



## Tribes in Assam

### Why in News

The anti-[Citizenship \(Amendment\) Act](#) protests have brought demands of the **Adivasis and tea tribes** in Assam to the forefront.

- The Adivasis, comprising 106 sub-groups, are the largest of the six communities **demanding the Scheduled Tribes (ST) status**. The others are **Chutiya, Koch-Rajbongshi, Moran, Matak, and Tai-Ahom**.
  - The Adivasis comprise **18%** of Assam's population.
- The grant of ST status to these communities will make Assam a tribal-majority State.

### Tea Tribes

- The tea garden workers were originally brought by the British from Odisha, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Andhra Pradesh and West Bengal to work in the tea plantations of Assam during mid 19<sup>th</sup> century. Later they permanently settled in Assam.
- They are known as tea and ex-tea garden tribes, who are recognized as **Other Backward Classes (OBC)** by the Government.
- These people not only constitute a sizable chunk of the population in the State but also play a major role in tea production of the State (about 53% of the total tea production of the country).
- Economically, they are quite backward and literacy level among these communities is extremely low. Thus, they are demanding ST status in the state of Assam.

### Koch Rajbongshi

- Koch Rajbongshi is an ancient tribe originally from the ancient Koch kingdom. The word "Rajbongshi" literally means "royal community".
- The homelands of this ancient tribe include West Bengal, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya and various North-Eastern parts of India.
- They speak Rajbongshi/Rajbanshi language. This language is also spoken in Bangladesh and Nepal.
- The Rajbongshi was primarily **animist** (perceiving all things animated and alive.), but later on, they followed Hinduism/Sanatana (both Shaiva and Vaishnavite), A few sections of Rajbongshi people were also found to be followers of Christianity.

### Moran Community

- The Moran community is one of the aboriginal tribes of Assam.
- In the 13<sup>th</sup> century, they lived in the south eastern region of the Brahmaputra valley.
- They had their own independent kingdom before the advent of the Ahoms.
- It is possible that it is a tribal word that means a group of people like, Mising, Mulung, Mung tai, etc.
- In the early 17<sup>th</sup> century, Aniruddhadeva converted them to Vaishnavism and thus brought about the regeneration of their society and culture.

[Source:TH](#)

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