

Key Facts about Asur Community

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About Asur Community:

- The Asurs are a very small **Austro-Asiatic ethnic group** living **primarily in** the Indian state of **Jharkhand**, mostly in the Gumla, Lohardaga, Palamu, and Latehar districts.
- A small minority lives in the neighbouring states.
- They are included in the list of **Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups** (PVTGs).
- As per the 2011 census, the tribe has a population of around 23,000.
- They speak the **Asur language**, which belongs to the **Munda family of Austro-asiatic languages**.
- **Occupations:**
 - Asurs are **traditionally iron-smelters**.
 - They were **once hunter-gatherers**, having also involved in shifting agriculture. However, **majority of them shifted into agriculture**, with 91.19 percent enlisted as cultivators in the 2011 census.
 - Their **indigenous technology of iron smelting** gives them a **distinct identity**, as they **claim to have descended from the ancient Asuras**, who were associated with the art of metal craft.

- When smelting, the Asur women sing a song relating the furnace to an expectant mother, encouraging the furnace to give a healthy baby, i.e., good quality and quantity of iron from the ore, and were thence, according to Bera, associated with the fertility cult.
- But now a days, a major section of the population is **also attached with mining work.**

- **Society:**

- The Asur society is divided into **12 clans**. These Asur clans are **named after** different **animals, birds, and food grains**.
- **Family is second-most prominent institution** after the clan.
- They have **their own community council** (jati panch) where **disputes are settled**.
- They maintain **putative kinship ties with** Kharwar, Munda, and other **neighbouring tribes**.
- **Except for the burial site**, they **share all other public spaces** with their neighbours.
- **Traditional male clothing is dhoti**, while **females wear tattoo marks** (depicting totemic objects) upon their bodies as ornaments.
- The Asur follow the rule of **monogamy**, but **in cases of barrenness, widower** and widow hood, they follow the **rule of bigamy** or **even Polygamy**. At the time of marriage, they follow the rule of **tribe endogamy**.

- **Religion:** The Asur religion is a mixture of **animism, animatism, naturalism**, and **ancestral worships**.
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Q1: Who are Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs)?

PVTGs are a more vulnerable group among tribal groups in India. These groups have primitive traits, geographical isolation, low literacy, zero to negative population growth rate and backwardness. Moreover, they are largely dependent on hunting for food and a pre-agriculture level of technology. Currently, there are 2.8 million PVTGs belonging to 75 tribes across 22,544 villages in 220 districts across 18 states and Union Territories in India. According to the 2011 Census, Odisha has the largest population of PVTGs at 866,000. It is followed by Madhya Pradesh at 609,000 and Andhra Pradesh (including Telangana) at 539,000.

Source: [Asur tribes in Netarhat to get forest land rights: Gumla admin](#)

Source: <https://vajiramandravi.com/current-affairs/key-facts-about-asur-community/>

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