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Q5(a)

Urbanization and tribal institutions

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2021 · Anthropology GS 2 · 10 marks · Social change and contemporary tribal societies

7.2 Social change and contemporary tribal societies: Impact of modern democratic institutions, development programmes and welfare measures on tribals and weaker sections.

Core demand of the question

- Write a note on urbanization and tribal institutions
- Keep the note to a 10-mark length of about 150 words

Revision summary

Urbanization sends tribal workers to mines and towns.

Clan marriage often continues at a distance.

Village council and sacred grove lose everyday force.

Urban hostels, churches, and ST associations replace some functions.

Tribe becomes a city identity as well as a village order.

Introduction

Urbanization pulls tribal households into towns, mines, and city margins. Tribal institutions-clan, council, grove, and bridewealth-do not vanish, but they are stretched and sometimes replaced.

Body**What moves**

- Wage work in Ranchi, Bhilai, Surat, and North-East hill towns relocates young adults while elders stay on the land.
- Clan exogamy and tribe endogamy continue through phone and return marriage, so kinship outlives the village street.
- **S. C. Roy's** village council and **Vidyarthi's** nature-man-spirit complex lose daily grip when the grove is far and the landlord is a contractor.

What appears

- Tribal associations, churches, and ST hostels become urban institutions, a parallel to caste sabhas.
- **PESA** and traditional councils weaken where the voter now lives in a municipal ward.
- Slum and peri-urban settlements mix several tribes, which dilutes a single parha but creates a **pan-Adivasi** politics.

Limit

- Urbanization is uneven. Many ST households remain rural. The note is about institutional strain, not about the end of tribe.

Flow diagram

Urban jobs -> Kinship at a distance
Urban jobs -> Council grove thin
Urban jobs -> Association church hostel

Conclusion

Urbanization relocates tribal people faster than it deletes kinship. Councils and groves thin; associations, churches, and ST politics thicken in town.

Facts & figures

Parha/council

Inter-village tribal forum that weakens when members live in municipal wards.

ST hostel

Urban residential institution that socialises students as a tribal category.

Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act (PESA)

Village-centred statute that urban migrants cannot easily use.

Pan-Adivasi

Town mix of tribes that produces a wider political identity than one clan council.

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