



# Tribes of

# JHARKHAND

*“Article 275 (I), grant-in-aid for promoting the welfare of STs.”*

• *Munda*

• *Santhal*

• *Oraon*

• *Kisan*

• *Kharia*

• *Gond*

• *Kol*

• *Kanwar*

• *Savar*

• *Asur*

• *Baiga*

• *Banjara*

• *Bathudi*

• *Bedia*

• *Binjhia*

• *Birhor*

• *Birjia*

• *Chero*

• *Chick-Baraik*

• *Gorait*

• *Ho*

• *Karmali*

• *Kharwar*

• *Khond*

• *Kora*

• *Korwa*

• *Lohra*

• *Mahli*

• *Mal-Paharia*

• *Parhaiya*

• *Sauria-Paharia*

• *Bhumij*

*“The Scheduled Tribe (ST) population of Jharkhand State was 8,645,042 (26.2%) of the total population (32,988,134) of the State.”*



*“Jharkhand holds the 6th rank in terms of Scheduled Tribe population among the India states.”*



*“Kharia at Jharkhand belong to the Proto-Australoid group.”*

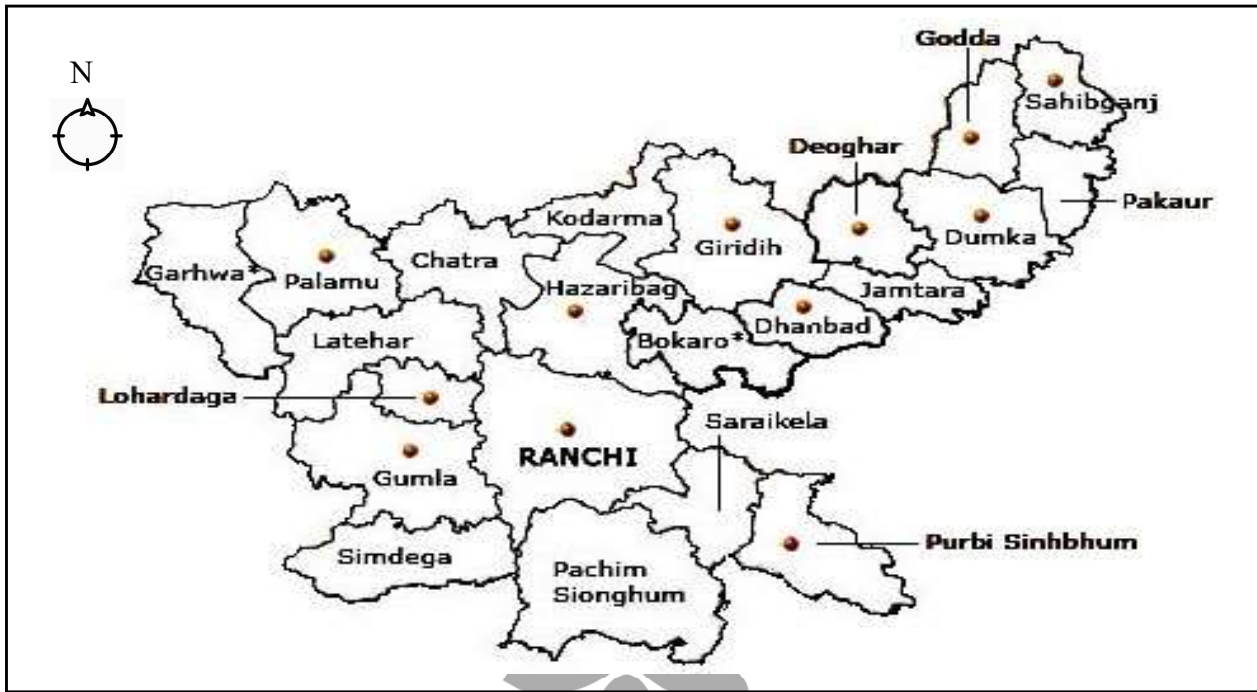
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*“The CNT Act was enacted in 1908 to stop land alienation is supposed to be the magna-carta for tribals.”*

## TRIBES OF JHARKHAND

Jharkhand holds the 6th rank in terms of Scheduled Tribe population among the India states. It has thirty two Tribal Groups. The two notable features of Jharkhand are its high proportion of Scheduled Tribe population which is about 28 percent against an all India average of 8 percent, and a high percentage of area under forest cover which is about 29 percent against the Indian average of 23 percent. In order to protect the interests of the Scheduled tribes, the provision of “Fifth Schedule” is enshrined in the Constitution under article 244 (2). Out of 259 blocks in the state of Jharkhand, 112 fall under the Fifth Schedule areas (spread across 15 districts out of 24 districts).



**District map of Jharkhand**

The tribals normally live in contiguous areas unlike other communities. Their lives are closely associated with the nature as they eke out their livelihoods from the natural environ – streams, trees, plants, animals etc. It is, therefore, recognized that maintaining their identities would invariably mean keeping their environment intact with them. Given the contiguous inhabitations, it also becomes simpler to have an area approach for development activities and also regulatory provisions to protect their interests. In order to protect the interests of the Scheduled tribes, the provision of “Fifth Schedule” is enshrined in the Constitution under article 244 (2).

### Tribal Community of Jharkhand

The Scheduled Tribe (ST) population of Jharkhand State was 8,645,042 (26.2%) of the total population (32,988,134) of the State. Jharkhand ranks all India 6th in terms of ST population and 10th in terms of percentage share of ST population to the total population of the state. Among

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the six project districts of Dumka, Ranchi (\*Khunti), Saraikela-Kharsawan, Purbi Singhbhum and Garhwa, Dumka has the highest tribal population at 44.8%. Jharkhand has around 32 Tribal Groups, major among them being Santhal, Munda, Oraon and Ho. Eight out of the thirty-two tribes of Jharkhand fall under Primitive Tribal Group (PTG). They are Asur, Birhor, Birajia, Korwa, Savar, Pahariya (Baiga), Mal Pahariya and Souriya Pahariya.

### Major Tribes of Jharkhand

#### ASUR

Asur is an important tribe in the state of Jharkhand in the eastern part of the subcontinent of India.

State and District	ST Population	
	Population	%
Jharkhand	7087068	26.3
Simdega	360825	70.2
Gumla	559772	67.2
Pashchimi Singhbhum	806472	65.4
Lohardaga	203053	55.7
Latehar	253365	45.2
Dumka	495239	44.8
Pakur	312838	44.6
Ranchi*	1164624	41.8
Saraikela-Kharsawan	304850	35.9
Jamtara	206664	31.6
Sahibganj	270423	29.1
Purbi Singhbhum	552187	27.8
Godda	247538	23.6
Garhwa	158959	15.4
Bokaro	218600	12.3
Deoghar	142717	12.2
Hazaribagh	268333	11.8
Giridih	184469	9.7
Palamu	138960	9.0
Dhanbad	202729	8.5
Chatra	30384	3.8
Koderma	4067	0.8
*Khunti District was carved out of Ranchi District in September 2007		

Asur in Jharkhand is one of the thirty major tribes of people who have made the state of



Jharkhand their home. The people who belong to this tribe form quite a big part of the total population of the state of Jharkhand. It ranks 21st among all the 30 tribal groups of the state, in terms of population, that is, there are as many as

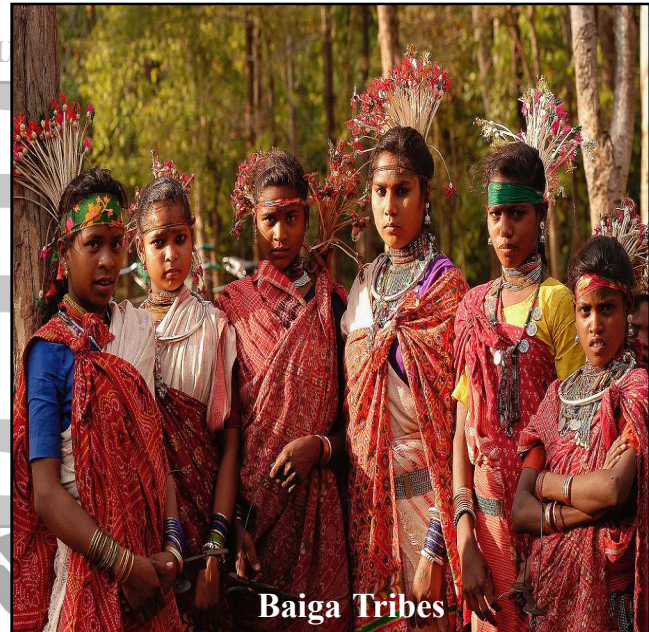
Districts	Divisions	Blocks	Gram Panchayats	Villages	Numbers of Blocks in Scheduled Areas	
Garhwa	3	19	193	907	1	Bhandaria block
Purbi Singhbhum	2	11	231	1810	9	Golmuri-Jugsalai, Patamda, Potka, Dumaria, Musabani, Ghatsila, Dhalbhumgarh, Chakulia and Bahragora blocks
Dumka	1	10	206		10	Saraiyhat, Jarmundi, Jama, Ramgarh, Gopikandar, Kathikund, Dumka, Sikaripara, Ranewar and Masalia blocks
Khunti	1	6	86	884	6	Arki, Khunti, Murhu, Karra, Torpa, Rania blocks
Saraikela-Kharsawan	1	8	120	120	8	Govindpur(Rajnagar), Adityapur(Gamhariya), Saraikela, Kharsawan, Kuchai, Chandil, Ichagarh and Nimdih blocks
Palamau	3	13	283	1918	-	-

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9 tribal groups in the state that have a smaller population than the Asur of Jharkhand. Asur is one of the most ancient ethnic groups in the state of Jharkhand. The people belonging to Asur at Jharkhand stay within houses made of clay. They live in villages that are grouped into different tolas for the convenience of the people. The houses in which the people belonging to Asur tribe live do not have any window. The people love to make their houses look even more beautiful by painting them on their external walls. They thrive mostly on the flesh of animals and birds and rice. The total population of the tribal group of Asur is 7783. The rate of literacy among the people of the state of Jharkhand is not very satisfying. The rate is only 10.62%. Though their total number is not ignorable, the percentage of the total population of the state that they cover is not a massive one. The people who belong to the Asur tribe cover only 0.13 % of the total population of the state.

### **BAIGA**

The Baiga is one of the most important tribes in the state of Jharkhand in India. The people who belong to the Baiga tribe of Jharkhand are reportedly least civilized of all the different tribes of the state. The people of the tribe of Baiga in Jharkhand inhabit in a particular district of the state. The name of this district of Jharkhand is the Garwah district. The people who belong to the tribe of Baiga constitute a Kolerian ethnic community. The name of this tribe of Jharkhand has quite a few meanings. One of them is 'ojha' or a person who makes medicines. Many of the people who belong to the Baiga tribe make medicines by profession, though their chief traditional occupation has been shifting cultivation. The people who belong to the tribe of Baiga at Jharkhand dwell in the remotest regions of the state and it becomes very difficult for the people of the urban world to reach out to them. Most of them are found to reside in the forested regions and hilly areas of Jharkhand. There are two book references of the tribe of Baiga of Jharkhand. One is the book called 'Highlands of Central India'. This book was written by a person named Forsyth. Another reference of this primitive tribe of Jharkhand is found in the documentation, which is called the 'Seoni Settlement Report'. This report was authored by a captain by the name Thompson. Though these two written documents mention the Baiga tribe of the state of Jharkhand, they cannot be termed reliable written sources of information about the people who belong to this tribe.



**Baiga Tribes**

**BANJARA**

The state of Jharkhand came into emergence on 15th November, 2001. The population of Jharkhand is mainly comprised of tribal people. There are more than 30 distinct tribal communities in Jharkhand and these tribes are grouped under the 'scheduled tribes' group of the Jharkhand populace. These tribes are separated on the basis of their language and cultural preferences. Banjara is one such tribe in Jharkhand. Though smallest in number, the Banjara tribe in Jharkhand is a recognized part of the tribal community. Unlike the Banjara tribe of Rajasthan, the Banjaras of Jharkhand lead a settled life. They generally live in thatched huts with kuchcha walls. Though they remain unperturbed by the modernization around, recent years have seen far-reaching changes in the relationship between the Banjaras and the large society. The literacy rate of the Banjaras is about 12.38%. The colorful lives of the Banjaras now have become the source of entertainment to the entire state. Tribal festivals like Sarhul, Tusu and Sohrai are celebrated throughout the state. Banjara music and dances like Chaw, Natua, Ghatwari and Matha now-a-days has become sources of recreation even to the tourist to Jharkhand. They now seem to plan their visit to Jharkhand in the festive seasons of the tribes in Jharkhand.



**BIRHOR**



Birhor is one of the primitive tribes in Jharkhand. In Jharkhand, Birhor are found in the Palamu, Garhwa, Dhanbad, Singhbhum, Giridih, Lohardaga, Ranchi, Hazaribagh, Gumla, etc. Birhor at Jharkhand belong to the Proto-Australoid stock; linguistically, they originate from the Austro-Asiatic group. It is interesting to note that the Birhor tribe of Jharkhand consider themselves as the descendants of the Sun. It is

believed that the Birhors are related to the Kharwar tribe, also said to have descended from the Sun. In Jharkhand, the Birhor tribe is divided into two major sub-tribes, namely Jaghis Birhor and Uthalu Birhor. These tribes in Jharkhand portray a distinct pattern of socio-economic lifestyle. In fact, the Jaghis Birhor and the Uthalu Birhor tribes in Jharkhand are known for their agro-based economy. The Jaghis Birhor are nomads who keep moving from one jungle to the other. These

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tribes practice shifting cultivation: when the food supply of a particular forest is exhausted, they head towards another forest. Furthermore, talking about the lifestyle of Birhor tribe in Jharkhand, it can be said that they live in groups known as Tanda. It is basically a bunch of six or seven cone-shaped huts made of leaves and branches. Family is the basic unit of Birhor society. The social setup of Birhor community in Jharkhand is patriarchal in nature: the father is the head of the family. Besides, the Birhor support monogamous marriages, still, at times polygamy or trigamy is also allowed in unusual circumstances like widowhood, sterility, etc. The economy of the Birhor tribe largely depends on forest resources, labor and agriculture. For the Uthalu Birhor, forest is the main source of food; whereas for the JaghisBirhor, agriculture seems to be the main stay of the people. The agricultural land of the JaghisBirhor is divided into two major types such as Tanr and Don: in the Tanr lands, the Birhors practice dry cultivation, whereas the don lands are known for their water retention capacity.

### **BIRJIA**

The Birjia tribe of Jharkhand is found in the districts of Ranchi, Gumla, Palamu and Lohardaga. In Jharkhand, Birjias live in small huts made of bamboo, wood or mud, which are located in the hills or the plains adjoining these hills. The Birjia at Jharkhand live in triangular or rectangular huts made up of bamboo, wood or mud. The huts of the Birjia tribe, usually, are devoid of windows: the huts have a small gate which is closed with a tati or a mat. The Birjia tribe possesses a patriarchal society: a Birjia family is usually a nuclear family with father as the head of the family. Moreover, the Birjia society is known as a monogamous society, yet the prevalence of bigamy cannot be overruled. It goes without mention that they



**Birjia Tribe**

have a rural society where agriculture and forests play a vital role in the socio-economic life. Hence, Birjia economy is based on agricultural yields, as well as on hunting, fishing and labor. The political organization of the Birjia tribe in Jharkhand is primarily based on the Panchayat system. The head of the Birjia society is the 'Baiga', who looks after the social laws and customs. But, the Birjia clan exempts women from participating in the panchayat, which is considered an exclusive right solely reserved for the men folk of the Birjia community. It is noteworthy in this context that the administration in the Birjia community has largely evolved in recent years, with the exposure of the Birjias to the modern ways of living. Hence, we can find the modern Gram Panchayat Elections making their presence felt in the Birjia society. In fact, both men and women of the Brijia clan now participate in the elections conducted by the State Election Commission.

### **CHERO**

The Chero are one of the scheduled tribes of Jharkhand. In Jharkhand, Chero dwell in the districts of Ranchi, SathalPargana, Latehar and Palamu. Palamu seems to have a larger concentration of the Chero tribe in Jharkhand. Besides, the Chero at Jharkhand are also found in Bhojpur, Gaya, Champaran, Munger, Daltonganj, Patan, Lesliganj, Bhawanathpur, Rohtas, etc. It is noteworthy in this



context that the Chero, also known as Cherwas or Cherus, was a martial group that annexed many new territories through war. They are said to be descendants of the Kshatriya lineage known as Chandravanshi. The Chero of Jharkhand follows a patriarchal form of the society where women are exempted from all the rights to inheritance and succession. The Chero tribe of Jharkhand is divided into two endogamous groups, namely Terahazari and Barahazari and is also divided into a number of clans said to follow endogamy and exogamy. Among the major clans of Chero are:

- Barka                      • Mawar                      • Barahaka                      • Kuar
- Mahato                      • Chotamawar                      • Samwat                      • Rautia                      • Manjhia, etc.

Talking about the economy, it can be said that the economy of the Chero tribe is based on wage earning and agriculture: the Cheros also practice animal husbandry. Among the important crops that form an integral part of agricultural yields are:

- Kurathi                      • Marua                      • Maize                      • Paddy, etc.

But, it is noteworthy that the agricultural yields are insufficient: therefore, the Chero engage themselves in wage earning throughout the year. The Chero tribe of Jharkhand seeks work as wage laborers in order to earn their livelihood and support their family.

### **CHICK BARAIK**



The Chick Baraik of Jharkhand is found in Ranchi, Lohardaga and Gumla districts. The Chick Baraik in Jharkhand belongs to the Proto-Australoid and speaks Mundari, Hindi and Sadani languages. The Chick Baraik tribe presents a picture of communal harmony. In Jharkhand, the Chick Baraiks do not dwell in a separate village but live with the other tribes and castes within the same village. In fact, it can be said that they celebrate fraternity and

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brotherhood. Furthermore, the Chick Baraiks present an amalgamation of the Hindu and the tribal beliefs. On one hand, Sing Bonga is said to be the titular deity of the Chick Baraiks, when on the other hand, they also worship Devi Mai, the Supreme Goddess of the Hindus. Among the other deities worshipped by the Chick Baraiks in Jharkhand are: besides, some of the major festivals of the Chick Baraiks are:

- Sohrai
- Sarhul
- Durga DeviPuja
- Phagu
- Ramnawmy
- Nawakhani
- Karma, etc.

Like the other tribes of Jharkhand, such as Mahli, Lohara, Karmali, the Chick Baraik are artisans who earn their living through spinning threads and weaving clothes. Weaving and spinning is the age-old profession practiced by the Chick Baraiks of Jharkhand. It is interesting to note in this context that the Chick Baraiks are also known as the artisan tribe in Jharkhand. The Chick Baraik society is marked with the presence of the Panchayat system, which is given due respect in the society. The decision adopted by the community panchayat is treated by the Chick Baraiks as the last word: no one, among the Chick Baraiks is authorized to go against the decision of the panchayat.

### **GOND**

The Gonds originally belong to Madhya Pradesh: but, in Jharkhand, Gond belongs to Palamu, Singhbhum and Ranchi districts. The Gond of Jharkhand, linguistically, belongs to the Dravidian race; but, racially, the Gond at Jharkhand hail from Proto-Australoid stock. According to the common belief, the Gond tribe belongs to a martial group, who trace their descent from the Kshatriyas. They are said to have migrated in the Central province in the 14th century, legends opine that the Gonds hailed from the South through Bustar and Chanda. Moreover, in Jharkhand, the Gonds dwell in the areas adjoining the forests: therefore, the Gond tribe is found to be scattered throughout the length and breadth of Jharkhand. Like the other tribes of Jharkhand, the Gond tribe also projects a patriarchal form of the society, where the father is the head of the family and the laws of inheritance largely support the men folk of the society. It is interesting to note that the Gonds follow division of labor: work is equally divided among the men and women of the society. Man and women work in complete collaboration with each other; yet,





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cooking and other household chores seems to be duty of the women and is not divided with the male members of the society. Talking about the economy of the Gond at Jharkhand, it can be said that the Gonds follow labor and agricultural economy. In fact, each family of the Gond society owns a piece of agricultural land, which is used by them to grow maize, marua, bajra and many other vegetables. Besides, each of the families possesses buffaloes and agricultural implements. Furthermore, the Gonds have a subsistence type of economy that does not possess the concept of saving.

### **GORAIT**

The Gorait at Jharkhand belong to the Austric racial group and are found scattered in the districts of Dhanbad, Palamu, Ranchi, SathalPargana, Singhbhum and Hazaribagh. Linguistically, the Gorait belong to the Proto-Australoid group. The Gorait in Jharkhand are found in the hilly tracks adjoining the forests of the territory. The Gorait of Jharkhand dwell with the other tribes of Jharkhand. This co-existence of the Gorait with the other tribes of Jharkhand has led to the assimilation of the cultural habits of the tribes. Thus, like the other tribes in Jharkhand, the Gorait also build a one-room house containing a bed-room, kitchen and bathroom. Among the Gorait, the authority of the family lies with the father of the family. Although, the father is the head of the Gorait family; yet the father takes decision with the assent of the other family members. Moreover, it can be said that the Gorait tribe celebrates the nuclear form of family: the presence of a joint family is very rare in a Gorait society. It is noteworthy that the Gorait are divided into a number of clans based on their origin. Among the important totemic clans among the Gorait of Jharkhand are:

- Toppo      • Indnar      • Tudu
- Khalkho, etc.

It should be marked that the aforesaid clans are patrilineal. Therefore, marriage in the same clan is a taboo. Talking about the religion of the Gorait of Jharkhand, it can be said that the Gorait believe in manism, animism, Bongaism, naturalism, witchcraft, Sharananism, animalism, etc. along with a strong belief in the concept of multiple Gods, the Gorait believe in ancestral spirits who are said to reside in Sarnagrove. Like the other tribes of



**Gorait Tribe**

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Jharkhand, the Goraits also have a panchayat based administration. The head of the Panchayat is known as the Pradhan, who is said to adopt laws for the Gorait society. Although the Pradhan is the head of the society, the Pradhan works in close association with the other members of the panchayat.

### **HO**

The Ho is one of the scheduled tribes of Jharkhand. The Ho in Jharkhand belong to Proto-Australoid stock and speak Ho and Hindi languages: a corrupt version of Bengali is also spoken by the Hos of Jharkhand. In Jharkhand, Ho tribe dwells near the rivers, river terraces or by the side of the springs. It is noteworthy in this context that the Ho community of Jharkhand largely depends on agriculture. Agriculture is the main stay of the people of the Ho tribe in Jharkhand. Besides, the Ho at Jharkhand practice wage earning for their sustenance. In fact, the majority of the Hos earn their living through daily labor in the different industries and mines in the territory. It is to be noted that the conditions of the people engaged as daily labors are better than the people who depend on agriculture. Furthermore, the Ho at Jharkhand is known to possess a panchayat based administration where the Manki, the head of the panchayat, takes decisions on behalf of the entire society. It is noteworthy that each and every family among the Ho tribe participates in panchayat and a unanimous decision is adopted at the panchayat with the assent of each of the members of the Ho society. It is interesting to note that the Hos are more politically aware than the other tribes of Jharkhand: in fact, the Hos are aware of their political rights that are guaranteed by the Constitution of India. The Ho of Jharkhand is well versed in the administration of the state and they take active part in the elections conducted by the Legislative Assembly of Jharkhand.



### **KARMALI**

Karmali in Jharkhand are found in Ranchi, Hazaribagh, Santhal Parganas, Singhbhum, and Bokaro districts. Karmali at Jharkhand is one of the scheduled tribes of Jharkhand who are also known as the artisan tribes of Jharkhand. Karmali of Jharkhand are known for a nuclear family system where the father is the head of the family. The nuclear family of the Karmali is composed of a man and his wife and children. The children live with their parents till they are single: after their marriage the children set up a family of their own. Therefore, we can say that the Karmali tribe celebrates a nuclear family: the concept of a joint family is completely absent in the Karmali society.

Moreover, it is interesting to note that the society of Karmali is based on the division of labor. Each of the members of the society is given their share of work: both men and women work in

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complete coordination with each other. Karmali women assist their male partners in making tools: the men, unlike the male members of the other tribe, also assist the female in cooking and other household chores. In Jharkhand, the Karmali tribes practice monogamy. But on the occasions of widowhood and sterility, polygamy is



also allowed among the Karmalis. In fact, the Karmali of Jharkhand celebrates endogamy and exogamy: a Karmali is allowed to marry outside their clan; but marrying outside their tribe is a taboo among the Karmalis. The religion of Karmali is centered around Sing bonga, Dihwarbonga, Nagbona, Banshbonga, Grambonga, etc. Another aspect of the religion of the Karmalis is animism. Among the important animals worshiped by the Karmalis are pigeon, he-goat, he-sheep, duck, etc. Furthermore, the Karmalis also believe in ancestral spirits. Some of the important festivals of Karmali are Jitia, Nawakhani, Dasehra, Ramnavmi, Vishwakarma Puja, etc.

### ***KHARIA***



Kharia at Jharkhand belong to the Proto-Australoid group. The Kharia in Jharkhand are said to be the descendants of Nagvanshi Raja and are divided into three major sections namely DudhKharia, DhelkiKharia and Hill Kharia. The Kharia of Jharkhand are one of the most primitive tribes that chiefly depend on the resources obtained from the forests of the territory. The Hill Kharia largely depend on roots, edible herbs, leaves, fruits,

seeds, flowers, honey, wax, etc; the DhelkiKharia and DudhKharia depend on agriculture. The Kharias are basically centered round the hills and plains adjoining the hills. The settlement of the Kharia is dispersed throughout the different districts of Jharkhand. The houses of the Kharias are made up of straw, bamboo, mud, rope, etc. and are generally rectangular in shape. The houses, generally, possess a single room that contains a bedroom, kitchen and bathroom: we can find a cow-shed or pig stay attached to the house. A family is the smallest unit in a Kharia society which is composed of the parents and children. In Kharia society, nuclear family seems to be the general trend and joint families are very rare to find. Moreover, the Kharia society is a patriarchal society

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where the inheritance law and the laws of succession largely support the male members of the society. A Kharia society falls under the jurisdiction of the Panchayat system and a Pradhan is supposed to be the head of the society. Therefore, it becomes the duty of the Pradhan to look after the peace and prosperity of the society. Furthermore, the economy of the Kharias is based on agriculture or wage earning. Besides, the Kharias also practice fishing, hunting, food gathering, etc. Moreover, the agricultural land is divided into two types: Tanr and Don Lands. Kurathi, Arahar, Til, Tisi, etc. are cultivated in the Tanr lands, as it is dry land whereas, the Kharias grow paddy in the Don land, due to its moisture retention capacity.

### **KHARWAR**

Kharwar are found in the Latehar, Lohardaga, Ranchi, Hazaribagh, Chatra, Daltonganj, Garhwa, districts and is known to be one of the scheduled tribes of Jharkhand. The Kharwar of Jharkhand is also found in the Rohtasgarh district in Bihar. It is interesting to note that the Kharwar in Jharkhand are a group of traditional people who use the Khair grasses for various purposes. Due to the excessive use of the Khair



leaves by them, the Kharwar are named so. A family is the unit of the Kharwar society which is generally nuclear in structure and comprises a husband, wife and their unmarried children because after marriage the children set up their own families. In fact, the concept of the joint family is completely absent from the Kharwar society. Although, the Kharwar at Jharkhand possess a patriarchal society; yet, we can find the division of labor in the society. It is for the smooth functioning of the household that the Kharwars practice division of labor. The father of the family is entitled to all the outdoor work and activities; whereas the mother is responsible for the household work. Furthermore, the Kharwar society is basically a patrilineal society which is based on the terminology of kinship. Talking about the religion of the Kharwar of Jharkhand, it can be said that the religion of the Kharwar presents a mixture of both the Hindu and tribal cult. Among the important deities worshiped by the Kharwar are:

- Goddess Lakshmi
- Sing Bonga
- Durga
- Bhagawati
- Hanuman
- Dihwar Bonga
- Gram Bonga, etc.

Moreover, the important festivals of Kharwar tribes are:

- Sarhul
- Chhatha
- Diwali
- Durga Puja
- Nawakhani
- Jitia
- Ramnavmi
- Sohrai

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- Phagu, etc.

Like the other tribes of Jharkhand, the Kharwar tribe also depends on agriculture and wage earning. The Kharwars had once been the Zamindars of Jharkhand, but due to their extravagant nature they have been rendered poor. In the present time, the Kharwars largely depend on agriculture. The agricultural land of the Kharwars is divided into two categories, namely Don and Tanr.

### **MUNDA**



The abode of the members of the extremely cherished Munda tribe is not confined to the borders of the state of Jharkhand. The Munda people have also penetrated into other beleaguering states of Orissa, Chattisgarh, Bihar and West Bengal. As a matter of fact, a handful of the Munda tribals have also been noted to have established their permanent domicile in Bangladesh as well. The sphere where the Munda in Jharkhand bears a remarkable similitude with its contemporary tribes is mainly concerned with a conspicuous dialect and a unique life-style. This could be vividly illustrated from the fact that the lingo restricted to them is known as 'Mundari'. The legend that exists behind this extremely coveted and revered language elucidates that Mundari actually belonged to the Austro-Asiatic family of languages. According to the last census, the estimated number of members of the Munda across Jharkhand totals up to twenty lacs or two millions. As a matter of fact, the language of the Mundas had been inspired from the designation of the tribe itself and bears uncanny resemblance with the other vernaculars fluently used in India like Sanskrit and Dravidian. The Mundari language is considered to be included in the group of interrelated languages like Ho, Santali and Mundari.

The religion that is followed by a quarter of the population of Munda of Jharkhand is Christianity. However, they also have evolved their own religion known as Sarna. They consider the celestial bodies like the moon, sun and the planets to be holy and 'Sing Bonga' or the 'Sun God' is their principle deity.

### **ORAON**

The individuals of the Oraon tribe not only inhabit the domain of Jharkhand but a handful have also successfully fanned out into many economically and technologically sound cities like Delhi, Kolkata and Mumbai as educated and well-employed individuals. Previously, the members of the Oraon clan extracted their livelihood from chopping trees, accumulating timber and other forest related activities. They also depended on the woods to procure them with all the essential ingredients required to perform their rituals. But as we entered the threshold of the 21st century, the tribal people of the Oraon of Jharkhand have taken up agriculture as their primary means of earn-

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ing their livelihood. However, the petite bunch of the Oraon tribe who had opted to seek refuge in the northern realms of India has been mostly employed in the flourishing tea estates. The lingo that has been accepted by the population of the Oraon tribe in Jharkhand is Kurukh. This language has originated from the Dravidian family of languages and bears significant similitude with



other contemporary dialects like Brahui and Malto. The individuals belonging to the Oraon tribe also like to have a grandeur lifestyle. This can be evaluated from the zeal and enthusiasm with which they perform dances, sing enchanting folk songs and play a vast array of musical instruments with adeptness. The religion followed by huge fraction of the Oraon people is Sarna. The rest have, however, have chosen to embrace Christianity. A recognizable name from the Oraon tribe is Kartik Oraon who had served the coveted post of a Congress Minister.

### Summary of Tribes of Jharkhand

- |                      |                   |                         |                  |
|----------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|------------------|
| • <i>Munda</i>       | • <i>Santhal</i>  | • <i>Oraon</i>          | • <i>Kisan</i>   |
| • <i>Kharia</i>      | • <i>Gond</i>     | • <i>Kol</i>            | • <i>Kanwar</i>  |
| • <i>Savar</i>       | • <i>Asur</i>     | • <i>Baiga</i>          | • <i>Banjara</i> |
| • <i>Bathudi</i>     | • <i>Bedia</i>    | • <i>Binjhia</i>        | • <i>Birhor</i>  |
| • <i>Birjia</i>      | • <i>Chero</i>    | • <i>Chick-Baraik</i>   | • <i>Gorait</i>  |
| • <i>Ho</i>          | • <i>Karmali</i>  | • <i>Kharwar</i>        | • <i>Khond</i>   |
| • <i>Kora</i>        | • <i>Korwa</i>    | • <i>Lohra</i>          | • <i>Mahli</i>   |
| • <i>Mal-Paharia</i> | • <i>Parhaiya</i> | • <i>Sauria-Paharia</i> | • <i>Bhumij</i>  |

### *Primitive Tribal Groups (PTG)*

Tribes like the **Asur, Paharia, Sabar, Birhor, Birjia, Korwa, Mal Pahariya and Sauriya Paharia** have been under special scrutiny on account of their primitiveness, backwardness and declining population. The eight tribes of Asur, Birhor, Birajia, Korwa, Savar, Pahariya (Baiga), Mal Pahariya and Souriya Pahariya of the thirty-two tribes of Jharkhand fall under Primitive Tribal Group (PTG). Together they account for a population of 0.273 million (Census 2001) which is a very nominal part of the total tribal population. According to the reports of the Health Department, the populations of the Birhor, Birajia, Baiga and Souriya Pahariya are declining. PTGs remain the most isolated and disadvantaged indigenous tribal groups with noticeable reduction in their population. Malnutrition, Malaria and dysentery are rampant in PTGs villages and the access of these communities to the social welfare programmes remains limited.

***The constitutional safeguards related to tribals are:***

The constitutional safeguards related to tribals are:

- (i) Article 14, related to equal rights and opportunities;
- (ii) Article 15, prohibits discrimination on grounds of sex, religion, race, caste etc.;
- (iii) Article 15 (4), enjoins upon the state to make special provisions for the STs;
- (iv) Article 16 (3), empowers states to make special provisions for reservation in appointments or posts in favour of STs;
- (v) Article 46, enjoins upon states to promote with special care educational and economic interests of STs, protection from social injustice and exploitation;
- (vi) Article 275 (I), grant-in-aid for promoting the welfare of STs;
- (vii) Article 330, 332, 335, related to the reservation of seats for STs in Lok Sabha and State Assemblies; and
- (viii) Article 339, 340, related to Control of the Union over the Welfare of STs and powers to investigations thereof. One of the important Acts which ensures Social Safeguards of the STs is “Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989.

**Some Important legal provisions to safeguard tribal interests**

***1. Chhota-Nagpur Tenancy (CNT) Act, 1908***

The CNT Act was enacted in 1908 to stop land alienation is supposed to be the magna-carta for tribals. It is applicable in North Chhota Nagpur, South Chhota Nagpur and Palmau divisions, including areas under various municipalities and notified area communities. In January 25, 2013, the Jharkhand High Court asked the State Government to also follow the Act for Scheduled Castes. Section 46 of the CNT Act restricts transfer of land belonging to Scheduled Tribes / Scheduled Castes and Backward Classes. However, a tribal may transfer his land through sale, exchange, gift or will to a fellow Scheduled Tribe member and residents of his own police station area. Similarly, SCs and BCs can transfer land to members of their own community within the limits of the district in which the land is located with prior permission of the Deputy Commissioner.

***2. The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006.***

This Act recognizes and vests forest rights and occupation on forest land in forest dwellings to scheduled tribes and other traditional forest dwellers who have been residing in such forests for generations but whose rights could not be recorded. The Act provides for a framework for recording the forest rights so vested and the nature of evidence required for such recognition and vesting in respect of forest land.

**3. The Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes: (Prevention of Atrocities) Rules, 1995.**

This Act provides for specific provisions to prevent atrocities on the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes and suggests State Governments to frame rules for the same. These include identification of areas where atrocity may take place or there is an apprehension of re-occurrence of an offence under the Act. The State Government is required to set up a “Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes Protection Cell” at the state headquarters headed by the Director of Police, Inspector-General of Police. This Cell is responsible for, conducting survey of the identified area; maintaining public order and tranquility in the identified area; recommending deployment of special police or establishment of special police post in the identified area; and restoring the feeling of security amongst the members of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes. It can be summed up that the protective provisions safeguard tribal people from social injustices and all forms of exploitation, while the developmental provisions promote special care for the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections like the tribals and SCs. Further, administrative provisions under the Fifth and Sixth Schedules give special powers to the state for the protection and governance of tribal areas and the reservation provisions ensure due representation in legislative bodies and government jobs

**4. Provision of Scheduled Areas under 5th Schedule of the Constitution**

In order to protect the interests of the Scheduled tribes, the provision of “Fifth Schedule” is enshrined in the Constitution under article 244 (2). The Fifth Schedule under article 244 (2) of the Constitution defines “Scheduled Areas” as such areas as the President may by Order declare to be Scheduled Areas after consultation with the governor of that State. The criteria for declaring any area as a “Scheduled Area “under the Fifth Schedule are:

- Preponderance of tribal population,
- Compactness and reasonable size of the area,
- Available administrative entity such as district, block or taluk, and
- Economic backwardness of the area as compared to neighboring areas. Out of 259 blocks in the state of Jharkhand, 111 fall under the Fifth Schedule areas (spread across 15 districts out of 24 districts).

***Scheduled Areas in Jharkhand***

1. Burmu, Mandar, Chanho, Bero, Lapung, Ratu, Namkom, Kanke, Ormanjhi, Angara, Silli, Sonahatu, Tamar, Bundu blocks in Ranchi district.
2. Arki, Khunti, Murhu, Karra, Torpa, Rania blocks in Khunti district



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3. Kisko, Kuru, Lohardaga, Bhandra and Senha blocks in Lohardaga district.
4. Bishunpur, Ghagra, Chainpur, Dumri, Raidih, Gumla, Sisai, Bharno, Kamdara, Basia and Palkot blocks in Gumla district.
5. Simdega, Kolebira, Bano, Jaldega, Thethaitangar, Kurdeg and Bolba blocks in Simdega district.
6. Barwadih, Manika, Balumath, Chandwa, Latehar, Garu and Mahuadarn blocks in Latehar district.
7. Bhandaria block in Garhwa district.
8. Bandgaon, Chakradharpur, Sonua, Goelkera, Manoharpur, Noamundi, Jagannathpur, Manghgaon, Kumardungi, Manjhari, Tantnagar, Jhickpani, Tonto, Khutpani and Chaibasa blocks in West-Singbhum district.
9. Govindpur( Rajnagar ), Adityapur(Gamhariya ), Saraikela, Kharsawan, Kuchai, Chandil, Ichagarh and Nimdih blocks in Saraikela-Kharsawan district.
10. Golmuri-Jugsalai, Patamda, Potka, Dumaria, Musabani, Ghatsila, Dhalbhumgarh, Chakulia and Bahragora blocks in East-Singbhum district.
11. Saraiyahat, Jarmundi, Jama, Ramgarh, Gopikandar, Kathikund, Dumka, Sikaripara, Ranewar and Masalia blocks in Dumka district.
12. Kundhit, Nala, Jamtara and Narainpur blocks in Jamtara district.
13. Sahebganj, Borio, Taljhari, Rajmahal, Barharwa, Pathna and Barhet blocks in Sahebganj district.
14. Littipara, Amrapara, Hiranpur, Pakur, Maheshpur, and Pakuria blocks in Pakur district.
15. Boarijore and Sunderpahari blocks in Godda District. The scheduled areas of Jharkhand have been specified by the Scheduled areas (States of Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Madhya Pradesh) Order, 2003 (Constitution Order, 192) dated 20.2.2003 after rescinding the order dated 31.12.77 so far as that related to the state of Bihar.

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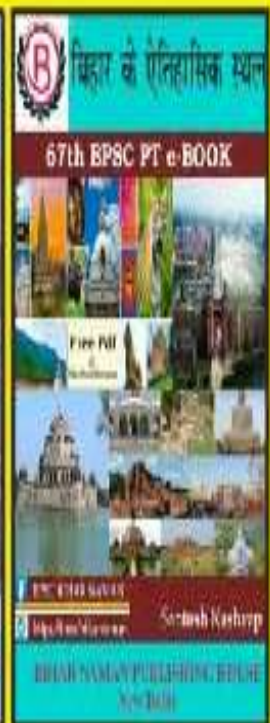
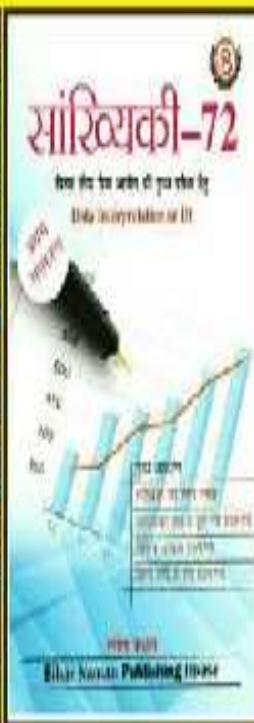


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