

Shompen Tribe

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About Shompen Tribe:

- They are one of the **most isolated tribes** on Earth.
- They are one of the **least studied Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs)** in India.
- They **reside in dense tropical rain forests of the Great Nicobar Island** of Andaman and Nicobar group of Islands. Around 95% of the island is covered in rainforest.
- The **Shompen habitat** is also an **important biological hotspot**, and there are two National Parks and one Biosphere Reserve, namely **Campbell Bay National Park, Galathea National Park, and Great Nicobar Biosphere Reserve**.
- **Population:** Though **according to the Census (2011)**, the **estimated population** of Shompen is **229**, the exact population of Shompen is unknown till today.
- **Most of them** remain in the forest and **have little or no contact with outsiders**.
- They are **semi-nomadic hunter-gatherers** and their main **sources of livelihood** are **hunting, gathering, fishing**, and a little bit of **horticultural activities** in a rudimentary form.
- They **live in small groups**, whose territories are identified by the rivers that criss-cross the rainforest.
- Being nomadic, they typically **set up forest camps** where they **live for a few weeks or months, before moving to another site**.

- They collect a wide variety of forest plants, but their **staple food is the pandanus fruit**, which **they call larop**.
 - Shompen **speak their own language**, which **has many dialects**. Members of one band do not understand the dialect of the other.
 - They are of **short to medium stature**, have a round or **nearly broad head shape**, narrow nose, a **broad facial profile**, and **distinctly exhibit Mongoloid features** such as light brown to yellow brown skin and oblique eye features.
 - Shompen **have nuclear families** comprising **husband, wife, and their unmarried children**.
 - A Shompen family is **controlled by** the **eldest male member**, who controls all activities of the women and kids.
 - **Monogamy is the general rule**, although polygamy is allowed too.
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Q1. What are Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs)?

PVTGs are a more vulnerable group among tribal groups in India. These groups have primitive traits, geographical isolation, low literacy, zero to negative population growth rate and backwardness. Moreover, they are largely dependent on hunting for food and a pre-agriculture level of technology. Currently, there are 2.8 million PVTGs belonging to 75 tribes across 22,544 villages in 220 districts across 18 states and Union Territories in India. According to the 2011 Census, Odisha has the largest population of PVTGs at 866,000. It is followed by Madhya Pradesh at 609,000 and Andhra Pradesh (including Telangana) at 539,000.

Source: [Nicobar project will not disturb or displace tribes: Environment Minister Bhupendra Yadav](#)

Source: <https://vajiramandravi.com/current-affairs/shompen-tribe/>

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