

### WHO WAS BIRSA MUNDA?



The Jharkhand Governor and Chief Minister recently paid tribute to tribal icon Birsa Munda on his death anniversary.

- He was a folk hero and a **tribal freedom fighter** who played a pivotal role in the Indian independence movement, particularly in the tribal regions of British India.
- He belonged to the Munda tribe in the **Chota Nagpur Plateau area**.
- He spearheaded an **Indian tribal mass movement** that arose in the **Bihar and Jharkhand** belts in the **early 19th century** under British colonisation.
- Munda rallied the tribals to fight **against the forceful land grabbing** carried out by the **British government**, which would turn the tribals into bonded labourers and force them to abject poverty.
- He influenced his people to realise the **importance of owning their land** and asserting their rights over it.
- Birsa **encouraged the tribe to stick to their traditions** and get back to their tribal roots.
- One of Birsa's notable contributions was the formation of the **Munda Rebellion**, also known as the **Ulgulan**, or the **Tamar Revolt**, in the **late 19th century**.
  - The rebellion was a response to the **oppressive policies of the British** administration, including the introduction of the **forest laws**, that restricted tribal access to their traditional lands, and the imposition of **exorbitant taxes**.
  - Birsa united various tribal communities under the banner of the Munda Raj and **led a series of guerrilla warfare campaigns** against the British forces.
  - Birsa Munda's leadership during the Munda Rebellion earned him the title of "**Bhagwan**" or "**Birsa Bhagwan**" among his followers.
- He often took **inspiration from Munda traditions, Christianity and Hinduism** to guide his followers in rituals and prayers.

- His struggle against exploitation and discrimination against tribals led to a big hit against the British government in the form of the **Chotanagpur Tenancy Act** being passed in 1908.
  - The act **restricted the passing on of land from the tribal people to non-tribals.**
- Birsa also played a crucial religious role among the Munda people.
  - He **founded the faith of Birsait**, a blend of animism and indigenous beliefs, which emphasized the worship of a single god.
  - He became their leader and was given the nickname, **‘Dharti Aba’** or the **father of the earth.**
- He died on June 9, 1900, at age 25.
- In recognition of his impact on the national movement, the **state of Jharkhand was created on his birth anniversary in 2000.**
  - November 15, the birth anniversary of Birsa Munda, was declared ‘Janjatiya Gaurav Divas’ by the Central Government in 2021.

## PRADHAN MANTRI AWAS YOJANA



The newly formed Cabinet has decided to further expand the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana and construct 3 crore additional rural and urban houses.

- Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) is a **credit-linked subsidy scheme** initiated to provide **affordable housing** to low and moderate-income residents across the country.
- The newly formed government has approved the proposal to provide **3 crore additional** rural and urban houses under PMAY.
- The scheme has **two components**: PMAY-U for the urban poor and PMAY-G and PMAY-R for the rural poor.

### PMAY-U (Urban)

- **Objective:** To provide housing for all in urban areas.

- **Beneficiaries:** Economically Weaker Section (EWS), Low-Income Group (LIG) and Middle-Income Group (MIG).
- **Subsidy Schemes:**
  - **Credit Linked Subsidy Scheme:** Offers interest subsidy on home loans for EWS, LIG, and MIG categories.
  - **In-Situ Slum Redevelopment:** Utilizes land as a resource to provide houses to eligible slum dwellers.
  - **Affordable Housing in Partnership:** Promotes partnerships with public and private sectors to provide affordable housing.
  - **Beneficiary-Led Construction:** Provides financial assistance to individuals to construct or enhance their own houses.

## PMA Y-G (Gramin)

- **Objective:** To provide a pucca house with basic amenities to all rural families who are homeless or living in kutcha or dilapidated houses.
- **Beneficiaries:** Identified using the **Socio-Economic and Caste Census (SECC) 2011**.
- **Features:**
  - **Financial Assistance:** 1.2 lakh in plain areas and Rs. 1.3 lakh in hilly, difficult and Integrated Action Plan (IAP) areas.
  - **Construction:** Houses are to be constructed by beneficiaries with technical assistance from the government.
  - **Convergence with other schemes:** Encourages convergence with other schemes like Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) for toilet construction, and MGNREGA for wage employment.

## RIGHTS OF JAILED MPS

In the recently concluded Lok Sabha elections, the victory of two candidates serving prison sentences on terror charges has raised questions about their ability to take oath and function as legislators.



## Can Jailed Leaders Function as MPs?

- **Legal framework:** Section 8(3) of the Representation of People Act, 1951 (RPA) disqualifies MPs if they are convicted of any offence and sentenced to imprisonment for not less than two years.
- **Constitutional right:** Despite being in prison, jailed leaders have the constitutional right to take oath as Members of Parliament.
- **Temporary bail:** Jailed leaders can seek temporary bail or custody to attend the oath-taking ceremony and perform other ancillary functions as MPs.

## Rights of MPs if Arrested

- **Oath-Taking:** Jailed leaders can take oath as MPs, but they must seek permission from authorities to be escorted to Parliament for the ceremony.
- **Inability to attend proceedings:** After taking the oath, they must inform the **Speaker** in writing about their inability to attend House proceedings.
- **Speaker's referral:** The Speaker will refer their requests to the **House Committee on Absence of Members**, which will make a recommendation on their absence.
- **Conviction and Disqualification:** If convicted and sentenced to a **minimum of two years** in prison, they will **immediately lose their seats** in the Lok Sabha.

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## PRADHAN MANTRI KISAN SAMMAN NIDHI (PM-KISAN) SCHEME

- The Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-Kisan) Yojana came into effect from **December 1, 2018**.
- Under the scheme, **income support of Rs 6000 per annum is provided to all eligible farmer families** across the country in three equal instalments of Rs 2,000 each every four months.
- The fund of Rs 2,000 is directly transferred to the bank accounts of the eligible farmers/farmer's family under the **Direct Benefit Transfer Mode**.
- **Nodal Ministry** - Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare



# CROSS & CLIMB ROHTAK



## Objective of PM-KISAN:

- To supplement the financial needs of all landholding farmers’ families in procuring various inputs to ensure proper crop health and appropriate yields, commensurate with the anticipated farm income as well as for domestic needs.

## Definition of Farmer’s Family:

- A landholder farmer’s family is defined as “**a family comprising of husband, wife and minor children**” who owns cultivable land as per land records of the concerned State/UT.
- The entire identification process of the family rests with the State/UT Governments.

## Pattern of Funding:

- It is a **Central Sector Scheme** with 100% funding from the Central Government.

Who is Eligible?	Who is Not Eligible for the Scheme?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Landholding farmers’ families with cultivable landholding in their names,</li> <li>Farmers from both the urban and rural areas,</li> <li>Small and Marginal farmers families.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Institutional landholder,</li> <li>Present or retired officers and employees of state/central government autonomous bodies,</li> <li>Beneficiaries with higher economic status are not eligible,</li> <li>Those who pay income tax,</li> <li>Farmer families holding constitutional posts,</li> <li>Professionals like doctors, engineers and lawyers,</li> <li>Retired pensioners with a monthly pension of over Rs 10,000.</li> </ul>

## WHY ARE BJP AND ALLIES VYING FOR THE POST OF SPEAKER OF LOK SABHA

The Speaker is chosen as the **Presiding Officer** of the Lok Sabha following the administration of the oath to new members by a **protem** or temporary Speaker.

## The Office of the Speaker of Lok Sabha:

- **About the office:** Article 93 of the Indian Constitution provides for the offices of the **Speaker and Deputy Speaker** who are to be elected “as soon as may be” after the commencement of the House.
- **Election and term of the Speaker:** S/he is elected by a **simple majority** in the House and the term ends with the dissolution of the House. S/he can also resign or can be removed from office before that.
- **Removal of the Speaker:** As per **Article 94** of the Constitution, a motion of no-confidence can be moved against the Speaker with notice of 14 days. Also, like any other member of the House, s/he can face disqualification.
- **Qualification of the Speaker:** There are no specific qualifications for becoming Speaker, which means **any member is entitled to be considered.**
- **How is the post of Speaker distinct from other members in the House?**
  - The Speaker is the Presiding Officer of the Lok Sabha and plays a crucial role in parliamentary democracy.
  - The post differs from other members in the following ways -
    - The placement of the Speaker’s chair in the House.
    - S/he has a **casting vote** and is in charge of the functioning of the House and plays a crucial constitutional role in dealing with disqualification of members.
    - The salary of the Speaker is drawn from the **Consolidated Fund of India** unlike for other MPs.

## What are the Powers of the Speaker of Lok Sabha?

- **Decides how the Lok Sabha is conducted:**
  - The conduct of government business is decided by the Speaker in consultation with the Leader of the House.
  - **Prior permission** of the Speaker is required for members to ask a question, or to discuss any matter.



- The Speaker has vast powers in ensuring that the Rules and Procedure for the functioning of the House are followed.
- **The Speaker has the power to expunge** (in full or in part) remarks that s/he may consider to be unparliamentary. Critical remarks against the ruling party may not be published if the Speaker decides to expunge them.
- When the treasury benches seem thin in the House, **the Speaker can disregard a request for division and push a Bill through by voice vote.**
- **No-Confidence Motion:**
  - One of the most important times when a Speaker's impartiality impacts the Opposition is when a motion of no-confidence is moved against the government.
  - **For example**, when the YSRCP and TDP gave notices for a motion of no-confidence in 2018, the then Speaker adjourned the House several times before admitting the motion and putting it to vote.
- **Casting vote:**
  - According to **Article 100** of the Constitution, the Chairman of Rajya Sabha or Speaker of Lok Sabha shall not vote in the first instance, but shall **exercise a casting vote in the case of any equality of votes.**
  - Conventionally, the Speaker votes in favour of the government.
- **Disqualification of members:**
  - **The Tenth Schedule or the anti-defection law**, introduced to the Constitution through the 52nd (Amendment) Act 1985, gives the Speaker of the House the power to disqualify legislators who 'defect' from a party.
  - **In the Kihoto Hollohan case (1992)**, the SC upheld the power vested in the Speaker and said that only the final order of the Speaker will be subject to **judicial review.**
  - In 2020, the Supreme Court had ruled that Speakers of Assemblies and Lok Sabha must decide **disqualification pleas within 3 months** except in extraordinary circumstances.

## AREAS OF CONCERN FOR THE NEW COALITION GOVERNMENT

- **Delimitation and North-South Divide**
  - One of the **most contentious issues is the pending delimitation exercise**, which aims to redraw the boundaries of parliamentary constituencies based on the latest population data.
  - **Northern states**, which have seen significant population growth, **stand to gain more parliamentary seats**, while southern states, which have implemented more effective population control measures, risk losing representation.
  - **Southern states**, which are generally more economically prosperous and opposition-dominated, **fear a loss of influence and resources**.
- **Fiscal Federalism and Resource Allocation**
  - The **existing model involves the redistribution of taxes** collected from wealthier states to poorer ones, primarily in the north.
  - **The BJP-dominated central government's policies are often perceived as favouring its strongholds in the north**, leading to accusations of political bias in resource allocation.
- **Centralisation vs. Regional Autonomy**
  - Since 2014, **the BJP's centralising policies have also been a source of contention**.
  - The abrogation of Article 370, which granted special autonomy to Jammu and Kashmir, is a prime example.
  - Similarly, **the push for "One nation, one election" seeks to synchronise state and national elections**, potentially undermining the autonomy of states to govern according to their unique political timelines and priorities.
  - **Such centralising tendencies raise concerns about the erosion of federal principles** and the concentration of power in the Prime Minister's Office (PMO).
- **The Challenge of Building Consensus**
  - **Building consensus on federal matters** in such a politically fragmented environment is **inherently challenging**.



- The **process of delimitation, fiscal redistribution, and policy formulation** requires a **delicate balance** of competing interests and priorities.
  - The **lack of a robust institutional framework for inter-governmental dialogue** exacerbates this challenge.
  - **Existing bodies like the Inter-State Council have not been effectively utilised** to foster cooperation and resolve disputes.
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## VEERANGANA DURGAVATI TIGER RESERVE:

- **Location:** It is spread across Sagar, Damoh, and Narsinghpur, districts of **Madhya Pradesh**.
- It is spread over an area of 2,339 square kilometres.
- It is the seventh tiger reserve in Madhya Pradesh.
- It will encompass areas within the **Nauradehi Wildlife Sanctuary and Durgavati Wildlife Sanctuary**.
- A green corridor linking Panna Tiger Reserve (PTR) with Durgavati will be developed for the natural movement of the tiger to the new reserve.

**Rivers:** Parts of the reserve fall under the **Narmada and Yamuna River basins**.

The **Singorgarh Fort** is located within the reserve.

**Vegetation:** Dry deciduous type

**Flora:** The chief floral elements include **Teak**, Saja, **Dhaora**, Ber, Amla etc.

**Fauna:** **Tiger, leopard**, wolf, jackal, Indian fox, striped hyena, Nilgai, Chinkara, Chital, Sambhar, Black Buck, Barking deer, Common Langur, Rhesus Macaque, etc.

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