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Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups

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Why is in news? President of India to grace the PVTG Meet organised by Tribal Affairs Ministry at Rashtrapati Bhawan tomorrow

- President of India will grace the PVTG (Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups) Meet in the Sports Ground of the Rashtrapati Bhawan, President's Estate.
- The President has invited the Members of 75 PVTGs for a visit to the Rashtrapati Bhawan for an extensive interaction with them and to apprise them about the various Schemes and Initiatives of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs.
- It is pertinent to mention that, in addition to its various schemes and initiatives, **in Budget 2023-24**, Government of India has **announced the Pradhan Mantri PVTG Development Mission**.
- This will saturate PVTG families and habitations with basic facilities such as safe housing, clean drinking water and sanitation, improved access to education, health and nutrition, road and telecom connectivity, and sustainable livelihood opportunities.
- An amount of Rs.15,000 crore will be made available to implement the Mission in the next three years under the Development Action Plan for the Scheduled Tribes.

Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups:

- Tribal communities are often identified by some specific signs such as primitive traits, distinctive culture, geographical isolation, shyness to contact with the community at large and backwardness.
- Along with these, some tribal groups have some specific features such as dependency on hunting, gathering for food, having pre-agriculture level of technology, zero or negative growth of population and extremely low level of literacy.
- These groups are called Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups.

The need for identification:

- **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.
- In this context, **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, while in 1993 an additional 23 groups were added to the category, making **it a total of 75 PVTGs out of 705 Scheduled Tribes**, spread over 17 states and one Union Territory (UT), in the country (**2011 census**).

How they are identified:

- Government of India follows the following criteria for identification of PVTGs.
- Pre-agricultural level of technology
- Low level of literacy
- Economic backwardness
- A declining or stagnant population

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Characteristics of 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).
- PVTGs have some basic characteristics -they are mostly homogenous, with a small population, relatively physically isolated, social institutes cast in a simple mould, absence of written language, relatively simple technology and a slower rate of change etc.

Population:

- In India, tribal population **makes up for 8.6% of the total population**. Tribal people live in about 15% of the geographical area of the country. The places they live vary from plains, forests, hills, inaccessible areas etc. PVTGs are scattered in different geographical areas of the country.
- According to the 2001 census, the PVTGs population is approximately 27,68,322. There are 12 PVTGs having a population above 50,000 and the remaining groups have a population of 1000 or less.
- The **PVTG of Sahariyas has the highest population** of 4,50,217, while the **PVTGs of Sentinelets and Andamanese has a very small population** of 39 and 43, respectively.

Pradhan Mantri PVTG Development Mission:

- A fund of Rs 15,000 crore for the next three years has been allocated for the socio-economic development of the group.
- It will be launched **as part of 'Reaching The Last Mile', one of the seven Saptarishi priorities** enlisted in this year's Budget.
- The PVTGs Mission **aims to provide basic facilities** like housing, water, road, telecom, education and health in PVTG areas across the country.
- The scheme follows the **strategic approach of Vanbandhu Kalyan Yojana**, which is **need-based and strives to optimise utilisation of resources available under various programs** and aims at specific outcomes.
- **Implementation:** Among the ministries that are expected to be roped in to implement the PM-PVTG Mission the Rural Development Ministry, the Water Resources Ministry, the Education Ministry, the Health Ministry and the Women and Child Development Ministry.