

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No.1204
TO BE ANSWERED ON 19.09.2020

PROTECTION OF PVTG FROM COVID-19 OF ODISHA

1204. SHRI PARVESH SAHIB SINGH VERMA:

Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of the steps taken for the protection of the Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTG) from the Covid-19 Pandemic;
- (b) the details of the steps taken after some members of PVTG from Odisha and Andaman and Nicobar were found COVID-19 positive; and
- (c) whether the Government has taken measures to inform the PVTG about the COVID-19 pandemic in their local language and if so, the details thereof ?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS
(SHRI ARJUN MUNDA)

(a) As per guidelines issued by the Government in the wake of COVID-19 pandemic, Government has taken steps for protection of the Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTG) of Odisha from the COVID-19 pandemic in the following manner:-

- PVTG communities were sensitized on various practices of COVID-19 prevention like Social distancing, hand-washing, sanitization, wearing of masks etc. with the close supervision of Micro Project Agencies (MPA) and Village Development Committees (VDC) supported by the respective District Administration.
- Across all 17 MPAs of the State located in 12 districts, PVTG SHGs/Individuals have been supported with tailoring units through Odisha PVTG Empowerment & Livelihoods Improvement Program (OPELIP). Under this activity, stitching masks and its eventual supply to the community people in the areas is ensured.

(b) After some members of PVTG from Odisha were found COVID-19 positive, facilitation have been made jointly by Micro Project Agency (MPA) concerned and 427 number of PVTG Village Development Committees (VDC) with close coordination from ASHA Worker of Health & Family Welfare Department and Anganwadi Worker of Women & Child Development & Mission Shakti Department, Government of Odisha as well as District Administration in respective PVTG districts.

- The Andaman & Nicobar Administration is giving special focus and attention to the protection and wellbeing of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG) viz. Great Andamanese (Strait Island), Onges (Little Andaman), Jarawas (South Andaman) and Shompens (Greater Nicobar Islands). The health of these tribals has been vigorously monitored and proactive measures to prioritize their testing have helped early detection of cases. 11 (Eleven) infected members of the Great Andamanese tribes are among those who were either themselves engaged or had families working in Government establishments. All of these infected Great Andamanese tribe except two have fully recovered and moved back to their settlement in Strait Island. The samples of entire Onges population has tested negative. Testing of Jarawas in three different areas has also confirmed their COVID free status. The Shompens are also safe in the Great Nicobar Island.

(c) The COVID-19 pandemic guidelines have been translated in 09 (Nine) Tribal Languages i.e. Munda, Santali, Ho, Sadri, Desia, Kuvi, Kui, Koya, Saora and Odia languages. These translated guidelines have been widely circulated among the tribal people including PVTGs for generating awareness on COVID-19.

Odisha PVTG Empowerment & Livelihoods Improvement Programme (OPELIP) works in 17 MPAs of 12 districts. The extensive services of the program and other requirements for the pandemic and other Government benefits reaches the communities through the locally engaged youths i.e. Community Resource Persons (CRPs), who are well-versed with the local dialect and language. There are around 478 local youths functioning as CRPs, who have been engaged by the Program. They have carried out all kinds of awareness program on COVID-19 in the villages in their respective local language / dialect.
