

Understanding PVTGs in India: Census Significance, Population, and Challenges

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Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) Latest News

- The Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA) has urged the Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India (RGI) to enumerate **particularly vulnerable tribal groups (PVTGs)** separately in the upcoming Census.
- The ministry requested that data on **households, individuals, and unique demographic, cultural, and socio-economic traits** of PVTGs be collected.
- This would enable more accurate planning and effective execution of **targeted welfare schemes**, including the **Pradhan Mantri Janjati Adivasi Nyay Maha Abhiyan (PM JANMAN)**.

Understanding Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs)

State / UT Name	PVTGs Name
Andhra Pradesh and Telangana	1. Bodo Gadaba 2. Bondo Poroja 3. Chenchu 4. Dongria Khond 5. Gutab Gadaba 6. Khond Poroja 7. Kolam 8. Kondareddis 9. Konda Savaras 10. Kutia Khond 11. Parengi Poroja 12. Thoti
Bihar and Jharkhand	13. Asurs 14. Birhor 15. Birjia 16. Hill Kharia 17. Konvas 18. Mal Paharia 19. Parhaliyas 20. Sautia Paharia 21. Saur
Jharkhand	Same as above
Gujarat	22. Kathotli 23. Kohvalia 24. Padhar 25. Siddi 26. Kolgha
Karnataka	27. Jenu Kuruba 28. Koraga
Kerala	29. Cholanaikayan (a section of Kattunaickans) 30. Kadar 31. Kattunayakan 32. Kurumbas 33. Koraga
Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh	34. Abujh Marias 35. Baigas 36. Bharias 37. Hill Korbas 38. Kamars 39. Saharias 40. Birhor
Chhattisgarh	Same as above
Maharashtra	41. Katkaria (Kathodia) 42. Kolam 43. Maria Gond
Manipur	44. Maram Nagas
Odisha	45. Birhor 46. Bondo 47. Didayi 48. Dongria-Khond 49. Juangs 50. Kharias 51. Kutia Kondh 52. Lanjia Sauris 53. Lodhas 54. Mankidias 55. Paudi Bhuyans 56. Soura 57. Chuktia Bhunjia
Rajasthan	58. Seharis
Tamil Nadu	59. Kattu Nayakans 60. Kotas 61. Kurumbas 62. Irulas 63. Paniyans 64. Todas
Tripura	65. Reangs
Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand	66. Buxas 67. Rajis
West Bengal	68. Birhor 69. Lodhas 70. Totos
Andaman & Nicobar Islands	71. Great Andamanese 72. Jarawas 73. Onges 74. Sentinelese 75. Shorn Pens

- PVTGs are a **sub-category of Scheduled Tribes (STs)** characterised by declining or stagnant populations, geographical isolation, pre-agrarian practices, economic backwardness, and low literacy levels.
- The category was created following the **Dhebar Commission** (1960–61), which highlighted disparities among tribal groups and noted that some were far more vulnerable than others.
- Initially, **52 groups were identified as PVTGs (then called Primitive Tribal Groups) during the Fifth Five-Year Plan** (1974–79).
- Later, in 2006, 23 more groups were added, bringing the total to 75 PVTGs across 18 states and the Andaman & Nicobar Islands.
- Experts have raised concerns about the criteria used, particularly the emphasis on geographical isolation.
- They suggested that the government should revisit and update inclusion parameters before conducting a fresh enumeration to reflect improvements or worsening conditions among different groups.

Separate Enumeration of PVTGs

- So far, **no separate enumeration of PVTGs has taken place in any Census**. Since PVTGs are a sub-category of Scheduled Tribes (STs), they are generally counted within the broader ST category.
- Many PVTGs are not listed individually but grouped under a common nomenclature, leading to limited visibility in Census data.
- According to the Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA), 40 out of **75 PVTGs** are listed as ‘single entry’ in the notified ST list under **Article 342 of the Constitution**.
- For example, in the 2011 Census, Baigas of Madhya Pradesh were counted separately, but groups like Abujh Marias, Bharias, Hill Korbas, and Kamars were not.

- Later, in 2013, Abujh Maria and Hill Korba were formally added to Chhattisgarh's ST list through legislation.
- By convention, the Registrar General of India (RGI) only publishes data for the main STs, with sub-groups and synonyms automatically included, which has prevented focused data collection on PVTGs until now.

Estimates of PVTG Population

- In November 2023, the government launched the ₹24,104 crore PM JANMAN scheme to uplift PVTGs through improved health, education, livelihoods, and infrastructure in over 200 districts.
- To support its rollout, the Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA) and state governments conducted a habitation-level survey, estimating the total **PVTG population at 47.5 lakh**.
- Among states, **Madhya Pradesh had the largest estimated PVTG population** at 13.22 lakh, followed by **Maharashtra** (6.7 lakh) and **Andhra Pradesh** (5.18 lakh).
- The 2011 Census data showed that some PVTG groups had populations of fewer than 1,000 people, including:
 - the Jarawas, Onges, Sentinelese, and Shompens (Andaman and Nicobar Islands),
 - Raji (Uttarakhand),
 - Kota (Tamil Nadu),
 - Birhor (Odisha),
 - Kamar (Madhya Pradesh), and
 - small tribal groups in Bihar.
- The Sentinelese were the smallest community with just 15 individuals, while the Baiga of Madhya Pradesh were the largest, numbering 4,14,526.
- Officials emphasise that accurate enumeration will plug gaps in welfare implementation, particularly in health and education, and help reassess whether current PVTG classification criteria remain relevant.

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