



# Tharu and Surjapuri Languages on the Verge of Extinction in Bihar

## Why in News?

On June 12, 2022, Bijoy Kumar Chaudhary, executive director of Bihar Heritage Development Society (BHDS), informed that two dialects spoken in Bihar - Tharu and Surjapuri- are facing a crisis of extinction.

## Key Points

- Bijoy Kumar Chaudhary said that the BHDS has come to this conclusion after going to the area and conducting a thorough and detailed investigation. He said the Tharu language is on the verge of extinction, while variations are being seen in Surjapuri.
- Experts have expressed apprehension that if steps are not taken to revive them, these two languages will merge into Bhojpuri, Maithili, Hindi and Bangla.
- The Tharu language is made up of a combination of Bhojpuri and Maithili and is spoken by the Tharu community mainly in the Western and East Champaran districts. Surjapuri language is made up of a combination of Bangla, Maithili and Hindi and its speakers live mainly in Kishanganj, Katihar, Purnea and Araria districts of the state. This language is also known as 'Kishanganjia'.
- The BHDS, functioning as a branch of the Art, Culture and Youth Department of the State Government, works for the conservation and promotion of the tangible and intangible heritage of Bihar.
- As a community, the Tharu people live in the foothills of the Himalayas located in Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Bihar and in the southern forest areas of Nepal. A large proportion of Surjapuri language speakers live in Jhapa district of Nepal, adjoining Thakurganj block of Purnea district. As per the 2011 census, the total number of Surjapuri language speakers in Bihar is 18,57,930.

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