



Manki-Munda System and Ho Tribe

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Why in News?

Adivasis from the **Ho tribe in Jharkhand's Kolhan region** protested against alleged **administrative interference in the Manki-Munda system**, with tensions driven by vacant posts, hereditary inefficiencies, and calls for reforms.

What is the Manki-Munda System?

- **Manki-Munda System: It is a centuries-old self-governance framework of the Ho adivasi community.**
 - Each village is led by a hereditary Munda, responsible for resolving local disputes, while a group of 8–15 villages, called a pidh, is overseen by a Manki, handling cases unresolved at the village level.
 - The system is decentralized and purely socio-political, with no role in revenue collection, land management, or taxation.
- **British Intervention: Post-Battle of Plassey (1757) and Buxar (1764)**, East India Company gained diwani rights, introducing taxation.
 - **Permanent Settlement Act (1793)** forced zamindars to extract land revenue, seizing Ho lands, triggering Ho (1821–22) and Kol (1831) revolts.
 - To manage the region, the British co-opted the Manki-Munda system instead of suppressing it.
 - **Captain Thomas Wilkinson (1833)** codified the system in **Wilkinson's Rules**, formally recognising Mundas and Mankis and integrating them into colonial administration.
 - This introduced **private property and pattas**, transforming collective landholding to individual ownership and led to demographic changes with influx of **outsiders (dikkus)**.
- **Post-Independence: Kolhan largely retained Wilkinson's Rules, with courts recognizing them as valid customary practices until *Mora Ho vs State of Bihar (2000)*, in which the Patna High Court clarified they are customs, not formal law, but allowed continued practice.**
 - **2021 Jharkhand initiative (Nyay Manch)** proposed reform, but not enacted.

What are the Key Facts About Ho Tribe?

- **About:** The **Ho or Kolha** are an **Austroasiatic Munda ethnic group** of India, concentrated mainly in **Jharkhand's Kolhan region** and parts of **Odisha**, with smaller populations in West Bengal, Bihar, Bangladesh, and Nepal.
- **Language:** Speak **Ho language**, an **Austroasiatic tongue** related to Mundari.
 - It is written in **Devanagari, Latin, and Warang Citi (native script developed by Lako Bodra)**.
- **History:** Ho presence dates back around 4000–3500 years, with migrations from Southeast Asia.
 - They took part in the **Kol uprising (1831–33)** against exploitative **non-tribal landlords (dikkus)**. Also active in the **1857 revolt** under the Raja of Porahat. Traditionally resisted Mughal, Maratha, and British incursions.

- **Society & Culture:** Strong **self-governance** through the **Manki-Munda system** in Kolhan.
 - Rich festival traditions like **Mage Parab (creator god festival)**, **Baa Parab (festival of flowers)**, **Sohrai (agricultural festival)**, and **Jomnama Parab (harvest)**.
 - **Dance and music** central to culture; performances held in the **akhra (village ground)**.
- **Economy & Forests:** Over 80% of the Ho people are engaged in agriculture, and they were among the **first adivasi communities to adopt settled farming**, with some also involved in mining activities.
 - Strong dependence on **sal forests**. The community strongly resists replacement of sal with teak plantations.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Prelims:

Q.1 Consider the following pairs: **(2013)**

Tribe	State
1. Limboo (Limbu)	Sikkim
2. Karbi	Himachal Pradesh
3. Dongaria Kondh	Odisha
4. Bonda	Tamil Nadu

Which of the above pairs are correctly matched?

- (a) 1 and 3 only
- (b) 2 and 4 only
- (c) 1, 3 and 4 only
- (d) 1, 2, 3 and 4

Ans: (a)

Q.2 Consider the following statements about Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) in India: **(2019)**

PVTGs reside in 18 States and one Union Territory.

A stagnant or declining population is one of the criteria for determining PVTG status.

There are 95 PVTGs officially notified in the country so far.

Irular and Konda Reddi tribes are included in the list of PVTGs.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) 1, 2 and 3
- (b) 2, 3 and 4
- (c) 1, 2 and 4
- (d) 1, 3 and 4

Ans: (c)

Q3. Under the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act,

2006, who shall be the authority to initiate the process for determining the nature and extent of individual or community forest rights or both? **(2013)**

- (a) State Forest Department
- (b) District Collector/Deputy Commissioner
- (c) Tahsildar/Block Development Officer/Mandal Revenue Officer
- (d) Gram Sabha

Ans: (d)

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