

# VAN ADHIKAAR AUR COVID 19

## Impact of COVID19 Lockdown on Adivasi and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers in India

The Covid19 lockdown, in force since March 24, has had a drastic impact on Adivasi and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers, impacting their livelihood, health, movement and several other basic rights.

This bi-monthly bulletin will highlight the particular problems faced by communities!

**LIVE: Govt announces projects worth 6000 crores will be approved under CAMPA funds. But will this really benefit Adivasi and Forest Dwelling communities?**

### LIVELIHOODS & MINOR FOREST PRODUCE

- The lock down has affected collection, use and sale of minor forest produce (MFP) by Adivasi and forest dwellers.
- MFP collection season from April to June provides major income support which has coincided with the lockdown period. Almost 60 % of annual collection takes place during this period
- Major MFP schemes announced by the central government such as the Van Dhan Vikas and Minimum Support Price- are inadequate to address the MFP issues due to absence of institutional support in the tribal areas.

### MIGRANT LABOUR & FOOD INSECURITY

- Most Adivasi migrant workers stuck in cities due to the sudden lockdown are more vulnerable to face food insecurity than those who are in their own villages.
- Additionally, they often face police atrocities and criminalization, causing mental and psychological distress.
- There is a worry of virus spread via returning migrants to their villages. Yet, there are some positive community led initiatives, for eg. in sub-Himalayan West Bengal, where communities have set up monitoring mechanisms for recently returned migrant workers.

### PVTG, PASTORALIST & NOMADIC COMMUNITIES

- The migration and seasonal access of pastoralists have been restricted due to the lockdown. Many pastoral communities are reported to be stuck in other states/districts without access to rations and fodder for the livestock.
- An advisory issued by the MoEFF on 6th April highlighted the reduction in human wildlife interface through restriction of movement of people to Protected Areas (PAs). This advisory could be misinterpreted and would impact PVTG, nomadic and pastoral communities living in and around PAs. There have already been reports of restrictions on movement affecting Baiga Adivasi in Madhya Pradesh.

### HEALTH

- Adivasi areas have severe shortage of basic healthcare facilities, shortage of healthcare professionals, and due to their remote location there is often lack of relevant information.
- Absence of healthcare facilities can severely limit the capacities to deal with any major COVID19 outbreak posing a serious threat.
- Adivasi communities across India have developed coping mechanisms such as making masks from palm and betel leaves and imposing social distancing norms or quarantine in their villages.

### FOREST DIVERSION, COMPENSATORY AFFORESTATION, EVICTION,

- There are reports of evictions of forest dwelling communities in Gujarat and Odisha. Mining activities proceed even during lockdown and continue to create conflict in many areas.
- On 28th March, the environment ministry amended the rules for Environment Impact Assessment 2006, exempting several categories of projects from the requirement of environment clearance.

### STORIES OF HOPE

- Tenure security of tribals and forest dwellers is key to ensuring their livelihoods and food security. In villages of Gadchiroli and Amravati districts of Maharashtra where community rights have been legally recognised, gram sabhas have shared funds generated from sustainable harvest of NTFPs to all village households, in some cases into women's bank accounts, in order to deal with the COVID crisis.

**Appeal to the reader:** We aim to compile thorough information during this lockdown. We appeal to you to share with us ground reports & stories to make our bulletins more powerful! Contact us at [vanadhikarmedia@gmail.com](mailto:vanadhikarmedia@gmail.com)

For more info.: **Preliminary Assessment report of COVID19 Lockdown on Adivasi and Forest Dwelling Communities.**

# TIMELINE OF A LOCKDOWN

## Impact of COVID19 lockdown on **Adivasi and Forest Dwelling communities** in India

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### 1-7 APRIL

[During a Lockdown, Why Is the Mining Industry Considered 'Essential'?](#)

[Nomadic Van Gujjar tribe caught in lockdown with nowhere to go](#)

[Lockdown halts harvesting season in Odisha's forests](#)

[Covid-19: Environment ministry panel for automatic extension of forest clearance](#)

[Adivasi man dies after police thrash villagers outside shop in Madhya Pradesh](#)

### 15-21 APRIL

[Involving Local Participation: What the EIA 2020 Could Have Done](#)

[Centre to hike MSP for minor forest produce by 16-30%](#)

[Learn Social Distancing from Jharkhand Santal community](#)

[Walking 104 kilometres without a break](#)

[Mahua, tendu leaf collection hits tribals hard](#)

[Odisha to borrow Rs 12K crore from CAMPA and OMBADC funds](#)

[Out of the woods: How the FRA is helping a village in Maharashtra during the COVID crisis](#)

### 1-10 MAY

[Poor access to PDS for tribals during lockdown: Experts report](#)

[Tribals at increased risk from COVID-19](#)

[COVID-19 lockdown dents the economy of India's forest dwellers](#)

[COVID-19: Govt hikes MSP for minor forest produce to help tribal gatherers](#)

[Frantic Shouts Went in Vain, Say Survivors as 16 Migrants Crushed to Death by Train in Aurangabad](#)

### 24-30 MARCH

[In Chhattisgarh: barricades as social distancing](#)

['Soaps won't save us if we die of hunger first'](#)

[Where country roads don't take you home](#)

['Coronavirus lockdown: Fear looms large over tribal communities](#)

[Relocation of tribal people living around Similipal Tiger Reserve forceful, claim locals](#)

### 8-14 APRIL

[Himachal's pastoral community in the shadow of lockdown](#)

[Need to convert COVID-19 into opportunity; restart highways construction on war footing: Nitin Gadkari](#)

[Chhattisgarh's tribal women keep vigil on their forests](#)

[Wilting mahua, wasted baskets, silent haats](#)

[Arjun Munda asks states to step-up procurement of forest produce to protect livelihood of tribals](#)

[COVID-19: Gujarat forest dept officials allegedly torched huts, fields](#)

[Rajasthan uncovers Chinkara poaching racket](#)

[Rapid survey shows impact of Covid on tribal migrant workers from Odisha](#)

### 22-30 APRIL

[2.7 lakh trees to be felled for hydropower project in Arunachal's Dibang Valley](#)

[Pastoral communities affected due to lockdown: Report](#)

[Saved from tigers, Sunderbans' honey collectors face hunger, poverty amid lockdown](#)

[Tribal people bring water to their two villages](#)

[Telangana Villagers Forced Out of Homes for Reservoir Project](#)

[Coronavirus Lockdown: Tribal People Restless Over Sale of Minor Forest Produce](#)