Society & Social Justice · GS - I

What are the two major legal initiatives by the State since Independence addressing discrimination against Scheduled Tribes(STs)?

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
2017	GS - I	Society & Social Justice

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Constitutional safeguards; affirmative action; protection from exploitation; prevention of atrocities; land rights; social justice

Model Answer

Introduction

Scheduled Tribes have historically faced social exclusion, land alienation, exploitation and limited access to public services. Independent India introduced constitutional and legislative safeguards to address these injustices.

Two Major Legal Initiatives

1. Constitutional Safeguards and Affirmative Action

- Articles 15(4) and 16(4) enable special provisions and reservation for disadvantaged groups, including Scheduled Tribes.
- Article 46 directs the State to promote their educational and economic interests and protect them from social injustice and exploitation.
- Political representation is provided through reserved seats under Articles 330 and 332.
- The Fifth and Sixth Schedules provide special administrative protections for tribal areas.

2. Legislative Protection Against Exploitation

- The **Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989** criminalises specified atrocities against STs and provides for special courts and relief measures.
- The **Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996 (PESA)** strengthens Gram Sabhas and local self-governance in Scheduled Areas.

Conclusion

Constitutional safeguards and protective legislation provide an essential framework for tribal justice. Effective implementation, legal awareness and protection of tribal land and cultural rights remain crucial.