Art & Culture · GS - I

Discuss the significance of tribal festivals such as Bastar Dussehra in preserving India's cultural diversity. How can traditional practices be protected while promoting inclusive and sustainable tourism?

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 20/10/2026	GS - I	Art & Culture

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Goddess Danteshwari, indigenous traditions, cultural diversity, community participation, oral heritage, Article 29, tribal identity, cultural preservation, responsible tourism, commercialisation, local livelihoods and sustainable development.

Model Answer

Introduction

India's cultural diversity is reflected in its regional and tribal festivals. Bastar Dussehra in Chhattisgarh is a distinctive celebration associated with Goddess Danteshwari and local indigenous traditions.

Cultural Significance

- **Distinctive traditions:** Its extended celebrations, chariot processions and rituals distinguish it from conventional Dussehra festivities.
- **Tribal identity:** Community participation and ancestral practices strengthen collective identity and intergenerational transmission of knowledge.
- **Cultural pluralism:** The festival illustrates how Hindu traditions and indigenous customs interact within India's diverse cultural landscape.
- **Constitutional protection:** Article 29(1) supports the conservation of distinct cultural traditions.

Challenges and Way Forward

Commercialisation, inadequate documentation and the loss of traditional knowledge can weaken cultural authenticity. Tourism should therefore be community-led, with local institutions and traditional custodians involved in decision-making.

Governments should support documentation, heritage education, local artisans and responsible tourism infrastructure. Visitors must respect community customs, religious practices and environmental limits.

Conclusion

Preserving Bastar Dussehra requires balancing cultural continuity with economic opportunity. Community ownership and sustainable tourism can protect this living heritage while supporting local livelihoods.

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