

Tribes of Haryana, List, Culture, Communities, Social Structure

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The **Tribes of Haryana** refer to the various **traditional communities and social groups** that have been living in the region for generations. These groups are mostly connected with **agriculture, trade, and rural life**, and each has its own **unique culture, customs, and traditions**. Even though Haryana does not have officially recognized **Scheduled Tribes**, these communities play an important role in shaping the state's **social structure, economy, and cultural identity**.

Major Tribes of Haryana

The **Tribes of Haryana** mainly belong to **Indo-Aryan and Indo-Dravidian backgrounds**. Most of these communities are actually **agricultural and pastoral groups** rather than officially recognized tribes. They are deeply connected with **farming, trade, and rural life**, and each group has its own **unique culture, traditions, and customs**. Haryana does not have officially listed **Scheduled Tribes (STs)**, but it is home to many important **ethnic and agrarian communities**. Some of the **major Tribes of Haryana** are discussed below:

1. Jat Tribe

- The **Jats** are one of the **largest and most dominant communities** in Haryana, especially in districts like **Hisar, Rohtak, and Karnal**.
- They are mainly known as **hardworking farmers** and play a major role in the state's **agricultural economy**.
- Jats are divided into several **clans**, each with its own identity and traditions.
- Apart from farming, many Jats are also involved in **trade, local businesses, and production activities** in rural areas.
- They have a strong presence in **government services**, especially in the **army, police, and civil services**, showing their contribution to national service.

2. Rajput Tribe

- The **Rajputs** are traditionally known as a **warrior class (Kshatriyas)** and have a long history of bravery and leadership.
- In Haryana, important Rajput clans include **Chauhans, Mandhars, Badgujars, and Tunwars**.
- They have historically been associated with **land ownership and military roles**.
- Today, Rajputs are involved in **agriculture, administration, and modern professions**, while still maintaining their **cultural pride and traditions**.

3. Ahir Tribe

- The **Ahir community** is mainly found in **Mahendragarh and Rewari regions** of Haryana.
- They are closely related to Jats in terms of **lifestyle and clan structure**.
- Traditionally, Ahirs are known for **cattle rearing and dairy farming**, making them important to the rural economy.
- They are also engaged in **agriculture and local trade**, contributing to village life and development.

4. Ror Tribe

- The **Ror community** is a relatively **small but important agricultural group**, mainly concentrated in **Karnal district**.
- They are primarily involved in **farming and allied agricultural activities**.
- Despite their smaller population, Rors have a strong identity and are known for their **simple lifestyle and dedication to agriculture**.

5. Gujjar Tribe

- The **Gujjars** are traditionally **pastoral and agricultural people**, often associated with **cattle rearing and dairy activities**.
- They are found in **canal-side villages and rural areas**, especially in **Karnal and nearby regions**.
- Gujjars are believed to have connections with both **Kshatriya and Brahmin traditions**.
- Many Gujjars also participate in **farming, livestock management, and local trade**, supporting the rural economy.

6. Harijan Communities

- The **Harijan communities** make up a significant portion (around **one-fifth**) of Haryana's population.
- Major groups include **Chamars, Chhuras, Dhanaks, and Julahas**.
- These communities have traditionally been involved in **various occupations**, including agriculture, craftsmanship, and labor work.
- Over time, they have made progress in **education, employment, and social development**, contributing to the state's growth.

7. Bania Community

- The **Bania community** is traditionally known as the **main trading and business class** in Haryana.
- Major sub-groups include **Aggarwalas, Oswals, and Maheshwaris**.
- They play a key role in **trade, commerce, and finance**, both in rural and urban areas.
- Despite being smaller in number, Banias have strong influence in **business, markets, and even politics**.

8. Meo Tribe

- The **Meo community** mainly lives in the **Mewat region** (covering parts of Gurgaon, Alwar, and Bharatpur).
- They are known for their **unique cultural blend of Hindu and Islamic traditions**.
- Meos are primarily engaged in **agriculture and pastoral activities**.
- Their identity is closely linked to the **region of Mewat**, from which they get their name.

Nomadic and Denotified Tribes of Haryana

- Haryana is also home to several **nomadic and semi-nomadic groups**, recognized for **state welfare support**.
- These include communities like **Jogi, Bhat, Madari, Sapera (snake charmers), Bazigar, and Bauria**.
- Traditionally, they were involved in **performing arts, animal handling, storytelling, and mobile occupations**.
- Today, many of these groups are working towards **social inclusion, education, and stable livelihoods**.
- There are **no Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs)** identified or residing in the state of **Haryana**.

Constitutional Safeguards for the Tribes of Haryana

• Political and Administrative Safeguards

- **Article 164** ensures that Haryana has a **separate Minister for Tribal Welfare**, which helps in focused attention on tribal development and policy implementation.
- **Article 330 & Article 332** provide **reservation of seats** for Scheduled Tribes (STs) in the **Lok Sabha** and **Haryana Legislative Assembly**, ensuring their **political representation** and participation in decision-making.
- It also provides for the formation of **Tribes Advisory Councils (TAC)**, which advise the government on **tribal welfare and administration** in these areas.

• Educational and Economic Safeguards

- **Article 46** directs the state to promote the **educational and economic interests of Scheduled Tribes** and protect them from **social injustice and exploitation**.
- **Article 15(4)** allows the government to make **special provisions**, such as **reservation in educational institutions**, for the advancement of tribal communities.
- **Article 16(4)** ensures **reservation in public employment**, helping improve **job opportunities and economic security**.
- Various support measures like **scholarships, financial assistance, and welfare programs** help reduce inequality and improve access to education.
- **Article 23 & 24** protect tribal people from **forced labour (begar)** and **child labour in hazardous industries**, ensuring their **basic human rights and dignity**.

• Grassroots and Cultural Governance

- **Article 243D** provides **reservation for Scheduled Tribes in Panchayati Raj Institutions**, ensuring their participation in **local self-governance**.
- The **PESA Act, 1996** (Panchayats Extension to Scheduled Areas) gives **Gram Sabhas (village assemblies)** real power over **local resources, minor forest produce, and dispute resolution**.
- This strengthens **grassroots democracy** and allows tribes to govern according to their **traditional practices and needs**.
- It also helps in protecting **community ownership of resources** and promoting **sustainable development**.

• Identification and Cultural Safeguards

- **Article 342** provides **official recognition of communities as Scheduled Tribes**, enabling them to access **constitutional benefits and protections**.
- **Article 29** protects the **language, script, and culture** of tribal communities, helping preserve their **unique identity**.
- It also ensures that no citizen is denied admission to **state-funded educational institutions** on grounds like **religion, caste, or language**.
- These provisions help maintain **cultural diversity and heritage** of tribal societies.

• Institutional Mechanisms for Protection

- **Article 338A** establishes the **National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST)**, which monitors and safeguards tribal rights.

- The Commission works to **investigate complaints, monitor safeguards, and advise the government** on tribal welfare policies.
- **Article 275** provides **grants-in-aid from the Union Government** for the development of **Scheduled Areas and tribal welfare programs**.
- The **Forest Rights Act, 2006** recognizes the rights of tribal communities over **forest land and resources**, supporting their **livelihood and traditional practices**.
- The **SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989** protects tribal people from **violence, discrimination, and exploitation**, ensuring **legal protection and justice**.

Key Government Schemes for Tribal Empowerment

- **Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan** – This scheme focuses on holistic development of tribal villages by improving infrastructure, healthcare, education, and livelihood opportunities, covering around 63,000 villages and benefiting over 5 crore tribal people.
- **Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS)** – Provides quality residential education to tribal students from Class VI to XII, with modern facilities aimed at improving academic performance, skill development, and access to higher education.
- **Pradhan Mantri Janjati Adivasi Nyaya Maha Abhiyan (PM-JANMAN)** – Targets Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) by improving road connectivity, housing, electrification, healthcare, and basic services in remote tribal regions.
- **National Overseas Scholarship for ST Students** – Enables meritorious tribal students to pursue higher education abroad, promoting global exposure and academic excellence.
- **Support to Tribal Research Institutes (TRIs)** – Promotes research, documentation, and preservation of tribal culture, traditions, and languages while supporting policy development.
- **Development Action Plan for Scheduled Tribes (DAPST)** – Ensures coordinated efforts across ministries for tribal welfare, focusing on filling gaps in education, healthcare, and infrastructure.
- **National Fellowship for ST Students** – Provides financial assistance for higher education and research through a transparent digital system, encouraging advanced studies among tribal students.
- **National Scheduled Tribes Finance and Development Corporation (NSTFDC)** – Offers concessional financial support to tribal individuals for self-employment and income-generating activities.
- **Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED)** – Promotes tribal products through marketing platforms, supporting artisans and creating sustainable livelihood opportunities.
- **Aadi Mahotsav and Cultural Initiatives** – Organizes cultural festivals to showcase tribal heritage, promote handicrafts, and generate economic opportunities through cultural promotion.
- **Pradhan Mantri Adi Adarsh Gram Yojana (PMAAGY)** – Aims to develop tribal-majority villages by providing basic infrastructure such as roads, drinking water, and housing.
- **National Health Mission (NHM) – Tribal Focus** – Strengthens healthcare services in tribal areas, addressing major health issues and improving access to medical facilities.