

HIGH PREVALENCE OF MALNUTRITION, GENETIC DISORDERS, INFECTIONS AMONG TRIBALS CONCERNING: HARSH VARDHAN

Relevant for: Developmental Issues | Topic: Rights & Welfare of STs, SCs, and OBCs - Schemes & their Performance, Mechanisms, Laws Institutions and Bodies

Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan. File | Photo Credit: [PTI](#)

It is a matter of concern that the tribal population in the country today suffers from a high prevalence of malnutrition, genetic disorders and infectious diseases, Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan said on Thursday.

He said the government has undertaken a slew of measures for the welfare of the tribal population in the country, identified 10 major concerns that need immediate attention and started working towards it.

“Our tribals lead a lifestyle with beliefs, customs, values and traditions that are in sync with nature. This lifestyle pattern which doesn’t defy nature grants them an enhanced immunity against various diseases.

“However, it is a matter of concern that our tribal population today suffers from a high prevalence of malnutrition, genetic disorders and infectious diseases,” Dr. Vardhan said.

He was digitally addressing the virtual curtain raiser ceremony by the Indian Council of Medical Research-National Institute of Research in Tribal Health, Jabalpur, as a part of 6th India International Science Festival 2020 (IISF 2020).

The 6th IISF 2020 is being organised by the Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR) in collaboration with the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), Department of Science and Technology (DST), Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES), Department of Biotechnology (DBT) and Vijnana Bharati (VIBHA) from December 22-25.

Dr. Vardhan said that often residing in hard-to-reach areas with difficult terrains, the tribal population has had “inequitable access” to benefits of significant advancements in science, technology as well as public health services.

“We have been taking a slew of measures in this regard. In 2018, an expert committee constituted jointly by Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and the Ministry of Tribal Affairs identified 10 major concerns that need immediate attention for the wellbeing of tribes and started working towards it,” he added.

Applauding ICMR-NIRTH, Jabalpur for developing indigenous strategies for strengthening the health services in the unreached areas, he noted that the institute has successfully demonstrated PPP models for reduction of tuberculosis among Saharia tribes and reduction in cases of malaria in the tribal district of Mandla in Madhya Pradesh.

“This prestigious institution has developed strategies for controlling prevalence of fluoride, anaemia and inherited hemoglobinopathies like sickle-cell disease among tribal populations,” Dr. Vardhan added.

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