



PESA Act Implemented in Chhattisgarh

Why in News?

- On August 9, 2022, Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel, while addressing the World Tribal Day program, said that a rule has been made in the state regarding the PESA (Panchayat Extension of Schedule Area) Act, which has also been published in the Gazette on August 8.

Key Points

- Significantly, on July 7, 2022, in the cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel, the draft of the PESA law was approved. With its publication in the Gazette on August 8, 2022, it has come into force in the state.
- The Chief Minister said that the PESA Act was already in place, but due to non-formulation of its rules, the tribals were not getting its benefits, now the tribals of the state would be able to take their own decisions regarding their water, forest and land.
- With the implementation of PESA Act, the power of Gram Sabha will increase. Under the PESA Act, 50 percent of the members of the Gram Sabha will be from the tribal community. Out of this, 25 percent will be women members. They will also have the right to take decisions in the development of villages and to settle mutual disputes.
- The Chief Minister said that after the formation of his government, a public holiday was declared on World Tribal Day, tribals were given forest rights pattas, under which five lakh pattas have been given under forest rights.
- It is noteworthy that the Panchayat (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996 or PESA was enacted by the Center to ensure self-government through Gram Sabhas for the people living in the Scheduled Areas. It legally recognizes the right of tribal communities, residents of scheduled areas to govern themselves through their own systems of self-government, and recognizes their traditional rights over natural resources.
- PESA empowers Gram Sabhas to play an important role in approving development plans and controlling all social sectors. This includes procedures and personnel implementing policies, controlling minor (non-timber) forest resources, minor water bodies and minor minerals, managing local markets, preventing land alienation, and controlling narcotics, among other things.