Spread of Covid Infection in Vulnerable Tribal Groups

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Why in News

Many members of eight different **Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs)** got infected in the second wave of **Covid-19** in Odisha.

> The infected PVTGs include the **Bonda tribe** of Malkangiri hills and **Dongaria Kondh** tribe of Niyamgiri hills.

Key Points

- **Tribal Groups in Odisha:**
  - According to the 2011 Census, Odisha's share of the **country's total tribal population was 9%.**
  - The Tribals constitute 22.85% of the State's population.
  - In terms of numbers of its tribal population, Odisha occupies the third position in India.
  - Of the 62 tribal groups residing in Odisha, 13 are recognised as PVTGs.
    > **The 13 PVTGs in Odisha are: Bonda**, Birhor, Chuktia Bhunjia, Didayi, Dungaria Kandha, Hill Kharia, Juang, Kutia Kondh, Lanjia Saora, Lodha, Mankirdia, Paudi Bhuyan and Saora.
  - Tribal populations are found in the entire seven districts of Kandhamal, Mayurbhanj, Sundargarh, Nabarangpur, Koraput, Malkangiri and Rayagada, and in parts of 6 other districts.

- **Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs):**
  - **Creation of Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs):** In 1973, the **Dhebar Commission** created Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs) as a separate category, which are less developed among the tribal groups.
  - In 2006, the Government of India renamed the PTGs as PVTGs.
    - In 1975, the Government of India initiated to identify the most vulnerable tribal groups as a separate category called PVTGs and declared 52 such groups. In 1993 an additional 23 groups were added to the category, making it a total of **75 PVTGs out of 705 Scheduled Tribes.**
    - Among the **75 listed PVTG's the highest number are found in Odisha.**
  - **Characteristics of PVTGs:** The Government classifies PVTGs on their:
    - Relative physical isolation,
    - Stagnant or declining population,
    - Low levels of literacy,
    - Absence of written language,
    - Pre-agricultural stage of economy, such as hunting, food gathering, **shifting cultivation** and terrace cultivation.
  - **Schemes for PVTGs:** PVTGs are more vulnerable among the tribal groups. Due to this factor, more developed and assertive tribal groups take a major chunk of the tribal development funds because of which PVTGs need more funds directed for their development.

    The Ministry of Tribal Affairs has implemented the scheme of **"Development of PVTGs"** which covers 75 Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) for their comprehensive socio-economic development.
    - Under the scheme, State Governments submit **Conservation-cum-Development (CCD)** plans on the basis of their requirement.
    - 100% grants-in-aid are made available to States as per the provisions of the scheme.

Source: TH