



Understanding Marginalisation

Q1. Write a brief note on Adivasis.

Ans. Adivasis

- i. Adivasis – the term literally means ‘original inhabitants’ – are communities who lived, and often continue to live, in close association with forests. Around 8 per cent of India’s population is Adivasi and many of India’s most important mining and industrial centres are located in Adivasi areas – Jamshedpur, Rourkela, Bokaro and Bhilai among others.
- ii. Adivasis are not a homogeneous population: there are over 500 different Adivasi groups in India. A state like Orissa is home to more than 60 different tribal groups.
- iii. Adivasis practise a range of tribal religions that are different from Islam, Hinduism and Christianity. These often involve the worship of ancestors, village and nature spirits.
- iv. During the nineteenth century, substantial numbers of Adivasis converted to Christianity, which has emerged as a very important religion in modern Adivasi history.
- v. Adivasis have their own languages, which have often deeply influenced the formation of ‘mainstream’ Indian languages, like Bengali.