

# Pradhan Mantri Janjati Adivasi Nyaya Maha Abhiyan (PM JANMAN): An Endeavor to reach the unreached for improving Healthcare of Tribals in India

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## ABSTRACT

One hundred and four Million tribal people live in India, which accounts for 8.6% of the country's population. The Union Cabinet on 15th November 2023 approved the Pradhan Mantri Janjati Adivasi Nyaya Maha Abhiyan (PM-JANMAN) aiming to reach out to over twenty-two thousand particularly vulnerable Tribal groups (PVTG) tribal habitats over two hundred districts in India. It focuses on the key elements of improving housing and lifestyle, education status, roads and connectivity, livelihood, and the healthcare sector. As per the report of the Expert Committee on Tribal Health, the tribal population in the country faces a triple burden of diseases, some of which are indirectly addressed in this initiative. Other major concerns like alcohol addiction and animal and snake bites have been left out, which could have gone a long way in mitigating these concerns among the tribal population. This initiative if implemented properly will revolutionize the health situation in the tribal communities across the country.

## KEYWORD

Snake Bites; Health Care Sector; Alcoholism; Cost of Illness

## INTRODUCTION

As per the "Report of the Expert Committee on Tribal Health 'Tribal Health in India' Bridging the Gap and a Roadmap for the Future" 2018, 8.6% of the country's population. Almost 90% of the tribal population of the country lives in rural areas. The tribal people throughout the country have rich traditions, cultures and heritage with unique lifestyles and customs. These tribal groups differ from each other in various aspects, like the language they speak, their cultural pattern, and socio-economic categories. The majority of these tribals living in the remote forest areas, remain isolated, and some are particularly vulnerable Tribal groups (PVTG) and face some peculiar health challenges different from the rest of the communities in India (1).

The Union Cabinet of India on 15th November 2023 approved the Pradhan Mantri Janjati Adivasi Nyaya Maha Abhiyan (PM-JANMAN) with budgetary provision of Rs 24,104 crore for the initiative of tribal welfare aiming to reach out to over twenty-two thousand particularly vulnerable Tribal groups (PVTG) tribal habitats over two hundred districts in India. This initiative aims to revolutionize the tribal communities across the country. It focuses on the key elements of improving housing and lifestyle, education status, roads and connectivity, livelihood, and the healthcare sector.

The health-related initiatives proposed in the JANMAN guidelines include Mobile Medical Units (MMU) under the National Health Mission, Construction and running of Anganwadi Centres along with creating awareness and reaching out

tribal community in remote areas about the existing schemes available like Ayushman Bharat card, PM Matru Vandana Yojna, PM Surakshit Matriya Abhiyan, Sickle Cell Mission, National Tuberculosis Eradication Program (2).

Some of the major challenges encountered by the tribal people are Lack of health awareness, health facilities, emergency transportation, Discriminatory behaviour by health care providers and financial constraints.

As per the report of Expert committee on Tribal health the tribal population in the country faces a triple burden of diseases namely malnutrition, communicable diseases like malaria and tuberculosis and Non communicable diseases like cancer, hypertension, and diabetes due to rapid urbanization, environmental distress, and changing lifestyles.

Other concerns are maternal mortality and Infant mortality rate, poor Health seeking behaviour, Genetically transmitted disorders like sickle cell anaemia and thalassemia, alcohol /tobacco addiction and animal and snake bites along with superstitions particularly related to health problems (1).

Majority of the snakebites occur in rural/tribal areas due to their habitat being proximal to forest and hilly terrain, with poor transportation facilities especially during the night hours thereby contributing to higher deaths (3).

A systematic review attempted to explore mental health issues and highlighted problems with alcohol use, anxiety, depression, suicide, and other mental health morbidities in tribal population (4).

While PMJANMAN scheme addresses the issues of Tuberculosis, sickle cell disease and access to Ayushman Bahrat (AB-PMJY) scheme but it has not addressed the critical areas of increasing addiction and mental health issues amongst tribal population. Considering the long-term implications of addiction and other mental health issues including this domain as one of the interventions in PMJANMAN would have gone a long way in reducing/mitigating associated social evils of addictions among the tribal population.

National Action Plan for Snakebite Envenoming (NAPSE ) proposes provision of anti snake venom at all health facilities, strengthening surveillance of snake bite cases and deaths in humans, strengthening of emergency care services at District Hospitals/ CHCs including services for ambulance, institutionalization of Regional Venom Centre's and inter-sectoral coordination which could have been incorporated in PMJANMAN (5).

The condition of health status in tribal regions must change in order to successfully, socially and economically transform our country and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030 (6).

If the PM JANMAN Abhiyan is properly implemented and the PVTGs benefit from it then the Abhiyan would complement in achieving the goals for improving health situation and holistic development of Tribal populace as envisaged.

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