

Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups

Why in news?

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A recent Anthropological Survey of India (AnSI) publication has brought to the fore startling revelations about the **Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs)** in the country.

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What the finding has revealed?

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- The publication provides one of the most **detailed descriptions of PVTGs** with each of the tribes being discussed in separate chapters.

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- The findings revealed that, for the 75 PVTGs, base line surveys exists only for about 40 groups.

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- **Base line surveys** are done to precisely identify the PVTG families, their habitat and socio-economic status, so that development initiatives are implemented for these communities, based on the facts and figures.

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- It emphasizes State govts must urgently conduct such surveys to arrive at accurate demographic and socio-economic figures of the PVTGs.

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- Among the 75 listed PVTG's the highest number are found in Odisha (13), followed by Andhra Pradesh (12).

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- All the **4 tribal groups in Andamans, and 1 in Nicobar Islands**, are recognised as PVTGs.

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- The publication also points out that the PVTG list requires revising and refinement to avoid overlapping and repetition.

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- Regional and State-specific variations in welfare schemes for PVTGs has also been highlighted.

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- There is a **huge variation in the number of PVTGs** ranging from a few individuals as in case of Great Andamanese to about a little more than a thousand people as in the case of Toda of Nilgiris.
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- Although PVTGs are **slowly witnessing decadal increase in their population**, quite a few still face stagnation such as the **Birhor** in central India. Some are **declining like the Onge and Andamanese**.
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- Smallest population size among the PVTGs are the **Senteneles** (as per the last contact effort on 2005, groups of **32 and 13 persons** were sighted at different places).
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- The Great Andamanese (57 persons) and the Onge (107 persons in 2012 as per Andaman Adim Janjati Vikas Samiti) are also dwindling.
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- The **Saharia people of Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan** are the largest among the PVTGs with population more than 4 lakhs.
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- Literacy rate among the PVTGs has gone up significantly over the past from single digit to 30 to 40 % in many of the PVTGs.
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- However, as is the case with entire India, female literacy rate is still considerably lower compared to male counterpart.
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- There is a considerable **increase in the age of marriage** among PVTGs.
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- The incidence of girl child being married while still being a minor, among these tribes has been decreasing.
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Source: The Hindu

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