

TRIBALS IN INDIA

Union Cabinet has approved 15th November as **Janjatiya Gaurav Divas** to commemorate the brave tribal freedom fighters.



Tribals in India

- According to 2011 census, the tribal population in India is over 104 million which is spread across 705 tribes and accounts for 8.6% of country's population.
- More than 90% of tribal people live in rural areas.
- Madhya Pradesh has highest tribal population followed by Maharashtra, Odisha and Rajasthan.
- Livelihood status - 40.6% of tribals live below poverty line vis-a-vis 20.5% non tribals.
- The 2011 census data shows that access to tap water, sanitation facilities, Drainage facilities and clean cooking fuel is much lower among the tribal population.
- There is also a stark gap in educational status as 41% of STs are illiterate.
- Sex ratio among tribals is 990/1000 as compared to national average of 933/1000.
- Tribals suffer from a triple burden of diseases: Malnutrition and communicable diseases, Genetic disorders and lifestyle diseases, Mental illness and addictions.



Challenges in tribal governance

- Lack of population level data, centralized policy formulation and implementation, near absence of tribals from the process, weak state level intervention etc. has accentuated dismal health conditions among tribals.
- Though tribals are heavily dependent on public health services but there is a shortfall of public health centres, sub-centres, community health centres by 27-40% in about half of the states.
- There are severe shortages in health human resources in terms of PHC doctors (33% shortfall), CHC specialists (84% shortage), health workers etc.
- The tribal sub plan (TSP) has shown a lackadaisical response.

Initiatives for Tribals

- Swasthya Portal, National Overseas Portal and National Tribal Fellowship Portal
- Online Performance Dashboard "Empowering Tribals, Transforming India"
- e-newsletter on health and nutrition-ALEKH.
- Pradhan Manti Van Dhan Yojana.
- Eklavya Model Residential Schools
- The number of Minor Forest Produce notified has been revised from 23 to 49
- Tribal Ministry is funding about 250 NGOs for 350 projects in the deficient service area, LWS areas, Border areas.
- Tribal Research Institute (TRI) Uttarakhand has been made nodal TRI for coordination of research works
- North Eastern Region Community Resource and Management Program.
- Pre-matric Scholarship Scheme for Tribals
- Trifood Project.
- Tribes India e-Marketplace.
- Tech for Tribals

Way Forward

- A bottom up approach with primary health care at the centre of public health services should be adopted.
- A localized primary care system is more acceptable
- Awareness programmes through schools and media should be encouraged.
- The new setup should include skilled local youth, traditional healers, ASHAs and PM's tribal health fellows.
- The literacy drives in tribal areas based on Salunkhe committee report should be undertaken.
- A principled approach based on 4R's (Respect, relevance, reciprocity, responsibility) should be followed for data and research.
- A multi-level governance structure, starting from village level gram sabhas to national level tribal health advisory councils should be adopted.
- Earmark of 8.6% of proposed 2.5% increase in health care expenditure in current health care policy to tribal health.
- A holistic tribal policy based on intended goals should be formulated