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# Kattunayakar tribe

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**Why is in news?** PM congratulates the entire team of 'The Elephant Whisperers' for winning Oscar

After the Oscar for best documentary short was announced for The Elephant Whisperers in Los Angeles, director Kartiki Gonsalves thanked Bomman and Bellie for sharing their tribal vision, which helped her make the movie — a moment of glory for the **Kattunayakar tribe of the Western Ghats** and their traditional wisdom.

The documentary revolves around a family that adopts two orphan baby elephants in Tamil Nadu's Mudumalai Tiger Reserve, and rears them.

Kattunayakan (Kattunayakar), is **one of the 75 Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs)** of India.

**Kattunayakar or Jennu Kurumbas** are a designated scheduled tribe in the Indian states of **Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Kerala, and Andhra Pradesh**.

The word Kattunayakar means the **king of the jungle** in Tamil and Malayalam.

The Kattunayakar are one of the earliest known inhabitants of the Western Ghats, who are engaged in the **collection and gathering of forest produce, mainly wild honey and wax**.

They also engaged in **other economic activities** such as fishing, trapping small birds and animals, and occasional farm labour.

Child marriages were common before the 1990s, but now the girls marry after attaining puberty.

**Monogamy** is the general rule among the Kattunayakar community. Kattunayakans are **patrilineal** and trace their descent through male line.

Kattunayakar **believe in Hinduism** and have a language which is **a mixture of all Dravidian languages**. The language contains elements of Kannada, Malayalam and Tamil.

The main deity of the tribe is **Lord Shiva and Nayakkar under the name of Bhairava**. They also worship animals, birds, trees, rock hillocks, and snakes, along with the other Hindu deities.

Kattunayakar are **fond of music, songs, and dancing**. They are also called **Cholanaickar and Pathinaickars**.

## Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups:

PVTGs are the **most vulnerable categories** among tribal groups.

They have declining or stagnant population, low literacy level, pre-agricultural level of technology and are economically backward.

PVTGs inhabit isolated, remote and difficult areas in small and scattered hamlets/ habitats.

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The 75 such groups of tribals in **18 States and 1 Union Territory** have been identified and categorised as PVTGs.

**Odisha has the highest number of PVTGs in India** while there is **no population in the states of Punjab and Haryana**.

**Sahariya has the highest population** while Sentinelese and Andamanese have a very small population among all PVTGs.

**In 1973, the Dhebar Commission** created Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs) as a separate category, who are less developed among the tribal groups. In 2006, the Government of India renamed the PTGs as Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs).