The First and Second are **Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra** respectively.
- Similarly, of India's total 75 **particularly vulnerable tribal groups**, 13 reside in Odisha.
- With 62 tribal communities, Odisha has the most diverse tribes in India.
 - Keonjhar, where tribes such as Sounti, Ho, Juang, Kharwar, Mahali, Oraon Kolha and Kora reside is the most mined district of the State.
 - **Keonjhar** district contains **more than 70%** of the iron ore reserves of Odisha.

Educational Schemes for Tribals

- **Eklavya Model School: Residential School** based on Navodaya Model to be opened in each tribal block by 2022.
- **Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowship Scheme (RGNF):** RGNF was introduced in the year 2005-2006 with the objective to encourage the students belonging to the ST community to pursue higher education.
- **Vocational Training Center in Tribal Areas:** The aim of this scheme is to develop the skill of ST students depending on their qualification and present market trends.
- **National Overseas Scholarship Scheme:** The National Overseas Scholarship Scheme provides financial assistance to 20 students selected for pursuing higher studies abroad for PhD and postdoctoral studies.
- Pre and Post Matric Scholarship Schemes.

Way Forward

- There is a need to give special focus to the education of tribal populations by the **Ministry of Tribal Affairs.**
- Awareness Campaigns like street drama, camps counselling session to bring attitudinal change in parents.
- Emphasis should be given to **career or job** oriented courses.
- Teachers should be locally recruited who understand and respect tribal culture and practices and most importantly are acquainted with the local language.
- **The Kothari Commission** stressed to pay special attention to the education of ST.
- **The XaXa Committee recommended** a greater focus on removing gender disparity in education.

Source: TH