



INDIA

Unity in Cultural Diversity



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INDIA
Unity in Cultural Diversity

NCERT





Sri Aurobindo on Indian Culture in *The Foundations of Indian Culture and The Renaissance In India*

“ A true happiness in this world is the right terrestrial aim of man, and true happiness lies in the finding and maintenance of natural harmony of spirit, mind and body. A culture is to be valued to the extent to which it has discovered the right key of this harmony and organised its expressive motives and movements. And a civilisation must be judged by the manner in which all its principles, ideas, forms, ways of living work to bring that harmony out, manage its rhythmic play and secure its continuance or the development of its motives. A civilisation in pursuit of this aim may be predominantly material like modern European culture, predominantly mental and intellectual like the old Graeco-Roman or predominantly spiritual like the still persistent culture of India. India's central conception is that of the Eternal, the Spirit here incased in matter, involved and immanent in it and evolving on the material plane by rebirth of the individual up the scale of being till in mental man it enters the world of ideas and realm of conscious morality, dharma. This achievement, this victory over unconscious matter develops its lines, enlarges its scope, elevates its levels until the increasing manifestation of the sattwic or spiritual portion of the vehicle of mind enables the individual mental being in man to identify himself with the pure consciousness beyond Mind. India's social system is built upon this conception; her philosophy formulates it; her religion is an aspiration to the spiritual consciousness and its fruits; her art and literature have the same upward look; her whole Dharma or law of being is founded upon it. Progress she admits, but this spiritual progress, not the externally self-unfolding process of an always more and more prosperous and efficient material civilisation. It is her founding of life upon this exalted conception and her urge towards the spiritual and the eternal that constitute the distinct values of her civilisation. And it is her fidelity, with whatever human shortcomings, to this highest ideal that has made her people a nation apart in the human world. (Pp. 2-3)”

Sri Aurobindo

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NCERT

राष्ट्रीय शैक्षिक अनुसंधान और प्रशिक्षण परिषद्
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FOREWORD

The National Council of Educational Research and Training is an organisation dedicated to facilitate teaching and learning at the school level in India. The Council fulfils this responsibility by bringing out curricular materials for students, teachers and general public from time to time. The present National Integration Module (NIM), imaginatively titled, *India: Unity in Cultural Diversity* is one more effort in this direction. Sponsored by the Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India, this module is one of various steps, which have been taken to fulfil the laudable goals of the *Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat* programme. This programme envisages pairing of States and Union Territories (UTs) of the Indian Union through which students and members of social and cultural groups of a State/UT will have the opportunity to visit another State/UT and *vice versa*. In this process, these students and members of social and cultural groups will find opportunities to learn about each other's States, their language and literature, food and dress, arts and crafts and important places of historical and cultural significance. The present Module encompasses all these areas in State-wise and UT-wise profiles. This, I understand, is a simple way of allowing students and interested readers to find essential information about a State or UT in a single place. The introduction, on the other hand, provides in a broad sweep the fundamental ethos of India's unity in cultural diversity. In short, the Module has tried to provide a perspective to what India is and has always been, and how people in this vast sub-continent celebrate life in myriad forms.

Putting together this Module has not been a task without challenge. Definite information about people, their language, dress, food, art and crafts are often hard to find. The difficulty gets compounded when one tries to fix the spellings of various local terms and names. Dates, when particular festivals are celebrated and the ways in which these are celebrated, also depend on varying popular perceptions and interpretations. Given the amazing diversity of India, this is only natural. Therefore, the Module has not tried to enforce uniformity while dealing with these aspects. To ensure correctness of information given in this Module all States and Union Territories had been requested to give their feedback. Feedback received from them have been duly noted and incorporated in the manner considered possible and appropriate. In the case of West Bengal, the feedback received from Visva-Bharati, Shantiniketan, has been duly recognised and incorporated.

The team comprising the faculty of the NCERT has tried to develop this material within a short span of time. Accordingly, information has mostly been culled from the publications and websites of the Government of India, States and Union Territories. Besides, wherever found necessary, pictures, information and sometimes even expressions have been taken from sources that are available in the public domain. All the maps in the Module have been drawn to the specifications of the Survey of India. Nevertheless, there could be issues that

may still require further attention and rectification. The Council invites suggestions from all interested readers, apart from students and teachers, for further improvement of the Module in the light of such issues. Having said so, I place on record my appreciation of the efforts which have been made by the Development Team in bringing out this Module. I also appreciate the work of the Publication Division in designing this Module in record time. The banyan tree (*Kalpavriksha/Kalpadruma*) on the back cover of the Module encapsulates the spirit of India that is *Bharata Varsha*. Finally, I also take this opportunity to thank the Ministry of Human Resource Development for entrusting the NCERT with the responsibility of bringing out this Module.

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INTRODUCTION

CULTURAL EXPRESSION OF INDIA

India is a country of sub-continental proportion. From east to west and from north to south it spans over distances of 2,933 and 3,214 kilometres respectively. With a cumulative landmass of about 3,287 square kilometres, it encompasses almost every topographical feature found in the world. As far as the current size of the population is concerned, it ranks number two in the world. More than the size, the population map of India stands out because of its immense diversity. This diversity has been sustained over centuries largely because of the numerous traditions, practices and knowledge systems, which communities across the country have relentlessly nurtured and come to represent in myriad forms. The finest expressions of such traditions and practices are seen portrayed in languages and literature, food habits and cuisine, clothing and dress, fairs and festivals, arts and crafts, music, dance and drama, and architectural and sculptural styles. Besides, the diversity is also seen amplified in the everyday lives of the people. Both these strands, the classical and the folk, draw their life-force and inspiration as much from the

elements of nature found in specific regions as from the continuous inter-mingling of peoples and their traditions across regions, giving rise to what we today fondly call the 'Indian Culture'.



Independence Day Celebration



Sambalpuri Dance

Though culture comprises traditions, practices and knowledge systems, yet it is a dynamic entity. Societies remain alive and functional as long as they are able to adapt to changing circumstances and modify aspects of their cultures accordingly. Indian culture is not alien to such changes. At every stage of historical evolution the country has only enriched its culture through greater interaction amongst various streams of people, assimilation by each of what was best of the other, with plenty of creativity amongst all, to attain synthesis. Similar trends are seen in our cultural endeavours in modern times, be it in the domain of films and other creative visual media, the domain of spectator sports or in the way we have come to refashion our national life around the celebration of certain National Days.

The Current Scenario

In this great national enterprise, each State and Union Territory (UT) of the Indian Union has contributed its fair share. From the days of the nationalist movement in the late 19th century CE, conscious efforts have been made by our national leadership, irrespective of the cultural and linguistic region or the political unit they belonged to, to make space for such voluntary contributions to pour

in, so as to showcase the collective representation of India. Its first flash was seen in the early years of the 20th century CE in Bengal, when the first attempt was made by the then colonial administration to split people on religious lines. Boycotting what was foreign was not the only motto of the movement that followed this attempt. Nor was substituting the foreign with *swadeshi*, or what was of our own, a mere emotional indulgence. Its real objective was to reaffirm the fact that once upon a time India occupied a pride of place in the world for its crafts, industrial products, fine fabrics, exquisite jewellery, foods and beverages, standing as one people. It was thus a national enterprise to pick up the thread from where it was lost and then to carry it forward with renewed resolve to attain freedom and thereupon to achieve far greater heights in all spheres of life, as a modern civilised nation. Since then such efforts have been gathering pace without relent.

But, much as we may cherish what we have accomplished as a country thus far, this is again a moment when we must propel ourselves far more energetically in this direction. As per the 2011 census 35.3 percent of our population is below 14 years of

age and nearly 41 percent below the age of 20 years. For this generation to effectively contribute to the process of nation building it is imperative that they bond and work with each other through enhanced understanding of cultures, traditions and practices of different States and UTs. One has also to bear in mind the fact that this is a generation that is seeking the best of education for itself while sharing an equally strong enthusiasm for mobility and career opportunities as no other generation did before.

The Present Goals of Education and the *Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat* Initiative

As it is evident to all, who care to think, culture and education—one in the form of the lives that we live and the other which fosters rational understanding of phenomena and motivates one to apply its output in the form of knowledge in real life—cannot be divorced from one another. The *National Curriculum Framework* (NCF), 2005 clearly recognises this and states how the aim of education should be about ‘connecting curricular knowledge to life outside the school’ and ‘nurturing an overriding identity informed by caring concerns (for diversity) within the democratic polity of the country’. It, therefore, behoves that we create material that children find useful and interesting to not only realise the goals of education as stated by the *NCF* 2005, but also to materialise the objectives of

Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat, an initiative announced by the Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi on 31 October 2015 on the occasion of the 140th birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, the towering leader to whom the credit goes for unifying the Princely States with the Indian Union after Independence. These



Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel

unexceptionable objectives seek to (i) celebrate the unity in diversity of our nation and to strengthen the

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A Swadeshi Advertisement of 1920s

fabric of traditionally existing emotional bonds between the people of our country, (ii) promote the spirit of national integration through a deep and structured engagement between all States and Union Territories through a year-long planned engagement between States, (iii) showcase the rich heritage and culture, customs and traditions of paired States for enabling people to understand and appreciate the diversity that is India, thus fostering a sense of common identity, (iv) establish long-term engagements, and (v) create an environment that promotes learning between States by sharing best practices and experiences.



A priest performing local ritual



Maha Kumbh at Triveni Sangam, Allahabad

With this understanding, the present Module tries to celebrate the spirit and form of India through the perspective of ‘unity in diversity.’ The ‘unity’ part reaffirms the conception of India as a united whole and recognises that the strength of Indian culture lies in its assimilative outlook and synthesising character. It does not need reiteration that the numerous ‘little traditions’ that one finds all across the country each rooted in its own specificity, have since time immemorial, been coalescing with each other to give rise to both the regional as well as the pan-Indian cultural traditions. Today, these pan-Indian or what the anthropologists prefer to call the ‘greater traditions’ can be seen shared and practised across regions, confounding lay observers about their exact historicity or places of origin. What

is more interesting is the fact that this tendency of ‘sharing’ to have a greater universal existence, while caring for the preservation of the distinctiveness of the individual traditions, has seamlessly allowed modernity to be culturally absorbed into the lives of the people making the Indian nation-state one of its kind in the whole world.

Similarly, the ‘diversity’ part, marking out the cultural specificities in State-wise profiles, draws our attention to the fact that India is a nation of incredible multiplicity, which lives naturally in its varied geographical surroundings. And, while doing so, it reiterates an inescapable truism. If there were no diversities, could there have been the joys of meeting, knowing, interacting and celebrating the life that we are so familiar with and frequently partake of? Without diversities, could it have been possible for the wise ones of yore to say ‘what is not there in Bharat (India) is not there in the *Jagat* (world)’? Thus, these diversities are verily the pillars on which the edifice of Indian culture has been built over centuries. And these indeed are the nuclei, which ‘enable people to imbibe the innate chord of binding and brotherhood, make our people aware about the seamless integral hull of the modern Indian State, spread across a vast landmass on whose firm foundations the geo-political strength of the country is ensured to benefit one and all’.



A school in Almora, Uttarakhand

From a purely educational perspective it will not be an exaggeration to say that in textual materials meant for transaction in classrooms one does not always find the cultural specificities of individual States and Union Territories mentioned to the extent one may like to have due to many unavoidable reasons. This often makes children coming from different parts of the country feel disheartened as they look for materials related to their States and Union Territories in those textbooks but fail to find them. The present Module in a way seeks to address that concern to some extent.

But, there are obvious complexities involved in this task. The first question that can be asked is about cultural specificities, which should or should not be included in a State or an UT profile. The second question, which follows it is whether cultural specificities can be discussed without adequate reference to the geographical surrounding and historical experience of the concerned State or UT in such a profile. The third question pertains to the editorial concern of whether or not to allocate equal space to the profile of each State/UT in the Module and also whether or not to use uniform spellings for common sounding names for things like festivals, food items, clothes, etc.

Finding answers to these questions is not easy. However, the objective with which this Module is prepared makes it easier to limit each State/UT profile to a template that concerns itself with cultural specificities like language, food and dress, fairs and festivals, arts and crafts, and contemporary cultural developments. Naturally, these cultural specificities cannot be discussed without a reference to the natural environment of the States/UTs and the courses of their historical evolution. Therefore, the profile of each State/UT has begun with such a reference, though in a measured way to not overly digress from the cultural thrust of the profile. Similarly, variations in the spellings of similar sounding terms have been preferred in place of bringing in uniformity to retain the flavour of diversity of this great country.

THE CULTURAL CONCEPTION OF INDIA

The unified geographical conception of India goes back to the time of the *Vishnu Purana*, wherein it stated in a lilting verse, *uttaram yat samudrasya Himadreschaiva dakshinam, varsham tad Bharatam nama Bharati yatra santatih*, thereby meaning, ‘the country that lies to the north of the ocean and to the



A view of the Himalayas



Triveni Sangam, Kanyakumari

south of the snowy mountains is called Bharata as there dwell the descendants of Bharat’. However, the name *Bharatavarsha*, always present in the minds of the epic poets and philosophers, did not just signify a geographical entity but also presented an ideal before aspiring kings to bring the entire landmass stretching from the mighty Himalayas to the high seas under one political dispensation. Ever since, potential rulers have spared no effort to realise this ideal in practice. In ancient times, the Mauryas and the Guptas fairly did it. In medieval times, the Sultans of Delhi and subsequently the Mughals, achieved great measures of success in doing so. The British, in modern times, surpassed those successes in building a pan-Indian empire. However, it was only after the country won its Independence on 15 August 1947 that this ideal has been justly realised within a democratic framework.

But the poetic vision of unity of the epic times was neither overtly political nor limited to imperialistic aspirations alone. As it is, the enormous geographical spread of the country and within it the great degree of physical diversity had to be reckoned with. To add to that, the diversity in the people of the sub-continent, representing every ethnic variety and living condition, could not just be ignored or obliterated. The snowy mountains (the Himalayas), arid deserts (the Thar or the Great Indian Desert in the States of Rajasthan, Gujarat, Punjab and Haryana), impenetrable forests (the Chotanagpur Plateau and the North-East), vast stretches of rocky table lands (the Deccan Plateau) were not easy to access. The valleys of the snow-fed rivers in the north (Sindhu, Ganga, Yamuna and Brahmaputra) and those of the rain-fed ones in the south (Narmada, Godavari, Tapti, Mahanadi, Krishna, Kaveri, Periyar) created their own ecosystems for habitation and propagation of distinctive lifestyles. The vast stretches of coastal plains (Kutch, Konkan,



A village in Thar desert



The Great Rann of Kutch

Karnataka, Malabar, Coromandel, Andhra, Odisha) cordoned off by chains of thickly forested hills in the western (Western Ghats) and the eastern (Eastern Ghats) parts of the peninsula, likewise offered diverse living conditions for the efflorescence of diverse cultures. In short, these exclusive topographical features created the necessary conditions that were conducive for the social, economic and political autonomy of people and States across the country.

Throughout the history of India the aspiring empire-builders always recognised this and accordingly devised political strategies by which they respected the autonomous existence of states when it was due and annexed peoples and territories with their own where it was feasible. This was seen in the case of the Mauryas while dealing with the *atavika rajyas*, the Mughals while dealing with the states of Rajputana, and the British while dealing with the Princely States of India through the policy of ‘subsidiary alliance’. In independent India similar tradition continues by way of having special provisions for certain States (Jammu & Kashmir, the North-Eastern Hill States) and certain sections of the population (Scheduled Tribes, Scheduled Castes, Other Backward Castes, Minorities) in the Constitution of India.

Not surprisingly, therefore, the basis for the realisation of the unifying visions of the epic poets could be found more appreciably in the domains of culture and in the kindred humane impulses of the peoples of India rather than merely in the domains of politics and the territorial quests of kings and emperors. As the late 19th and early 20th century British ethnographer and colonial Indian civil servant, Herbert Hope Risley, has quite reflectively observed, “Beneath the manifold diversity of physical and social type, language, custom and religion, which strikes the observer in India, there can still be discerned a certain underlying uniformity of life from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin.”

The Ancient Roots of India’s Cultural Unity

This ‘underlying uniformity of life’ is not of recent origin. Nor is it a modern construct born out of the introduction of English education, a uniform system

of legal and civilian administration, modern means of transport and communication like the railways and the telegraph, and the wilful suppression of popular resistance movements and dissensions under the colonial rule as it is often alluded to.

As already mentioned, the visionary poets from the very beginning were fully conscious of the geographical unity of the country and their words had a natural resonance in the popular consciousness. The ready reckoning and acceptance of the aphorisms of the Vedas, the philosophical postulations of the Upanishads revolving around the concepts of the *Brahman* (the universal soul) and the *Atman* (the individual soul),



A painting depicting the Krishna-Arjuna Samvad

the teachings of the *Bhagavad-Gita* elucidating the ideals of the ‘Karma Yoga’ (the path of action), the ‘Bhakti Yoga’ (the path of devotion), and the ‘Jnana Yoga’ (the path of knowledge) for self-realisation, and the laws of the *Smritis* (legal treatises attributed to sages like Manu, Narada, Brihaspati, Yajnavalkya, Gautama, Harita, Vasishtha, Bodhayana, Apastamba and Hirananyakesin) by the people across the country, affirms this.

The *Puranas*, said to be compiled by sage Vyasa, immensely popularised the abstract spiritual and ethical truths contained in these sacred texts in the most intelligible manner that was possible. They did so with concrete examples from the lives of illustrious sages, saints, kings, and also lay devotees. Attributed to the Age of the Epics, these poetical works took little time and effort to mould public life for thousands of years to come. The *Puranas* also transformed the Vedic divinities into easily approachable personal Gods like Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva thereby making the paths of knowledge, action and devotion easier for the people to appreciate and practise in their own inimitable ways. Its consequent impact could be seen in the budding literary traditions of different regions in the country.

Similarly, epics like the Ramayana and the Mahabharata became universal in their appeals and acceptance among the peoples of all ethnicities and predispositions because of their inherent assimilative character. Consequently, as cultural traditions started flowering in different regions of the country, the stories of Rama and Sita and that of the Kauravas and the Pandavas became some of their principal themes. Even today it is difficult to find a place in any part of the country, where a local legend or a monument is not characteristically linked to these stories.



A scene from Ramlila

Besides, belief systems can also be seen today that revolve around the ideas of *satya* (the principle of truth), *dharma* (the laws of ethical and moral stability), *karma* (the laws of action connected to the concept of the transmigration of soul), *ahimsa* (the principle of non-violence), *daana* (the principles of charity), *punya* (the principles of earning religious merit), *tapas* (the principles of austerities and penances), and *moksha* (the principles of attaining liberation for the individual soul from the cycle of birth and death) being followed by peoples of all walks of life across the length and breadth of the country despite there being multiple differences amongst them in the interpretations of these ideas.

Over the centuries, streams of people have come to this country as adventurers, traders, mendicants, missionaries, travellers, conquerors, scholars, refugees, each with their own baggage of customs and traditions. But none of them has gone back or stayed in this country without being influenced or touched by at least some or all of these ideas. Naturally, as it happens in most such cases of cultural meeting points, initially there must have been fierce debates, discords and even conflicts. However, there was an inherent capacity in India to absorb such discords intellectually and contribute to the progressive development of all its peoples towards higher truth and self-realisation. Over centuries, this intellectual capacity has come to be represented by the six systems of philosophy (the *Vaisheshika* of sage Kanada, the *Nyaya* of sage

Gotama, the *Samkhya* of sage Kapila, the *Yoga* of sage Patanjali, the *Mimamsa* or the *Purva Mimamsa* of sage Jaimini, and the *Vedanta* or the *Uttara Mimamsa* of sage Vyasa), which still guide scholarly discourses in this country. As the German-born British Indologist Friedrich Max Muller observed, “the sutras or aphorisms which we possess of the six systems of philosophy, each distinct from the others, cannot possibly claim to represent the very first attempt at a systematic treatment; they are rather the last summing up of what had been growing during many generations of isolated thinkers”. Today, as we approach these six systems of philosophy in their mature forms, we find an underlying harmony in their appraisal of truth although on the surface they appear to be distinct from each other.

The orthodox ways of approaching and realising truth based on the acceptance of the Vedas as the fountains of all knowledge, and hence infallible by the aforesaid scriptural and philosophical traditions, faced a serious challenge with the emergence of the thirty-six heterodox sects during the 1st millennium BCE. The principal among those sects were Jainism and Buddhism, the first led by Vardhamana Mahavira and the other by Gautama the Buddha. They propounded views of life that were outside the ambit of faith and devotion. Nonetheless, as time rolled on,



Buddha

a spiritual synthesis out of this challenge did come to fore giving expression to what we may call a characteristically Indian variety of religiosity. Making *stupas*, *chaityas* and *viharas*, building cave shrines



Sanchi Stupa

and monolithic temples, sculpting and worshipping images, painting murals on cave, temple and palace walls, and organising religious congregations and festivals became the defining features of this religiosity. Typically, people of all sects and religious persuasions adapted these features and practised in their own celebratory ways.

The setting up of the four *Maths* (also spelled as *Mutt*) in the four directions of the country during the 1st millennium CE by Adi Shankara or Shankaracharya as he is popularly referred to in Indian tradition (the Jyotirmath at Badrinath in Uttarakhand in the north, the Sarada Math at Sringeri in Karnataka in the south, the Sharada Math at Dwarka in Gujarat in the west, and the Govardhana Math



Ganga Arati at Kashi

at Puri in Odisha in the east) was also in a way, a part of this synthesising effort. It enjoined upon all Hindus the sacred duty to visit these four *tirthas* (places of pilgrimage) at least once in their life time to earn the required *punya* (merit) for attaining *mokshya* (personal salvation). Similarly, the practice of invoking the names of the seven sacred cities (Ayodhya, Mathura, Maya/Haridwar, Kashi/Varanasi, Kanchi/Kanchipuram, Avantika/Ujjain and Dwaravati/Dwarka) and the seven sacred rivers (Ganga, Yamuna, Godavari, Saraswati, Narmada, Sindhu and Kaveri) during all auspicious occasions till this day continues to remind every Indian of not only the geographical vastness of the country but also its essential cultural unity.

Continuation of India's Unified Cultural Ethos through the Medieval and Modern Times

As India confronted parallel civilisations, coming first during the medieval times in the form of Islam from the Middle East and next during the modern times in the form of Christianity from the West, its responses were not vastly different. Through numerous social, religious and cultural reforms it

vastly transformed Indian society on both the occasions to remain firmly entrenched in its inimitable synthesising character as ever. The *Bhakti* and the *Sufi* movements in the medieval times and the renaissance movement in the 19th century CE not only helped in the incorporation of



Ajmer Dargah

whatever were good in Islam and Christianity into the Indian way of life, but also widened the scope for the infusion of a good measure of Indian ideas and practices into the Islamic and Christian traditions and belief systems. It is, therefore, not surprising to find so many places of inter-religious amity and harmony in India today. Tombs of the *Sufi* saints (*dargahs*), temples, churches and cathedrals offering spiritual solace to one and all come in this category. It may be interesting here to note that as people of all faiths flock to the *Dargha* of Khwaja Muinuddin Chisti at Ajmer in Rajasthan, it is Salabega who has been honoured

with the epithet of *bhaktakavi* for his numerous compositions in the praise of Lord Jagannath at Puri in Odisha. Similarly, at Nagapattinam in Tamil Nadu, people



Vailankanni Church

of all faith flock to the Vailankanni Church to pray at the feet of the Holy Mother Mary for good health and peace.

Obviously, the Indians who came in close contact with the foreign ruling elites on both these occasions could not help but get influenced by their languages, food habits, styles of dressing and overall social mannerisms. Such impact could be seen prominently on the contemporary Indian ruling families throughout the 2nd millennium CE. But the opposite also happened in an inevitable way. In ancient times, foreigners such as the Indo-Greeks (Yavanas), the Perthians (Pahalvas), the Scythians (Sakas), the Yuechis (Kushanas), the Hunas (a Central Asian tribe)

and several others had come to India with the aim of conquest, but in the process had got completely merged into the Indian cultural milieu without much trace of their individual identities. Although it did not happen in the same way on these occasions yet out of these encounters there gradually evolved a distinctive Indian personality that we are so familiar with today.

The Indian converts into Islam and Christianity, of course, could not give up their inherited customs for sociological reasons. The use of *sindur* (vermillion) on forehead, bangles on wrists and the observance of so many other little traditions were testimonies of this fact. Many of them even continued with their previous surnames. But the process did not stop there. Beginning with Ghiyas-ud-din Balban in the 13th century CE, the Sultans of Delhi started adopting many features that were associated with the courts of the Indian Rajas. In this enterprise, the members of the nobility, who came from outside into India in those days, did not lag far behind. Many of them found it quite useful to adopt the Indian habits of maintaining personal hygiene and the ways of going about life in social and aristocratic circles. This was perfected to such an extent that by the time Babur appeared on the Indian political scene in the 16th century CE, he found 'everything in Hindustan in the Hindustani way'.

In certain regions of India the process went much further. In Jammu and Kashmir, Zain-ul Abidin, popularly known as 'Badshah' (the Great King), initiated the practice of visiting the shrines of Lord Shiva at Amarnath and Devi Sharada in the Neelam valley (now in Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir). In Bengal, Husain Shah gave encouragement to the worship of Satya Pir/Satya Narayana, a tradition where the Muslims and the Hindus shared faith in a commonly acceptable divinity with varying names. Besides, the *Sufis* also adopted a number of practices which were not very far from the practices that were associated with the *Bhakti* traditions. Worshipping relics (*Mu-e-Mubarak*) of the Prophet and his footprints (*Qadam-e-Rasul*) were some such practices. Among others, celebrating Basant Panchami and removing the ill-effects of the evil eye by performing *arti* too became parts of the *Sufi* tradition. All such

developments made people find a lot of similarity in both the movements, which helped in bridging the distances between the two communities. On their parts, the *Bhakti* saints (Ramananda, Kabir, Guru Nanak, Sri Chaitanya, Mirabai, Shankara Deva, Namdev, Tukaram, Narsinh Mehta) also brought communities closer by tying them together through the common thread of devotion and removing from their eyes the veils of bigotry and differentiation through languages and imageries that were quite easily intelligible to them.

In the modern times a partially different process of building the Indian cultural persona came to be seen. Until then the main principle of governance had been to not only recognise the existence of an infinite variety of religious beliefs and social customs among the governed but also to defer to their continued practice unless warranted otherwise in an exceptional circumstance. But the situation underwent a complete change as India turned into a colony during the 18th century CE. It not only led to the wholesale political subjugation and economic exploitation of the country at the hands of the British, but also opened the floodgates for indiscriminate westernisation of the Indian society and its culture. The introduction of western education through the English medium and its systematic promotion at all levels facilitated this process in an unprecedented manner. The proactive policies of the Christian missionaries to propagate their faith through providing western education, which had become remarkably essential to find any livelihood opportunity and thereby earn some standing in social life in the new environment, enormously

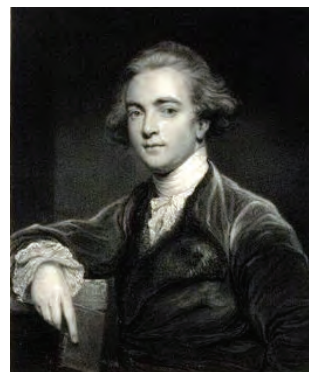


A Tennis Party in Simla, 1907

contributed to this process. As *The Gazetteer of India* (Volume Two) succinctly puts it: “Between the missionaries and the educationists, there was always the conflict whether conversion would bring progress and broader outlook or that education would lead Indians to Christianity.” At the end it was the missionaries who did much of the pioneering work in almost every field of education thereby impacting not only the policies of the colonial government of the time but also the larger Indian society. Another factor that also impacted the lives of the Indian people was the way in which the *Sahibs* or the British people lived in India. That it had a visible bearing actually comes to us from William Bentinck, who after coming to Bengal as the Governor General noted with satisfaction as to how the Indians in the cities of this Presidency were “spending their money not on ceremonies and religious rites alone but more and more on entertaining the British and entertaining like the British”. The directness with which the British also introduced social reforms like the banning of ‘slavery’ (beginning with a proclamation by Cornwallis against the sale and purchase of children of both sexes by the Portuguese, the Dutch, the French and the Arabs in 1789), the abolition of pernicious practices like ‘female infanticide’ (as early as 1795 CE in Bengal and thereafter in other Presidencies), *sati* or the self-immolation of the widow on the funeral pyre of the dead husband (through Regulation XVII of December 4, 1829) and ‘child marriage’ (beginning with the Act of 1860 that dealt with the age of consent and consummation), the removal of caste-based discrimination in the Hindu society (through the Caste Disabilities Removal Act of 1850), and the encouragement given to ‘widow remarriage’ (through the Hindu Widow’s Remarriage Act passed in 1856) also had a substantial transforming impact on the Indian society. In the immediate instance, it spurred the progressive elements of the Indian society, who steadfastly confronted orthodoxy of all kinds and led to the dawning of a new India.

However, alongside these impacts there also came into play a ‘national outlook’, which was hardly foreseen by the British. Contrary to Macaulay’s ideas, who expected to create ‘a class of persons

Indian in blood and colour, but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals and in intellect’, the introduction of western education in India, as the *Gazetteer* (cited above) states, actually freed the Indian mind from the “thralldom of old-world ideas” and initiated a renaissance in Indian life. It led to a sincere study of India’s cultural heritage and the rediscovery of its impressive past. Besides, it also led to the enrichment of modern Indian languages and the foregrounding of the humanistic trends in regional literatures, which once again brought people closer to each other. In this process the contributions of some enthusiastic western scholars and administrators like William Jones, Charles Wilkins, Monier Williams, John Marshall, Percy Brown, Vincent Smith and Henry Thomas Colebrooke, to name a few, was no less significant. In fact, it was a tribute to the age-old syncretic tradition of India that these scholars and administrators began deeply appreciating the philosophical as well as the temporal aspects of Indian culture even as the British gradually settled down to administer India with an iron grip. As historian Manmatha Nath Das writes: “When the young Indians read in their schools and colleges that a Buddha was the light of Asia, a Chandragupta Maurya had defeated the Greeks or that an Asoka was the greatest monarch in human history, they felt proud of their country”. Similarly, the aggressive



William Jones



Ramakrishna Math, Belur

condemnation of the religious practices, culture and society of India and especially that of Hinduism by the Christian missionaries coupled with their proselytising activities laid the foundation for the regeneration of the Indian religions and philosophies. The organisations which played the pioneering roles in doing so were the Brahma Samaj, the Arya Samaj, the Prarthana Samaj, the Ramakrishna Mission, the Theosophical Society, the Servants of India Society, the Satya Shodhak Samaj, Sri Narayana Dharma Paripalana Yogam, the Rahanumai Mazdayasanan Sabha and the Aligarh School. On the political front also the Indians learnt from the British the value of organisation and then the importance of agitation. This spurred a national movement which ultimately brought freedom to the country.

Thus, out of these cross-currents there has come into being a nation, which is modern and yet steeped in tradition. This is reflected across the social, political and economic systems of the country. As Professor A. L. Basham in his seminal work, *Wonder That Was India*, has quite perceptively stated, “Today there are few Indians, whatever their creed, who do not look back with pride on their ancient culture, and there are few intelligent Indians who are not willing to sacrifice some of its effete elements that India may develop and progress. Politically and economically, India faces many problems of great difficulty and no one can forecast her future with any certainty. But it is safe to predict that whatever that future may be, the Indians of coming generations will not be unconvincing and self-conscious copies of Europeans, but will be men rooted in their own traditions and aware of the continuity of their culture.” So, even as we have adopted the parliamentary system of government from the British, we have nourished a political culture that is uniquely Indian in ethos and sensibilities. Similarly, the welfare orientation of the country’s economy has allowed it to carry along the age-old economic relations that have sustained peoples and communities across the length and breadth of this country over the millennia. The same goes for the day-to-day life of the people in terms of the clothes they wear, the food they eat, the games they play, the languages they feel more comfortable with while

communicating with each other, and above all, the way they conduct themselves in public.

These are but a few examples which illustrate the essential unity of Indian culture. There are many more such examples which the readers will find mentioned in the State-wise profiles given hereafter in this Module. Besides, a closer look at other facets of Indian culture will also throw additional light on the unifying characteristics of Indian culture.

UNITY IN CULTURAL DIVERSITY

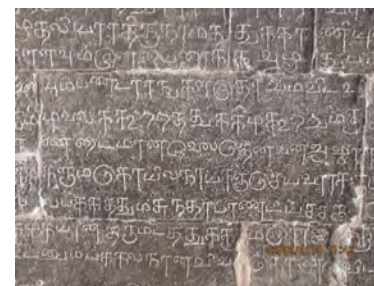
Language is a major marker that shows the bewildering diversity which has always existed in India. Going by the 2011 census there are as many as 122 languages and 234 mother tongues in the country with over 10,000 people speaking each of these languages. According to a 2013 study conducted by the Peoples Linguistic Survey of India, there are not less than 780 languages in the country as of now. In the past there might have been many more languages. But, whatever the number



Palm leaf manuscript in Sanskrit

of languages may be, there is no denying the fact that people in this vast country have always found in one or the other language the overarching means of communicating

with each other and to shape the country’s greater cultural identity. Literary works composed in Sanskrit, Pali, Prakrit and Tamil in ancient times connected vast number of peoples across the country. Then, alongside these languages, Persian and Arabic as the languages of the ruling class for over a period of more than five hundred years during the medieval times also contributed to the process of connecting peoples and their cultures



Tamil inscription from the Chidambaram Temple

in diverse ways. The standardised Hindi and Urdu languages, which are spoken by vast number of people in India today, are a tribute to this creative process. Similarly, since its introduction as a language of administration and education under the British rule in the 19th century CE, English has been continuing to play the role of a link language in India. Besides, the language has also been given the status of a 'subsidiary official language' in the country under the existing constitutional and statutory provisions to facilitate inter-governmental communication. Apart from this, what also needs to be remembered is the fact that in India languages coexisting within one family have always been intrepidly influenced by the languages of another family. This can be seen from the way Sanskrit has influenced languages like Kannada, Telugu and Malayalam, which belong to the Dravidian group of languages. Further, it is also worth remembering that literature produced across languages in India has always exhibited a remarkable spirit of unity defying formidable vocal diversity over the millennia.

Similarly, despite a bewildering variety of forms and expression in all other spheres of culture, be it fairs and festivals, food and cuisine or arts and crafts, one can still find a sense of unity writ large across their conception, mood and spirit. This can be well judged from the way festivals like Makar Sankranti, Holi, Baishakhi, Diwali and Dussehra are celebrated under different names in different parts of the country. This can also be judged from the way general norms for cooking food have come to be adhered to by people throughout the country. Today these traditions can



People celebrating Diwali

be found well preserved in temples as well as homes and popular restaurants alike. Furthermore, whether it is composing music or staging plays or building structures, one finds in all such activities an underlying observance

across the country of principles that are laid down in classical treatises emphasising on the aspect of conceptional unity amidst diversity of forms. A testimony to it can be seen in the recital of the Hindustani and the Carnatic styles of music, the performance of the Bharatanatyam, Kuchipudi, Kathakali, Odissi and Manipuri dance forms as well as the execution of the Nagara, Besara, Dravida and Kalinga styles of architecture as typical examples. The State-wise profiles are replete with many such examples.



Manipuri dance

Contributing Factors for India's Unity in Cultural Diversity

Today, with the benefit of hindsight, we can find several contributing factors for this unity amidst diversity. One such contributing factor is the organisational system of the Indian society. From the beginning it not only allowed a continuous process of social integration of people from diverse backgrounds but also provided them with the required space for social mobility and enjoyment of personal, domestic, religious and cultural freedom. As historian Radha Kumud Mookerji has pointed out, this ensured the continuity of the unitary character of the Indian society over a long period of time. Similarly, the emphasis laid by it from the beginning on linking the local with the regional and the regional with the national through institutional frameworks like family, marriage and kinship widened the sphere of the 'Great Indian Society' to eventually encompass the whole country.



Women from the Kumaon Hills, Uttarakhand

Sociological studies have shown variations in the Indian family structure depending on the marital, parent-child and sibling relations. However, there is no denying that over the centuries principles such as marrying outside one's immediate family circle, living in an undivided family, looking after the old and the young with care and affection, sharing family income for the welfare of all, celebrating festivals and observing family rituals together and carrying the family name have become the norms of the Indian family system imparting it a unitary character. Similarly, the time-honoured *Jajmani* system, allowing social groups to remain tied to each other through exchange of services, goods and gifts, has also provided a unifying basis for the Indian society and culture to thrive. In fact, the 'sense of collectivism' which one finds in an Indian village is largely on account of the steadfast observance of this system. But for it the Indian society could not have overcome the tumultuous changes that it has passed through over its long periods of history.

However, the process through which the Indian society could achieve all this was 'acculturation'. As a social process it allowed integration of many social groups into the larger fabric of the Indian society thereby shaping a broadly common pattern of life. As anthropologist McKim Marriott, while studying the village communities in India observed, this process allowed a two-way circulation of traditions giving birth to the sum and substance of Indian culture – elements of 'little traditions' in the form of local customs, rites, rituals and deities circulating upwards to the level of the 'greater tradition' and getting identified with its well-recognised forms; elements of the 'greater tradition' circulating downwards to become organic parts of the 'little traditions' losing some of their original forms and meanings.

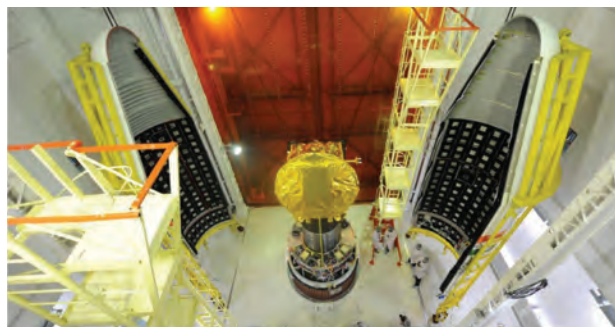
EPILOGUE

In India after Independence, urbanisation, industrialisation and agricultural revolution have greatly contributed to the integration of people from diverse backgrounds. Systems of mass transport and communication, modern medicine and health services, newer means of earning livelihood and



Jaipur Metro Rail

transacting businesses, and easy access to mediums of mass information and entertainment have immensely facilitated this process. The seamless continuum between the urban and the rural has also helped in bringing the country far closer than ever before. To add



ISRO's Mars Mission

to these, the achievements of the country in recent years in the fields of science and technology, institutional transformations and economic reforms, foreign policy, sports and games, and overall human development have once again generated a sense of nationhood that undeniably reflects the all-time poetic vision of India's fundamental unity amidst myriad diversity.

Pratyusa Kumar Mandal

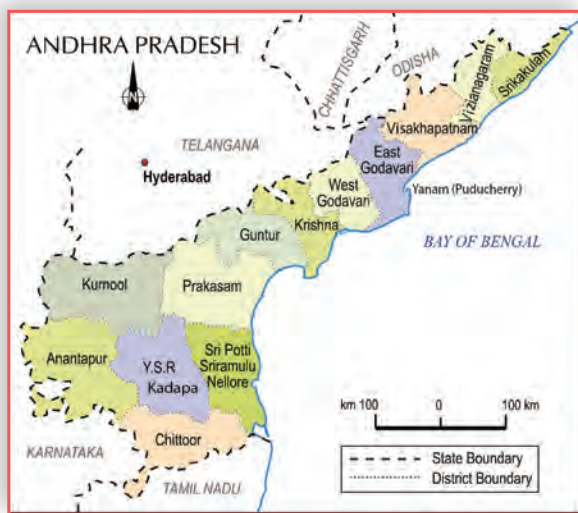
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ANDHRA PRADESH



The early history of Andhra is generally traced to the times of the Mauryan emperor, Ashoka. The chronicles of Megasthenese, the famous Greek traveller during the Mauryan era, reveal the richness of Andhra culture. The Satavahana dynasty ruled Andhra for a long time. Gautamiputra Satakarni was the greatest ruler of the Satavahana Empire in the 2nd century CE. Buddhism flourished during this period. Subsequently, different regions of the present-day Andhra Pradesh were ruled by the Eastern Chalukyas, Kakatiyas, Bahmanis, Vijayanagar Kings, Qutb Shahis, the Mughals, Asaf Jahis and the British.



Andhra Pradesh
State emblem

Andhra Pradesh is the land of Amaravati *stupa* (Buddhist shrine), Godavari and Krishna *pushkaralu* (worship of rivers), Kuchipudi dance, lyrical Carnatic music, Annamayya's *Keertanas*, Tyagaraja's compositions and the reverberations of Veena.

Andhra Pradesh is located on the southeast coast of India near the Bay of Bengal. It is the tenth largest State in terms of population and the eighth largest in terms of area. It shares borders with the States of Chhattisgarh, Karnataka, Odisha, Tamil Nadu, Telangana and the Union Territory of Puducherry (Yanam). Major rivers of South India such as Godavari, Krishna and Tungabhadra flow through Andhra Pradesh. The coastline is about 1,000 kms along the Coromandel Coast. The Eastern Ghats including the Nallamala range of forests are the other major geographical features.

The national freedom struggle witnessed the active participation of many Andhra leaders such as Kasinadhuni Nageswara Rao Pantulu, Tanguturi Prakasam (Andhra Kesari), B. Pattabhi Sitaramayya, Maharshi Bulusu Samba Murthy, Tanneti Vishwanatham, Alluri Seeta Rama Raju, N.G. Ranga, Durgabai Deshmukh and Damodaram Sanjeevaiah. Pingali Venkaiah was the designer of the flag on which the National Flag of India was based.

Fact Sheet	
State Day	1 November
Geographical Area	1,60,205 km ²
Capital	Amaravati (near Vijayawada)
Official Language	Telugu
State Animal	Krishna Jinka (Blackbuck)
State Bird	Palapitta (Indian Roller)
State Flower	Lotus
State Tree	Neem





Blackbuck



Indian Roller



Lotus



Neem

Potti Sriramulu launched a fast-unto-death to achieve a separate State for the Telugu-speaking people of the then Madras Presidency. His death led to the creation of the Andhra State in 1953. Then, after the merger of Telangana, the State of Andhra Pradesh was formed on 1 November 1956. Telangana became the 29th State of India on 2 June 2014 after the reorganisation of the State of Andhra Pradesh. Since then Hyderabad is being shared by both the States as the common capital. However, Andhra Pradesh is building a new capital city at Amaravati, on the southern bank of River Krishna.

CULTURAL SPECIFICITIES

Language

Telugu is the official language of the people of Andhra Pradesh. It is the 15th most widely spoken language in the world. Telugu-speakers constitute the third largest linguistic unit in India, next to Hindi and Bengali. The script is similar to that of Kannada. Urdu is an additional official language. Hindi, Tamil and Odia are among the other languages spoken in different parts of the State.

Telugu belongs to the Dravidian family of languages. It was accorded the classical language status in 2008. The origins of Telugu are traced back to the 1st century CE. Then it was also known as Tenugu. Early inscriptions in Telugu are found dating back to the 6th century CE. Telugu is also sometimes thought to be derived from the Sanskrit word 'Trilinga' (meaning three *lingas*). In the medieval times the land of the Telugus was described as the one marked by three *lingas* of the famous shrines of Draksharamam (East Godavari district), Srisailem (Kurnool district) and Kaleshwaram (Jayashankar Bhoopalapally district).

Early Telugu literary works, which originated around the 11th century CE, were translations from Sanskrit. Indeed, the vocabulary of Telugu was

highly enriched by Sanskrit. Nannaya, Tikkana and Yerrapragada came to be known as the *kavitraya* or 'the three great poets' of Telugu. The famous Bhakti poets in Telugu literature include Tallapaka Annamayya, Bhakta Ramadasu and Tyagaraja. Timmakka and Molla were the noted women poets of the medieval period. Telugu literature attained great heights during the 16th century due to the efforts of the famous Vijayanagar king, Sri Krishna Deva Raya.

Literary icons such as Vemana, Kandukuri Veeresalingam, Gurajada Venkata Apparao, Bellary Raghava, Tripuraneni Ramaswamy Chowdary, Goparaju Ramachandra Rao (Gora) and Srirangam Srinivasa Rao (Sri Sri); philosopher, Jiddu Krishnamurti and spiritual guru, Sathya Sai Baba are among the well-known personalities of the State. Viswanatha Satyanarayana, C. Narayana Reddy and Ravuri Bharadhwaja have been recognised for their contribution to Indian Literature with Jnanpith Award.

Gurajada Apparao wrote a popular Telugu patriotic song, "desamunu preminchumanna, manchi annadi penchumanna" (Love the nation, grow the goodness). The national pledge (All Indians are my brothers and sisters...) was originally written in Telugu by Pydimarri Venkata Subbarao. Subsequently, it was translated into English, Hindi and other regional languages.

Dress

The traditional attire of women and men are *saree* and *dhoti* respectively. These are mostly made of cotton and silk. Cotton *sarees* of Mangalagiri, silk *sarees* of Dharmavaram, cotton and silk *sarees* of Bandar and Venkatagiri are highly popular.



Dharmavaram pure silk wedding saree

Salwar kameez and *churidar kurta* (known locally as Punjabi dresses) have become common among youngsters in recent decades. Jewellery, mostly made of gold, becomes a part of woman's attire, especially during wedding and other special occasions. During functions, men wear white *dhoti* with golden border. Otherwise, they usually wear shirt and trouser.



Mangalagiri Cotton Saree

Food

The cuisine of Andhra Pradesh consists of many vegetarian and non-vegetarian dishes. Andhra cuisine is considered spicy. Rice is the staple food. A typical meal includes *pappu* (pulse dish), *charu* (tamarind soup), curd, buttermilk and curries made of vegetables or using meat and fish. The popular vegetarian dishes are *idli*, *vada* and *dosa* that are served with *sambar* and many varieties of *pachadi* or *chutney*. Andhra specialities include *pesarattu* (green gram dosa), *upma*, *bendakaya pulusu* (okra with tamarind based sour stew) and *gutti vankaya koora* (Andhra eggplant curry). A wide range of pickles made of mangos, gongura leaves, red chillies, etc., accompany Andhra meals.



A typical Andhra meal

The non-vegetarian dishes include Andhra style chicken curry, Andhra pepper chicken, *gongura mamsam* (lamb curry with gongura leaves), mutton fry, mutton curry, *chepala pulusu* (fish curry with tamarind based sour stew). Many special dishes are prepared during festivals and special occasions. They include *boorelu* (deep-fried sweet dumplings), *gaarelu* (deep-fried *vadas* made of black gram, pegin gram and green gram), *pulihora* (tamarind rice with green chillies), *pongali* and *bobbatlu*. The traditional sweets include *gavvalu*, *ariselu*, *sunundalu*, *perumallapuram bellam gaarelu*, *atreyapuram pootharekulu*,



Pootharekulu

madata kaja, *kakinada kaja*, *madugula halwa*, *bandar laddu* and *rava laddu*.

The coastal region of Andhra Pradesh is known for its seafood. Ragi is mostly used in the Rayalaseema region. Ragi *sankati* (finger millet balls) is the most popular dish. *Bellam* (jaggery) is common in northern Andhra Pradesh.

A popular saying in Telugu is *thinte gaarelu thinu, vinte Bharatham vinu* means: "If you want to eat, eat *gaarelu*; if you want to listen, listen to Mahabharat."



Bandar Laddu



Gaarelu

FAIRS AND FESTIVALS

The people of Andhra Pradesh celebrate many festivals. Most of them are related to different faiths or seasons. The major ones include: Bhogi, Sankranti and Kanuma in mid-January; Maha Shivaratri in February; Ugadi (Telugu New Year's Day) in March; Sri Rama Navami, Mahavir Jayanti and Good Friday in April; Buddha Purnima in May; Rath Yatra in July; Varalakshmi Vratam and Vinayaka Chavithi in August; Dussehra and Atla Taddi in October; Naraka Chaturdasi and Deepavali in November; Idu'l Fitr, Bakrid, Milad-un-Nabi/Id-e-Milad and Christmas in December.



Participants painting rangoli during Sankranti celebrations in Vijayawada (Photo: V. Raju, The Hindu, 15 January 2015)



Devotees at Rottela Panduga (Roti Festival/Rotiyaan-ki-Eid) in Nellore (Photo: K. Ravikumar, The Hindu, 5 November 2014)



PERFORMING ARTS

Dance

Kuchipudi, one of the famous classical dance forms of India, originated in the village of Kuchipudi, also known as Kuchelapuram in Krishna District. The efforts of Siddhendra Yogi have brought glory to this dance form.



Kuchipudi



Dhimsa

Dhimsa is a folk dance performed by tribes of Araku Valley located in the Visakhapatnam District.

Drama

Tolu Bommalata (leather shadow puppet show) is a traditional art form. This is one of the oldest forms of storytelling. Large and colourful puppets along with classical music are used in its performance. The themes of the puppet shows are mostly drawn from the Ramayana, the Mahabharata and Puranas.



Master puppeteers at work: Traditional artistes singing backstage during a leather puppet show (Photo: C.V. Subrahmanyam, The Hindu, 5 September 2011)

Music

Andhra Pradesh is a major centre of classical music in India. Shyama Shastri, Tyagaraja and Muthuswami Dikshitar, the three composer-musicians of the 18th century CE, are considered as the trinity of Carnatic music. The first two of them mainly composed in Telugu and the latter in Sanskrit.

The field of instrumental music was enriched by the contributions of Dwaram Venkataswamy Naidu (Violin), Emani Sankara Sastry (*Veena*), Chitti Babu (*Veena*), Sheik Chinna Moulana (*Nadaswaram*), Yella Venkatesara Rao and U. Srinivas (Mandolin).

The famous vocal musicians include Voleti Venkateswarlu, Mangalampalli Balamuralikrishna, Nedunuri Krishnamurthy, Srirangam Gopalaratnam, Sripada Pinakapani and Nookala Chinna Satyanarayana.

Burrakatha is a ballad in which the singers recite mostly mythological stories. They wear colourful costumes and make-up. The lead singer plays *Tambura* (a bottle shaped drum).



Burrakatha by Gorrelu Ramu and troupe, The Hindu, 29 March 2012

VISUAL ARTS

Bobbili *Veena* is a well-known musical instrument. It is created at Bobbili and Gollapalli of Vizianagaram district and Nuzvid in Krishna District. Exquisitely designed *Veenas* and *Tamburas* are carved from a single piece of jack wood. The artisans over the years have diversified the craft to make miniature *Veenas* as decorative pieces.



Artisans at work at the Craft Development Centre (Photo: K.R. Deepak, The Hindu, 28 April 2012)

Kalamkari paintings and fabrics use vegetable dyes. They are mostly found in Machilipatnam and Srikalahasti. Bronze castings of mythological figures are fine examples of expertise in metal crafts. *Butta*



Kalamkari Srikalahasti Swam Table



Kalamkari Machilipatnam Bed sheet floral



Bommalu (basket toys) are made of lightweight materials such as bamboo, and are mostly produced in Kurnool district.



Kondapalli, near Vijayawada, makes toys, which are popular. They are brightly coloured and lightweight.

Kondapalli Toys



Places of Importance

Andhra Pradesh has many historical monuments, pilgrimage sites and holy shrines of different faiths. Some of the temples trace their past to ancient times. The most famous of them is in Tirupati, located at the southern end of the Eastern Ghats. The town is amidst seven hills and has waterfalls, forests and valleys. Sri Venkateswara Swamy Temple is located at Tirumala, on top of the hills. This temple is considered to be one of the richest in the world in terms of offerings made by the devotees. The outer walls of the

sanctum sanctorum of this temple are covered with pure gold. Other major temples in the State include: Sri Bhimeswara Swamy Temple, Draksharamam; Sri Bhramaramba Mallikarjuna Swamy Temple, Nallamalai Hills, Srisailem; Sri Veera Venkata Satyanarayana Swamy Temple, Annavaram; and Kanaka Durga Temple, Vijayawada.

The other well-known places in Andhra Pradesh are Amaravati, Kurnool, Rajamahendravaram



Sri Bhramaramba Mallikarjuna Swamy Temple, Srisailem



Kanaka Durga Temple, Vijayawada



Lepakshi Nandi, Anantpur



Sri Venkateswara Temple, Tirupati

(Rajahmundry), Tirupati, Vijayawada (Bezawada) and Visakhapatnam. Rajamahendravaram and Vijayawada are the main venues of Godavari and Krishna *pushkaralu* respectively. They are held once in 12 years.



Krishna Pushkaralu



Godavari Pushkaralu

Popular pilgrimage centres are Ahobilam, Annavaram, Arasavalli, Draksharamam, Dwaraka Tirumala, Kanipakam, Mantralayam, Puttaparthi, Simhachalam, Srikalahasti and Mahanandi.

The State is also home to many Buddhist heritage sites such as Salihundram (Srikakulam district), Sankaram near Anakapalle (Visakhapatnam) and Nagarjunakonda (Guntur). Palaeolithic rock paintings are in Ketavaram, Yaganti, Katavani Kunta



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and Jerru Valley of Kurnool district. Andhra Pradesh has a few hill stations at Horseley Hills (Chittoor district) and Araku (Visakhapatnam district), known as Andhra Ooty.



Akkamahadevi Cave Temple



Undavalli Cave Temple



Chandragiri Fort and Palace

Near the Vizag harbour, the three holy shrines, namely, Baba Ishaq Madina Dargah, Venkateswara Swamy Temple and Ross Hill Church atop three adjacent hillocks symbolise communal harmony.



Apart from the traditional heritage sites, Andhra Pradesh is also home to highly advanced technology in various emerging fields. Visakhapatnam is a major hub of Information Technology (IT). The satellite launching station, also called the spaceport of India, is located at Sriharikota. It is a remote island, 18 kilometres east of Sullurupeta in SPS Nellore District. It has a national range for launching multistage rockets and satellite launch vehicles.



CONTEMPORARY CULTURAL DEVELOPMENTS

Telugu film industry produces the maximum number of films in India every year. Prominent personalities in the Telugu film industry such as Bommireddy Narasimha Reddy, L.V. Prasad, B. Nagi Reddy, Akkineni Nageswara Rao, D. Ramanaidu and K. Viswanath are among the Dadasaheb Phalke Awardees. Telugu film industry also produced many famous singers such as Ghantasala, S.P. Balasubrahmanyam, P. Susheela and S. Janaki.

A lot of events such as Pushkaralu, Sankranti, Ugadi Sambaralu (celebrations) and Visakha Utsav are organised to promote cultural heritage of Andhra Pradesh.

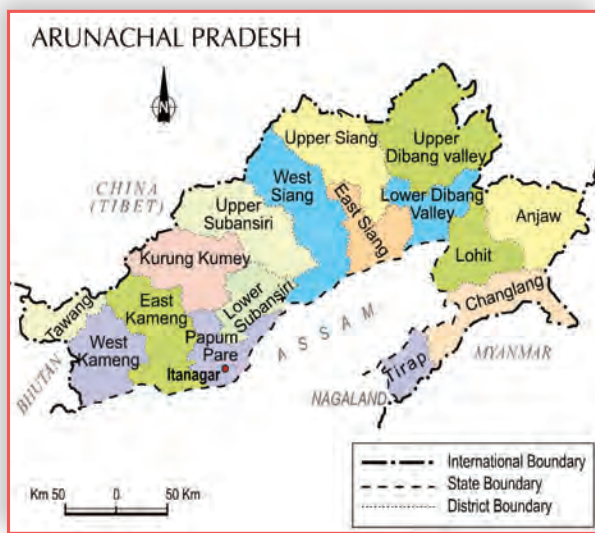


The tableau of Andhra Pradesh passes through the Rajpath, New Delhi during the 66th Republic Day Parade in 2015





ARUNACHAL PRADESH

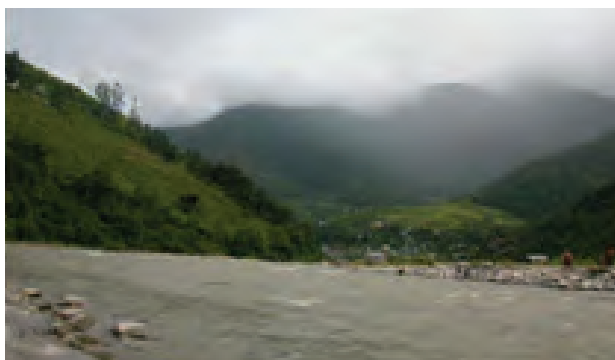


The State is known for its pristine beauty, high mountainous regions, undulating terrains, enchanting scenery, formidable streams, and thick forests. Extending from the snow covered peaks of the Himalayas to the Brahmaputra plains, Arunachal Pradesh, also known as the ‘Land of the Rising Sun’, is surrounded by Tibet and China on the north and the north-east, Bhutan on the west, Assam and Nagaland on the south, and Myanmar on the east. In fact, the Himalayan and the Patkai hills cover a major part of the State, making it the most sparsely populated in India. However, the passes running through these hills and the river courses provide essential transportation routes to the people of the State.

Geographically, Arunachal Pradesh is located in the north-eastern extremity of India. It became a full-fledged State of the Republic of India on 20 February 1987. Till 20 January 1972, it was known as the North-East Frontier Agency (NEFA). Thereafter, it became a Union Territory and renamed as Arunachal Pradesh.

The main rivers of Arunachal Pradesh are Siang, Tirap, Khameng, Lohit and Subansiri, which form the mighty Brahmaputra in Assam. These rivers, originating from the Himalayas, are snow-fed and divide the State into five river valleys.

The climate on the foothills is sub-tropical. However, in the mountains the temperature decreases with the rising altitude. The State also receives



A view of a valley

<i>Fact Sheet</i>	
<i>State Day</i>	20 February
<i>Geographical Area</i>	83,743 km ²
<i>Capital</i>	Itanagar
<i>Official Language</i>	English
<i>State Animal</i>	Mithun
<i>State Bird</i>	Great Hornbill
<i>State Flower</i>	Retusa
<i>State Tree</i>	Hollong



copious rainfall averaging between 2,000 mm and 4,000 mm (80–160 inches) in a year.

The capital of Arunachal Pradesh is Itanagar, which derives its name from the 14th century CE ‘Ita fort’ (brick fort) located in the capital complex. Itanagar is also the largest city of Arunachal Pradesh. The major religions followed in the State are indigenous faiths, Christianity, Hinduism and Buddhism.

The State, known for its natural beauty, is primarily dependant on agriculture. The main crops here are rice, pulses, sugarcane, wheat, millets, oilseeds, ginger and maize. It has a vast area with thick forest cover, which ensures that the forest produce also contribute to its economy. The farmers of the State employ various methods to increase their agricultural yield. *Jhum* and terrace farming are two of them. In *Jhum* cultivation, the farmers prepare the land by cutting down the unwanted vegetation and then setting it on fire. Terrace farming is practiced by converting the hill slopes into layered terraces and then clearing these of vegetation for cultivation. This practice also helps in preventing soil erosion. Rice mills, fruit processing industries, horticulture, handlooms, and handicrafts are other significant sources of income for the State and its people. The tourism sector of the State, however, has not been fully utilised.

People belonging to several tribes inhabit the State, making it colourful with their diverse culture and traditions.

CULTURAL SPECIFICITIES

Language

Arunachal Pradesh is home to many indigenous tribes having distinct languages. There are as many as 82 languages spoken in the State. The most common among these are Mishmi, Adi, Galo, Monpa, Hrusso, Nocte, Khamti, Nyishi, Wancho, Sajalong, Tagin, Tangsa, Sherdukpen, Apatani, Nah, Singpho, Sartang and so on. Other than these tribal languages, residents of Arunachal Pradesh also speak Hindi, Assamese and English.

Dress

The traditional attires of Arunachal Pradesh are spectacular. With 25 distinct tribes and over 110 sub-tribes, the colours and designs on fabrics they wear hold special meanings for each tribe. While most tribes, belonging to the same ancestry are ethnically similar, their geographical separation has brought about differences in their dressing styles. Using fibers from trees, goats, and human hair, they create ceremonial coats, shawls, skirts, sashes, *lungis* and belts with various forms of embroidery. Belt is an important part of both daily as well as ceremonial costume of women. In fact, it is a symbolic representation of their social and marital status.

Weaving is done with a bamboo tube using threads of cotton and wool. Geometric patterns usually dominate such weaving, the most popular motif being that of angular designs with zig-zag lines. Even floral patterns follow such design.

During wedding ceremonies people wear various types of accessories like *Biang Sipi* (chain of blue coloured beads), *Talei* (mixed sized bowls), *Buah Tap* and *Kamko Tap* (bangles worn by the groom), *Bauhche* (bridegroom’s sword), *Buah Gatjiang* (red coloured bead fastened on the left wrist of the groom), *Koktung* (headgear), *Doumui Che* (Bride’s sword), *Habo Terri* (garland worn by girls), *Pebar* (a rectangle-shaped jewellery) , and bead chains of various kinds known as *Sampu*, *Sangiang*, *Anabou*, and *Sengme*.

In day-to-day life also people adorn themselves with attractive costumes and jewellery. The men usually wear beautiful hats with embellishments of beaks and feathers of birds. Silver rings and earrings embroidered with different coloured beads too are commonly used as popular fashion accessories.



A local girl with traditional costume and ornaments



Headgear



Jewellery of silver and beads Traditional dress of Apatani tribe



Geometric patterns woven in a costume



Nyokum Festival of Nyishi

Food

The people of Arunachal Pradesh eat rice, bamboo shoot, *piike piilla* (pickle), *lukter* (combination of cooked dry meat and flakes of the king chilly or *bhut jolokia*), and *pehak* (a spicy *chutney* made with fermented soya bean and chilli). *Apong* (millet or rice beer) is a commonly consumed popular drink.

Rice is the staple food. It is consumed with different non-vegetarian side-dishes like meat, chicken, and pork. People in Arunachal Pradesh are also fond of eating fish. The Apatanis grow fish in their wet paddy fields. Besides, different species of leafy, stem and floral vegetables, wild edible plants, fruits, and roots are also cooked and consumed by the people. The tribes of Arunachal Pradesh have knowledge about the use of these plants as food, fodder and medicine. Maize, millet, oranges, ginger and spices like cardamom are also widely used by them as part of their food.



Thenthuk

The climatic and ecological diversity of the State provides a natural setting for the cultivation of such unique food habits.

FAIRS AND FESTIVALS

Festivals provide perfect opportunities for one to experience the cultural diversity of Arunachal Pradesh. As the State is inhabited by several tribal communities, such festivals related to one or the other community are celebrated throughout the year. During these occasions, people dance, sing, pray, pay gratitude to Gods, and enjoy community gatherings.

Buddha Mahotsava and *Saga Dawa* are two Buddhist festivals celebrated across the State

showcasing monastic and traditional tribal dances, food fairs and exhibition of local handicrafts. *Tamladu*, celebrated by the Digaru Mishmis, is another festival which showcases their religious and social beliefs. Similarly, *Sangken* is a Buddhist festival celebrated by the Khamtis in the Lohit district. It also marks the beginning of the new year for the community. *Ojiyale*, celebrated by the Wanchos during the months of March and April, features different songs and dances. Likewise, *Mopin*, associated with agriculture, plays an important role in the cultural life of the Galos. An objective of this festival is to drive away evil spirits.

Table 1 mentions some other notable festivals celebrated in Arunachal Pradesh.

Table 1

Festivals	Name of the Tribe	Date & Month of celebration
Si-Donyi	Tagin	6th January
Sarok	Hrusso	11th January
Reh	Idu-Mishmi	1st Februray
Donggin	Adi	2nd February
Boori-Boot Yullo	Nyishi	6th February
Shapwang Yaung Manawpoi	Singpho	14th February
Tam Ladu	Taraon	15th February
Oriah	Wancho	16th February
Nyokum	Nyishi	26th February
Unying-Aran	Adi	7th March
Mopin	Galo	5th April
Pongtu	Tutsa	11th April
Sangken	Khamti/Singpho	14th April



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Longte	Nyishi	15th April
Moh-Moi	Tangsa	25th April
Gumkum-Gumpa	Puroik	25th April
Etor	Adi	15th May
Dree	Apatani	5th July
Solung	Adi	1st September
Pham-Kho-Sowai	Bugun	10th September
Ke-Meh-Ha	Idu Mishmi	24th September
Chindang	Sajolang	15th October
Nyetshidow	Hrusso	15th November
Chalo-Loku	Nocte	25th November
Podi-Barbi	Adi-Bokar	5th December
Khikshaba	Sherdukpen	Date to be fixed by the community
Lah-Chut	Meyor	Date to be fixed by the community
Losar	Monpa	Date to be fixed by the community
Poi-Pee-Mau	Tai Khamti	Date to be fixed by the community
Tang	Sartang	September

PERFORMING ARTS

Dance and Music

Arunachal Pradesh is a repository of various forms of folktales, ballads, songs and dances, which demonstrate the creative instincts of the people.

Each tribe in the State has its own traditional dance which is generally performed during festivals and marriages. Among these the most popular are *Ponung* and *Tapu Dance* (Adi), *Niechi-dou* (Hrusso), *Pakku-Itu* (Apatani), *Rikhampada* (Nyishi), *Igu Dance* (Idu Mishmi), *Lion and Peacock dance* and *Ajhi Lhamu Pantomime* (Monpa and Sherdukpen), *Loku-Bawang* (Nocte), *Moh festival dance* (Tangsa) and *Ozele* (Wancho). These dances



Dance Form

are invariably accompanied by songs sung to the tunes of indigenous musical instruments like *Guga* (a bamboo string instrument), *Ujuk Tapua* (a wind instrument made of



Ujuk Tapua and Duff

bottlegourd) and reed flutes such as the *Pupe* and *Tapu*. *Ponu Yoksi* is another sword-like instrument used during ceremonial dances performed by the priests. Several types of drums are also played by different tribes. The most popular among these are *duff* and *khong*.

VISUAL ARTS

Some Important Monasteries

The 300-year old monastery at Tawang is an architectural marvel of the State of Arunachal Pradesh. It belongs to the Mahayana sect of Buddhism. It was built in the 17th century CE at a height of 10,000



Tawang Monastery

feet, it houses priceless images, painted tapestries, books and collections of gold lettered Buddhist scriptures. Among the latter, the 108 gold-embossed manuscripts of the teachings of the Buddha and 225 volumes of explanations of his teachings (each covered with specially designed moth-proof silk adorned with paintings) are the most prized ones.

Handicrafts

Arunachal Pradesh is a land of beautiful handicrafts comprising a wide range of products.

From the point of view of their specialities, and the tribes that are associated with these, the State can be divided into three zones. The first zone includes Buddhist tribes like the Sherdukpens, Monpas, the Khowas, Akas, Mijis, Membas, Khambas, Khamtis and Singphos. The second zone stretches from the East Kameng district in the west to the Lohit district in the east occupying the central part of the State.

The third zone is composed of the south-eastern part of the State.



Bamboo Crafts



Floriculture - Orchids



Lillies



Horticulture

The people of the first zone make beautiful masks. They also periodically stage pantomimes and dances using these masks. Besides, the Monpas also make beautiful carpets, painted wooden vessels, and silver articles.

The people of the second zone like the Apatanis, Hill Miris and Adis are expert workers in cane and bamboo. They make beautiful articles using these materials which speak eloquently about their skill and craftsmanship. They also weave cloths that are used daily by the people. The shawls and jackets of the Apatanis, *galles* (lower garment worn by

women) and shoulder bags of the Adis and coats and shawls of the Mishmis are examples of their fine weaving skills.

The people of the third zone are famous for wood carving. However, the Wanchos also weave beautiful bags and loin cloths. Goat's hair, ivory, tusks of boars, beads of agate and other precious stones, brass and glass are other materials specially used by the people of this zone to produced different articles.

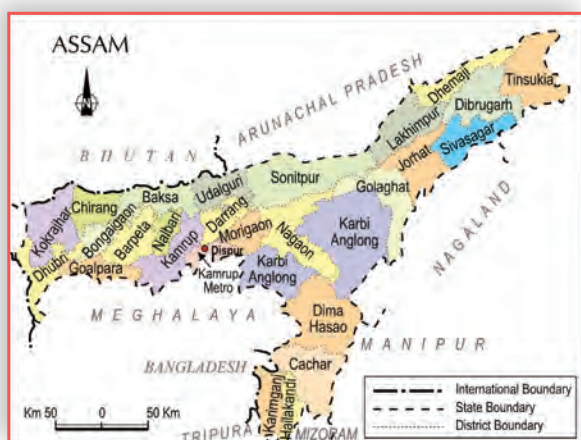
CONTEMPORARY CULTURAL DEVELOPMENTS

In recent decades the cultural landscape of Arunachal Pradesh has changed owing to greater access to education. Technological input is gradually replacing the old methods of weaving skirts and shawls. Besides, reaching products made of bamboo, cane and orchids to the markets across India has noticeably enhanced the material circumstances of the people. The monasteries and places of natural beauty are also attracting thousands of visitors to the State. The Siang River Festival is one such attraction, which promotes eco-tourism in the State. Earlier this festival was celebrated as Brahmaputra Darshan Festival in Tezu and Pasighat. However, since the year 2005, it is celebrated as Siang River Festival in places like Tuting, Yingkiong and Pasighat in the month of December each year.





ASSAM



Assam, lying between 89° 42' E and 96° E longitudes and 24° 8' N and 28° 2' N latitudes, occupies the central location in north-east India. With its western border directly connected to West Bengal, the State is also regarded as the gateway to the north-eastern States. During the epic period, the State was known as Pragjyotisha. It meant, 'the land of eastern astronomy'. Subsequently, the State came to be known as Kamarupa as testified to by the Allahabad Pillar Inscription of King Samudragupta. This name remained in vogue till about the 12th century CE. From the 13th century CE the State came to be ruled by the Ahoms. According to some scholars, the State owes its present name to them. However, going by another interpretation, the State may have drawn its current name from the Sanskrit word *asoma*, which means 'peerless' or 'unparalleled'. The Ahoms remained in power for about six hundred years. Thereafter, the State passed into the hands of the Burmese. However, the British seized it from them through the Treaty of

Yandaboo signed in 1826 CE. Finally, the State was incorporated into the Indian Union.

The present State of Assam, covering an area of 78,438 square kilometers, mainly consists of two extensive river valleys: the valley formed by the River Brahmaputra and its tributaries in the north; and the valley formed by the River Barak and its tributaries in the south. Between these two valleys run the long range of hills (Karbi, North Cachar and Barail), which account for much of the State's greenery and wildlife. It is because of this unique topographical feature that the State is also known as the 'Land of Red River and Blue Hills'.

Over the centuries, these valleys and hills have become homes to peoples of diverse backgrounds and ethnicities. Some of them have been categorised as the hills and the plains tribes. The most prominent among them are the Bodos, Misings, Rabhas, Deoris, Tiwas, Kacharis, Karbis, Hajongs and Mechs. Besides, there is a sizeable population of Adivasis from the Chotanagpur region settled in the tea plantations of the State. They are known as the 'tea tribes'. However, the Koch Rajbongshis, Ahoms,

Fact Sheet	
State Day	2 December
Geographical Area	78,438 km ²
Capital	Dispur
Official Languages	Assamese, Bodo, Bengali
State Animal	Gor (Rhinoceros)
State Bird	White-winged wood duck
State Flower	Foxtail Orchids
State Tree	Hollong (<i>Dipterocarpus macrocarpus</i>)



Chutiyas, Morans and Motaks constitute the majority of the non-tribal ethnic Assamese population. The Bengali, Nepali and Hindi speaking people are other important constituents of the State's population. In between them these people have not only shared the bountiful natural resources provided by the State to sustain themselves and flourish but have also come to create a cultural mosaic which is known to everyone today as the 'Assamese culture'.

CULTURAL SPECIFICITIES

Since ancient times Assam has provided the much needed cultural glue to hold the entire north-eastern region together. To a large extent this holds true in the modern times as well. It is in the expansive plains of this State that people coming from different directions over centuries have found a common ground to evolve an acceptable language for exchange of ideas and information, a body of literature that is rich in human emotion and philosophy, and other facets of culture which in many ways define the region.

Language

Assamese or 'Asomiya' is the most commonly spoken language in the State. Besides, it also serves the purpose of a link language in the whole region. As a language, it is considered to have evolved out of Magadhi, a form of old Prakrit language. However, on account of various influences over the years the language has come to acquire some variations in its form of speech. These are called the groups of dialects of Assamese. Of these, the eastern group of dialects is spoken mainly in the Sibsagar district and its adjoining areas. Similarly, the central group of dialects is mostly spoken in the Nagaon district and the areas adjacent to it. In the west, on the other hand, there are two distinct groups of dialects. These are called the Goalparia and the Kamrupi groups.

Bodo or 'Bo-Ro' is another important spoken language of the State. It belongs to the Tibeto-Burman language family and is mostly spoken in the areas coming under the Bodoland Territorial Council, where it is the official language. By the 92nd Amendment of the Constitution of India in

2003, Bodo has also become one of the 22 scheduled languages of the country.

Apart from these two languages, Bengali has also been accorded official status in the State as it is spoken widely in the Barak Valley region. Besides, there are a number of other languages, which have added lustre to the State's composite culture. Table 1 below lists some of those languages.

Table 1

Other Tribal Languages	Dimasa, Mishing, Karbi, Rabha, Tiwa and others belonging to the Tibeto-Burman family. There are also some variants of Tai language like Tai Phake, Tai Aiton, Tai Khamti spoken by small ethnic groups in the State.
Other Non-Tribal Languages	Punjabi, Hindi, Marwari, Bhojpuri, Odia, Manipuri and other modern Indian languages spoken by members of the same language speaking communities residing in the State.

Literature

Assamese has acquired the status of a literary language at least from the 10th century CE. Its earliest corpus included folk songs, ballads, riddles, proverbs and myriad sayings. Besides, specimens of compositions in the earliest forms of Assamese are also found in the *Dohakosha* and *Charyagiti* of the Siddha cult of Buddhism, which belonged to this period. However, Hema Sarasvati's *Prahlada Charitra* ascribed to the 13th century CE is generally considered to be the first written work in Assamese. In the 14th century CE, Assamese literature further developed with patronage from Mahamanikya, the king of Cachar. Being encouraged by it, Madhava Kandali, the chief poet of the time, rendered dramatic incidents from the epic, the Ramayana into Assamese with added local flavour, thereby making these stories extremely popular. During the next two centuries, the Vaishnava movement led by Srimanta Sankaradeva, and after him by his disciple Madhavadeva, heralded the golden age of Assamese literature. *Kirtana-ghosa*, an anthology of devotional songs consisting of the compositions of both, a number of one-act plays known as *Ankiya Nats*



of Srimanta Sankaradeva, and *Baragitas* and *Rajasuya* of Madhavadeva, the first portraying the playful childhood of Lord Krishna and the later His greatness over other kings of the time through the narration of the sacrifice of the same name performed by the Pandavas, have come down as great literary works of that period, which also witnessed the compositions of *Charita-puthis* or biographical works of Vaishnava saints in verse. The next phase of development of Assamese literature especially in the forms of the compositions of *Buranjis* or court chronicles in prose and poetical romances like *Mrigavati Charita*, *Madhava Sulochana*, and *Shakuntala Kavya*, an adoption of Kalidasa's poetical drama, took place under the patronage of the Ahom kings during the 17th and the 18th century CE. In the 19th century CE, the modern period of Assamese literature commenced with the publication of the *Bible* by Atmaram Sarma (1813). Since then the process has continued with the publication of successive works on Assamese grammar and lexicon, periodicals like *Arunodaya* (1846) and *Jonaki* (1889), new types of drama like *Bhramaranga* (1888) and new poetry using blank-verse among various other literary creations. Poet Bholanath Das, playwright Hemchandra Barua, novelist Rajani Bardoloi, essayist LN Bezbarua and non-fiction writer Hema Goswami are some of the notable literary figures of this period. Table 2 below provides a list of the eminent litterateurs, who have so far received the Jnanpith award from the State.

Table 2

Name of the Litterateur	Year of Award	Literary Work
Birendra Kumar Bhattacharya	1979	<i>Mrityunjay</i> (Immortal)
Mamoni Raisom Goswami (also known as Indira Goswami)	2000	For contribution to Assamese literature.

Dress

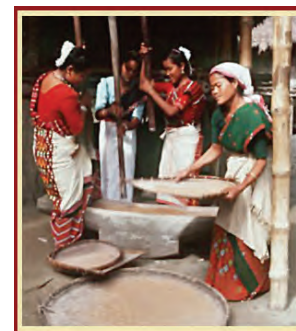
In India, Assam is perhaps one State where one can come across people wearing the maximum variety of colourful dresses. This is because of the rich tradition that has existed among the different communities

of the State to weave and adorn themselves with distinctive attires. However, over the years a clearly identifiable variety of Assamese costume has come into existence. For men this has traditionally been consisted of *dhoti* (lower garment) and *gamucha* (a piece of cloth put across the shoulders) and for women of *mekhala* (long-skirt type lower garment) and *chador* (a piece of cloth worn across the upper part of the body with pleats). In modern times, the men folk have mostly switched over to westernised outfits like trousers and shirts. Occasionally they also wear other fashionable Indian apparels like *kurta* and *pyjama*. But among the women the traditional *mekhala-chadors* with a great variety of weaves and *sarees* have remained the most desired cloths. In ceremonial occasions like the Bihu festivals women dancers generally wear *mekhalas* made from *muga* (a type of Assamese Golden silk) with red floral motifs whereas in marriages the Assamese brides mostly wear *mekhalas* made from *pat* (a type of Assamese white silk) with *chadors* and a cloth below it called *riha*.

As already pointed out, different ethnic groups in the State have added great versatility to its clothing pattern with their own variants of costumes that are



Deori couple in traditional dress



Mishing women in traditional costume



Bihu performance with traditional dhoti-gamucha and mekhala-chador



unique in colours, designs and motifs. For example, among the Mishings, the women generally wear *sampan* around their waist, *galuk* on the upper body and a head dress called *hura* whereas the men mostly wear *mibu-galuk*, *tongali*, and *gonroo*. Similarly, the Deori men mostly wear *ikho* (a loin cloth) with shirt at home, while the Deori women wear *igo* to cover the body from below the shoulders to the ankles, *jakashiba* around the waist and *gathiki* to cover their heads. The Karbi men wear two types of jackets with a traditional turban called *poho* and the women wear a shorter version of the *mekhala* called *pinicamflak* with an upper cloth called *jar-ek* and an artistic waist band called *wanpo*. The Hajong men mostly wear *ningti* (a loin cloth) though in winter they also use a scarf and *kampesh* while Hajong women wear *rangputin* as their lower garment and *pasra* or *agrun* as the upper garment. During festivals they also wear an extra piece of cloth called *kamarbandha*.

Food

The Assamese food is generally well known for its simplicity on account of very little use of oil and spices. But the uses of multiple herbs often provide strong flavours to the Assamese dishes. Similarly, the uses of many vegetarian and non-vegetarian ingredients make the Assamese platter rich in variety and taste.

An Assamese meal is often consisted of rice and a variety of vegetarian and non-vegetarian dishes. Among the former, the notable preparations are: *paleng xaakor khar* (dried banana peels with spinach), *thekera tengar joolot dailor bor* (a light sour curry of lentil fritters), *bhendir sorsori* (ladies finger cooked with mustard sauce), *amitar khar* (sautéed papaya), *labra* (mixed vegetable), *masur dailot diya kothalor guti* (red lentil with jackfruit seed curry), *xewali phoolor khar* (mixed fragrant flowers curry) and *phoolkobi aru motormah anja* (cauliflower and peas curry). Similarly, among the latter, the most popular preparations are: *machor tenga* (fish curry that is sour in taste) and *patot diya mach* (baked or steamed fish wrapped in banana leaves with white mustard paste). Besides, various preparations using dry-fish, fowl, duck, pigeon and goat meat are



Assamese Thali



Assamese Pitha and sweet items



Banana pancakes

also quite popular among different communities in the State. The famed *bhot jolokia* (hot chilli) of Assam is a natural accompaniment to such a meal. Other specialities which add taste and flavour to the Assamese meal include: *koldilor bor* (fried banana flower fritters), *jolphai jola aru mitha achar* (hot and sweet pickle of Indian olive), *bilahir tok* (sweet and sour tomato dip), *bilahi rohodoi chutney* (sweet and sour dip made from star fruit and tomato), *ou tengar chutney* (savoury made from elephant apple) and *umbul* (sour tomato tongue teaser).

The Assamese people also prepare a variety of cakes and sweet items. The most notable among those are: *xutuli pitha* (fried dumplings stuffed with sesame seeds and jaggery), *narikol pitha* (fried dumplings stuffed with grated coconut and jaggery), *tekeli pitha* (steamed rice-flour cake made using an earthen pot), *sunga pitha* (rice cake baked in bamboo cans), *kol pitha* (banana pancakes), *gooror payash* (rice-jaggery pudding) and *narikelor ladoo* (sweetmeats made from scrapped coconut and sugar).

FAIRS AND FESTIVALS

Bihu

Assam is a State of many fairs and festivals. But Bihu is by far the most important among them all. It is celebrated thrice in a year to mark the three important stages of agricultural operation in the State and is thus known by three different names to suit the respective





Rongali Bihu Celebration



Kati Bihu Celebration



Bhogali Bihu Celebration

occasions. Bohag Bihu marks the beginning of sowing by the farmers while Kati Bihu is observed to pray for the standing crops. Similarly, Magh Bihu marks the season of harvesting.

Bohag Bihu is also known as Rangali Bihu as it begins on the last day of the month of Chaitra (April) coinciding with the colourful spring season. On the first day of this festival people worship cows wishing for an increase in their health and milk production. On the second day, they wear new cloths, exchange *bihuan gamocha* and prepare different special dishes for sharing and eating. On the third day, boys and girls forming *huchari* parties (dancing groups) go from place to place dancing rhythmically to the accompaniment of *dhhol* (drums) and *pepa* (pipes) and praying for the wellbeing of all inhabitants. Most ethnic groups in the State celebrate this festival in their own typical ways.

Kati Bihu is celebrated on the last day of Aswin (October) coinciding with the auspicious month of Kartika for the Hindus all over India and continues for the whole month. The festival is celebrated in the evenings by lighting *saakis* (earthen lamps) in front of the *tulsi* (basil) plants in people's houses and along the paths leading from the houses to the

paddy fields. In the paddy fields too *akash-bantis* (sky-lamps) are lit atop bamboo poles to show the dead souls the way to heaven while at the same time praying for a good harvest. Interestingly, these lamps help in controlling pests and insects and ensure good health for the crops. As there is very little merry-making involved in these celebrations, the festival is also called Kongali Bihu (Poor Bihu).

Magh Bihu is celebrated every year on the day of Sankranti in the month of Magh (January). Since it coincides with the harvesting of the new crop, which encourages feasting and merriment, it is also called Bhogali Bihu. On the night of the day of festival, called *uruka*, people erect a *bhela-ghar* (a makeshift cottage) and a *meji* (a fire-structure made of bamboo and hay) apart from organising a *bhog* (feast) for night-long celebration. Early next morning they light the *meji* after taking bath and offer it sweetmeats to convey their gratitude to the fire-god. It follows day-long celebrations with buffalo fights, bulbul fights, egg fights and visiting places of friends and relatives.

Apart from Bihu, there are a number of other ethnic festivals celebrated in the State. A few of those are mentioned in Table 3 below.

Table 3

Name of the Festival	Ways of Celebration
Ambubachi Mela	This is a 3-4 day ritualistic festival associated with the annual purification rites of Goddess Kamakhya held every year in the middle of the month of June in Her Temple at Guwahati.
Doljatra	Introduced by Srimanta Sankaradeva, this festival coinciding with Holi is celebrated every year in the month of March with great religious fervour in all the <i>Satras</i> and <i>Devalayas</i> (Vaishnavite Monasteries and Temples) of the State. The 3-day celebration of this festival in the Barpeta <i>Satra</i> in lower Assam is especially quite popular.



Bheldiya Festival	This is a festival celebrated in the month of May to worship the River Goddess by farmers, fishermen and boatmen, whose lives and livelihoods essentially depend on the rivers. On this occasion the devotees accompanied by the chanting of the names of Lord Vishnu and readings from the Bhagavata text float beautifully decorated ritual boats made out of the peels of the Banana plants and pay their obeisance to the rivers.
Me Dum Me Phi	The Ahoms celebrate this festival in a common place to worship their ancestors on 31st January every year with all traditional costume and fanfare.
Ali Ai Ligang Festival	This 5-day festival associated with the commencement of agricultural operation with sowing of seeds is celebrated every year in the spring season (February-March) by the members of the Mishing community with traditional songs, dance and feast.
Baishagu Festival	This is a new year festival celebrated every year by the Bodo Kacharis in the month of Baisakh (mid-April). The festival begins with the worship of cow on the first day and continues with the worship of their supreme God, Bathou (identified with Lord Shiva) and community feast and dancing on the second day before it is concluded with a prayer at a designated place called <i>girjasali</i> .
Rongker Festival	This is also a new year festival celebrated every year in the month of April exclusively by the male members of the Karbi tribe who offer prayers to various gods and goddesses for the well-being of the whole village.
Rajini and Harni Gabra	These festivals associated with the beginning of activities are celebrated by the Dimasa people. In the Rajini festival particularly no outsider is allowed to participate.
Jonbeel Mela	This fair is traditionally held during the winter every year at Jagiroad where members belonging to the Tiwa, Karbi, Khasi and Jaintia tribes gather to exchange their goods with the local people. The fair begins with the customary <i>agni-puja</i> (fire worship) for the well-being of all and continues with the performance of traditional songs and dances. It is believed that Govaraja or the Tiwa king visits this mela with courtiers to collect taxes from his subjects.



Bagrumba Bodo dance



Celebration of Ali-Ai-Ligang festival

Besides these, the people of Assam also celebrate almost all the well-known festivals of India like Holi, Deepavali, Dussehra, Krishna Janmashtami, Ramnavami, Shivaratri, Eid, Muharram, Christmas, Guru Purnima, Buddha Jayanti and several others with great fervour.

PERFORMING ARTS

Assam has a rich tradition of performing arts. Some of these were developed in typical stylised forms in the religious centres of the State while others flourished as part of popular and community performances in fairs and festivals. Dance forms such as *Deva-nati* or *Nati-nach* (associated with the tradition of Devadasis in temples), *Oja-Pali* (a group

performance of singing and dancing with dramatic interludes comprising an *Oja* or leader and *Pali* or assistants) and *Satriya* or *Sattriya* (originally started by Sankaradeva for popularisation of Vaishnavism in the *Satras*, it now includes non-mythological genres such as *Apsara Nritya*, *Sali Nritya*, *Jhumura* and *Nadu Bhangi* with performances accompanied by *Bor-geet*) belong to the first category, whereas *Bihu* (a group dance performed by males and females together in traditional attires with definite postures and rhythmic movements), *Bagurumba* (a group dance performed



Sattriya Dance by Ramkrishna Talukdar



Dimasa ritual with the blowing of Muri



by the Bodos), *Jumur* or *Jhumar* (a group dance performed by the Adivasis) and other tribal dance forms (*Ali-Ai-Ligang* and *Po-rag* of the Mishings, *Banjar-Kekan*, *Nimso-Kerang* and *Hachcha-Kekan* of the Karbis, *Jakhamara* and *Lewatana* of the Hajongs, *Sagramisawa* of the Tiwas and *Ka-pai*, *Ka-pan* and *Ka-yon-kong* of the Tai Phakes) belong to the latter.

Similarly, *Bor-geet* (associated with the Satriya dance) and *Oja-Pali-geet* (consisting of three types of songs, namely, *biyah-gowa* based on stories from the Mahabharata, *Sukananni* associated with the worship of the Snake Goddess, *Manasa* and *Ramayani* based on the stories from the Assamese version of the Ramayana) are considered to be the classical forms of Assamese music though the State often reverberates with different forms of folk music like *Bihu-geet* (Bihu song), *Bon-geet* (forest/nature song), *Naworia-geet* (boatmen's song), *Nichukoni-geet* (lullabies), *Biyanaam* (marriage song) and *Dehbisaror-geet* (devotional song). The musical instruments which usually accompany the performances of these songs and dances are the *Khol* (drums), *Taal* (symbols), *Baanhi* (flutes), *Pepa* (an instrument made of buffalo horn), *Dhol* (drums) and *Gogona* (reed and bamboo instruments). Besides, the State also possesses a rich tradition of tribal music with their typical musical instruments. Notable among these instruments are *Sarai-lau* associated with the Tiwa songs and dances, *Pongi* (flute) and *Chang* (drum) associated with the Karbi songs and dances and a pipe instrument called *Muri* associated with the Dimasa songs and dances.

Among the dramatic performances in the State the most popular is the *Bhaona*, which began with the composition and enactment of the *Ankiya Nat* (one-act plays) by Sankaradeva in the *Satras*. Besides, parties of drummers called *Dhulia* also present popular dramatic performances with spectacular aerobic movements on different festive occasions



Oja-Pali performance



Ankiya Bhaona performance

in the Kamrup region. Similarly, *Kushan-gan* and *Bhari-gan* are two other popular forms of folk drama which are performed in the Goalpara region.

VISUAL ARTS

Assam is quite well-known for its distinct forms of visual arts. Among these the traditional paintings, which are still preserved in the palaces of the Ahom kings, the *Satras* and the *Chitra-Bhagavatas*, stand out for their unique motifs and designs. In a way, these paintings, depicting stories from history and mythology, have since become the template for the Assamese painters to explore newer themes following the same style. Similarly, the statues and images found in the Madana-Kamadeva Temple (depicting stories associated with Kamadeva and his wife Rati) and the Agnigarh premises (depicting a range of themes) situated in the Kamrup district are testimony to the State's sculptural heritage. Besides, historical temples dating back to the Ahom period like the Kamakshya Temple near Guwahati and Shiva Temple at Shivsagar with their distinct building styles represent the quintessential Assamese architecture.

Terracotta and masks are other visual art forms in which the artisans of Assam have earned a name for themselves.

Asarikandi in Dubri district has particularly emerged as an important centre of pottery, terracotta and sola pith crafts in the State for its distinctive style. Here, in the hands of the craftsperson, figures from mythology and that of different Gods and Goddesses alongside toys of various kinds



Traditional Mask



Assamese Terracotta

and pots and vases have not only found a new lease of life but also popular admiration and acceptance. Similarly, masks made by the Assamese craftsperson from a variety of materials like terracotta, bamboo, wood, sola pith and metal are widely used in traditional dances and dramas.

Among metal works, the ones that are most commonly used are the bell-metal and brass utensils of everyday use. Of these the most iconic are the *Xorai* and *Bota*, which are used to offer betel and betel-nuts to guests in every household. These two articles have also become popular souvenirs, which visitors like to carry from the State.

Assam being a State rich in forest covers has also become a natural home to both useful and exquisite works in wood, cane and bamboo. The State has especially a long tradition of carving decorative panels on wood in palaces, monasteries and temples. The class of artisans, who excelled in this craft, have since come to be known as *Khanikars*. In modern times, the articles that have become representative of these works are the wooden figures of one-horned rhinos, wooden replicas of the Kamakshya Temple, the bamboo *Jaapi* (large hat) and different types of wood and cane furniture.

However, the craft in which the State has earned worldwide fame is weaving. The State is especially known for the golden hued *muga* silk, which is unique to Assam. Besides, the State also produces *pat* (mulberry) and *eri* (endi) silks. The latter is particularly used in making warm cloths. Almost as popular as these are the *mirijims* (decorative work done on mattresses, blankets and covers) of Majuli (largest river island) and north-eastern Assam, *lasingphees* (blankets woven out of colourful staple yarn with cotton and bamboo inserted in between wefts for warmth) of Cachar, and shawls of Karbi Anglong and Dimasa Hasao districts.

Next to textiles, the State is also known for its exclusive enamelling work known as *minakari* on gold and silver jewellery. Jorhat has become the main centre for such work. Dark blue, dark green and white are the preferred colours for *minakari* though red and yellow colours are also occasionally used.

CONTEMPORARY CULTURAL DEVELOPMENTS

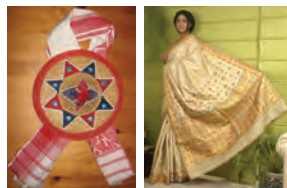
After independence, Assam has gone through a long process of political reconfiguration. However, this has neither affected its cultural mosaic nor its

enthusiasm to promote itself for the benefit of one and all. In this endeavour the State has not only emphasised on building institutions to preserve the State's cultural heritages but also to dynamically promote these through the organisation of concerts, exhibitions, fairs and festivals. The ones, which are notable in this respect, are the 'Brahmaputra Festival', 'Tea Festival', 'Elephant Festival' and 'Dehing Patkai Festival'.

Organised by the Assam Boat Racing and Rowing Association in collaboration with the Department of Tourism in the month of January at Guwahati every year, the Brahmaputra Festival promotes the traditional arts and crafts of the State alongside adventure sports and awareness about the significance of the river and its eco-system for the people living on its banks. Similarly, the Department of Tourism organises the Tea Festival in the month of November at Jorhat every year to attract global attention to the culture and economy of the State, which is strongly connected with tea plantation. The Elephant Festival on the other hand is organised every year at the Kaziranga National Park in the month of February to create awareness about the role of elephants in the eco-system and how best to resolve human-elephant conflicts in the best interests of both. Likewise, the Dehing Patkai Festival, organised at Lekhpani in the month of January every year featuring ethnic cultural varieties alongside adventure sports and visits to World War II memorial sites, aims at showcasing not only the composite aspect of the State's culture but also the harmonious coexistence of modernity in a tradition-bound society.

So far as the institutional effort is concerned, the State, in conformity with the Assam Accord of 1985, has set up the Srimanta Sankaradeva Kalkshetra to 'protect, preserve and promote the cultural, social, linguistic identity and heritage of the Assamese people'. The institution has since been doing this in the spirit of the great 15th century CE saint, Srimanta Sankaradeva, who preached the ideal of unity in diversity and the essential oneness of all.

Apart from these, Assam has also created space and opportunity for groups and individuals to creatively work towards the promotion and propagation of its culture and tradition both within and outside the country.



Bamboo Jaapi on a gamocha Muga silk saree





BIHAR



intimately connected to the Buddha's life resulting in a trail of pilgrimage sites, which together form the most cherished Buddhist circuit in India. Among these sites the most famous are Bodh Gaya (where the Buddha attained enlightenment), Rajgir or Rajagriha (where he spent five years of his life) and Gridhrakuta (where he delivered most of his sermons). Bihar also served as a centre of higher education during the peak period of Buddhism. In its heydays, the Nalanda University attracted many students from all over the world. Similarly, Bihar is also closely associated with Jainism. The 22nd Tirthankara of Jainism, Mahavira was born in Kundalapura and passed away at Pavapuri.

CULTURAL SPECIFICITIES

Language

Being the cradle of different ruling dynasties since ancient times, Bihar has contributed significantly to all aspects of Indian culture. Besides connoting the people of the State, 'Bihari', as derived from the term 'Vihara', also refers to a group of three related languages, namely, Bhojpuri, Maithili and Magahi,

Bihar nestles in the eastern part of the great Gangetic plains of India with West Bengal to its east, Uttar Pradesh to its west and Jharkhand to its south. In the north, it shares international border with Nepal. River Ganga divides the State into two parts by flowing through its middle from the west to the east.

In ancient times, Magadha formed the core of which present-day Bihar was a centre of power, learning and culture. From here arose the first empire of India, the Mauryan Empire, which unified large parts of South Asia under one rule.

Mithila, the northern part of Bihar, was an early centre of Brahmanical learning. Bihar is also the land where Buddhism and Jainism took their birth. In fact, the State derives its name from the Sanskrit word 'Vihara', which means a Buddhist monastery. Among all Indian states Bihar is the one that is most

Fact Sheet	
State Day	22 March
Geographical Area	1,102 km ²
Capital	Patna
Official Language	Hindi, Maithili, Urdu
State Animal	Ox
State Bird	House Sparrow
State Flower	Marigold
State Tree	Peepal



which are mainly spoken in Bihar. Although all these languages have rich collections of written works, it is specially so in Maithili. Besides, Bihar has also significantly contributed to Sanskrit, Pali, and more recently, to the Hindi literature as well.

Dress

The traditional dress of the people of Bihar is *dhoti* and *kurta* for men and *saree* for women. On some occasions, men also wear *churidar* and *pyjama* along with *kurta*. *Saree*, the traditional attire of women, is available in a wide range of colours, fabrics and designs. *Matka* silk, manufactured in and around Bhagalpur, is a fine quality silk. Women are also very passionate about jewellery like bangles, rings and anklets. *Chandrarhar*, *Tilri*, *Panchlari*, *Satlari* and *Sikri* are the common accessories worn by women.



Women wearing Traditional Sarees

Food

The staple food of Bihar is generally consisted of *roti*, *dal*, *chawal*, *sabzi* and *achar*. The traditional medium of cooking is the mustard oil. *Khichdi*, a combination of



Litti Chokha

rice and lentils seasoned with spices and served hot with several accompanying items, is also consumed occasionally. The most favourite dish of Bihar is, however, *litti chokha*. *Litti* is made of wheat flour with filling of *sattu* (a variety of chickpea flour) while *chokha* is made of boiled and smashed potato, tomato or brinjal. Other salted snacks and savouries popular in Bihar are *makhana* and *sattu*. Bihar also offers a large variety of sweet delicacies that include *Kala Jamun*, *Kesaria Pedas*, *Khaja*, *Khurma*, *Pua*, *Mal Pua*, *Thekua*, *Murabba* and *Tilkut*.

FAIRS AND FESTIVALS

The majority of the people of Bihar are Hindus. So all the traditional Hindu festivals are celebrated in the State with much gaiety. But there is one



Chhath Puja

festival which is uniquely associated with Bihar. This festival is called *Chhath*. *Chhath Puja*, a three-day celebration, which takes place after Diwali, is dedicated to the Sun God and his wife Usha to thank them for sustaining life on earth and for granting wishes. This festival is observed by people all over Bihar, Jharkhand, eastern Uttar Pradesh and parts of Nepal with much fervour.

The Sonepur Cattle Fair is another well-known cultural event of the State. It recreates the legend of *Gajendra Mokshya*. Associated with the Hariharanatha Temple in Sonepur, the fair begins on the full moon (*Purnima*) day of the month of *Kartik* (November).

People in Bihar also worship *naga* (snakes) on the day of Nag Panchmi, the fifth day of the month of *Sravana* (July), with the offering of milk. The prime centre of *naga* worship is Rajgir. It is celebrated on 14 January, the day of Makar Sankranti every year. *Pausha Mela* is another festival unique to Bihar.

Bihar is also famous for the International Buddhist Gathering at Bodh Gaya, where stand the Mahabodhi tree and the Temple. At Gaya, the annual session of the Dalai Lama also takes place in the month of December.

In September, during the second half of the month of *Bhadrapad*, also known as *Pitrapaksha*, Hindus from all over the world come to Gaya to perform *tarpan* or the last rites for their ancestors.

In the month of April, Mahavir Jayanti is celebrated with much fanfare on the Parsvanath Hill in Vaishali. Another festival dear to the Jains is Deo Deepawali, which is celebrated ten days after Deepawali at Pawapuri to mark the attainment of *nirvana* (death) by Mahavira.

Mithila in Bihar has a unique tradition of having a marriage convention near Madhubani in the month





Sonepur Cattle Fair



Buddha Jayanti in Bodh Gaya

of June. Called *Sorath Sabha*, it features a unique gathering of Brahmins of Mithila in the vast mango grove in Surath to discuss horoscopes and negotiate for marriages within the community.

Bihar has a sizable Muslim population, who celebrate festivals like Eid-ul-Fitr, Eid-ul-Azha and Muharram. Christians in the State are small in number. Nevertheless, they celebrate all Christian festivals with equal enthusiasm. Bihar being the birthplace of the tenth Sikh guru, Guru Gobind Singh, the Harmandir Takht, also known as the Patna Sahib, attracts many Sikh pilgrims from all over India and abroad.

PERFORMING ARTS

Bihar has contributed significantly to Hindustani classical music with its *poorab ang* of *thumri*, the

Gaya School of music, the Rivilganj tradition of *pakhawaj* and the Darbhanga *gayaki* of *dhrupad*. In 14th century CE, Bihar saw the popularisation of *som gayan* of Maner by the Sufi saint, Sadirfun Ahmad Maneri. The State has also produced other musical legends (*dhrupad* singers) like the Malliks of Darbhanga Gharana and the Mishras of Bettiah Gharana.

Apart from the above, Bihar possesses an age old tradition of folk songs, which are sung on occasions like marriages, birth ceremonies and other festivals. They are sung mainly in groups to the accompaniment of musical instruments like *dholak*, *bansuri*, and occasionally, *tabla* and harmonium.

In the 19th century CE, under the British rule, many people from Bihar had to migrate (as indentured labour) to the West Indian Islands, Fiji and Mauritius. Thus, many sad plays and songs (called *biraha*, meaning separation) became popular in the State during this time, especially in the Bhojpur region.

Table 1 lists some of the other performing art forms from the region.

Table 1

Performing Arts	Salient Features
Holi Geet	Following these songs, women dance gracefully to the rhythm played by men with <i>manjira</i> (cymbals) and <i>dhol</i> .
Kajri	These songs are sung by peasant women during rainy season to propitiate the Vedic deities, Indra and Agni, asking for their blessings for a successful harvest.
Jhoola	These songs are sung by women at the advent of the monsoon.
Bara-Masa	With imageries drawn from mythology, usually that of Sita of the Ramayana, women sing these songs with great yearning to be together with their husbands.
Harnam and Jogira	In these performances, two singer-dancers enact verses in a dialogue form usually ending with the phrase 'Harnam sumirto kyon na'.
Jhumar	In these performances, young boys enact sequences from the life of Radha and Krishna in a style similar to that of <i>Kathak</i> .
Sama-Chakaiva	Based on a legend from the Padma Purana, it enacts the beautiful bond between a brother and sister.
Nachari	This comprises enactment of verses of Vidyapati, the famous 16th century CE poet, said to be of the Mithila region.
Chaiti	It is performed by men with their body smeared with 'ramras'. They typically wear yellow attires and dance with <i>kartal</i> while singing.
Allaha and Biraha	In this performance, two artists face each other while singing to enact stories of valour of local heroes and other mythological characters.
Kheliran	This is performed only by women in the region in and around Gaya.



<i>Naach</i> of Kathakiya	It is performed only by the Brahmins telling mythological tales through enactments, accompanied by songs.
<i>Salhes</i>	It is performed by members belonging to the Dusadh community.
<i>Kamala</i>	The fishermen of Mithila region perform this dance featuring a lot of undulating swaying movements.
<i>Jiya</i> or <i>Jhijhia</i>	One of the most eminent dances of Bihar, <i>Jhijhia</i> depicts a band of young belles adoring and offering prayers in the form of song and dance.
<i>Jata-Jatin Naach</i>	This is a popular form of folk theatre that incorporates fair amount of music and dance in its dramatic rendering.
Dance of Suthre Sain	Moving from door to door, these wandering minstrels, with stick in hand beat a staccato beat on the iron bangles that covers the entire arm of the performers.
Dance of the 'bai' or 'Dance of Gajoch'	These song and dance performances are enacted by the 'Bais' (women) who are also known as 'Gajoch' in the Mithila region.
Dance of Nrityakali	In these performances, young boys enact the stories associated with Shiva-Parvati and Radha-Krishna.
<i>Chamara</i> and <i>Kamala Damp Basuli Naach</i>	These are dances performed by the men of the <i>chamar</i> (shoemaker) community.
<i>Maharai</i>	This dance is performed by the boatmen (<i>mallah</i>) of Bihar.
<i>Bhands</i>	This group consists of professional jesters, who entertain with witty repartees that involve music and dance.
Karma Dance	This performance revolves around fertility rites, wherein women plant the Karma sapling and dance around it.
<i>Brindabani</i>	This is performed during the week-long Chaitra Festival.
<i>Bidesiya</i>	In Bhojpuri, meaning 'from the foreign land', it is a folk theatrical performance played extensively in western Bihar. Probably started by one Guddarrai, it acquired widespread popularity and recognition owing to the talent and charisma of the legendary writer-actor Bhikhari Thakur and his plays of the same name.

VISUAL ARTS

Madhubani painting, made mainly by women, is believed to have originated in the Mithila region of northern Bihar at the time of Rama's marriage with Sita, the princess of Mithila. It gained popularity in the post-Independence era with the well-known artists like Bharti Dayal, Mahasundari Devi, Ganga Devi and Sita Devi painting for the outside world.



Sama Chakaiva



Sama Chakaiva

Now it has become a hugely popular art form with a number of women artists practicing it. The themes of Madhubani painting are mostly based on Puranic stories and illustrate deities like Krishna, Ram, Shiva, Durga, Lakshmi and Saraswati. Natural objects like the sun, moon and sacred plants like *tulsi* are also widely painted apart from scenes depicting royal courts and social events like weddings and human association with nature. *Manjusha Kala* or Angika Art is another famous art form of Bihar. It is mainly practised in the region which was earlier known as Anga.

Historically, the Patna School of Painting, also called Company Painting, flourished in Bihar during the early 18th to mid-20th century CE. The Patna School of Painting was an offshoot of the well-known Mughal Miniature School of Painting. Those who practised this art form were the descendants of the Hindu artisans of the Mughal period.

Sculptures in Bihar date back to the Mauryan period. The Pillars of Ashoka and the Didarganj



Yakshi, carved out of a single piece of stone, are the finest examples of this period. Many more works in stone are found throughout Bihar. Bronze sculptures of the Pala period represent an advanced technique of the ancient times. The Sultanganj Buddha statue and the unique image of Lord Vishnu of Mandar Hill from the Gupta period are estimated to be 1500 years old.

Similarly, significant architectural pieces found in Bihar date back to the Vedic period. While the Mauryan period marked a transition to the use of brick and stone, wood continued to remain a material of choice. Megasthenes describes of a wooden palisade encircling the capital city of Pataliputra in his historic work, *Indica*. Evidence of ancient structures have been found in recent excavations in Kumrahar (Patna). Of these, remains of an 80-pillared hall begs special mention.

Several Buddhist *stupas*, like the ones at Nalanda and Vikramshila, were originally built as brick and masonry mounds during the reign of King Ashoka (273 BCE–232 BCE). To this day, the Barabar hill caves housing Buddhist *Stupas* and *Viharas* remain the finest examples of early Buddhist art in eastern India.

Rock-cut stepwells in India date back to 200–400 CE. The wells at Dhank (550–625 CE) and the stepped ponds at Bhinmal in Bihar (850–950 CE) were constructed in this

sequence. Persian architectural influence can also be seen in the surviving tombs made of sandstone and marble in Bihar, which include Sher Shah Suri’s tomb at Sasaram.

The Patna High Court, Bihar Vidhan Sabha, Bihar Vidhan Parishad, Transport Bhawan, Golghar, St. Mary’s Church and Patna Museum are other architecture marvels of Bihar.

The artisans of Bihar are adept at creating articles of everyday use using local materials. Baskets and cups and saucers made from bamboo strips or cane reed and painted in vivid colours are commonly found in every home in Bihar. A special container called ‘pauti’, woven out of *sikki* grass in north Bihar, is a sentimental gift that accompanies a bride when she leaves her home after her wedding. Besides, Bhagalpur in Bihar is well-known for its sericulture. Silk produced here is called *tussah* or *tussar*. Bihar is also known for appliqué works called locally as *khatwa*.

CONTEMPORAY CULTURAL DEVELOPMENTS

Like elsewhere, Bihar in post-Independence period has also come under the influence of popular culture. But the weight of its thousands of years’ history have managed to keep the State and its people maintain a balance between tradition and modernity. This balance is seen in the State’s television shows and cinema. Though Bhojpuri is yet to be recognised under the Eighth Schedule, yet the State is running a commercially successful film industry in Bhojpuri language with indigenous content. Dynamism can also be seen in every aspect of Bihar’s folk culture with inputs from contemporary politics, economics and social life. Besides, the Government of Bihar has also been making sincere efforts to protect and promote the culture of the State through various constructive measures. The Patna Museum is a world class repository of the State’s multifarious history and cultural heritage. It has numerous sections of which the ones that showcase the history of Bihar, the State’s diaspora, its handicrafts, contemporary art and cuisine attract maximum attention. The children’s section is also a big draw with the children and all visitors alike.



Craft of Bihar



Madhubani Painting



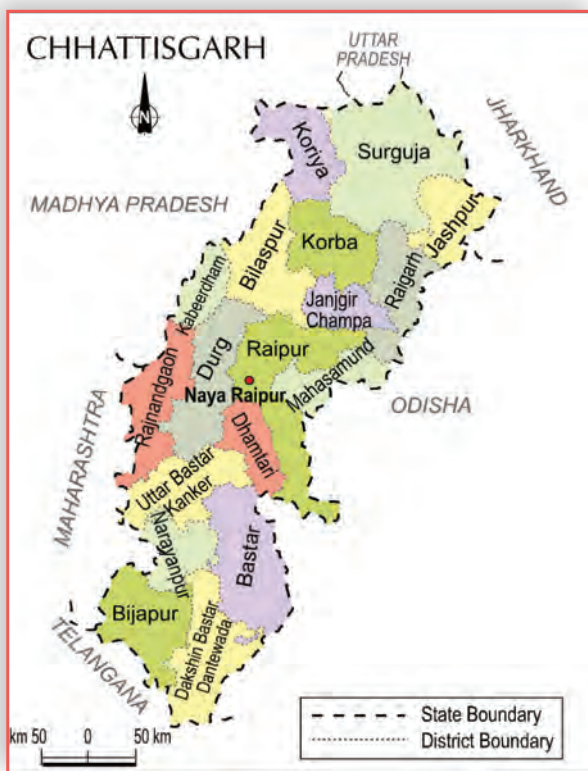
Mauryan Structure at Barabar Caves



Patna Museum



CHHATTISGARH



are Hasdo, Rihand, Indravati, Jonk, Arpa and Shivnath.

Hinduism is the major religion of the people living in this State. This includes people, who belong to sects like the Satnami Panth, the Kabirpanth and the Ramnami Samaj. Besides, there are also people, who follow Islam and Buddhism. The tribal people of the State largely follow their own customs and beliefs though some of them have been converted into Christianity. These people include: the Gond, Abujmaria, Bisonhorn Maria, Bhatra, Muria, Halba, Parja and Dhurvaa of the Bastar region; the Muriya, Dandami Mariya (or Gond), Dorla and Halba tribes of Dantewara; the Korwa, Kavar, Gond, Bhaiyana, Rajgond, Binjwar and Dhanwar tribes of Korba; the Kol, Gond and Bhunjia tribes of Koriya; the Parghi, Savra, Manji and Bhayna tribes of Bilaspur and Raipur; the Kamar tribe of Gariabandh, Mainpur, Dhura and Dhamtari; and the Munda tribe of Surguja and Jashpur.

CULTURAL SPECIFICITIES

Chhattisgarh is well known for its rich cultural traditions. These traditions are seen reflected in the

Chhattisgarh, carved out of Madhya Pradesh in the year 2000, shares borders with Odisha and Jharkhand on the east, Uttar Pradesh on the north, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra on the west and Telangana on the south. With an area of 135,192 square kilometres, it is the 10th largest state in India. It is also equally populous despite the fact that its northern and southern parts are hilly. This is because of the central part, which is plain and fertile. This plain has been formed by the river Mahanadi and sees extensive rice cultivation. The other rivers of the State

<i>Fact Sheet</i>	
<i>State Day</i>	1 November
<i>Geographical Area</i>	135,192 km ²
<i>Capital</i>	Raipur
<i>Official Language</i>	Hindi
<i>State Animal</i>	Wild Buffalo
<i>State Bird</i>	Bastar hill myna
<i>State Tree</i>	Sal



day-to-day lives of the people and their languages, food habits, songs and dances, fairs and festivals and the different kinds of arts and crafts they make. Being a tribal dominated State, as mentioned above, its culture has specially been moulded by their life-styles. Besides, the neighbouring States have also influenced its culture in many ways.

Language

Hindi is the official language of Chhattisgarh. However, the people of the State mostly speak Chhattisgarhi, which is a variant of the Hindi language. It has five principal dialects based on geographical division. These are: Kedri (spoken in the central region), Utti (spoken in the eastern region), Budati or Khaltai (spoken in the western region), Bhandar (spoken in the northern region) and Rakshahun (spoken in the southern region). Besides, people in the bordering areas also speak Kosali, Oriya, Bhojpuri, Marathi and Telugu languages. The tribal people largely speak their own distinctive languages though some of these, such as, Kurukh, Parji and Gondi, are on the verge of extinction.

With so many languages, it is natural for the State to have a rich literary heritage. Among the tribal communities this heritage has been coming down in the form of oral traditions with numerous songs, fables and incantations. Among others the tales of the State's history and its various social movements have formed the core of literary creativity. Khub Chand Baghel, a famous literary personality of the State, has specially made a mark by raising issues of the lower castes in his plays like Jarnail Singh and Unch Neech. In recent decades this has largely centered round the State's struggle for establishing its own political identity in the Indian union.

Dress

The people of Chhattisgarh usually wear attractive and colourful dresses. This is particularly true about the tribal people of the State. Among them, the women usually wear a kind of *saree* called *lugda* and a blouse called *polka* while the men generally wear *dhotis* and *pagris* (cotton turbans). The tribal women

are very particular about the colour and lengths of their *sarees*. Generally, they wear these up to knee length and sometimes in full length. Often these *sarees* come in linen, silk and cotton, painted with molten wax. Besides, the tribal women also love to adorn themselves with different kinds of ornaments. These include *suta* (necklaces), *phuli* (nose rings), *bali* and *khunti* (ear rings), *choora* (bangles)



Dress of the men from Muria tribe

ainthi (rings worn on forearms), *kardhani* (belts worn around waists), *pouchhi* (rings worn on upper arms), *bichhiya* (traditional rings worn on the fingers of the toes symbolising marriage) and *ghungroos* (worn around ankles). These ornaments are usually made of silver. However, they also wear ornaments made of beads, feathers and cowries, especially during the festivals and other special occasions. *Baandha*, a type of necklace made of coins is also a common accessory among them. Similarly, tribal men also wear certain ornaments. These include *koundhi* (a necklace made of beads) and *kadhah* (a bangle worn during traditional ceremonies and festivals). In urban areas, the common attires among men are usually trousers and shirts, and among women, *sarees* and *salwar-suits*. Batik *sarees*, printed using the tie and dye technique, are especially popular in the State. Besides, Maheshwari, Chanderi and Sambalpuri silk *sarees* are also worn by the women on special occasions.

Food

Chhattisgarh is known as the 'rice bowl' of India. Naturally, therefore, rice and rice flour are frequently used to prepare most of the food items here. However, among the different kinds of food eaten by the people, the popular ones are *bore basi* (water rice), *dal pithi*

*Muthia**Chila*

(a special preparation made during festive occasions), *moong dal halwa* (a winter preparation made of split green gram lentils, clarified butter and sugar seasoned with cardamom powder), *kadhi pakora* (deep fried gram flour dumplings cooked with curd), *muthia* (steamed dumplings made of rice flour, sesame seeds, mustard seeds, red bean stew, garlic and curry leaves), *aamat* (a mixed vegetable preparation considered as Bastar's *sambar*), *bara* (a variant of south Indian *vadai* prepared with chopped chillies, onion and fresh coriander leaves), *bhajia* (made of gram flour mixed with chopped onions or chillies), *chila* (a kind of pancake made of rice and black gram batter), *tilghur* (a sweet ball made of sesame seeds, jaggery and roasted peanuts), *sabudana khichdi* (made of tapioca pearls and vegetable specially for consumption during fasts), *faraa* (steamed dumplings made of rice flour with different kinds of fillings), *khurma* (made of condensed milk, roasted vermicelli, sugar and dry fruits), *bafauri* (steamed dumplings made of pigeon gram flour mixed with different kinds of vegetables and spices), *kusli* (a sweet dish made of white flour, dry fruits, clarified butter and semolina), *lavang lata* (a deep fried sugary sweet dish), *shikanji* (a spicy lemon drink), *thokva* (a type of *paratha* made of corn flour and *mohuwa chutney* mixed with jaggery) and *mahuwa* juice (made of the fruits of a local tree known as Mahuwa).

FAIRS AND FESTIVALS

Festivals play key roles in binding people in common threads of unity and brotherhood. Besides, they also provide occasions for renewing peoples' cultures

and traditions. In this respect, Chhattisgarh is no exception. The people here celebrate not only the national festivals with great enthusiasm but also a number of regional festivals that are typical to the State. Among the latter, festivals like Bastar Dussehra, Madai and Hareli are quite popular.

Bastar Dussehra

This is a ten-day festival celebrated in the honour of Devi Maoli, a native deity of the Bastar region and revered as the elder sister of Devi Danteshwari and

*Bastar Dussehra*

all her sisters. During this festival, hundreds of priests from all over the State bring flower-bedecked local deities to the Danteshwari Temple at Jagdalpur and worship them following local traditions.

Madai Festival

This festival begins in the Bastar region in the month of December with the worship of the local Goddess, Kesharpal Kesharpalin Devi. Then, in January, it is

*Madai Festival*

celebrated by the tribals in the Kanker, Charama and Kurna regions. In February, it shortly moves back to the Bastar region, where Goddess Cheri-Chher-Kin is worshipped. Thereafter, towards the end of February, it goes to Antagarh, Narayanpur and Bhanupratappur regions. Finally, it is celebrated in Kondagaon, Keshkal and Bhopalpattanam regions in the month of March. Everywhere, the festival is held in large grounds, where thousands of people could congregate. The ceremonies usually begin with the processions of the local Goddesses. Thereafter, the usual worships follow with accompanying cultural programs.

Hareli Festival

This festival is mainly celebrated by the farmers of the State in the month of *Shravan* (July-August). On this occasion, they not only worship their agricultural equipments and the cows, but also place branches and leaves of the bael (*bilwa*) tree in their fields and pray for a good crop. Besides, they also hang branches of the neem tree at the main entrances of their homes to ward off seasonal diseases. Children on this occasion play a local game called, *gedi* (walking with bamboos) and also take part in such races.

Kajari Festival

This is another festival related to the farmers and celebrated at the beginning of the sowing season especially by women blessed with sons, who seek the blessings of Goddess Bhagwati for having a better crop. The festival begins on the day of the *shukla navami* (the 9th day of the bright fortnight of the month) as the women collect soil from the agricultural fields in leaf cups for barley to be sown and kept in a clean room with its walls and floors finely smeared with a mixture of cow dung and mud. Its floors are also decorated with beautiful designs comprising figures of a house, a woman with a pitcher, a child in cradle and a mongoose using rice powder mixed with water for worship. These rituals continue for seven days till the day of the full moon as the women pray for the well-being of their husbands, children and a good harvest. On the last day particularly they keep fast from morning till evening and then carry that cup over their heads to immerse it in a nearby pond or any other water body.



Kajari Festival

Besides these, people of the State also celebrate the Goncha festival in Jagdalpur, Phagun Madai on the eve of Holi, the Boramdeo festival on the banks of river Sankari in the Satpura hills and the Navakhana festival on the ninth day of the month of Bhadrapad (August-September) after harvesting rice. There are also a number of fairs in which people enthusiastically participate. Among these the most popular are the Sheorinarayan Mela – held on the full moon day of the month of *Magh* (January-February) in the premises of the Sheorinarayan (Lord Rama) temple in Sheorinarayan town, the Narayanpur Mela – held in the month of February, right after celebration of Jagdalpur Dassera, the Champaran Mela – held every year in January-February at Champaran in the honour of Vallabhacharya and Rajiv Lochan Mahotsav – held annually near Rajimalochana temple in Rajim village from 16th February to 1st March.



A Tribal Festival

PERFORMING ARTS

Like other States, Chhattisgarh has also a rich tradition of performing arts. These comprise dances, drama and music. But, being a State largely inhabited



by tribal people, many of these art forms exhibit a distinct tribal orientation.

Dance

Dances in Chhattisgarh primarily showcase the joyous life of the tribal people involving complex footwork and deft swaying movements in groups to the accompaniment of the beatings of drums. Often the dancers form single lines and move rhythmically in the anti-clock wise direction holding each other



Tribal dance in Chhattisgarh

across the waist. Different songs are also sung during these performances creating enchanting atmospheres for all. Some of these popular dances are: Saila Dance – a group dance comprising male performers, who dance with bamboo sticks after cutting crops; Suwa or Soowa (parrot) Dance – a group dance performed by female dancers to please the Goddess of Wealth; Karma Dance – a group dance performed by both male and female dancers in praise of the Karam tree; and Raut or Rawat Nacha or Dance – a group dance consisting of a large number of male dancers half of whom play drums and flutes of special kinds while others dance encircling the child member of the team dressed up as Lord Krishna.

Drama

The word popularly used for drama in Chhattisgarh is *gammat*. Chandaini-Gonda is one such folk drama that is enacted in the district of Dantewada featuring dialogues, songs and dances that are often based on mythological stories or local folk tales. Sonha Bihan, Lorik-Chanda, Hareli, Gammatiha, Rahas and Kari of

the Durg district also belong to this genre. Dressed in colourful attires, the performers in these enactments play their roles based on either mythological or historical characters of local significance. In fact, several acclaimed plays of the famous theatre personality, Habib Tanvir, are variations of this form of dance-drama. Besides, Chhattisgarh has also a popular film industry known as ‘Chollywood’, which regularly produces Chhattisgarhi films.

Music

Like dances, music of folk origin dominates the landscape of Chhattisgarh as people sing soulful songs to suit various occasions. Some of these songs are season specific while others are sung during festivals. There are yet others, which re-enact the epic stories with contemporary interpretations. To the first category belong songs like *baramasi* (twelve months), *sawnahi* (sung during the rainy season) and *faag* or *basant geet* (sung with the onset of the spring season). Likewise, to the second category belong the *suwa* and *dohe* songs, which are sung at the time of celebrating Dipavali (the festival of light). To the third category belongs the much popular *pandwani* with two characteristic styles of singing known as *vedamati* and *kapalik*. While in the first style the lead artist narrates the story of the Pandavas from the epic Mahabharata by sitting on the floor throughout the performance, in the second style the narrator actually enacts the scenes with action. The popular folk singer of the State, Teejan Bai has earned world-wide acclaim singing Pandwanni in this style. However, apart from these, the repertoire of folk music in Chhattisgarh also includes several other types of songs, such as,



Teejan-Bai

sohar geet (sung after the birth of a child), *bihar geet* (sung during marriages), *goura geet* (sung to propitiate Lord Shiva and Goddess Durga), *cher-chera* (sung to celebrate



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the growth of crops), *pathori geet* (sung while bidding farewell to a newly-wed bride), *dewar geet* (sung as entertainment songs) and *khuduwa, loriya, fugdi, kau mau* and *chau mau* (songs sung affectionately for children). *Bharthari*, another popular music form of the State, is based on the folk tales of the former King and saint Raja Bharthari. These songs are generally sung to the accompaniment of various types of musical instruments. The most notable among those are the *dhols* (big drums), *mandals* (smaller sized drums) and *mandri* (a miniature version of the *mandal*).

VISUAL ARTS AND CRAFTS

Traditional arts and crafts of Chhattisgarh represent fine examples of the creative talents of its people and their artisanal skills. To the first category belong the wall paintings and floor decorations usually made using natural colours to depict rituals performed on various occasions by the tribal people of the State. Among such art, the most popular are the Pithora paintings, which originated in the tribal areas of central India, and the Godna (tattoo) art, which the women of the Jangala village make on textiles combining natural colours with acrylic paint to enhance their visual appeal. Besides, hand printing on cotton fabrics like the *Chhattisgarhi Kosa Sarees* also displays the artistic abilities of the tribal people of the State. To the second category belongs the popular *dhokra* work in which bell metal items are made using brass and bronze with hollow casting and the lost wax technique. Traditional jewellery widely available in

a variety of gold, silver, bronze and mixed metal, beautiful terracotta pottery and figurines representing the rituals and customs of the tribal people, the metal artefacts and figurines made of wrought iron, various articles made of bamboo for daily use and decorative purposes including baskets, fishing traps, hunting tools and agricultural implements and nicely carved wooden products and furniture also belong to this category.

CONTEMPORARY CULTURAL DEVELOPMENTS

With its multifarious cultures and traditions, Chhattisgarh in recent years has truly emerged as a State of natural attraction for visitors from far and wide. The State Government through its many initiatives has also brought it to the cultural forefront of the country. The Sirpur National Dance and Music Festival (organized every year in the month of January by the Chhattisgarh Tourism Board), the Chakradhar Samaroh (organized by the Ustad Allaudin Khan Sangeet Academy and the Chakradhar Lalit Kala Kendra to commemorate the glorious memory of Maharaja Chakradhar Singh who wrote several books on music and dance and established the Raigarh Gharana), and the Bastar Lokatsav (organized to coincide with the Bastar Dussehra every year after the monsoons) are some such initiatives. Besides, the natural and cultural heritages of the State in the forms of pristine forests, waterfalls, rock paintings, carved temples and caves have also acted as great tourist attractions.



Wall painting



Bamboo works



Bell metal (Dhokra) works



GOA



Even after more than five centuries, Goa continues to retain its charm.

Goa is one of the most popular destinations for tourists from India as well as abroad. It is located in the south-western region of India, along the Arabian Sea. About 100 kilometres of the Konkan coastline stretches across Goa.

It shares borders in the north with Maharashtra along the Terekhol river and in the south with Karnataka. The Western Ghats, a part of the Sahayadri Mountains, are to the east.



Goa State Emblem

Some of the major rivers flowing through Goa are Mandovi, Zuari, Lolieum, Betul, Tiracol, Chapora, Sal and Talpona. The major towns are Margao, Vasco, Mapusa, Bicholim, Quepem, Curchorem, Canacona and Ponda.

This is how the Portuguese Ambassador to China, who visited Goa around 1511, described it, “Now our road takes us to the magnificent kingdom of Goa. The people of this kingdom are strong, prudent and very hardworking. The kingdom of Goa is the most important in India. It is civilized, having famous orchards and water. It is the coolest place in India and it is the most plentiful in foodstuffs.”

The population of Goa is diverse in terms of religion and language. While Hindus constitute about two thirds of the population, nearly 30 per cent are Christians and about 5 per cent are Muslims. With



Indian Gaur (Bos Gaurus)



Ruby Throated Yellow Bulbul

<i>Fact Sheet</i>	
<i>State Day</i>	30 May
<i>Geographical Area</i>	3,702 km ²
<i>Capital</i>	Panaji (Panjim)
<i>Official Language</i>	Konkani
<i>State Animal</i>	Indian Gaur
<i>State Bird</i>	Ruby Throated Yellow Bulbul
<i>State Tree</i>	Matti



the population of about 15 lakhs, Goa is the second least populous State of India. With an area of 3,702 km², it is also the smallest State.

Goa has two districts: North Goa and South

Goa. Vasco-da-Gama and Madgaon are the major railway stations. Dabolim is Goa's international airport.

The history of Goa, prior to the arrival of the Portuguese, is relatively unknown. A legend has it that Parashuram, an incarnation of Vishnu, shot an arrow into the Indian Ocean leading to the creation of the paradise known as Goa. Goa in the past had names such as Gomanchala, Gopakapattam, Gopakapuri, Govapuri, Gomantak, etc. Goa was a part of the kingdoms ruled by the Satavahanas, the Kadambas, the Rashtrakutas of Malkhed, the Chalukyas and the Silharas in different periods. It came under the Muslim rulers by the end of the 14th century CE when the Yadavas were overthrown by the Khiljis of Delhi.

The discovery of the sea route to India by Vasco-da-Gama in 1498 had far-reaching implications for India in general and Goa in particular. This was followed by many expeditions to India by the Portuguese and many other Europeans. In 1510, Alfonso de Albuquerque captured Goa, with the help of some locals. In 1542, the Jesuit priest St. Francis Xavier arrived in Goa and thus the era of evangelisation began. The rule of the Portuguese in Goa continued for about 450 years.

Even after India's Independence in 1947, Puducherry and Goa continued to be in the hands of the French and the Portuguese respectively. The French vacated soon thereafter. But the Portuguese refused to meet the democratic aspirations of the people of Goa. The Government of India had to intervene and Goa was liberated on 19 December 1961. Since then, December 19 is celebrated as the Goa Liberation Day. Goa along with Daman and Diu was made a composite Union Territory. Goa became the 25th State of India on 30 May 1987 after it was



Vasco-da-Gama railway station

conferred statehood. Daman and Diu were delinked from Goa and became a separate Union Territory.

CULTURAL SPECIFICITIES

Language

Konkani is the official language of Goa. Marathi is an additional official language. Kannada is also spoken in Goa apart from Hindi and English. Some belonging to the pre-liberation generation still use Portuguese, the language of the colonial rulers. It is interesting to note that it was in Goa that printing was done for the first time in India, in 1556. Konkani is written in the Devanagari script. It was included in the 8th Schedule of the Constitution of India in 1992.



Konkani writer Ravindra Kelekar (seated) receiving the Jnanpith Award for 2006

Dress

The Goan dresses reflect both the Eastern and Western styles. *Nauvari* (nine-yard) saree and *pano bhaju* are among the traditional dresses worn by women. Men normally wear a *puddvem*.

Food

Rice with fish curry is the most popular dish of Goa. Coconut is the most common ingredient in Goan cuisine. Many of the Goan dishes are spicy. Being a coastal region, a wide range of seafood is available. Prawns, lobsters, crabs, pomfrets, clams, ladyfish, mussels and oysters are used to prepare curries, fries, soups and pickles. Dried and salted fish dishes are also popular. The Goan non-vegetarian delicacies such as the prawn *balchão* and *sorpotel* are acclaimed throughout the world. People in rural Goa still use traditional way of cooking in clay pots on firewood. This also provides a



Fish

smoky flavour. *Feni* is a popular alcoholic drink of Goa. It is prepared with either cashew or toddy palm.

FAIRS AND FESTIVALS

Goans celebrate a wide range of festivals throughout the year. These vividly reflect the cultural heritage of different religious and linguistic communities. The major fairs and festivals include: New Year's Day, Goa Carnival, Fatorpa Zatra, Three Kings Feast, Easter, Shigmo Festival, Shirgao Jatra, Sao Joao Festival, Sangodd, Chikalkalo, Eid-ul-Fitr, Eid-ul-Zuha, Ganesh Chaturthi, Dussehra, Narak Chaturdashi, Diwali, Tripurari Poornima, Feast of St. Francis Xavier (December 3), Mando Festival and Christmas.

Churches and Convents of Goa



Chapel of St. Francis Xavier



Bom Jesus Basilica



Chapel of St. Cajetan



Se Cathedral



Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception Church



Church of St. Anne

Temples of Goa



Shri Kamakshi Devi Temple



Shri Shantadurga Devi Temple



Shri Mahadev Temple



Shri Manguesh Temple

PERFORMING ARTS

Dance and Music

Goa has its own folk songs and dances. *Mando* song is considered the finest creation of Goan cultural synthesis. It is a slow verse dealing with love and tragedy. It also deals with social injustice and political resistance during the long colonial rule of the Portuguese in Goa.

Dances of Goa



Goa has many folk dances such as *Dashavatara*, *Dekhni*, *Dhalo*, *Dhangar*, *Fugdi*, *Ghodemodni*, *Goff*, *Jagar*, *Kunbi*, *Muslim Khel*, *Perni Jagar*, *Ranamale*, *Romta Mel*, *Divlyan Nach* (Lamp Dance) and *Veerabhadra*. Other folk dances include: *Corredinho*, *Tonayam Mel*, *Viramel*, *Talghadi* and *Gaulan Kalo*.

VISUAL ARTS

Arts and Crafts

Terracotta and brass items made in Bicholim are among the well-known ones in Goa. Being a coastal State, Goa also has items such as chandeliers, mirrors and idols, which are made of exquisite sea shells.

The well-known art forms include seashell craft, bamboo craft, woodcarving, wooden lacquer ware, brass metals and papier-mache. Goa also has unique crafts, such as, pottery, woodcraft, crochet, marco, handicrafts, coconut craft, hand-painted tiles, etc. The eminent personalities who have been decorated with Padma awards for their contribution in different fields include Laxman Pai – Padma Shri (1985) and Padma Bhushan (2018); Mario de Miranda



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– Padma Shri (1988), Padma Bhushan (2002), Padma Vibhushan (2012); M. Boyer – Padma Shri in (2005); and Remo Fernandes – Padma Shri (2007).

Places of Importance

Being located on the Konkan Coast, Goa is famous for its many beaches. Domestic and foreign tourists throng the beaches of Calangute, Bogmalo, Anjuna, Vagator, Arambol, Colva, Baga, Harmal and Miramar. However, the tourist attractions in Goa are not confined to beaches alone. Aguada Fort is the largest and the best-preserved Portuguese bastion in Goa and was built in 1609–12. It has a four-storey Portuguese lighthouse, erected in 1864, and is the oldest of its kind in Asia. The other famous forts are Terekhol, Chapora and Cabo de Rama. Goa is home to many significant places of worship, especially churches and convents which became the UNESCO World Heritage Sites in 1986. Panaji, the capital city,

has three historic monuments—the Jama Masjid, Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception Church and the Mahalaxmi Temple—surprisingly situated on the same road (Dr. Dada Vaidya Road, known as Rua de Saudade during the Portuguese era) that pose a perfect symmetry of communal harmony and camaraderie. Dudhsagar and Harvalem waterfalls and wildlife sanctuaries at Bondla, Cotigao and Molem are other attractions. Dr. Salim Ali Bird Sanctuary is located at Chorao. The National Academy of Water Sports at Dona Paula has emerged as a popular tourist destination.

CONTEMPORARY CULTURAL DEVELOPMENTS

Apart from the traditional fairs and festivals, Goa hosts many popular cultural events such as *Lokotsav* (National Folk Festival) and the International Film Festival of India. Indeed, Goa, termed as ‘God’s Own Abode’, is India’s smallest State with a large heart!



Aguada Fort



Calangute Beaches



Safa Shahouri Masjid



Mahalaxmi Temple, Panaji



Lokotsav (National Folk Festival)



Shigmo Festival



Tribal Festival



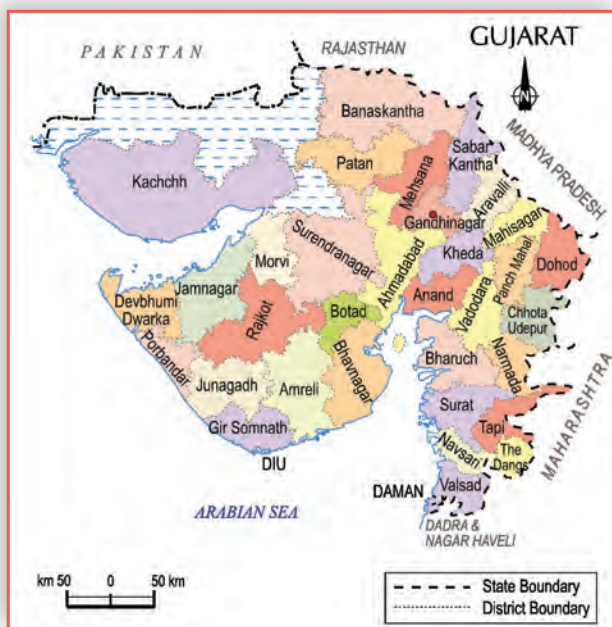
Goa Carnival



The tableau of Goa passes through the Rajpath, New Delhi, during the 68th Republic Day Parade in 2017



GUJARAT



mostly covered with scrubs or sparse woodland. The southern part, on the other hand, is famous for its rich soil and fine crops of cotton. The eastern part stretching out to the Western Ghats is mountainous and attracts heavy rainfall. This contrasting topography accounts for the four major cultural regions of Gujarat, namely, Saurashtra, Kutch, Kathiawar and Dang.

The capital of Gujarat is Gandhinagar while its two major commercial centres with flourishing textile industries are Ahmedabad and Surat. Surat is also known for its gems and diamond cutting units. Economically, the State has always thrived on its production of commercial crops, overseas trade and commerce.

The people of Gujarat belong to diverse communities. Of these, the Hindus, Jains, Muslims (especially the Khoja and Bohra Muslims), Christians, Parsis and several scheduled tribes are the prominent ones.

Hinduism is the major religion in Gujarat and much of the folklore and folk culture of the State revolves around Lord Krishna. It is believed that Lord Krishna migrated from Mathura and settled at Dwarka along with the Yadavas, Ahirs and Kshatriyas, who accompanied him.

Situated on the west coast of India, Gujarat became a State of the Union of India in May 1960. Presently, with a population of over 60 million, the State shares borders with Rajasthan on the north-east, Madhya Pradesh on the south-east, and the Maharashtra on the south while the Arabian Sea washes its shores on the west. Besides, it also shares international border with Pakistan's Sindh province on the north-west.

Geographically, Gujarat is a State of contrasts. It has wet and fertile rice-growing plains on the west coast and almost rainless salt deserts of the Rann of Kutch in the north-west. The large Kathiawar peninsula rises from the shores of the Arabian Sea as a low, rolling hilly land and stretches upto the centre. It is largely arid except for some seasonal streams and is

Fact Sheet

State Day	1 May
Geographical Area	1,96,244 km ²
Capital	Gandhinagar
Official Language	Gujarati
State Animal	Asiatic Lion
State Bird	Greater Flamingo
State Flower	Marigold (Galgota)
State Tree	Mango



Gujarat has some Stone Age sites in the valleys of the Sabarmati and Mahi rivers. It also has several sites belonging to the Harappan Civilisation. Of these, Lothal is believed to be one of the world's most ancient seaports. Gujarat's coastal cities, such as, Bharuch and Khambhat have been serving as ports and trading centres since the time of the Mauryas, dated to the 3rd century BCE.

CULTURAL SPECIFICITIES

Language

The official language of the State is Gujarati, which has a long literary tradition. Other languages spoken in Gujarat are Kathiawadi, Kutchi, Bhili (Bhilodi), Hindi, Marathi, Sindhi and Urdu.

Dress

The cultural vibrancy of Gujarat is often seen in their way of dressing with bright and colourful attires. The main outfits of the Gujarati men are *chorno* and *kediyu* whereas the women wear *chaniyo* and *choli*. While performing *Garba* (a folk dance), men wear a small coat called *keviya*. It is a tight long sleeved coat with frilled pleats at its waist and embroideries on its borders and shoulders. A tight *churidar* and a colourful turban are put on along with this coat. A coloured waistband adds beauty to this outfit. Alongside men, women performing *Garba* wear *lehenga choli*, *chaniya choli* and *ghagra choli*. The *odhni* or *dupatta* completes their outfit. There is also regional variation in the manner the Gujaratis dress themselves. *Abhas* is the traditional costume of the Kutch region. The Parsi men distinguish themselves by wearing pants, long coats and caps, whereas the Parsi women wear *sarees*. Both men and women in Gujarat wear a lot of jewellery that are made of beads, silver, white metal, ivory, gold and diamond. One also finds a lot of a mirror work on the cloths of both men and women.

Food

The Gujarati food is primarily vegetarian. However, different regions in the State have their own styles of preparing food. The typical Gujarati *thali* (platter)



Gujarati Breakfast

Gujarati Thali

consists of (a) *roti* or *rotlo* of *bajra*, *bakhari*, *makai*, *jowar* or *bhakri*, (b) *dal* or *kadhi*, (c) rice and (d) *sabzi* of various types, such as, *Bateta nu shaak*, *Bateta sukhi bhaji*, *Bharela*, *Fansi ma dhokli nu shaak*, *Ganthia nu shaak* and *Undhiyu*. Gujarati pickle and *chhundo* are used as teasers. Most of the snacks are made of gram flour and are deep-fried or steamed. Most popular among these snacks are *dhokla*, *khajli*, *thepla*, *fafda*, *khakda*, *mathia*, *ghanthia* and *khandvi*. Many Gujarati dishes are distinctively sweet, salty and spicy at the same time. In the Saurashtra region, *chass* (buttermilk) is considered to be a must-have drink item in the daily menu.

FAIRS AND FESTIVALS

Apart from the national festivals, more than 3,500 other festivals are celebrated in the State. Most of these festivals revolve around the changes in seasons, the times of harvesting or observance of auspicious or religious occasions. Taken together, these festivals highlight the rich religio-culture traditions of Gujarat, making it apt to call the State the 'Land of Festivals'.

Navratri is the most popular festival in the State and is celebrated every year in the month of October for nine days worshipping the nine divine aspects of *Shakti*, the Mother Goddess, who not only sustains the universe but also destroys evil in Her personified form of Durga. The two popular folk dances of Gujarat, the *Garba* and *Dandia* are performed by both men and women during this occasion on every night.

The 'Rann Utsav' of Kutch is usually organised every year from the month of November till February by the Tourism Corporation of Gujarat to promote tourism in this part of the State.

The 'Modhera Dance Festival' is another such initiative, which is held every year during the third week of January at the Sun Temple in Modhera. Its



Navratri



Rann Utsav



International Kite festival

is organised by the State's Department of Culture, in collaboration with the West Zone Cultural Centre to celebrate Indian classical dances.

Similarly, the 'International Kite Festival' is celebrated every year on 14th January coinciding with the celebration of Makar Sankranti. Technically, the festival marks the end of winter. On this day, kites of different sizes and colours are flown all over Gujarat.

The 'Saptak Music Festival' to celebrate Indian classical music is usually held in the first week of January every year in the city of Ahmedabad.

Among the religious festivals, Janmashtami (the birthday of Lord Krishna) is celebrated with great fervour in the State, especially in the temple city of Dwarka. Also, on this day, people enjoy the breaking of the *dahi-handi* (an earthen pot filled with buttermilk), which is tied high up on a rope.

The 'Bhavnath Mahadev Fair' is held every year for five days during Mahashivratri in the month of February at the Bhavnath Mahadev Temple, which is located at the foot of the Girnar hill in Junagadh.

Like elsewhere Muslims in Gujarat celebrate Eid-ul-Fitr, Eid-ul-Azha and Muharram with great fervour, while the Parsis celebrate Nowruz (the Parsi New Year) with equal fervour.

The 'Dang Darbar Fair', one of the prominent tribal festivals of the State, is held in the month of March every year and exhibits the rich tribal traditions of the region.

Apart from the above, people in Gujarat also celebrate Christmas, Ganesh Chaturthi, Rakshabandhan, Holi and Diwali with traditional gaiety.

PERFORMING ARTS

The State of Gujarat is quite well-known for its rich traditions of classical and folk music. Many of

the *ragas* are named after the State and its various regions and peoples like *Gurjari*, *todi*, *bilaval* (after Veraval), *sorathi* (after Sorath), *khambavati* (after Khambhat, known previously as Cambay), *ahiri* and *lati*. While the State predominantly practices the Hindustani classical music, different types of folk music too have enriched its cultural traditions. These include lullabies, nuptial songs, festive songs and *Rannade* songs. Gujarat is also known for having produced its own musical instruments that accompany folk songs. Some such instruments are *turi*, *bungal* and *pava* (wind instruments), *ravan hattha*, *ektara* and *jantar* (string instruments), *manjira* (percussion instrument) and *zanz* (pot drum). Folk music like *duha*, *sorathaa*, *chaand* and ballads are traditionally performed in the Saurashtra region of the State. *Bhajans* (devotional songs) and *haveli sangeet* (palace songs) are also widely performed in the State.

Bhavai is the most well-known folk theatre of the State. It originated in the 14th century CE. In the early 16th century CE, the Portuguese missionaries also introduced to the State a type of folk theatre called, *Yesu Mashiha ka Tamasha*, following the Maharashtrian tradition. During the later half of the 19th century CE, the Parsis also introduced western



Bhavai



Siddi Damal Dance



theatre to the State by staging Shakespearean plays. Later on, these traditions, taken together, gave shape to the modern Gujarati theatre.

It is believed that in ancient times, Lord Krishna, while migrating from Vrindavan (in Uttar Pradesh) to Dwarka (in Gujarat) brought *raasleela* to the State.

The *raasnriya* and *raasleela* (mystical romantic dances) of those times are said to have survived to this day in the form of *Garba*. Besides, there are also many region and community specific dances, which one finds in the State. Some of those are mentioned in Table 1.

Table 1

Dance	Region/Community Involved	Salient Features of the Dance Form
Tippani Nritya	Kadiya, Kumbhar, Ubhad, Bhil, Kharva and Siddi women of Saurashtra	The performance uses 'tippani' that consists of a square piece of wood or iron, called 'gadbo'.
Randal's Ghodo (Horse) Dance	Khambhat Bara, Bhalnakantha, Vadhiyar, Khakhariya and Kathiawad	Involves worship of Rannade or Randalma, wife of the Sun-God, by the women with joyful dance.
Jaag Nritya	Women of urban or semi-urban areas, Koli tribe	Dance with a 'Jaag'(pot full of wheat or barley sprout).
Raas	Saurashtra	Recreation of Brindavani <i>raasleela</i> .
Raasda	Men and women of Koli and Bharwad communities; women of Saurashtra	Song and music-oriented performance.
Daandiya Raas	Koli, Aayers, Kathiawadi Rajputs, Bhadwad and Rabri people	On the nights of full moon in the autumn season, this dance is performed with small sticks called <i>dandiya</i> .
Gofgunthan-Solanga Raas	Koli and Kani communities of Saurashtra	Knotting of colourful strings by the performers.
Manjira Nritya	Padhaar community of Bhalnakantha region	Playing of small cymbals, called <i>Manjiras</i> .
Hinch Nritya	Koli women of Kutch, Rajputani of Vadhiyar and Karadiya, and Dalit women of Bhal	Dances with earthen pot called, <i>Gaggar</i> .
Thaga Nritya	Thakore community of north Gujarat	A kind of sword dance.
Dholo Rano	Koli community of Gohilwad	It is an agrarian dance.
Ashwa Nritya	Koli community of north Gujarat	Sword dance by horse riders.
Holi Nritya	Madawadi community	Joyous dance during Holi.
Titodo	Different communities across Gujarat	Performed by unmarried people.
Madari Dance	Snake charmers across Gujarat	Performed by snake charmers playing <i>morli mahover</i> .
Dhamal of Siddhis	Siddhis of Bharuch, Bhavnagar, Surat, Zafrabad, Surendranagar and Jambur region	Use of a <i>dholki</i> or drum called, <i>Dhamal</i> .
Gher Nritya	Dublas of the southern part of Gujarat	Performed in a 'Gher' or circle.
Shikaar Nritya	Adivasi men of Dharampur region	Recreation of a hunting scene.
Thaakarya, Gadhavi and Baacha Nritya	Adivasis of the Dang region	Performed to rhythmic beats of drums.
Aagva Nritya	Tribes from the Narmada river basin areas of Bharuch	Predominantly performed by men.
Gheriya Nritya	Tadvi community of Panchmahal, Bharuch and Vadodara	Performed by men during Holi.
Aaleni-Haalen	Young Bhil women of Tadvi community	Performed to welcome spring.
Sword Dance	Adivasi men of Dahod region	A type of war dance.
Kaakda Nritya	Diverse communities across the State	Performed to please the Goddess for protection against pox.

Folk dance of the Gamits	Songarh region	Performed at various times of the day on various occasions.
Folk dances of the Adivasis of Panchmahal	Adivasis of Panchmahal	Varieties of Spring dance.
Janviyo Dhol Nritya	Dungari, Garasia Bhils of north Gujarat	Performed to the beat of 'Holi Jagavavi'(a large <i>dhol</i> to awaken 'Holi' or Spring).
Daang	Daangi people	Vigorous tribal community dance.
Rathawa	Rathwa tribe	Music is created during dance to the rhythm of steps.
Mandava Nritya	Thakurs of Khakharia Tappa and Adivasis of Dang area	A kind of balancing dance performance.
Tur Nritya and Halpatis	Halpati tribe	Performed at weddings or on the occasion of Holi with dancers assembled in interlocked patterns.
Bhavai	Taragalas and Bhojakas of north Gujarat	A kind of dance-drama.

VISUAL ARTS

Gujarat was one of the main centres of the Indus Valley Civilisation with about 50 settlements. It has exhibited a rich tradition of visual arts since then. The Gujarati form of miniature painting can be traced back to the 11th century CE, when Jain *pothis* or manuscripts were painted on palm leaves and preserved. Use of calligraphy in the State can also be noticed in wall decorations and other places. Some of these still look considerably fresh.

Stone carvings are other impressive pieces of visual art of Gujarat. The State is also a repository of numerous places of historical importance, which attract thousands of people from all over the world. The city of Junagadh is adorned with beautiful shrines of Hindus, Jains and Muslims. In Junagarh caves, a huge boulder preserves to this day the fourteen rock edicts inscribed by Emperor Ashoka in the 3rd



Balrama sculptures,
Rani ki vav



Statue of female
mendicant



Statue of Nayika



Sheshshayee vishnu



Parvati's Penance



Statue of Kalki

century BCE. Besides, one can also see here classic examples of rock cut architecture in the Chitya Halls and the sculpted pillars of the caves. Maru-Gurjara or Chalukyan style architecture can also be seen in the Sun Temple of Modhera. Similarly, one can see architecture belonging to the Chalukya (Solanki) period at Adalaj, a heritage site protected by the Archaeological Survey of India in the Gandhinagar district. Here an interesting depiction of 'Ami Khumbor' (symbolic pot with water of life) and 'Kalp Vriksha' (tree of life) carved from a single block of stone present a marvellous example of the State's sculptural heritage. Table 2 provides a list of other important monuments of the State.



Pots and
pitchers

Copper has been in use in Gujarat since the times of the Chalcolithic Age. Its traces are found in the ruins of the Indus Valley Civilisation at Lothal and Dholavira. The town of Shihor is still continuing that glorious tradition of metal craft with its 'Kansa' (bell metal) works, especially pots and pitchers of various sizes.



Table 2

S. No.	Name of the Monuments and Heritage sites
1.	Jami Masjid, Khambhat, Anand
2.	Talaja Caves, Talaja, Bhavnagar
3.	Champaner Fort, Champaner, Godhra
4.	Mandvi or Custom House, Champaner, Godhra
5.	Pavagad Hill Fort and Palace Complex, Pavagad, Godhra
6.	Kanakeshvara Mahadev Temple, Kanakpur, Godhra
7.	Rudabai Stepwell or Adalaj Stepwell, Adalaj, Gandhinagar
8.	Durvasa Rishi's Ashram, Pindara, Jamnagar
9.	Kalika Mata Temple, Navi Dhrewad, Jamnagar
10.	Dwarkadhish group of temples with its outer compounds, Devbhumi Dwarka
11.	Junagadhi (Jain) Temple, Vasai, Jamnagar
12.	Ashokan Rock Edicts, Junagadh
13.	Uparkot Buddhist Caves, Junagadh
14.	Vithalbai Haveli, Vasco, Kheda
15.	Sun Temple, Surya Kund with other adjoining temples and loose sculptures, Modhera, Mehsana
16.	Rani ki Vav, Patan
17.	Ruins of Rudra Mahalaya Temple, Sidhpur
18.	Kirti Mandir (House where Mahatma Gandhi was born), Porbandar
19.	Old Dutch and Armenian Tombs and Cemeteries, Surat
20.	Ranak Devi's Temple, Wadhwan, Surendranagar
21.	Ancient Mound, Rangpur, Surendranagar
22.	Fresco Rooms in Bhau Tambekar's Wada, Vadodara
23.	Saptamukhi Vav, Dabhoi, Vadodara
24.	Microlithic site, Amarjapura, Vadodara
25.	Dholavira archaeological site (Kotada), Tehsil Bhachau, Kutch
26.	Laxmi Vilas Palace, Vadodara
27.	Three gates besides Bhadrakali Temple (Azam Khan Sarai), Ahmedabad
28.	Sidi Saiyyed Mosque, Ahmedabad
29.	Ahmed Shah's Mosque, Ahmedabad
30.	Teen Darwaza, Ahmedabad
31.	Ancient site at Lothal, Lothal, Ahmedabad

Wood carving has also been an integral part of Gujarati art since long. There are four types of wood carvings that can be seen in the State. The first type

comprises figure works which adorn the houses of the Hindus. Well-known items like *nav khandia* and *tran khandia* (kinds of cupboards) also belong to this category. The second type comprises various abstract and geometrical wood carvings seen in the Muslim households. The beautiful wood carvings found in the reception rooms of the merchants comprises the third type. The fourth type comprises wooden blocks that are used for textile printing. Pethapur in the Mehsana district is famous for carving of such blocks from teakwood.

Gujarat is well-known for its tradition of Pithora painting, which is indigenous to the State. Modern-day painters also find their experimenting space in Gujarat, especially in the city of Vadodara (previously known as Baroda). Raja Ravi Verma spent his later years in this city along with Mysore (also called Mysuru) and other parts of India and enhanced his skills as a painter.

Gujarat is also quite well-known for its embroidery work. Superbly embroidered *toranas* (welcome arches), *chaklas* (wall hangings), and beautifully embroidered dresses like *lehangas*, *cholis*, *dupattas*, men's *kurtas*, *churidars* and children's clothes bear witness to such work. *Ari* embroidery (done with silk threads using a hook) is another popular craft of Kutch. The motifs commonly found in these embroideries are of dancing peacocks and human figures in various dancing poses. *Bandhani* with beautiful and delicate bead work is also unique to Gujarat.

Communities like Rabaris, Ahirs, Jats, Bharwads of Gujarat have their own styles of embroidery. *Kinkhabs* (brocades) woven with extra weft patterns are examples of this. Similarly, figures of flying birds and paired cocks amidst floral sprays are embroidered on the *Tanchoi*. Sometimes, *pallus* are also woven in Gujarat with intricate designs featuring peacocks, baskets, bunches of flowers and hunting scenes.



Pichowai Painting



Patola

Patola in Gujarat has the most colourful and elaborate weaving style with its figured body and the subtle merging of one shade into another. The most renowned amongst *patolas* is the one made in Patan in the Mehsana district.

Kutch and Saurashtra in Gujarat are also known for their beautiful earthen wares. They produce natural white wares in attractive shapes and designs. Saurashtra is specially well-known for its special type of clay called, *gopichandan*. This clay is so named as it feels like *chandan* (sandalwood paste) when tempered with water.

The oldest centre of crochet (lace) work in Gujarat is Jamnagar. Here, the women of the Vohra community are engaged in this art since the time of the Mughal Emperor, Aurangzeb.

CONTEMPORARY CULTURAL DEVELOPMENTS

The vibrancy of the cultural heritage of Gujarat is visible in the day-to-day life of its people. The products of its handicrafts coming with exceptionally skilled craftsmanship have entered the global market. Besides, the vibrant culture of the State has also been showcased in films and television serials. Festivals like the ‘Rann Utsav’, the ‘International Kite’ Festival and the ‘Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit’ have provided opportunities to the people of Gujarat to not only share their culture with the people from other regions within the country, but also to take it to the next level and truly make an impact internationally.



The Sun Temple at Modhera in district Mehsana is the venue of the annual dance festival





HARYANA



Haryana, with an ancient history going back to the Harappan times, is spread over 44,212 square kilometres. It was made a full-fledged State with the reorganisation of Punjab on 1 November 1966. As per the Census of India, 2011, it is the eighteenth largest State in terms of population with an estimated 2.54 crore inhabitants. The Union Territory of Chandigarh serves as its capital.

Haryana is bounded by Punjab in the west, Himachal Pradesh in the north and Rajasthan in the south. The river, Yamuna defines its eastern border with Uttar Pradesh. On its part, Haryana surrounds the country's capital, Delhi from three sides namely northern, western

and southern. Consequently, a large area of south Haryana comes within the National Capital Region.

Economically, Haryana is one of the most developed States of India. Its agricultural and manufacturing sectors have experienced sustained growth since the 1970s. Since the year 2000, the State has also emerged as the largest recipient of per capita investment in India.

CULTURAL SPECIFICITIES

Language

Hindi is the official language of Haryana and is spoken by the majority of the population in this predominantly Hindi-speaking State. Besides, with sizable number of Punjabi speaking Sikh population residing in the State, Punjabi has also been accorded the status of the second official language of the State since the year 2010.

Dress

The vibrancy of the people of Haryana and their simplicity and spirited enthusiasm for life find expression in their costume. The women of the State specially have an attraction towards colour. Their basic trousseau includes *daaman*, *kurti* and *chunder*.

Fact Sheet	
State Day	1 November
Geographical Area	44,212 km ²
State Capital	Chandigarh
Official Language	Hindi, Punjabi, Urdu
State Animal	Blackbuck
State Bird	Black francolin
State Flower	Lotus
State Tree	Sacred fig





Haryanvi women



Men wearing Haryanvi dress

The latter is a long, coloured piece of cloth decorated with shiny laces meant to cover the head and is drawn like the 'pallu' of a *saree* to the front. *Kurti* is a shirt-like blouse, which usually comes in white colour in sharp contrast to the *daaman*, which is a flairy ankle-long skirt that comes in striking colours. The men generally wear *dhoti*, a piece of long wrap-around cloth tucked in between the legs, with a white-coloured *kurta* to cover the upper part of the body. *Pagri* is a traditional headgear for men, which nowadays is worn mainly by the village elders. Usually, an all white attire is considered a status symbol for men.

Food

Haryana is well known for abundance of milk and milk products, which have influenced the food habits of the people of the State. Besides, people also take varieties of *rotis* or *chapattis*, of which *rotis* made of wheat and *bajra* (millet) are more popular though *rotis* are also made of gram and barley. Most popular cuisines of the State are *Singri Ki Sabzi*, *Methi Gajjar Kadhi Pakora*, *Mixed Dal*, *Khichri*, *Bathua Raita*, *Besan Masala*, *Roti-Makhan*, *Bajra Aloo Roti-Makhan*, *Bura Roti-Ghee*, *Kachri Ki Sabzi*, *Kheer*, *Churma*, *Malpua* and *Hara Dhania Cholia*. As already stated, Haryanvis have a strong inclination for homemade butter and *ghee*, which they use liberally in their daily diet.



Bajre ki roti, bathura ki sabji and lassi

FAIRS AND FESTIVALS

The people of Haryana celebrate various fairs and festivals with equal pomp, splendour and gaiety.

Just like other regions of the country, festivities like Dussehra, Navaratri, Holi, Diwali, Mahavir Jayanti, Guru Parav, Raksha Bandhan, Lohri, Karva Chauth, Krishna Janmashtami, Maha Shivratri, Durga Puja, Eid-ul-Fitr, Eid-ul-Juha and Muharram are celebrated across the State. Apart from these, the State also observes many fairs and festivals, which serve not only as occasions of celebration, but also attract a large number of visitors to the State at different times of the year. Some of these festivals are Baisakhi, Haryana Day, Kurukshetra Festival, Mahabharata Festival, Mango Festival, Sohna Car Rally, Surajkund Craft Mela, Kartik Cultural Festival and Pinjore Heritage Festival.

A festival called Gugga Naumi is also celebrated all over Haryana in honour of a saint, who was known as Gugga Pir. In the lunar month of *Bhadon* (August-September—Bhadrapaksha), the devotees of Gugga Pir paint his image on the wall in turmeric and worship the snake, painting its image in black colour and by pouring milk and buttermilk into snake holes.

Places of Historical Importance

Several pre-Harappan and Harappan sites have been found in Haryana. The major ones among these are located at Rakhigarhi, Banawali, Balu, Kunal, Agroha, Mittathal and Naurangabad. Evidences of material culture like paved roads, drainage system, large rainwater collection and storage systems, terracotta figurines and toys, backed bricks, metal works, bronze and iron implements, bangles made of terracotta and conch shells, marks of ploughed and cultivated fields and tools and implements for ploughing have been unearthed from these sites. Besides, coins belonging to the Kushan and the Gupta periods and coins belonging to the Kushans and the Yaudheyas have also been found from Naurangabad and Khokarakot respectively.

The Lat and the Humayun Mosque, located in Fatehbad, are two important monuments of the State that are associated with its medieval history.

However, the State is by far most well-known for Kurukshetra. The place has a sacred association with the Vedic Culture as well as the Mahabharata. It is believed that Lord Krishna proclaimed the philosophy of the Bhagavad Gita to Arjuna here at Jyotisar. The



very first verse of the Gita describes Kurukshetra as the 'Dharmakshetra' (place of righteousness). According to Hindu mythology, Kurukshetra applies to a circuit of about 128 kilometers, which includes a large number of holy places, temples and tanks that are associated with the ancient Indian traditions and the Mahabharata War.



Brahma Sarovar and Kurukshetra Temple

PERFORMING ARTS

Haryana has a rich tradition of music. Even villages here have been named after classical ragas. For example, in the Dadri *tehsil* villages like Nandyam, Sarangpur, Bilawala, Brindabana, Todi, Asaveri, Jaishri, Malakoshna, Hindola, Bhairavi and Gopi Kalyana have been named after well-known ragas. Similarly, in Jind district there are villages, which have been named Jai Jai Vanti, Malavi, etc.

Phag is a popular dance of Haryana. It is performed in the month of *Phalguna* (February–March) to celebrate the colourful festival of Holi. The dancers come together to the sound of *tasha*, *nagara* and *dhol*. The men sing the traditional songs of *Phalguna*. They are followed by women, who run after the men hitting them with *koraras* (knotted clothes) while men defend themselves with *shuntis*.

Swang, meaning disguise or imitation, is another attraction of the State. It is performed on the open stage by troupes of about 20–30 male artistes including the director, producer and musicians. The female roles are also played by male actors. Exchange of dialogues between two characters or groups of characters, appropriate costumes, and music are the main elements of this performance. *Swang* songs are accompanied by a number of folk instruments like *dholak*, *nagara*, *tasha*, *bin*, *cymbals*, etc. Usually performed by villagers, *Swang* is a blend of folklore, music and narration.

The *Jhumar* dance of the State derives its name from the ornament 'Jhumar', which are commonly

worn by young married women on forehead. The dance, exclusively performed by women in a circular formation, is also known as 'Hariyanvi Gidda'.



Jhumar or Haryanvi Gidda

Gugga is likewise an exclusively male dance. Ritualistic in nature, it is

performed in a procession that is taken out in the memory of saint Gugga, where devotees dance around the Pir's grave and sing songs in his praise.

Khoria, similar to *Ghoomar*, is another dance that is performed only by women on weddings and festivals. *Chupala*, on the other hand, is a devotional dance and is performed by men and women carrying *manjiras*. Similarly, *Deepak* is performed by both men and women carrying earthen lamps, where they express their devotion through dance often lasting a whole night.

Ratvai is a dance associated with the Mewati tribe. It is performed during the monsoons to the accompaniment of large drums.

Dhamal is another popular dance, performed in the Gurugram region. The dance begins with a long note on *bin* followed by the pulsating, rhythmic beatings of drums like *dhol*, *tasha* and *nagara* which invite some of the dancers to enter the arena carrying large *duffs* in their hands with frills of brightly coloured fabric tied to their edges. Other dancers soon follow carrying sticks of medium length, wrapped in tinsel and trusselled at both ends. Other accompanying instruments which add to this performance are the *sarangi*, *jhanhj*, *kartal* and *bansuri*. To begin with, the dancers form a row in semi-circle. Then with their heads touching the ground, they invoke the blessings of Goddess Bhavani, Lord Ganesha and the holy Trinity (Brahama, Vishnu and Mahesh). They then rise to form a circle and dance, first at a sedate pace and then gradually in gusto.

Loor or *Lahoor*, performed by women, is also a popular dance of Haryana. It derives its name from the word 'loor', which is commonly used for a 'girl' in the Bangar region. Performed during the Holi festival, this dance celebrates the onset of spring and the sowing of the Rabi crops. Its accompanying song is generally



sung in the form of questions and answers. *Dhamyal* is another community dance, which depicts the joyous emotions of the people on account of the promise of a good harvest and the advent of spring. The sounds of the *daph* (a one sided drum) and that of the ornaments worn by the women add to the musical extravaganza of this performance.

Ghoomar is another attractive dance of Haryana. Marked by circular movements of the dancers, it is generally performed by girls in the areas bordering Rajasthan.



Artists presenting Jhumar at Saras Mela



Woman performing Haryanvi Folk Song



Ghoomar Dance



Loor Dance

So far as musical instruments are concerned, an earthen pitcher is sometimes used as a miniature drum with its mouth covered with strips of rubber and then played with both hands. In many dance forms, the main dancers carry their own musical instruments such as the *dholak*, *manjira*, *chimta*, *deru* and *kartal* and dance to their beats creating exhilarating atmospheres. *Bin* and *bansuri* are also commonly used to play the background music. One of the unique performing arts of Haryana is *Ragini* in which traditional and contemporary issues are addressed through both individual and collective singings with the use of almost all the musical instruments mentioned above.

VISUAL ARTS

Pottery

Pottery is an integral part of rural life in Haryana. Potters are found in almost all the villages where they make utensils, decorative pieces and toys. Seasonal festivals are the times when the potters' wheels

become active and they make hundreds of beautiful toys, lamps, flower pots, and articles of household use.

Weaving

Haryana is also famous for its handloom products like shawls, *durries* and *lungis*. The *durries* from Haryana often come embellished with spectacular geometric designs. *Durries* with white triangles set against blue backgrounds are especially quite popular. Panipat is an important centre of *durrie* making in the State.

Sculptures and Painting

As already noted, Haryana has been home to different kinds of terracotta art and sculpture since the Harappan times. That tradition continues to this day. Besides, the youth from the State have also been experimenting with various forms of contemporary art.



Rakhigarhi Wheel

Bhiti Chitra (fresco painting) of Haryana is also quite famous. Mata Mansa Devi Temple, Kalayat Kapil Muni Temple and *havelis* at Bhiwani possess illustrious examples of such paintings, which portray stories from the *Jatakas* through folk motives and also tell the stories of social development of that time.

CONTEMPORARY CULTURAL DEVELOPMENTS

With its rich cultural traditions, the State has been making all out efforts to reach out to the wider world.

Initiatives such as the Surajkund Mela are a testimony to these efforts. 'Surajkund



Surajkund Mela

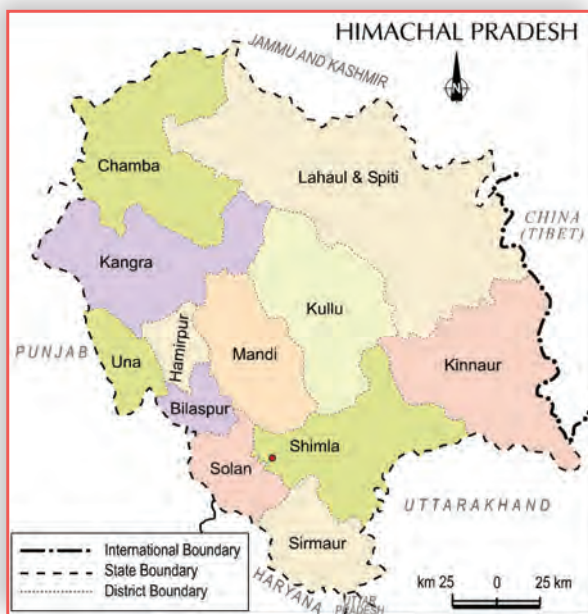
Crafts Mela' is held in February every year and brings together craftpersons like

potters, embroiderers, weavers, wood carvers, metal workers, stonemasons and painters from all over India on one platform. The fair also sees folk dancers, musicians, acrobats and magicians assemble and perform to entertain people. This provides an opportunity to all visitors to also get a glimpse of the State's cultural heritage and recent achievements.





HIMACHAL PRADESH



meaning ‘mountain’. Coming into existence on 25 January 1971, the State is encircled by Jammu and Kashmir on the north, Uttarakhand on the south-east, Punjab on the south-west and Haryana on the south. The Tibetan Autonomous Region of the Peoples Republic of China flanks it on the east.

Himachal Pradesh is home to various tribes and communities. The prominent ones among those are the Gaddis, Gujjars, Kinnauris, Lahulis, Pangwalis, Rajputs and Punjabis. The Hindus constitute more than 95 per cent of the State’s population. A majority of the rest are Buddhists. They are mostly concentrated in the Lahaul and Spiti regions of the State. Others follow different faiths.

The climate in the State varies extremely from one place to another with heavy rainfall in some areas to almost no rainfall in others. Being high in altitude, snowfall is a common sight in most parts of the State.

A popular tourist destination in the State is Dharamsala, where the 14th Dalai Lama of the Gelug sect of Tibetan Buddhism resides. The other picturesque places are Kullu, Manali, Dalhousie and McLeodganj. Shimla is the capital of the State

With lofty snow-clad mountains, deep valleys, lush green forests, lakes, cascading streams and waterfalls, Himachal Pradesh is indeed a nature’s delight. It derives its name from the Sanskrit words *hima*, meaning ‘snow’ and *achal*,



Kangra Valley

<i>Fact Sheet</i>	
<i>State Day</i>	25 January
<i>Geographical Area</i>	55,673 km ²
<i>Capital</i>	Shimla
<i>Official Language</i>	Hindi
<i>State Animal</i>	Snow Leopard
<i>State Bird</i>	Western Tragopan (Jujurana)
<i>State Flower</i>	Pink Rhododendron
<i>State Tree</i>	Deodar





Snow-clad Mountains

while Mandi, Kangra, Chamba and Hamirpur are its important towns.

CULTURAL SPECIFICITIES

Language

The official language of Himachal Pradesh is Hindi. It is commonly used in educational institutions and official circles. However, majority of the people speak Pahari, which owes its origin to old Sanskrit and Prakrit.

The Pahari language has three distinct forms. These are: Eastern Pahari, Western Pahari and Northern Pahari. Dialects like Himachali, Kuluhi, Chambiali, Churahi, Mandeali, Keonthali and Srimauri belong to these forms of Pahari.

Besides Pahari, Punjabi, Kangri, Kinnauri and Dogri are also spoken in the State.

Dress

The vibrant culture of the State can be seen reflected in the traditional attires of the people. These attires also reflect the regional and ethnic diversity of the State. However, irrespective of communities, Himachali men mostly wear *sherwani* with attractive *churidar-pyjamas* and *pagri* (turban). Similarly, women generally wear *kurtas*, *rahide* (a long head scarf) and *ghagra* or *lehenga choli*. The *rahide* is worn by women to protect their head from cool breeze as well as to show their traditional social affinities. Farmers working in the fields usually put on a loincloth with *kurta* and a traditional cap. Priests, on the other hand, wear white



dhoti and *kurta* with a *pagri* while worshipping in the temples. Silver rings, bangles and headgears with unique designs are also worn as normal accessories by the women. Pashmina shawls produced in the region are too widely used. *Pattu* and *dhobroo* are among the most preferred shawls in the State.



Food

Himachal Pradesh is known for apples. Pink Lady, Honey Crisp, Jazz, Red Delicious and Golden Delicious are different varieties of this luscious fruit. Other



Apple orchard

fruits, which grow in the State, are mangoes, guavas, oranges, grapes, bananas, lemons and peaches. Varieties of squash and juices made from these fruits are widely sold in India and abroad.

However, the daily food of people in Himachal Pradesh consists of *dal* (lentils), varieties of curries made of vegetables and steamed rice. People also eat *chapatis* made of either wheat, *jowar* or *bajra* flour. *Patande*, prepared like a pancake, is a speciality of the Sirmaur district of Himachal Pradesh. It is also made of wheat, *jowar* or *bajra* flour.



Guchhi mattar, *sepu vadi* and *kaddu ka khatta* are also considered as special vegetarian delicacies of the State. In places like Kinnaur and Lahaul-Spiti, people prefer locally-grown coarse grains such as millet, buckwheat and barley. *Dham*, prepared by hereditary Brahmin chefs, is considered to be a special festive meal. This meal includes rice, *dal* (a green lentil broth), *boor ki karhi* (red kidney beans cooked in yogurt) and *kheer* (sweet rice). Milk products like *chaach*, *muttha* and *ghee* are also popular and taken regularly. Different kinds of sweets too are prepared using milk and its various products. Non-vegetarian dishes are usually prepared with lots of spices. *Kullu trout*, *grilled fish*, *chicken anaardana* are some such popular non-vegetarian dishes.

Kangra Tea is another speciality of the State. It is known for its special aroma and is exported all over the world.

FAIRS AND FESTIVALS

As in other States, people in Himachal Pradesh also celebrate all the well-known festivals of India. However, the festival that is special to Himachal Pradesh is Chaitrual. Baisakhi is also celebrated on the 13th of April every year in places like Tattapani near Shimla and Rewalsar and Prashar lakes near Mandi. Following the local tradition, people take

holy dips on this occasion. Numerous village fairs are also organised during this festival, where wrestling, dancing and archery competitions are held.

Phulaich is another colourful festival of the State. Being a festival of flowers, it is celebrated in the month of September every year as the rains give way to the autumn. This is that time of the year, when the hills of Himachal Pradesh wear a colourful look with numerous flowers. The festival specially draws maximum popular participation in the Kinnaur region. Here the festival is also celebrated to pray for the departed souls of the dead relatives. The *ladra* flower steals the show on this occasion as the villagers climb the hills to pluck these flowers believing that these will bring prosperity for them.

October in Himachal Pradesh is the most sacred time of the year. It is in this month that the ten-day long Dussehra festival is celebrated in full fervour with interesting rituals being performed on each day from dawn to dusk. Its celebration at Kullu is specially popular. During this occasion, an international folk festival is held here, where besides showcasing the local handicrafts of Himachal Pradesh, artifacts from all over the country are put on display.

Apart from these, Table 1 mentions some other festivals popular in Himachal Pradesh.



Chet Festival



Lossar festival



Kullu Dussehra

Table 1

S. No.	Name of the Festival	Festival Season Month	Purpose of Celebration	Participant Community
1.	Halda Festival	January	The festival is dedicated to the Goddess of wealth. It is also, observed to celebrate the new year.	Buddhist
2.	Lohri or Maghi	January	Harvest festival	Hindu
3.	Lossar/Loshar Festival	Between mid-November and mid-December	It marks the beginning of the Tibetan year.	Budhhist
4.	Manimahesh Fair	February	Celebrated in honour of Lord Shiva.	Hindu
5.	Doongri Festival	May	Celebrated in honour of Hidimba Devi (wife of Bhima).	Hindu
6.	Nalwari Fair	March	It is a cattle fair.	General
7.	Ladarcha Festival/ La Darcha Fair	August	It is observed to strengthen the commercial ties between India and Tibet.	Hindu and Buddhist
8.	Ashwin Mela	March and October	It is held on the occasions of Navaratri.	Hindu
9.	Bisua Festival	April	The festival, considered very auspicious, is celebrated to mark the onset of the summer season.	Hindu

PERFORMING ARTS

Over the centuries Himachal Pradesh has let a variety of dance and music to flourish in the State. Table 2 provides the descriptions of some of those attractive dance forms.



Table 2

Dance	Description
Dandras	It is a male dance of the 'Gaddis', the shepherds of Bharmaur in Chamba district. The Gaddis are a colourful tribe of Chamba. They wear a frock-like cloak of white wool called <i>chola</i> , which is secured around the waist with many yards of woolen sashes and a high peaked cap that is pulled down to cover the ears during severe winter.
Dance of the Gaddi shepherdesses	It is often called the 'Peasant Dance' of Chamba and is performed by two groups of women in separate circles. The women wear woollen skirts and shawls called <i>pattu</i> with a head garment called <i>joji</i> . Songs depicting domestic chores and quarrels between young brides and their brother-in-laws (<i>devar</i>) often accompany these dances.
Chhatrari Dance	This dance takes its name from the village where the inhabitants move to for four months during severe winter. The women wear full skirts with a blouses and layers of coloured sashes around their waist during the performance of this dance.
Sikri Dance	This is an exclusive dance of women of Chamba performed on the occasion of the Sushi Mata Mela held during spring time. It describes the beauty of flowers.
Dangi Dance or Ghurehi	This dance is performed exclusively by women of Chamba. During the performance one group asks questions while the other replies. Beginning at a slow speed, it gathers momentum gradually.
Mahasu Nati	The districts of Shimla and Solan, known as Mahasu, are home to this dance, which is traditionally performed near the temples by both men and women, who dance in a circle holding hands and moving in curves and serpentine formations. Music is played using <i>dhol</i> , <i>nagara</i> , <i>damdama</i> , <i>hodki</i> , <i>shehnai</i> , <i>karnal</i> and <i>ranasingha</i> during this performance.

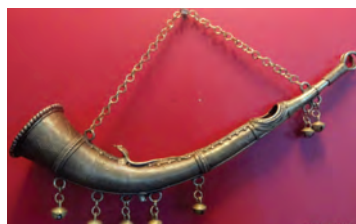


INDIA: UNITY IN CULTURAL DIVERSITY

Deepak Dance	This dance is performed to please <i>Gram Devatas</i> (village deities) on various occasions. Men, in their traditional dress of <i>churidar-pyjama</i> , and women, in their gaily coloured <i>choli-ghaghra</i> s with head scarves perform this dance while balancing trays of lighted lamps on their head.
Chham Chhanak	This dance is performed by the <i>Lamas</i> of Lahaul Spiti offering tribute to Lord Buddha. While performing this dance they wear costumes rich in gold, black and yellow colours decorated with traditional motifs.
Loshar Shona Chuksam – Kinnauri Nati	This dance takes its name from <i>Losia</i> , which means ‘New Year’. Through it, the dancers recreate scenes of agricultural operations like sowing and reaping <i>ogla</i> (barley) and <i>phapar</i> (buckwheat).
Martial Dances of Kullu	<i>Kharaiti</i> is one such dance that is performed with swords and heralds other dances known as <i>Ujagjama</i> and <i>Chandhgebriker</i> . It is when the <i>Kharaiti</i> has reached a climax that the two other dances are performed accompanied by patriotic songs. In Lahuli village also a martial dance called <i>Lahuli</i> is performed.
Namagen	This is a dance performed by Kinnauris in the month of September to celebrate autumn. The accompanying music for this dance is provided by instruments like <i>kangarange</i> , <i>daman</i> , <i>boopal</i> , <i>shamal</i> (<i>shehnai</i>), <i>anga</i> (<i>dhol</i>) and <i>nigaru</i> (<i>kikara</i>). During this dance men dress in tight <i>pyjamas</i> with loose <i>kurta</i> while the women wear an upper garment called <i>gachi</i> with a shawl or <i>pattu</i> . All dancers also sport grass or canvas shoes on their feet.
Parasa	It is a type of martial dance performed on the banks of the Renuka lake in Sirmaur district. It is performed on an <i>ekadashi</i> day to relive the legend of Parashuram killing Renuka on this spot. The lake is thus believed to have been named after the name of Renuka.

Musical Instruments

There are several wind instruments used by people in Himachal Pradesh. Amongst these the most popular are *bhopal*, *shamal*, *bugal*, and *shehnai* (different kinds of pipes). *Damentu* (horn) and the highly ornate *narsingha* (hornpipe) and *sanai* also belong to this category. Among the stringed instruments, *Kangarange* is the most commonly used one. To maintain the rhythm of various dances, percussion instruments like the *damane*, *anga*, *dhol* and *dholak* (drums), *hulki* (an hourglass-shaped drum), *kartal* (clappers), *khanjiri* (tambourine) and *jhanja* (large cymbals) are also used.



Damentu (Horn)



Musical Instruments

VISUAL ARTS

Folk Art

The exquisite forms of folk art of Himachal Pradesh are seen in the beautifully designed shawls of Kinnaur, the distinctive woollen caps of Kullu, the embroidered handkerchiefs of Chamba and the paintings of Kangra. The palanquins in which temple deities are taken out in processions also exhibit peoples’ innate artistic talent. Besides, there are many monuments in the State, which stand testimony to its artistic heritage.

The Kangra Fort

It is located in the Kangra valley at the confluence of the Banganga and Manjhi rivulets. The fort has seven gateways. Of these, the Ranjit Singh Darwaza is famous for its massive wooden door that is flanked by fortifications on both sides.

Kye Gompa

Built in the 14th century CE, this Gompa is the largest centre of Buddhist learning in the Western Himalayas. Situated in the Spiti valley, it has all the appearance of a hill fort. Here a narrow passage with winding flight of steps leads to the seat of *Zimchung* (the Lamas’

God), which is located on the top floor. Some 200 to 300 monks reside in this Gompa during the winter months.

Tabo Monastery

It is another old Buddhist monastery situated in the Spiti valley. Considered to be an important centre of Buddhist learning, this is the place where the present Dalai Lama is expected to go into retirement.



Buddhist Prayer Wheels

Temples

The Chamba valley has numerous ancient temples built with wood and stone. Of these, the most prominent ones are the Lakshminarayan Temple, Hari Rai Temple, Champavati Temple, Vajreshwari Temple and Hari Hara Temple. These temples were built between the 8th and 10th century CE.

Bhuri Singh Museum, Dalhousie

Named after Raja Bhuri Singh, this museum has an impressive collection of paintings belonging to the Kangra and the Basholi schools. The museum has also a rich collection of materials on the history of Chamba.



Kangra Painting depicting Krishna with gopis



Kulu Caps

Colonial Architecture

Some of the finest examples of British architecture can be seen in Shimla, which was once the 'Summer Capital' of India. The once Viceregal Lodge and now the Indian Institute of Advanced Study, the Imperial Civil Secretariat that is now the Accountant General's Office and the Gaiety Theatre are its representative icons.

As already stated, weaving, carving, painting and chiselling have always been an intrinsic part of the life of people in Himachal Pradesh, from the upper reaches of Lahaul and Spiti to the lowlands of Kangra. The miniature paintings of Kangra, the *thangka* paintings and the paintings of the Spiti valley are a natural draw with the people visiting the State. Silver ornaments worn by Himachali women like *har*, *thagalu* and *chandersain* also attract the visitors. The abundantly available pine, deodar, walnut, horse chestnut and wild black mulberry wood in the State also contribute to its famous woodcrafts. Similarly, the cold climate of the State has necessitated wool weaving. Almost every household in Himachal Pradesh owns a pit-loom. Thus, it is not unusual to find both men and women spinning yarn and weaving *pashmina* and *desar* shawls.

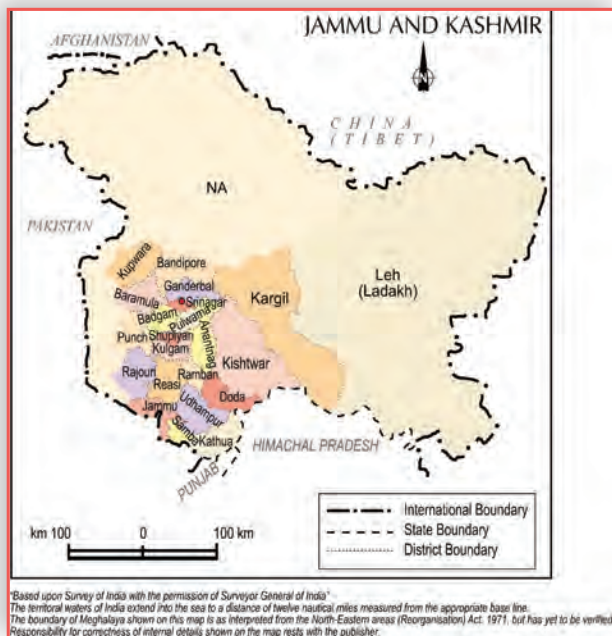
CONTEMPORARY CULTURAL DEVELOPMENTS

In recent years Himachal Pradesh has emerged as an important tourist destination with the State government poised to transform it into "A Destination for All Seasons and All Reasons". Having numerous places of pilgrimage, scenic spots and places of historical and cultural significance, it is but natural for the tourism sector of the State to continue to flourish and contribute to the economy of the State and the people at large.





JAMMU AND KASHMIR



The State of Jammu and Kashmir is situated in north India. Most of its part is located in the Himalayan region. It shares its border with Punjab and Himachal Pradesh on the south and international border with China on the north and the east, Pakistan on the west separated by the Line of Control (LoC) and Afghanistan on the north-west. Its is also known as the ‘Crown of India’. The State of Jammu and Kashmir is divided into three regions: Jammu, Kashmir Valley and Ladakh, with its summer capital as Srinagar and the winter capital as Jammu. As per Census of 2011, Jammu and Kashmir has population of 1.25 crores (excludes the area under illegal occupation of Pakistan and China).

Jammu and Kashmir is the only State in India which has its own official State flag along with the

national flag. The State also exercises the special autonomy under Article 370 of the Constitution of India according to which no enactment passed by Parliament of India, except related to defence, communication and foreign policy will be imposed in Jammu and Kashmir unless it is ratified by the State assembly. It is the only State in India with Muslims in majority.

Jammu and Kashmir has agro-climatic conditions best suited for horticulture and floriculture. The State is also a major exporter of walnut. Apart from agriculture, tourism sector is one of the important sources of income and employment generation in the State.

Jammu is famous for its beautiful temples and shrines which attract thousands of pilgrims every year. Infact, it is also known as the Temple City. Kashmir is famous for its beautiful mountainous landscape, beautiful gardens, lakes and pristine streams. It is truly a wonderland of nature and also known as the Paradise on Earth. Ladakh is also known as Little Tibet and is renowned for its truly amazing landscape high up in the Himalayas, popular for trekking and

<i>Fact Sheet</i>	
<i>State Day</i>	26 October
<i>Geographical Area</i>	222,236 km ²
<i>Capital</i>	Srinagar (in Summer) and Jammu (in Winter)
<i>Official Language</i>	Urdu
<i>State Animal</i>	Hangul
<i>State Bird</i>	Black necked crane
<i>State Flower</i>	Lotus
<i>State Tree</i>	Chinar



also for its Buddhist culture. It can also be termed as “Mecca of bikers”, which attracts enthusiastic bikers from all over the world.

Places of Interest

Name	Description
Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine	Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine at Katra nearly 60 km from Jammu is the special attraction of Jammu.
Bahu Fort	It is the oldest edifice in Jammu and faces the famous river Tawi. There is a temple inside the fort dedicated to Goddess Kali.
Patnitop	Patnitop is well known for its amazing natural beauty and its Sanasar lake, notable for its scenic views of mountain ranges and its meadows.
Mansar Lake	Mansar is a lake fringed by forest covered hills and the temple dedicated to snake god <i>Sheshnag</i> is located on banks of the lake.
Pahalgam	It is the base camp for Amarnath pilgrimage. Amarnath yatra lasts for about 45 days during the summer and thousands of pilgrims, young and old, throng here every year.
Gulmarg	It is a lush green meadow sprinkled with flowers. Known for its highest and longest cable car reaching an altitude of 13,400 ft., this place is also famous for its golf hikes and a destination for skiers riding.
Sonamarg	The way to reach Sonamarg (Meadow of the Gold) is from Sindh valley. Sonamarg is located at an altitude of around 2,740 m above the sea level. It has snowy mountains as its backdrop against the sky.
The Mughal Gardens	The Mughal Gardens in the Srinagar city are ideal scenic spots. Some of these gardens are Cheshmashahi, Nishat Bagh, Shalimaar Bagh and Naseem Bagh. These beautiful gardens are located along the banks of the famous Dal Lake.
Dal Lake	Dal Lake is the main attraction of Srinagar. The shoreline of the lake, about 15.5 km is encompassed by a boulevard, lined with Mughal era gardens, parks, houseboats and hotels and in the center of the lake in an island <i>chaar chinar</i> (named after 4 chinar trees).
Jamia Masjid	Jamia Masjid is a grand mosque in Srinagar. The Jamia Masjid of Srinagar is situated at Nowhatta, in the middle of the old city. It was built by Sultan Sikandar Shah Kashmiri Shahmiri in 1394 AD, under the order of Mir Mohammad Hamadani, son of Sayyid-ul-Auliya Sayyid Ali Hamadani (RA).

Zanskar	Zanskar river is located at a very high altitude in Ladakh Division. In winter, it gets frozen and converts into an amazing adventure frozen river trek.
Lamayura (Moonland of Ladakh)	It is a small village in Ladakh, midway between Kargil and Leh on the Srinagar Leh highway. It is known for its moonlike landscape in the great Himalayas.



Jamia Masjid

CULTURAL SPECIFICITIES

Language

Urdu is the official language of Jammu and Kashmir. Local language of the State is Kashmiri known as *Koshur* which is an Indo-Aryan language. It is spoken in Kashmir and Chenab valleys. Kashmiri language is one of the 22 scheduled languages of India. People living in Ladakh speak *Ladakhi* and those living in Jammu mostly speak *Dogri* and Hindi is mostly spoken by Kashmiri Pandits and the Gujjar people of the State.

Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh have multi-faceted, multi-religious and multi-ethnic culture distinct to the three areas of the State. Kashmiri culture is defined in terms of religious values, language, literature, cuisine and traditional values of mutual respect. Ladakh is famous for its unique Indo-Tibetan culture. Chanting in Sanskrit and Tibetan language forms an integral part of Ladakh’s Buddhist lifestyle. Kashmiri poets and writers like Mehjoor, Abdul Ahad Azad, etc. have enriched the literature of the place.

Other languages spoken in Jammu and Kashmir are Punjabi, Balti, Gojri, Shine and Pashto.

Dress

Dresses of Kashmir are well known for their embroidery and intricate designs. The form of clothing is designed to counter the cold climate of the region.



Pheran, a loose garment gown, is the prominent attire for Kashmiris, mostly used during winter season. They also prefer to wear typical clothing includes *gonchas* of velvet, embroidered waist coats and boots and hats.

Jammu's Dogra culture is different from Kashmiri culture. Dogra culture is quite similar to that of neighbouring Punjab and Himachal Pradesh. After Dogras, Gujjaras form the second largest ethnic group in Jammu, known for their semi-nomadic lifestyle. The people of this region wear loose tunic *dupatta*, *chudidars* and *salwar*.

Food

The cuisine found in Jammu and Kashmir varies from place to place. Hindus belonging to Jammu region are mostly vegetarian. *Thukpa*, noodle soup, *tsampa* (also known as *Ngampe* in Ladakhi) and roasted barley flour are famous food items of Ladhakhis which are common to Tibetan food. Ladhakhis also eat rice, wheat, millet, goat meat, dairy products and locally produced vegetables and fruits. Following are some famous dishes of Kashmir: *Yakhni* which is used as a starter, is yoghurt based mutton gravy, *Tabaq maz* is made of fried ribs, *rogan josh* is made with mutton, *goshtaba* is a meat ball curry, *haleem* is made from meat and pounded wheat, *dum aloo* is a potato curry cooked by steam, *shab deg* is cooked with turnip and meat and is left to simmer overnight, therefore is called *shab deg* as *shab* means night. *Wazwan* is a multi-course (36) meal of Kashmir. It is generally prepared for marriages and special functions as it is associated with Kashmir's culture and identity. *Sheermal* and *baqarkhani* also have special place in Kashmiri cuisine.

Kahwa (The saffron tea) is known worldwide for its aroma and medicinal values. A traditional green

tea flavoured with cardamom and almond is widely famous as *kahwa* and is usually consumed during the winter season and on other occasions. An expensive spice saffron is grown locally and is used to flavour pulao (rice dish) and sweets. Traditional foods of Jammu are morel (Gushi Mushroom) Pulao, *Oria* (Potato/Pumpkin in mustard sauce), *shasha* (Raw mango *chutney*) etc.



Kashmiri Kahwa Tea

FAIRS AND FESTIVALS

Although, Jammu and Kashmir is home to people of different religions, there are no distinctions when it comes to celebrating festivals of all the communities.

Baisakhi

This festival is celebrated in the month of *vaisakh* (april-may). Baisakhi signifies the starting of the new harvest season. People celebrate this day by organising enjoyable *Giddha* and *Bhangra* dances.

Navratra

It is a very popular festival especially in the Jammu region. The nine days of festivity are celebrated during September or October. On this occasion, many devotees visit the Mata Vaishno Devi temple which is considered to be auspicious.

Lohri

This festival is celebrated to welcome the spring season. People sing and pray for the prosperity of their land in coming days and offered sweets, rice etc into the bonfire. One of the attractive features of



Kashmiri Dress



Dogri Dress



Porous Lotus Roots Gravy



Rogan Josh

Lohri is the *Chajja dance* performed by the young boys in colourful outfits.

Tulip Festival

Tulip garden of Srinagar is the Asia's largest Tulip garden. Tulip festival is one of the most popular flower festivals in India. A large variety of Tulips are displayed on this occasion. This festival also features number of cultural programmes, sale of local handicrafts, Kashmiri folks songs and other forms of art.

Eid-ul-Fitr and Eid-ul-Azha

The two are the most famous festivals of Muslims in the State of Jammu and Kashmir. Eid-ul-Fitr is celebrated at the end of the month of Ramadan whereas Eid-ul-Azha is celebrated on the 10th of the last month of Islamic Lunar calendar. *Urs* is also held annually at the shrines of Sufi saints on their birth anniversaries. Thousands of devotees throng the shrines and offer prayers.



Eid Festival

PERFORMING ARTS

Jammu and Kashmir has some of the most captivating forms of performing arts in India. Kashmiri music reflects the rich musical heritage and cultural legacy of Kashmir.

Chakri is one of the most popular types of traditional music played in Jammu and Kashmir. It is a group song played with the instruments like *harmonium*, *rabab*, *sarangi*, and the *nout*. Many fairy tales, love stories, religious stories are told through *chakri*.

Ladi-shah is also an important Kashmiri music tradition. It is a sarcastic form of singing. The songs are sung resonating to the present social and political conditions and are utterly humorous. The songs reflect the truth and are entertaining.

Sufiana Kalam is the classical music of Kashmir, which uses its own *ragas* (known as *Muquam*) and is accompanied by a hundred-stringed instrument called *Santoor* along with the Kashmiri *Saaz* and the *Sitar*.

Band Pather is the traditional folk theatre of Kashmir. It has survived in all times for its popular idioms, versatile metaphors and unique style in content, presentation and performance. The performers called *Bhands* have peculiar dress, improvising wit and humour in their acting, dancing and music.

Rouf Dance is one of the famous folk dance forms practiced in Jammu and Kashmir. It is performed as a welcoming dance for the spring season and also on various occasions like marriages, *Eid*, etc. In this dance, two or four groups are formed consisting of 2 to 3 women wearing beautiful and colourful traditional dress (embroided *Pheran*).

Jabro Dance is a community dance of the nomadic people of Tibetan origin living in the hills of the *Chen Theng* area of Ladakh and is performed by men and women at all festive occasions. This dance is an integral part of the *Losar* celebrations, which is the Tibetan New Year festival. The melodious *jabro* songs are sung to the musical accompaniment '*Damian*', a guitar-like stringed instrument and the flute.

VISUAL ARTS

Jammu and Kashmir is best known for its cultural heritage and rich craft which has prevailed since a very long time. The famous *Basholi Qalam paintings*



Band Pather



Rouf and Dongri Dance



Losar Festival



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which are kept in famous museums across the world are found in Jammu and Kashmir. One can see the sculptures and carvings of Gods, Goddesses on the pillars or temples which are common characteristics of folk art.

The art and crafts in Kashmir is famous for its workmanship and is admired all over the world. Kashmir is home to the some of the great artisans and artists who produce exquisite carpets, gold ornaments, and embroidered shawls. Chiselled woodwork of walnut wood and oak, and exquisitely coloured and painted papier-machie are some of the beautiful arts.

Kashmiri carpets are famous across the world. These are usually hand-knotted and are made of silk or wool mostly bearing floral designs. *Namdas*



Kashmiri Carpet



Kashmiri Pashmina Shawl

and Gabbas are the two beautiful and popular floor coverings made of woollen and cotton fibre. Kashmiri shawls are known for their quality all over the world and these are usually made of finest fibres of cashmere wool or the soft *Pashmina* or *Shahtoosh* (made from hair of chiru antelope) and are very expensive.

Cultural music and folk dance like *wanvun*, *rouff*, carpet/shawl weaving, woodcarving, *papier Machie* and Kashmiri *sufiana* form a very important part of Kashmiri culture.

CONTEMPORARY CULTURAL DEVELOPMENTS

In Jammu and Kashmir, 'The Department of Culture and Tourism' carries out the task of overall planning, promotion, publicity, preservation, conservation of heritage sites, archives, antiquities, digitisation of libraries and research.

In 2015, the government separated Culture from the Tourism Department to give it a focussed direction for identification, preservation and maintenance. In 2016, a meeting was held at the Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Languages (JKAACL) presided over by the Chief Minister of the State. It was announced that JKAACL would open new regional cultural centres in different parts of the State. It was decided that steps would be taken for documentation of intangible cultural heritage of the State.



Kargil Folk Dance



JHARKHAND



demands, it became a separate State of the Republic of India on 15 November, 2000 with Ranchi as its capital.

With its present configuration, the State shares borders with Bihar on the north, Uttar Pradesh and Chhattisgarh on the west, Odisha on the south and West Bengal on the east.

Geographically, most of the State lies on the Chota Nagpur Plateau, which is the source of the Koel, Damodar, Brahmani, Kharkai, and Subarnarekha rivers. Besides, it is also extensively covered by forests providing natural habitats for the State's tribal population.

There are about 32 tribal groups, who live in Jharkhand. The prominent ones among them are the Mundas, Santhals, Oraons, Kharias, Gonds, Kols, Kanwars, Savars, Asurs, Baigas, Banjaras and Bhumijis.

CULTURAL SPECIFICITIES

Archaeological findings such as the pre-Harappa pottery, pre-historic cave paintings and rock-arts in various parts of Jharkhand speak about the spread

Jharkhand literally means 'the land of forests'. In ancient times, its northern portion was a part of the Magadhan Empire and the southern portion a part of the Kalinga Empire. Subsequently, it came under the control of the Mauryas, the Guptas and others. In the medieval times, the Sultans of Delhi and the Mughals also ruled this region until it was annexed by the British.

It were the latter, who named the region as Jharkhand, but soon resentment brewed against their rapacious rule amongst the local inhabitants. First, the standards of revolt were raised by Tilka Manjhi in the late 18th century. Subsequently, in the late 19th century Birsa Munda led the people of the region against their rule. Sidho and Kano were the two other tribal heroes, who also revolted against them.

After independence, it remained a part of Bihar for a long time. But after protracted struggles and

<i>Fact Sheet</i>	
<i>State Day</i>	15 November
<i>Geographical Area</i>	79,714 km ²
<i>Capital</i>	Ranchi
<i>Official Language</i>	Hindi
<i>State Animal</i>	Elephant
<i>State Bird</i>	Koel
<i>State Tree</i>	Saal
<i>State Flower</i>	Palash



of a unique culture in this region in ancient times. Presently, the beautiful woodworks, the *paikar* paintings, tribal ornaments, stone carvings, masks, baskets, and dolls and figurines of its local inhabitants bear testimony to this fact. The comb-cut finger-painted Kohvar art used to celebrate marriages, the wall-painted Sohrai that welcomes bumper crops and the use of a variety of natural colours obtained from stone, red ochre, kaolin white, manganese and black earth still represent the moorings of that old culture in modern times.

Language

Hindi is the official language of Jharkhand. However, people belonging to various communities speak different languages. Many scholars nowadays believe that the languages that are spoken by the tribes of the State are akin to the Harappan language. This has spurred efforts to decipher the Harappan script. Overall, there exist three important language groups in the State – the Munda, the Indo-Aryan and the Dravidian. The first includes Santhali, Bhumij, Ho, Mundari and Kharia. The second includes Bengali, Sadri, Maithili, Panchpargania, Odia, Khortha, Nagpuri, Kurmali and Angika. And the third includes Paharia (Malto), Korwa and Oraon (Kurukh). People predominantly speak Santhali in Godda, Sahibganj, Dumka, Pakur, Saraikela, Kharsawan and East Singhbhum. Mundari is spoken in some parts of Ranchi, Khunti, West Singhbhum, Latehar, Simdega, and Gumla. Ho has a presence in Saraikela, Kharswan and West Singhbhum. Among non-tribal languages, Bhojpuri, Magahi (variants of Hindi), Odia and Bengali are also spoken. Urdu has also been accorded the status of an additional official language in the State.

Dress

The men in Jharkhand usually wear a single piece of cloth known as *Bhagwan*. Otherwise, they also wear *dhoti* and *kurta* whereas the women wear *saree* and



blouse. Nowadays, people in the State have also turned to *kurta* and *pyjama*. The tribal people normally prefer to wear their traditional costumes consisting of *dhoti*, *kurta*, *pyjama* and shirt. The traditional attires of the tribal women are called *panchi* and *parhan*. The Anjana and Swarnarekha silks of Jharkhand are also quite popular. Besides, the tribal men and women also make tattoos, which is locally known as *Godna*. The tribal women in addition wear different types of ornaments made of beads, silver, gold and other materials.

Food

Roti (bread), *chawal* (rice), *dal* (pulses), *tarkari* (vegetables curries) and *bhujia* (fried vegetables) constitute the main meal for most of the people in the State. A variety of pickles, *chutneys*, *papad* and *chokha* are also eaten along with the meals. Besides, non-vegetarian dishes like chicken, meat and fish curries are also eaten by the people.



Thali

Mustard oil is usually used to prepare the various vegetarian and non-vegetarian items. *Panch-phutana*, a clever mix of five spices (cumin, mustard, fenel, fenugreek and kalonji), is used to season the curries and other dishes. But, on the whole, the food prepared in Jharkhand remain simple and easy to digest.

Chilka Roti

It is prepared by using a mixture of rice and gram flour which is then fried in oil. It is taken with *dal*, *sabji* and *chutney*.

Litti

It is prepared like a *roti* with fillings of a mixture of *sattu* (roasted pigeon gram flour), garlic, green chilli, black pepper and lemon juice.

Pitthas

These are prepared using rice or wheat flour and are stuffed with various ingredients.

Rugra

It is an indigenous variety of mushroom prepared as a curry to be eaten with rice and vegetables.



Rugra

Dhuska

Dhuska is known as the most popular food item in Jharkhand and prepared out of a mixture of rice and lentil batter fried in oil. It is taken as breakfast with gram and potato curry.



Dhuska

Malpua (a pancake like sweet item), bamboo shoots, *thekua* (a fried sweet item offered in the Chatth



Thekua



Mitha Khaja

Puja), *aaloo chokha* (mashed potato seasoned with oil and spices), *till ka barfi* (made of sesame seeds and jaggery during Makar Sankranti), *mitha khaja* (a deep fried sweet item made of white flour and sugar) are other important food items of the State.

The tribes of the State also prepare their own local brews called *handia*, which is made of fermented rice and herbs and *mahua*, which is prepared out the flowers of the Mahua tree.

FAIRS AND FESTIVALS

Jharkhand is home to a large number of local fairs and festivals that are celebrated round the year displaying the cultural ethos of the people. Some of those are highlighted here.

Tusu Parab or Makar

This is essentially a harvest festival celebrated in the month of January. On this occasion, unmarried



Tusu Festival

girls decorate a wooden or bamboo frame using coloured papers and then immerse it as a gift in the nearby river for over all prosperity in their lives.

Chhath Puja

In this festival, people worship the Sun God to thank Him for sustaining life on earth and to promote overall prosperity and progress. Chhath Puja is celebrated twice in a year – once in the month of *Chaitra* (March) and again in *Kartik* (November).



Chhath Puja

Sarhul

This festival is celebrated during the spring season when the Saal trees wear new leaves. On this occasion, Saal flowers are collected and offered to Gods. In the belief of the



Sarhul Festival

local people these flowers symbolise the fertility of earth and brotherhood among the villagers.

Sohrai

This festival is celebrated after Diwali on the new moon day. In the evening people light *diyas* (earthen lamps) and next day wash their cattle and put on vermilion on their heads mixed with oil. Besides, they also organise bull fights during this festival.

Karam

In this festival, people worship Karam Devta, who is known as the God of power and youth. On this occasion, the young villagers collect wood, fruits and flowers from the nearby forests and worship Him. They also sing and dance in groups. The festival is usually celebrated in the months of August-September.

Jawa

This festival is celebrated for fertility and better fortune. On this occasion, the unmarried girls use germinating seeds to decorate a small basket and



worship Karam Devta hoping to increase their fertility.

Rohini

This festival is celebrated at the time of sowing seeds. Some other festivals like Rajsawala Ambavati and Chitgomha are also celebrated with Rohini.

Beside these, the people of the State also celebrate many other festivals. Among those the most important are Hal Punhya, Bhagta Parab, Bandna and Jani-Shikaar. Besides these, various fairs, such as, Kunda Mela in Pratappur, Kolhua Mela in Hunterganj, Chatra Mela, Kundri Mela in Chatra, Kolhaiya Mela in Chatra, Tutilawa Mela in Simaria, Lawalong Mela, Belgada Mela in Simaria, Bhadli Mela in Itkhori, Sangharo Mela in Chatra are also held in the State, where people participate in great enthusiasm.

PERFORMING ARTS

Jharkhand has been proudly emerging as an important multi-ethnic cultural State after its formation. As a natural corollary it is increasingly showcasing its cultural heritages in the forms of various performing arts.

Dance

As part of cultural activities, people in the State perform dances during all important festivals. Some of the prominent ones among those are mentioned below.

Mardani Jhumar

It is performed during the harvest season with the accompaniment of many musical instruments like *shenai*, *dhol*, *kara*, *nakara*, *jhanj* and *kartal*.

Paika Dance

This is a form of martial dance performed by men holding shields and swords on festive and ceremonial occasions like weddings.

Chhau Dance

The word Chhau is derived from the Sanskrit word *Chhaya*, which means shade, image or mask. While performing this dance, the dancers wear masks and with the help of these masks and their body

movements enact stories from the epics. This dance has been included in the list of the UNESCO Heritage Dances in the year 2010.

Mundari Dance

All members of the Munda community participate in this dance at the time of celebrating marriages and the newly weds. The movements of this dance are very rhythmic and limited to a few steps. With music and song, this is performed with a few steps taken forwards and then taking the same steps backwards.

The Santhal Dance

This is a group dance performed by both men and women of the santhal community.



Santhal dance

Agni Dance

In the Rig Ved, *Agni* has been adored as an important deity. This dance is performed in his honour on the occasion of Bipu or Manda worship in the State.



Paika Dance



Chhau Dance



Mardana Jhumar Dance



Mundari Dance

Beside these, the people of the State also perform Phagua, Nachni, Jamda, Ghatwari, Natwa, Choukara, Sohrai, Lurisayro and Matha dances. In Chota Nagpur region the Hunta dance is performed by the Santhals and the Mundari dance by the Mundas. The Oraons concentrated in Hazaribagh and Goomla perform their dances in honour of the Mother Earth for plentiful rains in the months of April and May. Jhumur is also a traditional tribal dance performed mainly by the women during the cultivation season. Jhitika, Danga, Lahasuya, Domkach and Ghora Naach dances are also performed by the people of the State in different times of the year.

Drama

Dramas in Jharkhand are performed on temporarily set up stages across the State. Various tribal groups are often associated with such performances in both the rural and urban areas. They especially stage their performances during festivals, such as, Sarhul, Karma, Tusu, Sohrai, Badna, Dussehra and so on. During these performances, they also extensively use their folk music. Akhariya Domkach, Dohari Domkach, Janani Jhumar, Mardana Jhumar, Faguwa, Udasi and Pawas are some such popular music. Besides, they also perform a variety of folk dances like Paika, Chhau, Jadur, Karma, Jamda, Ghatwari and Matha as part of their drama shows. Musical instruments like *bansuri*, *shehnai*, *madanvari*, *singa*, *visamdhandki*, *thapchanchu* and *kartal* are widely used during these performances. Masks, made of clay, are also used sometimes.

Music

Music in the form of songs form an essential part of the life of people in Jharkhand. These songs frequently recollect their living experience in this land. Besides, they also accompany dances and dramatic performances. Among such songs the more prominent ones are Dohari, Domkach, Janani, Jhumar, Jhumta, Mardana, Daidhara, Pahil sanjha, Adhratiya and Vinsaria. These songs not only fulfil the purpose of entertainment but also play an essential role in keeping the people united.

Among the different forms of music, Jhumar attracts maximum attention. It is mainly performed by the Santhal community with the accompaniment of traditional instruments like *madals* and *singas* (different types of drums). These traditional musical instruments of the State have their own uniqueness. Paika dance is similarly performed with the accompaniment of musical instruments like *shehnai*, *bheri*, *narsingha*, *dhak* and *nagara*. Musical instruments such as *nagara*, *jhanj*, *mohuri*, *turi*, *dhol*, *dhumsa*, *bheri*, *bansuri* and conch are also used in Chhau performances. Karma is accompanied by their folk musical instruments such as *jhumki*, *thumki*, *challa* and *payri*.

VISUAL ARTS

Jharkhand is famous for its heritage of visual arts coming down over long periods of time. Archaeological surveys have revealed the presence of such objects belonging to the ancient period in the forms of rock and cave paintings, stone carvings, inscriptions, temples, sculptures and pottery in places like Khandhar, Isko, Banda, Barakatta, Karharbari, Badam, Ramgarh, Itkhori and Satpahar. In most of these cases, artists have been found using natural materials to create the art objects. That tradition is still being continued by the people of the State in the forms of Paitkar painting by the Paitkar community, Jadopatiya painting by the Santhals, Sohrai (harvest art) and Khovar (marriage art) paintings by the women of the farming communities. Besides, there are also other art forms, such as, Dhokra art, Ganju art, Kurmi art, Munda art, Turi art and Rana, Teli and Prajapati arts.



Sohrai art



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Crafts in Jharkhand also equally display the traditional cultures of the people. Wood and bamboo, abundantly available in the State, are frequently used to make many handicraft products. Bamboos are specially used to make accessories for hunting and fishing. Besides, baskets are also made using this material. Wood is used specially for making utensils, decorative objects and furniture. The pottery items such as vases, earthenware and jars are also equally popular. Gonda grass items, silk *sarees*, papier mache products, lac jewellery, leather products, terracotta items of the Kumhar community are the other appreciable handicrafts of the State.

CONTEMPORARY CULTURAL DEVELOPMENTS

After being constituted into a separate State, Jharkhand has been consistently making progress in all fields including culture. Its efforts to create awareness among the people about the State's built

heritage by organising archaeological workshops have been particularly helpful. There are also initiatives taken to organise State level festivals to promote the arts and crafts of the local people. With its natural endowments also the State has become a favourite destination for visitors from all over the country and abroad. Places like Baba Baidyanath Temple, Suraj Kund, Maithon Dam, Noori Masjid are some such places which witness large number of visitors. The State Government is particularly committed to enrich the bamboo and wood crafts of the State along with tribal paintings and the stone carving activities. In the field of education, Ranchi, once considered to be a hub of quality education, is regaining its reputation. In the field of sports too the State has earned national recognition. This is specially so in the case of games like hockey, archery and cricket at both the national and the international levels.



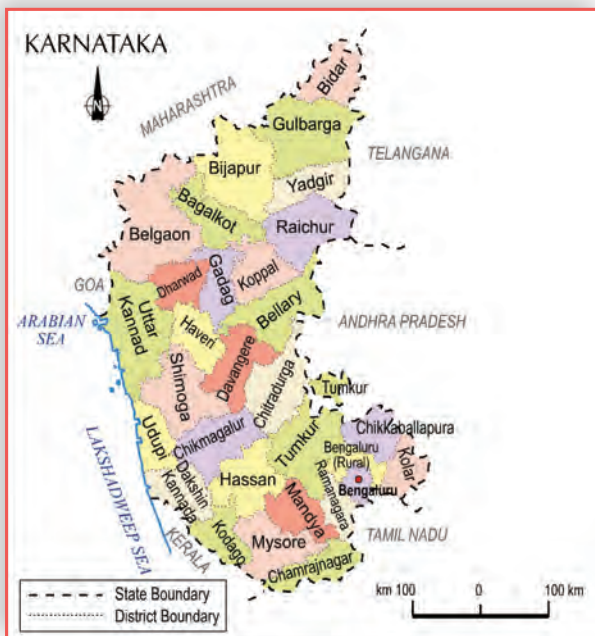
Khovar



Sohrai paintings on the walls of Hazaribagh



KARNATAKA



as per the Census of India, 2011, it is the eighth largest State in the country in terms of population.

Bengaluru, formerly known as Bangalore, is the capital of Karnataka. At various points in time, the place on which this city is situated, was ruled by various South Indian dynasties. However, the establishment of a mud fort here in 1537 by Kempe Gowda, a feudal ruler under the Vijayanagara kings, is considered to have laid its foundation. In 1638, the Marathas conquered this city and ruled it for almost 50 years. After this, the Mughals captured and sold it to the Wodeyars of Mysore. After Independence the city became the capital of the Mysore State and remains so till date.

Karnataka has a rich diversity of flora and fauna with about 20.19 per cent of its total geographical area under forest cover. These forests support 25 per cent of the elephant and 20 per cent of the tiger population of India. In all, the State has 18 wildlife sanctuaries and 10 bird sanctuaries. Of these, the Ranganathittu Bird Sanctuary is a bird watchers' delight. The famous Jog falls is also located in the

Karnataka is a State with a long recorded history. After Independence, it came into existence as the Mysore State in 1953. Thereafter, with the unification of all the Kannada dominant areas lying under different dispensations, it acquired its present shape in 1956. Subsequently, in 1973 it was renamed Karnataka.

Presently situated between 11°31' and 18°14' north latitudes and 74°12' and 78°10' east longitudes, the State has the Arabian Sea on its west, Goa and Maharashtra on the north, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh on the east, Tamil Nadu on the south-east and Kerala on the south. With an area of 1,91,79 square kilometres, it is the seventh largest State of India in terms of area. Similarly, with 61,130,704 inhabitants

<i>Fact Sheet</i>	
<i>State Day</i>	1 November
<i>Geographical Area</i>	191,791 km ²
<i>Capital</i>	Bengaluru
<i>Official Language</i>	Kannada
<i>State Animal</i>	Elephant
<i>State Bird</i>	Indian roller
<i>State Flower</i>	Lotus
<i>State Tree</i>	Sandal



Shimoga district of the State. It is the highest plunge waterfall in India.

Besides, the State is also home to a range of monumental arts, architecture and sculptures.

CULTURAL SPECIFICITIES

The diverse linguistic and religious communities living in Karnataka over the centuries have contributed to its distinct culture in many ways. These communities range from the majority Kannadigas to Tuluvas, Kodavas, Konkani and other minority groups. Their contributions are seen reflected in the day-to-day life of the people.

Language

Kannada is the official language of Karnataka. It is spoken by approximately 65 per cent of the State's population. It is also one of the classical languages recognised by the Government of India. Tulu, Konkani and Kodava are other minor native languages, which share a space with Kannada in the State. Urdu is also spoken widely by the minority Muslim population whereas Tamil, Telugu, Marathi and Malayalam are spoken by the members of these linguistic communities in the bordering areas of the State. With increasing urbanisation and the opening up of the education and the IT sector, English has also gained wide currency. However, according to a study of the People's Linguistics Survey, languages like Kavaga, Irula, Soliga, Bagada, Yerava, Gaulis, Betta kuruba and Jenu kuruba are surviving on the edges with less than 10,000 speakers in each case. Similarly, Siddi

and Hakki Pikki have become critically endangered as the younger generations of these communities no more speak these languages.

Kannada literature is more than a thousand years old. The earliest extant work belonging to this language, *Kavirajamarga* of the Rashtrakuta king, Amoghavarsa I, is dated to the 9th century CE. After that, Kannada Literature saw its ascendance through the works of Pampa, Ponna and Ranna in the 10th century CE, Basavesvara and his contemporaries in the 12th century CE, Harisvara in the 13th century CE, Narahari in the 14th century CE, Sarvajna in the 17th century CE, Kempa Narayana in the 19th century CE and K.S. Karanth and others in the 20th century CE.

Besides these, there have been many other litterateurs, who have received wide recognition for their multifarious contributions to Kannada literature. It is no wonder then that the highest number of Jnanpith Awards has so far been won by Kannada writers. Table 1 below provides a list of those writers.



Masti Venkatesha Iyengar



Girish Karnad

Table 1

Name of the Litterateur	Year of Award	Literary Work
Kuppali Venkatappa Puttappa (also known as Kuvempu)	1967	<i>Shri Ramayana Darshanam</i> (The Philosophy of Ramayana)
Dattatreya Ramachandra Bendre (also spelled as Bendhre)	1973	<i>Nakutanti or Naakuthanthi</i> (Four Strings - An Anthology of Poems)
Kota Shivaram Karanth	1977	<i>Mookajjiya Kanasugalu</i> (Dreams of Silent Granny)
Masti Venkatesha Iyengar (also spelled as Masthi Venkatesa)	1983	<i>Chikkavira Rajendra</i> (Life of Rajendra, the last ruler of the Kodagu kingdom)
Vinayaka Krishna Gokak	1990	<i>Bharata Sindhu Rashmi</i> (Deals with the philosophy of the Vedic Age)



U. R. Ananthamurthy	1994	For contribution to the Navya movement in Kannada literature.
Girish Karnad	1998	For his acclaimed works like <i>Tughlak</i> , <i>Yayati</i> .
Chandrashekar Kambar	2010	For his contribution to Kannada literature.

Dress

Saree is the traditional dress of women in Karnataka. In the northern region, *Ilkal* or the Dharwad *Saree* is commonly worn. Similarly, women in Kodagu have a distinctive way of wearing the *saree*.

Ilkal is a village near Dharwad. It has been a centre of weaving since the 8th century CE. The credit for this is attributed to the local chieftains, who provided patronage to the local weavers beginning with that time.

Each region of Karnataka has a distinct way of weaving. The Ilkal *sarees*, for instance, are woven using the *tope-teni* technique. With three portions in red and in between them two portions in white, the *pallus* of these *sarees* look quite gorgeous and distinct.

Nearly 70 per cent of the country's total mulberry silk comes from Karnataka, which is also famous for its Mysuru silk *sarees*.

From a historical point of view, although the growth of the silk industry in the State was first initiated during the reign of Tipu Sultan, it was the Maharaja of Mysuru, Krishna Raja Wodeyar, who gave it a bold fillip by importing 32 looms from Switzerland.

Dhoti, known as *Panche* in Karnataka, is the traditional attire of men. In the northern region, men also wear *pyjamas* or knee-length shorts while working in the paddy fields. The traditional headgear in southern Karnataka is Mysuru *peta*. In the north, it is *pagadi* or *pataga*.

Food

Karnataka is famous for a wide range of vegetarian and non-vegetarian dishes. These dishes differ from one region to another in terms of the ingredients that are used and the styles in which these are prepared. Often the names of the dishes also vary on such counts.



Traditional dress of Karnataka

However, a typical *oota* (meal) in Karnataka includes items such as *bath* or *anna* (rice), *chitranna* (rice flavoured with spices), *mosaranna* (curd rice), *palya* (fried, boiled or a sautéed side dish), *saaru* (a gravy item), *tove* (a thick lentil soup), *gojju* (a sweet and sour item), *kosambari* (salad), *ghee* (clarified butter), *mosaru* (curd), *uppinakayi* (pickle), *happala* (papad) and *sira* (sweet item made of rice, jaggery, milk and dry fruits) or *paramanna* (rice pudding with *ghee* and jaggery). Such a meal is usually served on a *mutuka* (banana) leaf.



Lunch from Karnataka

Other than the meal as mentioned above, people also eat a variety of snacks and sweet items. Popular among these are different kinds of *rotti* (bread made of finger millet, sorghum, pearl millet, wheat or rice flour), *dosa* (made of fermented rice, husked wheat, finger millet or tapioca pearl and black gram batter) that is served with *chutney* (made of grated coconut, roasted pigeon gram and spices) and *sambar* (lentil-based spiced vegetable stew), *churumuri* (puffed rice), *vade* (fried doughnut made of fermented black gram batter), *bonda* (deep fried boiled and mashed potato dipped in chickpea batter), *bajji* (fried vegetables dipped in chickpea batter), *unde* (ball-shaped sweets of various kinds), *pak* (sweet piece made of chickpea flour, sugar and *ghee*), *pedha* (scalded milk thickened with sugar), *kunda* (thickened milk) and *maaldi* (sweet made of wheat, poppy seed, jaggery and *ghee*).

The coastal (Mangalore) and the hilly (Kodagu) regions of Karnataka are also well-known for a variety of non-vegetarian dishes like *kane* (lady fish) fry, crab curry, *pandi saaru* (pork curry), *koli saaru* (chicken curry) and mutton curry.

Finally, Karnataka being a coffee producing State, *kaapi* (filter coffee with milk and sugar) also forms an essential part of people's daily intake.



Indeed, Karnataka cuisine is so popular that one can find 'Udupi Restaurants' and 'Indian Coffee Houses' everywhere in the country.

FAIRS AND FESTIVALS

Ugadi or Yugadi is the main festival of Karnataka, which marks the Kannada New Year. It is celebrated on the first day of the Indian month of *Chaitra* (March–April). On this occasion, people decorate the entrances to their houses with fresh mango leaves and *rangoli* (colourful floral designs). They also prepare a mixture of neem flowers, tamarind pulp, chilli powder, unripe mango, salt and jaggery. The mixture is called *bevu-bella*. It signifies the various emotions that are associated with life. It is the first item taken on this occasion. Besides, *Obbattu* or *holige* (a *rotti* stuffed with gram and jaggery) and *puliogure* are also prepared on this occasion.

Makar Sankranti is another major festival. Being a post-harvest festival, it is celebrated with great fanfare. The festival also signifies the entry of the Sun into the zodiac sign of *Makara* or Capricorn.

Dasara or Dussehra is the main festival of Mysuru, where it is celebrated as *nada habba* or the 'state festival'. It lasts for ten days and ends with *Vijayadashami*. According to a local legend, Goddess Chamundeshwari killed the demon king Mahishasura, after whom the city of Mysuru has been named, on this day signifying the victory of fairness over evil. *Bombe habba* or a doll and figurine display with a significant connection with the agricultural economy of the State



Mysuru Dasara

makes for a special attraction during this festival. It is said that the doll celebration was originally started to encourage the desilting of canals and riverbeds, which was necessary for proper irrigation.

Another festival associated with agriculture is Kambala. It is an annual event, which features buffalo race. Traditionally, this event is said to have been patronised by the Alupa kings of Mangalore some 300 years ago. Today, the farmers race their buffaloes in paddy fields as a gesture of thanksgiving to the gods for protecting their animals from diseases.

Besides these, there are several other fairs like Sri Vitappa Fair, Sri Shidlingappa's Fair, Godachi Fair, Shri Yellamma Devi Fair, Banashankari Devi Fair. Ramzan, Diwali, Ganesha Chaturthi, Basava Jayanti, Naga Panchami, Hampi Festival and Maha Mastakabhisheka of Gomateshwara (Bhagavan Bahubali) at Shravanabelagola, which are celebrated in the State with much fanfare.

PERFORMING ARTS

Music

As in the case of cuisine, Karnataka has also earned for itself a special place in the field of performing arts. It is one of those States in India, where the Hindustani, the Carnatic and the folk musical traditions have flourished side by side.

The twin cities of Hubli-Dharwad and Belgaum in northern Karnataka have produced some of the outstanding Hindustani vocalists of the last century. Among them the most notable are Kumar Gandharva, Bhimsen Joshi, Mallikarjun Mansur and Gangubai Hangal. These maestros have also been honoured with *Kalidas Samman* and *Padma* awards.



Bhimsen Joshi

Similarly, from the times of the Vijayanagara Empire, the southern part of Karnataka has earned for itself a place in the field of Carnatic music. During the 17th and the 18th century CE, the Haridasa Movement furthered this process as its exponents like Vijayadasa, Gopaladasa and Jagannathadasa, contributed to it through their compositions of

Devara Nama (devotional songs) in simple Kannada. Following their footsteps, Carnatic musicians from the States, who have earned a name in recent years are VT Chowdiah, V Sheshanna, M Vasudevachar, Doreswamy Iyengar and TK Iyengar.

In the field of folk music equally, *Janapada Geete*, which includes the *vachanas* of Basavanna, has earned for the State a unique name. Besides, the tribal people of Karnataka have also added to the State's folk music repertoire with their own distinctive songs and music.

Dance

The most popular dance of Karnataka is *Yakshagana* (song of Yaksha). It has two forms. The *Moodalopaya* form is commonly performed in the eastern region whereas the *Puduvlopaya* form is more common in the western region. Often traced back to the 16th century CE, the performance of *Yakshagana* combines songs, music, scholarly dialogues and dance with impressive facial make-ups and colourful costumes.

Besides, Karnataka is also known for various ritual dances, which are known as *Kunitha*. Among these, *Dollu Kunitha*, performed by the Kuruba men, is the most popular. Its performance involves synchronized group formations, beating of well-decorated drums and singing by the dancers. In another version of this dance, known as *Puja Kunitha*, the dancers carry a wooden palanquin with a deity seated in it on their heads. Traditionally associated with Lord Shiva's penance in a cave on earth, this dance begins on a full moon day and continues for days as the dancers go from village to village before it ends with an all-night



Yakshagana



Dollu Kunitha folk dance

performance to celebrate the arrival of fresh harvest in homes.

Table 2 provides a list of some other popular dances of Karnataka.

Name of the Dance Form	Way of Performance
Veeragase	Performed during the Dasara festival, this dance portrays the story of Veerabhadra, who destroyed Dakshya Yajna.
Bolak-aat	Performed by Kodava men, it features dancers who hold <i>chavari</i> (yak fur) in one hand and <i>odi-kathi</i> (a short sword) in another to dance in an open field with an oil lamp burning on the background.
Ummatt-aat	In it, the Kodava women, adorned with traditional dresses and jewellery, dance in a circle with brass cymbals in hands to a swinging rhythm around a central character, who holds a pot full of water to represent 'Mother Kaveri'.
Bayalata	Featuring drama and dialogues, this folk dance is performed in the southern region of Karnataka to mark the end of the harvest season.
Kamsale	This is performed by dancers from the Kuruba community accompanied by songs sung in praise of Lord Shiva.
Bhootha Aradhane	Performed in the coastal regions of Karnataka, it features a procession of idols and a performer dancing with a sword and jingling bells to personify a holy spirit.



Nagamandala	It is performed by dancers known as <i>vaidyas</i> , who dance whole night around a huge figure of serpent drawn on the ground in natural colours in the southern region of Karnataka.
Gaarudi Gombe	Performed during major festivals, this dance features puppets made of bamboo sticks that are decorated with masks and colourful regional costumes.
Joodu Haligi	It features two to three performers, who dance vigorously to the playing of two round-shaped percussion like instruments made of buffalo hide with a stick.
Togalu Gombeyaata	Unique to Karnataka, it features puppets made of leather.

VISUAL ARTS AND CRAFTS

Karnataka is well-known for many handicrafts. Bidriware is one among those. This handicraft was developed in the 14th century CE during the rule of the Bahamani Sultans.



It draws its name from the township of Bidar, which is still the chief centre of its production. Due to its striking silver inlays work, it is exported all over the world. For the same reason, the Geographical Indications (GI) Registry has also granted it the GI certificate. The metal used in making these wares is a blackened alloy of zinc and copper.

Besides, Karnataka is also well-known for its inlays work on wood. This involves decorating the surface of the wood by inserting into it pieces of ivory, bone, plastic or wood of different colours. This craft is concentrated in the Mysore and Bangalore regions of the State.

Channapatna, situated in the rural district of Bangalore, is also known for its beautiful wooden toys. The origin of this craft is traced to the times of Tipu Sultan, who invited artisans from Persia to train

the local craftpersons in making such toys.

Karnataka, known as the ‘Sandalwood State of India’, is also famous for various articles made by highly skilled craftpersons from this fragrant soft wood. These articles range from lamp shades, trays and jewellery boxes to combs and walking sticks with rosewood handles. Moreover, Karnataka is also quite famous for its exquisite carvings from wood, stone and ivory. The best examples of this art can be seen on the ceilings and gateways of temples and palaces.



A sculpture at Tripurantaka temple

Bamboo is cultivated all over Karnataka and gets ready for use in three to four years time. Naturally, it forms a very good base material for craftpersons to make beautiful wall hangings, baskets, furniture, lamp shades, mats, coasters and stands.

In Chitradurga, banana fibre is blended with fibres from river grass, hibiscus, jute and wool to make aesthetically beautiful handcrafted products like window blinds, yoga mats, files, folders, coasters, dinner mats, pillow covers, bedspreads, lamp shades, table mats, cushion covers and various other articles.

Important Sites

Kudremukh National Park

Located in Chikkamagaluru district, it is the second largest wildlife sanctuary in the Western Ghats and quite suitable for trekking.



Gauri Temple at Aihole, Hampi



Hampi (Hampe)

It is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and houses numerous ruined temples dating back to the Vijayanagara period. The Virupaksha Temple is one of its best attractions. The road leading to this temple was once a flourishing market, where horses were traded.



Ugranarasimha statue at Hampi



A temple at Hampi, Karnataka

Bijapur

Officially known as Vijayapura, this place is well-known for its historical monuments built during the rule of the Adil Shahi Kings. Gol Gumbaz, the largest dome to have been built in India, is its main attraction apart from the Whispering Gallery, where even minute sounds can be heard 37 metres away.

Kodagu

The district is well-known for the place of origin of River Kaveri, which is called Talakaveri. The Brahmagiri, Talakaveri and Pushpagiri wildlife sanctuaries besides the Nagarhole National Park are located here.

Bylakuppe

Located in the Mysore district, this place is well-known for having the Tibetan Buddhist Golden Temple.

Badami

The place is famous for its stone temples and rock-cut monuments dating back to the period of the Chalukyas of Badami. The Agastya Teerth located here is also an important pilgrimage site.

Gulbarga (Kalburagi)

Founded by the Bahmani Sultans in the 14th century CE, the place is known for its temples and various Islamic monuments and memorials.

Gokarna

This temple town is famous for the Mahabaleshwara Shiva Temple and its beautiful beaches.

CONTEMPORARY CULTURAL DEVELOPMENTS

The diverse linguistic and religious communities of Karnataka, combined with their long histories, have contributed immensely to its rich and varied cultural heritage. In contemporary times, this heritage is carried forward by a vibrant theatre culture through organisations like Ninasam, Ranga Shankara and Rangayana.

The Chamarajendra Academy of Visual Arts (CAVA), the Jaganmohan and Venkatappa Art Galleries and the Chitrakala Parishat are also providing platforms to showcase the State's achievements in the fields of contemporary visual arts. Similarly, the Utsav Rock Garden, which is located in Gotagodi Village in Haveri district, displays contemporary sculptures depicting the rural life of Karnataka along with a wide array of creative and modern paintings.

In music, rock bands like the Kryptos and the Inner Sanctum, located in Bengaluru, are too creating a niche for themselves.

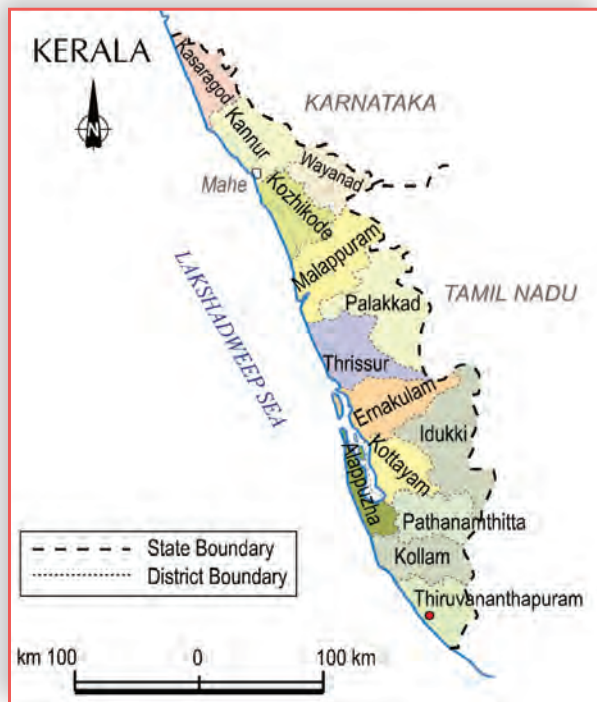
Similarly, the Indian Cartoon Gallery located in the heart of Bengaluru, in a first of its kind in India, is promoting the art of cartooning.

Alongside these, the development and the growth of the software industry in and around Bengaluru has acquired for this 'Garden city' the epithet of the 'Silicon Valley of India'.





KERALA



The name Kerala is derived from the word *ker*, which means coconut. Legend has it that the present geographical area that forms the State of Kerala emerged from the sea when Parashurama, the sixth incarnation of Lord Vishnu, threw in rage his axe into it as a measure of repentance for exterminating the Kshatriyas, the warrior class, from the earth. Going by another tradition, the landmass of Kerala emerged from the sea with the blessings of Varuna, the Lord of the Sea, in return for the prayer of Bhumidevi, Mother Earth. The promotional tagline of ‘God’s own Country’ of the Kerala Tourism Development Corporation (KTDC) captures the spirit of such legends apart

from celebrating the verdant natural beauty of the State and its unique culture.

Geographically, the State lies in the south-western extremity of peninsular India. On the west, its shores are washed by the Arabian Sea and in the east, it is flanked by the imposing Western Ghats. As the landmass cascades from these Ghats towards the Sea, it represents three distinctly visible topographical features running in parallel to each other from the north to the south. These are the hills and valleys, midland and plains, and the coastal region. At its narrowest, the land is 35 kilometres wide and at its widest, it is 120 kilometres.

The backwaters are another typical geographical feature of the State. With canals linking these backwaters and other lakes, the State possesses an uninterrupted waterway of 450 kilometres from its capital, Thiruvananthapuram to Vada-kara. Besides, the State also has many rivers and rivulets flowing from the Ghats in the north to the south. The prominent ones among these are: Valapattanam, Chaliar, Kadalundipuzha, Bharathapuzha, Chalakudy, Periyar, Pamba, Achancoil and Kalladayar. An interconnection between the backwaters, lakes and rivers, forming a unique grid especially in the coastal strip, has earned for

<i>Fact Sheet</i>	
<i>State Day</i>	1 November
<i>Geographical Area</i>	38,852 km ²
<i>Capital</i>	Thiruvananthapuram
<i>Official Language</i>	Malayalam
<i>State Animal</i>	Elephant
<i>State Bird</i>	Great hornbill
<i>State Flower</i>	Kanikonna
<i>State Tree</i>	Coconut



the old port-town of Alappuzha the epithet of ‘Venice of the East’. With such natural endowment in possession, the State has also become emblematic for lush coconut groves and paddy fields. Naturally, therefore, Kerala has adopted the coconut tree as the ‘State Tree’. No aspect of the cultural life of the people of the State can be said to be complete without a generous use of the fruit of this all important tree.

With a total geographical area of 38,852 square kilometres, Kerala has come into its present political existence since 1 November 1956.

CULTURAL SPECIFICITIES

Kerala is one of the most literate States of the Indian Union. It houses some of the finest educational and scientific institutions of the country. The Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC) and the Indian Institute of Space Science and Technology (IISST) located in Thiruvananthapuram and the Indian Naval Academy (INA) located at Ezhimala in the Kannur district are some such institutions. The school education sector is also quite well developed.

Language

Over the years Malayalam has emerged as the principal language of Kerala. But, at the same time, there are several other languages spoken by the people in the State. Table 1 provides a glimpse into this speaking tree of the State.

Literature

The finest literary creations of the State have been accomplished in Malayalam, which belongs to the family of Dravidian languages. But the language

has always been receptive to influences from other classical and modern languages. Principal among these are Sanskrit, Arabic, French, Portuguese and English.

The earliest literary expressions in Malayalam were in the form of folksongs. Some of these folksongs are still recited by Pulluvars at the festivals in serpent groves and by Panars as they go from house to house waking up people in the morning. There are also popular ballads of north Kerala (*vatakkann pattukal*) and south Kerala (*thekkann pattukal*), which continue to pass on stories of heroic acts and other mundane experiences of the people from an olden time.

Ramacharitam written in *pattu* form (an old Dravidian [Tamil] form of poetry) and attributed to Cheeraman is considered to be the oldest existing composition in Malayalam. This nearly one thousand years’ old classic retells the story of Sri Rama with fine literary sensibility. The subsequent literary works found greater infusion of Sanskrit giving rise to a poetic form called, *Manipravalam* (*mani*, meaning ruby in Malayalam and *pravalam*, meaning coral in Sanskrit). Examples of this form of composition are *Unniyachi Charitam*, *Unnichiruthevi Charitam* and *Unniyadi Charitam*, wherein the verse portions follow Sanskrit meters and the prose portions follow Dravidian meters. Cherusseri’s *Krishnagatha* revitalised the *pattu* form in the 15th century CE making both forms flourish side by side. About this time Malayalam works in prose also started taking shape. The coming of the printing press in the 16th century CE added vigour to this process. Amidst such developments, the great works by Thunchattu Ezhuthachan, namely, *Adhyatma Ramayanam*, *Srimahabharatam*, *Irupattinalu Vrittam* and *Harinama Kirtanam*

Table 1

Non-tribal Languages	Malayalam, Tulu, Tamil, Konkani, Kannada, Hindi
Tribal Languages	Allar, Mannan, Aranadan, Kada, Malaryan, Malapandaram, Paliyan, Malavedan, Ravula, Paniya, Irula, Erravalan, Bettakrumba, Muthuva, Kanikkaran, Koddava, Jennu Krumba, Urali, Mullu Krumba, wayanad Chetti, Mudu Koruga, Kudiya, Bellari, Malavan, Mala Malasar, Ullatan, Thachandan, Kalannadi, Kunduvali, Kumbaran, Attapady Kurumba, Pathiya, Kota, Toda
Other Languages/Creoles (Dialects formed from two languages)	Judeo Malayalam; Variants of Indo-Portuguese spoken in Kannur, Thalasseri, Kochi, Kollam and Vypin



heralded the era of modern Malayalam literature. In these works the Dravidian and Sanskrit streams also achieved a unique synthesis. This was followed by the development of dramatic works that led to the growth of a new form of visual art form called, *attam* or *kathakali* during the 17th and the 18th centuries CE. Unnayi Warriar's *Nalacharitham* was a work of great distinction of this genre. Thereafter, the onset of socio-political awakening coupled with modernisation in all spheres of life in the 19th and the 20th centuries CE paved the way for the growth of more imaginative writing in Malayalam. Kerala Varma Valiya Koyi Thampuran was a litterateur of great distinction of this period. His works saw the Oriental and the Western literary streams merge into a fine confluence. The other litterateurs, who also made a mark for themselves during this period, were A.R. Rajaraja Varma (1863–1918), K.C. Kesava Pillai (1868–1914), O. Chandu Menon (1847–1900), C.V. Raman Pillai (1858–1922), N. Kumaran Asan (1873–1924), Ulloor Parameswara Iyer (1877–1949) and Vallathol Narayana Menon (1878–1958).

Table 2 shows the Malayalam litterateurs, who have so far won the coveted Jnanpith Award* since its institution in the year 1961.

Dress

The people of Kerala wearing mostly white or off-white clothes against the verdant backdrop provide a unique spectacle to the people visiting the State from outside. The men often wear a cloth called *mundu*, which is tucked at the waist and, unless folded up to

the knee for free walk, it reaches to the feet. Traditionally, the women also wear a variant of this cloth, which is called *mundu neriyathu*. The *mundu* represents the piece of lower cloth and *neriyathu* stands for its upper part, which is worn over the blouse across the shoulder. Among men, those who like also put a piece of cloth on their shoulders. A *mundu* often comes with coloured borders known as *kara* or with borders of golden *zari* to provide the long-cloth a status.



A man wearing a traditional mundu

Apart from *mundu neriyathu*, women in Kerala also wear *saree* of cream or off-white colour in cotton or silk with golden borders especially on festive occasions, while a three-piece costume consisting of a blouse, a full skirt and an upper cloth called *davani* is widely worn by young girls. An observer from outside can also discern some variation in the way people following different religions wear these clothes. For example, Christian women wear a pleated style of *mundu*, which is folded nicely like a fan at the back. Similarly, bridal costumes also differ according to peoples' religious persuasions.



A woman wearing a traditional saree

Table 2

Name of the Litterateur	Year of Award	Literary Work
G. Sankara Kurup	1965	Odakkuzhal (<i>The Bamboo Flute</i> — A collection of poems)
Sankaran Kutty Pottekkatt	1980	Oru Desathinte Katha (<i>The Story of a Locale</i> — A novel)
Thakazhi Sivasankara Pillai	1984	Kayar (Coir — A novel)
Madathil Thekkepaattu Vasudevan Nair	1995	Overall contribution to Malayalam literature
Ottapalakkal Nambiyadikkal Velu Kurup	2007	Lyrics for cinema

*An Indian citizen writing in any of the 22 languages listed in the Eighth Schedule of the Indian Constitution is eligible for the Jnanpith Award. The award carries a cash component, a citation plaque and a bronze replica of Saraswati, the Indian Goddess of knowledge, music and arts.



Food

Kerala is known for its simple yet rich variety of food. Typically, much of these items are prepared using rice, tapioca, vegetables, coconut and a variety of spices in elegant styles. Depending upon one's preference, Kerala offers both vegetarian and non-vegetarian dishes. A full meal often consists of rice, side dishes and sweets. On important festivals and other ceremonial occasions the meal becomes more elaborate.



Sadya

Such a meal is called *sadya*. Table 3 provides a chart of food items which people usually eat in breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Table 3

Breakfast	<p>Appam — a soft pancake made from toddy fermented rice batter, with a soft spongy middle and crispy edges;</p> <p>Puttu — a type of steamed cylindrical cake made from rice flour and scrapped coconut;</p> <p>Idiyappam — also called <i>noolappam</i>, it looks like noodles and is made from rice flour.</p>
Lunch	<p>Sadya — features steamed par boiled rice (<i>chora</i>), curries (<i>sambar</i> — vegetables cooked with lentils and spices; <i>parippu</i> — pulses boiled in salted turmeric water and flavoured with clarified butter), side dishes (<i>avial</i> — a blend of vegetables cooked with coconut paste and green chillies; <i>thoran</i> — minced string beans, cabbage, beetroot, radish, carrot cooked with grated coconut, red chillies and turmeric; <i>olen</i> — ash gourd and dry beans cooked with coconut milk), savouries (<i>upperi</i> — fried banana chips; <i>pappadam</i> — fried wafer made of black gram flour; salad — combination of sliced vegetable; curd; pickle — mango and lime; <i>kichadi</i> — sautéed cucumber or ladies finger in curd; <i>payasam</i> — dessert made of rice, milk and jaggery; and <i>pazham</i> — ripened golden yellow plantain).</p> <p>A non-vegetarian meal on the other hand features curries and side dishes prepared with egg, fish or meat. Popular among such dishes are: <i>Kaya Attirachi</i> — a Thalasseri specialty made of lamb leg and raw banana; <i>kozhippidi</i> — a chicken curry prepared in Malabar style; <i>Irachi pathal</i> — a meat curry prepared in the Malabar region; <i>Meen moilee</i>— stewed fish; <i>karimeen pollichathu</i> — fish fry.</p>

Dinner

Chapathi — a circular rolled out bread made from wheat flour; **Poori** — a small circular rolled out deep-fried bread made from wheat flour; and/or **Parottas/Pathiris** — made from fine wheat flour and leavened with oil.

FAIRS AND FESTIVALS

Kerala is a State of many festivals. Some of these are celebrated throughout the State, while others are celebrated locally by people of particular denominations. Table 4 acquaints us with some of these festivals.

The foremost festival of Kerala is Onam. Traditionally, it is celebrated to reminisce the prosperity enjoyed by the people during the reign of the mythological king Mahabali, who had been pushed into *patala* or the netherworld by *Vamana*, the fifth incarnation of Lord Vishnu, and to welcome his once-in-a-year visit to his subjects as per the latter's boon in the month of *Chingom*, the first month of the Malayalam calendar corresponding to the months of August–September of the English calendar. As the festival coincides with the harvesting season, it is celebrated with much fanfare with people wearing traditional clothes, making *athapoovu* or floral decorations in the front yard of the house for ten days and cooking and eating different kinds of delicious food. Boat races are also organised during this festival, which attract thousands of tourists.

Vishu or the 'Malayalam New Year' is another such festival. It is celebrated on the first day of the Malayalam month of *Medam*, which corresponds to the month of April. On this day, people look forward to a year of plenty and prosperity beginning with the ritual of *vishukanni* in which seasonal fruits, vegetables, yellow flowers (known locally as *kanni konna*), rice, gold, clothes and coins alongside holy texts are arranged on a platter for people to see first in the morning as they wake up. This is followed by the practice of elders giving money to the young ones and wishing them well.

Apart from these two, people in Kerala also celebrate other popular festivals of India, such as, Deepavali, Navarathri, Mahashivarathri, Christmas, Easter, Miladi-e-sherif, Ramzan and Eid-al-Adha.



Table 4

Type of Festival	Name of some well-known Festivals	Time and Ways of Celebration
Temple Festivals	Guruvayoor Festival	These festivals are held in the famous shrine of Guruvayoorappan in Thrissur on important occasions like Ashtami Rohini in the month of <i>Chingom</i> , Sukla Paksha Ekadasi in <i>Vrischikom</i> , Kuchela Day in <i>Dhanu</i> and Vishukkani in <i>Medam</i> .
	Pooram Festival	This colourful festival is celebrated in the month of <i>Medam</i> (April–May) and features processions of richly caparisoned elephants from various temples to the Vadakunnatha Temple located at Thrissur.
	Chittur Konganpada	This festival is celebrated every year in the Bhagavathy temple at Chittur near Palakad town to commemorate the victory of the Nairs of Chittur over the Konganadu (Coimbatore) army led by the Chola King Rajadhi Raja on the first Monday after the dark lunar night in the month of <i>Kumbham</i> (February–March).
	Sabarimala Shrine Festival	This festival is celebrated every year in the temple of Lord Ayyappa at Sabarimala on 14 January and draws lakhs of devotees, who come to watch the appearance of <i>Makara Vilakku</i> , a strange light in the distance and also offer prayer on the way at the shrine of a Muslim warrior situated at Pampa, who was considered to be a close associate of Ayyappa.
	Sundareswara Festival	This eight-day long festival is held every year in March–April at the Sundareswara Shiva Temple founded by Sree Narayana Guru in 1916.
	Attukal Pongala	The <i>Attukal Bhagavathy Temple</i> is a Hindu religious shrine at Attukal, Thiruvananthapuram. <i>Attukal Pongala</i> is the main festival of this temple. Millions of women, even from other states gather every year in the month of <i>Kumbham</i> and prepare <i>Pongala</i> (rice cooked with jaggery, ghee, coconut, etc.) in open pots to please the Goddess. This festival has figured in the Guinness Book of World Records for being the single largest gathering of women for a religious activity.
Church Festivals	Arthunkal Feast	This festival in the memory of St. Sebastian is celebrated every year for eleven days in the month of January in St. Andrew's Forance Church at Arthunkal.
	Manjikkara Church Festival	This festival is celebrated in the Manjikkara Church to pay respect to Ignatius Elise III, the holy patriarch of Antioch, whose body is believed to be entombed here.
	Niranam Church Festival	The main festival in this church (the place is believed to have been visited by St. Thomas) is celebrated in the honour of Mother Mary on August 15. The feast of St. Thomas is also celebrated here on 3rd July every year.
	Rakkuli Thirunal	This feast of Epiphany is celebrated every year in the St. Thomas Cathedral Church at Pala on the 6th of January.
	Vettukad Festival	This festival is celebrated for eleven days ending with the last Sunday of October for Christ the King in the local church situated on the outskirts of Thiruvananthapuram.
Masjid Festivals	Chandanakuda Mahotsavam	This festival is celebrated in Beemapalli, a shrine dedicated to the memory of Beema Beevi, a pious Muslim woman believed to be gifted with divine powers.
	Veliancode Jaram Nercha Festival	This festival is celebrated in the village of Veliancode near the tomb of a priest believed to have exceptional divine qualities.
	Cheraman Juma Masjid Festival	This festival is celebrated in the Juma Masjid situated in the Methala Village of Kodungalloor in the memory of Cheraman Perumal who, it is believed, having gone on a pilgrimage to Arabia embraced Islam after meeting Prophet Mohammed at Jeddah and accepted the name of Thajuddin.

PERFORMING ARTS

Kerala is well-known for its many beatific, sonorous and lyrical art forms. Most famous among these are Kathakali and Mohiniyattam. Besides, there are other

popular performing arts, which deftly combine dance, drama and music.

Kathakali is one performing art that distinguishes Kerala. In a way it represents the acme of all other



performing arts which the State is deservingly proud of. At one go it combines the facets of opera, ballet, masque and pantomime. Heralded by *kelikottu* or the beating of drums (*maddalam* and *chenda*) and to the accompaniment of the *chellinga* (gongs) and the *ilathalam* (cymbals), it is traditionally performed within the temple precincts after sunset to elucidate the ideas and stories from the Indian epics and Puranas. Dressed with huge *kireetams* (headgears), *kanchukams* (jackets) and long skirts worn over a thick padding of cushions and with faces thickly painted to portray specific characters, the actors do this with the help of evocative facial expressions, elaborate hand gestures (*mudras*) and dynamic stage movements.

Mohiniyattam is another distinctive dance form which is characterised by slow, graceful, swaying movements of the body and highly emotive eye and hand gestures of female dancers wearing elegant gold-filigreed dress in pure white or ivory, akin to the traditional attire of the women of Kerala. This dance form flourished under the patronage of the Chera kings between the 9th and the 12th century CE and was rooted in the Hindu mythology which speaks of Lord Vishnu taking the form of a celestial enchantress (*Mohini*) during the 'Churning of the Sea' (*Sagara Manthana*) to deny the demons a chance to share the drink of immortality (*amrit*). In its heydays, the dance was practised by *devadasis* or temple dancers and hence was also known as Dasiattam.

Koothu is a type of ritualistic art wherein a solo performer from the Chakkier community plays the role of a jester to make playful comments on

the manners and customs of the time, drawing heavily from the stories of the Ramayana and the Mahabharata in *Koothambalams* (temple theatres). Nangyar Koothu is a variation of this art form, which is performed by the *Nangiars* (female members of the Chakkier community).

Kutiyattam, features dramatic performances enacted simultaneously by both the male and female members of the Chakkier community and lasts from six to twenty days. Late Ammannoor Madhava Chakkier was an unrivalled maestro of this art form.

Krishnanattom is a traditional art form in which actors, wearing appropriate red/blue vests with flowing garments and characteristic masks or sometimes putting colourful facial make-ups in place of masks, portray the life of Lord Krishna through dramatic performances lasting over eight days.

Kakkari Natakam is a satirical dance-drama which portrays the human forms of Lord Shiva and his divine consort Goddess Parvathi playing the lead roles as *Kakkalan* and *Kakkathi* to make people aware about the pitfalls of the contemporary society in a blend of Tamil and Malayalam languages.

Chavittu Natakam is a form of musical dance-drama which evolved in Kerala at the turn of the 16th century CE with the influences of the European Christian Miracle Plays and used to be performed either on an open stage or in the interior of a church. Even though the actors in this musical drama wear Greco-Roman dresses, they speak a mix of colloquial Tamil and Malayalam.



Kathakali



Mohiniyattam



Krishnanattom



Duffmuttu is a form of group performance popular among the Muslims of Malabar and is staged during festivals and nuptial ceremonies. As the performers play *duffu* (a percussion-like instrument), the leader begins singing a song while others move in circles joining in the chorus. The songs are mostly tributes to martyrs, heroes and saints.

Thullal is a solo satiric dance form was introduced by the renowned poet Kunchan Nambiar in the 18th century CE. In this performance, which is also

staged during temple festivals, the performer, decked up like a Kathakali dancer, recites verses based on mythological themes and elucidates them for people to understand through expressive gestures. This performance is supported by a singer, who repeats the verses to the accompaniment of an orchestra of *mridangams* or *thoppi maddalams* (percussions) and cymbals.

Apart from the above, the State is also a veritable treasure house of many more ritualistic and folk art forms. Table 5 below briefly lists some of those.

Table 5

Name of the Art Form	Characteristic Features
Thiruvathirakali	This is a dance performed by women in order to attain everlasting marital bliss on Thiruvathira day in the Malayalam month of <i>Dhanu</i> (December–January).
Oppana	A dance form essential to the wedding festivities of the Malabar Muslims.
Margomkali	This is a ritual folk art of the Syrian Christians of Kottayam and Thrissur districts.
Kannyarkali	Kannyarkali, also known as Desathukali or Malamakkali, is a folk art mostly practised by the Nair community of Palakkad.
Kolkali	Kolkali is a highly rhythmic folk art performed in the north Malabar region of Kerala.
Kummattikkali	This is a mask dance popular in some of the northern districts of Kerala.
Arjuna Nritham	This is a ritual art performed by men in the Bhagavathy temples of Kerala.
Mudiyettu	This is a ritual dance performed in some Kaali temples of Ernakulam and Kottayam districts in central Kerala.
Paana	Also known as Paanakali, this ritualistic performance is offered to propitiate the goddess Bhadrakali in the districts of Thrissur, Palakkad and Malappuram.
Patayani	This is a week-long ritual dance held in Kaali temples on the banks of the Pamba river during the Malayalam months of <i>Meenam</i> and <i>Medam</i> (March–April).
Poothanumthirayum	This performance is a ritual offering to Goddess Kaali in many places of south Malabar.
Theeyattu	This is a solo dance-drama enacted in some Bhagavathy temples of Thiruvalla, Kottayam, Thripunithura and neighbouring areas in front of the Kalam or Dhooli Chitram (ritual drawing with coloured powders).
Theyyam	Also known as Kaliyattam, this ritual dance popular in north Kerala (erstwhile Kolathunadu) features dance, mime and music embodying rudiments of ancient tribal cultures which attached great importance to the worship of heroes and ancestral spirits.
Tholppavakkoothu	Literally meaning ‘leather puppet play’, this is a ritual art performed during the annual festivals in the Kaali temples of Palakkad district.
Kalaripayattu	This is a martial art form considered highly scientific in its practice.
Velakali	This spectacular martial dance is performed by men in some of the temples of southern Kerala.

VISUAL ARTS

Kerala is well-known for its mural paintings drawn by accomplished artists using natural colours like saffron-red, saffron-yellow, green, red, white,

blue, black, yellow and golden-yellow to feature mythological themes and *kalams* (colourful decorations) drawn on floors of temples and households using rice flour (white), charcoal powder



(black), turmeric powder (yellow), powdered leaves (green), and a mixture of turmeric powder and lime (red). A forty-day long festival that features *kalam* is celebrated in most Bhagavathy temples in the State. Similarly, mural paintings adorn the walls of most temples and palaces in Kerala. The largest such panel,



Radha-Krishna mural painting

Gajendra Moksha is found in the Krishnapuram Palace situated near Kayamkulam in the Alappuzha district. One can also see extensive murals preserved at the Mattancherry Palace depicting scenes from the *Ramayana* and the *Bhagavatham* in the Ernakulam district. The murals of the Shiva temple in Ettumanoor provide a visitor an insight into the earliest forms of Dravidian mural painting.

Among the crafts of Kerala, the most popular are those made from coconut shells, wood, clay and cane. Kerala is also known for its uniquely crafted jewellery. Table 6 mentions a few popular handicrafts of Kerala.

Table 6

Names of Major/Minor Crafts	Distinctive Features
Kasavu Saree, Mundu, and Neriyathu	Off-white cotton or silk long cloths with golden brocade.
Pavithra Mothiram	A uniquely crafted golden ring, shaped like a knot.
Aranmula Kannadi	Bronze mirror with handles.
Nettipattom	A glittering copper and gold ornament which adorns the forehead of an elephant.
Chundan Vallom	Snake boat of Kerala made of Anjili wood.
Vaikkol Chitrangal	Straw pictures made by pasting straw cut to different sizes on cloth or canvas.
Coir products	These include mats, rugs, wall hangings, door pieces, bags, hammocks, ceiling and floor furnishings, beds, cushions, little show pieces and window blinds.
Fibre crafts	These include items like dolls, mats, purses, bags, bangles, wall hangings made from fibres obtained from plants like banana and pineapple.
Pulpaya	Traditional mats woven out of Korappullu grass.
Ramacham Vishari	Fan made of <i>Vettiver grass</i> .
Netturpetti	Jewel box made of rosewood, originally designed in the Nettur region of Malabar.
Nilavilakku	Traditional bell metal lamp.

CONTEMPORARY CULTURAL DEVELOPMENTS

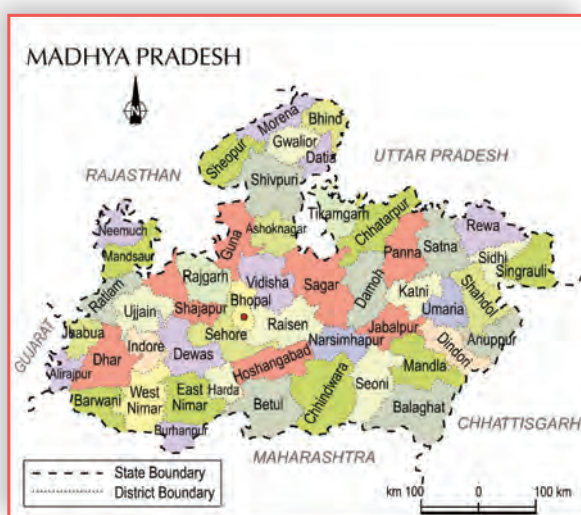
Kerala is one of those States, which despite modernity touching every facet of its life, still takes immense pride in preserving its culture. Modernity in a way has significantly contributed to this effort of the State. Those aspects of its cultural life, which were once confined to temple precincts or professed and practised by exclusive groups, are now widely known across the country and abroad. Mediums like cinema, television and computer-added multimedia have all

significantly contributed in this process. Cultural products once consumed by the rich and the influential people have become consumables for all, providing dignity and economic returns to its producers and practitioners. Open halls, theatres, public spaces have all become the new venues for the celebration of the State's culture. Safaris, boat races, holiday homes, surface and air connectivity, and over and above all, democratic polity and economic entrepreneurship are the new signs and signets of such celebration.





MADHYA PRADESH



portrait of culture that is not only unique but also in many significant ways representative of what India culturally stands for. No wonder, the catch-phrase describing the State as the 'Heart of India' suits it from all angles.

CULTURAL SPECIFICITIES

The culture of Madhya Pradesh has been shaped as much by its topography as by the people, who have lived here for generations. The State, watered by rivers like the Sone, the Chambal, the Betwa, the Kali Sindh, the Tava, the Tapti, and over and above all, the Narmada, which flows from the east to the west between the Vindhya and the Satpura mountains, has almost 75 per cent of its population reside in villages with agriculture as their main occupation. It is largely on account of their toil, and encouragement provided by the government, the State has made rapid strides in the production of wheat, soyabean, jowar (sorghum), pulses, oilseeds, paddy and coarse millets. Naturally, therefore, a good deal of the State's culture

Madhya Pradesh, situated between 21.2° and 26.87° north latitudes and 74.02° and 82.49° east longitudes, occupies the central region of India. With a total landmass of 3,08,259 square kilometres, it is also the 2nd largest State of the country in terms of area. Similarly, with 7.27 crore inhabitants as per the census of 2011, it stands as the 5th largest State in terms of population.

The State, with Bhopal as its capital, came into existence in November 1956 following the re-organisation of the Indian States. However, in November 2000 again it was re-constituted paving the way for the creation of the new State of Chhattisgarh comprising its south-eastern portion. Nevertheless, the State, bounded by Uttar Pradesh in the north, Rajasthan and Gujarat in the west, Maharashtra in the south and Chhattisgarh in the east, puts up a

<i>Fact Sheet</i>	
<i>State Day</i>	1 November
<i>Geographical Area</i>	308,252 km ²
<i>Capital</i>	Bhopal
<i>Official Language</i>	Hindi
<i>State Animal</i>	Swamp Deer
<i>State Bird</i>	Asian Paradise Flycatcher
<i>State Flower</i>	Palash/Parrot Tree
<i>State Tree</i>	Banyan



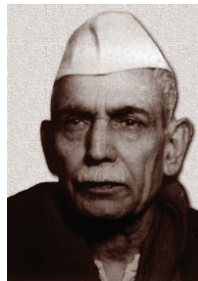
revolve around these activities. However, availability of abundant mineral resources like coal, iron ore, copper, manganese, bauxite, limestone, marble, granite and diamond have also spurred significant industrial activities in places like Indore, Bhopal, Gwalior, Jabalpur, Dewas and Neemuch adding enough cosmopolitan characteristics to the State's popular culture. Besides, the presence of tribes like the Baigas, the Saharias, the Bharias, the Gonds, the Bhils, the Korkus, the Santias, the Kols, the Dhanuks, the Panikas and the Suars in the southern, south-western and eastern parts of the State, with their arts, crafts and ways of life have also lent extra colour and diversity to its culture.

Language

Hindi is the official language of Madhya Pradesh. It is also the most widely understood language. However, dialects such as Malwi, Nimar, Bundeli and Bagheli related to this language are commonly spoken in the Malwa, Nimar, Bundelkhand and the Baghelkhand regions respectively. Besides, Marathi, Urdu, Gujarati, and Sindhi are also spoken by those who belong to these language-speaking groups. In addition, different tribal groups also speak their respective languages. In major towns and cities, English has also emerged as a major functional language.

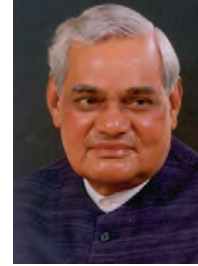
Literature

In the field of Literature, Madhya Pradesh occupies a pride of place for being home to a number of famous literary personalities. Among them the most cherished one is the legendary Sanskrit poet and dramatist, Kalidasa, who is well-known for his literary works such as *Kumarasambhava*, *Raghuvamsa* (epics), *Abhijnanasakuntala* (drama) and *Meghaduta* (lyric poetry) among many others. He is believed to have flourished during the reign of Chandragupta II of the Imperial Gupta Dynasty in the 4th century CE. In modern times too the State has seen the rise of many acclaimed literary figures. Most notable among them is Makhan Lal Chaturvedi. He was a brave and



Makhan Lal
Chaturvedi

fearless journalist but equally prolific as a writer, poet and dramatist. His work, *Him Taringini* won him the first ever Sahitya Akademi Award for writing in Hindi in the year 1955. Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the 10th Prime Minister of India, is another notable literary figure from the State. Among his books of poetry, *Samvedna* and *Nayi Disha* have been converted into music albums by the famous Ghazal singer, Jagjit Singh. Nida Fazli is another well-known Hindi and Urdu poet from the State. He revived the *doha* form of poetry and also wrote many famous songs for Hindi cinema and television serials. Rahat Indori is also an equally popular poet and lyricist from the State. He has particularly gained popularity for his involvement with *Mushairas* and *Kavi Sammelans*. Among others are Bhagwan Dutt Sharma, who stands out as one of the foremost literary translators of international literature into Hindi, and Hari Shankar Parsai, who has won the Sahitya Akademi Award for his most remembered satirical work, *Viklang Shraddha ka Daur*.



Atal Bihari
Vajpayee



Nida Fazli

Dress

Traditionally, the women in Madhya Pradesh wear *lehenga* and *choli* with a *lagra* or *odhni* to cover their heads and shoulders. Black and red are the most favoured colours for such dresses. Besides, *sarees* have also become quite common among the women in Madhya Pradesh. *Bandhani sarees* coming in rich, colourful patterns are especially popular among them. Ujjain, Indore and Mandsaur are famous for producing such *sarees* in bulk. In addition, Madhya Pradesh is also famous for producing the much acclaimed Maheshwari and Chanderi silk *sarees*. These are exported in large



Women in sarees



numbers around the world. Along with these, women in the State are also adapting to different kinds of modern outfits.

Likewise, *dhoti* and *safa* (a kind of turban) are the traditional dresses of men in Madhya Pradesh. *Mirzai* and *bandi* (types of jackets in white or black) also constitute a part of the traditional dress of men in the Malwa and Bundelkhand regions. In tribal areas, short *dhotis* are used by men on formal occasions. However, while working outside they wear only a miniscule cloth called, *langot*.



A man in safa

People in Madhya Pradesh also wear ornaments of different kinds. Tribal women particularly like to wear their traditional *kathir* and silver ornaments. Besides, they also love to have tattoos on their hands and foreheads.

Food

Madhya Pradesh is well-known for its warmth and hospitality. This is reflected in the amalgamation of cultures and cuisines in the State. Being a wheat



Dal Bafla



Poha

producing State, wheat along with *arhar dal* (pigeon pea) form the regular food of the people. However, these staples are also used to prepare several special dishes. *Bafla*, made of wheat and eaten with *dal* (a broth made of lentil) and *ghee* (clarified butter) is one such special dish.

Other vegetarian specialities of Madhya Pradesh are *Bhutte ki Kees* (made of grated corn and skimmed

milk), *Chakki ki Shaak* (steamed wheat doughs added to a gravy rich in spices), *Palak Puri* (made of wheat dough and grated spinach) and *Poha* (flattened rice prepared with onions, tomatoes and other spices).

People in the eastern and southern parts of the State also eat rice and various preparations made out of it.

Among non-vegetarian dishes, *Seekh Kebab*, *Shammi Kebab*, *Keema* and *Korma* of Bhopal are most well-known.



Malpua

Besides, Madhya Pradesh is also quite famous for its sweet dishes. The most famous among these are *Malpua*, *Jalebi*, *Mawa Bati Srikhand*, *Faluda* and *Rabri*. Similarly, among the salted snacks, the most popular are *Dalmoth*, *Khasta Kachori* and *Khatta Meetha Chivra*.

FAIRS AND FESTIVALS

Like all other States in India, people in Madhya Pradesh

also celebrate with great enthusiasm festivals like Makar Sankranti (January), Maha Shivaratri (February), Holi (March), Ram Navami (April),



Aalami Tableegi Ijtima

Buddha Purnima (May), Id-ul-Fitr (June), Raksha Bandhan, Janmashtami and Ganesh Chaturthi (August), Id-ul-Zuha (September), Dussehra (October), Muharram (October), Diwali (October/November), Guru Nanak Jayanti (November), Id-



Simhastha

e-Milad-un-Nabi (December) and Christmas (December). Such celebrations of festivals goes well with the country's

popular saying of ‘a festival a month’. However, with people of diverse religious persuasions and linguistic and community affinities, the State also witnesses the celebration of many other local fairs and

festivals. Some of those have their origins in myriad mythologies while others are related either memories of local heroes and saints or changes in seasons. Table 1 provides a list of some such fairs and festivals.

Table 1

Name of the Fair/ Festival	Manner of Celebration
Simhastha Fair	This fair is held on the banks of the river Kshipra in Ujjain in a cycle of every twelve years when Jupiter enters the zodiac sign of Leo. On this occasion, millions of devotees and holy men of all sects of Hinduism congregate here for spiritual merit.
Aalami Tableegi Ijtima Fair	This three-day congregation is held in Bhopal every year with groups of devotees coming here from around the world to listen to the holy discourses of Islamic scholars and learn how to lead a conscientious life following good values.
Ramlila Fair	This hundred years’ old fair is held every year in the month of February in the Bhandar Tehsil of Gwalior district. It is more than 100 years old. January-February are the months reserved for it.
Hira Bhumia Fair	This fair is held every year in the months of August and September in the name of Hiranmanya Baba, whose blessing is believed to be propitious in removing the barrenness of women in the Gwalior region.
Pir Budhan fair	This more than 250 years’ old fair is held every year in the months of August-September in Sanwara of Shivpuri district near the tomb of the Muslim saint, Pir Budhan.
Nagaji Fair	This animal fair is organised for about a month every year in the months of November-December at Porsa in Morena district in the memory of saint Nagaji, who lived during the period of Akbar.
Tetaji Fair	This fair is held at Bhamavadi village of Guna district on the birthday of Tetaji, who, it is said, had the power to remove snake venom from one’s body.
Jageshwari fair	This fair is held in Chanderi of Guna district in the honour of Jageshwari Devi, who, it is said, had cured a king of leprosy.
Amarkantak Shivratri	This fair is held on the day of Shivratri at Amarkantak of Shahdol district, where river Narmada originates.
Mahamrityunjay Fairs	In the temple of Mahamrityunjay in Rewa these fairs are held every year on the occasions of Basant Panchami and Shivratri.
Chandi Devi Fair	This fair is held during the months of March-April at Ghoghara village in Sidhi district in the temple of Chandi Devi, who is believed to be the incarnation of goddess Parvati.
Baba Shahabuddin Aulia Urs	In February at Neemuch of Mandsaur district, this Urs is celebrated for 4 days in the shrine of Baba Shahabuddin.
Kaluji Maharaj Fair	This fair is held for a month in Pipalyakhurd of West Nimar in the honour of Kaluji Maharaj, who used to cure the diseases of human beings and animals.
Singaji Fair	This fair is held for a week in August-September in Pipalya village of West Nimar in honour of Singaji, who was an esoteric person and was respected as a deity.
Dhamoni Urs	This fair is held in the months of April-May at Dhamoni in Sagar district in the shrine of Mastan Shah Vali.
Barman Fair	This 13 days’ fair starts from Makar Sankranti in Gadarpur of Narsinghpur district.
Math Ghoghara Fair	This 15-day fair is held in Bhaironthan of Seoni district during Shivratri near a cave adjacent to a natural lake.
Chethiagiri Vihara Festival	This is a Buddhist festival held at Sanchi in late November every year and attracts hundreds of Buddhist monks and pilgrims, who come here to pay their respects to the relics of two of the Buddha’s foremost disciples, Sari Putta and Maha Moggallana.



Karam Festival	This is an agricultural festival celebrated by the tribal people of the State in honour of the Karam Devta, believed to be the God of youth and power, in the month of September-October every year.
Laru Kaj	Families of Gonds celebrate this festival once in nine or twelve years for health, happiness and prosperity by organising a ceremony that is considered as the pig's wedding in honour of Narayana Dev.

PERFORMING ARTS

The performing arts of Madhya Pradesh range from multiple folk traditions to rich classical traditions. Of the folk traditions, the songs are especially remarkable for their characteristic styles, which narrate stories of diverse human experience, while the dances capture the joyous moods of life.

It is said that in the Nimar region one will find different styles of folk singing to suit different occasions. *Kalgiturra* is one such form in which songs recounting anecdotes from the epics to the present social circumstances are sung by opposing parties to outsmart each other all through the night to the beats of the *chang* and the *dhaf*. Phag songs with a strong romantic fervour are sung during the celebration of Holi as *Garba* songs devoted to goddess Shakti are sung to the accompaniment of the beats of the *mridang* (a type of drum) during Navratri. Similarly, *Gavlan* songs are sung as part of the *Raslila* or *Raasleela* celebrations. Besides, devotional songs composed by



Sanjha performance

saints like Singaji, Kabir, Meera and Dadu are also sung in this region in the Nirguni style. The singing of these songs is usually accompanied by the playing of musical instruments like *ektara* and *khartaal* (a musical instrument with small metal jinglers attached to wooden planks).

Among the Nath community in the Malwa region also the recitation of the hymns composed by the noble king, Bhartrihari and saints like Kabir, Meera, Gorakh and Gopichand is quite popular. These recitations are usually accompanied by a stringed

musical instrument called *chinkara*, which are made out of bamboos and bows of coconut shells. *Sanjha* is another form of melodious folk song of this region that is usually



Dholak and Nagara

sung by young girls in group. And as the rains descend on earth, *Hid* songs marked by full throated voices of the singers in classical *aalap* style also reverberate throughout this region while in the Bundelkhand region, during this season, the heroic tales of Alah-Udal sung to the beats of *dholak* and *nagara* keep the Alhait community engrossed.

In the Baghelkhand region traditional singers, known locally as the Basdevas, carrying on head the idol of Lord Krishna and donning their characteristic yellow garments go about in pairs and sing songs about mythological characters using *sarangi* and *chutki paijan*. *Biraha* and



Gangaur

Bidesiya are two other important forms of folk songs, which capture the mood of people in this region. The *Biraha* songs relate to the themes of love, separation and reunion while the *Bidesiya* songs implore the loved ones to return early.

The folk dances in the State likewise differ from place to place and from occasion to occasion. Table 2 provides a list of some of those dances.

Table 2

Name of the Song/Dance	Style of performance
Swang	This is a lively dance form of the Bundelkhand region. Its performance begins with the beating of <i>mridang</i> and gradually gains momentum dotted with prose and poetic dialogues.
Rai	This dance of Baghelkhand is performed by a man disguised as a woman to the accompaniment of musical instruments like <i>dholak</i> and <i>nagara</i> .
Matki	Performed by women on various occasions to the beating of a drum locally called <i>matki</i> , this community dance of the Malwa region is usually initiated by a lone woman called <i>Jhela</i> , while others join in with their traditional dresses to move in circles with graceful steps and hand movements.
Gangaur	This devotional dance form is performed during the nine days of Gangaur festival in the Nimar region in honour of their deity Ranubai and Dhaniyer Suryadev.
Badhai	Popular in the Bundelkhand region, these dances are performed by both men and women on congratulatory occasions like births and marriages to the tunes of accompanying musical instruments.
Baredi	Beginning with the day of Diwali, this dance is performed by a group of colourfully dressed 8-10 young men led by a lead performer for a fortnight. Usually, a two line devotional poetry called <i>diwari</i> precedes this performance.
Naurata	This dance is performed by unmarried girls seeking God's blessings for a good match through the nine days of festivity during the period of Navratri in the Bundelkhand region.
Ahirai	This popular dance form of the Bharia tribe is performed by a group of musicians, who whirl in a circle with aerobic movements keeping pace with the rising crescendo of the drums and <i>timki</i> (a pair of brass metal platters) all through the night on occasions such as marriages.
Bhagoria	This is a traditional dance of the Baiga tribe wherein beginning with the Dussehra festival eligible male members from one village visit another village to be welcomed by young girls who would choose from amongst them their suitable partners.
Pardhauni	This is another dance popular among the Baigas, who perform it mainly to welcome and entertain the bridegroom's party during a marriage.

Apart from the folk traditions, as mentioned earlier, Madhya Pradesh has also rich traditions of classical music. The legendary medieval singer Tansen is associated with this State as also Pandit Vishnu Narayan Bhatkhande of modern times. Other notable musicians of the State are Marangachary Nana Saheb Panse, Kumar Gandharva, Ustad Amir Khan, Ustad Allauddin Khan and the Dagar brothers. The State is the birthplace of *Dhrupad* (a classical *raga*) too. In the present context, Gwalior is considered as one of the important centres (*gharana*) of Indian classical music.

VISUAL ARTS AND CRAFTS

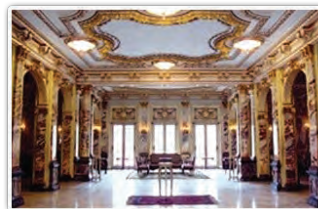
Like performing arts, Madhya Pradesh too has a rich tradition of visual arts. The rock paintings of Bhimbetka dating back to the Stone Age are a living proof of this fact. Coming to the present, at the popular level, this tradition finds itself beautifully expressed through various types of folk paintings, which depict

life in vivid colours. The wall paintings of the Bundelkhand, Gondwana, Nimar and Malwa regions are fine examples of such paintings. This age-old tradition is equally

matched by works of modern painters like D.J. Joshi, Syed Haider Raza, Narayan Shridhar Bendre, Vishnu Bhatnagar, Maqbool Fida Hussain, Amrit Lal Vegad and Kalyan Prasad Sharma. Besides, the artistic instincts of the people can also be seen in the variety of terracotta works, which include figurines of deities, birds, animals, serpents and many more objects of ritual and cultural



Sanchi Stupa

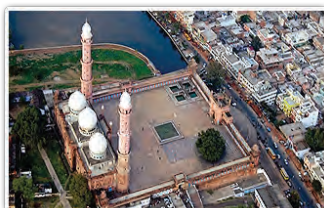


Gwalior Palace inside view



INDIA: UNITY IN CULTURAL DIVERSITY

needs. However, the most splendid artistic creations of the State are seen in the magnificent temples of Khajuraho, the majestic forts of



Taj-ul Mosque, Bhopal

Gwalior, the exquisite *stupa* of Sanchi, the biggest mosque of India, the Taj-ul Mosque of Bhopal, the Mahakala Temple of Lord Shiva at Ujjain and many other buildings of historical importance.



Metal work



Papier mache work

Similarly, the State rightfully prides itself for several crafts, which include exquisite glass works, various kinds of utilitarian and decorative articles made of bamboo and wood, metal works, various articles made of leather, *papier mache* and stone works, hand woven rags and carpets, and over and above all, hand woven cotton and silk *sarees* of worldwide fame.

CONTEMPORARY CULTURAL DEVELOPMENTS

In recent times, Madhya Pradesh has consistently been at the forefront of economic development

in the country. This has been more than matched by the initiatives it has taken to preserve and promote the rich cultural traditions of the State in different spheres. Two such important initiatives are the Lokrang and Lokranjan Festivals. The first is a cultural exposition organised by the Madhya Pradesh Adivasi Lok Kala Academy in Bhopal for five days beginning with the Republic Day on 26th January to bring on one platform the creative and performing art forms of the folk and tribal people from all over the country and the second is a national festival of folk dances organised by the State's Tourism Department at Kahjuraho every year. Similarly, the Culture Department of the State has set up several national and State level awards to honour achievers of high distinction in the fields of art and literature from all over India. The most prestigious of these awards are named after Kabir, Kalidasa, Tansen, Tulsidas, Lata Mangeshkar, Kumar Gandharva, Iqbal, Maithilisharan Gupt, Kishore Kumar, Devi Ahilya Bai, Sharad Joshi and Mahatma Gandhi. Besides, the State has also been promoting its age-old craft traditions by not only creating awareness about these by organising crafts festivals but also by facilitating their marketing nationally and internationally. All these activities have succeeded in putting up the State as one of the most progressive one on the cultural map of India.



Tansen Samaroh, 2017



Lokrang Samaroh, 2018



MAHARASHTRA



Maharashtra, with a total area of 3,07,713 square kilometers lying between 70°30' and 80°30' east longitudes and 15°40' and 22°00' north latitudes, is the third largest State of India. Similarly, with a population of 11.24 crore (according to the 2011 Census of India), it is the second most populous State in the country of which approximately 45.2 per cent people live in urban areas.

Located in the north centre of Peninsular India, it is surrounded by the Arabian Sea on the west, the States of Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh on the north, Chhattisgarh on the east and Karnataka and Telangana on the south.

With over 80 per cent of its area covered by the Deccan plateau, it has three natural divisions. The first is the narrow coastal strip of Konkan in the west, the second is that part of the great Western Ghats known in Maharashtra as the Sahyadri mountain ranges which runs parallel to the sea-coast with many of its offshoots branching towards the east and the south-east, and the third is the Maharashtra Plateau that includes major rivers like the Tapi, the Krishna, the Godavari and the Bhima.

Occupying such a strategic position, the State has seen numerous attempts at empire building. This dates back to the times of the Satavahanas (230 BCE — 225 CE). They were followed by the Vakatakas during whose the famous Ajanta Caves attained great artistic perfection. Thereafter, the Kalachuris, the Chalukyas, the Rashtrakutas and the Yadavas ruled the area. The latter specially give it an identity by using Marathi as their court language. Subsequently, the Bahamanis provided it some political cohesion. However, as a homogeneous entity

<i>Fact Sheet</i>	
<i>State Day</i>	1 May
<i>Geographical Area</i>	307,713 km ²
<i>Capital</i>	Mumbai
<i>Official Language</i>	Marathi
<i>State Animal</i>	Shekru or the Indian Giant Squirrel
<i>State Bird</i>	Hariyal or the Yellow Footed green pigeon
<i>State Flower</i>	Tamhan or Lagerstroemia
<i>State Tree</i>	Mango



its rise was cemented under the leadership of Shivaji. Thereafter, the Peshwas took it to much greater heights.

During India's epic struggle for freedom several leaders from here played seminal roles. The foremost among them were Dadabhai Naoroji, Mahadev Govind Ranade, Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Vinayak Damodar Savarkar. Finally, the State in its present form came into being with effect from the May, 1960 as an outcome of the linguistic reorganisation of the states of India.

Currently, as the industrial powerhouse of India, Maharashtra occupies a prominent place in the country's economy. Its capital Mumbai, also known as the country's commercial capital has the presence of all the leading industrial and corporate houses of the country.

CULTURAL SPECIFICITIES

Maharashtra is home to people with various religious persuasions and community affiliations. Among them, the Marathi Hindus constitute the majority of the population. Apart from them, people of north Indian origin, Gujaratis, Sindhis, Punjabis, Rajasthanis, Kannadigas and Tamils also live in the State. Besides, there are tribes such as Thakar, Warli, Konkana and Halba. The Muslims constitute the second largest religious community followed by the Buddhists, Sikhs, Jains, Christians and Parsis. Over the years the cultural traditions of Maharashtra have been shaped by the contributions of all these people.

Language

Marathi is the main language spoken in Maharashtra. It is also the official language of the State. However, the manner in which the language is spoken varies from place to place. As per the People's Linguistic Survey of India (PLSI), there are about 12 varieties of Marathi spoken by the people apart from 38 other languages that are spoken by different tribal, nomadic and denotified communities. Besides, languages like Hindi, Urdu, Gujarati, Kannada, Tamil, Telugu and Bhojpuri are also spoken in the State by people belonging to these linguistic communities.

Literature

The history of literary work in Marathi goes back to the 12th century CE, when Mukundaraja (1128—1198 CE) produced his didactic compositions *Viveka Sindhu* and



Bhalchandra Vanaj Nemade

Paramamrita. He was followed by the saint-poets of the Mahanubhava cult, who opened the prospects of *moksha* (salvation) for all through *bhakti* (devotion) and penance. This thread of devotion was subsequently taken up by saint Jnanadeva (also known as Sant Dnyaneshwar) whose *Bhavartha Dipika* (popularly known as the *Jnanesvari* or *Dnyaneshwari*) and *Amritanubhava* have till date remained the sacred books of the people of Maharashtra. Then, in the 17th century CE, Marathi literature showed the flowering of both religious poetry in the form of Sant Tukaram's *Abhanga* and non-religious ballads in the forms of *Povadas* that narrated the selfless valour of the Marathas and *Lavanis* that were romantic in character. Thereafter, in the 19th century CE, there came the first work of Marathi grammar, first Marathi dictionary and pioneering works in modern prose and poetry. This literary efflorescence has since been continuing with recognition coming in the form of the Jnanpith Award for four Marathi literateurs so far. They are: Vishnu Shakharam Khandekar for *Yayati* in 1974; Vishnu Vaman Shirwadkar for *Natsamrat* in 1987; Vinda Karandikar for *Ashtadarshana* in 2003; and Bhalchandra Vanaj Nemade for his contribution to Marathi literature in 2014.

Dress

Traditionally, the women of Maharashtra wear a nine-yard *saree* called, *navarre* or *nauvari*. The way this *saree* is worn is different from the way women wear *saree* in the northern parts of India. It's lower part is generally worn in the India manner the Maharashtrian men



A woman in Navarre saree and traditional jewellery



wear *dhoti* while the other end covers the upper part of the body. Because of this typical manner of wearing this *saree*, it is popularly called *lugade*. Along with this *saree*, Maharashtrian women also wear a blouse called, *choli*. Younger women, on the other hand, wear a five-yard saree called, *paithani*. These silk *sarees* are named after Paithan, a town in the district of Aurangabad.



Maharashtrian man in traditional dress

For the small girls, people usually prefer *parker-polka* (skirt-blouse) made of traditional Maharashtrian fabric.

Along with these traditional dresses, the Maharashtrian women also wear different kinds of jewellery. The designs of such jewellery have been coming down since the time of the great Maratha kings and the Peshwas. Among the favoured jewellery, the Kolhapuri *saaj* (a special type of necklace) is specially popular. Besides, a *nath* (nose-ring) studded with a pearl or ruby, makes the Maharashtrian look perfect.

For men in Maharashtra, *dhoti* and *kurta* are the most common attires. Besides, they also wear a *pehta* (head dress akin to *pagree*) and, sometimes, a *bandi* (waist coat). A pair of Kolhapuri *chappal* (foot wear) usually completes their outfit. Since the time of the freedom movement, the ubiquitous Gandhi *topi* (cap) has also become a favourite with the elderly men in rural Maharashtra.

Food

Food in Maharashtra are usually made of wheat, rice, sorghum (*jowar*), pearl millet (*bajra*), vegetables and lentils. However, the signature items, which have

earned for the State world-wide reputation, are *puran poli*, *ukdiche-modak*, *vada-paav*, *pav-bhaji*, *batata-vada* and *paani-puri*.

Maharashtrian cuisine has also many regional varieties. Of these, the most popular are the Malvani (Konkan region) and the Varadhi (Vidarbha region). Though different in styles of preparation, yet in both these varieties a lot of seafood and coconut are used.

In traditional households, meals, which consist of several items, often begin with an offering (*naivedya*) to the household deities. The most popular among these items are: *bhaji* (a vegetable preparation usually cooked using *goda* or sweet spices), *rassa* (a curry made of potatoes, cauliflower and tomatoes cooked with fresh coconut kernel and water), *varan* (a plain lentil stew), *aamti* (made of *tur dal* or split pigeon pea that is flavoured with *goda masala*, tamarind or *amshul* and jaggery or *gud*) and *bharli vangi* (a stuffed baby eggplant preparation).

Among non-vegetarian preparations, *triphal ambat* (a creamy dish of fresh pomfret fishes) is highly popular.

All vegetarian and non-vegetarian dishes, as mentioned above, are eaten with boiled rice or *chapattis* (plain wheat bread) or *bhakis* (made of *jowar*, *bajra* or rice flour). Besides, *vada* (special *puris* made of rice flour), *amboli* (a kind of pancake made of fermented rice, urad dal and semolina), *pachadi* (a mix of seasonal vegetables in a sauce of coconut and green mangoes), and sweet items like *puran poli*, *shreekhand* or *modak* also constitute a part of the main meal.

FAIRS AND FESTIVALS

The new year in Maharashtra begins with the celebration of Gudhi Padwa. The next to follow is



Modak



Pav-Bhaji



Vada-Paav



Table 1

Festival	Description
Banganga Festival	This festival is held every year in the city of Mumbai paying a musical tribute to Lord Ram.
Bhaubeej	This provides an occasion to cement ties between brothers and sisters on the fifth day of Diwali.
Gokulashtami	This is observed to celebrate the birth of Lord Krishna. Breaking of the <i>Dahi-Handi</i> (clay pots filled with curd) hung high up on a rope is a special feature of this celebration.
Ganga Dashahara	This festival is celebrated in honour of River Ganga, who is known as <i>Tripathaga</i> or the 'Three-Path River', as it is believed that the river flows in all the three worlds — in the heaven as the Mandakini, on the earth as the Ganga and in the nether world as the Patal Ganga.
Jiviti Puja	It is performed by married women on any one of the Fridays in the month of <i>Shravan</i> (July–August) in adoration of Jivti or Goddess Parvati.
Kojagiri Poornima	Also known as Ashwin Poornima, this is celebrated on a full moon day of the Indian month of Ashwin (September–October).
Nag Panchami	This is observed in the honour of the <i>Nag Devta</i> (the Snake God).
Narali Poornima	This marks the end of the monsoon season in Maharashtra. It is celebrated on the full moon day of the Indian month of <i>Shravan</i> (July–August). On this occasion, people offer coconuts to the sea. The festival also marks the beginning of the new fishing season.
Pola Festival	Bullocks and other cattle used for agriculture are worshipped on this occasion.
Vata Poornima	This festival is dear to the Maharashtrian women. It is celebrated in the Indian month of <i>Jyestha</i> (May–June). On this occasion, the women observe fast and tie threads around a banyan tree while praying for union with the same husbands in every other birth.

Ganesh Chaturthi. It is celebrated for ten days with great enthusiasm. Besides, there are other festivals, which are typical to Maharashtra. Table 1 lists some of those.

Apart from these main festivals, the people of the Maharashtra also observe Dussehra, Diwali, Holi, Mahashivratri, Novroj (Parsi New Year) Ramzan, Eid-ul-Fitr, Eid-al-Adha, Muharram, Eid-ul-Milad, Buddha Jayanti and Christmas as in the rest of India.

PERFORMING ARTS

Dances

Maharashtra is famous for a variety of folk dances. *Dhangari Gaja* is one such dance. It is performed by the Dhangars of Sholapur in honour of their god, Biruba donning colourful handkerchiefs and traditional attires like *dhoti*, *angarakha* and *pheta*.



Waghya Murali Dance 1

Lavani is another such dance. Its name is derived from the Sanskrit word *lavanya*, which means 'beauty'. Its performance features highly romantic emotions.



Waghya Murali Dance 2

The Povada dance, on the other hand, features the heroic events associated with the life of Chhatrapati Shivaji.

In contrast to these, the Waghya Murali dance, associated with Lord Khandoba, generates great devotional fervour.

The Koli dance associated with the fishing community of Maharashtra is equally popular. In this dance, both male and female performers portray the movements of the waves and the casting of nets into the sea for fishing.

Music

The tradition of classical music in Maharashtra is often traced to the 13th century CE, when Sharanga

Dev composed his famous treatise, the *Sangit Ratnakara*. This tradition has since given birth to many musical legends amongst whom the most notable are Pandit Jasraj, Lata Mangeshkar and Kishori Amonkar.



Marathi women singing folk song

Another form of music that is still in vogue in Maharashtra is *natya sangeet*. Narayanrao Rajhauns, also known as Bal Gandharava, is one of its most celebrated exponents.

Folk music is also form an important part of the State's musical tradition and includes *bhajans, kirtans, lalitas, abhanga vanis, tumbadi, powada, bharuds* and *gondhals*. Apart from these, *Bhaleris* (farm songs) and *palane* (lullabies) are also quite popular.

Besides, Maharashtra is also well-known for its rich tradition in theatres. The notable early theatre personalities of the State are Vishnu Das Bhawe, who used amorous and tragic themes, and Sangeet Sharada, who pioneered social drama in Marathi. Today, theatre continues to have a marked presence in cities like Mumbai and Pune with an educated loyal audience base. Its wide repertoire includes social plays, farces, historical plays as well as serious drama. Marathi playwrights such as Vijay Tendulkar, P.L. Deshpande, Mahesh Elkunchwar and Satish Alekar have influenced the theatre movement throughout India. Commercial theatres like the Prithvi theatre have also been contributing to the cultural life in the State in significant ways.

Similarly, Maharashtra has emerged as the prime location for films making in India. Mumbai, known popularly as the Bollywood, is also a prime centre, where popular television serials and music albums are produced on a regular basis. The Marathi film industry, well-known for its art films and acclaimed directors like Dadasaheb Phalke and V. Shantaram is also located here. The Dadasaheb Phalke Award is India's highest award in cinema. It is given annually by the Government of India for lifetime contribution to Indian cinema.

VISUAL ARTS

Maharashtra is famous for several historically important monuments, which represent its artistic and architectural traditions and heritage. Below are given some of those landmark monuments.

Ajanta Caves, Aurangabad: These are some of the oldest rock-cut caves in the country dating back to the 2nd century BCE. These Buddhist caves are specially known for their exquisite mural paintings.

Ellora Caves, Aurangabad: These caves feature Hindu, Buddhist and Jain monuments dating back to the 6th century CE. Cave 16 here specially attracts attention for the Kaliashnath Temple, which is the single largest rock-excavated monolithic structure in the world.

Bibi ka Maqbara, Aurangabad: It is the only example of Mughal architecture of its kind in the Deccan. It was built in 1679 by Aurangzeb's son as a replica of the famous Taj Mahal in Agra.

Gateway of India, Mumbai: This Gateway, built in 1924 to welcome King George V and Queen Mary, represents a fine example of the Indo-Sarcenic style of architecture in India.



Ajanta-Ellora Caves



Kailashnath Temple, Ellora Caves



Bibi ka Maqbara



Gateway of India

Vijaydurga Fort, Sindhudurg: Among the many forts built by Chhatrapati Shivaji, this fort stands out for its magnificence. Located in the Konkan region, this fort features sweet water reservoirs, a hidden



passage, temples dedicated to Lord Shiva and a shrine dedicated to Shivaji built by his son Rajaram.

Shaniwar Wada, Pune: It was built in 1746 as a residence for the Peshwas. Presently, its attractions are its gates and the lotus fountain, which represent the architectural styles of that time.



Vijaydurga Fort, Sindhudurg



Shaniwarwada, Pune

Crafts

The excellence of the Maharashtrian craftspersons are seen in the weaving of *mashru* and *himroo*, the distinctive fabrics which were once used by the nobles and appeared like gold cloth. The same expertise is also seen in the weaving of the *paithani* and the *narayan peth sarees*. *Bidriware* is another well-appreciated craft of the State besides the hand-made leather *chappals* and sandals from Kolhapur. Kolhapur is also famous for its jewellery. *Kolhapuri saaj* (necklace) is specially a favourite with the women of Maharashtra.

Apart from these, the hand paintings drawn by the women of the Warli tribe on the mud walls of their houses are also quite famous. These are often compared with the well-known Madhubani paintings of Bihar.



Paithani saree



Warli painting



Kolhapuri chappals

Places of Cultural Importance in Maharashtra

Temple of Mahadev, Old Mahabaleshwar: Located in the Western Ghats, Mahabaleshwar is a famous hill station in Maharashtra. The Krishna river originates here in the form of a stream from a spout, which looks like the mouth of a cow. This ancient temple of Lord Shiva is situated here.

Solapur: The place is famous for the Siddeshwar Temple, which was built in the 16th century CE. The temple is visited by an average of 35 lakh pilgrims ever year.

Khandala: The ancient rock-cut caves of Karla and Bhaja are situated here. The place is also famous for its rock formations and cliffs. Another worth visiting spot here is the Bhushi Lake.

Nashik: The place is famous for the Kumbh Mela, which is held once in every 12 years.



Nashik Kumbh Mela

CONTEMPORARY CULTURAL DEVELOPMENTS

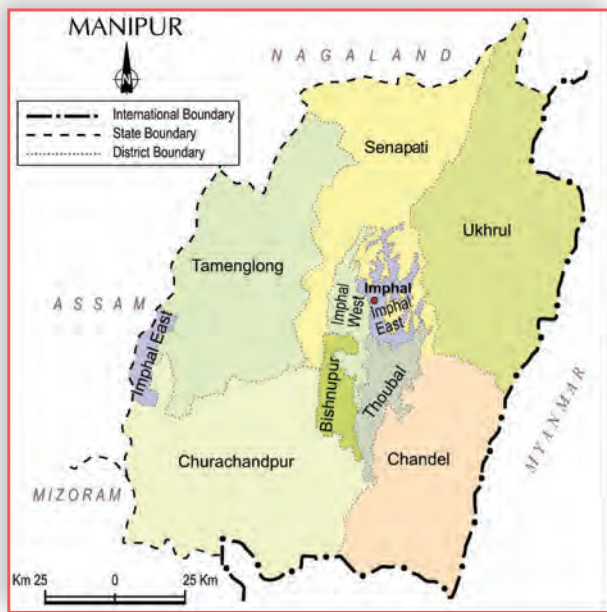
Like most other parts of India, Maharashtra represents a unique blend of traditional and modern cultures. Besides, it is also a veritable cultural melting pot. This is seen in the co-existence of people of all faiths, customs and traditions in the State.

The Sea Link, the sky scappers, the busy corporate board-rooms, reflect the fast-paced modern lifestyles of the people living here. But amidst this march of modernity, the quintessential Maharashtrian never lapses into oblivion. This is seen in the celebrations of the Elephanta Festival, the Ellora Festival, the Kalidasa Festival and the Palkhi Festival. This is also experienced in the projection of the country's soft power through art and cinema.

Maharashtra, indeed, stands for what India is today and what it will be tomorrow.



MANIPUR



Manipur, which literally means ‘The Land of Jewels’, is situated on the north-eastern border of India, between 23.80° and 25.68° north latitudes and 93.03° and 94.78° east longitudes. On its north, west and south-west, it shares borders with Nagaland, Assam and Mizoram respectively. And, on the eastern and southern fronts, it shares an approximately 352 kilometres long international border with Myanmar.

With a long political history that is often traced back to 33 CE, Manipur became the 20th State of the Indian Union in 1972. Consisting of two topographical zones, namely, the small oval shaped plain in the central part called ‘Imphal Valley’ and the surrounding hills, it covers an area of 22,327 square

kilometres. Out of this the latter occupies almost 20,126 kilometres. While Meiteis, who are mostly Hindus and speak Manipuri, dwell in the valley, the hills are inhabited by tribes like the Puram or Chote, the Tangkhul, the Sanamahi, the Paite, the Baite or Thadou, the Mao-Maram, the Chiru, the Vaiphei, the Hmar, the Kom, the Maring and the Monsang. In terms of their linguistic affiliation, these tribes are categorised into three groups, namely, the Naga-Bodo group, the Eastern Naga group and the Kuki-Chin group. The Tangkhuls were the first to adopt Christianity. Most other tribes have since followed suit.

Economically, agriculture and allied activities are the primary occupations of nearly 70 per cent of the State’s population. With the Loktak Lake as its main source of water, the Imphal Valley has remained its ‘Rice Bowl’. This lake, connected to the Manipur River, is the largest freshwater lake in north-east India.

Situated in Bishnupur district, the Loktak Lake is known for its circular floating swamps called *phumdis*. Similarly, the hills of Manipur covered

<i>Fact Sheet</i>	
<i>State Day</i>	21 January
<i>Geographical Area</i>	22,327 km ²
<i>Capital</i>	Imphal
<i>Official Language</i>	Manipuri
<i>State Animal</i>	Sangai (Brow-antlered deer)
<i>State Bird</i>	Mrs. Hume’s pheasant
<i>State Flower</i>	Siroy Lily
<i>State Tree</i>	Indian Mahogany





Loktak Lake



Siroy Lily

with wet, temperate and pine forests, host varieties of rare plants, animal species and wonderful orchids. Siroy Lily, found on the hill-tops of Siroy hill in Ukhrul district, is one such orchid. Since 21 March 1989, it has been adopted as the state flower of Manipur. The Department of Posts under the Ministry of Communications, Government of India, has also released a postal stamp to celebrate this flower.

CULTURAL SPECIFICITIES

Language

Manipuri, locally known as Meiteilon, is the official language of the State. Although it is spoken mainly by the people of the valley, yet it also serves the purpose of a link language amongst all other communities. The language is also the principal medium of instruction at all stages of education. Especially, the dialect spoken in the Imphal region is considered as the most standard form of speech of this language in comparison to its other dialects such as Kakching, Sekmai, Andro, Phayeng, Kwatha, and Thanga.

Early Manipuri literature was consisted of ritual hymns, cosmogony and histories in the forms of folktales in both prose and poetry. Some examples of these works like *Panthoibi Khongul*, *Nongshaba Laihui*, *Sakok Lairamlen* and *Poireiton Khunthokpa* (prehistories in prose from the 3rd century CE) and *Numit Kappa*, *Ougri*, *Khicho*, *Sana Lamoak* (poetries from the 6th–7th centuries CE) are still extant. However, the definitive history of writing in Manipuri goes back to the 11th century CE. The *Loiyamba Shinyen* or the written constitution of Manipur (*Meitrabak*) is dated to this time. The *Chitharon Kumpaba* or the Royal Chronicle from the time of Meidingu Thangwai Ningthouba (1467–1508 CE) until the end of Meidingu Bodhachandra's kingship

(1941–1955 CE) is another proof of the rich literary tradition of the Manipuri language. During this long period, the 18th century CE especially marked a turning point as Vaishnavism occupied the centrestage in Manipur under the royal patronage of King Meidingu Pamheiba (1709–1748 CE) and Vaishnavite works enriched the State's literature. Thereafter, with the advent of the British in the late 19th century CE, the Bengali script came to be used for writing Manipuri. Magazines and newspapers were also published and the Manipuri literature come to witness efflorescence in all its domains. The Manipuri writers, who made a mark from then on are Arambam Dorendrajit Singh, Laishram Samarendra Singh, H. Guno Singh and Pacha Meetei. In the midst of all this, however, efforts have been going on to bring back the original script of the language.



Laishram Samarendra Singh

Dress

The traditional dresses of the Manipuri women, which differ from occasion to occasion, generally comprise *Innaphi* (an exquisitely woven shawl used to wrap the upper body), *Phanek* (a handwoven cloth wrapped around the waist like a skirt), *Mayek Naibi* (a special type of *Phanek* with horizontal stripes), *Kanap Phanek* (a stitched traditional Meitei skirt), *Lai-Phi* (a beautiful yellow bordered white cloth) and *Chin-Phi* (a fully embroidered *Phanek*). In comparison, the dresses of the Manipuri men are rather simple. Usually they wear a jacket, a turban and a *dhoti* or *pheijom*. They had two very important costumes in the past,

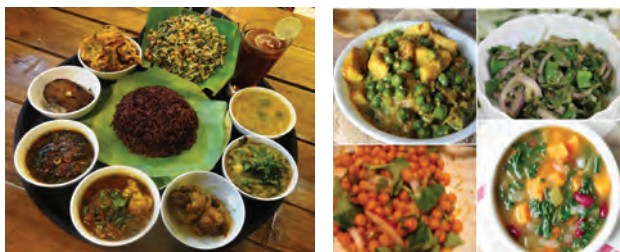
namely, *Ningthoupee*. (the traditional costume of the Kings) and *Zamphie*. (the traditional costume of the warriors). These are no longer in use. However, men belonging to the upper strata of the society wear a special *dhoti* called, *Khamen Chapta*. In yester years, the kings used to honour people with this *dhoti*.



Traditional attire of Manipuri men and women

Food

Food in Manipur generally consists of rice, vegetables, salad, soup, curry, fish and meat. These are usually boiled or steamed as very little use of oil is preferred. However, chillies are a favourite with them. The *Umarok* chilli of Manipur is specially famous. Besides, a number of herbs like *Maroi* (family of herbs), *Nakupi* (Garlic leaf), *Sadigom* (coriander leaf), *Mayangmaton* (tulsi), *Nungsi-Hidak* (mint) are also used by the people while cooking their food. *Heiri Bok*, a scented lemon found in Manipur, is also used for aroma with all types of food. It is common for people to grow vegetables



Manipuri Festive Food Thali

Manipuri Breakfast

and herbs in their own kitchen gardens. Table 1 lists some of the popular dishes of Manipur. —

Table 1

Kangsoi	A vegetable soup
Eeronba	A combination of vegetable, potato and fermented fish
Ooti	Vegetables or bamboo shoots with <i>dal</i> (a lentil broth) and rice
Hawaii	A type of <i>dal</i>
Paknam	A spiced cake made from lentil powder.
Ngri	A type of dried fish preparation
Nga Atoiba thumba	Fish cut to small pieces and cooked with a thick gravy of vegetables
Nga Aiyaba	Another type of dried fish preparation

FAIRS AND FESTIVALS

In Manipur hardly a month passes by without a festival being celebrated. These festivals remove the monotony of life by providing opportunities for physical, mental and emotional recreations. Below are listed some of the important festivals of the State.

Gaan-Ngai, celebrated for five consecutive days in the month of *Wakching* (December/January), is an important festival of the Kabui Nagas. It opens with a religious ceremony on the first day and continues for the remaining days with common feasts, dances and presentation of gifts. *Lui-Ngai-Ni* is another collective festival of the Nagas observed on the 15th day of February every year. This festival is associated with the sowing of seeds and features



Chumphu Festival



social gatherings, singing of songs and dancing. Similarly, among the Tangkhul Nagas, *Chumpha* is a great festival. It is celebrated for seven days in the month of December after the harvest. The last three days of this festival are devoted to social gathering and rejoicing ending with a mass procession within the village of celebration. Unlike other festivals, women play a prominent role in it.

Kut is an autumnal festival celebrated by the Chin-Kuki-Mizo (CHIKIM) people. It is known by different names in different places, but the spirit of the celebration remains the same everywhere as it is also celebrated as a thanksgiving festival for a good harvest. The modern *Kut* is observed on the 1st of November every year.

Among the Meiteis, *Sanamahi Cheng Hongba* is an important ritual festival. It is celebrated every year on the full moon day of the Manipuri month of *Inga* (June/July). On this occasion people offer rice and other food items to the deity, *Sanamahi* for a good monsoon during the year. The celebration takes place at Kangla, the ancient seat of power of the rulers of Manipur. Besides, the rituals are also observed by the people in their houses.

Another important social festival among the Meities is *Ningol Chakkouba* in which married women are invited to their parental homes for family reunion. This is observed on the second day of the new moon in the Manipuri month of *Hiyangei* (October/November).

Hiyang Tannaba or the 'Boat Race' is also quite popular among the Meiteis. It is generally held in the month of November at the Thangapat (Moat). The boats called, *Hiyang Hiren* are thought to have spiritual power and it is believed that their worship will prevent evil omens. In this race, the rowers wear traditional dresses and head-gears. Similar races are also conducted during spells of natural calamity.

Apart from the above, a number of festivals associated with religion, are also observed in the State. Among them, *Yaoshang* or *Dol Jatra* is regarded as a premier festival of Manipur. It is celebrated for five days commencing from the full-moon day of *Phalgun* (February/March). *Thabal Chongba* (a folk dance) is

performed during this festival.

Lai-Haraoba is another popular festival, which is associated with the worship of traditional deities and ancestors. Among them, the most famous is Thangjing, the ruling deity of Moirang. The festival is celebrated in his honour during the month of April/May and attracts huge gatherings.

Cheiraoba or the Manipuri New Year is celebrated during the Manipuri month of *Sajibu* (March/April). On this day, people clean and decorate their houses and prepare special dishes, which are first offered to various deities. Also as a part of the ritual associated with this festival, people climb the nearest hill-top in the belief that it will enable them to rise to greater heights in the worldly life.

Ratha Jatra is another important festival of the Hindus of Manipur. It is celebrated for 10 days in the Manipuri month of *Ingen* (June/July). During this festival Lord Jagannath leaves his temple in a car, locally known as *Kang*, which is pulled by pilgrims, who vie with each other for the honour.

Heikru Hidongba is also a festival with religious significance for the Hindus. It is observed in the month of September. In this festival, long, narrow boats are rowed by a large number of rowers along a 16-metre wide moat. An idol of Vishnu is installed on the eastern side of this moat before the commencement of the race.

Kwak Jatra, associated with the worship of Goddess Durga, is also celebrated in the State every year in the month of October representing the victory of righteousness over evil.

Among the Muslims of Manipur, the most popular festivals are Ramzan and Id-ul Fitir. Similarly, the Christians also celebrate the Christmas with all traditional fervour associated with it.

Finally, a festival called *Mera Houchongba* is a festival celebrated every year during the Manipuri month of *Mera* (October) to promote peace and solidarity amongst all communities living in the State. During this occasion, people from different communities living in the hills as well as the plains bring goods available in their areas for exchange with each other at the Kangla.

PERFORMING ARTS

Dance and Music

Manipur is known for its highly lyrical and stylised dance forms. Even the State’s martial arts are recognised for their almost poetic renditions. The principal male and female dancers are known as *Amaibas* and *Amaibeas* (in short, *Maibas* and *Maibeas*). Table 2, given below, lists some of the well-known dances of Manipur.



Pung Cholom Performer



Maharas Purnima Festival

Table 2

Dance	Description
Thang-Ta	It is a traditional martial art of the State. The name is derived from two words, <i>Thang</i> (meaning ‘sword’) and <i>Ta</i> (meaning ‘spear’). Its performance combines both rhythm and vigour providing a thrilling spectacle. Both men and women take part in its performance.
Kartal Cholom or Cymbal Dance	It is normally performed by male artists using cymbals and wearing white <i>pheijom</i> or <i>dhoti</i> and spherical turbans. The artists sing and dance to the rhythm of <i>Pung</i> or <i>Mridanga</i> (two-sided drum).
Lai-Haraoba	An important form of performing arts of Manipur is <i>Khamba-Thoibi</i> . It is a duet performance by male and female dancers. This dance along with the <i>Maibi</i> (priestess) and other dances form the <i>Lai Haraoba</i> dance.
Jagoi	The legend of Shiva dancing with Parvati in this region beside a lake, nestling among the hills and lit by the sparkle of the ‘mani’ (gem) on the forehead of Shiva’s serpent, inspires this dance form. Performed by the followers of Saivism and the Shakti cult, this has also led to other ritualistic dances dedicated to Lord Shiva, Nongponkningthu, Parvati and Panthoibi.
Raas-leela or Raslila	It is the epitome of Manipuri classical dance and reveals both the sublime and the transcendental love between Radha and Krishna and the Gopis’ devotion towards the Lord. These dances are generally performed at night in a <i>mandap</i> (platform) in front of a temple and watched with deep devotion. In the temple of Shree Govindjee at Imphal, Raslilas are performed on the nights of <i>Basanta Purnima</i> , <i>Sarad Purnima</i> and <i>Kartik Purnima</i> . Usually, these performances combine all the three variants of the dance, namely, solo, duet and group. Apart from their sublimity and grace, the richness of the costumes of the performers also add to the luster of these performances.
Thabal Chongba	This is a kind of Manipuri folk dance, where both men and women hold hands together to sing and dance in a circle.
Kabui Naga Dance	This is a kind of community dance performed separately by men and women. In its all-men form, the men dressed in red wraps with traditional designs over white trousers and their heads adorned with large feathers and chests covered with ornaments of shells and beads dance joyously on the occasion of the Gan Ngai festival that is celebrated in December–January. In the all-women form of the dance, the women perform in sitting position with their arms making abstract patterns in the air and on the ground singing all through by themselves.
Tandan Pheichak	This is a harvest dance performed by the Kabui Nagas to propitiate the Goddess of harvest.
Lai Chingthokpa to Hakchang Shaba	These are sequential dances which begin with an invocation to the spirits of Gods and Goddesses who lie in the waters. Then follow the showcasing of different stages of life from the birth to death. These are depicted only through movements with no accompanying narration as the images of the deity Pakhangba are drawn in space.



VISUAL ARTS

Monuments

The architectural style of Manipur is discernible in the construction of the Shree shree Govindjee Temple. This temple, adjacent to the palace of the former rulers of Manipur in Imphal, is a sacred place of worship for the Vaisnavites. It is a simple and beautiful structure with twin gold domes, a paved courtyard and a large congregation hall. The presiding deities, Radha-



Govindjee Temple

Govinda are flanked by idols of Balaram and Krishna on one side and Jaganath, Balabhadra and Subhadra on the other. Likewise, the conical temple of Lord Vishnu built in 1467 during the reign of King Kyamba at Bisnupur, located 27 kilometers away from Imphal on the Tiddim Road, stands testimony to Manipur's the then architectural heritage, which was influenced by the Chinese style. The imposing Shaheed Minar located in the Bir Tikendrajit Park in Imphal is another impressive structure, which commemorates the indomitable spirit of Manipuri martyrs who sacrificed their lives while fighting against the British in 1891. Similarly, Langthabal, a small hillock situated 6 kilometers from Imphal on the Indo-Myanmar road, retains the relics of an old historical palace, well-planned temples and ceremonial houses reminding visitors of the State's architectural past. Sekta Mound, locally known as *Sekta Kei*, is another historically important archaeological site, which preserves the evidence of secondary burial.

Handicrafts

Manipur is the largest producer of bamboo products after Tripura in the entire north-eastern region. Bamboos, grown abundantly in Churachandpur, Jiribam, Tamenglong and Imphal districts are thus used extensively to make sofa sets, mats, various type of baskets, trays, chairs, tables, flower vases, ashtrays and other decorative and utility articles.



Cane and Bamboo Crafts

Imphal valley of Manipur is also an important centre of *kauna* craft. It's most well-known product is a unique double-weave mat called, *kaunaphak*. *Phak*, yellow in colour, is the succulent stem of a plant that grows in water. These stems are carefully chosen to make mats, chairs, cushions, coasters, bags and *moorahs* (low stools).

Similarly, wood carving is a popular craft in Manipur. Its main products are wooden trays, spoons and drums.

However, the most important craft of Manipur is weaving. It is a household industry as coarse cotton and silk clothes are woven using domestic looms. Cotton yarn imported in large quantities are first dyed in red, yellow, green, orange, black and pink and then woven with artistic designs. The craft is popularly known as *Laichamphi*, which means cotton cloth.



An owl carved from wood



A Manipuri woman demonstrating weaving techniques

Manipur craft persons also make dolls and toys from cotton, clay, wood and bamboo. These products clothed in traditional outfits have a charm of their own. Often the dolls include characters like Radha and Krishna. The toys include different types of stylized animals and birds.



Dolls and Toys

Hand embroidery is another popular craft practiced by both men and women in Manipur. Tablecloths, bed-covers, shawls, handkerchiefs and various other items are made in this way portraying legendary figures and beautiful motifs of birds and animals.

CONTEMPORARY CULTURAL DEVELOPMENTS

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru once called Manipur “A Jewel of India”. It indeed is a sparkling jewel that is

continuing to progress as time passes by. A marker of this progress is witnessed in the field of sports. The Khuman Lampak Sports Complex at Imphal, which houses all the major stadia in one complex, has produced a number of world-class sportspersons. Similarly, the *Sagol Kangjei* of Manipur has been adapted worldwide by the enthusiasts of this sport as Polo. Besides, the State is also making advances in the fields of arts and tourism adding energy and prosperity to the lives of the people. An example of it is the setting up of a cultural complex in the town of Andro, which showcases the potteries of the north-eastern region besides having a Doll House wherein dolls representing the 34 recognised tribes of the State are displayed. However, all this is not happening at the cost of the traditions and culture of the State. Rather, these advances are contributing to the preservation and propagation of those time-honoured traditions and the culture of the State.

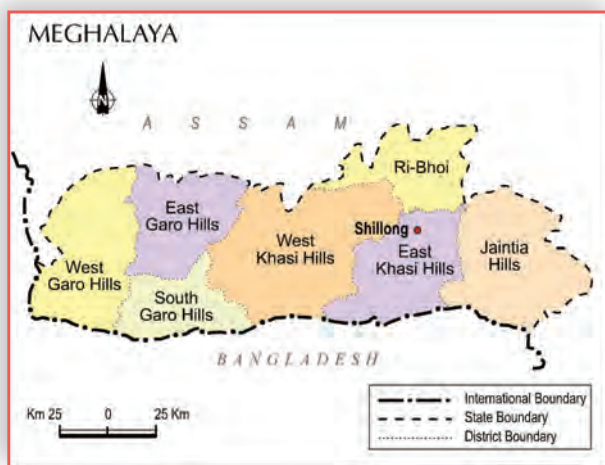


Glimpses of Sangai Festival, 2017





MEGHALAYA



The word ‘Meghalaya’, made up of two terms — ‘megh’ meaning ‘cloud’ and ‘alaya’ meaning ‘abode’ in Sanskrit—means the ‘Abode of the Clouds’. As it suggests, the State is well-known for receiving the highest rainfall in India. Archaeological evidence conforming to the Neolithic Age prove the existence of human inhabitation in Meghalaya since ancient times. However, the rich history of Meghalaya and its cultural diversity has been largely wrought by the Khasi, the Jaintia and the Garo tribal groups, who are the principal inhabitants of the State. At present, the Khasis inhabit in the central part of the State while the Jaintias (or Pnars) and the Garos reside in its eastern and western parts respectively. In modern times, Meghalaya came under British occupation in 1872. They established its headquarters in Cherrapunji but later shifted it to Shillong. After Independence, Meghalaya, consisting of only two districts, remained a part of

Assam. Subsequently, a movement was launched demanding a separate Hill State for the people from 1960. Finally, it was conferred full statehood on 21 January 1972 by an Act of the Parliament of India with Shillong as its capital.

Essentially a hilly State, Meghalaya is spread over an area of 22,429 square kilometres and lies between 24°57’ and 26°10’ north latitudes and 80°46’ and 92°53’ east longitudes. It is bounded on the north and east by Assam and shares borders to its south and west with Bangladesh. The only airport in the State is at Umroi, 35 kilometres away from Shillong.

CULTURAL SPECIFICITIES

The three major tribes of Meghalaya as mentioned earlier are the Khasis, the Jaintias and the Garos. Though different culturally, they share the trait of matrilineal descent in common. The Khasis and Jaintias are also collectively called ‘Hynniewtrep’ or the ‘children of seven huts’. Originally, they are believed to be of the Mon-khmer Austro-Asian stock whereas the ancestry of the Garos is traced to the Tibeto-Burman stock. Apart from these three, several minor ethnic groups

<i>Fact Sheet</i>	
<i>State Day</i>	21 January
<i>Geographical Area</i>	22,429 km ²
<i>Capital</i>	Shillong
<i>Official Language</i>	English
<i>State Animal</i>	Clouded Leopard
<i>State Bird</i>	Hill Myna
<i>State Flower</i>	Lady Slipper Orchid
<i>State Tree</i>	White Teak

like the Lalung, Mizo-Biate, Karbi, Boro, Koche, Hajong, Rabha and Dalu also reside in the State.

Language

The official language of the State is English. However, the tribes of Meghalaya speak different languages. The most important among those are the Khasi, Jaintia and Garo languages.

Linguists, who have studied the Khasi and Jaintia languages, appear to have identified these as Austro-Asiatic languages belonging to the Mon-Khmer family. On the other hand, the Garo language belongs to the Bodo-Garo branch of the Tibeto-Burman language family.

Though the Khasis make up one community yet they speak in different dialects. These dialects vary from one territorial zone to another and include *Maram*, *Amwi*, *Bhoi*, *War*, *Lyngngam*, *Langrin*, *Shella*, *Mawchang*, *Rambrai*, *Mawsynram*, *Jirang*, *Marskiun*, *Nongsken*, *Nongjri*, *Mawsiangei*, *Wahsiej* and several others. These dialects have been handed down orally from one generation to another.

Similarly, the Garo language, which has some similarities with Boro-Kachari, Rave, Dimasa, and Kok-Borok languages, has many dialects. Some of those are *A beng* or *Am beng*, *Merabeng*, *Atong*, *Me gam*, *Matchi*, *Dual* (*Matchi-Dual*), *Ruga*, *Chibok*, *Chisak*, *Gara*, *Gan ching*, (*Gara-Gan ching*) and *A we*.

Dress

Like indigenous people elsewhere, in Meghalaya too, the Khasi, the Jaintia and the Garo people adorn themselves with their own traditional dresses.

Among the Khasis, the female dress consists of *Jainpien* (a one piece, ankle length, wrap around cloth), *Ka Sopti Kti* (a long sleeved velvet blouse), *Ka Sem Poh* (a cloth worn under the left arm, across the chest and back), *Ka Jainsem Dhara* (a long, woven silk cloth). *Tapmoh khlieh* (a cloth worn over the shoulders like a cloak) and *Muga* (a silk cloth).

Similarly, the Khasi male dress includes *Jainspong* (a headgear or turban), *U Thuia* (a plume of black and white feathers fastened at the back of the turban), *Ka Jymphong* (a sleeveless coat), *ka Sopti*

Kti (a long-sleeved shirt), *ka Jainboh* (a one piece cloth worn as a *dhoti*) and *U Panpoh* (a waistband).

The Khasi women also wear a number of ornaments, which include *ka Pansngiat* (a crown made of silver or gold for adorning the head), *ka Lasubon* (a silver ornament with a bunch of flowers attached to it), *u Kanapad* (a neck rest known as *u Shan Ryndang*, made of gold), *u Kynjri Ksiar* (a long necklace made of gold), *Ka Paila* (a single-strand necklace made by stringing gold beads on it), *ka Sati Ksiar* (a finger ring made of gold), *u Sohskor* or *Khoila* or *Siar Kynthei* (earrings made of pure gold), *ka Khadu Syngkha* (bracelets made of pure gold), *Mahu* (silver armlets), *Kynjri Tabah* (silver chains) and *Taj* (silver armlets). They also keep a *Rumal* (lady's handkerchief).

In this regard, the Khasi men also do not remain far behind. They adorn themselves with *u Shan Ryndang* (neck rest), *u Kpieng* (a necklace), *u Kynjri Tabah* (a silver chain), *u Kynjri Syngkai* (a silver chain worn round the waist), *u Sohskor* (earrings), *ka Ryngkap* (a quiver), *u Symphiah* (whisk) and *ka Waitlam* (sword).

The Jaintia women wear *Jainpien*, *Ryndia* or *Khyrwang* (striped cloth in either black and white or black and maroon), *Jainsem muga* (a silk cloth), *Sopti mukmor* (a velvet blouse, mostly in red), *Dhara* (a silk cloth), *Thoh Saru* (an eri silk wrapper) and *Dhara Muga* (a muga silk cloth). As for ornaments, they wear earrings and rings, a gold pin called *langkyrneng*, silver earrings called *kyrla bhoi*, gold bracelets called *khadu* and silver bangles know as *syngkha*.



Garos traditional headgear



The Jaintia men, on the other hand, wear *Jain boh* (dhoti), *Tupia jain* (black cap), *Sopti poh lieh* (white shirt), waist coat, *Ryndia* (shawl) and *Jainspeng lieh* (white turban).

The traditional Garo female dress includes *Dakmanda* (one piece wrapper worn on the waist upto the ankles), *Ganna Kore Kinga and Reking* (petticoat), *Chinani* (shawl), *Chroko Ganna Dodok* (cloth piece worn across one arm) and *Kotip* (turban). The Garo women also wear ornaments like *Ripok Dokatchi* (necklace with stones, gems and emerald), *Rikgitok* (necklace of coral beads), *Rikgitchak* (necklace with various gems, ivory and metal bells), *Seng ki* (shell beads worn over the waist), *Bato Rengki* (Hairband), *Siliting* (silver chain with designs) and *Pilne* (headgear with cock's plume).

The Garo male dress, on the other hand, include *Gantap* (a wrapper worn above knee), *Genji Gisim* (black T-shirt), *Kotip Nokma* (silk turban), *Kotip* (turban), *Kadesil* (headgear), *Pandra* (cloth worn in a criss cross manner over the body), *Dome* (cock's plume) and *Kot* (coat). The Garo men also wear ornaments, which include *Jaksil* (brass armllets), *Rikmatchu* (coral beads necklace), *Konal* (tight silver necklace), *Naderong* (earrings), *Narikki* (earrings made of lead), *Milam* (doubled edged sword), *Seppi* (shield made of rhino skin) and *Rang* (brass gongs). However, in the present days, these traditional dresses and ornaments are worn mostly during special occasions like dances and festivals.

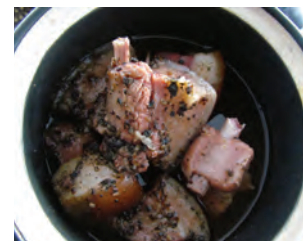
Food

The food habits of the Khasi and the Jaintia people are similar. It mainly consists of rice and other side dishes. A combination of rice (*Ja*) and meat (*doh*) cooked with ingredients such as chopped pieces of onion, a bit of yellow powder (turmeric) and salt is especially one of their favoured dishes. It is called *Jadoh*. When the rice is about to be ready, the ground ginger is added to it for taste and aroma.

Doh khlieh is another popular dish among the Khasis and the Jaintias. It is prepared by mixing pieces of boiled pork or chicken with ingredients



Jadoh



Dohneihong

such as freshly chopped onions, ginger, green chilies and salt.

The well-known traditional snacks consumed by the Khasis with tea are *Pumaloi*, *Putharo*, *Pukhleim*, and *Pu mithai*. These steamed items are prepared from powdered rice.

A popular condiment of the Jaintias is *tungrymbai*, which is made from fermented soyabean fried in lard with red ginger and black sesame seeds (*til*).

The Garos also prefer simple food. Usually they take rice with boiled meat and vegetables to which they add *kalchi*, a kind of alkaline condiment. Bamboo shoots are also extremely popular among them.

FAIRS AND FESTIVALS

The people of Meghalaya celebrate national and State-level festivals with equal fervour. However, some of their festivals stand out as special.

Ka Shad Nongkrem or Ka Pomblang Nongkrem

This is a popular festival as well as dance of the Khasis. It is held annually, usually in the month of November at the Iingsad, which is the residence of the traditional political Syiem (Chief) of the 'hima Khyrim' at Smit village of the East Khasi Hills district and lasts for five days. The festival is observed to honour the ancestors, the founder of the former 'hima Shyllong' and to invoke God's blessings for a good harvest and well being and prosperity of the Syiem's family along with the well-being of all the people of the 'hima'. Only girls take part in the dance that accompanies this festival wearing expensive silk costumes and costly gold and silver ornaments. The boys on this occasion, wearing ceremonial attires, with sword in one hand and a yak tail whisk in the other, dance round them to the piping of the flutes and the beating of drums.

Ka Shad Suk Mynsiem

This is another important festival of the Khasis. It literally means “dance of the joyful heart or happy soul”. As an integral part of their religion, they celebrate this festival to thank God for all the blessings He had bestowed on them in the past year and also to propitiate Him for further prosperity and happiness in the coming year.

This festival is held every year during the springtime, when the nature is in full bloom. Wearing costly costumes made from silk and muslin and ornaments of gold and silver to fit different parts of the body boys and girls perform six different types of dances, namely, *Shad Nalai*, *Shad Dum-Dum*, *Shad Klang*, *Shad Padiah*, *Shad Mastieh* and *Shad Wait* to the accompaniment of seven different tunes played with pipes and drums by musicians. Usually, the girls dance in the middle of the ground while the boys and the men dance around the ground, along the outer edge, encircling the girls. The slow changing movements of the girls can only be noticed by carefully watching and attentively listening to the whole performance. The movements of the men, on the other hand, are vigorous and energetic, which makes the changes in their performance easily perceptible.

Among the six types of dances, *Shad Mastieh* is more warlike in its presentation. Two groups of male dancers face each other from the opposite ends of the ground with their swords raised high. Each group moves towards the opposite end waving the swords in right hands and whisks on the other. After a few rounds they meet in the middle of the ground bowing to one another.



Ka Shad Suk Mynsiem dance



Khasi



Simsang Festival

Beh-dien-khlam

This is a major religious festival of the Jaintias. It literally means ‘driving away the plague with sticks’ as *beh* means ‘drive’, *dien* means ‘stick’ and *khlam* means ‘plague’ or ‘pestilence’. The festival is generally held during the month of July every year, at the end of the sowing period, to invoke God’s blessings for a good harvest and to drive away evil spirits, plague and pestilence from the land. It is especially celebrated by people, who still adhere to the indigenous faith, *Niam-tre*.

Chad Laho

This is another popular traditional dance-festival of the Jaintias. It is celebrated as a thanksgiving festival to God after the harvesting season. In the dance that accompanies this festival, each of the female dancers dance being flanked by two male dancers, one to her right and the other to her left.

Similarly, *Chad Sukra* is a traditional Jaintia festival connected with the sowing of seeds. It is held annually in different parts of the Jaintia Hills during the month of April. It is especially observed by people, who still follow the *Niam-tre* faith, with the conviction that before they set foot on their fields for cultivation prayers should be offered to God for his protection of crops from any type of natural calamity.

Besides, *Chad Pliang* or ‘plate dance’ is also a popular dance of the Jaintias. It is performed by women, who carry plates either in their hands or on heads or in mouths while dancing. The dance, performed whenever there is an occasion, is usually accompanied by folk songs and music.



Wangala

This is the most popular festival among the Garos. This is celebrated after harvest to thank Misi Saljong, the ‘Sun God’ and Mini-ma Kiri Rokime, the ‘Goddess of Grains’. This festival is usually celebrated in the month of October or November accompanied by customary rituals, merry making, and dancing for seven consecutive days and nights or till food and drinks last. Dressed in the best of their traditional attires and ornaments, both the young and old males and females in the Garo villages heartily take part in this festival.

The dances mainly performed during this festival are *Ajema Roa*, *Mi Su A*, *Chambil Moa*, *Do Kru Sua*, *Chame Mikkang Kia*, *Kambe Toa*, *Gawang Roa* and *Napseprika*. However, the Wangala or the ‘100-drum festival’ of Asanang near Tura in the West Garo Hills is the most spectacular of all. Beautiful Garo girls called *nomil* and handsome boys called *pante* take part in this festival with great enthusiasm. On this occasion, the *pantes* beat a long drum called *dama* in groups and play bamboo flute. The *nomils* with colourful costumes dance to the tune of *dama* and the accompanying folk songs in a circle. Most of these folk songs depict everyday Garo life, the beauty of nature, their day to day struggles, romance, human aspirations and also seek God’s blessings.

Apart from these, the Garos also celebrate festivals like *Gal mak Goa* and *Agalmaka*.

VISUAL ARTS AND CRAFTS

The people of Meghalaya have made a mark for themselves in handicrafts. They prepare many cane and bamboo products like baskets, mats, hats, *moorahs*, headgears, trays, fans, combs, pipes, chairs, utensils, knives and umbrellas. *Meghum khoks* (baskets) are a special product of the Garo Hills. The Khasis also make various utility baskets. Their other popular handmade



Cane Craft

products are mouth organs, tobacco pipes, flutes, cup violins and varieties of weapons used in day-to-day activities and dances. The Khasis are also famous for making *Tlieng* (a special kind of cane mat) and *Meghum khoks* (artistic baskets). They use bamboo and cane extensively to make houses as well. They decorate the smoking pipes with various colours. The Garos weave attractive bed sheets and table covers. The Jaintias and Khasis also make different kinds of gold and other jewellery. They make a special type of necklace called *Rigitok* using thin fluted stems of glass strung together with fine threads. They also prepare clay utensils, dolls and toys for their use in various festivals and religious functions. *Sohmarih* or pineapple fibres, are also used to make varieties of fishing nets, belts, purses, handbags and mats. The exquisite bamboo and cane products as well as wood carvings are mostly made in particular seasons. The hand woven traditional dresses of these tribes are also very attractive.

CONTEMPORARY CULTURAL DEVELOPMENTS

Meghalaya, adopting various schemes in recent years, has been able to achieve high literacy rate as well as reduce the difference between the male and the female literacy ratio. Various schemes have also been launched to preserve the traditional arts and culture and at the same time make these contemporary. This has brought material benefits to the craftspersons of the State apart from making its arts and crafts reach a larger customer base. There is also active participation in different State and national level festivals apart from promoting tourist places such as Double Decker Living Root Bridge, Umiam Lake and Nohkalikai Falls. Besides, the annual Ahaia Winter Festival, conceptualised in 2008, is organised to promote the Garo Hills as a popular tourist destination. This three-day festival is a gala event with carnivals, cultural shows, food festival, rock concert, wine festival, angling competition, ethnic wear competition, children’s fancy dress, DJ nite, exhibitions and ‘housie housie’ and other games. The entry forms for the carnival and other events are available at the Tourist Office, Tura.



MIZORAM



21 major hill ranges, Mizoram has an endless variety of landscape rich in flora and fauna. Its agro-climatic conditions, having both temperate and semi-tropical climates, are also conducive to a wide variety of crops. Similarly, the two main rivers, Thawng (Dhaleswari) and Kolodyne (Chintuipui) with their tributaries make sufficient water available for irrigation. Thus, horticulture, floriculture and agriculture have become the mainstays of nearly 70 per cent of the State's population. Consequently, much of their culture revolve around these activities.

CULTURAL SPECIFICITIES

The culture of Mizoram reflects the traditional ethos and contemporary lifestyles of the Mizos, a term which literally means the 'people of the hills'. It is a generic term and stands for several tribes and sub-tribes. Of those, the major tribes are the Lushai, the Ralte, the Hmar, the Paite and the Pawl. Besides, Mizoram is also inhabited by a number of other ethnic communities like the Thode, the Kuki, the Lakher, who are culturally much akin to the Mizos.

One of the fascinating aspects of the Mizo society is *hnatlang*. It means 'working together'. The

Mizoram, meaning 'land of the hill people', is a mountainous State situated in the north-eastern part of India. Following the signing of the historic Memorandum of Settlement between the Government of India and the Mizo National Front in 1986, it was granted statehood on 20th February 1987. It shares long international borders with Myanmar on the south and the east and Bangladesh on the west. Within India, it shares borders with Tripura, Assam and Manipur. Territorially, it occupies an area of 21,087 square kilometres with only a population of 10.97 lakh making it a State with the third lowest population density in India (about 50 per square kilometre) as per the Census of 2011.

Bestowed with lush forests with bamboo trees, immaculate waterfalls, crystal clear lakes and

Fact Sheet	
State Day	20 February
Geographical Area	21,087 km ²
State Capital	Aizawl
Official Languages	Mizo, English, Hindi
State Animal	Hillock Gibbon
State Bird	Mrs. Hame's pheasant
State Flower	Red Vanda
State Tree	Iron Wood



practice helps the Mizos to remain a close-knit society. It also helps in ensuring that there is no discrimination on the grounds of class and gender among the Mizos.



Community participation in a festival

They live like a big family and celebrate the birth of a child or a marriage together in the community. The whole village also mourns, when a person dies.

Zawlbuk, a place near the chief's home, serves as a 'bachelor house', where the young people of the community get the lessons of life and society.

Language

Mizo, also known as Lushai, is the official language of Mizoram and is spoken by the majority of its people. In 19th century, the Christian missionaries introduced the Roman script for this language. Since then it has become the medium of formal education in the State.

Mizo belongs to Sino-Tibetan family of languages. After the introduction of the Roman script, the first book in Mizo language named, *Mizo zir Tir Bu* was published in 1896. Thereafter, several litterateurs have contributed to the development of the Mizo literature. The most prominent among those litterateurs are Thangliana (folktales), Liangkhaia (Mizo history, ancient chants and festive songs), Awithangpa (famous for his beautiful poems and innovative expressions) and Ch. Pasena and Chawngzic (dramatists). Besides, Mizos also have a rich religious literature in the form of sacred chants, which are used by two types of priests, namely, Bawlpu and Sadâwt. Prominent individuals from the State like Nuchhungi Renthlei Lalthangfala Salio and Lalzuia Colney have also received *Padma* awards for their works in the field of literature.

Dress

The traditional attires of the people of Mizoram are simple and yet colourful with intricate designs which have become a part of their cultural identity.

The Mizo women usually wear *Puan*. It comes in white and black shades with the latter made of synthetic fur. The Mizo girls wear *Puanchei* with *Kawrechi*, which is a handwoven cotton blouse. Among the Lushais, the women wear include a blue skirt made of cotton, a white jacket, an additional cloth to wrap around and a headgear made of coloured bass and cane. The unmarried Lushai girls wear *Zakuolaisen*, a blouse with crimson coloured stripes, and after marriage, they wear *Puon Pie*, a quilt-like woven cloth, especially at the time of leaving the parents' house for the in-laws'.



Mizo men, on the other hand, do not have much variation in their dress. They usually prefer to wear a long piece of cloth (about 7 feet long and 5 feet wide) with a white coloured coat. The sleeves of this coat come with white and red bands along with other decorative designs. In summer, they wear a turban to protect themselves from Sun with a band tied around the waist while in the winter they put on an extra piece of cloth to wrap their upper body.



Traditional attires of Mizoram

Apart from the above, the Mizos also have clothing common for both men and women, which include *Ngotekherh* (a traditional *puan*), *Hmaram* (a hand-spun cotton cloth of indigo colour) and *Cyhna Hno* (an embroidered silk *puan*).



Food

A Mizo platter generally includes non-vegetarian preparations. However, they also eat vegetables along with these preparations, which are mostly cooked or sauted in mustard oil. The Mizo people also like to add bamboo shoot in their food. Besides, duck meat is a favourite with them.



A Mizo Platter

Lubrusca (grape wine) and *Zu* (a form of tea) are their most favoured drinks.

Table 1 mentions some other popular dishes of Mizoram.

Table 1

Dishes	Style of Preparation
Bai	It is a popular dish made of steamed vegetables, pork, spinach, bamboo shoot and local herbs. The dish can also be prepared without pork.
Vawksa Rep	It is Mizoram’s favourite smoked pork dish prepared with chillies, local herbs and green leafy vegetables.
Sawhchiar	This dish is prepared by cooking rice and meat together with onion, ginger and garlic.
Sanpiau	It is a popular snack made of rice porridge and served with fresh coriander paste, spring onions, crushed black pepper and fish sauce.
Misa Mach Poora	This dish is prepared by cooking shrimps with onion, coriander, peppercorns and lime juice.

FAIRS AND FESTIVALS

Most of the traditional fairs and festivals of Mizoram revolve around agricultural operations. Nonetheless, such occasions provide people opportunities to wear customary dresses complete with headgears, jewellery and traditional weapons. Table 2 lists some of these traditional festivals, which are celebrated with characteristic community spirit and togetherness. Besides these, Christmas is also celebrated with much fun and fanfare. With majority of the State’s population practising Christianity, the celebration of this festival often lasts for three days.

Table 2

Time of Celebration	Name of the Festival	Description
November	Khuado Kut	It is a thanksgiving ceremony observed on a full moon nights after the harvest. On this occasion, the villagers seek to ward off the evil spirit by lighting a torch.
August – September	Mim Kut	It is celebrated to pay respects to the departed souls of the previous year by offering them bread, maize, vegetables and other items. Dancing and singing form an integral part of this festival.
December – January	Pawl Kut	It is a thanksgiving festival celebrated for two days after the harvest.
February – March	Chapchar Kut	It is a thanksgiving festival celebrated after clearing the jungles for <i>Jhum</i> cultivation. It is also celebrated as a spring festival with great fervour.



Cheraw dance



Chapchar Kut Festival

PERFORMING ARTS

Dance

The celebratory spirit of the people of Mizoram are seen in their singing and dancing, which they perform on various occasions throughout the year. *Cheraw* is one such dance. It involves great precision and perfect



rhythm. During its performance, the male performers sit facing one another and tap long bamboo staves while the female performers wearing colourful costumes dance to the tapping of the bamboo staves. During the course of the dance various steps are used imitating the nature and wildlife.

Chheih Lam is another dance performed to enjoy the completion of a day's work. This dance is accompanied by drum beats and the blowing of bamboo tubes.

So Lakia is a traditional dance performed to celebrate a victory in war. Through this dance, actions of the war heroes are enacted to the accompaniment of the beatings of drums and gongs.

Chai Lam is a community dance performed during the celebration of the Chapchar Kut festival. In this dance, women and men stand next to one another to form a circle while holding each other's waist and shoulder. As the drums and gongs are played, they sing in chorus and dance to its rhythm.

Par Lam is a new dance form in which female dancers wearing colourful attires and tucking flowers on their heads dance and sing simultaneously while waving their hands gracefully. Men usually play guitars to provide the background music to their performance.

Besides these, the Mizos also have other dance forms. The most popular among those are: *Khuallam* (dance of the guests), *Chawng Laizawn* (dance to mourn the death of one's wife or to celebrate successful hunters) and *Tlanglam* (a popular dance with song called, *Numtiz Puma Zai*).



SoLakia dance



Par Lam dance

Music

The Mizos sing different types of folk songs. *Bawh Hla* represents the cry of victorious warriors while *Hladu* represents the cry of successful hunters. Besides, they also have love songs (*Lengzem Zai*) and songs named after occasions (*Pai Pan Hla*).

The musical instruments of the Mizos can be broadly divided into three categories. However, even without musical instruments, the Mizos clap hands or use other methods to create rhythm.

Beating or Striking Instruments

Khuang (drum)	It is an indigenous instrument which has a very significant place in Mizo social and religious life. It is made of a hollow tree and wrapped on both sides with animal skin.
Dar (Gong)	There are various sizes of brass gongs which are named Darkhuang, Darbu and Darmang. Darkhuang is used to announce the demise of a person. Darbu is a set of three brass gongs of different sizes used to produce three different musical notes.
Bengbung	It is an indigenous instrument consisting of a series of flat wooden bars, which produce three types of musical notes. Bengbung is usually played by girls in their leisure times.
Talhkhuang	It is made of three curved wooden pieces. The depths of the curves produce different sounds. It is played with a wooden hammer. The Mizos never take Talhkhuang to their houses or anywhere else except to Lungdawn, the great platform at the entrance of the village. It is played when a chief or the village erects a memorial stone.
Seki	This is made out of the horns of a domesticated mithun. The two hollow horns are beaten to lead the playing of other musical instruments like Darbu. It is commonly used at the time of group dances.

Wind Instruments

Rawchhem	It is like a Scottish 'Bagpiper' or Chinese 'Snag'. The Musician blows into it by controlling the holes with his fingers and thereby produces various musical notes.
Tumphit	It is made of three small bamboos of different sizes and length, tied in a row with strings. The upper ends are cut open at different lengths so that each tube produces a different note. This musical instrument is used during ritual ceremonies like Rallulam or festivals like Cheungchen.

Tawtawrawt	This is a trumpet like instrument made by joining several bamboo tubes one after another. The last tube happens to be the size of a forefinger, which is used to blow the trumpet. For accoustics, a dry hollowed out gourd is attached to the bigger end of the bamboo tubes.
Phenglawng	It is like a flute made of bamboo. Originally, it had three holes producing three different sounds.
Buhchangkuang	This is a flute made of reed or paddy stalk. This simple instrument is usually played by girls.
Hnahtum	These are folded leaves used by the Mizo boys to produce interesting sounds.

Stringed Instruments

Tingtang	Often called the Mizo guitar, it is a kind of fiddle or violin having only one string.
Lemlawi	It belongs to the family of jaw harp but its shape and size are different.
Tuium dar	This simple musical instrument is also made of bamboo. It is played like a guitar.

VISUAL ARTS AND CRAFTS

Mizoram excels in various crafts using cane, wood, bamboo and different kinds of leaves and grasses as raw materials.

The State is particularly well-known for products such as traditional baskets, chairs, sofas, tables, bamboo screens, cages, umbrella-handles, hats, and other decorative pieces. These are mainly produced in the Handicrafts Centres situated in Aizawl, Lunglei and Chimgtupui (Sailha). The special attractions of these products are their bright colours.



Ornaments

Mizos wear ornaments not only to decorate themselves but also to convey deeper messages. Widows, for example, remove earrings and slit their ear lobes to say no to remarriage. Women of the Lushai tribe wear two-pronged pins made of brass to keep their hair knots in place. Hair combs are also used as ornamental items. Stones and wooden studs are used as earrings. Necklaces having amber, agate, carnelian and various other types of beads are worn by both men and women. The tiger's tooth is sometimes hung around the neck as an ornament. The Mizos also wear tufts of goat's hair bound together with a red thread.

Weapons

Lushais use spears, daos, spikes, bows and arrows. Some of these weapons are decorated with black wood, ked acquired handles, brass bands and knobs.

CONTEMPORARY CULTURAL DEVELOPMENTS

Aizawl, the capital of Mizoram, is a cultural city situated amidst picturesque hills. It is called the 'Home of Highlanders'. Champhai is a beautiful resort on the Myanmar border. It is also home to ancient relics and monuments. Besides, it is referred to as the 'Fruit Bowl of Mizoram' with wide cultivable plains, vineyards and passim and kiwi plantations. Serchhip, located between Mat and Tuikam rivers, is home to a wide range of endangered species. It has also the State's highest waterfalls. Thenzawl, a town in Serchhip, is the main centre for handlooms. There are many other centres of tourist attraction, which have made the State a popular go-to-place in the North-East. The State Government is increasingly tapping this potential by opening tourist lodges, highway restaurants travellers' inns, recreational centres and picnic huts.





NAGALAND



celebrated religious ceremonies. By force, British stopped inter-tribal conflicts and head-hunting practices. At the time of independence of India in 1947, this area remained as a part of Assam province. In 1957, the Naga Hill district of Assam and the Tuensang frontier were united and formed a single administrative unit. Then Statehood was officially conferred on 1 December 1963. Total population of Nagaland is 1,978,502.

Nagaland is one of the seven sister States in North East India. It is covered by mostly high-altitude mountains and it shares its border with Assam and Myanmar in the west, Arunachal Pradesh and part of Assam in the north and Manipur in the south.

CULTURAL SPECIFICITIES

The people of Nagaland belong to several tribal communities having rich cultural traditions. They follow practices of exogamy and clan endogamy for their marital alliance. Eldest member in the family is permitted to perform religious activities. Different

It is presumed that the ancient name Nagaland is derived from the Naga language 'Nakanchi' or 'Naganchi'. It is also believed that Naga tribe came through migration at different times and they settled in the north-eastern parts of India and established their respective sovereign mountain terrains and villages. Naga culture is very much similar to the neighbouring kingdom of Ahom in Assam. The Naga tribal groups were socio-economically and politically linked with the tribes in Assam and Myanmar.

In 1826, the British East India Company annexed parts of Nagaland and expanded their domain. At that time, the Naga tribes were often engaged in internecine warfare, practised head-hunting and

<i>Fact Sheet</i>	
<i>State Day</i>	1 December
<i>Geographical Area</i>	16,579 km ²
<i>Capital</i>	Kohima
<i>Official Language</i>	English
<i>State Animal</i>	Mithun
<i>State Bird</i>	Blyth's Tragopan
<i>State Flower</i>	Rhododendron
<i>State Tree</i>	Alder

tribes wear colourful traditional dresses and follow their customary laws and traditions. Nagas are well-known as ferocious fighters. In the Indian Army, the Naga regiment is quite popular as fearless and dreaded.

Language

Nagaland is a State which shelters rich diversity of ethnic groups having diverse languages. But, most of the Nagas are Christians and they speak English fluently. In spite of this, there are rich linguistic traditions with many dialects of 17 different tribal groups. Even, we notice many dialects which are mutually incomprehensible within the language of a particular tribe. Therefore, inter-tribe and intra-tribe communication is quite difficult. Naga people mostly communicate using various dialects such as Tibeto-Burman consisting of Sumi, Lotha, Sangtam, Angami, Pochuri, Phom, Ao, Mao, Inpui, Rongmei, Poumai, Tangkhul, Thangal, Maram and Zeme. In addition to this, their dialect indicates Nagamese Creole which is used between tribes of two villages. Plurality even in their dialects creates communication problems. In such circumstances, they adopted English. English as the medium for education and official language of Nagaland was proclaimed by the Nagaland Assembly in 1967.

Dress

Most of the Nagas use dresses as per the norms of their traditional culture. Their traditional shawl is well-known as the most prominent one in their dress items. The shawl concerned to warrior or man who performed the Feast of Merit varies accordingly. The widespread dress pattern of the Angamis—a major group of Naga includes red and yellow colours. But now, green bands on black cloth, known as *Lohe* are popular. The western Angami villagers wear somewhat distinctive pattern of dresses.

Lothas, another tribal group of the State, generally achieves a streamline gradation of shawls which indicates the number of *Gennas*, maintained by the wearer. After performing the first genna, they wear the *Phangrhup* (shawl with status). Then they

perform second genna and third genna with wearing of strips being widened *phangrhup* and the *Ethasu* (another shawl) respectively. Then they complete a series of feasts and the stone-dragging and wear the *Lungpensu*, a dark blue cloth with five stripes of light blue and narrow marginal stripes on each side. On the other side, the *Tsungkoteptsu* is acquainted



Naga girl wearing Traditional Ornaments

as the warrior shawl with figures of tiger, elephant, human head, cock, etc. and *Dao* (knife) and spear strikingly. Each figure has a symbolic meaning. Wealth of the wearers is indicated by *Mithun* (State animal), whereas tiger and the human head mean skills in hunting and success in taking heads respectively. Their dresses are coloured dark blue and painted with black on a white band. The unmarried boys and girls use the *Kaksi nei* whereas the newly married couple wear the *Silang nei*. Another variety of Chang shawl, the *Tobu nei* has zig-zag patterns in alternate red and black colours on a blue band. They normally use one which is generally black coloured. Plain blue cloth and a white cloth with black marginal band are generally worn by women. Angami women sometimes wear petticoat or *neikhro*, a sleeveless top or *vatchi*, white skirt or *pfemhou*. The *Ze-liang-rong*, a mixed group of Zemis, Liangmais and Rongmei exhibit themselves in costumes considerably similar to that of the Angami tribe. Nowadays, most of the Nagas follow the westernised culture and therefore, they wear traditional dresses only on festive occasions.

Food

While the food of each Naga tribe is distinct, they also have some common items. However, plain rice, cooked vegetables and meat are the normal food of Nagaland.

Bamboo Shoot

Bamboo shoot is considered as an important ingredient in food items of Nagaland. They use fermented and dry



bamboo shoot and add to various dishes.

Bushmeat or Dog Meat

Some Naga people consume the Bushmeat or dog meat and it is one of their favourite dishes. It is prepared with oil, garlic, ginger and some spices. Normally, they eat this item with rice or traditional bread.

Axone (Fermented Soyabean)

The fermented soyabeans are used along with vegetables for making stew. It is also mostly used to make chutney. Axone is used in different forms such as smoked pork in Axone, dried river fish with Axone,



Bamboo Shoot



Nagaland Cuisine

Axoni in cake form is also made.

Samanthu

It is a thick curry, prepared by using a chilli powder called 'Samanthu'. This is a traditional food item, with lots of gravy and spices. *Samanthu* is slowly cooked to give spices more flavour. It is a signature food, loved by most of the people in Nagaland.



Besides these, the people of Nagaland consume *Anishi* (dry colocasia stems and leaves), fermented dry fish, *Aikibeye* (Mustard leaf and Colocasia

roots), *Akini* (perilla seeds), *Chokibo* (snails), boiled vegetables, fish cooked in bamboo, *Tathu* (chutney), *Zutho*, *Dzutse*, *Ruhi* (famous beer) and others.

FAIRS AND FESTIVALS

Nagaland is a land of rich cultural tradition. Their festivals and fairs play an important role to display their indigenous culture. Most of their festivals are related to agriculture, from ploughing and sowing seeds to the collection of produce. Every tribe in Nagaland celebrates festivals in their own distinct way. They mostly enjoy their festivals with traditional pomp of music, dance and colourful dresses. New Year and Christmas are also celebrated like in other parts of the country. Some of the local festivals are mentioned below.

Nazu Festival

It is a very colourful festival celebrated by the Pochury tribal groups just before the annual sowing of seeds. Not many rituals are performed and it is more about entertainment with music and folk dance, specially the *Khupielilie* by executing tuneful and harmonious movements of the hands and legs.

Moatsu Festival

Ao tribes of Nagaland celebrate this festival in the first week of May every year for three days. With music and folk dance, they celebrate this festival for recreation and amusement after clearing fields, sowing seeds or repairing and constructing houses.

Amongmong Festival

In the month of September, this festival is celebrated by the Sangam tribe of Nagaland with the aim of promoting their unity. This festival is celebrated for six days.

Hornbill Festival

This festival was started by the Government of Nagaland in 2000 to encourage interaction among tribes and also to promote the cultural heritage of the State. It is organised with the ambience of dance, feast, music and various games.



The Hornbill Festival

Besides these, the tribal people of Nagaland celebrate other festivals such as Sekrenyi, Moatsu Mong, Suhkruhnye, Bushu, Yemshe, Metumniu, Metemneo festival, Ngada festival, Tokhu Emong, Tuluni, Sukrunye, Naknyulum, Tsokum, Monyu, Aoling Monyu, Jemsha, Nga-Ngai throughout the year. They also organise various fairs such as Mithun Mela (to increase awareness among the mithun-animal farmers), Kaushal Mela (to promote the skills of youth), Health Mela (health awareness to uplift the health).

PERFORMING ARTS

Dance, music, art and craft are important part of the culture of Nagaland. All the tribes of Nagaland are associated with different traditional dances, music, art and craft. There is no other formal way to pass on these cultural activities from elders. The young people normally follow all activities and through enormous practice with old generation at different occasions, they learn their traditional arts.

Dance

Each tribe of the State has its own dances which are performed during auspicious events such as religious ceremonies, harvesting of the crops, wedding ceremonies, social gatherings. A unique feature in most of the dances is that the upper body of the dancer is found erect, whereas the legs move in different directions as per the requirement. Almost all the dances are performed by a group of men and women with perfect synchronisation. Dancing costumes are colourful and vibrant which add to the overall presentation of their ceremonies. Their dance is performed with clapping, chanting in rhythm, singing



Community festival of a tribe

folk songs and playing traditional music. The folk dances consist of Aaluyattu, Agurshikukula, Butterfly Dance, Changai Dance, Khamba Lim, Kuki Dance, Leshalaptu, Mayur Dance, Modse, Monyoasho, Sadal Kekai, Seecha and Kukui Kucho, Shankai and Moyashai, Rengma, Khupielilie, Zeliang Dance, War Dance, Chang Lo or Sua Lua.

Music

Throughout the State of Nagaland, traditional music is mostly played during dance performances. In accordance with the occasions, the themes of the music change. In a natural way, stories relating to romance, history, incidents and bravery are narrated accompanied by music. The most popular songs such as *Heliamleu* or war songs, *Neuleu* or legendary songs related individual events are performed with their music. The choral or church or Christian music and rock or pop genre music are commonly known



Headhunting song of Sangtam Naga

as gospel music and secular music respectively. Traditional instruments like *Tati*, *Theku*, *Asem* (drums), *Jemji* (flute-made Mithun horn), violin, mouth organ, bamboo flute, guitar, flutes, pipes are played with folk songs. The new generation of Nagaland is quite fond of Western music and many local rock bands are also popular outside the State.



VISUAL ARTS

The people of Nagaland are well-known for their unique culture and traditions. Visual arts like bamboo and cane products, weaving and wooden materials, variety of pottery, drawings, jewellerys, performing art play a major role in enriching their culture and traditions. They use cane and bamboo to make different household items such as basket, mat, hat, headgear, tray, bowl mug, container, fan, bamboo pipe, chair, utensil, knives, toy, different designs of furniture, accessories and musical instruments. Most of the Naga women weave colourful shawls, bags and jackets. Their traditional pottery made by women is very famous. Tseminyu and Ungma villagers have specialised in pottery. Nagas also prepare various artefacts, weapons and utensils with iron tin and brass. Ornaments like neckbands, armlets, bracelets, bangles are also made. They use iron, tin and brass to make most of the ornaments. Their attire specially shawls namely *Tiongkong su*, *Tabensa su*, *Lungkhum subang*, *Keyi su* sarees and bedsheets are woven by Naga women. Nagas decorate their doors and walls with colourful paints, drawing natural scenery, face of animals, hunting, ritual activities on their walls.

CONTEMPORARY CULTURAL DEVELOPMENTS

Present generation of Nagaland is eager to achieve modernity and as result, their literacy is very high as compared to other neighbouring States. In fashion designing and tribal art and craft, they are reproducing items which represent the ancestral motifs, blended with modern appeal. The students attend different courses to achieve skills for becoming entrepreneurs. Today's youth of Nagaland is producing various handicrafts blending modern and traditional designs keeping a focus in global as well as local market. In this aspect, the government also has various schemes to train and help young entrepreneurs. Various educational institutes/vocational training centres, encourage different sports activities such as angling, camping, trekking, mountaineering, archery, cricket, football, tennis, boxing.

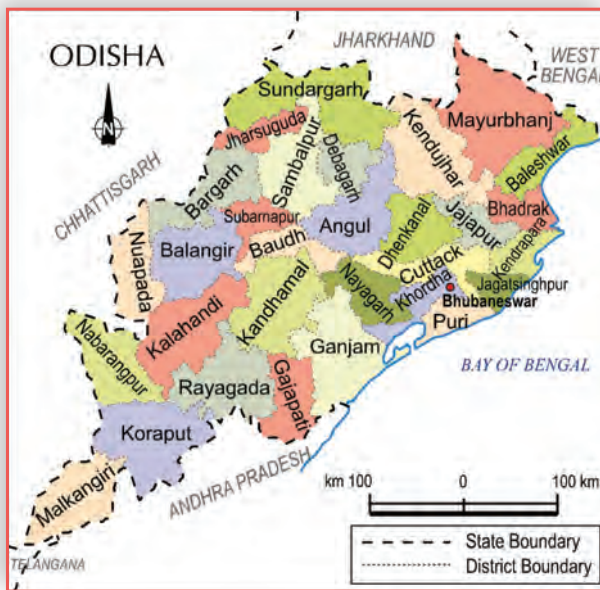
Its sharp peaks, the tearing clouds and the misty wind create an absolutely delightful environment. The beautiful landscape and stunning sunrise and sunset make it a perfect place for sightseeing and adventure and therefore attract tourists throughout the year. Some of the popular tourist places are Japfu Peak, Shilloi Lake, Khonoma Village and Kisama Heritage Village, State Museum, Kohima Zoo, Intanki Wildlife Sanctuary, World War II Cemetery, etc.



Glimpses of Hornbill Festival



ODISHA



Important Historical Events

This ancient land rose to prominence as a kingdom under Kharavela, a great conqueror and patron of Jainism, in the second half of the 1st century BCE. The twin hills named Khandagiri and Udaygiri near the State's capital city of Bhubaneswar, still stand as a testimony to that glorious phase of its history. Subsequently, other dynasties like Bhauma-Kara, Somavamsi, Ganga and Suryavamsi ruled over it. The Jagannath temple at Puri and the Sun temple at Konark were built during the glorious rule of the Gangas.

Odisha, formed as a separate province on 1 April 1936, got its present shape and boundary on 1 January 1949, when Mayurbhanj, the last among the princely states, was merged in it.

Lying between the parallels of 17.49'N and 22.34'N latitudes and meridians of 81.27'E and 87.29'E longitudes, the modern state of Odisha was variously known as Kalinga, Utkal, Odra, Kosala, Tosali and Kongoda in the past. It came into the broader picture of Indian history with the conquest of Kalinga in 261 BCE following which Ashoka adopted Buddhism upholding the values of peace and non-violence.

Odisha is surrounded by Telangana and Andhra Pradesh in the south, Chhattisgarh in the west, West Bengal in the north-east and Jharkhand in the north. The Bay of Bengal lies to its east. It is the ninth largest state by area and the eleventh by population.

The Maritime History of Odisha

Odisha has a maritime history that goes back to 350 BCE according to available sources. Its merchants along the Bay of Bengal sailed up and down the Indian coast and also travelled to Bali, Java, Borneo, Indo-

Fact Sheet	
State Day	1 April
Geographical Area	155,707 km ²
Capital	Bhubaneswar
Official Language	Odia
State Animal	Sambar Deer
State Bird	Indian roller (Neelkanth)
State Flower	Ashoka
State Tree	Ashwatha (Pipal)





China and other countries of Southeast Asia. They introduced the elements of their culture as they traded in these territories. Besides, through such maritime endeavours they also brought affluence and opulence to Odisha. In remembrance of this past glory, every year coastal Odisha celebrates Bali Jatra during *Kartika Purnima*, on the river bed of Mahanadi, in Cuttack.

CULTURAL SPECIFICITIES

Language

Odia is the official language of the State. It is also commonly spoken throughout the State with local variations. As a language, it belongs to the Indo-Aryan family and is considered to have evolved out of Prakrit and Ardha-Magadhi. It has been conferred with the status of 'Classical Language' by the Government of India. Besides, the tribal people of Odisha such as the Khond, Kisan, Kui, Koya, Kuvi, Gadaba (Ollari), Bhumij, Bonda, Santali and Savara use their own dialects. These dialects used by the tribal people add lustre to the composite culture of the State.

Literature

The Odias have a rich literary heritage. In the 9th century CE, Matsyendranath, Gorakhnath and Minanath composed *Boudhgan* and *Charyapada* (Buddhist mystical verses) in Apabhramsa Odia. Then, in the 14th century CE, Narayanananda Abadhuta Swami composed *Rudra Sudhanidhi* in a blend of poetry and prose in more refined Odia. From 15th century CE, Odia language took its proper shape. This was reflected through Sarala Dasa's Odia *Mahabharata* and *Chandi Purana*. The period, which succeeded Sarala Dasa, is known as the 'Pancha Sakha

Age' after the five saint-poets, who were Balaram Das, Jagannatha Das, Ananta Das, Achuta Das and Yashobanta Das. They enriched the Odia literature by their immortal creations. Subsequently, poets like Dinakrushna Das, Abhimanyu Samantasimhara and Upendra Bhanja also glorified Odia literature through their *Kavyas* and poems.

In the modern period, Fakir Mohan Senapati's novel, *Chha Mana Atha Guntha*, based on the tradition of realism, completely revolutionised the literary scene of Odisha as it dealt with the life of the common people in remote villages exploited by the zamindars. Radhanath Roy, Madhusudan Rao, Gangadhar Meher, Kuntala Kumari, Sabat, Mayadhar Mansingh, Radhamohan Gadnayak, Rabi Singh, Ramakanta Rath and many others thereafter enriched Odia poetry. Gopinath Mohanty's novel, *Mati Matala* received

Table 1: Jnanpith Awardees from Odisha

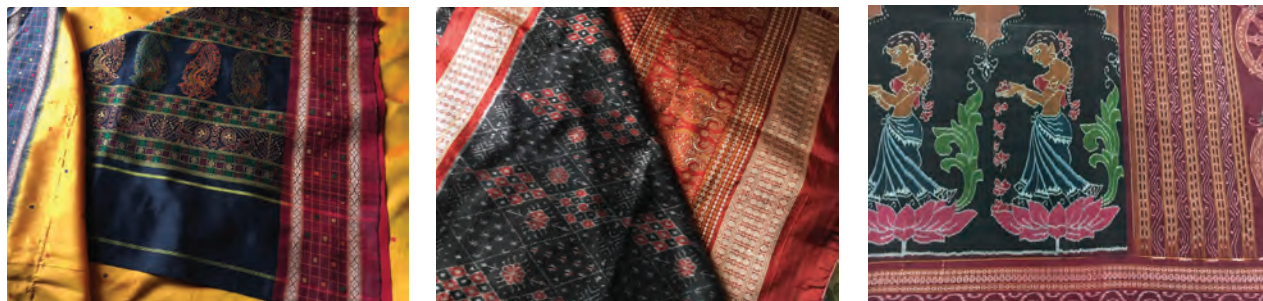
Name	Year of Award	Literary work
Gopinath Mohanty	1973	<i>Mati Matala</i> (the fertile soil)
Sachidananda Rout Ray	1986	Overall contribution to Odia literature
Sitakanta Mahapatra	1993	contribution to the enrichment of India literature
Pratibha Ray	2011	Overall contribution to Indian literature

the Jnanpith Award in 1973. Surendra Mohanty, Manoj Das, Chandrashekhar Rath, Chittaranjan Das, Ratnakar Chaini are some other notable names of Odia literature.



Tribes of Odisha

Odisha is a proud land of tribes. More than 60 culturally vibrant tribes, including 13 primitive tribal groups, co-exist in Odisha. They have their distinct identity which is reflected in their language, culture, art and craft. Their cultural ethos are preserved in their beliefs, settlement patterns, types of housing, food habits, ornaments, dresses, music, paintings, dances, value judgements, etc.



Some Patterns in Handloom Sarees

Dress and Weaving

Generally the women of Odisha wear *saree* and the men wear *dhoti*. Because of humidity people prefer cotton fabrics. Odisha has a glorious record of handloom-weaving since 600 BCE. More than four lakh weavers are today engaged in producing a fine range of fabrics with unique designs. Odisha's silk, *tussar* and cotton fabrics are recognised throughout the world. Odisha *Ikat* is a woven silk product and is known as 'Bandha of Odisha'. Because of its unique tie and dye technique, it has been called 'poetry on the loom'. Among the more notable *bandhas* of Odisha are the Nuapatana tie and dye *Khandua* and *Sambalpuri*. *Berhampuri* silk is also famous for its traditional pattern. *Bapta*, an indigenous mixture of silk and cotton, is also widely appreciated. The other places popular for weaving are Bargarh, Sonepur, Ganjam, Bangiriposi, Boudh, Cuttack, Jajpur and Balasore.

The *Dongria Kondh* textile of the Niyamgiri hills of Rayagada district and the *Adivasi Pata* woven by the Darika community of Kotpad village of Koraput district bring art the culture in beautiful patterns and motifs.

Food

Rice is the staple food of Odisha. *Chuda* (flattened rice) or *mudhi* (puffed rice), the former with *dahi* (curd), *gur* (jaggery) and *kadali* (banana) are generally taken as breakfasts by the Odias. In lunch, the people

take rice, *dal*, one mixed curry and *ambila* (a sour curry). Fish curry, fish fry, prawn curry, crab curry, mutton, chicken and eggs are also eaten by the non-vegetarians. At dinner *pakhala* (water rice) or *pitha* (cake) with different curries are usually savoured. Mustard oil is used in most dishes as the cooking medium, but *ghee* is preferred in temples. In old times, food was traditionally served on banana leaves or disposable plates made of *sal* leaves.



Chhena pada

Odisha has a culinary tradition spanning centuries with a variety of dishes. The Jagannath temple in Puri has the largest kitchen in the world with 1,000 chefs working around 752 wood-burning clay hearths (called, *chulhas*) to feed over 10,000 people each day. It has a unique method of cooking. The pots are kept one above the other on the hearths. But food in the top most pot is cooked first. Besides, sweet items like *rasagola*, *rabidi*, *malpua*, *kheera* and *chhena pada* of Odisha are also famous throughout the world.

Table 2

Item	Method of Preparation
Chhena Poda	It is one of the notable sweets of Odisha made of a mixture of fresh cheese, sugar, semolina (<i>suji</i> /rawa), cashew nuts, raisins, green powder of cardamom and <i>desi ghee</i> .





Rasagola



Pakhala



Rasabali

Manda Pitha	Ball shaped dumplings made of rice flour with fillings of grated coconut, sugar and cardamom powder. After steaming for some time, these balls become ready to serve.
Chakuli Pitha	Round shaped pan cakes made of fermented rice and white lentil batter.
Kakara Pitha	Made of a dough of semolina, water, sugar and fillings of coconut, sugar and cardamom powder that are deep fried in lower flame till turning golden brown.
Chitau Pitha	Steam cooked round shaped cakes made of a paste of rice and coconut powder.

FAIRS AND FESTIVALS

Odisha has colourful fairs and festivals and are as numerous as the days of the year. The famous festivals are:

Rath Yatra

The sacred journey of Lord Jagannath with brother Balabhadra and sister Subhadra from the Jagannath Temple to the divine shrine called the Gundicha Temple is known as the Car Festival or the *Rath Yatra*. On this occasion, the deities adorn three chariots named *Nandigoshha*, *Taladhwaaja* and *Darpadalana* respectively. They stay in the divine shrine for nine days and then return to the Jagannath Temple. This journey is called *Bahuda Jatra*. This grand festival of Odisha is visited by lakhs of devotees from India and abroad who pull the sacred chariots from the Jagannath Temple to the Gundicha Temple and back on a broad road called *Badadanda*. The festival begins from the second day of *Shukla Paksha* (bright half) in the month of *Ashadha* (June-July) every year. This festival of Lord Jagannath, who is worshipped as the Lord of the Universe, is celebrated not only in Puri, but also in many other places in India and abroad.

Similar to this festival, the Protégé of Lord Lingaraj is also taken out in a chariot from the

Lingaraj Temple to the Rameswara Temple. There the Lord stays for four days with *Mausi maa* (maternal aunt) during the *Shukla Paksha* in the month of *Chaitra* (March-April). This is called the Car festival of Lord Lingaraj.

Raja Festival

The other most unique festival of Odisha is the Raja festival. This colourful festival has its origin in an agrarian society. It marks the beginning of rainy season. The young girls decked with ornaments, beautiful costumes, *alta* (red liquid) and *chandan* (sandalwood paste) enjoy the three-day festival playing on swings and taking delicious traditional cuisines like *podapitha*, *kheer*, *kakara*, *chakuli*, etc. *Raja paan* (betel) is also a speciality. They are not supposed to do any household chores and walk barefoot on this occasion.

Nua Khai Festival

Western Odisha celebrates this harvest festival in the month of August-September (*Bhadra*) after Ganesh Chaturthi. During this festival the family members get together and seek blessings from the elders. The salutation they use is called *Nua Khai Juhar*. The first harvest is offered to Maa Samleswari or the local deity and then consumed

by all. A variety of traditional cuisines like *panna*, *manda pitha*, *arissa pitha* are also prepared on this occasion.

Besides, there are several other festivals celebrated in the State. Some of those are given in the table below:

Table 3

Fairs/Festival	Period and Celebrations
Shiva Ratri (Jagara)	It falls on the 14th day of dark fortnight of Phalgun (February). In all the Shiva temples of Odisha including the most notable ones like Lingaraj temple (Bhubaneswar), Lokanath temple (Puri), Kapilas temple (Dhenkanal) and Nrusinghanath temple (Balangir), the devotees, especially women keep night-long vigil by lightening the lamps to have their desires fulfilled.
Ganesh Puja	It falls on the 14th day of dark fortnight of Bhadrapada (August). On this day, the students worship god Ganesha for wisdom and success.
Janmashtami	It is observed on the 2nd day of the dark half of Bhadrapada (August) in all the Vaishnavite temples and Mathas of Odisha including the household shrines. Devotees fast on that day and partake food only after the symbolic birth of Krishna at midnight.
Durga Puja	This major Hindu festival takes place in September-October every year. In all the Shakti shrine and mandapas of Odisha, Goddess Durga is worshipped and people visit her idol on the days of Mahashtami, Mahanavami and Vijaydashami (Dussehra)
Laxmi Puja	The festival is celebrated on the full moon day after Durga Puja. Goddess Laxmi is worshipped on that day for wealth and prosperity.
Kali Puja	It is observed a day before Deepawali in the month of Kartika (November). Here Shakti in the form of Kali is worshipped as symbol of victory of good over evil.
Dola Purnima	Dola Purnima or Holi, the famous spring festival of India is celebrated in Odisha in the month of March. The images of Krishna are taken in decorated Vimanas (small wooden temples) by the bearers from house to house from the 10th day of the bright fortnight of Phalgun to the full moon day. At last all the vimanas assemble in an open field and amidst bhajana and kirtana, people throw abhir (coloured powder) at each other and distribute sweets.
Chandana Yatra	It begins in the month of Vaisakha (April). The representative of Krishna is taken from the temple in a procession to the nearby pond and kept in a boat. The boat moves inside the pond with bhajana and kirtana to give a feeling of coolness to the god. People offer prayers to the God on boat.
Dhanu Yatra	Dhanu Yatra or 'Bow Ceremony' is observed at Bargarh, a district of western Odisha. The town of Bargarh becomes Mathura, river Jira becomes Yamuna and village Amapalli becomes Gopa. Different episodes of Purana like birth of Krishna, death of demons like Baka, Shakata, Putana etc till the death of Kansa are performed with actors which attract the people. Now it has gained worldwide popularity.
Konark Dance Festival	It is of a recent origin. A fitting tribute to the Sun temple at Konark, classical dancers of India get together to perform through different dance forms like Odishi, Bharatnatyam, Kathakali, Kathak, Manipuri etc.
Puri Beach Festival	It has originated recently and is co-sponsored by the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India in collaboration with the Department of Tourism, Government of Odisha. It includes events ranging from fashion shows to rock shows.
Other Festivals	Janhi Osha, Khudurukuni Osha, Bhajijuntia, Sudasha, Vrata, Rabinarayana Vrata, Shamba Dashami, Prathamastami, Danda Yatra, Nagapanchami, Ananta Vrata, Somanatha Vrata etc. are other festivals observed in different parts of Odisha.

PERFORMING ARTS

Dance and Music

Odisha has contributed three distinct schools of dance to the rich culture of India. They are Odissi, Dalkhai

and Chhau. Odissi is one of the six acknowledged classical dance forms of India. Anchored in religion and philosophy, its themes mainly rest on the infinite love between Radha and Krishna. Ramananda Ray brought Odissi out of the temple closet and introduced





A stance in Odissi



Jatra



Mayurbhanj Chhau

it in a new form called, *Gotipua Nacha*. It is performed by young boys dressed up as girls. Odissi music has also a classical form consisting of all the ingredients common to the Hindustani and the Carnatic music. Jayadev was the first Odia poet, who composed lyrics meant to be sung during the performances of Odissi. Odissi music is accompanied by harmonium, *mardala* (drum), violin, flute, gini, *sitar* and *veena*.



Dalkhai dance is performed by the girls of western Odisha on 'Bhai Jiuntia Osa'. On this occasion, they observe fast and wish good luck to their brothers. They usually dance and sing *Dalkhai* under a banyan tree or in the mango grove to the accompanying beats of drums.

Rasarkeli is also a popular song of western Odisha. It is a song of entertainment accompanied by dance. The heartfelt feelings of young men and women are expressed through this song. The *Bajnia* (drummer) plays the music and the young men and women dance to its rhythm.

Chhau known for its vigour and vitality is essentially a highly stylised martial dance form. Every year, it is performed in the month of April with much fanfare at Baripada in the Mayurbhanj district.

Ranapa dance is likewise a martial dance form practiced in the Ganjam district.

Ghumura dance is the most popular traditional dance of the tribes of the Kalahandi district. In it

the dancers tie the *Ghumura badya* (drum) on their waists, beat the drum and dance simultaneously. The other instruments played during this dance are *Jhanjha*, *Toori* and *Nisan* along with tribal song. It starts before Nua Khai and ends in the Chhatar Jatra of Maa Manikeswari.

Nowadays, these dances are performed throughout the year in and outside Odisha.

Folk Theatre

Folk theatres known as *jatras* in Odisha mostly provide entertainment to the rural people. These are performed with full cast accompanied by music, singing, dancing and acting for whole nights. The popular forms of *jatra* are the *Ram Leela*, *Rasa Leela/Krishna Leela*, *Pala*, *Prahalad Natak*, *Daskathia*, *Mughal Tamsha*, *Danda Nacha* and *Geetinatya*.

VISUAL ARTS

Architecture and Sculpture

Odisha is full of archeological treasures dating from the pre-historic times up to the end of the Muslim rule in the mid- 16th century CE. One can find the presence of highly developed pre-historic civilisation in Odisha from the excavated sites at Sisupalgarh and Jaugada. The unique cave architecture dating back to 1st century BCE is found in the caves of Khandagiri and Udayagiri. These caves decorated with sculptural motifs were hewn out of solid rocks for the use of Jain ascetics during the period of King Kharavela.

Buddhism also inspired the development of art and architecture in Odisha. Ashoka's rock edicts at Dhauli and Jaugada, the remains of the main *stupa*,

two *viharas*, *chaityas* and Buddha images found during archeological excavation in Ratnagiri; Bodhisattvas and images of Buddha from the hills of Lalitgiri and Olasuni, bear testimony to such contribution.

Odisha is well-known for its temple architecture. This is exemplified in three monumental temples of the State — the Lingaraj Temple at Bhubaneswar (11th century CE), the Jagannath Temple at Puri (12th century CE), and the Sun Temple at Konark (13th century CE). Only the frontal part of the latter exists today. Nevertheless, this temple stands out as an architectural masterpiece for its conception as a grand chariot and its intricate, yet delicate stone work.

Contemporary Odisha has a cultural heritage that encompasses the intermingling of four religious traditions: Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism and Sarnaism besides the cultures of *Adivasis*. The artistic traditions of the State represent all of these.

Handicrafts

Handicrafts are an ingrained part of Odisha's cultural heritage. The list below shows a variety of handicrafts available in the State:

- Silver *filigree* (*tarakasi*) work of Cuttack.
- The typical tribal jewellery of the Koraput and the Gajapati districts made of brass, bell metal and silver or white metal.



- Brass and bell metal wares, utensils, bangles with fine engravings of Balakati and Kantilo.
- *Dhokra* metal wares of Dhenkanal, Cuttack and Mayurbhanj.
- Terracotta and pottery of Bolangir, Bargarh, Rayagada and Keonjhar.
- Cane and golden grass work of Puri, Kendrapara, Jaipur and Khurda.
- Horn works of Parlakhemundi and Cuttack.
- Stone and wood carvings of Khiching, Puri and Cuttack.
- Puppets, masks and the relatively new craft of papier-mache.
- *Applique* work of Pipli.
- Bamboo craft of Sundergarh, Sambalpur and Kandhamal.

Paintings

The Odisha style of painting is mostly found in the temples. Besides, it has a rich heritage of tribal paintings. The Sauras, Kondhs and Santhals decorate their houses with motifs of flowers, birds and geometrical designs. Jhoti or jhunti is also a popular folk art tradition of the State made by women on walls and floors of houses on auspicious occasions. Palm leaf paintings of Odisha are called *pattachitra*, which mostly deal with subject matter related to religion and mythological themes. Raghurajpur, near Puri, is famous for such *pattachitras*. The *applique* art of Pipli also originated as a temple art. Nowadays these art works, designed with coloured clothes, decorate houses and public buildings in various parts of the world.



Lingaraj Temple



Ruins of Konark Temple



Jagannath Temple





Courtesy: Sasmita Samant, Artist

CONTEMPORARY CULTURAL DEVELOPMENTS

Odisha has a rich, diversified topography. It has hills, valleys, dense evergreen forests, scrub jungles, and estuaries. The rainfall, climate and its long coastline also provide excellent conditions for a very variety of flora and fauna. With such natural bounties, the State attracts tourists not only from India, but also from across the globe. The famous wildlife sanctuaries of the State are the Similipal National Park, Chilika, Bhitarkanika and Gahiramatha. Apart from these, Baisipalli Wildlife Sanctuary, Debrigarh, Hadgarh, Kotgarh and Sunabeda sanctuaries are also quite popular. Nandan Kanan, a beautiful zoological park near Bhubaneswar, is famous as a captive breeding centre for *gharials*. It is also breeding centre for white tigers.

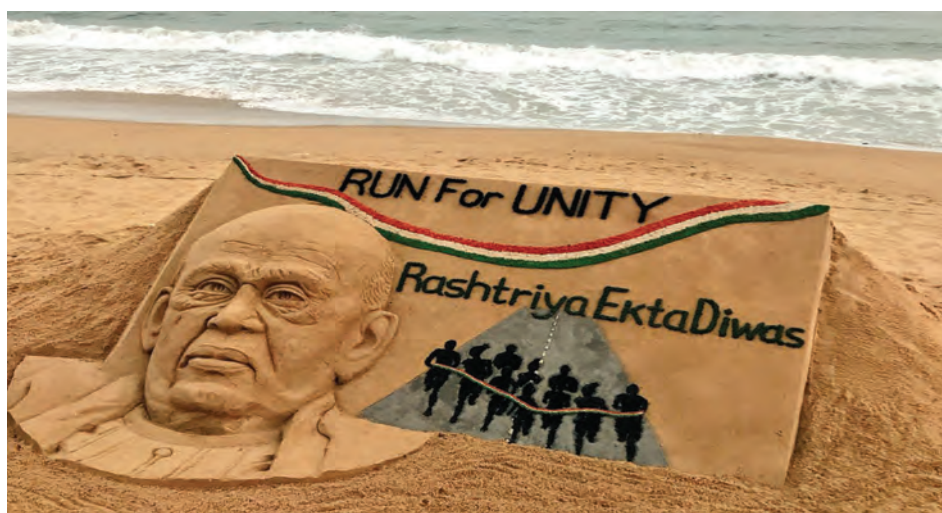
Odisha has many beautiful and unique white sand beaches. Famous among those are the Puri beach, Chandipur beach, Talasari beach, Konark beach and Gopalpur-on-sea.

Chilika is the largest salt water inland lake in the country. It provides sanctuary to lakhs of migratory birds during winter. Irrawaddy dolphins are also seen in Chilika near Satapada.

There are many waterfalls in Odisha too. The major ones among these are Khandadhar, Badaghagara, Nrusinghanath, Harisankar, Phurlijharan, Pradhanpat, Duduma, Barehipani and Devakunda. Taptapani and Atri are famous hot-springs.

Besides, the scenic, serene and sublime Odisha also showcases its cultural innovations through several initiatives, the principal among which are the Konark Dance Festival, International Sand Art Festival, Mukteswar Dance Festival, Rajarani Music Festival and Dhauli-Kalinga Mahotsav.

Sand art of Odisha, a unique type of art form was developed at Puri. It has now spread all over the world. Sudarshan Pattnaik is the main exponent of this art form. He was awarded Padma Shri in 2014.



Sand art by Sudarshan Pattnaik at Puri beach, paying tribute to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, 31 October 2017.



PUNJAB



can be traced to *panca nada*, a Sanskrit word for ‘five rivers’ used for a region mentioned in the Mahabharata. Sutlej, Beas, Ravi, Chenab and Jhelum are the five rivers, of these only Sutlej, Ravi and Beas rivers flow in the present-day Punjab.

The area of Punjab is divided into three regions: Majha, Doaba and Malwa. According to the 2011 Census of India, the total population of Punjab is 2,77,04,236.

The history of Punjab goes back to thousands of years. Archaeological remains unearthed from Ropar establish the undivided Punjab as the cradle of the Indus Valley Civilisation. This area finds mention in the Mahabharata and Ramayana also. Sanghol used to be a flourishing Buddhist monastery in the region. It was visited by Hiuen Tsang in the 7th century CE. Later, this area was ruled by Muslims until around 1300 CE followed by the rule of the Sikhs from 1700 CE to 1849 CE. Punjab has always been famous for the courage and valour of its people. The contributions made by people like Kartar Singh Sarabha, Lala Lajpat Rai, Udharn Singh, Madan Lal Dhillon and Bhagat Singh, during the struggle for Indian independence are well known.

Punjab, a state located in the north-west part of India, is surrounded by Pakistan in the west, Jammu and Kashmir in the north, Himachal Pradesh in the north-east and Haryana and Rajasthan in the south. After the Partition of India in 1947, the Punjab province of British India got divided between India and Pakistan. The Indian Punjab was reorganised on the basis of language in 1966 with Haryanvi-speaking area as Haryana, Pahari-speaking area as Himachal Pradesh alongside the present State of Punjab. Sikhs form the majority in Punjab comprising 57.69 per cent of the population. The name Punjab is derived from two words, Punj meaning ‘five’ and Aab meaning ‘water’ conjointly meaning land of five rivers. The origin of the word

Fact Sheet

State Day	1 November
Geographical Area	50,362 km ²
Capital	Chandigarh
Official Language	Punjabi
State Animal	Black Buck
State Bird	Northern goshawk
State Tree	Shisham



Most of the people in Punjab follow Sikhism which has its origins in the teachings of the first Sikh Guru, Guru Nanak. Hindus form the largest minority; however Muslims form a significant part of the populace. A small number of Christians and Jains are also present in some areas.

CULTURAL SPECIFICITIES

Language

Punjabi is the official language of the state. It is written in the Gurmukhi script (in which the scriptures and the Punjabi language are written). Besides Punjabi, Hindi, Urdu and English are the other languages spoken in Punjab.

Dress

The clothing of the people of Punjab showcases vibrant colours with rich and heavy embroidery works. Punjabi kurta, Tehmat and Pugg (turban or *pagari*) is the traditional dress of Punjabi men. The traditional dress for women is the Punjabi 'Salwar kameez'. The Patiala salwar is also popular here.

Food

Punjabi cuisine is well-known for its generous use of milk, curd, butter and cream. It consists of several varieties of vegetarian and non-vegetarian delicacies. The most popular vegetarian dishes are *Sarson ka Saag*, *Dal Makhani/Dal Handi*, *Choley*, *Punj Ratani Dal*, *Kadhni Paneer*, *Shahi Paneer* and *Sheer Korma*. Some of the popular non-vegetarian dishes are *Tandoori Chicken*, *Butter Chicken*, *Bhuna Ghosht*, *Kebab*, *Amritsari Fish*, *Tandoori Fish*, *Fish Tikka*, *Chicken Biryani*, *Lamb Biryani*, *Keema Naan*, *Reshmi Tikka*, *Malai Tikka* and *Pork Pickle*. The Punjabi dishes consist of several bread variants like

Kulcha, *Phulka*, *Poori*, *Bhatoora*, *Lachha parantha*, *Naan*, *Tandoori roti* and *Parathans* stuffed with *aloo*, *mooli*, etc. *Lassi* is central to Punjabi cuisine. The traditional Punjabi food is incomplete without sweets and desserts. Some popular desserts of Punjab are *Roh di kheer* (rice cooked in sugarcane juice), *Jalebi*, *Malpua*, *Rabri*, *Sewaiyyan*, *Gulab Jamun*, *Zarda*, *Firnee*, *Gaajar Halwa* and *Sooji Halwa*. Dhabas or local roadside restaurants are popular here.

FAIRS AND FESTIVALS

Punjab celebrates a number of fairs and festivals that show its tradition and heritage. Some of the most popular fairs of Punjab are mentioned below.

Chhappar Mela

Held in the region of Ludhiana during the month of September, this fair is dedicated to Guga Pir, who is regarded to be the God of snakes.

Shaheedi Jor Mela

This three-day festival in memory of the sons of Guru Gobind Singh who sacrificed their lives for the freedom of faith, is celebrated in December at Fatehgarh Sahib. People from different parts of Punjab pay homage at the gurudwara here.

Harballabh Sangeet Mela

Organised in Jalandhar in the month of December, this festival is celebrated in memory of the well-known saint musician, Swami Harballabh. Various singers and musicians from all over the country attend this mela.

Martyr's Fair

Every year on 23rd March, this fair is held across Punjab to pay homage to the martyrs, Shaheed Bhagat Singh, Rajguru and Sukhdev.

Ludhiana Jarag Mela, Muktsar Maghi Fair, Prof Mohan Singh Mela and Baba Sodal Mela are some other important fairs which are celebrated here with dedication and fervour.

Punjab also celebrates many festivals. Some of the important ones are mentioned here:



Chole Bhature



Punjabi Food

Lohri

Lohri marks the end of winter, and is celebrated a day before Makar Sankranti in the month of January. On this event, individuals assemble around the fire, sing customary songs, offer desserts, popcorn, groundnuts, etc., to the flames while welcoming each other with warmth. This celebration symbolises supplications for the prosperity of the crops.

Basant Panchami

Announcing the arrival of the spring season, Basant Panchami is celebrated during the month of January or February. People dress themselves in yellow attire, gather in huge numbers and walk down to the fair sites where kite flying competitions are organised.

Hola Mohalla

Celebrated in Anandpur Sahib in March, this celebration was initiated by Guru Gobind Singh in 1700 CE. During this celebration, Sikhs gather in huge numbers to execute mock fights and martial arts, adding military and spiritual components to the celebration of Holi.

Gurpurab

Gurpurab is a festival celebrated in honour of the Sikh Gurus. The three main Gurpurabs are—the birth anniversaries of Guru Gobind Singh, Guru Ram Dass and Guru Nanak Dev. During this festival, special langar is arranged at gurdwaras and processions are taken out where devotees sing religious songs.

Baisakhi

Baisakhi is celebrated on the first day of the Vaisakh month (April–May) according to Nanakshahi or



Gurpurab

Sikh calendar, when harvest is gathered and farmers rejoice. Baisakhi is also known as the foundation day of Khalsa Panth. Singing and dancing are important parts of this festival.

A few other festivals like Eid, Janmashtmi, Diwali, Good Friday, Shivratri, Moharram, Dussehra and Kila Raipur Festival, Teeyan, Babe-da-viah (Batala), etc., are also celebrated here.

PERFORMING ARTS

Music and Dance

Music in the State of Punjab ranges from the local folk music to classical music to devotional music, thus offering a wide range of music for all the occasions like birth, death, wedding, festivals, spiritual occasions and fairs. In Punjab, the most famous classical music gharana is the Patiala Gharana which is notable for its rendering of the *thumri*, *ghazals* and *khyal*. Similarly, Punjabi folk music has songs for every occasion like birth, death, marriage along with songs about the fearlessness and valour of the Punjabi men. In Punjab, devotional music is known as Shabad which signifies 'word'. Also referred to as Gurbani, Shabad is a style or type of *bhajan* which is essentially drawn from the Guru Granth Sahib, the holy book of Sikhs. The contemporary music in Punjabi is popular in India as well as in other parts of the world like the UK and the USA. The Punjabi pop tunes have also been a part of many Hindi films.

Punjab has a rich cultural history. We find existence of numerous dance forms here.

Bhangra

Bhangra is performed only by the men during Baisakhi. This dance used to be performed by the farmers during the harvest season. Famous for its energy and various acrobatic feats, tricks and 'bolis' like 'balle balle' and 'hoy hoy', it is now also performed on other occasions like weddings, festivals and birthdays. It has



Bhangra





Giddha

become very popular in the western world in Canada, the UK and the USA.

Giddha

Giddha is the folk dance of women and is performed mainly on occasions like marriage, Teej festival, *mundan* and sometimes during the harvest season. Women sing satirical songs, accompanied by rhythmic clapping. The subject of the songs vary from love of women for their paternal home to dissatisfaction with in-laws or evils of society.

Luddi, Jhummer, Julli, Dankara, Sammi, Jaago, Gadka and Kikli are some other popular dance forms of Punjab.

VISUAL ARTS

Harmandir Sahib or Golden Temple

The state's outstanding architectural monument is the Harmandir Sahib or Golden Temple at Amritsar, which represents the perfection of both Hindu and Islamic architecture. The higher part of the Harmandir Sahib is decorated and glittered with gold plated styling and the dome imitates a reversed lotus. Anandpur Sahib, Dukh Nivaran Sahib, Tarn Taran, Goindwal Sahib, Khadur Sahib, Baba Bakala are some other important gurdwaras (a place of worship for Sikhs) in the Punjab. There are hundreds of gurdwaras across the State of Punjab. An important feature of the gurdwara is that it places no restriction on any person based on caste, religion, gender, etc. All human beings are allowed and welcomed at a



Golden Temple

gurdwara. Another important aspect of gurdwaras is the common kitchen service called the *langar* open to all devotees.

Martyr's Memorial

On 13 April 1919, the day of Baisakhi, a peaceful gathering of men, women and children at Jallianwala Bagh were brutally massacred by the British soldiers led by General Reginald Dyer. The Martyr's Memorial in the shape of eternal flame at this place signifies the eternal souls of the innocent lives lost.

Attari-Wagah Border Post

This is a border post between India and Pakistan. A frenzy of patriotism among the Indians is seen during the flag lowering ceremony held daily at sunset. It is a sight to watch and an enthralling moment to experience.

Tombs of Mohammed Momin and Haji Jamal

Two beautiful tombs are situated in Nakodar, Jalandhar belonging to an Ustad and his disciple.



Attari-Wagah Border Post

Mohammed Momin was a *tambura* player in the service of Khan-i-Khanan, one of the Maharatnas in the court of Emperor Akbar, and Haji Jamal was his disciple. The tombs are replete with exquisite glazed tile work in traditional ornamentation of floral, geometric and flowerpot motifs in vibrant colours of blue, green, yellow, orange and white.

Sarai Nurmahal

About 13 kms from Jalandhar, Sarai Nurmahal was commissioned by Nurjahan, wife of Emperor Jahangir. The richly ornamented gateway with low-relief sculptures of celestial figures and anthropomorphic animals, reflect its imperial connection, whereas, the delicately executed geometric, floral patterns and human figures speak of the Empress' passion for art.

Moorish Mosque

In the heart of Kapurthala, lies the Moorish Mosque, which was commissioned by Maharaja Jagatjit Singh and designed by the French architect Monsieur M. Manteaux. It is patterned on the lines of the Grand Mosque of Marrakesh, Morocco. Its unconventional architecture of arched cloisters and slopping roofs and the intricate floral paintings on the interiors speak of the Maharaja's fine artistic taste.

Qila Mubarak

Punjab is a place that has lots of forts and palaces that are true depictions of its rich cultural and royal history. Rising majestically in the heart of Bathinda, the gigantic Bathinda Fort is the highest in India. The qila is a witness to many historical events, the most fascinating of which is of Empress Razia Sultan, the only woman ruler of the Mughal rule. She was imprisoned here after she was defeated by her rebellious general, Malik Ikhtiar-ud-din Altunia.

Some other important forts here are Qila Mubarak (Patiala), Gobindgarh Fort (Amritsar), Anandpur Sahib Fort, Bahadurgarh Fort, Shahpur Kandi Fort, Phillaur Fort.

Punjab has several important archeological sites like Dholbaha, Sanghol and Rupnagar. Some



Remains of a Buddhist Stupa at Buddhist Sanghol

other famous monuments are Old Motibagh Palace, Durgiana Mandir, Sheesh Mahal, Fort Museum, Sainik School of Kapurthala, Divan Khana or the Darball Hall.

Apart from these historical monuments, the State also has many museums which house paintings, particularly the Sikh, Mughal and Rajasthani style of miniatures, medals and armours belonging to the princely days of the State, other archaeological, anthropological collections. Important museums are Maharaja Ranjit Singh Museum, Amritsar; Archaeological Museum, Hoshiarpur; Sangrur Museum; Sheesh Mahal Museum, Patiala; Shahed-e-Azam Bhagat Singh Museum, Khatkar Kalan; Shri Guru Teg Bahadur Museum, Sri Anandpur Sahib; Archaeological Site Museum, Sanghol; and Virasat-e-Khalsa, Anandpur Sahib.

Handicrafts

Punjab is rich in its art and craft which is well reflected in the handicrafts of the State. *Phulkari* along with *pidhis*, *jootis*, *durries* and *parandis* are well-known handicrafts of Punjab.

Phulkari

Phulkari (a cloth or shawl embroidered with silk flowers) is an art of embroidering shawls, dupattas and dress materials with floral motifs. Besides floral motifs, birds, animals, human figures, vegetables, pots, buildings, rivers, the sun and the moon, scenes of village life and other imagery are also embroidered. It is done with needle and strands of untwisted silk. The silk threads in golden yellow, red, crimson, orange,





Phulkari

green, blue and pink are usually for embroidery. It is made by female members of the house, and takes a long time to make. Traditionally, a *phulkari* shawl is gifted to the daughter at her wedding.

Woodwork

Woodwork of Punjab is popular throughout the world. The carpenters here make artistic beds with comfortable backrests fitted with mirrors and carved colourful legs called *pawas*. They are also experts in making the comfortable low seats called *peeras* and *peerians*.

Mud work

This has been a popular handicraft of the state since ancient times. In this work, the walls of the houses are first plastered with soil or mud, and after that, different designs and motifs are created on them.

Leather

Leather *jootis* (shoes and slippers) of Punjab are extremely well known. Made from different shades of leather, these *jootis* are decorated with multi-coloured threads.



Leather jootis

Metalwork

The traditional craft of the Thatheras of Jandiala Guru (a town near Amritsar) involves the making of brass



Thatheras at Work (Divya A, Indian Express 23 August 2015)

and copper utensils through a painstaking process. In 2014, this craft was inscribed on the UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

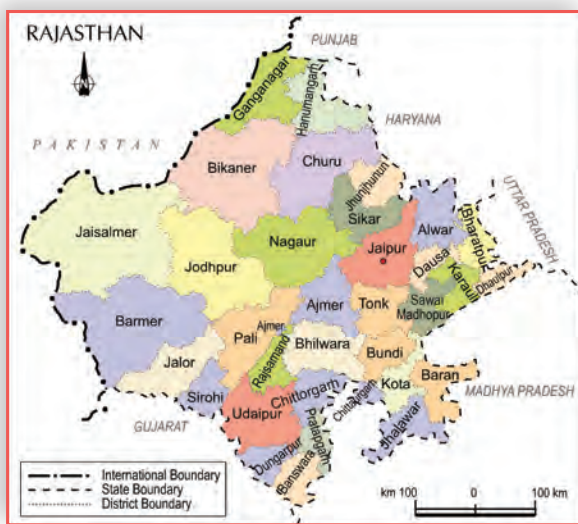
Besides the above-mentioned handicrafts, Punjab is also famous for basketry, metal work and toys.

CONTEMPORARY CULTURAL DEVELOPMENTS

Punjab is known for its vibrant culture. It has emerged as one of the sought-after tourist attractions in India, offering rich cultural and natural heritage experiences. Lot of money and labour has been invested here in developing infrastructure, in preservation and popularisation of historical sites, monuments, other places and buildings of importance, living craft and its traditional cuisine showcasing its unique culture. The carefully designed 'Heritage walks', 'Eco trails' and 'Freedom trails' bring alive the different aspects of its mesmerising history and culture. Today, tourism has become an important source of income, employment and regional development. This land of Gurus, Pirs and warriors believes in earning living through hard work and in sharing the fruits of their labour with others. This is attested by the presence of Punjabis in all parts of the world, where they have been easily absorbed because of their qualities of hardwork and generous behaviour. The tagline of Punjab tourism 'India begins here', motivates you to visit this land more and more to explore the intrinsic features of India and the Indian way of life which is so diverse yet so unified and unique in its essence.



RAJASTHAN



Sawai Madhopur and Sariska Tiger Reserve in Alwar. The state was formed on 30 March 1949, when the numerous princely states were merged into India and Jaipur, also known as Pink City, was made its capital. The state is fed by the rivers Chambal, Ghaggar, Luni, Banas, etc., and several lakes developed by various kings. The more recent intervention of Indira Gandhi canal built for irrigation and the stepwells and dams are other sources of water in Rajasthan.

CULTURAL SPECIFICITIES

Language

Hindi is the official and the most widely spoken language in the state followed by Marwari, Harauti, Mewari, Mewati, Punjabi and Urdu, etc.

Dress

A Rajasthani traditional dress for women comprises an ankle-length skirt and a short top, also known as *lehenga* and *choli*. A piece of cloth known as *chunari* covers the head and protects it from heat. Rajasthani dresses are usually designed in bright colours like

Rajasthan is located on the western side of the country, widely covered with Thar Desert (also known as the Rajasthan Desert and Great Indian Desert) in the western parts and Aravali hill ranges in its eastern and northern parts. Rajasthan shares its border with Punjab in the north; Haryana and Uttar Pradesh in the north-east; Madhya Pradesh in the south-east; and Gujarat in the south-west and the Pakistani provinces of Punjab in the north-west and Sindh in the west, along the Sutlej–Indus river valley. The culturally rich state has a history which goes back to the Indus Valley Civilisation sites at Kalibanga, medieval Dilwara Temples, Mount Abu and temples of Osian, forts and miniature painting traditions, colourful handicrafts and the Keoladeo National Park, Bharatpur, a World Heritage site, two of the national tiger reserves at Ranthambore in

Fact Sheet	
State Day	30 March
Geographical Area	342,239 km ²
Capital	Jaipur
Official Language	Hindi
State Animal	Camel
State Bird	Great Indian bustard
State Flower	Rohida
State Tree	Khejri



blue, yellow and orange with a lot of mirror work and embroidery. The block prints, tie and dye prints, Bagaru prints, Sanganer prints and Zari embroidery



Rajasthani dress for women



A traditional dress for men

are major hand work seen in the attire of both men and women. Men of Rajasthan wear colourful *pagri* or the headgear which is a long piece of cloth with *dhoti* and *kurta*. Women as well as men wear a lot of jewellery made from silver, gold and other metals.

Food

Rajasthani cuisine is largely associated with the Jain and Marwari communities. Marwari *Bhojnalaya*, or vegetarian restaurants, originated in the Marwar region of Rajasthan, are today found in many parts of India. Rajasthan is also known for its snacks like *Bikaneri bhujia*. Other famous dishes include *bajre ki roti* (millet bread) and *lahsun ki chutney* (garlic paste), *mirchi bada*, *pyaaj kachori* and *ghevar*, *mawa kachori* from Jodhpur, *alwar ka mawa* (milk cake), *malpuas* from Pushkar and *rassgollas* from Bikaner.



Dal-bati-churma

Dal-bati-churma is a popular dish of Rajasthan. It consists of three items: Dal(lentils), Baati(bread) and Churma(sweet).It is served with the *dal* (lentils) and spicy garlic *chutney*. *Besan* (gram flour) *ki kadi* is also served with it, which is commonly served at all festivities, including religious occasions, wedding ceremonies and birthday parties in Rajasthan.



Mirch bada



Ghevar (sweet)

FAIRS AND FESTIVALS

The main religious festivals are Diwali, Holi, Gangaur, Teej, Gogaji, Shri Ramdeo Jayanti, Shri Devnarayan Jayanti, Makar Sankranti and Janmashtami.

Gangaur, a festival devoted to Goddess Parvati, is celebrated in March. During this festival, young girls pray for grooms of their choice, while the married women pray for the well-being of their husbands. The festival lasts for 18 days with various activities and culminates in a grand procession marking the arrival of Shiva to escort his bride home.

Pushkar Camel Fair is one of the largest animal fairs in India. During the fair, lakhs of people flock to Pushkar, along with their camels and cattle for many days for livestock trading and also for pilgrimage.



Camel Fair at Pushkar

Pushkar becomes hub of activities when colourfully dressed devotees, musicians, acrobats, folk dancers, traders, comedians, *sadhus* and tourists reach here during Pushkar fair in the month of *Kartika* (October or November), beginning on *ashtami* (eighth day of lunar calendar) and continues until full moon day or *poornima*. Devotees take holy bath in the Sarovar (lake), as the sacred water is known to bestow salvation.

The Camel Festival is also held at Bikaner in January.

Nagaur Fair is held annually around the end of January and early February. Nagaur becomes active with cattle, horses and camels accompanied by their turbaned owners.

Desert Festival at Jaisalmer is celebrated once a year during winter in the desert region. It is a beautiful



A Decorated Camel



Desert Festival

show of music and variety of Rajasthani dances like *Ghoomar*, *Gangaur*, *Gair Dhap*, *Moria*, *Chari* and *Terah taali*. The famous Gair dancers and the fire dances are the special highlights of the festival. Teej is a festival to mark the advent of monsoon.

Urs Ajmer Sharif is held according to the lunar calendar in the memory of the revered Sufi saint Khawaja Moin-ud-din Chisti. He had come from Persia and established the Chishtia (Sufi) in Ajmer. The annual six-day Urs at Ajmer Sharif Dargah of Khwaja Moin-ud-din Chishti who left for heavenly abode in 1256 CE after a six-day prayer in seclusion, is attended by innumerable pilgrims irrespective of their faith. It is an occasion for thousands of believers to congregate at the shrine and offer their prayers.



Urs Ajmer Sharif

PERFORMING ARTS

Dance

Bhavai: This is one of the State's most spectacular dances. A number of veiled women dancers balance up to seven or nine brass pots on their heads as they dance swaying on their soles perched on the top of a glass or on the edge of a sword.

Ghoomar: A community dance of the Rajputs, performed by the women of the house and is traditionally out of bounds for the men. Ghoomar has simple swaying movements to convey the spirit of any auspicious occasion.

All women, young or old, participate in Ghoomar dance, which can continue for hours into the night. As one of the traditional rituals, a bride is expected to dance Ghoomar on being welcomed in her husband's home.

Kalbelia: One of the dance forms of Rajasthan, Kalbelia is performed



Ghoomar



Kalbelia

by the Kalbelias, the snake charmers' community. The *sapera* dancers wear long, black skirt embroidered with silver ribbons.

The Ghoomar dance from Jodhpur and Kalbelia dance of Jaisalmer have gained international recognition.

Terah taali: It is a devotional form of dance performed by the Kamada tribe, to honour their folk hero Baba Ramdeo. Tied to the various parts of their body are thirteen cymbals, which they strike with the ones they hold in their hand.

Kathak: Lucknow, Banaras and Jaipur are three schools or major *gharanas* of Kathak. Amongst these, Jaipur *gharana* is well-known for its rapid intricate footwork, vivacious body movements and subtle *abhinaya*.



Kathak, Jaipur

Music

Jaipur-Atrauli Gharana: The distinctive feature of the Jaipur *gharana* is its complex and melodic form which arises out of the involutedly and undulating phrases that comprise the piece. It was founded by Ustad Alladiya Khan and the various exponents of this *gharana* are Alladiya Khan, Mallikarjun Mansur, Kesarbai Kerkar, Kishori Amonkar, Shruti Sadolikar, Padma Talwalkar and Ashwini Bhide Deshpande.

Rajasthan is also known for hundreds of its local musical instruments which include *Rawanhattha*, *Kamaicha*, *Sindhi Sarangi*, *Morchang*, *Dedh Satara*, *Naag Phani*, *Ghara*, *Jantar*, *Chikara*, *Ektara*, *Murali*, *Gujari*, *Dheru*, *Bhapang*, *Khartal*, etc.



Rajasthani Folk Singers



Rajasthani Folk Singers



Kathputli



Use of kartal and ghungru



Folk music is an important part of Rajasthani culture. *Kathputli, bhopa, chang, teratali, ghindr, kachchhighori* and *tejaji* are examples of the traditional Rajasthani culture. Folk songs are usually ballads which relate heroic deeds and love stories; and religious or devotional songs known as *bhajans* and *banis* which are often accompanied by musical instruments like *dholak, sitar* and *sarangi*.

VISUAL ARTS

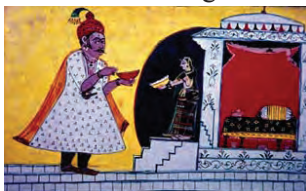
Miniature Paintings of Rajasthan

Rajasthan's role in the development of Indian art has been very important with miniature paintings being perhaps the most fascinating with distinctive styles. The decoration of dwellings and other household objects is another example of the creative genius of Rajasthani painting.

From 16th century onwards there flourished different schools of paintings like the Mewar school, Bundi-Kota kalam, Jaipur, Bikaner, Kishangarh and Marwar schools.

Each school of painting has its distinctive features. For instance, the flowing rivers, dense forests, lush green fields of Kota-Bundi region can be seen in the paintings of that region. In palaces of Kota-Bundi, the paintings depicting hunting scenes and animal fights are displayed. Other than nature, the figures of women are graceful, with well-proportioned bodies and sharp features. Colours used are mainly bright, with red prominently appearing in the background.

The rulers of Amber-Jaipur were closest to the Mughals and had maintained political and social links with them. Therefore, it is only natural to find a strong Mughal influence in the paintings here. Examples of this can be seen in the paintings in



Miniature painting of Malwa school



Mewar school of painting

the palaces of Amber, Bairat and Toda Rai Singh and much later in Samod, Achrol, Shahpura, Alwar and Tonk.

The Kishangarh school is best known for its Bani Thani paintings. It is a totally different style of painting like with highly exaggerated features long necks, large, almond shaped eyes, long fingers and the use of subdued colours. The originality of style can be credited to its royal patron, Raja Sawant Singh, better known as Nagari Das.

Jodhpur has a very strong folk tradition and here the figures are mainly of robust warriors and dainty women. Paintings of the legendary lovers like *Dhola-Maru* on camel back, hunting scenes which include innumerable horses and elephants dominate the paintings of the Marwar region.

Bikaner also had strong Mughal influences and therefore developed a style which was a combination of both the local as well as borrowed styles. The colours used by the miniature artists were made from minerals, vegetables, precious stones, indigo, conch shells, pure gold and silver.

The preparation and mixing of colour was an elaborate process and it took weeks, sometimes months, to get the desired results. Very fine, specially created brushes were made for different kinds of paintings. The landscape changed, the colours used were varied, paintings were done on paper and palm leaf to illustrate manuscripts, and on walls of palaces and the inner chambers of forts, *havelis* and paintings were done on cloth.

However, the importance of miniatures has never diminished even after all these years. Pure Rajput paintings and those influenced by the Mughal court provide an interesting insight into the lifestyle of the centuries and continue to fascinate scholars to this day. Artists in Jaipur, Nathdwara and Kishangarh still work on miniatures and produce excellent work.

The cloth paintings of Rajasthan include the *phads* (scroll



paintings) used by the Bhopas and the *pichwais* (cloth hangings) used behind the deity in Vaishnava temples. Done in bright colours with bold outlines, these paintings have very strong religious traditions, and the artist who works on them considers himself to be a servant of the Lord and puts *shraddha* or devotion on each *pichwai* or *phad* that he paints.

Handicrafts

Stone Craft

Marble is found in abundance in Rajasthan and the craftsmen fashion beautiful marble icons of gods and goddesses decorated with gilt painting. Apart from religious icons, staircases, furniture, tableware and artifacts are also crafted by the highly skilled stone carvers. Jaipur and Jaisalmer are also famous for ornamental *jaali* or trelliswork.

Terracotta

Villages and towns in Udaipur and Molela have a tradition of clay pottery, which has blossom into a fine art. Here, potters use the clay at their command to create pots, objects of art such as warriors mounted on horses, elephants and their *mahouts* and so on.



Terracotta Art

Block Printed Textiles

Sanganer is famous for its block printed textiles. A special feature of the Sanganer prints is the harmony of various colours and designs as well as the use of gold and silver in the prints. Earlier, vegetable colours were used but today both vegetable and chemical dyes are used. Ajrak is the hand block printing which is done on both sides. Only natural dyes are used in Ajrak block printing.

Jadau and Kundan Jewellery

Jaipur's *kundan jadau* and *meenakari* are part of the great jewellery heritage of India. Jewellers craft range

of old style necklace, rings and earrings. Enamelling or *meenakari* work involves a laborious process wherein the piece is fixed on a stick of lacquer and delicate floral designs are engraved on it.



Kundan Jewellery

Pottery of Jaipur

All the materials that go into the composition of Jaipur's blue pottery are quartz, raw glaze, sodium sulphate, fuller's earth locally known as multani clay. All require the same temperature, and the pottery needs to be fired only once unlike other pottery.

Leather Craft

Rajasthan is famous for its decorated leather items. *Mojdis* or thick footwear are made out of locally tanned leather and are generally decorated with silk or metal embroidery and beads.

Gesso Work

Rajasthan has fine samples of gesso work like the ones found in the palaces. The camel skin bottles of Bikaner are an example of the gesso painted objects of everyday use. In Tonk, a special type of shield of thick hide is decorated with coloured gesso. This is finely varnished which gives durability apart from the finish. Gesso in mirror decoration is a fantastic form of architectural decoration. Jaipur is also noted for glass mosaics in which the design is cut out of plaster or metal and behind the opening pieces are formed by neatly arranged coloured glass.

Tie and Dye

Principally, Rajasthan is known for its tie and dye technique in which fabrics are tied in small twists using thread. These are then dipped into *vats* with their array of bright colours to create a mosaic of patterns called *bandhani*. These textiles, mostly used for sarees and *odhnis*, are done in different patterns.

Puppets

The art of *kathputli* or the puppetry has a long tradition in Rajasthan. Mostly, they consist of painted



wooden heads draped with dresses made from old fabrics and sequined for charm.

The mixture and brilliance of Rajasthan's architectural heritage

in the form of majestic forts, intricately carved temples and *havelis* (mansion), forts, stepwells, and the vibrant and colourful traditions make Rajasthan a paradise for tourists, historians and scholars. This vibrant region has been home of the Rajput warriors who had ruled here for many years. The Rajputs were prolific builders and have dotted the arid Aravali landscape with their legacy of some of the most imposing and magnificent forts and palaces in the world. Today the structures tell the story of gallantry, courage and tragedy of the bygone era.



Rajasthani Puppets

Places of Worship

Nathdwara

It is one of the celebrated pilgrimage shrines of India, enshrining Krishna as Govardhana Giridhari. Nathdwara, means 'Gate of the Lord'. Shrinathji represents the form of Krishna, in which he lifted the Govardhana hill and subdued Indra, the king of Devas, who was sending an incessant downpour of rain, causing immense hardship to the cowherds of Gokul.

Dilwara Temples, Mt. Abu

Mount Abu, a hill station in southern Rajasthan was an important Vaishnava and Shaivite center till 11th century. Today, it is recognised for its magnificent Jain temples of Dilwara. Its sober exterior contrasts with the wealth of the interior ornamentation and carving in marble. The Dilwara temples enshrine various Jain *tirthankaras* and



Dilwara Temples

saints. Built between the 11th and 13th centuries, the marble temples of Dilwara are one of the most sacred pilgrimages of the Jains.

Ranakpur

Ranakpur, in Pali district, is renowned for some marvelous carved temples in Amber stone. Ranakpur is one of the five holy places of the Jain community. These temples were built during the reign of the liberal and gifted monarch Rana Kumbha in the 15th century.



Ranakpur

Osian

Osian, near Jodhpur is the ancient town of Thar desert which used to be a trading centre between 8th and 12th centuries. The main temples are 15 Jain temples, Sachiya Mata temple, Surya temples, Harihara temples, Pippala Devi temple, Shiv temple and Vishnu temple.



Osian Monuments

Forts and Palaces

The magnificent forts and palaces of Rajasthan of varied sizes were built during the medieval period as a defense mechanism to keep the enemy away. The notable feature about each of them is the exquisite carving work that has survived till date and still receives appreciation from people worldwide. Indeed, six majestic hill forts located in Chittorgarh, Kumbhalgarh, Sawai Madhopur, Jhalawar, Jaipur and Jaisalmer were included in the UNESCO World Heritage List in 2013.

Chittorgarh Fort

Chittorgarh remained the capital of Mewar from the 8th century to the 16th century and was the stronghold of



Chittorgarh Fort

the Sisodia Rajputs. It is regarded as the symbol of Rajput chivalry, resistance and bravery. Chittorgarh covers an area of seven miles covering 700 acres of land with its fortifications, palaces, temples and towers. The fort is situated on a 180m high hill that rises swiftly from the plains. The road leads through seven gates namely Padan Pol, Bhairon Pol, Hanuman Pol, Ganesh Pol, Jorla Pol, Lakshman Pol, to the main gate, Rampol. Inside the Chittorgarh fort there are many palaces like the Rana Kumbha Palace, the Fateh Prakash Palace, the Tower of Victory and Rani Padmini's Palace. The Palace of Rana Kumbha is built of finely cut stone covered with coats of stucco and it is painted.



Chittorgarh Fort

Amber Fort

This fort is set in a picturesque location near Jaipur, representing its glory from the days when it was the capital of the ruling Kachhawahas before it was shifted to Jaipur in 1727. Amber fort was built in red sandstone and white marble by Raja Man Singh in the 16th century. The Palace of Mirrors (the Sheesh Mahal) is also of special interest. The Sheesh Mahal has walls inlaid with exquisite mirrors. An impressive flight of stairs leads to the Diwan-e-aam (hall of public audience) which has latticed galleries and double row of columns, each having a capital in the shape of elephants on the top. The Maota Lake in front of Amber Fort gives spectacular and beautiful reflections of the magnificent Amber fort-palace. The fort also has a Kali Temple known as Shila Devi Temple, which is famous for its mysterious history, huge silver lions and silver doors with raised relief. Ganesh Pol leads to the residential apartments of the Maharaja. Jai Mandir or Hall of Victory has a dazzling mirror



Amber Fort, Jaipur

ceiling and an inlaid panel. Sukh Niwas or Residence of Pleasure has an ivory inlaid sandalwood door.

Shekhawati takes its name after its ruler Rao Shekha. Shekhawati means the garden of Shekha. The towns of Shekhawati region are known for their amazing painted *havelis*. Such is the appeal of the *haveli* that this region is called the open art gallery of Rajasthan. The plethora of painted *havelis* in rich artistic tradition are noted for their frescoes depicting mythological themes and huge animals.

Patwa's *havelis* of Jaisalmer are also famous for their carving and architecture.

Jaipur

Amber had been the capital of Kacchwahas till Raja Sawai Jai Singh felt the need of shifting his capital to another place for the safety of the ever-increasing population and growing scarcity of water. In the 18th century, Jaipur became his capital and the first planned city of India, which was designed by a brilliant Bengali architect who was well versed in his area of study and was known as Vidyadhar Bhattacharya.

The city was planned on the principles laid down in traditional Indian architecture mentioned in the *shilpa shastras*. The city was planned in a grid system and boasts of wide and straight avenues and roads that are arranged dexterously in nine rectangular city sectors. As a safety measure against any possible invasions, the city was enveloped with the fortification walls with seven gates. It is astonishing that the whole city was painted in autumn pink.

Hawa Mahal is the best-known landmark and the signature monument of Jaipur, built by the poet Raja Sawai Pratap Singh. It is



Hawa Mahal

the delicate façade that can be seen from outside the city palace. The five-storeyed building flaunts Rajput architecture and artistry to its best, including its 953 pink sandstone windows known as *jharokhas* that are built in such a manner that it resembles a giant honeycomb.



Jantar Mantar or the magical device of Jaipur is one of the five observatories in India built by Sawai Jai Singh, the leading astronomer of his times and the founder of Jaipur. The collection of giant masonry astronomical instruments continue to provide accurate information even today.



Jantar Mantar

Udaipur City Palace

Udaipur is a city of palaces, lakes, temples, gardens, carrying the flavour of a great past, epitomising valor and chivalry. The imposing city palace, towering over the lake Pichhola, is the largest palace complex in Rajasthan. Courtyards, pavilions, terraces, corridors, rooms and gardens adorn this palace. The palace museum contains a wonderful collection of old Rajput weaponry. The Mor Chowk is filled with beautiful mosaics of peacocks. The Manak Mahal has inlay glass and mirror work while Krishna Vilas has a remarkable collection of miniatures.

Umaid Bhawan Palace, Jodhpur: The royal family of Jodhpur still lives in a part of this palace which was actually built with the purpose of giving employment to the people of Jodhpur during



Umaid Bhawan Palace

a long drawn famine. Another part of the palace houses a well-maintained museum, displaying an amazing array of items belonging to the Maharaja and the royal family like weapons, antiques and fascinating clocks, crockery and trophies.

Mehrangarh Fort: The 5-km long Mehrangarh fort houses some marvelously carved panels, latticed windows, magnificent palaces, huge ramparts and seven gates to guard the fort. The superb collection

of palanquins, elephants howdahs, miniature paintings, ancient musical instruments, royal costumes, weaponry, cannons, royal furniture and variety of turbans tied in Rajasthan makes the fort even more interesting.



Mehrangarh Fort

CONTEMPORARY CULTURAL DEVELOPMENTS

A large number of festivals and fairs are held round the year throughout Rajasthan. They vividly reflect the vibrant cultural heritage of the State. The prominent ones include Kite Festival in Jaipur, Camel Festival in Bikaner, Kumbhalgarh Festival, Nagaur Cattle Fair, Desert Festival in Jaisalmer, Baneshwar Fair in Dungarpur, Braj Holi Festival in Bharatpur, Dhulandi Festival in Jaipur, Gangaur Fair in Jaipur, Mewar Festival in Udaipur, Mahaveerji Fair in Sawai Madhopur, Summer Festival in Mount Abu, Teej Festival in Jaipur, Kajli Teej in Bundi, Abhaneri Festival in Dausa, Marwar Festival in Jodhpur, Ranakpur Festival in Pali, Matsya Festival in Alwar, Pushkar Cattle Fair, Chandrabhaga Fair in Jhalawar, Bundi Festival, Kolayat Fair in Bikaner, Dussehra in Kota and finally Winter Festival in Mount Abu. No wonder that Rajasthan continues to be a favorite destination for various kinds of travellers from across India and the world.



RAJASTHAN

JAANE KYA DIKH JAAYE!



SIKKIM



Sikkim was adjudged the cleanest state of India in a 2016 sanitation survey. It became the first fully organic farming state in India in 2016. It is one of the biodiversity hotspots in the world. Sikkim figured as the world's number one place to visit, in the 2014 list prepared by Lonely Planet, a popular travel guide. Indeed, the phrase, 'small is beautiful' aptly describes Sikkim. You might have heard of actor Danny Denzongpa and footballer Bhaichung Bhutia, who hail from Sikkim.

With only 86 persons per sq. km., it is also among the least populated states of India, With its size almost double of that of Goa, Sikkim consists of four districts: East, West, North and South. Siliguri and New Jalpaiguri (NJP) are the nearest railway stations and

Bagdogra airport is located nearby. A new airport has come up at Pakyong in East Sikkim.

Nestled along the slopes of the eastern Himalayas, Sikkim is a landlocked state. One can easily come across a wide range of spectacular landscapes at different altitudes. Sikkim has snow-capped mountains, rivers, waterfalls, sacred lakes, verdant forests, exotic flora and fauna. It is strategically located in the vicinity of the Siliguri corridor or what is termed as 'Chicken Neck' between India's mainland and its north-eastern region. It is connected with the Darjeeling district of West Bengal on its southern periphery. It has international borders with Nepal in the west, Bhutan in the east, and the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) of China in the north. The Chumbi valley in Tibet can be approached through two major passes — Jelep La and Nathu La. They are on the Old Silk Route.



*Kham Sum Ongdi,
Seal of the State
Government of Sikkim*

<i>Fact Sheet</i>	
<i>State Day</i>	16 May
<i>Geographical Area</i>	7,096 km ²
<i>Capital</i>	Gangtok
<i>Official Language</i>	English
<i>State Animal</i>	Red Panda
<i>State Bird</i>	Blood Pheasant
<i>State Flower</i>	Nobile orchid
<i>State Tree</i>	Rhododendron





Red Panda



Blood Pheasant



Nobile Orchid



Rhododendron

Khangchendzonga (Kanchenjunga), the third highest peak in the world, is located in Sikkim. It is worshipped as the guardian deity of Sikkim. Khangchendzonga National Park (KNP), with an area of 1,784 sq. km occupies a quarter of Sikkim's area! In 2016, the UNESCO recognised the KNP as a World Heritage site, having both natural and cultural significance. Teesta river originates from the Cholamu Lake and flows right across Sikkim. The confluence of Teesta with its tributary, Rangeet happens at Melli near the Sikkim–West Bengal border.

The early history of Sikkim is generally traced to the 13th century during which a blood-brotherhood treaty was signed between representatives of Lepchas and Bhutias at Kabi Lungchok in North Sikkim.

The historical visit of three revered Lamas to Yuksam in 1641 in West Sikkim was a landmark event. This was the event during which they consecrated Phuntsog Namgyal as the first Chogyal of Sikkim. Thus, the era of the Namgyal dynasty began in Sikkim.

Sikkim, a protectorate of India, emerged as a state of India during the mid-1970s. After being a monarchy for 333 years, it became an integral part of

the democratic republic of India. It became the 22nd state as a result of the Constitution of India (36th Amendment) Act, 1975. May 16 is celebrated as the State Day of Sikkim.

CULTURAL SPECIFICITIES

Language

Despite its small size, Sikkim has tremendous linguistic diversity. Among the languages and dialects spoken here are Nepali, Bhutia, Lepcha, Limbu, Newari, Rai, Gurung, Manger, Sherpa, Tamang and Sunwar, apart from Hindi and English. Nepali became one of the scheduled languages of India since 1992.

Food

The cultural diversity of Sikkim is also reflected in its cuisine. It is literally a melting pot of different styles of cooking with different ingredients. Each dish has a unique flavour and taste. Momos are, of course, the ubiquitous dish all over Sikkim. Fermented food and bamboo shoots are common elements of many dishes of Sikkim. Table 1 mentions some of the popular dishes and food items of Sikkim.



Rabdenste, site of ancient capital of Sikkim



Coronation Throne of Norbugang near Yuksam



Dubdi Monastery in Yuksam, built in 1701 CE

Table 1

Food Item	Description
Momo	Hot steamed flour dumplings filled with minced meat or vegetables, served with chilli sauce and hot soup.
Thukpa/ Gya-thuk	Tibetan style noodles in soup, with meat or vegetables.
Sishnu	Soup prepared from leaves of edible wild varieties of nettle.
Saelroti	Special bread prepared by the Nepalese, mostly during festivals; fermented rice batter deep fried in a ring shape and eaten usually with potato curry or meat.
Chhurpi	Fermented dairy product prepared from cow milk with a mild sour taste is used for making soups and Achar (pickles); used with Ningro, a wild fern to make an exotic combination.
Kinema	Fermented soybean food with a unique flavour is eaten with rice.
Gundruk and Sinki	Vegetable products sun dried after fermentation and stored for consumption; used for soups, curries and pickles.
Mesu	Fermented bamboo shoots used to make pickles.
Tama	Fresh bamboo shoots used with pork to make a tasty curry.
Chaang	Fermented cereal-based alcoholic beverage; sipped from a bamboo receptacle with a thin bamboo pipe.

Dress

The colourful costumes of Sikkim reflect its cultural diversity. The people of Nepali, Bhutia and Lepcha communities have different traditional attire.

FAIRS AND FESTIVALS

While some festivals are commonly celebrated by the people all over Sikkim, many fairs and festivals are unique to different religious communities (mostly Hindus and Buddhists) and linguistic communities (mostly Nepalese, Bhutias, Lepchas), regions and seasons. The well-known festivals are Loosong/ Namsong, Maghey Sankranti, Sonam Lochhar, Losar (Tibetan New Year), Bumchu, Ram Navami (Chaitey Dasain), Baisakhi (Nepali New Year), Sakewa, Saga Dawa, Drukpa Tshechi, Guru Rinpoche’s Thrunkar Tshechu, Tendong Lho Rum Faat, Indraajatra, Pang

Lhabsol, Dasain (Durga Puja), Diwali (Tihar), Lhabab Duechen, Christmas and Tamu Lochaar.

PERFORMING ARTS

Dance

Mask dances of Sikkim are highly popular, traditional dance forms. The dancers donning dragon, animal and bird masks along with colourful costumes perform these dances with much gusto. They convey the universal message of the triumph of good over evil.



Nepali Dance



Bhutia Dance



Lepcha Dance



Snow Lion Dance



Rumtek Monastery



Tashiding Monastery



Pemayangtse Monastery



Phodong Monastery

VISUAL ARTS AND CRAFTS

Thangka is the most popular art form of Sikkim. It is a religious scroll, related to various traditions of Tibetan Buddhism. It is hand-painted on a fabric with dazzling colours. A guest in Sikkim is mostly greeted



INDIA: UNITY IN CULTURAL DIVERSITY

with a traditional ceremonial scarf, called *khada*. It is usually in white colour and made of silk. Shri Sonam Tshering Lepcha was awarded Padma Shri in 2007 for Art and Smt. Hilda Mit Lepcha was awarded Padma Shri in 2013 for Art.



Namgyal Institute of Tibetology, Gangtok

CONTEMPORARY CULTURAL DEVELOPMENTS

Despite the rugged topography and frequent landslides especially during the monsoon, Sikkim has emerged as an ideal destination for cultural and eco-tourism, adventure tourism, and mountaineering in the Himalayas.

Most of the lakes such as Khecheopalri, Gurudongmar and Tsangu are treated as sacred spots. This reflects the deep reverence that people of Sikkim have for nature.

The Nathu La Pass was reopened for cross-border trade on 6 July 2006 after nearly 44 years. This was shut down after the border war between China and India in 1962. A new and shorter route for pilgrims to Kailash Mansarovar Yatra was opened through Nathu La in 2015. The nearby Baba Mandir is another popular attraction.

From being a remote, secluded kingdom in the Himalayas, Sikkim transformed itself into a progressive state, which is at the forefront of social and economic development. Sikkim swiftly evolved from a feudalistic pattern of society into a vibrant modern democratic society, where people from all communities get opportunities to progress. Sikkim is a plural society having people who belong to different religious and linguistic backgrounds. It is a peaceful state where communal harmony reigns supreme.



*Gurudongmar Lake,
North Sikkim*



*Khecheopalri Lake,
Pelling*



Guru Padmasambhava



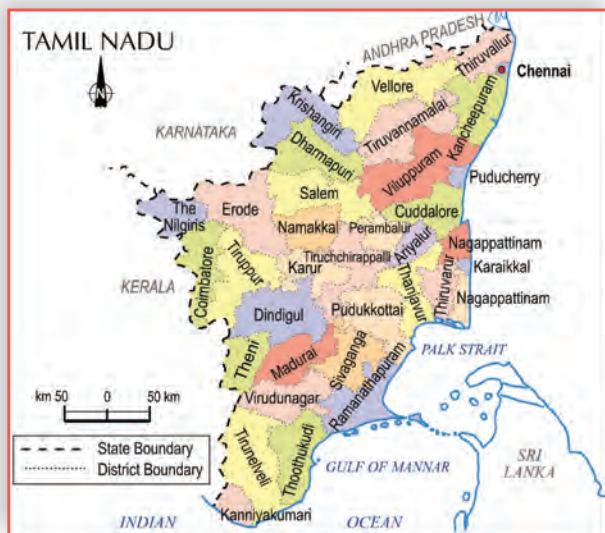
Nathu La



The tableau of Sikkim passes through the Rajpath, New Delhi during the full dress rehearsal for the Republic Day Parade on 23 January 2016



TAMIL NADU



The name 'Tamil Nadu' literally means 'The Land of the Tamils'. Located in the south-eastern extremity of the Indian peninsula, Tamil Nadu occupies a vantage geographical position as its coast opens up to the Bay of Bengal to the east and the Indian Ocean to the south. At its southern most point, the Arabian Sea meets these vast expanses of water making it a unique confluence of three seas. Similarly, the Eastern and the Western Ghats meeting at the Nilgiri Hills in its westernmost part provide a distinctive geographical outline to the State. The State comes seventh in terms of population in the country as per the 2011 Census. Mostly dependant on the monsoons, it receives significant rainfall from June to September (southwest monsoon) and from October to December (northeast monsoon). These *monsoonal*

rains also feed rivers like the Kaveri (Cauvery), Palar, Ponnaiyar (South Pennar), Vaigai, Thamirabarani, which water the State and sustain its agriculture and industry. The Kaveri delta, historically famous for paddy cultivation, especially provides the backbone to the State's agriculture and in many ways defines its hallowed cultural ethos and achievements. Mighty empires like that of the Cholas' had been built up with this area serving as their core. Not surprisingly, therefore, the river is also adored by some as 'the Ganga of the South'.

CULTURAL SPECIFICITIES

Tamil Nadu is considered as one among the most developed States of the Indian Union. Nearly half of its population at present dwells in urban areas owing to rapid industrialisation. Nevertheless, the State and its people have continued to preserve and promote the classical culture which they have inherited from the past. The thriving Tamil language and literature, the general way of living of the people, their food habits and clothing, all bear testimony to this fact.

Fact Sheet	
Geographical Area	1,30,060 km ²
Capital	Chennai
Official Languages	Tamil, English
State Animal	Nilgiri Tahr
State Bird	Emerald Dove
State Flower	Glory Lily (Kandhal)
State Tree	Palmera Palm



Language

The official language of Tamil Nadu is Tamil. It is one of the oldest lasting classical languages in the world. However, there are also people in the State who speak other languages. Among them, the most prominent are Telugu, Kannada, Urdu, Malayalam and Hindi. Besides, the State is also home to several native languages spoken by a number of indigenous communities. According to one study conducted by the People’s Linguistic Survey of India, there are 36 such languages of which it listed 20, with 17 of them categorised as ‘endangered’. Table 1 mentions these and other languages spoken by people depending on circumstances in the State.

Table 1

Classical Languages	Tamil, Sanskrit
Modern Indian Languages	Telugu, Kannada, Urdu, Malayalam, Hindi
Tribal Languages spoken by Indigenous Communities	Bettakurumba, Mullukurumba, Palukurumba, Irula, Kota, Kattunaicka, Toda (all spoken in Nilgiris); Eravalla, Kadar, Muduvar (all spoken in Anamalai Hills); Kalrayan Malayali, Pachaimalai Malayali (all spoken in North Arcot, Yercaud, Kolli Hills); Kanikaran (spoken in Kanyakumari, Tirunelveli); Kollimalai (spoken in Kolli Hills); Urali (spoken in Erode)

Literature

Tamil has a literary tradition that goes back to the period of the Sangams (c. 300 BC – c. 300 CE). The most well-known surviving works from this period are the *Tolkappiyam* (a book of grammar attributed to Tolkappiyar), *Ettu Togai* (*Eight Anthologies*), *Pattu Pattu* (*Ten Idylls*), epics like *Silappadikaram* and *Manimekalai* (authored by Ilango Adigal and Sattanar respectively), *Thiru Kural* (a Tamil treatise par excellence by Thiruvalluvar) and *Perungadai* (another work of epic proportion by Kongu Velir). This period was succeeded by the age of devotional poetry of both the Shaiva and the Vaishnava variety

in Tamil literature. These works are referred to as the Thevaram and the Nalayira Divya Prebandham respectively. Of the latter, the compositions of the female saint-poet Andal’s Thiruppavai are still sung with great admiration. Similarly, of the former, the compositions of Sambandar in praise of Lord Shiva are ranked among the finest poetical works in Tamil literature. Devotionalism made way for the age of epics coinciding with the ascendance of the imperial Cholas in the 9th century. *Jivaka* (Seevaga) Chintamani of Tiruttakka Tevar, Kalingattupparani of Jayamkondar, Takkayagapparani of Kavichakravarti Ottakoothar and Ramayana of Kamban have come down as the finest Tamil literary works from this period. The decline of the Cholas in the 13th century saw a deceleration in the growth of Tamil literature though a large number of philosophical and other works were produced under local patronage in succeeding years. Arunagirinathar’s *Tiruppugal*, consisting of over a thousand devotional songs in praise of Lord Muruga, is one of the best known works of this period. In the 17th century, efforts were made to begin a new era in Tamil literature. *Sirappuranam*, the life of Prophet Muhammad was written in the 18th century by Umaru Pulavar. This was also the century when Father Beschi introduced modern prose into Tamil literature. In the 19th century, *Pratapa Mudaliar Charitram* by P. Sundaram Pillai was published as the first Tamil novel beginning an era of new creative writing. In the 20th century, Subramania Bharati appeared as a great national poet creating a new rhythm and style. Table 2 provides a list of the Tamil litterateurs, who have received the Jnanpith Award.



Thiruvalluvar Statue in Kanyakumari



Subramania Bharati



Table 2

Name of the Litterateur	Year of Award	Literary Work
P. V. Akilandam	1975	<i>Chittrappavai</i>
D. Jayakanthan	2002	For contribution to Tamil literature

Dress

Tamil Nadu has been the cradle of South Indian culture from antiquity. This is demonstrably visible in all aspects of peoples' life in the peninsular part of India, especially in the manner they dress and eat. In ancient times, as per references found in the Sangam literature, the men wore only a single piece of cloth covering the lower part of their body and the women wore a saree. The tradition has largely continued since then. Today, visitors to the State will find the men mostly wearing a rectangular piece of cloth called lungi or dhoti with an *angavastram* put sometimes across and sometimes around the shoulders. Wearing a shirt with half or full sleeve to cover the upper part of the body has also become a common practice among men in the modern times. The lungi is generally worn in the *mundu* style, draping the cloth around the waist with one portion of it hand-pleated in the front. A longer dhoti on the other hand is worn with a *kacchha* with one part of it hauled up between the legs from the front and tucked at the back with a neatly done up frill.

The women of the State likewise continue to drape themselves with the traditional saree. To this, a



Tamil Nine Yards Saree



A Tamil man in traditional dress



A Tamil woman in traditional dress

blouse and a petticoat have been added in the modern times. These sarees come woven in a variety of materials like cotton, silk, chiffon, georgette, organza, but the silk sarees of Kanchipuram are still the most sought after as women mostly prefer to wear these on important occasions like weddings and festivals.

Pavada or half-saree, comprising a heavily frilled full-length skirt, a short blouse and a *davani* or light shawl worn over the blouse across the shoulder to cover the upper part of the body, has traditionally been the preferred attire for the young girls in the State. However, in recent times, new trends in dressing have emerged.

Food

Rice is the principal agricultural produce of Tamil Nadu. Naturally, the main items eaten in the morning, daytime or in the evening are made of rice. Rice cooked with tamarind juice, spices, oil and salt makes the popular tamarind rice or *puli sadam*. Similarly, the other well-known rice dishes are made by cooking rice with coconut, tomato or curd with essential condiments. A proper vegetarian meal consists of either simple steamed rice called *sadam* or one or more of these rice items with side dishes like *sambar* (a combination of vegetables cooked with lentils, onions, chillies, coriander and turmeric powder with a pinch of asafoetida), *rasam* (soup prepared with tamarind juice as the base with the addition of tomato, chilli, pepper, cumin, salt, garlic, etc.), *thayir* (curd), *appalam* (fried sun-dried wafer made from black gram flour), *poryial* (vegetables fried in open pan with or without grated coconut), *kulambu* (curry made of pulses, vegetables and tamarind), *oorukaai* (pickle), *mor* (butter milk flavoured with ginger, salt, curry leaves) and *payasam* (rice boiled in milk and sugar). Such a meal is traditionally served on a plantain leaf. In addition, the State also offers a variety of non-vegetarian dishes that are popular in Madurai, Sivaganga, Tirunelveli and other southern districts. However, Tamil Nadu has by far earned its name and fame in the whole of India and abroad for the items that it offers for breakfast. Most of these items are also eaten as snacks in the evening and at





A vegetarian Tamil meal served on a plantain leaf



A non-vegetarian Tamil meal served on a plantain leaf



Athirasam



Kuli Paniyaram



A Tamil breakfast platter with dosai, idli, vadai



Murukku



Ven Pongal

dinner time. Table 3 provides a list of such items.

Table 3

Idli	Small steamed round cakes made from a batter of fermented black lentils and rice.
Vadai	A common term used for different types of small fried cakes made from a batter of fermented black lentils and rice.
Dosai	A type of pancake made from the batter of fermented black gram and rice.
Oothappam	A thick pancake made from the batter of fermented black gram and rice to which onions, tomatoes, chillies and curry leaves are added while preparing it on an open flat pan.
Pongal	A dish made from rice and lentils cooked with cumin, pepper, ginger and clarified butter.
Upma	This breakfast item is cooked as a thick porridge from dry roasted semolina or coarse rice flour with various vegetables and other seasonings added during cooking, according to individual preferences.

Sweet dishes of Tamil Nadu like *athirasam*, *chakkarai pongal* and *kuli paniyaram* are equally popular among the masses. *Murukku* is another snack item that is ubiquitous by its presence across the State.

FAIRS AND FESTIVALS

Pongal is the most well-known festival of Tamil Nadu. It is celebrated over four days. The first day is observed as Bhogi. On this day, the people clean

their households and get rid of the worn out things to welcome the new on the next day, that is also called the day of Makara Sankranthi. This day, celebrated as Pongal, marks the first day of



Thai pongal celebration

the auspicious Tamil month called *Thai*. It usually falls on the 14th day of the month of January every year. Apart from its astronomical significance (as the Sun begins its northward movement for the next six months from this day), the day is also celebrated as *Uzhavar Thirunal* or the 'Farmers' Festival'. That is because it provides the farmers the occasion to celebrate by cooking the new rice with jaggery, from their harvests. The third day is celebrated as *Mattu Pongal* to show gratitude to the bulls, bullocks and cows. Traditionally, these animals are bathed, their horns are painted and they are taken around with jingle bells tied to their necks. An event called *Jalli Kattu* featuring a contest between a well-groomed bull and men for the control of the former is also organised, especially in the southern parts of the State, on this occasion. The fourth day is celebrated as *Kaanum Pongal*. On this day, people generally visit places and meet each other in a final celebratory mood.



Navarathri and Deepavali are two other popular festivals celebrated across the State. As the name suggests, the former is celebrated over nine nights invoking the Mother Goddess in her various forms for blessings during the Tamil month of *Purattasi* (September–October). During this festival, women also organise thematic doll exhibitions at home that is called *kolu*. Apart from this, temples and *mutts* in Tamil Nadu also celebrate Vasantha Navarathri during the summer. As in the rest of India, Deepavali is celebrated in the State as the ‘Festival of Lights’ with much fanfare in the Tamil month of *Aipasi* (October–November). During this occasion, people especially worship Goddess Lakshmi for wealth and prosperity.

Table 4 provides a list of other festivals celebrated in various parts of the State.

PERFORMING ARTS

Tamil Nadu is known all over the world for its highly stylised classical dance form, Bharathanatyam. In its oldest form this dance used to be performed by *devadasis* (female servants of the Gods) in temples



Mattu Pongal Celebration

and the courts of the kings. In modern times, with great dedication and sincere efforts, E. Krishnaswamy Iyer and Rukmini Devi Arundale brought it out from the precincts of the temples to open stages while retaining its essential devotional characteristics. Today, on account of their efforts, both male and female dancers across the country and outside are able to practise this art. The foremost among such exponents are Alarmel Valli, Bala Saraswathi, Mrinalini Sarabhai, Kamala Laxman, Padma Subrahmaniam and Chithra Visweswaran. And, the great masters or *Nattuvanars*, who have contributed to its further development are Panthanalloor Meenakshi Sundaram Pillai, Panthanalloor Chokkalingam Pillai, Padmasree Vazhoor Ramayya Pillai and Adayar Laxman.

Apart from Bharathanatyam, the State also has a large number of folk dances. Table 5 provides a list of some of those dance forms.



Bharathanatyam



Karagattam



Therukuthu

Table 4

Name of the Festivals	Manner of Celebration
Mahamagam Festival	This festival takes place once in 12 years in the Tamil month of <i>Masi</i> (February–March) on the Magam Star Day at the divine tank called the Mahamagam Kulam in Kumbakonam. Pilgrims from all over Tamil Nadu assemble here to take the holy dip at the designated auspicious hour in this tank.
Chithirai Festival	This festival is celebrated in Madurai to re-enact the celestial wedding of Goddess Meenakshi (Shakti) with Lord Sundaeswarar (Shiva). During this festival, Lord Vishnu rides his chariot fastened with golden horses to arrive at the wedding venue of his sister, Meenakshi.
Tamil New Year	This festival is celebrated on the opening day of the first month of the Tamil calendar, <i>Chithirai</i> which coincides with 14th April every year.
Arubathu Moovar Festival	During this festival, held every year in the Tamil month of <i>Panguni</i> (March–April), replicas of all the 63 <i>Nayanmar</i> (Shaivite) saints, called <i>Arubathu Moovar</i> , are taken out in a colourful procession coinciding with the Brahmotsavam Festival of the Kapaleeswarar Temple at Mylapore in Chennai.
Karthigai Deepam Festival	This is a popular festival celebrated in the Tiruvannamalai Temple, where a huge lamp is lit on top of the Tiruvannamalai hillock that is seen from miles afar.



Table 5

Name of the Art Form	Characteristics
<i>Karakattam</i>	In its religious form, the dance is performed in front of an image of the Goddess Mariamman. Typically the dancer carries on his or her head a brass pot filled with uncooked rice and tumbles and leaps to the rhythm of a song called <i>temmanguppāu</i> , decorated with flowers and surrounded by a bamboo frame, without spilling a grain.
<i>Kummi</i>	This is a dance performed by women, who are positioned in a circle and they dance to a tune while clapping their hands rhythmically.
<i>Mayil Aattam</i>	This is performed by dancers wearing peacock feathers in temples dedicated to Lord Murugan to obtain his blessings.
<i>Kolattam</i>	Similar to Kummi, in this form the women dancers use small colourfully painted wooden sticks instead of clapping their hands.
<i>Poikkal Kudirai Aattam</i>	Called as the 'dummy horse dance', it is performed to please the village deity, <i>Ayyanar</i> .
<i>Bommallattam</i>	A puppet dance, it depicts scenes from the Ramayana and the Mahabharata.
<i>Theru Koothu</i>	Performed entirely by men, this is a form of open air theatre which begins in the late evening and continues through the night to the accompaniment of music and narratives played/announced from the side of the stage.
<i>Oyilattam</i>	It has been traditionally a dance where a few men stand in a row and perform rhythmic steps to the accompaniment of music with the number of dancers increasing gradually.
<i>Ottan Koothu</i>	It is a folk art practised by small groups of tribal people wherein sequences from ancient stories and other epics are taken as subjects to educate the people.
<i>Sevai Attam</i>	In this dance, the performers dance in a group with one of them performing the role of a clown to the accompaniment of <i>urumi</i> (drum-like musical instrument) beats.
<i>Villu Pattu</i>	This is a folk dance where performers narrate stories through songs with <i>villu</i> or the bow as the main instrument.

Dances aside, Tamil Nadu is also well-known for being the home of Carnatic music. It is one of the oldest systems of music in the world and is based on *ragas* (melodic scales) and *talas* (rhythmic cycles). Purandara Dasa, who is known as the 'Father of Carnatic Music', has contributed significantly to its codification and giving it a clear format for its teaching and performance. Another important element of Carnatic music is its devotional character. Innumerable devotional songs composed by Shyama Shastri, Tyagaraja and Muthuswami Dikshitar in the 19th century continue to be sung by practitioners. These devotional songs are usually sung to the



Veena



Mridangam



Vamsi

accompaniment of music played by instruments like *mridangam* (a hollow cylindrical drum with its two sides closed tightly by animal hide), *veena* (a stringed instrument), *nadaswaram* (an indigenous wind instrument known locally as *nayanam*) and *vamsi* (flute). For its contribution to music, Chennai has been included in the UNESCO Creative Cities Network in November 2017.

VISUAL ARTS

Tamil Nadu also possesses one of the finest cultural heritage of visual art and craft in India. Among these, the ones which attract attention are the architectural marvels preserved in the form of temples, stone and bronze sculptures, paintings, murals on temple walls, carvings from wood, textiles and metal ware. Table 6 enumerates some of these fine traditions.

Shiva Nataraja,
Chola bronze

Table 6

Types of Art and Craft	Distinctive Features
Tanjore Painting	This form of painting originated in the 9th century in Tanjore or Thanjavur. The paintings are made on cloth using dyes coated with zinc oxide and are then decorated with semi-precious stones and silver or golden threads.
Mural Painting	Similar to Tanjore painting style but with significant difference in execution, the most notable mural paintings are seen on the walls of world famous Meenakshi Temple of Madurai and Brihadeeswara Temple of Thanjavur.
Bronze Sculpture	Highly skilled artisans, claiming direct descent from the divine architect, Vishwakarma, make these sculptures using the 'lost wax' or <i>cire perdue</i> method. The Shiva Nataraja image enshrined in the Brihadeeswara Temple of Thanjavur is one of the finest specimens of such sculpture.
Stone Sculpture	The speciality of stone sculpture seen in almost all temples lies in not allowing the stone to dictate the form of the image. It is rather the artist, who imposes his vision of the image on the stone. This makes the sculpture look artistic. The thriving centres of stone carving today are Mamallapuram and Chengalpattu.
Wood Carving	Earlier engaged in carving doors, brackets and beams for temples, highly skilled wood carvers of Tamil Nadu today are lending the same old world charm to modern buildings with their intricately carved doors and beams.
Metal Ware	<i>Deepam</i> or lamps are the best known metal ware products of Tamil Nadu.
Cotton Textiles	The famous centres of cotton textiles in Tamil Nadu are located in Coimbatore (textiles with decorative floral borders), Salem (fine cotton dhotis), Madurai (plain and gold-bordered dhotis known as Madurai Sungudi) and Chettinad (sarees in colours of mustard, brick red and black, which reach up to the calves of the wearers).
Silk	Traditionally Thanjavur, Kumbakonam, Arni and Salem were known for <i>Pattu Pudavai</i> (a specialised variety of silk weaving). But in due course, the State has come to be better known for the heavier silk sarees of Kanchipuram known locally as <i>Murukku Pattu</i> , which have distinctive borders and <i>mundhi</i> (end pieces).
Mats and Basketry	Tamil Nadu is known for its cane weaving and palm leaf products, including trays, flower baskets, shopping bags, folding fans and toys. The Korai grass mats produced in the village of Pattamadai in Tirunelveli are also quite popular.



Brihadeeswara Temple

CONTEMPORARY CULTURAL DEVELOPMENTS

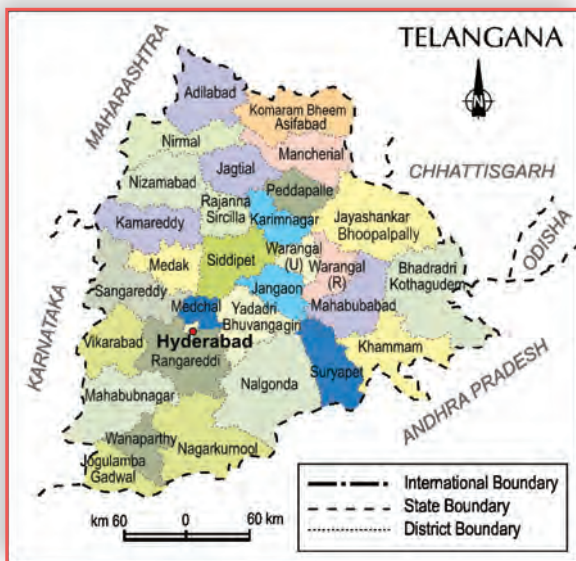
As one of the most progressive States, Tamil Nadu has been quite conscious of preserving and at the same time promoting its cultural heritage. It organises several public festivals where the classical as well as the folk art and craft are displayed to raise awareness

about such a priceless heritage. Universities and other specialised institutions have also been set up in the State to study its culture and contribute towards their preservation and promotion. It is a matter of great tribute to the State's enterprising people that much of what used to be referred to earlier as the food and cuisine of Tamil Nadu have become universal in their acceptability today. Today, there can never be a ceremonial occasion where one will not see a Tamilian lamp not being lit or a woman not wearing a Kanchipuram saree. Similarly, there is no city of any stature in the country today where one will not find a temple built in Dravidian style with an ascendant Gopuram or not listen to the reverberating chants of M.S. Subbulakshmi rendered in Carnatic style. These are but only a few instances of the reach of Tamil culture today. One can find many more such examples in their own vicinity.





TELANGANA



Telangana is located in the Deccan plateau in the middle of India. The climate is mostly hot and dry, owing to its location in a semi-arid region. It is the 12th largest State of India in terms of both area and population. It shares borders with the States of Andhra Pradesh in the south and east; Karnataka in the west; and Maharashtra and Chhattisgarh in the north.



Telangana State Emblem

Telangana emerged as the newest State of India on 2 June 2014. It is ‘South of North and North of South’ in many senses. It represents the rich heritage of composite culture of India in so many ways. Telangana is home to the Warangal Gateway, Golconda Fort, Charminar, Salarjung Museum, cosmopolitan city of Hyderabad, Godavari and Krishna *pushkaralu* (worship of rivers) and Saraswati Temple at Basara.

The name ‘Telangana’ was thought to be derived from the word ‘TrilingaDesa’, the land marked by three ancient Shiva Temples at Kaleshwaram (Jayashankar Bhoopalapally district), Srisailem (Kurnool district) and Draksharamam (East Godavari district). It was also claimed that this region was called as ‘Telugu Angana’ during the reign of Nizams of Hyderabad, so as to distinguish it from the Marathi-speaking region of Marathwada, in Nizam State.

The State symbols of Telangana vividly reflect its cultural heritage. *Jammi Chettu* (State Tree) is worshipped on the day of Dussehra festival and it is considered a good omen to spot the *Palapitta* (State Bird) on this day. The women of Telangana use *Tangedu* flowers (State Flower) during the popular festival of Bathukamma. Indeed, *Jinka* (State Animal) and Palapitta are associated with Ramayan and Jammi chettu with Mahabharat.

The Buddhist texts and the chronicles of Megasthenese, who visited India in the 4th century BCE, referred to the existence of many fortified towns in Telangana. The early history of Telangana, like the neighbouring Andhra region, is generally traced to

Fact Sheet	
State Day	2 June
Geographical Area	112,077 km ²
Capital	Hyderabad
Official Language	Telugu
State Animal	Jinka (Deer)
State Bird	Palapitta (Indian Roller)
State Flower	Tangedu (Tanner’s Cassia)
State Tree	Jammi Chettu (Prosopis Cineraria)





*Jinka
(Deer)*



*Palapitta
(Indian Roller or Blue Jay)*



*Tangedu
(Tanner's Cassia)*



*Jammi Chettu
(Prosopis Cineraria)*

the times of the Satavahana dynasty. Subsequently, parts of Telangana were under the rule of Ikshvakus, Vakatakas, Vishnukundins and Chalukyas. With Warangal as its capital, the Kakatiya dynasty ruled Telangana from the 11th century to 14th century. Rani Rudrama Devi and Prataparudra were the famous rulers of this era. Later, the present-day Telangana was ruled by the Qutb Shahis (1496-1687) and the Asaf Jahi Nizams (1724-1948). Hyderabad was the largest princely state, when India gained independence from the British.

Even after August 1947, Hyderabad State continued to be ruled by the Nizam, Mir Osman Ali Khan. The Government of India liberated Hyderabad from the clutches of the Nizam on 17 September 1948. Telangana was part of Hyderabad State from 1948 to 1956. Later, as part of the reorganisation of the states on the basis of language, Telangana region was merged with Andhra State to form Andhra Pradesh on 1 November 1956. Thus, the Telugu-speaking regions were brought together. However, later the people of Telangana launched several movements for a separate state. Finally, Telangana became the 29th State of India on 2 June 2014, after the reorganisation of the State of Andhra Pradesh.

The legendary Gond martyr Komaram Bheem and Telangana ideologue Prof. Kothapalli Jayashankar are among the noted personalities.

CULTURAL SPECIFICITIES

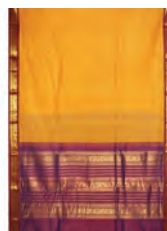
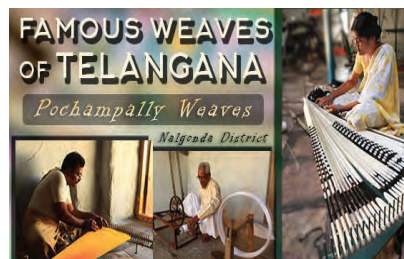
Language

Telugu is shared by the people of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh as their official language. Urdu is an additional official language. Banjara, Hindi, Kannada and Marathi are other languages spoken in Telangana.

During the medieval era, Telugu literature benefitted from the patronage provided by Quli Qutb Shah, the founder of the Qutb Shahi dynasty. His court had many Telugu poets such as Addanki Gangadhar Kavi, Panuganti Telanganarya and Kandukuri Rudra Kavi. Sahitya Akademi Awardee Suravaram Pratap Reddy, Jnanpith awardee Dr. C. Narayana Reddy and Dasarathi Rangacharya are among the famous literary figures. The birthday (September 9th) of eminent Telugu poet, Kaloji Narayana Rao is celebrated as Telangana Language Day. Dakhni Urdu is popular in Hyderabad and other parts of Telangana.

Dress

Telangana has an iconic saree weaving cluster at Pochampalli, Nalgonda District. Pochampalli Ikat sarees and dress materials are famous for their traditional geometric patterns. They are made by skilful weavers using Ikat style of dyeing. This involves painstaking work by weavers, who usually spend one full week to make a saree.



Gadwal



Narayanpet



Siddipet



Food

Telangana has many popular dishes, especially non-vegetarian. As per the survey conducted by the Registrar General of India in 2014, Telangana has the highest population of non-vegetarians in India. It tops the list with 98.7 per cent of the people eating meat and fish.



Hyderabad Biryani



Hyderabad Haleem

The diet of Telangana includes rice, lemon rice, bagara annam (seasoned rice), rasam, poori, chapathi, chinta chiguru pappu (tender tamarind leaf dal), gaarelu (dal vada), chicken biryani, mutton biryani, mutton pulao, natu kodi kooru (desi chicken curry), podi mamsam (mutton fry), tala kaya kooru (mutton curry), fish curry, royyala masala (prawn curry), drumstick tomato curry, gokara kaya/goru chikkudu (guwar beans/cluster beans) curry, beerakaya royyalu kooru (ridge guord with prawn curry), kanda bachali kooru (yam curry), masala vankaya (brinjal) curry, palakura (spinach leaves) badilu, guta tomato curry and a wide range of pickles.



Chicken Curry



Sarpapindi

Sarpapindi (tapala attu/tapala chekka), a crunchy spicy rice flour pancake, is a popular snack in Telangana. Many dishes are prepared using millets, lentils, cumin seeds, sesame seeds, ginger, tamarind, chilies and asafetida. Most of the dishes are spicy.

FAIRS AND FESTIVALS

The people of Telangana celebrate festivals that depict cultural heritage of various religious and linguistic communities, which inhabit this land. Being a cosmopolitan city, Hyderabad witnesses festivals being celebrated by people from many parts of India.

These festivals include Sankranti, Mahashivaratri, Holi, Ugadi, Srirama Navami, Bonalu, Ramzan, Vinayaka Chaturthi, Moharram, Bathukamma, Dussehra or Vijayadashami, Deepavali, Christmas. Of all these, Dussehra is called 'pedda panduga' (main festival). Bathukamma and Bonalu deserve special mention as they are unique festivals of Telangana.

Bathukamma is a festival of flowers. This festival is treated as a symbol of Telangana's cultural identity. It is celebrated as part of Dussehra. Women in colourful costumes and jewellery carry artistically stacked Bathukammas with the locally grown flowers such as Tangedu, Gunugu and Chamanti. They assemble at a meeting point in the village or street.



Bathukamma



Bonalu

They make circles around the Bathukammas and recite songs in a group. These songs convey powerful messages. Finally the flower stacks are immersed in the nearby waterbodies such as tanks and lakes.

Bonalu is celebrated during the Telugu month of Ashadam (June/July). During the festival, the devotees worship Goddess Mahakali for fulfilling their desires. Bhojanam (meal) is offered to the deity. Rice is cooked with milk, jaggery in a brass or earthen pot. This is decorated with neem leaves, turmeric and vermilion. A lighted diya is placed on top of the pot.

Sammakka Saralamma Jatara at Medaram, near Warangal, is among the largest fairs of the world. This is a tribal festival. After Kumbha Mela, it attracts the largest number of devotees in India. The main deities of the Sammakka Saralamma Temple are two brave tribal women. The mother-daughter duo stood up for dignity of their community and became martyrs in the battle against oppression.



Medaram Jatara



Ganesh Pooja



Mecca Masjid



Haleem-making competition

Apart from Ramzan celebrations, Moharram is observed on a large scale by the Muslims of Telangana. It is also called as 'peerla panduga' (Festival of Pirs). Pir means master. Many Hindus also join this festival.

PERFORMING ARTS

Dance, Theatre and Music

Telangana has many unique and composite art forms. One of the early dance forms was Perini Sivatanavam, also known as 'dance of warriors'. Many communities had a tradition of story-telling in the form of Golla Suddulu, Oggu Kathalu and Gotralu. The narratives of 'Dhoom Dham' describe struggles against exploitation.

Chindu Bhagavatham is performed widely across Telangana. It is similar to Yakshagana. It is a unique theatre art form that combines many elements such as dance, music, dialogue, costume, make-up and stage techniques. The word 'Chindu' in Telugu means 'jump'. As the presentation is interspersed with leaps and jumps by the performers, it gained the name of Chindu Bhagavatam. Most of the stories are from 'Bhagavatam'.



Gusadi Dancers of Adilabad

Cultural performances such as Qawali, Ghazals and Mushairas became part of the cultural landscape of Telangana in general and Hyderabad in particular.

VISUAL ARTS

Telangana has many art forms and attractive handicrafts made of a variety of materials. They speak

volumes about the highly skilful nature of artisans. Some of the well-known are mentioned in Table 1.



Nirmal Arts and Crafts



Places of Importance

Apart from the capital city of Hyderabad, the major cities include Warangal, Karimnagar, Nizamabad, Mahabubnagar and Khammam. They are home to many historical monuments and places of worship.



Thousand Pillars Temple



Ramappa Temple



Table 1

Art and Craft	Description
Banjara Needle Crafts	Traditional handmade fabrics made by Banjaras (the nomadic tribes) in Telangana; a form of embroidery and mirror work on fabrics employing the needlecraft.
Bidri Craft	The unique art of silver engraved on metal. Black, gold and silver coatings are applied on this. It involves many phases like casting, engraving, inlaying and oxidizing. The name of this art form is derived from Bidar (Karnataka), which used to be a part of the erstwhile Hyderabad State.
Bronze Castings	A fine example of craftsmanship and intricate process; famous throughout the world; while using solid casting of icons, the mould is created using several coatings of different clays on a finished wax model; then fine curves are imparted to the cast image.
Dokra Metal Crafts	Also known as bell metal craft; widely seen in Adilabad district; produces objects such as figurines and tribal deities; comprises folk motifs, peacocks, elephants, horses, measuring bowl, lamp caskets and other simple art forms and traditional designs.
Nirmal Arts and Crafts	Nirmal oil paintings use natural dyes for depicting themes from the epics such as Ramayana and Mahabharata; the wood paintings and other wooden articles have great aesthetic expression; Nirmal craft originated during the Kakatiya era; the motifs used are floral designs and frescoes from the regions of Ajanta and Ellora and Mughal miniatures.

The Glorious Kakatiya Temples (Thousand Pillars Temple and Ramappa Temple) and Gateways in and around Warangal; Golconda Fort, Qutb Shahi Tombs and Charminar in Hyderabad are being considered to be included in the UNESCO World Heritage List.



Warangal Gateway

Banaras). A dargah within the precincts of the temple symbolises religious tolerance in the region.



Golconda Fort



Charminar

Sri Raja Rajeswara Swamy (Rajanna) Temple in Vemulawada is termed as ‘Dakshina Kasi’ (Southern



Raja Rajeswara (Rajanna) Temple, Vemulawada



Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy Temple, Yadadri



Chowmahalla Palace



Hussain Sagar

Golconda was an early capital city of the Qutb Shahi dynasty, which ruled from the mid-16th century to mid-17th century. The Golconda Fort was built by Quli Qutb. It was a massive, self-contained township of the medieval era. The citadel or Bala Hisar had the Silah Khana, Nagina Bagh, Ambar Khana, Akkanna-Madanna Offices, Ramdas Jail, Darbar hall, Baradari, Hammams, Mahals and royal courts.



Jogulamba Temple, Alampur



Bhadrachalam Temple

Charminar was built as a ceremonial gateway to celebrate the foundation of Hyderabad at the end of the 16th century. Salarjung Museum is a popular tourist spot.



Saraswati Temple, Basara



Kaleshwaram Temple

Medak Cathedral is one of the largest holy shrines in Asia. It was built during early 20th century.





Medak Church

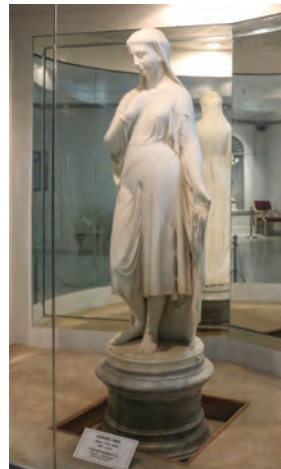
manner. Efforts are being made to value and preserve the rich heritage of composite culture of Telangana.



Krishna Pushkaralu



*Double Statue,
Salarjung Museum*



*Veiled Rebecca,
Salarjung Museum*

Hyderabad became the centre of the Telugu film industry, as it has numerous film studios, including the Ramoji Film City. This is where the recent blockbuster movie, *Bahubali* was made.



Ramoji Film City

CONTEMPORARY CULTURAL DEVELOPMENTS

The unique traditions of people of Telangana received a major boost in recent times. Bathukamma, Bonalu and Sammakka Saralamma Jatara were declared as state festivals. The *pushkarulu* of Godavari and Krishna Rivers were organised in a spectacular



Bahubali



The maiden tableau of Telangana passes through the Rajpath, New Delhi during the full dress rehearsal for the Republic Day Parade on 23 January 2015





TRIPURA



Tripura is one of the seven sister states in the north-eastern part of India. It is the third smallest State of India and covers an area of 10,486 sq. km. The State is surrounded by Bangladesh on its north, west and south. Mizoram and Assam are located on its eastern side. Agartala is the capital of this state and is situated on the western side. There is a common belief that the name of the State has originated from ‘Tripura Sundari’, the presiding deity of the land which is famous as one of the ‘51 Pithas’ of Hindu pilgrims. Apart from this traditional view, it is also believed that the land was originally known as ‘Tuipra’ meaning a land adjoining the water.

The low Deotamura range is followed by the Artharamura, Langtarais and Sakhan Tlang ranges.

The Jamrai Tlang mountains have the highest peak, Betling Sib (3,280 feet). A number of rivers originate in the hills of Tripura and flow into Bangladesh. The Khowai, Dhalai, Manu, Juri and Longai rivers flow towards the north, the Gumti to the west and the Muhuri and Feni to the southwest. The hills have red laterite soil that is porous. The flood plains and narrow valleys are overlain by alluvial soil, and those in the west and south constitute most of the agricultural land. Vast natural as well as artificial lakes namely, Dumboor lake in Gandacherra sub-division, Rudrasagar at Melaghar, Amarsagar, Jagannath Dighi, Kalyan Sagar are found in the State. The beautiful hill station of Jampui hill bordering Mizoram, wildlife sanctuaries at Sepahijala, Gumti, Rowa and Trishna are also important places.

The State has a tropical savanna climate, and receives seasonal heavy rains from the southwest monsoon. The temperature during summer varies from 20° to 36°C and during winter from 7° to 27°C. In some areas the temperature goes down to 2°C min. Forests cover more than half of the area, in which bamboo and cane tracts are common. A variety of

<i>Fact Sheet</i>	
<i>State Day</i>	21 January
<i>Geographical Area</i>	10,492 km ²
<i>Capital</i>	Agartala
<i>Official Languages</i>	Bengali, Kokborok, English
<i>State Animal</i>	Phayre’s Langur
<i>State Bird</i>	Green imperial pigeon
<i>State Flower</i>	Nageshwar
<i>State Tree</i>	Agar



horticultural/plantation crops are produced in Tripura like pineapple, orange, cashewnut, jackfruit, coconut, tea, rubber, etc.

This State was ruled by the Tripuri dynasty for many centuries. It was a Princely State at the time of the British rule. In the year 1949, it became a part of independent India. The NH44 is the only main highway that connects this State with the rest of India.

The indigenous communities, comprising scheduled castes and tribes, constitute 49 per cent of the population in Tripura. Among 19 tribes living in the State, the Tripuris are the largest, while the Reangs, who came in from Chittagong are the second largest. Other tribes include the Jamatia, Noatia, Darlong, Halam, Garo, Chakma and Kalai.

The forests of Tripura have valuable trees like sal. Wildlife includes tigers, leopards, elephants, jackals, wild dogs, boar, gayal ox, wild buffalo and gaur (Indian bison).

Agriculture is the major occupation of the region. Crops include paddy, jute, cotton, oilseeds, potato, sugarcane and fruits. At present both plough cultivation in the plains and Jhum cultivation in the hills are practiced.

CULTURAL SPECIFICITIES

Language

The culture of Tripura depicts both Bengali and Tripuri traditions. Bengalis form a major part of the population. There are two official languages of this state—Bengali and Kokborok, a dialect of Tripuri. Tripuri is the language of the community and is mostly found in Khowai, Kailasahar, Sadar and Amarapur sub-divisions. The origin of Kokborok is said to be from Tibeto-Burman languages. It is written using the Bengali script.

Other languages spoken are Hindi (1.68 per cent), Chakma, Mogh, Halam, Garo, Odia, Manipuri and Bishnupriya Manipuri.

Dress

Women of Tripura engage in handmade crafts, textiles and garment designing to be economically solvent.

Risa is the upper part of the dress. It drapes the chest around the back-twice. *Ringtail* is the lower

half of the dress that the ladies wear. It is like a draped skirt and varies with every clan in terms of designs and patterns. Although with time, due to the intermingling of people across clans, the designs have seen a fusion



Dresses of different tribes

of patterns. During special occasions or celebrations, the females wear headbands made up of brass coloured cane and porcupine quills, especially during dance performances. The women beautify themselves with ornaments like chains made up of coins, bangles, earrings and nose rings. *Rikutu Gamcha* is a towel-like sheet of loin cloth which is commonly worn by men of Tripura. Along with this, *kubai* is worn, which is a self-woven shirt. Turban or *pagri* is also worn by men to protect themselves from the sun while working in open fields. Cotton *sarees* and *dhotis* of Bengal are worn by the people as a vast population of Bengalis is found in the State.



Chakma Woman

Food

Tripura's cultural diversity is reflected in the food habits of the tribal and non-tribal people. The non-tribal Bengalis of Tripura eat rice, fish, chicken, mutton and pork. The non-tribals prepare spicy curries of a large variety of fishes. Fish is also imported from Bangladesh. The most popular and delicious preparation of fish is the boiled 'Hilsa' made with mustard seeds and green chillies. The traditional *Chuak* is the rice beer prepared by fermenting rice in water. It is taken on social occasions and ceremonies. *Apong*, a local drink, is made from millet rice. The people in the State savour fruits. The food eaten by the tribes is quite different from the non-tribal people of Tripura. *Muya Awandru* is a Tripuri food item which contains bamboo shoots, rice flour and *berma*. The *Kosoi Bwtwi* is made of beans and *berma* dried fermented fish. *Muya bai Wahan* is another food item





Tripura Food



Mosdeng Food

of bamboo shoots, jackfruit, papaya and pork. *Gudok* is prepared using bamboo pipes. It has a special aroma and taste. *Wahan* is a dish made of pork. *Mosdeng serma* is a Tripuri *chutney* made of *berma*, red chilli, garlic and tomato.

FAIRS AND FESTIVALS

The main feature of festivals in Tripura is that tribals and non-tribals celebrate them together.



Kharchi Festival

The worship of the 14 deities, popularly known as Kharchi (Khya) Puja is celebrated in July, in Agartala.

Ker and Garia pujas are traditional tribal festivals. A large piece of bamboo when bent in a particular fashion assumes the image of Ker. It is generally believed that the former rulers used to perform this *puja* for the general welfare of the people.

Garia is a community *puja* and cocks are sacrificed to appease the deity. It is celebrated on the seventh day of the month of Baisakh (April).



Garia Puja

After Navanna, the festival of new rice, Ganga Puja is celebrated in March–April every year, which is another remarkable tribal festival.

The Kas celebrated in June or July often includes animal sacrifice.

The other festivals include the Poush Sankranti, Ashok Ashtami Fair, Durga Puja and the Boat Race, and Diwali. Durga Puja is the greatest community festival in Tripura and celebrated with much fanfare.

PERFORMING ARTS

Being largely rural, tribal customs, folklore and folk songs are important elements of Tripura's culture.

Music

The royal legacy of Tripura kingdom, Birchandra and his son Radhakishore Manikya of 19th century patronised Hindustani vocal and instrumental music, Manipuri music and dance forms, Bengali folk musical and theatrical traditions, *Kirtans*, Panchali recitations of Krishnaleela narrations as well as Jatra performances. Birchandra Manikya turned his palace into a centre of musical training and learning where exponents from different parts of India assembled and found patronage. Cultural programmes marked by songs and dances, associated with birth anniversaries of great poets and lyricists like Rabindranath Tagore and Kazi Nazrul Islam added colour and charm to the state's multi-layered cultural mosaic enriched by contributions from many streams of sub-culture.

Dance

Dances in the form of dance-drama and folk dances of the tribes living in the State have been practised and patronised by the monarchs as well as the present government. Tripura's culture is religious and social and we see its reflection in the prevalent art forms. Tripura's folk culture comprises attributes like the delicately rhythmic physical movement of the 'Hoza Giri' dance by the Reang tribesmen, the collective musical recitation of 'Manasa Mangal' or '*Kirtan*' (devotional songs in chorus) of the non-tribals, 'Dhamail' dance of the non-tribals performed on family occasions like wedding ceremony in rural areas. Musical duels (Kabi Gaan) between two rival rhyme-makers. Enriched by myths and legends of tribal society over the past half a millennium, 'Jhum' cultivation forms the focal point for music and dance. The generic word used locally for dances is 'lam'.

Maimata is a popular dance of the Kaloi community. In order to select a suitable site for collective jhum, a procession is led by the community chief, Roy or Rai, sitting in a palanquin accompanied by the priest who is known as Achai. After the selection of site, jhum cultivation is inaugurated with clearing

of jungle vegetation. Maimata is celebrated at the end of harvest with the cooking of new rice amidst festivities including music and dance. Some more dances of Tripura are mentioned in Table 1.



Traditional Tribal Dance

Table 1

Dance	Description
Garia	This dance of the tribals is organised on the occasion of New Year festivities and worship of deity 'Garia'.
Holi Hug Dance	This is again a similar kind of 'jhuming' dance. The dancers hold hands at waist level. It is performed by members of the Marsum tribe.
Hoza Giri Dance	It is celebrated before the selection of site for jhum, to pray for the blessings of Mainuma, (Goddess of wealth) by the Reang community of Tripura.
Lebang Bomani	This is a dance that reflects the game of catching insects. Special sounds through clapping of bamboo stick clappers (<i>tokkas</i>) are produced while dancing.
Sangrai-Mogh Dance	This is a dance of Mogh community. Ushering in the New Year, the Mogh community of Tripura celebrates Sangrai (last day of the month) with music. The Moghs are followers of Buddhism.
Chawn Lam	Chawn Lam is a dance performed on the occasion of Chang festival. It is held at the end of a good harvest when an animal is sacrificed.
Pheiphit Lam	This is a dance of victory where the head of an animal or enemy is placed at the centre of a platform. Bamboo trumpets and flutes are played in addition to pipes of different sizes.
Waikhong Lam	This is a commemorative dance which pays tribute and obeisance to the almighty and tribal lords.
Lam-Lam and Dar-Lam	It is a gateway dance performed at a funeral.
Khongilaam Dance	This dance imitates movement of the hornbill bird. Entry of male dancers is soon followed by that of women, and both dance in a circle.
Inthona Lam	Inthona Lam literally means 'coming out of a cave'. It represents a string of five festivals of the Taroa tribe as they welcome the entry of the New Year.

Lampak Dance	This dance is performed by the Koirang tribe and they imitate the killing of a tiger through dance.
Zangta Lam	The word 'zangta' stands for enemy. Zangta Lam, therefore, is a dance of the Paithe tribe symbolising victory over the enemy.

Musical Instruments

The important musical instruments such as Khamb (Drum), Bamboo flute, Lebang, Sarinda, Do-Tara, and Khengrong are widely used in folk dances and music.

Theatre

Bengali culture and traditions had always dominated the cultural and literary firmament of this State. Birchandra and his son Radhakishore Manikya, belonging to the 19th century, openly patronised dramatic forms in makeshift stages within the palace compound. As the viewership and interest grew, theatre moved out of the palace confines to open fields, school compounds and private lawns of the aristocrats. The early performances had mostly religious, allegorical or patriotic themes, though vulgar and lewd *jatra* shows for rural audiences also made their presence during this time.

The practice and popularity of Bengali musical plays (*geeti natya*), *paala* acting and other folk dramatic forms grew in Tripura during the last few decades of 19th and early decades of 20th century. It was the effort of Birchandra Manikya that saw a fusion between the Gaudiya and the Manipuri traditions resulting in a unique style of rendering Krishnaleela oriented *paalas*. Radhakishore Manikya was as talented connoisseur of art and culture as his father who was a poet and painter himself. During his time Rabindranath Tagore visited Tripura several times. During his rule, two Opera styled performance companies, Kasharipatty and Acharyapara Jatra party, in the tradition of Dhaka Barisal *jatra* companies, grew up in Agartala. Inspired by their popularity, several groups of hilly people also showed interest to enact Hindu religious stories in the uphill tribal areas of Tripura. Ujjayanta Natyasamaj was a popular theatre group. Many plays of Tagore, Dwijendralal, Amritlal and Girishchandra were also enacted by this group



around this time.

Birendra Kishore Manikya succeeded his father and promoted theatre. The local artists were trained with the necessary skills. This led to the growth of several aristocratic amateur theatre companies in Agartala. One exclusive women's theatre group also came into existence under the leadership of Maharani Pravabati Devi within the palace. Since 1917, several theatre groups owned by the Thakurs like Ranbir Karta's Theatre, and amateur groups of Lebu Karta, Surendra Karta and Narsimha Karta grew up.

VISUAL ARTS

Within its small geographical area, Tripura has plenty of attractions. The former Maharajas had constructed beautiful palaces in different locations of the State which provide a glimpse of its royal past.

Ujjayanta Palace, a two-storied royal house, is beautifully carved and sculpted in Indo-Greek style, Kunjaban Palace and Neermahal Lake Palace at Melaghar. Important



Ujjayanta Palace

temples of Hindus and Buddhists including the famous Mata Tripureswari temple at Udaipur, Udaipur Maata Baari, Kamlasagar Kali Temple or Kasba Mandir and Bhuvaneshwari Mandir are other important places in Tripura.

Other attractions in Agartala are Tribal Museum, Laxminarayan Temple, Uma Maheswar Temple, Jagannath Temple, Benuban Vihar, Gedu Mian Mosque, Malancha Niwas, Rabindra Kanan, Purbasha, Handicrafts Designing Centre, Fourteen Goddess Temple, Portuguese Church, etc.

Rock Cut Carving

Tripura has beautiful rock-cut carvings and stone images at Unakoti, Debtamura and Pilak. Most of these carvings are huge in size and made on vertical walls exposed in the open areas. Unakoti dating back to the 8th or 9th century, probably has the biggest bas-relief sculpture in India. There are many stone

image carvings at Unakoti. Debtamura is famous for its panels of rock carvings on the steep mountain wall on the bank of Gomati. A treasure



Shiva head at Unakoti

house of Hindu and Buddhist sculpture dating back to 8th and 9th centuries, Pilak boasts of beautiful images scattered in an area of about 10 sq. km.

Weaving

They weave in their loom a small piece of cloth, which they call *Risha* and they use this small piece of cloth as their top garment. People of Chakma community are followers of Buddhism. The Chakma women are experts in weaving.

Craft

Basket-making is an important craft of Tripura. The different types of baskets produced include *jamatia* (firewood basket), *riang* (carrying basket), *tukri*, *laili*, *sempa khari* (date basket), *turi* (grain storage basket), *dulla* and *sudha* (the traditional fish trap). Tripura is famous for its cane and bamboo handicrafts. They include table mats, floor mats, room dividers, decorated wall panels and attractive furniture of cane. The Tripura *mudah* is a low stool made of bamboo and split cane.

Industries produce hand-loomed textiles, cane and bamboo products, metalware and seasoned timber. Carpentry, blacksmithing and embroidery are also important.

CONTEMPORARY CULTURAL DEVELOPMENTS

The people of this State maintain close proximity to West Bengal. Education, art and culture is shared at every phase. The art institution in Tripura which mainly focuses on visual art is carrying forward the mission of establishing serious and systematic art practice. Rabindra Prasad also frequently exhibits works of art. Rabindra Sangeet is also practised with serious devotion in the State and has a great influence of Bangladesh.



UTTAR PRADESH



unified culture of so many influences. Uttar Pradesh, being one of the most ancient cradles of Indian culture, had been the home of powerful empires of ancient and medieval India. Dotted with various holy shrines, pilgrimage and historical monuments and sites, its contributions to the Indian sub-continent's politics, culture and society has been outstanding. 'Gangetic Plains' as this region has been known or referred to as Aryavarta, we get evidences of all types of tangible and intangible heritage starting from the prehistoric cave paintings to Vedas to Ramayana and the Mahabharata to art and architecture or the literary tradition or the traditional crafts, to leadership in contemporary India.

CULTURAL SPECIFICITIES

Language

While Hindi is the official language, Urdu is an additional language. Bengali, Nepali, Punjabi and several important regional languages such as Awadhi, Bhojpuri, Braj, Bagheli, Bundeli and Khari-boli are spoken in the State besides several local dialects that do not have a formal name.

Created on 1 April 1937 as the United Provinces during British rule, it was renamed as Uttar Pradesh (UP) on 24 January 1950 with Lucknow as its capital. Uttar Pradesh is the most populous State of India bordered by Rajasthan in the west, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and Delhi in the north-west, Uttarakhand and Nepal in the north, Bihar in the east, Madhya Pradesh in the south, and touches the States of Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh in the south-east. The State has fertile lands with the major rivers of north India like Ganga, Yamuna, Chambal, Gomti, Ken, Saryu, Betwa, Ramganga, Rihand, Rapti, Varuna, Hindon and many of their tributaries. Hindi is the official and most widely spoken language in Uttar Pradesh. Though, the State had been into turmoil all through the history, it gave back the best of its soil to the country in the form of a

<i>Fact Sheet</i>	
<i>State Day</i>	24 January
<i>Geographical Area</i>	2,40,928 km ²
<i>Capital</i>	Lucknow
<i>Official Language</i>	Hindi
<i>State Animal</i>	Swamp Deer
<i>State Bird</i>	Sarus Crane
<i>State Flower</i>	Palash
<i>State Tree</i>	Sal



Dress

The people of Uttar Pradesh wear a variety of traditional and Western-style dresses. Traditional dresses include colourful draped garments—such as saree for women and dhoti or *lungi* for men—and tailored clothes such as *salwar kameez* for women and *kurta-pyjama* for men. Men also often sport a headgear like *topi* or *pagri*. *Sherwani* and *Achkan* are more formal dresses for men and are frequently worn along with *chooridar* on festive occasions. Western-style trousers and shirts are also common among the men.

Food

The food specialties in Uttar Pradesh are wide, ranging in variety, taste and flavour. Different cities have their own styles of preparing the strong flavoured food items with exotic gravies. *Puri-Aloo*, *Kachori*, *Nimona*, *Baati Chokha*, *Tehri*, *Kadhi Chawal*, etc., are among the popular vegetarian dishes. The *chaat*, *samosa* and *pakora* are among the most famous snacks in the region. Meat delicacies and *Biryanis* (rice preparations) of Awadh are world famous. An interesting type of cooking in Awadh is ‘Dum Pukht’, in which the food is sealed and cooked in a mud-pot called ‘handi’. The traditional desserts popular here are *Balushahi*, *Barfi*, *Chhena*, *Gujhia*, *Halwa*, *Imarti*, *Jalebi*, *Kalakand*, *Launglata*, *Rabri*, *Petha*, *Rasmalai*, *Tasmai*, *Malpua*, etc. *Sharbats* (juice) are also very popular in Uttar Pradesh. There are many types of *sharbats* used here like *bel sharbat*, *Lemon sharbat*, *rose sharbat*, etc.



Kebabs



Dum Pukht Biryani

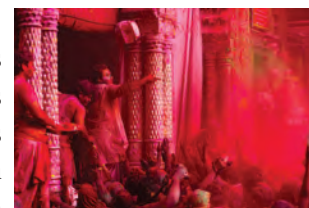
FAIRS AND FESTIVALS

Various pilgrimage sites are situated along the River Ganga, which are the hubs of fairs, festivities and worship by millions of Hindus every year. Ten days in the month of *Jyeshtha* (June), Ganga Dussehra is celebrated at Garhmukteshwar, Prayag and Varanasi. Devotees take a holy dip in the Ganga, worship it, collect the clay from the banks/ *ghats* and take it home. Thousands of lamps are floated into the Ganga after *aarti* at the dusk.

Traditionally, Kumbh fairs are widely recognised as the *Melas*, held at four places: the Haridwar Kumbh Mela, the Allahabad Kumbh Mela, the Nashik-Trimbakeshwar Simhastha and Ujjain Simhastha. These four fairs are held periodically at one of these places by rotation. The Kumbh Mela is held since ancient times every 12 years at Triveni Sangam, the meeting points of three rivers: the Ganga, the Yamuna and the mythical Saraswati at Prayag (Allahabad).

There are many other festivals which are celebrated throughout the year and most of them are common and religious practices are as much an integral part of everyday life. Among the most important Hindu festivals are Diwali, Holi, Dussehra, and Raksha-Bandhan. Also, there are places which are specifically identified with some of these festivals. Durga puja is observed in many parts of the State during Navratri. Bārah Wafat, Eid, Bakrid and Birthday of Imam Ali ibn Abitalib are recognised official Muslim religious festivals. Muharram, the day of Ashura is an official holiday but Shiites consider it as a day of mourning and not a festival. Mahavir Jayanti is celebrated by Jains, Buddha Jayanti by Buddhists, Guru Nanak Jayanti by Sikhs and Christmas by the Christians. Other festivals include Ram Navami, Chhath Puja, Janmashtami, Mahashivratri, etc.

Holi and Janmashtami associated with Lord Krishna are celebrated with great fervour in Mathura and other parts of the State. During Holi, festivities start by offering colours to the Lord at the temples before it is celebrated on the streets. Artists from



Holi in Vrindavan

various parts of the country gather here to perform *raas leela*, or divine dance recitals by Krishna's devotees. *Gayan mandalis* or singing troupes that render folk songs particularly associated with Holi, flock to this place. Janmashtami is celebrated on the day when Krishna was born. Idols of Krishna and Radha are decorated and then worshipped.

PERFORMING ARTS

Kathak is the major classical dance form of northern India. There are three main *gharanas*, or schools of Kathak: Jaipur, Lucknow and the Banaras. Each has a slight difference in interpretation and repertoire. The word Kathak means 'to tell a story'. It is derived from the dance dramas of ancient India. The dance is primarily an abstract exploration of rhythm and movement. Kathak demands the highest standards of training, intelligence, and most importantly, civility. Kathak involves gracefully coordinated movements of feet along with entire body. Today, Uttar Pradesh is home to two prominent schools of this dance form, namely, Lucknow Gharana and Banaras Gharana.



Banaras Kathak

Ramlila is a popular enactment of the epic Ramayana. It is believed that the great saint Tulsidas started the tradition of Ram Lila, the enactment of the story of Lord Ram. The *Ramcharitamanas*, written by him, forms the basis of Ram Lila performances till today. The Ramnagar Ram Lila (at Varanasi) is enacted in the most traditional style which lasts for almost one month. Hundreds of *sadhus* called the 'Ramayanis' come to watch and recite the Ramayana. The uniqueness of this Ram Lila is that it is not enacted on the stage but different events from the life of Lord Rama take place at different locales identified for the performance on different days. Thus, we have Ashok Vatika, Lanka, etc., at different locations in the town. The audience moves along with the performers with every episode, to the next location. In 2008, Ramlila was inscribed on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

The folk heritage of Uttar Pradesh includes songs called *rasiya* (known and especially popular in Braj), which celebrate the divine love of Radha and Krishna.



Raas Lila

These songs are accompanied by large drums known as *bumb* and are performed at many festivals. Other folk dances or folk theater forms include Raslila, Swang, Ramlila, Nautanki, Naqal (mimicry), Qawwali, Ragini, Kajri, Alha and Biraha.

VISUAL ARTS

Painting

The tradition of painting in Uttar Pradesh has been going on since pre-historic times where the cave paintings of Sonbhadra and Chitrakoot depict scenes of hunting, war, festivals, dances, romantic life and animals. The art of painting reached the epitome of perfection in the area of Bundelkhand when the King of Orchha reconstructed the temple of Keshav Dev in Mathura. The paintings of Mathura, Gokul, Vrindavan and Govardhan depict the scenes from the life of Lord Krishna.



Bara Imambara

Architecture

Bara Imambara, Lucknow was built by more than 22,000 people. During the day, the Imambara was built, and at night, the workers destroyed parts of what had been built to ensure that no one remained unemployed. This is indeed a monumental feat as it was once the largest vaulted hall in the world, with a 50 feet high roof, spanning an area of 162 feet. The galleries and corridors within the great Imambara form a complicated and intricate labyrinth (*bhool-bhuliaya*) through which at times it is difficult to find one's way. Towards the west of the Imambara is the Rumi Darwaza or the Turkish Gate. The 60-foot high gateway stands as an equally grand entrance to the great hall.



Wajid Ali Shah's single contribution to Lucknow was the Qaiser Bagh Palace. In the centre was a Baradari flanked by two mermaid gates. On the right end was Chandiwali Baradari, and the Khas Muqam and Badshah Manzil.

Residency was built by the Britishers. The ruins of the Residency stand desolate as a mute witness to the Mutiny of 1857 when it was almost destroyed. The 1857 Memorial Museum at the Residency has been established and designed to present a visual account of the freedom struggle of 1857.

Chhota Imambarā, as it had been called later, has a golden dome, exquisite chandeliers, huge mirrors, silver minar, colourful interiors and delicate calligraphy on its arched entrance.



Chhota Imambarā

The State Museum of Lucknow is the oldest and largest multi-purpose museum of Uttar Pradesh, established in 1863. It is situated in the four-story building in Lucknow Zoo (Banarasi Baug). It has a rich collection of sculpture, bronzes, paintings, natural history, manuscripts, numismatics, anthropology, etc., of Awadh region. It contains a Egyptian mummy (c. 1000 BC) and a wooden sarcophagus as well.

Mathura, the birthplace of Lord Krishna was known as Brij Bhoomi. Mathura is surrounded by numerous sites which have been associated with Lord Krishna. This region has hundreds of small and big temples which attract pilgrims throughout the year. Some of the significant temples are Dwarikadeesh temple, the temple at Krishna Janmbhoomi, Shri Radha Raman temple, Shri Govind Dev temple, etc.

Mathura Museum has a huge collection of Mathura school of sculptures known for the Mathura style that flourished during the Kushan period around 100 BC and reached its peak during the Gupta period (325 to 600 AD). The sculptures made in red sandstone were marked by sharp and beautiful features, graceful and slim body, with many folds of transparent drapery and a new



style of *coiffure*. The collection of Mathura sculptures and terracottas are displayed in the Government Museum at Mathura, which was established in 1874. Perhaps the most impressive work of art displayed here is the headless life-size statue of Kanishka.



The Mathura school of art adopted the traditions of the early Indian art of Bharhut and Sanchi. Starting with the earliest terracotta figures of the mother goddess, the free use of elaborate motifs in hairstyles and drapes, and the fusion of the old Indian-cults as the worship of *yakshas* are all important features of this school of art.

Agra, the city of architectural wonders, is one of the richest heritage sites in India with numerous Mughal monuments including the magnificent Taj Mahal, tombs like Akbar's mausoleum at Sikandra, impressive Agra Fort, formal Mughal gardens and the fabulous city of Fatehpur Sikri.

Tomb of Itmad-ud-Daula is one of the most attractive structures inlaid with pietra dura decoration in Agra designed by Nur Jahan, the favourite queen of Jahangir, for her father.

It is the first Mughal building to be constructed of white inlaid marble, a type of architecture which becomes characteristic of Mughal buildings in the



Tomb of Itmad-ud-Daula

17th century. Believed to have inspired the design of the Taj Mahal, the tomb stands on a low platform and is rectangular with four minars or domed towers growing out of its four corners.

Taj Mahal, overlooking the River Yamuna, was built by Shah Jahan to enshrine the body of his favourite wife, better known as Mumtaz Mahal who died shortly after giving birth to her 14th child,



Taj Mahal

in 1631. Square in shape, the Taj Mahal known for its symmetry, sits on a raised platform surrounded by four minarets. The fully developed four minarets mark an important stage in Mughal architecture. The

most remarkable feature of these minarets is their harmony with the tomb. It is topped with a huge central dome, a bulging white double-dome with a broad *padma-kosa* (lotus-petals) and beautiful *Kalasa*-finial mounted on the tomb, capped by a crowning brass spire. It is embellished with extraordinarily fine detail of relief carving, highlighted by floral patterns of precious stones. Carved vases of flowers including roses, tulips and *narcissi*, rise subtly out of the marble base, a pattern repeated more colourfully and inlaid with precious stones around the four great arched recesses on each side.



Motifs on Taj Mahal

Agra Fort, built by the Mughal emperor Akbar, contains numerous impressive structures like the Jahangir Mahal, Khas Mahal, Diwan-i-Khas, Diwan-i-Aam, Machchhi Bhawan and Moti Masjid. The Musamman Burj is a beautiful octagonal tower with an open pavilion. The Jahangir Mahal was built by Akbar and is one of the few structures that survives from his reign. It is a Stately building with rows of ornate pillars with elaborate hanging brackets set around an open courtyard.

Tansen's Baradari has 12 doorways, this rectangular single-storey building is made of red sandstone with three doorways on each side. The arched doorways grace its northern and southern sides while the eastern and western sides have flat-roofed doorways.

In Fatehpur Sikri, Birbal's house stands near the north-west corner of Jodha Bai's palace. An extension of northern suite of Jodha Bai's palace, Hawa Mahal is composed of beautiful *jali* screens. This kind of arrangement of screens keeps the interior cool and at the same time ensured *purdah* for ladies. It was originally closed with beautiful stone screens and extended upto Hathi Pol and Sangin Burj, but now only a part of it is survived. Jodha Bai's palace is the largest and most important part of Imperial Harem, having all facilities, provisions and safeguards.

Several Hindu motifs like *hans* (swan), parrot, elephants, lotus, *srivatsa mark*, *ghantmala*, etc.,

are decorated in the interior. The *colonnaded dalan* contains curvilinear square pillars with beautiful moldings and extremely graceful brackets. The western suite, which serves the purpose of temple, contains beautiful curvilinear pillars with brackets. This suite contains *vedikas* and the super structure of the building comprises *chhatris*, semi-circular domes and triangular tiled roofs which bear traces of arabesque designs in glazed tiles. Panch Mahal, a five-floored pillared pavilion is an extraordinary building. It was called *badgir* or wind tower, which was constructed to alleviate the heat and is a very popular architectural mechanism of Persian architecture.

The first floor has 84 pillars with each row of eight pillars arranged in north to south direction and six pillars arranged in east to west direction. The second floor has 56 pillars beautiful carved with unique designs with row of six pillars in north to south direction and row of four pillars in east to west direction. Capitals of these pillars contain beautiful carved designs like floral vase, arch or rosette pattern.

Varanasi

The land of Varanasi (Kashi) has been the ultimate pilgrimage spot for Hindus for ages. Often referred to as Banaras, Varanasi is among the oldest living cities in the world. Varanasi has also been a great centre of learning for ages and is associated with spiritualism, mysticism, Sanskrit, yoga and honoured authors, musicians, dancers and scholars of all fields.

With more than 100 *ghats* along the Ganga, some of the prominent *ghats* are the Dasaswamedh Ghat, Manikarnika Ghat, Harischandra Ghat, Kabir Ghat and Assi Ghat. Manikarnika Ghat, one of the oldest and most sacred *ghats*, is the main cremation *ghat* of Varanasi.

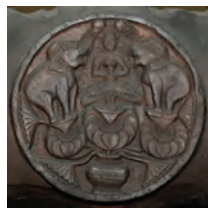
Bharat Kala Bhawan, located in the Banaras Hindu University has an outstanding collection of sculptures, paintings and textiles which began with the private collection of the eminent art historian Rai Krishnadasa. The sculpture



Sandstone Structure of Bhairut Stupa



collection includes terracotta and clay objects, stone and bronze and cast metal objects. Ancient terracotta varying from ritual icons to toys to utilitarian objects date to the Indus Valley civilisation, Mauryan, Sunga and Gupta periods.



Sandstone Structure

Among the stone sculptures are red sandstone reliefs from the 2nd century BC Buddhist stupa at Bharhut and rare images and statues from well-known schools like Gandhara, which saw the synthesis of Greek and Indian styles and Mathura, a powerful art centre during the Kushana period. The large and impressive collection of textiles contains precious examples of Banaras silks and brocades, embroidered shawls from Kashmir and the rare Chamba *rumal*, once used to wrap ceremonial gifts and offerings. They consist of rich embroidered pieces with designs and stories from the life of Krishna. There are several collections of Mughal, Rajasthani and Pahari miniature paintings from almost all the schools housed here.

Sarnath is about 10 km from Varanasi, where Buddha delivered his first sermon after gaining enlightenment. On the day before his death, Buddha included Sarnath along with Lumbini, Bodh Gaya and Kushinagar as the four places he thought to be sacred to his followers. It makes Sarnath one of the most venerated Buddhist places. Besides Buddhism, Sarnath is also connected with Jainism. Some of the important Buddhist monuments at Sarnath are the Dhamekha stupa, the Chaukhandi (was built to mark the place where Lord Buddha met his first disciples as he travelled from Bodh Gaya to Sarnath) and monasteries and temples of different schools of Buddhism from Japan, China, Thailand, Burma, etc. The Indian Buddhist society called Mahabodhi Society maintains a deer park around the Buddha temple. The Mahabodhi Temple within the park has a tooth relic of the Buddha.



Sarnath

Sarnath has yielded a rich collection of artifacts including sculptures and edifices comprising numerous Buddha and Bodhisattva images and other ancient remains. To house all the excavations in and

around Sarnath, a site museum has been established where finest specimens of Buddhist art and other important remains have been kept. The single most famous exhibit of this museum is the lion capital. Among the exhibits is a beautiful sculpture of the Buddha from the 5th century. The Buddha sits cross-legged, with eyes downcast in deep meditation, and a halo around his head. The Ashoka Lion capital or the Sarnath lion capital is the national symbol of India. The Sarnath pillar bears one of the edicts of Ashoka, an inscription against division within the Buddhist community. The Sarnath pillar is a column surmounted by a capital, a canopy representing an inverted bell-shaped lotus flower, which consists of a short cylindrical abacus with four 24-spoked dharma wheels with four animals (an elephant, a bull, a horse and a lion).

Kapilvastu, where Buddha spent the early years of his life, was the capital of the Shakya clan whose ruler was his father. Today, Kapilvastu comprises several villages, where a large stupa stands at the ancient site which houses the bone relics of Buddha.

Kushinagar, one of the principal centres of the Buddhist pilgrimage, is the place where Buddha attained Mahaparinirvana—freedom from the cycle of births. The Chinese travellers Fa Hien and Hieun Tsang have also mentioned Kushinagar in their travelogues. The monuments of Kushinagar are clustered in three distinct groups comprising the main site at the Nirvana temple, the central Stupa and surrounding monastery of Mathakuar Kot in the south-west and the Ramabhar Stupa, a kilometer to the east. Buddha passed away at this place near the Hiranyavati River and was cremated at the Ramabhar stupa. The Mauryan emperor Ashoka added grandeur to this place by getting the magnificent statue of Buddha carved on a single piece of red sandstone.



Seated Buddha Sculpture

The site Museum of Kushinagar contains collection of Buddhist artefacts like sculptures, carved panels, etc., which were discovered from the site excavations at Kushinagar.



Sravasti, capital of the ancient Kosala kingdom, is sacred to Buddhists because it is here that Buddha performed the greatest of his miracles, including that of the creating His multiple images. An active centre of Buddhism even in the Buddha's lifetime, the Buddha himself spent many summers here, and delivered important sermons.

Deogarh/Dashavatar temple, dedicated to Lord Vishnu situated on the right bank of the Betwa river, is of great importance. Integral to the history of the Guptas, it is a fine example of early temple architecture, showing a high level of craftsmanship of architecture and sculpture. The terraced basement above the high plinth is decorated with sculpted panels. The figures of Ganga and Yamuna adorn the carved doorway leading to the sanctum sanctorum. Three large carved panels along the side walls—the Gajendramoksha panel, the Nar Narayan Tapasya and the Anantshayi Vishnu—depict scenes from Vaishnava mythology.

Bhitargaon Temple is a unique architectural specimen with a brick *shikara* belonging to the Gupta period. Inside the temple, only the sanctum or *garbhagriha* and the porch exist. The importance of the Bhitargaon temple lies in the fact that it is the sole surviving record of this early phase of temple architecture in India.

Established in 1931, Allahabad Museum is known for its rich collection and unique objects of art. It has a collection of the famous Bharut stone sculptures depicting the Jataka stories, the Roreich paintings, painting from the Bengal School of Art, terracotta gallery, archaeological gallery and much more.

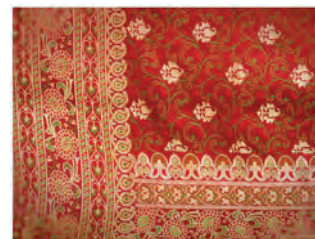
Crafts

Pietra dura is Agra's fabled inlay work of precious stones like lapiz lazuli and machelite on marble. The mosaics formed by the inlay work range from beautiful floral patterns to free flowing flower and vine themes on table tops, bowls, wall hangings, etc. The best of pietra dura work featuring delicate and intricate mosaics in jewel-like colours is made in Agra.

Lucknow's *chikankari* is one of the important crafts of Uttar Pradesh, which entails delicate and traditional hand embroidery with needle-work.

Chikankari's charm lies in the minuteness, evenness and sheer excellence of craft. The motifs of *chikankari* range from floral and vine themes to birds, animals and arabesques. It is done on fabrics like chiffon, muslin, organza, organdie and silk.

Saree weaving is a cottage industry for millions of people around Varanasi. Most of the silk for the Banarasi sarees comes from South India, mainly from Bengaluru. Kinkhab is the art of using gold and silver thread on fine silk and cotton to create the rich brocades of Varanasi gold thread on a silver background. Breathtakingly beautiful, they are embellished with bird, animal and geometric patterns in the *butidar* and *jaal* style. Zardozi embroidery is another unique art of Varanasi, which is famous around the world.



Banarasi Jangla

Carpet weaving is an important craft tradition of Uttar Pradesh. The carpet weaving centres primarily located in the State are around Varanasi and its neighbouring areas of Mirzapur, Khamaria and Bhadohi which produce almost 90 per cent of the country's carpets. They have their own distinct designs such as the Taj Mahal, Kethariwala Jal, Jamabaz, Kandhari, etc. Embossed, sculpted carpets in the Chinese style are also produced in Mirzapur.

Moradabad in western Uttar Pradesh produces large quantities of metalware, specially brassware and it is famous for its coloured enamelling and intricate engravings. Also, metal lock industry of Aligarh is an example of master craftsmanship.

Saharanpur is well-known for its carved and brass inlay furniture items in wood of *sheesham*, *sal* and *dudhi*, used to make well-finished screens, room dividers and furniture items featuring *jaali* or lattice work and brass inlay work in floral and geometric patterns.

Glazed pottery with white background and blue and green patterns is developed in Khurja, Chunar and Rampur in Uttar Pradesh. A very special kind of earthenware peculiar to Nizamabada and Azamgarh districts of Uttar Pradesh is distinguished by its dark



lustrous finish. It has high gloss and lustre derived from a powder called kabiz, made from the mud of rice fields. Khurja is also well-known for its cheap and tough tableware. Khurja pottery has evolved a style of its own by raising the pattern with the use of thick slips into a light relief. A speciality of Khurja is a type of long pitcher decorated in relief by a thick slip. Specialised glazed items like tableware for modern use are produced in Chinhat and Mausalia.

Gorakhpur has villages where clay figures of animals are created. It is famous for its ornately decorated terracotta horse too. The potter creates the basic form by placing separate pieces of mud on the wheel and then carving them.

Ferozabad is a glass town where the entire community seems to be involved in making glassware. Originally only glass bangles were made here, but now all types of sophisticated glassware including tasteful tableware is produced.

‘Attars’ or perfumes are produced in Kannauj (Lucknow-Unnao-Kanpur) region since the 19th century when the perfumers experimented and succeeded in making *attar* with delicate and lasting fragrances using various aromatic herbs, spices, sandal oil, musk, essence of flowers and leaves. The famous fragrances used in perfumes are *khus*, *keora*, *chameli*, *zafran* and *agar*.

Lucknow is well-known for its jewellery and enamel work. Exquisite silverware with patterns of hunting scenes, snakes and roses are very popular.

Leather industry in Kanpur for supplying the raw material all over the world and shoe industry at Agra is well-known for its export and supplies within the country.

The Bundelkhand region consists of five cities Chitrakoot, Deogarh, Jhansi, Kalinjar and Mahoba. Jhansi is the gateway to Bundelkhand, a region rich in cultural heritage. Located in central India, the place used to be a stronghold of the Chandela kings. The

legendary queen Rani Laxmi Bai led forces against the British rule during the revolt of 1857 and died bravely at the age of 22 years.

Deogarh in Lalitpur district is known for Gupta monuments and many other monuments of Hindu and Jain origins. The Gupta temple dedicated to the Hindu god Vishnu, popularly known as the Dashavatara Temple and dated to the 6th century CE, is the earliest known Panchayatana temple in North India. The fort on the hill has a cluster of Jain temples, the oldest of these dating to the 8th or 9th century. The wall frescoes of Jain images of “iconographic and the stylistic variety”, are special features of the fort.

Chitrakoot meaning “the hill of many wonders” falls in the northern Vindhya range of mountains

Mahoba is known for its myriad lakes and temples. The lakes and hilltop fort which was built by the Chandela Kings are engineering marvels. Ballads praise the days of glory and narrate the inspiring saga of Alha and Udal, the two legendary warrior brothers who sacrificed their lives for the honour of their land.

The ancient fort of Kalinjar was strategically important during the medieval times. Located in the stunning Vindhya ranges, this fort has a charm which lingers for long in one’s mind. There is also the famous Neelkanth temple which according to the legend was built on the spot where Lord Shiva emerged from the churning of the ocean and came to rest for some time.

CONTEMPORARY CULTURAL DEVELOPMENTS

The Uttar Pradesh Tourism showcases its immense cultural diversity by organising a large number of festivals such as Taj Mahotsav (Agra), Ayurveda Mahotsav (Jhansi), Lucknow Mahotsav, Kajari Mahotsav (Mirzapur), Ganga Mahotsav (Varanasi) and Buddha Mahotsav (Kapilvastu, Kaushambi, Kushi Nagar, Sankisa, Sarnath, Shravasti).



UTTARAKHAND



of India, the Ganga and the Yamuna, originate in this region. Other famous rivers include the Bhagirathi, a major tributary of River Ganga, and many other tributaries and distributaries such as Dhaulti Ganga, Kali Ganga, Girithi Ganga, Rishi Ganga, Bal Ganga, Bhilangna River, Tons River, Alaknanda, Nandakini, Pindar, Kosi and Mandakini. This State has two major divisions, Garhwal and Kumaon and the interim capital of Uttarakhand is Dehradun. According to the 2011 Census of India, Uttarakhand has a population of 10,116,752. More than four-fifths of Uttarakhand's residents are Hindus. Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, Buddhists and Jains form the remaining population. The original natives of the land belong to different tribes. Main tribes of the region include Bhotias, Tharus, Buxas, Jaunsaris and Rajis.

Often referred to as 'Dev Bhoomi', Uttarakhand is a State in the northern part of India, which became the 27th State of India on 9th November 2000. The name Uttarakhand is derived from two Sanskrit words *uttara* meaning 'north', and *khanda* meaning 'land', conjointly meaning 'Northern Land'. The presence of humans in the region goes back to prehistoric times. Archaeological evidences like rock paintings, rock shelters, Palaeolithic stone tools and megaliths support this fact. Located at the foothills of the Himalayan mountain ranges, it is largely a hilly State, having international boundaries with China (Tibet) in the north and Nepal in the east. To its north-west lies Himachal Pradesh, and to the south is Uttar Pradesh. Two of the most famous rivers

CULTURAL SPECIFICITIES

Language

Hindi is the first official language of Uttarakhand and is spoken by the majority of the population. Sanskrit is

Fact Sheet	
State Day	9 November
Geographical Area	53,483 km ²
Capital	Dehradun
Official Language	Hindi
State Animal	Alpine Musk Deer
State Bird	Himalayan Monal
State Flower	Brahm Kamal
State Tree	Rhododendron (Buransh)



given the status of second official language. The two main regional languages are Garhwali and Kumaoni. Jaunsari and Bhotiya dialects are being used by some tribes in the region.

Dress

Traditionally women of Uttarakhand, especially in the remote hilly regions, wear *ghagra* which is a long *petticoat*-like skirt, a full-sleeved shirt and a *dupatta*. Kumaoni women wear a special red *dupatta* with silver or golden *gota* (lace) on the borders, called *pichora*. Women in district Pithoragarh generally wrap the saree around their waist as a *sarong* (a garment consisting of a long piece of cloth wrapped around the body and tucked at the waist or under the armpits). They also wrap a shawl around their waist in a way that resembles a waistband. They usually wear a blouse on top, over a full sleeved sweater. Women in rural areas often cover their head with a *scarf* which is tied at the back of their heads, called *dhantu* and is usually made of wool. The Bhotiya women generally wear *chuba* (a long gown with a silk shirt inside it). Recently, a lot of changes have taken place in the dressing pattern of women and now *salwar-kurta* is also a popular dress among women.



Woman wearing Pichora



Garhwali Women in Traditional Dress



Kumaoni Women in Traditional Dress

Men traditionally wear *kurta* and *pyjama* with a warm jacket and a typical *pahadi* headgear. A woollen shawl provides extra protection during winters. Western-style trousers and shirts are also common among the men.

Food

Uttarakhand is renowned for its extensive variety of pulses. Among these, *bhatt* or black soyabean is the most preferred and *bhatt* is cooked in an iron *kadhai* to make *chudkani*, *bhatwani* and *thatwani*. Traditionally, chapatis are made of flour obtained from *mandua* and buckwheat. *Mandua ki roti* is generally consumed during the cold and harsh winters. Uttarakhand’s cuisine makes good use of local herbs and spices like *jamboor*, *kala jira*, *gandrayani* and *jakhiya* as taste enhancers. Chutneys are made of *bhangjeera* and *til*.



Bal Mithai

Table 1 mentions some of the preferred cuisine of Garhwal and Kumaon divisions.

Table 1

Cuisine of Garhwal	Cuisine of Kumaon
Gahat (Kulath) Soup, Stuffed Gahat Chapatis, Gahat (Kulath) Rasmi Badi (Kofta) Urad Ke Pakore (Wada), Rus, Bhangjeera ki Chatni, Aloo ke Gutke, Kafili, Phaanu, Til ki Chutney, Mandua ki Roti, Singori, Bhangak Khatai, Jhangora ki Kheer, etc.	Bal Mithai, Mandua ki Roti, Singodi, Bhangak Khatai, Sisunak Saag, Lesu, Jhangora ki Kheer, Sani Hui Mule and Nimbu, Aloo ke Gutke, Wada, Kumaoni Raita, Rus, Kaapa, Gahat ki Dal, Mixed Dal Salad, Singal, Aloo Dal Pakore

FAIRS AND FESTIVALS

Numerous fairs and festivals are celebrated all over Uttarakhand. One of the major Hindu pilgrimages, Kumbh Mela is held in Uttarakhand’s holy city of Haridwar, once in every 12 years. People from all over



Kumbh Mela



Nanda Devi Mela



the world take part in the Kumbh Mela. According to Hindu mythology, drops of *amrit* or divine nectar had fallen on four places when Garuda, the divine bird was transporting the kumbh or celestial pitcher containing Amrit. Kumbh Mela is organised in all these four places and Haridwar is one of them. The Uttarayani Mela is held every year in the second week of January on the holy occasion of Makar Sankranti and is celebrated at a number of places in Uttarakhand. Nanda Devi is the chief patronising Goddess of Uttarakhand. Nanda Devi is another popular fair held around September. Various other fairs like Kanwar Yatra, Kandali Festival, Bissu Mela, Magh Mela, Purnagiri Mela, Syalde Bikhauti Mela, Haatkalika Fair, Jauljibi and Thal fairs and Nanda Devi Raj Jat Mela also take place here.

Various festivals are celebrated in Uttarakhand. Kumaoni Holi, in varied forms of Baithki Holi, Khari Holi and Mahila Holi, all starting from Basant Panchami, are festivals and musical affairs lasting over a month. The festival of Bat Savitri is held in Uttarakhand in the Hindu month of Jyestha when married women keep fast all day long and later in the day offer prayers to Goddess Savitri as well as the holy Banyan tree for the health and prosperity of their husbands. Dasera or Ganga Dussehra festival is celebrated during the Hindu month of Jyestha in which offerings are made to Goddess Ganga. Basant Panchami, Makar Sankranti, Ghee Sankranti and Phul Dei are some other festivals celebrated here. Since 1999, an International Yoga festival is also held at Rishikesh, each year in the month of March in which yoga aspirants from different parts of the country and world participate.

PERFORMING ARTS

Music and Dance

Uttarakhand is rich in folklores and has folk songs for every occasion. Popular folk songs include Mangal, Basanti, Khuded and Chhopati. 'Bedu Pako' is a popular folk song of Uttarakhand with international fame. Phag, Bair, Baramasa, Saiddhali, Pavada, Hurkiya Baul and Pandav are some other folk songs. These songs are usually played on instruments like



Musical Instruments

dhol, damau, turri, ransinga, dholki, daur, thali, bhankora, mandan and mashakbaja. Narendra Singh Negi and Mina Rana are popular folk singers of this region.

Most of the folk songs are accompanied by dancing. The prominent folk dances are the Langvir Nritya, Bhotia Dance, Chamfuli and Chholia. Langvir Nritya is a dance form from Garhwal, performed by males that resembles gymnastic movements. The Bhotia Dance, Dandala, Chamfuli, Dhusaka and Dhurang are the group folk dances of the Bhotias and are similar to the Garba dance of Gujarat. Chamfuli, a popular dance form of the Garhwal region, is performed by both men and women separately and together in pairs. The Chholia dance is performed exclusively by the men at marriage processions.



Chholia Dance

The Pandava dance is performed during Dussehra and Deepawali and involves enactment of stories from Mahabharata through dance and music. The Badra Nati dance is performed during religious festivals and other social occasions. Tharu dance is performed on the bride's first visit to her parent's house after marriage. The Chanchari dance is performed in the Garhwal region and Almora. The Jhoda dance of Kumaon is performed on a full moon night around Holi.

The Hurkiya baul is a community dance performed in the Kumaon region during the sowing season. During the performance a singer narrates stories of bravery from local history, while the performers enter from two opposite sides and enact the stories in a series of movements.





Badrinath Temple



Kedarnath Temple



Gurdwara Hemkund Sahib

VISUAL ARTS

Temples and Shrines

The State is famous for its temples and shrines. Gangotri and Yamunotri, the sources of the Ganga and Yamuna, together with Badrinath (dedicated to Vishnu) and Kedarnath (dedicated to Shiva) form the Chota Char Dham, one of Hinduism's most spiritual and auspicious pilgrimage circuits. Jageshwar temple complex is 34 kms from Almora and one of the 12 *jiyotirlingas* in the country. Located in the middle of dense deodar forest, the complex houses 12 temples dating back to the 9th century. Famous for its intricate stone work, Baijnath temple complex is located in Kausani in Garur valley. Rudranath, Naina Devi, Mansa Devi, Har Ki Pauri, Gauri Kund, Chandi Devi, Chandrabadni, Dhari Devi, Doonagiri Devi, Gaura Devi, Hariyali Devi, Jwalpa Devi, Kalipad Shakti Peeth, Nand Devi, Surkanda Devi are some other famous temples located in Uttarakhand.

Uttarakhand is a place of pilgrimage not only for Hindus but for others too. Piran Kaliyar Sharif near Roorkee is a pilgrimage site for Muslims; Gurudwara Hemkund Sahib, Gurudwara Nanakmatta Sahib



Piran Kaliyar Sharif

and Reetha Sahib are pilgrimage centres for Sikhs. Tibetan Buddhism has also made its presence with the reconstruction of Mindrolling Monastery and its Buddha Stupa, at Clement Town, Dehradun.

Accessories and Jewellery

Oversized nose ring called the *nath*, worn by married women, is the most common jewellery item in Uttarakhand. Another common accessory adorned by married women here is the black beaded necklace called *chareu*. Neck-piece, called *hansuli*, is also popular here along with nose studs called *keels* and silver toe rings called *bichchua*.



A woman wearing 'Nath'

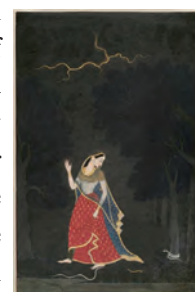


Hansuli

Crafts

Painting

The development of the Garhwal School of painting as a branch of the Pahari School of art is believed to have started in the 17th century which reached its zenith in the latter half of the 18th and first half of the 19th century. The pioneering figure behind this development was an eminent Garhwali painter, Mola Ram. Indian life, its history, culture and traditions form subjects of these paintings.



Painting by Mola Ram

Aipan or Alpana, a popular Kumaoni art form done on walls, paper and pieces of cloth involves drawings of various geometric and other figures representing gods, goddesses and other objects of



Aipam

nature. Barboond, Patta, Rangwali, etc., are some other popular local paintings done on special occasions. The region is also famous for its ancient rock paintings and engravings in places like Lakhudiyar, Falseema, Kasar Devi in Kumaon and Dungri in Garhwal.

Wood Carving

The ornately decorated temples of the region are witness to the popular craft of wood carving. Intricately carved designs of floral patterns, deities, and geometrical motifs decorate the doors, windows, ceilings and walls of village houses as well.



Copper workshop in Tamta Mohalla, Almor

Metal and Tweeds

Tamta Mohalla in Almor is the centre of unique traditional copperware art. Almor is also home to weavers. Traditional tweeds and shawls are other products of the local craft which reflect the artistic brilliance of the local craftsmen.

Ornaments

In every part of Garhwal and Kumaon, traditional goldsmiths make traditional ornaments using motifs and patterns which are thousands of years old. The ornaments come in variety of gold, silver, copper and brass.

Other crafts of Uttarakhand include basketry, woollen shawls, scarves and rugs.

CONTEMPORARY CULTURAL DEVELOPMENTS

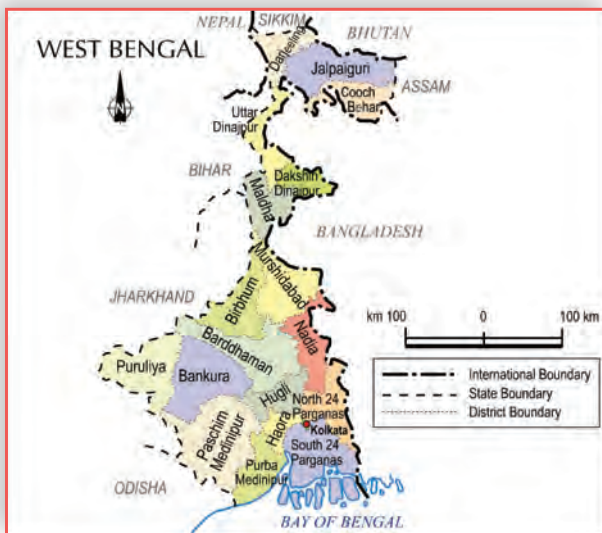
Incredibly beautiful land of Himalayan peaks, huge glaciers, streams and lakes, the mention of which is instantly encountered with expressions like 'simply heaven', 'Dev Bhoomi', etc., Uttarakhand has many pilgrimage places of various religions, hill stations, national parks, bird sanctuaries and world heritage sites. Some of the most famous hill stations of India like Mussoorie, Nainital, Dhanaulti, Pauri, Lansdowne, Sattal, Almor, Kausani, Bhimtal and Ranikhet are in Uttarakhand. Due to its proximity to the Himalayan ranges, the hilly terrain and valley is suitable for trekking, climbing, skiing, camping, rock climbing, and paragliding. Uttarakhand is enriched with great diversity of flora and fauna. The region is home to some rare species of plants and animals, many of which are protected by sanctuaries and reserves. The State has numerous National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries. Jim Corbett National Park, located here, is the oldest national park of the Indian sub-continent. The park is well-known for its diverse wildlife and Project Tiger run by the Government of India. Rajaji National Park is another such park which is known for its elephants. Valley of Flowers National Park and Nanda Devi National Park in Chamoli district together constitute a UNESCO World Heritage Site. One of its cities, Rishikesh is now popularly known as the 'Yoga Capital of the World'.

The State has made systematic and concentrated efforts over the years to develop its multifaceted tourism in an eco-friendly way. All these efforts have resulted in making tourism a major source of employment and income/revenue generation and have considerably contributed to the overall economic and social development of the State.





WEST BENGAL



Rupnarayan besides other water bodies like ponds and lakes. Variations in altitude result in diversity in the natural surroundings and climate of West Bengal.

The State is bounded on the north by Bhutan and the State of Sikkim, on the east by Bangladesh, on the west by Jharkhand, on the north-east by the State of Assam, on the south by the Bay of Bengal, on the south-west by Odisha, on the north-west by Nepal and on the west by Bihar. The capital of West Bengal is Kolkata, which is also known sometimes as the ‘City of Joy’ and the ‘City of Palaces’.

Magnificent buildings, museums, cultural centres, historical monuments, cuisine and festivals have made the State enchanting and a great attraction for tourists. Educational centres like Visva Bharati situated in Shantiniketan and founded by the Nobel Laureate Rabindranath Tagore has attracted students and educationists from all over the world. The Ramakrishna Mission founded by Swami Vivekanand has equally got international acclaim and discipleship. The Presidency College (now University) situated in Calcutta has also been an important centre of learning in India.

West Bengal is a State located in the eastern part of India. From the northern highlands at the feet of the Himalayas to the tropical forests of the Sunderbans, it is a land of extreme diversity, each region being different from the other. It can be broadly divided into two geographical zones — the Gangetic Plain and the Himalayan, and Sub-Himalayan area.

The alluvial plain in the south is watered by the Hooghly river and its local tributaries — the Mayurakshi, Damodar, Kangsabati and Rupnarayan. The Himalayan north, comprising the districts of Darjeeling, Kalimpong, Jalpaiguri and Cooch Behar, are watered by the swift flowing rivers Teesta, Torsa, Jaldhaka and Ranjit. The coastal region has also rivers like Padma, Meghna, Damodar, Mayurakshi, Teesta,

<i>Fact Sheet</i>	
<i>Geographical Area</i>	88,752 km ²
<i>Capital</i>	Kolkata
<i>Official Languages</i>	Bengali, Nepali (in Darjeeling and Kalimpong districts)
<i>State Animal</i>	Fishing cat
<i>State Flower</i>	Night-flowering Jasmine
<i>State Tree</i>	Devil Tree



CULTURAL SPECIFICITIES

Language

The official language of the State is Bengali. Nepali is also an official language in Darjeeling and Kalimpong districts. Hindi, Odia, Punjabi, Santhali and Urdu are additional official languages. Bengali, belonging to the Indo-Aryan language family, is the seventh most spoken language in the world. Santhali, Mundari and Hoe are a few major tribal languages spoken in the State. Besides, there are other local languages spoken by the Tamang, Lepcha and Bhutia tribes of the Darjeeling hills. Kurukh is another language which has been given official status recently by the West Bengal government. This language belongs to a sub-family of the Dravidian languages spoken by people in a part of the Chhota Nagpur plateau in the State.

Dress

The traditional costume of women is *saree* and of men is *dhoti-kurta*. These are usually made of cotton or silk. West Bengal has a rich tradition of handloom weaving.



The traditional saree

Jamdani and *Tangail* are the two most well-known handloom varieties belonging to this tradition. *Jamdani* was known as a textile of excellence for its super fine quality in the 15th and 16th centuries CE. Subsequently, *Jamdani sarees* featured designs of the paintings of Rabindranath Tagore and Jamini Ray and this motifs of rural art forms making them very attractive.

The term *Tangail* originated from a district of present-day Bangladesh which goes by the same name. Previously, it was known as 'Begum Bahar', where silk warps and cotton wefts were used. Later

on, both cotton warps and wefts were adopted into its weaving. The weavers of *Jamdani* belong mainly to the 'Basak' community, who migrated from *Tangail* to settle in *Katwa Dhatrigram*, *Tamaghata*, *Samudragarh* and *Dhanekhali* areas in *Burdwan* district before the Partition.

Similarly, the silks of Bengal are much acclaimed the world over since ancient times. Today, the most well-known Bengali silks



Baluchari sarees

are the *Baluchari sarees*, which are a product of exclusive design and fabulous weaving techniques, that tell stories of the *Ramayana*, the *Mahabharata* and *Krishna Leela*. Other silk textiles of the State are *Tussar* and *Kantha*.

Men and women living in the hilly regions of West Bengal like *Darjeeling* and *Kalimpong* wear long skirts, wrap-ons, blouses, tunics, woollen pants, shirts, coats, sweaters and head gears. The *Batik* silk and cotton *sarees* of *Santiniketan* along with its leather crafts also attract visitors.



Costume in Hills of W. Bengal

Food

Although the food habits, tastes, preferences and choices of items vary from district to district, and from community to community, the basic course generally remains



Bengali Thali

the same with rice and fish playing a predominant role in Bengal. The State has earned fame for itself for a variety of good quality rice. A variety of vegetables and fruits are also grown in the State throughout the year. A wide variety of fish (*ruhi*, *katla*, *pabda*, *tangra*, *koi*, *hilsa*, *pomfret*, *bhetki*), including shrimps, prawns and crabs, are commonly consumed by the people. Traditionally, *ghee* and mustard oil are used as the mediums of cooking.





Fish Maach



Rosogolla

A Bengali meal usually consists of *shukto* (a preparation that includes many types of vegetables and bitter gourd), *shak* (leafy vegetables), *dal* (pulses), *bhaja* (fried vegetables like ladyfinger, potato, etc.), variety of vegetables, fish/mutton/chicken/egg curry, *chutney* (sweet saucy item of tomato, raw papaya, raw mango, etc.), sweets like *mitha dai* (sweet curd) and *sandesh* or *rosogolla*. Use of mustard seeds either as *phoron* (leavening agent) or as a paste in different cuisines are used to prepare exquisite Bengali dishes. *Payesh* or *kheer* (made of rice and milk added with sugar or *gur*) is always prepared on auspicious occasions. The *gur* is prepared from the juices of *khajur* (dates) or *taal* (palm) which are known for their sweetness. Bengalis have also a variety of other sweets like *pantua*, *mihi dana* of Burdwan, *raso kadombo*, *nikhuti* etc.



Sandesh

FAIRS AND FESTIVALS

Durga Puja

This is the most popular festival of West Bengal celebrated in the month of September or October and coincides with the Navratri festival celebrated all over India. It consists of a series of rituals performed over five days welcoming Goddess Durga throughout the State. Profusely decorated *pandals* are put up with idols of Durga, Saraswati, Lakshmi, Kartik, Ganesh and Mahisasur, sometimes with that of Shiva as well. The festival is symbolic of the assertion of women power and the victory of good over evil. The festival starts with Mahalaya, the first phase of the moon in the month of



Durga Puja

Ashwina. Thousands offer prayers called *tarpan* to their ancestors at river banks on this occasion. From the sixth day (*Shashti*) onwards, the festival is celebrated for four days (*Saptami*, *Ashtami*, *Navami* and *Dashami*) in *pandals*. On the tenth or the last day, the idols are carried in processions for immersion in a nearby river or lake. This is also called the day of 'Vijaya Dashami'. The festive mood builds up as drummers (*dhakis*) beat feathered drums and others dance before the idols.

Poila Baishakh (Bengali New Year)

This festival is the first day of the Bengali calendar, coinciding with 14 April every year. The traditional Bengali greeting on this occasion is 'Shubhō Nōbobōrsho', which literally means 'Happy New Year'. It is a day of great festivity and celebration.

Ratha Yatra

The Ratha Yatra (cart festival) at Mahesh is the second oldest chariot festival in India (after Ratha Yatra at Puri) and the oldest in Bengal. Celebrated in the month of July, it is a religious festival for all. Children buy little chariots of wood or clay and decorate them to mark the auspicious occasion.

Rabindra Jayanti

Kaviguru Rabindranath Tagore's birth anniversary is celebrated every year on or around 8 May, as an important festival. On this day, the State reverbrates with music, dance and drama composed by the Nobel laureate.



Rabindranath Tagore

Table 1 lists some other festivals celebrated by different communities in West Bengal.

Table 1

S.No.	Name of the Festival	Purpose of Celebration
1.	Durga Puja	To give strength, or <i>shakti</i> , to destroy the evil forces. Symbolic of women's power.
2.	Saraswati Puja	To worship Maa Saraswati, the Goddess of knowledge and music.
3.	Christmas	Birth of Jesus Christ
4.	Dol Purnima	Holi
5.	Gangasagar Mela	Celebrated at the place where Ganga falls into the Bay of Bengal on the Makar Sankranti day.
6.	Id-ul-Fitr	Marking the end of Ramazan.
7.	Jagaddhatri Puja	Goddess Jagaddhatri is worshipped.
8.	Kali Puja	Kali is worshipped as the Mother Goddess who protects from evil. This is similar to Diwali
9.	Bhai Phonta	Sisters pray for their brothers, safety, well-being and success.
10.	Orange Festival	To promote the Samsing-Jaldhaka area in the foothills of Bhutan (Himalaya under Darjeeling Hills) as a major orange growing landscape, the Orange Festival takes place every year. This festival is organised mainly to promote community-based tourism, ecological conservation, Indo-Bhutan friendship and peace.
11.	Kalpataru Utsav	Ramakrishna revealed himself to be an Avatar, or God's incarnation on earth.
12.	Laxmi Puja	Goddess of prosperity, Laxmi who is worshipped in most Hindu households for the family's well-being.
13.	Makar Sankranti	Marks the shift of the sun into ever-lengthening days.
14.	Vishwakarma Puja	God of Creation celebrated to worship machines, tools or technical machinery in manufacturing units.

Apart from these festivals, several *melas* (fairs) are part of West Bengal's cultural ethos. The Vasantotsava (spring festival celebrated as Holi) provides a riot of colours while the Poush Mela at Santiniketan celebrates local crafts.

PERFORMING ARTS

Music

Table 2 lists some of the folk, classical and regional music performed in West Bengal.

Table 2

Folk Music	Description
Baul	This form of music stands as a unique form of Bengali folk music, traditions and mysticism.
Gombhira	It is performed with a particularly distinctive rhythm with two performers, representing a man and his maternal grandfather, who sing varied themes to raise social awareness. It is popular in Malda district.
Bhawaiya	It is a popular folk music in Jalpaiguri and parts of Darjeeling, Kalimpong and North Dinajpur districts. Using Kamtapuri language, these folk songs are sung both solo as well as in chorus. Buffalo keepers used to sing these songs while <i>ploughing</i> .
Padavali Kirtans	It refers to the Vaishnavite songs composed in medieval period of West Bengal (15th to 17th century). This is sung in devotional gatherings.



Gajan Songs	It is a communication between two Gods as Kali, Shiva or Shiva Parvati, etc. The singers pierce their body, put heavy make-up and dance and sing. These forms of folk music are often accompanied by musical instruments like <i>ektara/gopijantra</i> , <i>dhak</i> , <i>khol</i> and <i>kaansi</i> .
Classical Music	
Hindustani classical music	Hindustani classical music is widely practised in West Bengal. Stalwarts of Hindustani Shastriya Sangeet like Ustad Amir Khan, Ustad Mushtaq Hussain, Girija Shankar Chakraborty, Ustad Nissar Hussain Khan, Ustad Bade Ghulam Ali, Begum Akhtar, Jnan Prakash Ghosh made Kolkata their permanent home. Similarly, <i>Tabla</i> maestro like Sri Kumar Bose, Shankar Ghosh, Sri Bikram Ghosh, Tanmoy Bose, Anindo Chatterjee, Sabir Khan, etc., have enthralled audiences around the world with their recital of Hindustani music.
Regional Music	
Song of eminent poets and composers of West Bengal	The State is recognised for modern musical tradition all over the world. Songs written by Rabindranath Tagore are collected in <i>Gitabitan</i> (a volume of around 2,500 songs). Other composers in West Bengal are Nazrul Islam, Atulprasad and Dwijendra Lal, Salon Fokir.
Adhunik Gaan	These consist of a variety of songs sung in films and also recorded in private albums. Singers like Lata Mangeshkar, Manna Dey, Kishore Kumar, Manabendra Mukherjee, Satinath Mukhopadhyay, Dhananjay Bhattacharjee, Pannalal Bhattacharya, Akhil Bandhu Ghosh, Sandhya Mukhopadhyay, Pratima Bandyopadhyay, Nirmala Mishra, Tarun Bandypadhyay, Dwejen Mukhopadhyay, Arati Mukhopadhyay, Suman Kalyanpur have rendered beautiful compositions under this genre. Composers like S.D. Burman, R.D. Burman, Salil Choudhury, Sudhin Dasgupta, Hemanta Mukhopadhyay, Shyamal Mitra, Nachiketa Ghosh and V. Balsara have enthralled audiences.

Theatre

Theatre in West Bengal can be broadly divided into Kolkata-based theatre and rural theatre. The two types are similar in form and content, but differ in presentation. The most popular Kolkata-based theatre groups are Indian People’s Theatre Association (IPTA), Bohurupee, Natyachetana, Swapnasandhani, Nandikar, Rangakarmee, The Hypokrites, Sayak and The Arshinagar Project Sanglap.

Jatra: A form of open-air theatre, it is staged by troupes visiting from place to place. Jatras evolved in the 15th century CE during the Bhakti movement. By the 19th century CE, the repertoire had swollen to include social and historical themes that are performed in the present times.

Dance

Chhau: It is a type of dance drama popular in rural Bengal with its centre in Purulia. This dance form draws its themes from the epics, the Ramayana and the



Performance of Purulia Chhau

Mahabharata. Ornamental apparels like masks and elaborate headgears adorn the dancers, who display unique acrobatic movements to depict the victory of good over evil.

Kathakatha: It is a form of drama mainly performed on religious occasions in rural areas with mythological contents.

Gaudiya Nritya: It is a popular form of dance, which originated in Gaur, the ancient capital of Bengal. In recent times has acquired a stylised form due to the efforts of Professor Mahua Mukherjee.



Gaudiya Nritya

Rabindra Nritya: It is unique to Bengal even as it brings together a wide range of dance forms from across the world. It is performed with Rabindranath Tagore’s songs and dance dramas.

Dhali: It is a heroic folk dance performed with swords and shields by both men and women. This tradition was started by soldiers, who engaged themselves in this kind of performance to overcome the day’s



fatigue after winning a battle.

Bagroomba Dance: This is a dance popular among the Mech tribe in the northern part of Jalpaiguri district, who celebrate it as part of the spring festival wearing colourful costumes to appear like butterflies.

Mosa Glang Nai Dance: It is performed by Mech women with bowls to show plucking of flowers for 'Kherai Puja' to give a clarion call to the youth of the tribe to become active and hardworking.

Raibenshe: This is a form of war dance (*rai* means royal and *benshe* means bamboo) representing various types of acrobatic and mock fighting stunts with *dhol* (drum) and *kanshi* (gong) for music. The performers are dressed in *dhotis* tightly tied to their waists with strips of red cloth.

Bratachari: This dance is a part of social and religious rites of people, which originated in Raibenshe. It is accompanied by *dhol* (drum) and *kanshi* (gong) for music.

Kali Naach: It is performed during the Dussehra celebration. The performers wear huge black masks, heavy headgears, dark make-up and garlands of skulls imitating Goddess Kali.

Rava Naach: These are performed by the Rava tribe from the northern part of Bengal. The dances include *Fai Nang Mein* or welcome dance, *nak chung baini* or dances reflective of catching prawns, *Baishar Bidanor* or New Year's dance and *Larai lunji* or war dance.

Baul Dance: Strumming the *ektara* and dressed in saffron robes, the baul dancers sing songs in praise of the almighty and speak of *moksha* or merging of the individual self with the supreme self.



Baul



Baul Dugi

Bolan: This dance forms part of the Gajan festival held to pray Lord Shiva during the spring season by the migrant workers from UP and Bihar in Bengal. The languages spoken in this performance are Brajbhasha, Magadhi, Bhojpuri and Awadhi.

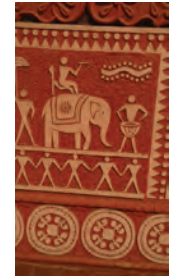
VISUAL ARTS

Terracotta Temples of Bishnupur

Bishnupur boasts of 30 temples built between the 17th and the 18th centuries CE. Built mostly of bricks and with tiles of laterite, these are modelled on the pattern of Bengali huts built with bamboo and mud with sloping straw thatches. These temples are replete with terracotta sculptures, the best examples of which can be seen in the Radha Shyama and the Keshta Raya temples. Apart from the temples, terracotta pottery and other artifacts from Bishnupur are also very famous.



Bishnupur



The Bengal School of Painting

The Bengal School of Painting flourished during the British period, in the early 20th century, with Abanindranath Tagore as its leading practitioner. Nandalal Bose, Rabindranath Tagore, Surendranath Kar, Asit Kumar Halder, who joined him as disciples, carried this movement forward. Rabindranath Tagore, who had no formal training in art, succeeded in producing more than 2,500 works of art within a decade. Over 1,500 of them are preserved in Viswa-Bharati, Shantiniketan. Evidently, in his quest for newer forms of expression in terms of line, form



*Rabindranath Tagore
Ra-Tha seal Initials*

*Jamini Roy
Mother and Child*



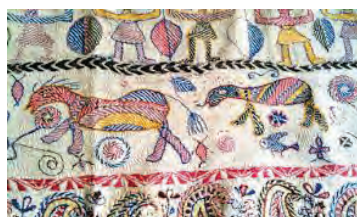
and colour, he attempted to do something different from what he did in his literary works. Jamini Roy (1887–1972) is another distinguished artist of the 20th century Bengal. His works have been declared as the national treasures of India.

Kalighat Paintings: The name comes from the temple of Goddess Kali situated at Kalighat in Kolkata. This form of painting was brought to the city by the painters-cum-potters from rural Bengal in the 19th century CE. Created on mill-made papers with water colours, these paintings mainly depict Hindu gods and goddesses. However, contemporary Kalighat paintings also reflect the society at large.

Scroll Painting: This is a traditional visual art form, which is also known as *pata* painting.

Clay and Terracotta: Terracotta plaques, medallions and wall panels are a speciality of West Bengal. Krishnanagar in the Nadia district is famous for its sharply chiselled and finely shaped dolls of clay, which are moulded by hand and then baked on fire. For shine, extracts of tamarind seeds are applied on these toys.

Embroidery: The art of making *Kantha* (rags) evolved out of necessity. It can also be called a recycling art. The precious silks and muslins after becoming worn-out were not wasted. Women pile these in layers and stitch into *kanthas* to protect themselves during the winter. Apart from floral motifs, the *kantha* works also display animals, birds and mythological figures.



Kantha

Sholapith: In this form of art, *shola* (a wild herbaceous plant that grows in the wetlands of West Bengal) is used for making decorative objects for deities like Durga. The



Shola work

shola artists also design garlands, floral bouquets and beautiful headgears (*mukuts*) for Bengali brides and grooms. During Durga Puja many exquisite idols are made of *shola*.

Masks: In West Bengal wooden masks form an important part of the attire of the Gambhira dancers. The Purulia Chhau dancers also wear masks representing different characters of gods and goddesses from the epics. These masks are made of *papier mache* and have a quality of earthiness about them.



Mask-making of Purulia Chhau

Stoneware: Midnapur district is well-known for stoneware with Simulpur as its main centre. The traditional practitioners of this craft are the Kargas, Bhumi and Karmakars.

The State is also well-known for its architecture. The Victoria Memorial in Kolkata, the Ramakrishna Math in Belur, the Kali Temple in Dakshineshwar are some of the marvelous examples of its architecture.

CONTEMPORARY CULTURAL DEVELOPMENTS

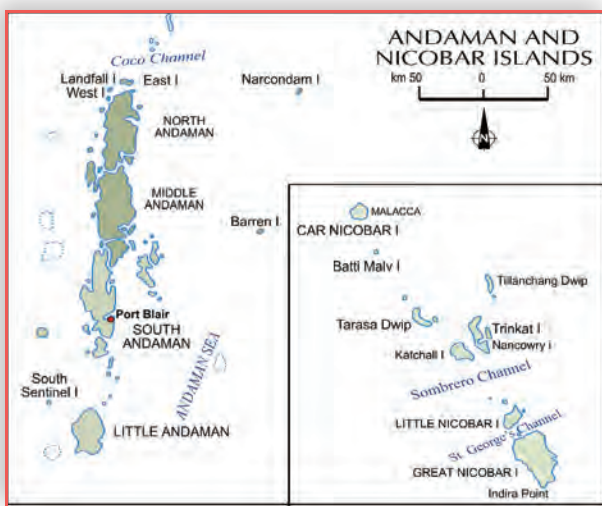
Presently, many types of fairs are being organised in Kolkata and other places of the State to promote its cuisine, handicrafts and literature. These fairs are great attractions for tourists as these are mostly held during the winter.

Many initiatives are also being taken to promote the literature of the Nobel Laureate Rabindranath Tagore across the world, especially in countries like the United Kingdom, Germany, France, U.S.A., South Africa, Mauritius, South East Asian Countries highlighting their universal approach.

The Teesta tea is another attraction of the State along with the Darjeeling tea.



ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR ISLANDS



the north-east monsoons, the Union Territory is at present divided into three revenue districts with Port Blair as its capital.

CULTURAL SPECIFICITIES

Andaman and Nicobar Islands is a cluster of some beautiful islands on earth. Andaman and Nicobar Islands dwellers have migrated and settled down from various parts of India and Burma as well. The culture of Andaman and Nicobar Islands is distinct and unique and comprises mainly two types of inhabitants—Indians and Natives. The former are mainly from the Indian Mainland especially from areas like Punjab, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Myanmar and Sri Lanka. The Natives are what makes Andaman and Nicobar Islands different from other parts of the country. They are the main reason why these islands have a wild aura about them. Andaman and Nicobar islanders are primarily divided into two major categories. The Great Andamanese, Onges, Jarawas and Sentinelese of the Negroid population live in the Andaman Islands. The Great Nicobarese (Nicobari) and Shompens of the Mongoloid origin constitute the Nicobar Island tribes. The indigenous people in the

The Andaman and Nicobar Islands situated between 6° and 14° latitudes and 92° and 94° longitudes in the Bay of Bengal have been inhabited for thousands of years going back to the Middle Palaeolithic age. Through the vast majority of this time the inhabitants of these islands maintained their separated existence diversifying into distinct linguistic, cultural and territorial groups. In the mid-nineteenth century CE, for the first time they came into sustained contact with the outside world. Today, they are mainly consisted of the Great Andamanese tribes like the Jarawa, the Onge and the Sentinelese and the Nicobarese consisting of the great Nicobarese and the Shompens. Host to the tropical climate nourished by both the south-west and



Port Blair

<i>Fact Sheet</i>	
<i>Geographical Area</i>	8,249 km ²
<i>Headquarters</i>	Port Blair
<i>Official Languages</i>	Hindi and English
<i>State Animal</i>	Dugong
<i>State Bird</i>	Andaman Wood Pigeon
<i>State Flower</i>	Pyinma
<i>State Tree</i>	Andaman Padauk



islands live in peace and harmony with each other and form a unique culture of their own.

Language

Hindi and English are the official languages in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. However, most of the people do understand and communicate in Hindi even though they speak various other languages. Interestingly, among the settlers one can find people belonging to almost all the major linguistic communities of India. But along with Hindi and English, the Island administration recognised Bengali, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam and Nicobarese as other principal languages.

Dress

Traditionally the original inhabitants had no sense of dressing. The Sentinelese wore no clothes. The Jarawas on the other hand used to dress themselves mostly in necklaces and armbands made out of shells and barks of trees. The Shompens wore some dresses below their waistline. However, after contact with the outside world some of these inhabitants have adopted a dressing culture. The Car Nicobar inhabitants no longer restrict themselves to their traditional dresses made out of coconut leaves. Some of them have adopted modern clothes. Similarly, the Onges have also given up their no-dress culture and started wearing clothes like the settlers. The settlers themselves wear clothes that are little different from the variety of clothes worn by the Indians in rest of the country.

Food

Food in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands mainly consists of the north and south Indian varieties that are popular in the mainland. To add to these, the islands have become popular destinations for enjoying a great variety of exquisite seafood sometimes with Burmese and Thai flavours alongside the Indian ways of cooking. Among these prawn curries and grilled lobsters are popular.



Market

Among the original inhabitants no particular method of cooking is observed. Usually they lived a life dependent on hunting and gathering of food. For this the islands have always had abundant supplies. However, after contact with the outside world they are now eating cooked food like other islanders. The Great Andamanese have even adopted the method of cooking their traditional food comprising crabs, fish, pork and turtle and turtle eggs with spices. Some of them have also started cultivating vegetables and poultry farms.

As for drinks, fresh coconuts are available all across the islands and serve as a perfect accompaniment to any seafood dish.

FAIRS AND FESTIVALS

The Andaman and Nicobar Islands in a way represents the whole of India in a miniature form. Therefore, the fairs and festivals that are celebrated in these islands are not very different from the rest of India. Since the majority of the population consists of the Hindus, the scene is generally dominated by the Hindu festivals like Durga Puja, Diwali, Holi, Janmashtami, Makar Sankranti and typical festivals associated with the south Indian communities living here like Panguni Utharam and Mari Amman festivals.

However, popular Christian and Muslim festivals like Christmas and Eid are also celebrated in the Islands with great enthusiasm.

Among the natives, the Ossuary Feast is the most important festival, which is celebrated by the members of the Nicobar tribes to pay respect to the departed soul of the head of the family. The Feast usually follows a night long performance of dance under the moonlight wherein everyone is invited to participate.

PERFORMING ARTS

The natural surroundings of the islands provide the setting as well as the inspiration for their inhabitants to lead a joyful and creative life. This is true as much about the original inhabitants of these islands as about the settlers. The former generally sing and dance to celebrate an occasion without being overly



perturbed about its artistic qualities or sophistication. Similarly, for the settlers coming from different parts of the country the importance of participating in a concert is of greater significance than seeking artistic excellence in its execution. Thus as life moves on in the islands, the joys of music and dance accompany it naturally.

Among the indigenous tribes, the Onges appear to be more versatile in singing and often love to sing in unison with both the male and the female members of the community participating in it. Such a singing performance often accompanies a dance. They can pick a dancing step easily. This they frequently do from observation. As the singers sing to a set rhythm, the songs mostly relate to travel, sport and personal adventure rather than to love or beliefs.

Likewise, the Nicobari dance performed by the original inhabitants of the Car Nicobar Island is a notable dance form that has been coming down from antiquity in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. The Nicobarese perform this dance as a part of the Ossuary Feast though it is also performed during canoe racing and other seasonal festivals. Under the swinging palm trees on a full moon night, the dancers wearing coconut and plantain leaves around their heads and waists and holding each other's shoulders from behind sway in circles to the rhythm of traditional songs sung by a leader unaccompanied by any musical instrument. In separate groups, both men and women participate in the dance, which is followed by a pig fight next day morning.

VISUAL ARTS

The Andaman and Nicobar Islands has been the repository of some of the gory tales of the British repression of India's freedom struggle. But equally its soil also reverberates with the echoes of India's heroic battle against the British Raj. The Cellular Jail in Port Blair today stands as a visual testimony to this epic tale. Besides, the tenacity and the creative potential of the settlers of these islands,



Cellular Jail

most of whom to begin with were the descendants of the freedom fighters and others, is also seen visually expressed in the crafts and industries that have come to flourish in the solitude of these islands.

With the palm trees providing the most easily accessible resource, the Andaman and Nicobar Islands have excelled in making palm-leaf articles like mats, which have gained wide recognition for their design and durability. Besides, the islanders have also come to make mats from *pandanus* leaves and coconut stems, which have become popular among the visitors.

Endowed with a luxuriant forest cover, the Andaman and Nicobar Islands have also emerged as a viable centre of woodcraft. Traditionally, the islanders have been using wood for construction of houses, making canoes and furniture, and fencing plantations. Adding to these, in recent decades, the islanders have also been woods from trees such as Padauk, Gurjan, Marble Wood, Kokko, and Chooi to name a few to make popular showpieces of creative and commercial value. One such popular item is table-tops made of padauk trees. Crossbow with its grooved central beam and iron loops, miniature models of wooden canoes are other such popular items.

Cane and bamboo works like baskets, furniture and wall-hangings are also notable craft items of these Islands alongside wood works.

However, the most prized among all is the shell craft. With shells like Turbo, Nautilus, Murex, Trochus, Green Mussel, Giant Clam, Oysters, Scallop, Cockle and also shells from the Cephalopoda species like Squid or Octopus abundantly available on the shores of the Islands, their inhabitants have honed the skills to make a range of decorative articles for national and international markets. Among these the widely popular articles are rings, earrings, bangles, necklaces, table lamps, showpieces, ashtrays and different types of decorative boxes.

CONTEMPORARY CULTURAL DEVELOPMENTS

The Andaman and Nicobar Islands have been culturally unique all these years for being a microcosm of India. However, its greater strategic role can be



INDIA: UNITY IN CULTURAL DIVERSITY



Island Tourism Festival



Beach Festival day

harnessed by not only consolidating what it has so far come to represent but also by increasingly making it a centre of continuing cultural confluence of many streams of Indian culture. Luckily, the administration of the Islands has been doing this wonderfully well by organising a number of cultural events that remind the cultural, economic and strategic importance of these Islands to all Indians. Among these, the Island Tourism

Festival stands out as the most significant. This is a fortnight long festival organised simultaneously in different locations with the principal celebration being held in Port Blair in the month of January every year. The festival highlights the achievements of the Island administration while providing avenues for artistic performances and celebration of the composite culture of the Islands. The next in importance is the Beach Festival. Organised in the month of April for 3 days, this festival apart from making provisions for various games and sports also includes celebration of food, entertainment and crafts. Besides this, the Island administration also organises an exclusive Food Festival coinciding with the World Tourism Day on 27th September every year. It provides great encouragement to promote locally developed cuisine and especially seafood. In the month of August, the administration organises a Monsoon Festival branding it as the Music Festival to keep the rainy season humming with tourism and activity. These and other such activities have truly added substance and a sense of direction to the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.



Boating



Scuba diving



Beach Festival night

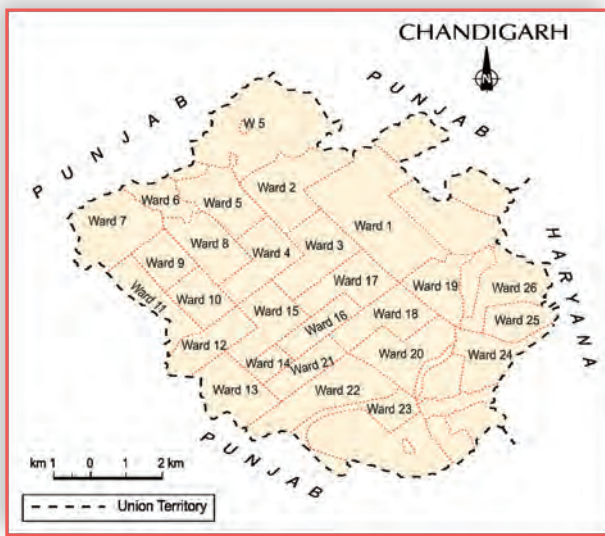


Beach





CHANDIGARH



existence, Chandigarh became the joint capital of both Punjab and Haryana, while it was declared as a Union Territory. To the north, west and south of Chandigarh lies the State of Punjab and to its east lies the State of Haryana. According to the 2011 Census, Chandigarh's population is 9,60,787. The city is populated by people from various religions like Hinduism, Sikhism, Christianity and Islam, where the Hindu population is the largest followed by Sikhs.

CULTURAL SPECIFICITIES

Language

The official language of the city is English, though most of the people converse in Hindi and Punjabi. Since it is also the capital of Haryana, Haryanvi language is also spoken by a section of people.

Dress

The dresses here are similar to those worn in Punjab and Haryana. *Kurta salwar* or *salwar kameez* is the favourite dress for Punjabi and Haryanvi women. These are available in a wide range of colours and designs. During festivals and other important occasions, women are also seen wearing sarees,

Chandigarh, the first planned modern city of India, designed by the French architect Le Corbusier, derives its name from the temple of 'Chandi Mandir' located in the vicinity of the city. The deity 'Chandi', the goddess of power and a 'garh' laying beyond the temple gave the city its name Chandigarh. Located at the foothills of the Shivalik range of the Himalayas, Chandigarh is drained by seasonal streams like the Sukhna Choe and the Patiali Rao. The pre-historic past of this area is well attested by the fossil remains found from this region. The area has been home to the Harappans also. From the medieval to the modern times, this area was part of prosperous Punjab Province which was divided into East and West Punjab during the Partition of the country in the year 1947. The foundation stone of Chandigarh was laid in 1952. On 1 November 1966, when the States of Punjab, Haryana and the UT of Himachal Pradesh came into

Fact Sheet

State Day	1 November
Geographical Area	114 km ²
Official Language	English
State Animal	Indian Grey Mongoose
State Bird	Indian grey Hornbill
State Flower	Dhak
State Tree	Mango



lehenga choli and other outfits. Patiala suits are popular here. The traditional bridal costume of women in Chandigarh is *lehenga-choli-dupatta*. The traditional attire for men is *kurta pajama* and Punjabi *dhoti kurta*. The traditional bridegroom's costume is *sherwani*. The *sherwanis* are decorated with *zardozi* (embroidery work done with gold and silver threads).

Food

The cuisine of the area is typically Punjabi, which is spicy and well-known for its extensive use of butter, cream and *ghee*. Both vegetarian and non-vegetarian dishes are prepared here with great variety and taste. *Chole-bhature* is the most popular dish of Chandigarh. But, the pride of the winter cuisine is *sarson-da-saag* served with butter accompanied by *makke-di-roti*. The other popular dishes are *ma ki dal*, *rajma*, stuffed *parathas*, *sheer korma*, *punj ratani dal*, *choley*, *dal handi/dal makhani*, etc. Cuisine is characterised by a profusion of dairy products in the form of *malai*, *paneer* and curd. Favourite non-vegetarian dishes are *bhuna gosht*, butter chicken, tandoori chicken, tandoori fish, Amritsari fish, lamb biryani, chicken biryani, *reshmi tikka*, *keema naan*, pork pickle and *malai tikka*. People in Chandigarh prefer large varieties of flour and bread preparations. A few of the significant items are *tandoori roti*, *naan*, *lachha paratha*, *kulcha*, *chapatti* or *phulka*, *mooli paratha*, *aloo paratha*, *bhatura* and *poori*. *Lassi* is a popular refreshing drink of Punjabi origin which has gained popularity in almost all parts of the country. *Phirni*, a sweet dish made of milk, rice flour and sugar and chilled in earthenware bowls is a typical Punjabi dessert. Other sweet dishes like *panjiri*, *gulab jamuns* and *burfi* are also popular. One thing that makes Punjabi cooking so extraordinary is the tandoor. *Dhaba* (a roadside food stall) is another contribution of Punjab for foodies. Once popular



Chole Bhature



Tandoori Chicken

with truck drivers and travellers only, *dhaba* is now popular with everybody and forms an important part of the national and state highways.

FAIRS AND FESTIVALS

Many festivals are celebrated in Chandigarh. Among these, *Baisakhi* is the most important festival. It marks the beginning of the harvest season and celebrates the founding of Khalsa panth. According to the solar calendar, this festival falls on the first day of the year, which is usually 14th April. Teej is a traditional festival in which women participate enthusiastically. It falls in the first week of August. In Teej festival, Rock Garden serves as the festive venue, where different cultural programmes like dance performances are held. Giant wheels are the main highlight of the festivities of Teej. Lohri, Hola Mohalla, Gurpurab, Bhaiya Dooj (Tikka), Teeyan, Karva Chauth, Dusshera, Diwali, Raksha Bandhan, etc., are equally celebrated with great pomp and show. Chandigarh also celebrates Festival of Gardens, Mango Festival, Chrysanthemum Show, Chandigarh Carnival and Plaza Carnival.



Celebration of Lohri



Karva Chauth

PERFORMING ARTS

Music and Dance

Chandigarh is known for its lively folk dances and vibrant music depicting the liveliness and enthusiasm of the people here. Some of the popular folk dances are *Dhamal*, *Bhangra*, *Giddha*, *Sammi*, *Teeyan*, *Jhummer*, *Gatka*, *Luddi*, *Kikli*, *Julli* and *Dankara*.

Dhamal is a folk dance which is performed by men during the harvest festival. This dance usually begins with one person initiating a step and other people following him. This dance makes use of sticks which are known as *shuntis*.

Bhangra is another popular dance using a *dhol*, played by a person while others dance to its tune. Bhangra is known for its fast and energetic performance. Both women and men perform this dance.

Giddha is another popular dance form which begins with slow movements but as the tempo goes up, the movements become fast. Besides dancing, Giddha involves enactment of verses also. This dance is usually performed by women. *Boliyan* is a popular part of Giddha. The above dance forms are usually performed on Haryanvi folk music. *Dholak*, *sarangi*, *nagada*, flute are the usual musical instruments used during these dance performances. The themes of the songs include praise of the heroic deeds of soldiers, love stories, etc.



Giddha

VISUAL ARTS

Chandigarh, the Planned City

Chandigarh is one of the early planned cities of post-independent India and is internationally known for its architecture and urban design. The master plan of the city was prepared by architect Le Corbusier. Chandigarh was conceived as a city of ‘Sun, Space and Verdure’ to fulfil four basic functions of living, working, care of body and spirit, and circulation. The master plan having rectangles called sectors, which are intended to be self-sufficient neighbourhood units, are enclosed by fast-moving traffic roads (see the map). The classification of streets for different types of traffic is an important feature of the city plan. A number of city parks were planned for the care of the body and spirit. No wonder Chandigarh is often called ‘the City Beautiful’. In 2015, BBC named Chandigarh as one of the perfect cities of the world in terms of architecture, cultural growth and modernisation.

Important Buildings and Monuments

The Capitol

One of the greatest works of Le Corbusier, the Capitol Complex is undoubtedly one of the grandest places in Chandigarh. The Capitol Complex with its three main

places—the High Court, the Legislative Assembly and the Secretariat—serves as the operating space of Punjab and Haryana governments. In July 2016, this complex was declared as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO.

Open Hand Monument

This place was designed to provide space to general public to discuss various social and civil issues. The hand represents the colours of the Indian National Flag and serves as the emblem of the city of Chandigarh.



Capitol Complex



Open Hand Monument

Martyr's Memorial

This Memorial is perhaps the largest War Memorial of the country, with nearly 8,459 names of the deceased soldiers since 1947, from Army, Air Force and Navy. This Memorial is dedicated to those who laid their lives defending the country since independence. Other important monuments in the complex are Geometric Hill and Tower of Shadow.

Gardens, Lakes and Wildlife Sanctuaries

Chandigarh is known as the Garden City of India as it houses some of the most unique and beautiful gardens in the country.

Rock Garden

Situated in the middle of the Capitol Complex and Sukhna Lake, Rock Garden stands as a symbol of human imagination and creativity. This magnificent art work is



Rock Garden

the creation of a visionary public works department employee, Mr. Nek Chand, who created various forms of structures like dolls, figures of birds, men and women using household and industrial wastes.



Rose Garden

This garden is known to have nearly 825 varieties of roses and more than 32,500 varieties of other medicinal plants and trees.

Pinjore Garden, Terrace Garden, Botanical Garden, Leisure Valley and Cactus Garden are some other gardens in Chandigarh.

Sukhna Lake

Adjoining the Rock Garden near the foothills of Shivalik Hills, is an artificial lake named Sukhna, created in 1958 by damming the Sukhna Choe, a seasonal stream coming down from the Shivalik Hills. Sukhna Lake is the venue for many festivities.

Sukhna Wildlife Sanctuary

This sanctuary is located at a distance of one km towards the north-east of Sukhna Lake. The wildlife sanctuary has different kinds of trees, herbs, creepers, shrubs and grasses. It is also home to numerous mammals, reptiles, smaller creatures, birds and butterflies.



Migratory Birds at Sukhna Lake, Chandigarh

Parrot Bird Sanctuary

This bird sanctuary is home to thousands of parrots. It is the second largest wildlife sanctuary in the city after Sukhna Wildlife Sanctuary.

Museums

Apart from the gardens and wildlife sanctuaries, Chandigarh is also famous for its museums. Each museum has a different theme. The most popular among them is the Government Museum and Art Gallery, which has a rich collection of Gandhara sculptures, Pahari and Rajasthani miniature paintings and Sikh art displayed in the galleries. A rich collection of contemporary art is highlight of this museum. International Dolls Museum is another popular museum which houses numerous varieties of dolls collected from all over the world. Some other museums located here are Museum of Evolution of Life, City Museum and National Gallery of Portraits.

Crafts

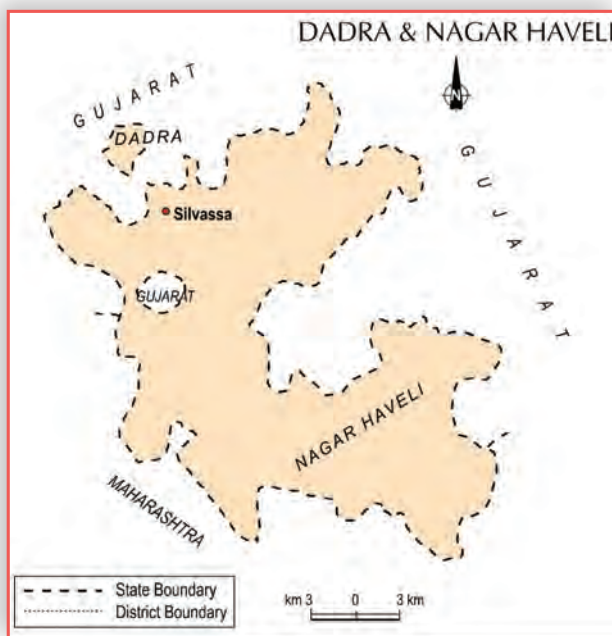
Since Chandigarh is a UT, which serves as a capital of both Haryana and Punjab, the art and crafts practiced here are the same as in Haryana and Punjab.

CONTEMPORARY CULTURAL DEVELOPMENTS

Home to various artists and writers, Chandigarh is known for its frequent exhibitions and performances by singers, dancers, musicians and artists. Throughout the year, the region is vibrant through its numerous artists' exhibitions, craft melas, art workshops, and art and heritage festivals which tell a great deal about its residents' love for various performing, visual and plastic arts besides literary encounters. The Union Territory has also made an effort to set up a Society for Tourism and Entertainment Promotion in Chandigarh (STEPS) to promote tourism in all aspects and to organise, support, manage, promote and publicise all modern and traditional events and activities which are reflective of its culture. Besides, it also organises various music and dance performances, films, opera, concerts, theatre, etc., by local, national and international groups to provide its residents with an exposure to culturally diverse entertainments. All these things make this city a truly metropolitan city.



DADRA AND NAGAR HAVELI



The Union Territory of Dadra and Nagar Haveli lies near the western coast of India and consists of two separate parts. Of these, Dadra is surrounded by the State of Gujarat, and Nagar Haveli lies on the border of Maharashtra and Gujarat. The territory has hilly terrain especially towards the north-east and east where it is surrounded by ranges of Sahyadri mountains (Western Hills). River Damanganga and its three tributaries criss-cross this territory. According to the 2011 Census, it has a population of 3,43,709 people. More than half of the population of the region belongs to different tribal groups. The most prominent tribes are Dhodia, Kokna and Varli, with small groups of Koli, Kathodi, Naika and Dubla scattered across the

territory. Dhodias and Dublas are found mainly in the northern part, whereas Koknas and Varlis are found all over the territory. The population also comprises people belonging to various religions like Hinduism, Christianity and Islam. However, the majority of the population are Hindus.

The recorded history of Dadra and Nagar Haveli dates back to the rule of Koli chieftains. In the year 1262 CE, Rajput invaders, after defeating the Kolis, became the rulers of Ram Nagar which was a state in the Nagar Haveli region. They ruled the region until the middle of the 18th century, when the Marathas annexed the territory from them and ruled over Nagar Haveli. In the late 18th century, the Marathas had to cede Dadra and Nagar Haveli to the Portuguese as a compensation for the Portuguese vessel that the navy of the Marathas had destroyed. Due to pressure from Indian nationalists after India's independence in 1947, the Portuguese had to leave Dadra and Nagar Haveli in the year 1954. On 11 August 1961, it became a part of the India as a Union Territory.

CULTURAL SPECIFICITIES

Language

As it shares borders with both Gujarat and Maharashtra, the languages spoken here are Gujarati, Hindi, Marathi, Bhili/Bhilodi and Konkani.

<i>Fact Sheet</i>	
<i>Liberation Day</i>	2 August
<i>Geographical Area</i>	491 km ²
<i>Headquarters</i>	Silvassa
<i>Official Languages</i>	Gujarati, Hindi, Marathi



Dress

Each Indian State and Union Territory has its own set of unique attire that reflect their culture and tradition. Dadra and Nagar Haveli also has traditional attire for men and women.

Traditionally, the Varli men wear a loincloth, a turban and a waist-long coat. The women drape *lugden* (a knee-length one yard saree) around their waist that goes down to the knee and adorn themselves with silver and white metal ornaments.

The traditional dress of the Dhodia men is a knee-length white dhoti which is worn with a shirt or waistcoat along with white or coloured caps, earrings and silver chains around the waist. The women usually wear a knee-length blue saree. Necklaces made of colourful beads and metal bangles or *kadas* worn around the ankles are some of the accessories used by these women.

Kokna men and women are fond of tattooing their bodies, mainly their foreheads. Kokna men wear a knee-length dhoti with a shirt or waistcoat and a turban. The women usually wear colourful knee-length or full length sarees.



Kokna Woman in Traditional Dress

Food

The cuisine of the area comprises different types of pulses, vegetables, which include wild mushrooms and bamboo shoots. Rice, *nagli* (*raagi*) and *jowar* flour are used to make chapatis. Crab is a popular delicacy in Silvassa and river fish like *rohu*, *katla* and *mrigal carp* are in great demand here. Karanda berries, *ajoola*



Ubadiyu



Crab Cooked in Silvassa Style

leaves, ambada leaves and raw mangoes are used to make chutneys. Ubadiyu is one of the most popular dishes, in which vegetables and beans are mixed with special herbs and cooked in an earthen pot. *Khaman*, steamed chickpea cake, and *gamthi* chicken are other popular dishes. Parsi specialties like *dhansak* and *patra ni machhi*, Punjabi and Mughlai food and the sumptuous Gujarati thali are also popular here. *Tadi* is a favourite liquor, which is made of 'Mahua' flowers.

FAIRS AND FESTIVALS

Though Dadra and Nagar Haveli celebrates all pan-Indian festivals—Ganesh Chaturthi, Navaratri (nine nights of music and dance), Parsi New Year's Day, Id-e-Milad, Makar Sankranti (Kite festival), Christmas and New Year's Day, there are some traditional and distinct festivals that are celebrated by the tribal people here.

Barash

Barash is mostly celebrated by the Varli and Kokna tribes and is similar to the biggest Hindu festival, Diwali.



Women worshipping during Barash Festival

Kali Puja

The tribal people living in Dadra and Nagar Haveli strongly believe in the powers of Goddess Kali and thus gather in large number to conduct Kali Puja during the crop harvesting season.

Besides these, there are some other festivals like Divaso, Akha Tij, Baleo and Holi-Holi. Divaso is celebrated by the Varli and Dhodia tribes. Akha Tij is mainly celebrated by the women belonging to the Kokna tribe. The Dhodias celebrate Rakshabandhan as Baleo. Holi is celebrated by all tribes and a large, week-long village fair is held at Lavachha.

Tarpa Festival and Crafts Mela, Monsoon Magic Festival and Nariyeli Poornima are some other main celebrations of the region.

PERFORMING ARTS

Music and Dance

The main sources of entertainment of the tribal people are folklore and folk dances. Folk dances form a significant part of the life of these people. People belonging to different tribes dress up in colourful attire and dance to the tunes of various folk songs and musical instruments on special occasions such as child birth, weddings, festivals and important ceremonies.

The different types of folk and tribal dances of Dadra and Nagar Haveli include the Tarpa Dance, Gherria Dance, Bhawada Dance, Dhol Dance and Tur and Thali Dance.

Dhol Dance

Varli and Kokna tribes perform this dance to the rhythm of a *dhol*. The dance is performed to songs that are sung solo or in chorus, with the dancers facing the accompanists. This dance is famous for its various formations like acrobatics and human pyramids, and is performed at night during the harvest season.

Bhawada Dance

This mask dance is performed by the Kokna tribesmen at night during summer across a number of villages. Each village has a different set of masks. Carved out of single pieces of wood and decorated with bamboo strips and bright coloured papers, these masks depict Gods and Goddesses like Panch Pandava, Ravana, Ganesh and tribal deities Kaloba, Mhasoba and Rangatai. *Sur*, *kahali* and *sambal* are the musical instruments used in this dance performance.

Tarpa Dance

This popular dance is performed by men and women of the Varli, Kokna and Koli tribes at night during the harvest season. In this dance, people make a circle by holding each other around the waist and a man with a wind instrument called *tarpa* stands in the middle of the circle.



Tarpa Dance

Tur and Thali Dance

Dhodias and Dublas perform this dance during marriages and other festive occasions. This dance form makes use of musical instruments like *tur* and *thali*. *Tur* is a cylindrical drum made out of clay with leather surfaces on both sides, while *thali* is a metal plate.

Gherria Dance

This is a group dance performed by the Dubla tribesmen. In this group dance, the leading man called Kavio, wearing a silk coat, dhoti, headgear and holding a peacock dressed in feather in his right hand, sings. It is followed by other singers known as *gherrias*. They are dressed as female devotees of their Goddesses.

Tribal people make their musical instruments on their own using materials like wood, clay, bamboo, dried fruits and vegetables, leather and gourd.

VISUAL ARTS

Important Places

Dadra and Nagar Haveli is home to several churches, mosques, gurudwaras and other religious sites. Some popular religious places include Bindrabin Temple, Tirupati Balaji Temple, Swaminarayan Temple, Church of Our Lady Piety and Saint Thomas Church. Endowed with immense natural beauty and lush greenery, Dadra and Nagar Haveli is one of the most beautiful Union Territories in the country.



The territory has got a wonderful Tribal Cultural Museum in the capital city of Silvassa, which is dedicated to preserving the glorious legacy of culture, civilisation and traditions of the tribes in Dadra and Nagar Haveli. The museum showcases several exquisite exhibits including exotic ornaments adorned by men and women of different tribes, household items, fishing rods, kitchenware, hunting tools, agricultural tools and musical instruments. The walls of the museum are also decorated with spears, daggers, arrows, bows, sabers, shields, armours and various photographs of their social and cultural events.

Vanganga Lake, Hirwa Van Garden, Dudhoni, Satmaliya Deer Park, Vasona Lion Safari, Nakshatra Garden are some other attractions.

Crafts

Varli/Warli painting

Dadra and Nagar Haveli is home to numerous indigenous tribal groups. Among these, the unparalleled expertise and masterful creativity of Varli tribe is apparent in their wall paintings. With essential components like squares, circles, and triangles, tribals change a plain wall into an impression of the world around – the sun, the moon, trees, and nature – and pay their appreciation towards these through their art. Varli painting has many motifs which depict everyday life as a celebration. One of the favourite scenes is a depiction of the Varli dance where men and women put their arms around each other and dance around in a circle to the tune played by the unique pipe called the Ghangal (a musical instrument made from gourd, bamboo and iron strings).

Weaving work

The tribal people belonging to Dadra and Nagar Haveli are especially known for their weaving work.



Varli painting

Mat Weaving of Dadra

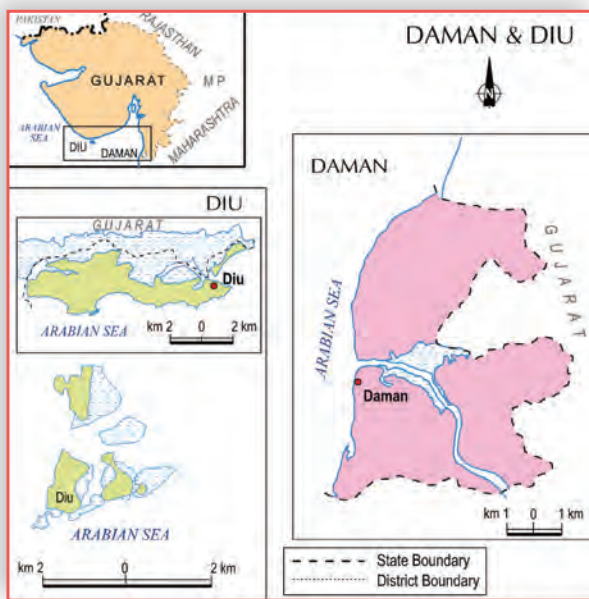
Mat weaving forms an inseparable part of the lives of the rural population residing here. Mats weaved with bamboo twigs are especially a speciality of the place. Similarly beautifully crafted baskets with bamboo canes has also brought recognition to the place.

CONTEMPORARY CULTURAL DEVELOPMENTS

Dadra and Nagar Haveli is known for its picturesque and pristine landscape with hills, rivers, their tributaries, forests and undulating terrain. There are systematic and concentrated efforts from the administration to preserve this so that there is minimal impact on its ecosystem. There is a lot that can attract tourists here: forests, wildlife, winding river, beautiful reservoir, tribal villages, etc. It is also a sought after location for picturising Hindi film songs. Tourists can even have a memorable experience of farming by participating in the process. The territory also showcases its vibrant tribal heritage and happily shares its cuisine, customs and culture—art and craft, dances and rituals—with tourists. Lately, water sports activities have become an attraction here. The lion safari, deer parks and innumerable jungle hideouts make the place an ideal destination for nature and wildlife enthusiasts. There are many children's parks, gardens and a mini-zoo at Silvassa. As a hub of eco-tourism, agri-tourism, the tribal culture, water sports or the wildlife, Dadra and Nagar Haveli has something to offer to everyone.



DAMAN AND DIU



The territory has a fascinating and varied history. It was once a part of the Saurashtra region of Gujarat and was ruled by the Mauryas during the ancient period. In 1535, the Portuguese got permission from Bahadur Shah, the Sultan of Gujarat, to build the Diu Fort and keep a garrison (a fortified settlement with soldiers) on the island. In 1559, the Portuguese on realising the strategic importance of Daman captured the town and built a fort and set up military troops there. They ruled for more than 450 years. Daman and Diu, along with Goa, were liberated by India on 19 December 1961. Goa, Daman and Diu were administered as a single Union Territory until 1987, when Goa was granted statehood, leaving Daman and Diu as a separate Union Territory. Damanganga, Kolak and Kalai are the major rivers of this Union Territory.

Daman and Diu, a Union Territory of India comprising two districts namely Daman and Diu, is situated on the western coast of India. Daman is the capital of this territory and is located on mainland near the southern part of Gujarat, whereas Diu is an island near Una of Gir Somnath district in Gujarat. The name Daman is probably derived from the Damanganga River, while Diu is from the Sanskrit word 'dvipa', meaning 'island'. The population of Daman and Diu is 0.24 million (Census 2011), which comprises Hindus, Muslims, Christians and tribes, namely the Dhodia, Dubla, Varli, Naikda and Siddi.

CULTURAL SPECIFICITIES

Language

The official languages of the territory are Gujarati, Konkani, Hindi and English. Gujarati is the mother tongue of most of the territory's population. Marathi is also popular here. The official language of the

<i>Fact Sheet</i>	
<i>Liberation Day</i>	19 December
<i>Geographical Area</i>	112 km ²
<i>Headquarters</i>	Daman
<i>Official Languages</i>	Gujarati, Konkani, Hindi, English



INDIA: UNITY IN CULTURAL DIVERSITY

territory during the colonial period was Portuguese, however it is now in a state of decline.

Dress

The dresses are influenced by both Indian as well as Portuguese culture. Men prefer wearing *pyjama*, shirt and dhoti kurta. Due to the influence of Western culture, shirt, trousers, shorts, jeans are increasingly worn by the men as well as boys in Daman. The traditional dresses of women include *ghaghra*, blouse and *odhani*. They also wear sarees and *salwar kameez*. The Christians in Daman prefer wearing European costumes.



A small girl wearing traditional dress

Food

This area is known for its mouth-watering cuisine, especially seafood. Due to its proximity to Gujarat, native Gujarati food forms a major part of the cuisine of Daman. Since it was once under the possession of the Portuguese, the traditional Portuguese food is also popular here. Parsi food is another favourite of the locals of Daman. The traditional food is predominantly vegetarian. The people have light breakfast with *rotli* (flat breads) and tea, while *rotla* (peasant's bread) and *saag* are taken for lunch. *Chokha* with *saag* and curry is taken for dinner. *Potaya*, *puri*, *pla* and various non-vegetarian dishes are prepared during festive occasions. *Penn de calamari*—pasta with squid, *Cozido de peixe*—a fish stew, *Caldinho de Camarao*—shrimp soup are a few Portuguese dishes in Diu, that are in great demand. Chicken bullet is a unique and popular dish of Daman. *Papri*, boiled sweet and salty peas, is one of the favourite evening snacks of the people of Daman. Crabs and lobsters are the major delicacies. Fish *Koliwada*, a spicy fried prawn dish, is said to have its origin in Daman. *Cozido*, a dish made of meat and vegetables during Christmas and *Val nascido* made on the feast of St. John de Baptis are popular among the Catholics in Daman.



Seafood



Fish Koliwada

Gujarati sweets like *laddu*, *basundi*, *jalebi*, *barfi*, *lapsee* are also popular here. Christmas and New Year's Day are celebrated with plenty of cakes and sweets.



Breakfast Platter

The fruits of Hoka tree are unique and popular in Diu.

FAIRS AND FESTIVALS

All major festivals like Makarsankranti, Holi, Diwali, Shivratri, Eid, Rakshabandhan, New Year's Day and Easter are celebrated in a grand manner. However, there are some fairs and festivals which are unique to this area.

Gangaji Fair

This fair is held every year in the month of March in the village Dabhel, near the Somnatha Mahadev temple. Large number of people attend this fair, take bath in the nearby tank and worship Lord Shiva.

Nariyal Poornima

This is one of the most important regional festivals celebrated in Daman marking the beginning of the fishing season, during which the people flock to the seashore, and offer coconuts to appease the Gods of wind and water. This festival is celebrated with various water sports activities, at the creek between Nani Daman and Moti Daman. The coconut food festival is a special highlight of this celebration.





Garba Festival of Daman

Garba Dance Festival

This is also an important festival celebrated here, like in Gujarat, during which people dance gaily, wearing colourful costumes.

Folk Dance Festival

This is another festival which is celebrated with active participation of people of all ages. Mando Music and Dance, Verdigao Dance, Vera Dance are some of the most popular dance forms associated with the folk dance festival.

Christmas in Daman is a time for joy and celebration. Music and dance form an integral part of the Christmas celebrations. These celebrations continue until the New Year's Day.

PERFORMING ARTS

Music and Dance

Various traditional forms of the Portuguese dances are popular among the people here. Mando Music and Dance, Verdigao Dance, Vera Dance and other

dance forms are well preserved and presented on various occasions. Tribal dances with social messages are also popular here. Koli dance is popular among the fisherfolk of Daman. Machhi Dance is another popular dance form of the fishermen in Daman. It is performed on special occasions by men as well as women. Women carrying baskets, sing songs and dance to the beats of *dholak* and *jhanjh*, whereas men perform various rowing actions, depicting fishing in the sea and boating.



Mando Music

VISUAL ARTS

Important Historical Buildings and Monuments

Daman and Diu have a number of historic forts and monuments. Diu Fort is a tall and imposing structure, offering a magnificent view of the sea, with a light house, jail and a museum, and is surrounded by the sea on three sides, with its outer wall built along the coastline. One can get a splendid view of the Panikotha Fort located in the sea, opposite to the Diu Fort. Also called Fortim-do-Mar and located at the mouth of the creek, Panikotha fortress houses a pretty light house and a small Chapel dedicated to Our Lady of the Sea, and can be reached via a canoe or a motor launch. A beautiful architectural marvel, with carvings of lions, angels and priest, with a small chapel and an artificial waterfall, the Zampa Gateway is considered to be the main entrance to Diu city wall. The town of Diu is sandwiched between this Gateway to its west and



Diu Fort



View of Water Fort Prison from Diu Fort with watch tower of Diu Fort



St. Paul's Church





Nani Daman Fort



Moti Daman Fort



Ivory Work



Tortoise Shell Craft

the Fort on the east. An artificially created waterfall, the Zampa Waterfall nearby, adds to its beauty. Other significant monuments are: Nani Daman Fort, Fort of Moti Daman, St. Thomas Church, Nadia Caves, St. Paul's Church, Tower of Silence, Daman Freedom Memorial, Portuguese Fort, Se Cathedral, Forte do Mar and Gupta Prayag in Delwada. The place also has a beautiful Sea Shell Museum, displaying a huge and impressive collection of sea shells. The territory houses a few other magnificent buildings. The 18th century Jain temple is situated in the northern region of Nani Daman Fort and is dedicated to Mahavir Swami. The temple is built with white marble and has beautiful carvings. Other places of worship are Gangeshwar Temple, Bom Jesus Church, Our Lady of Rosary Chapel (within the premises of the Moti Daman Fort), Our Lady of the Sea Church (within Nani Daman Fort), Somnath Temple, etc. Various beaches of Daman and Diu are attractions for tourists like Nagoa Beach, Devka Beach, Jampore Beach, Ghoghla Beach, Chakratirth Beach, the Gomtimata and Jallandhar Beach.

Crafts

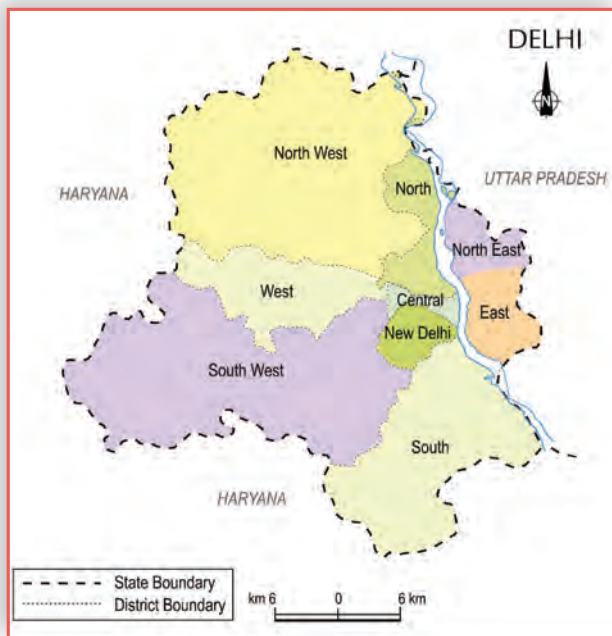
Daman and Diu is specially known for the craft of 'mat weaving'. Tortoise shell craft and the art of ivory carving are some popular crafts of the Diu region. Tortoise shells are used to make decorative as well as useful household items. The craft of ivory carving is practised by the craftsmen of both Daman and Diu.

CONTEMPORARY CULTURAL DEVELOPMENTS

The rich cultural heritage and profound natural beauty of the territory have helped in making this place one of the most attractive holiday destinations for the tourists in the recent past. Daman and Diu are the places where you could appreciate the unique style and architecture of its buildings, feel an aura of peace and tranquility created by its temples and churches, enjoy parasailing, wind surfing and water skiing, cover almost the whole Diu island on cycle, put your feet up and enjoy the splendid sunset at the Chakratirth Beach or take your camera to spot some feathered wonders at Fudam Bird Sanctuary or dolphins along the shores. You would also be enthralled to see here the memorial and scale model of the Indian Naval Ship Khukri, which sank near the coast of Diu, after being fired by a Pakistani submarine during the 1971 Indo-Pak War. There are persistent efforts by the administration to motivate its residents and tourists to maintain a healthy balance between nature and development. The first dedicated cycle track of its kind that covers almost the whole Diu island is one such effort. In addition to this, there are many other green projects and initiatives planned here to ensure that the region remains a sustainable tourist destination. In recent times, it has emerged as an ideal retreat destination for authors, artists, thinkers, filmmakers, business class and nature enthusiasts.



DELHI



16.8 million. Extending beyond the NCT boundary, Delhi's urban area now includes a population of over 26 million that makes it the world's second largest urban area. Urbanisation is not a new phenomenon for Delhi, as it has been continuously inhabited since the Mahabharata period and has served as a capital of various kingdoms and empires. Delhi's culture has been influenced by this long history and historic association as the capital of India.

CULTURAL SPECIFICITIES

Language

Being the capital of India, Delhi, including New Delhi, has people from all over the country settled down here. They speak their own languages as well as Hindi and English. The official language of Delhi is Hindi, apart from Punjabi and Urdu.

Dress

Being a cosmopolitan city, Delhi has influence of so many cultures that it has the most modern trends in its fashion scenario. The traditional Punjabi attire as well as the western costumes are worn by men and women in Delhi. Largely, *Salwar kameez* with *dupatta* has traditionally been the attire of women, whereas men wear *kurta pyjama*. The younger generation prefers jeans and shirt or tops. However, *sarees* are usually

Delhi or Dilli, officially the National Capital Territory (NCT) of Delhi, is a metropolitan area in the northern part of India. The political administration of the NCT of Delhi resembles that of a State of India, with its own high court, legislature and a council of ministers headed by a chief minister. Delhi, jointly administered by the Union government and the Government of NCT of Delhi, is the administrative centre of India. Delhi is also the centre of the National Capital Region (NCR), which is a unique 'interstate regional planning' area created by the NCR Planning Board Act of 1985. It is surrounded by Haryana on three sides and by Uttar Pradesh in the east. Delhi recorded 11 million of city population in the Census of 2011, while the total population of NCT was about

Fact Sheet	
Geographical Area	1,483 km ²
Capital	New Delhi
Official Languages	Hindi, English, Punjabi, Urdu
State Animal	Nilgai
State Bird	House Sparrow





Daulat ki Chaat



Bhalle Papri



Kebabs

the most popular attire during traditional festivals and special occasions. The local markets for clothes like Chandni Chowk for wholesale and Lajpat Nagar, Karol Bagh, Sarojini Nagar, etc., have been attractions for everyone visiting Delhi at any time.

Food

Delhi food has influence of Mughal cuisine. Besides, as the capital of India, it also accommodates a variety of international and regional cuisine restructuring them according to different taste buds. Most popular dishes include *kebab*, *biryani*, *tandoori chicken*, *butter chicken*, *aloo chaat*, *chaat*, *dahi vada*, *kachori*, *golgappe*, *samosa*, *chole bhature*, *jalebi*, *lassi*, etc. *Daulat ki chaat*, a unique cuisine of Delhi, is made using a complicated technique of condensing milk foam on a cold night, only available during winters. The fast-paced life of Delhi's people has encouraged the growth of street and fast food outlets. The Parathe Wali Gali (the street of fried bread) is a lane in Chandni Chowk — prime market area of Old Delhi, particularly for eateries, known since 1870s.

FAIRS AND FESTIVALS

Republic Day, Independence Day and Gandhi Jayanti, being the national holidays, are celebrated every year. The Republic Day Parade on 26th January is a grand show of armed forces and States/UTs, awaited by all Indians throughout the year. All religious festivals of Hindus, Buddhists, Jains, Sikhs, Muslims, Christians, etc., are celebrated in Delhi throughout the year. Festivals like Diwali, Mahavir Jayanti, Gurpurab, Raksha Bandhan, Holi, Lohri, Karwa Chauth, Krishna Janmashtami, Maha

Shivaratri, Durga Puja, Eid-ul-Fitr, Eid-ul-Azha, Moharram, Buddha Jayanti, etc., are celebrated. *Phool Walon Ki Sair*, a festival that symbolises the composite culture is being celebrated for many years. Flowers and *pankhe* — fans embroidered with flowers — are offered to the shrine of the 13th century Sufi saint Khwaja Bakhtiyar Kaki and the Yogmaya temple, both situated in Mehrauli.

The New Delhi World Book Fair, held annually at the Pragati Maidan, is the second largest exhibition of books in the world. India International Trade Fair (IITF), organised by the India Trade Promotion Organisation, is the biggest cultural and shopping fair of Delhi which takes place in November each year. Other events such as Kite Flying festival, International Mango festival, Jashn-e-Rekhta, literary festivals of Sahitya Akademi and Basant Panchami (the Spring festival) are held every year in Delhi.



Kites Festival



Phool Walon ki Sair

PERFORMING ARTS

Delhi has a rich tradition of performing arts like *Ramlila*, the traditional folk theatre form of north India. During Navaratri and Dussehra, performances of *Ramlila* are organised all over the city, out of which, performances at 'Ramlila Maidan' are prominent.

Kathak, the classical dance form from north, also marks its influence in Delhi and is being practised



Ramlila



Sarangi



Kathak

as a living tradition since medieval times. Kathak Kendra, the National Institute of Kathak Dance, is also situated in Delhi. The semi-classical musical traditions of *thumri*, *tappa* and *ghazal* are still in practice and widely admired. They are accompanied by *tabla*, *sarangi*, *harmonium* and *tanpura*.

The Sangeet Natak Akademi, the national academy for music, dance and drama, was set up by the Government of India. As the apex body of performing arts in the country, the Akademi organises theatre festivals, classical dance and music festivals, folk dance and theatre performances of different States in the city.

VISUAL ARTS

Delhi has been the capital of many kingdoms since time immemorial, and is therefore home to many monuments. The Archaeological Survey of India has identified around 174 monuments. Each of these monuments is significant for its architectural heritage. Most of the monuments situated in the old city such as Jama Masjid, Lal Qila, Purana Qila, etc., belong to Mughal periods. Lal Qila or Red Fort, primarily made of red sandstone, and decorated with excellent paintings, gold bordered projections, mosaics of mirrors, ceiling made of gold and silver, wonderfully reflected in a central pool on the marble floor of Rang Mahal. The Qutub complex has the Minar with the projecting balconies having an interesting pattern with an intricate design in which triangular pieces of vaulting spring from the corners. The complex has

an Iron Pillar of the Mauryan period as well as the remains of the Jain temples built before the Qutub Minar.



Qutub Minar



Lal Qila



Work on Diwan-e-Khas,
Red Fort



Humayun's Tomb

Md. Mahdi Karim

Reminiscence of British colonial architecture can be found in many government buildings including Rashtrapati Bhavan, Central Secretariat, Rajpath, Parliament of India, Vijay Chowk and Connaught Place. Other important places like India Gate, Rajghat, Vijay Ghat and Shantivan, the Laxminarayan temple, Akshardham temple, the Bahá'í Lotus temple and the ISKCON temple are examples of modern architecture. The Lutyens' Bungalow zone is also an architectural marvel.



Parliament





Supreme Court



Rashtrapati Bhavan



Vijay Chowk

Delhi has a number of museums (around 30) including National Museum that has a fine collection of sculptures, paintings, numismatics, etc., from the earliest times to the recent history. Other important museums in Delhi are the National Handloom and Handicraft Museum (NHHM), National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA), Rail Museum, Dolls Museum, Philately Museum, Parliament Museum and many other government or private collections. Delhi's art and craft also include *zardozi* (embroidery done with gold thread) and *meenakari* (the art of enameling) works.



Zardozi

CONTEMPORAY CULTURAL DEVELOPMENTS

Delhi has always played a significant role in the cultural scenario of the country, with different cultural activities at the national and international levels, be it art and craft, theatre, music and dance or literature. Delhi, the cultural hub of the country, hosts many other artistic and literary festivals and fairs. The Qutub Festival, a musical festival with the backdrop of Qutub Minar, showcases performances of musicians and dancers from all over India. National School of Drama organises its annual international theatre festival, Bharat Rang Mahotsav. Besides, the Old Fort Dance Festival, Delhi organises Bhakti Sangeet, a festival of devotional music at the Nehru Park, Delhi Classical Music Festival, Thumri Festival and Youth Festival at Kamani Auditorium and the Heart of Delhi, Central Park in Connaught Place.

A very recently developed cultural space is Dilli Haat, first opened in south Delhi and now in other parts as well, offering a delightful amalgamation of craft, food, and other cultural activities. Mandi House in the centre of Delhi houses many art galleries, theatres, and other performing avenues. India International Centre and India Habitat Centre are hubs of many intellectual and developmental activities. Delhi hosted the Asian Games (1982) and the Commonwealth Games (2010) which have created many stadia and infrastructure.



Dilli Haat

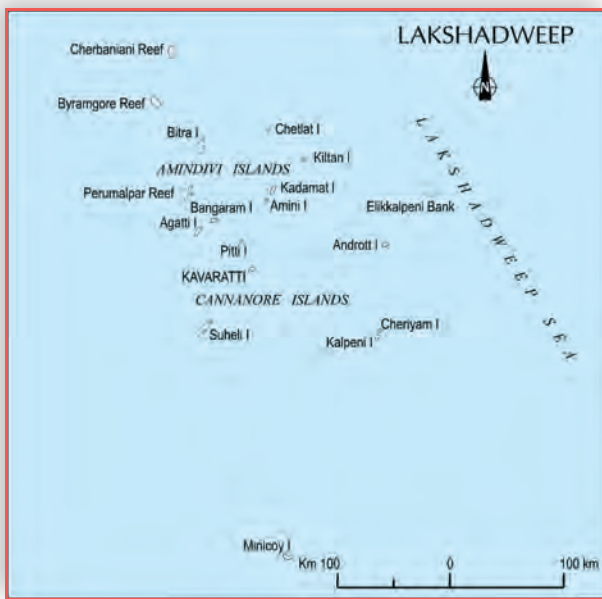


Akshardham





LAKSHADWEEP



of Islam. It was believed that Arab Saint, Ubaidulla brought Islam to these islands. For different periods, they were under the control of rulers from the Malabar Coast, Tipu Sultan and the British.

The Union government declared the group of islands called the Laccadive, Minicoy, and Amindivi Islands as a Union Territory on 1 November 1956. These islands were renamed as Lakshadweep in 1973. In Sanskrit, *Laksha* means one lakh, but Lakshadweep has only 36 islands! It



Lakshadweep Seal

is also interpreted that *Laksha* in Lakshadweep stands for *Lakshya*, which means aim. These islands have been functioning as signposts for seafarers since times immemorial. Only 10 of these islands are inhabited. They are Agatti, Androth, Kalpeni, Kavaratti (Laccadive group); Amini, Bitra, Chetlat, Kadmat, Kiltan (Amindivi group); and Minicoy. Despite sharing many common features, they are a diverse lot.

Lakshadweep is located on the southwest coast of India in the Arabian Sea. It is an archipelago of islands scattered all over the Arabian Sea. The early history of these islands remains obscure. Archaeological evidence revealed the presence of Buddhist settlements around the 6th or 7th century. Soon afterwards, the islands came under the influence



Butterfly Fish



Sooty Tern



Bread-Fruit Tree

Fact Sheet

State Day	1 November
Geographical Area	32 km ²
Headquarters	Kavaratti
Official Language	Malayalam
State Animal	Butterfly Fish
State Bird	Sooty Tern
State Flower	—
State Tree	Bread-Fruit



INDIA: UNITY IN CULTURAL DIVERSITY

Lakshadweep islands are coral reef atolls. About 4,200 sq kms of lagoon area, 20,000 sq kms of territorial waters, and about 4 lakh sq kms of economic zone make Lakshadweep a large territory.

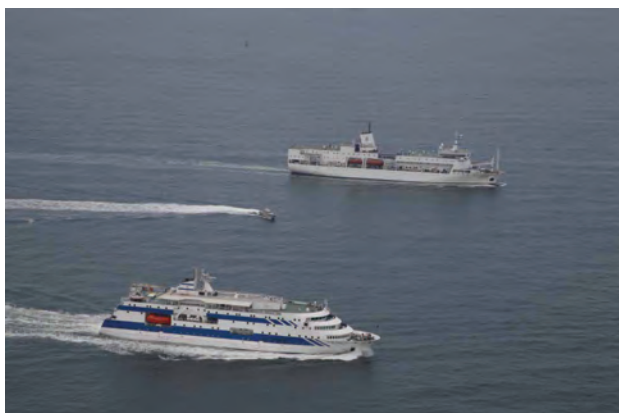


One of the Lakshadweep Islands

The total population (Census 2011) of all these islands is only 64,429. The density of population is high and stands at 2,013 people per sq km. Most of the islands are small. For example, the land area of Agatti is 3.84 sq kms, 6 kms long and 1 km wide. Lakshadweep is directly administered by the Union Government through an Administrator. Lakshadweep is the smallest Union Territory of India. Kavaratti Island was selected as the headquarters of the U.T. Administration in 1964 when the Secretariat was shifted from Kozhikode (Calicut).

The distance from different islands to the Malabar coast of Kerala varies from 200 to 400 kilometres. All these islands are accessible by sea from the mainland, mostly from Kochi (Cochin), Kerala and Mangaluru, Karnataka. Agatti Island, being the only island with an airport in Lakshadweep, serves as a gateway to the islands. Helicopter services link Kavaratti with all the major islands.

Being an archipelago, connectivity between mainland and islands and among islands is a major



The major passenger ships, MV Kavaratti and MV Corals arrive at Kochi harbour (18 April 2015)

challenge. Most of the passenger ships to various islands sail from Kochi. The islanders and visitors have to embark on a long voyage to reach their destinations. For example, journey from the mainland to the islands such as Kavaratti or Minicoy takes around 18 hours.

CULTURAL SPECIFICITIES

Language

Malayalam is the most widely used language in all islands, except Minicoy. The people of Minicoy use Mahl language, which bears close resemblance to the language of the Maldives. Jeseri (Dweep Bhasha), related to Malayalam, is also spoken.

Dress



Islanders of Lakshadweep

Food

Coconut and Tuna fish are the most common ingredients in Lakshadweep cuisine, owing to their availability in abundance. Most of the dishes are non-vegetarian, containing mostly seafood.



Traditional dishes of Lakshadweep

FAIRS AND FESTIVALS

More than 95 per cent of the people in Lakshadweep are Muslims. Major Islamic festivals such as Eid-ul-Fitr, Bakrid and Milad-UI-Nabi are celebrated with devotion and gaiety. All islands have many mosques.



National Minicoy Fest Logo



Tharkiyathul Islam Complex, Kavaratti

About 50 mosques are spread out over Kavaratti Island. The most spectacular among them is the Ujra mosque. The serenity of this unique place of meditation mesmerises the visitors. It has ornately carved pillars and ceiling reflecting the superb craftsmanship of the locals. A small tank is located near the mosque. The water of this tank is said to heal ailments.

The people of Lakshadweep celebrate the Independence Day, Republic Day and the Lakshadweep Day (1 November) in all the islands in a grand manner. Lakshadweep Cultural Festival named



National Minicoy Fest

‘Attolu Eidu’ (Island Festival) has become a major event involving participants from all the islands.

PERFORMING ARTS

Dance and Music

The cultural traditions of islanders are closely intertwined with those of the Mappilas of North Kerala on the mainland. This is reflected in various forms of folk dances and folk songs prevalent in Lakshadweep. The themes are mostly drawn from various aspects of island life and nature. Being a close-knit community, all these dances and songs are always group performances. They are neither performed in solo nor in duets. Some dance forms are mentioned below.

Dances of Lakshadweep

Kolkali (Stick dance)	Most popular folk dance; Kol means stick; dance is performed only by males by holding the sticks in their hands; they form pairs and dance in a circle in tune with the beatings of the sticks and rhythmic folk songs; and they form different alignments slowly at the beginning and end in a frenzied tempo.
Parichakali (Shield dance)	Paricha means shield; dance is performed with swords and shields made of soft wood; similar to a martial art; accompanied by songs that usually describe the heroic combats of the ancient warriors; similar to Kolkali, dancers begin slowly and end in a crescendo of agile movements.
Bandiya (Pot dance)	Most popular folk dance among women; Bandiya means pots; dance is performed with brightly coloured pots; traditionally women used to carry pots to fetch drinking water from ponds attached to Mosques or prayer halls; these pots express emotions of a bride.
Oppana (Smearing of the henna)	Popular dance at a wedding ceremony; close friends of the bride perform this dance wearing glittering clothes; they sing and dance around the bride after smearing henna on her palms; dance is full of music and dazzling movements.
Lava	Most popular traditional folk dance of Minicoy; performed only by males.



INDIA: UNITY IN CULTURAL DIVERSITY



Kolkali Dance



Lava Dance



Oppana Dance



Bandiya Dance

VISUAL ARTS

Arts and Crafts

Lakshadweep is home to highly skilful artisans who were adept at building a sailing craft called 'Odam' for many centuries. Being highly resourceful, a craftsperson utilises each and every part of coconut to make attractive products. Coconut fibre is extracted and converted into fibre products such as coir yarn and mats. Aravana are small drums that girls hold while dancing.

CONTEMPORARY CULTURAL DEVELOPMENTS

Lakshadweep has been promoting sustainable tourism. Major tourist islands are Agatti, Bangaram,



Exploring the Underwater World

Kalpeni, Kadmat, Kavaratti and Minicoy. These islands have rich and unique flora and fauna. Many multicoloured fishes abound in the beautiful lagoons of many islands. They have emerged as serene destinations, especially for many enthusiasts of water sports, fishing, etc. Visitors can view the exotic underwater world from the glass-bottomed boats. They can also hire water sports crafts like kayaks and sailing yachts.

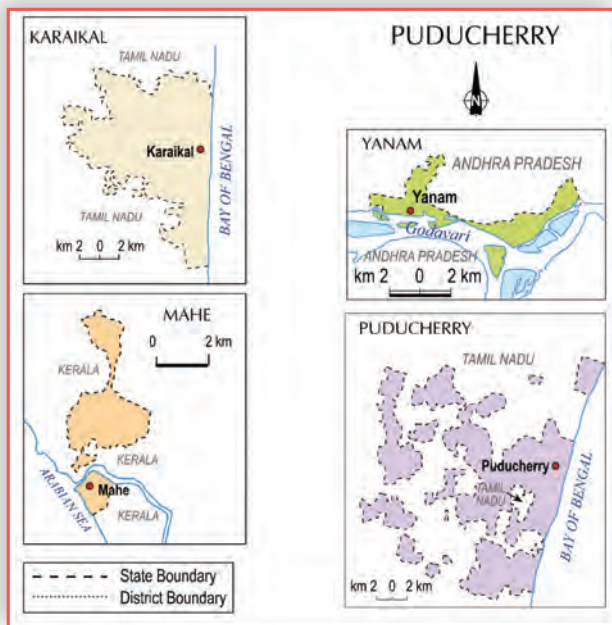
Conservation of nature has acquired a lot of significance in the wake of climate change. The impact of global warming on low-lying areas such as Lakshadweep is for real. In fact, the neighbouring Maldives held a cabinet meeting under water to draw the global attention towards the real threat to their existence. So, being a fragile ecosystem, these islands are protected by restricting the number of tourists to manageable levels. All tourists require entry permit to visit the islands from the administration. Foreign tourists are permitted to enter only a few islands. Visitors are bound to be charmed by tranquil waters of the Lakshadweep, as it is indeed full of islands of peace and development.



The tableau of Lakshadweep passes through the Rajpath, New Delhi during the 69th Republic Day Parade in 2018



PUDUCHERRY



of French India were transferred to the Republic of India on 1 November 1954, and legally (de jure) on 16 August 1962, thus forming the Union Territory of Pondicherry with the four coastal enclaves.

CULTURAL SPECIFICITIES

Language

The Union Territory of Puducherry has a rich cosmopolitan culture, with people speaking French and English, along with Tamil, Telugu and Malayalam. Also, some of the schools in Puducherry use French as the medium of communication. Half of the population in the region hold dual citizenship of both French and Indian. People of different castes, religions, creed, origin live here happily and enjoy all the festivals together. The dominant cultural practices in Puducherry are mainly influenced and inspired by the traditions and customs of the people of the Tamil origin on the one hand and the lifestyle of the French colonisers on the other hand.

Formerly known as Pondicherry, Puducherry literally means 'New Town' in Tamil. It is a Union Territory of India and is located in the southern part of the Indian peninsula. Out of the four districts, Puducherry and Karaikal districts are bound by the State of Tamil Nadu, while Yanam and Mahé districts are enclosed by the States of Andhra Pradesh and Kerala respectively.

In 1674, Pondicherry (Pondichéry), Chandernagor, Mahé, Yanam, Karaikal and Masulipatam became a part of the French colony under a single French governor in Pondicherry, although French rule over one or more of these enclaves was repeatedly interrupted by British occupations. The territories

<i>Fact Sheet</i>	
<i>State Day</i>	16 August
<i>Geographical Area</i>	492 km ²
<i>Capital</i>	Puducherry
<i>Official Languages</i>	Tamil, English, French, Telugu and Malayalam
<i>State Animal</i>	Squirrel
<i>State Bird</i>	Asian koel
<i>State Flower</i>	Cannon Ball Flower (Nagalinga flower)
<i>State Tree</i>	Vilva Tree



Dress

The people of Puducherry wear traditional Indian dresses which include pants and shirts for men and women like to wear sarees with blouse and long skirts.

Food

The French legacy of freshly baked baguettes and crisp croissants with a steaming cup of coffee constitute the breakfast of most of the people. They equally enjoy all the South Indian delicacies such as *Masala Dosa*, *Sambar Vada* and *Idli*, etc. *Kadugu Yerra* is an incredible curry made with prawns cooked in a spicy tomato sauce with potatoes, vinegar, fenugreek and mustard paste and creamy coconut milk. Filled with various nutritious vegetables, curry is a local delicious vegetarian delicacy. Various local delicacies in Puducherry are made usually with very less oil. Other dishes popular in Puducherry are: Coconut Curry, Tandoori Potato, Soya Dosa, Podanlangkai, Assad, Curried Vegetables, Stuffed Cabbage, Payasam, etc.



Baked Bouggets served for Breakfast, a French Legacy



Kadugu Yerra

FAIRS AND FESTIVALS

The people of Puducherry celebrate the festivals like Pongal, Masi Magam, Mangani, etc. Fairs and festivals of Puducherry are reflective of the cultural heritage of the place. A strong connection with Tamil Nadu, a history of French colonialism, and the influence of Sri Aurobindo together explain the large number of festivals celebrated here. In and around Puducherry, there are more than 350 temples. All the major Hindu, Christian and Muslim festivals are celebrated in Puducherry apart from the local Tamil festivals, some of which are listed in Table 1.



Adikumbeswarar in Masi magam



Villianur Temple Car Festival



Pongal Celebration

Table 1

Festival	Salient Features
Pongal	A four days' festival also observed in Tamil Nadu. The most important day of Pongal is known as Thai Pongal, which is also celebrated as Makar Sankranti.
Masi Magam	A Tamil festival celebrated in the Tamil month 'Masi' during the Makam Nakshatra. On this day, temple idols are taken in a procession to a water body for a ceremonial bath.
Tamil New Year	It is celebrated on 14th April, the first day of the Tamil month 'Chithirai'.
Villianur Temple Festival	The most popular festival being the Brahmotsavam, which is observed for ten days continuously and devotees from all over India come here to take blessings of the Lord Shiva in the form of a 'Shivlinga'. Other temples devoted to the Devi and Murugan were constructed during the Chola period. The annual Temple Car Festival which is held between the months of May and June involves pulling of a 15-meter tall chariot through the streets by a large number of devotees.
Veerampattinam Festival	The biggest coastal village situated between Puducherry and Cuddalore has rivers on both sides which help the fishermen to protect their craft during cyclones. The village is famous for its Car Festival, which is a 6 weeks' long celebration at the Shri Sengazhuneer Amman Temple.
Villianur Temple Car Festival	Villianur Temple Car Festival is an ancient tradition about the famous deity named Thirukamemswara Kukilambal. On this occasion, the idol of the God is taken out for a procession in a decorated chariot. The long procession visits the local areas and then ends its journey in the temple.



PERFORMING ARTS

The music and dance forms of Puducherry are very much influenced by the rich heritage of the Tamil tradition. Various dance festivals are celebrated here. Cultural programmes are also organised during festivals. Carnatic music, prevalent in South India is enjoyed by the people.



Chidambaram Natyanjali Festival

VISUAL ARTS

Architecture

Puducherry architecture is one of the most interesting subjects to be noticed and studied. The architecture here is highly influenced by the culture of the place. An interesting fact about Puducherry is that the city is divided into two quarters. While one is the French sector, the other is the Tamil sector. The cityscape of these two sectors strongly reflect the differences in the lifestyle and practices of the people.

The *thinna*s are public verandas with masonry seats for guests and visitors. The interiors of the houses in the French quarter are more embellished than the exteriors. French architectural influences are marked by the tall arched windows and door along with high ceilings. The French houses are generally built facing the streets. The window shades are generally made of wood or light metals.

Aayi Mandapam (1800–1850) is a shining white monument built during the time of Napoleon III, Emperor of France.

The Church of Our Lady of the Angels was built in 1855, in a Greco-Roman architectural style. Its façade has two plain square towers. The interior has a barrel vaulted roof, with a great dome rising over the crossing. The pastel peach and lime colours give the church a serene appearance. This church is also famous for an oil painting of Our Lady of

the Assumption, which was a gift from the French emperor, Napoleon III.

Auroville: Located around 8 kms north-west of Puducherry, Auroville or the ‘City of Dawn’ was designed by the French architect Roger Anger Auroville after being conceived as a place for human unity by the Mother, the spiritual collaborator of Sri Aurobindo, in 1968. The buildings are a combination of modern western and traditional Indian elements, set in a rural landscape of deep red earth and widespread forestation.



Aayi Mandapam

Manakula Vinayagar Koil Temple (1700–1750): This temple dedicated to Ganesha is more than 300 years old. It has a golden spire and walls portraying 40 different forms of Ganesha. The temple also has a smaller shrine dedicated to Lord Murugan, who is Ganesha’s younger brother.

Varadaraja Perumal

Temple (600–750 AD) is

built in the typical Dravidian style, complete with brightly coloured ‘gopuram’ and sculpted pillars, and is



Auroville

probably the oldest standing structure in Puducherry. This temple is dedicated to Lord Vishnu. Right behind that is a separate shrine for Narasimha.

Kanniga Parameswari Temple (750–1200) is dedicated to the goddess Shakti, and is unique as it seems to be strongly influenced by the French architectural style. It has an unusual blend of both Tamil and French architecture with its arched walls, iconic columns, stained glass windows and even some angel decorations, reminiscent of a French building. However, the inner ceiling supported by the more traditional granite pillars and the sanctum sanctorum, which has a typical Tamil design, highlight the more traditional Tamil features.

Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus: The white and brown Neo-Gothic church is one of Puducherry’s finest Catholic churches. It was built by French missionaries in the 1700s in a contrasting



INDIA: UNITY IN CULTURAL DIVERSITY

Neo-Gothic manner, with towers flanking a central gable and stained glass windows on the side. The church has an imposing entrance and the beautiful stained glass panels depict incidents from Jesus Christ's life.



Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus

Puducherry Museum:

The Puducherry Museum is located in the former residence of the French administrator building. The museum has a collection of rare bronze and stone sculptures from the Pallava and Chola dynasties and artifacts excavated from Arikamedu, including remnants of Greek and Roman jars, 200 year-old beads made from glass and precious stones and even objects from the Tsung period in China. The museum also has a Geology room, a shell and fossil room and a collection of handicrafts, coins, church relics and French furniture.



Puducherry Museum

Crafts

The handcrafted materials such as various dining mats, candles, incense sticks, wooden serving mats, screen paintings, batik paintings on clothes, etc., are made by the people of Puducherry.

Applique and Patch Work

The word applique is a French term. It is a technique where in several pieces of bright vibrant shades of red, white, black, blue and yellow fabrics are superimposed in patches to give a decorative effect. The patches are then sewn to the base fabric to give specific form and design. In Puducherry, during festival processions these are usually found on the temple chariots for covering the horizontal beams. Applique work is also done on long tubular pieces

which look like long pillars hanging down the sides of the chariots.

Leather Craft

Hand-tool etching on leather is done in Auroville in Puducherry. The terracotta coloured leather is etched and braided by hand, and then coloured in two main colours, tan and brown mixed with black.

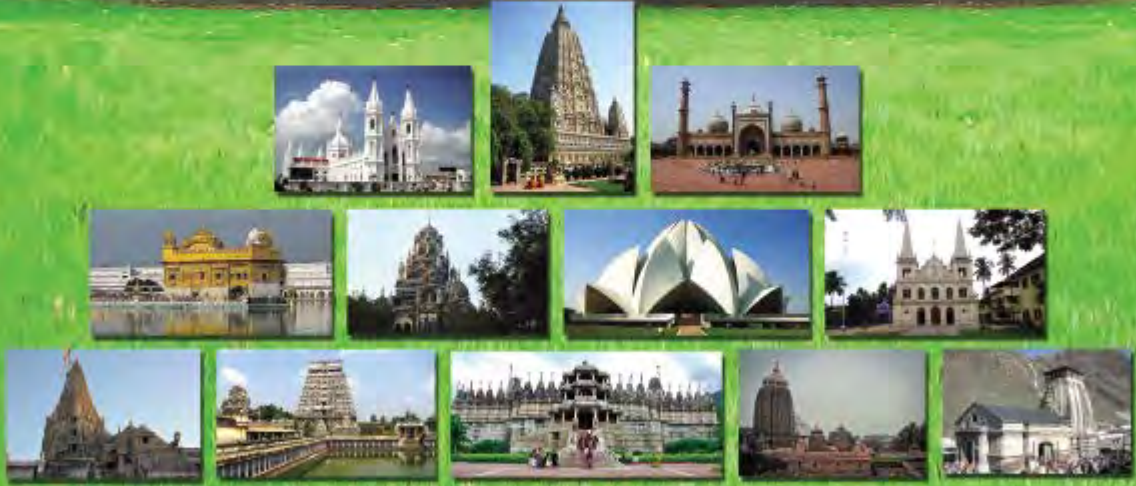
Wire Toys and Puzzles

Shell toys consist of large individual shells or small ones stuck together to form an animal or a human figure. Homemade toys in this region are made of leaves, fruit skin like pomegranate skin, twigs, paper and wire.

CONTEMPORARY CULTURAL DEVELOPMENTS

The Pondicherry Heritage Festival has emerged as a major cultural event in recent years. It is supported by the Departments of Tourism and Art and Culture. The organisers and partners include the Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH), People for Pondicherry's Heritage, PondyCAN, Alliance Francaise and French Institute of Pondicherry. *Fete de Puducherry* is another important event.

A poster for the Pondicherry Heritage Festival 2017. At the top, a silhouette of the festival's architecture is shown against a red background with the text 'PONDICHERRY HERITAGE FESTIVAL 2017'. Below this is a circular logo with 'PONDICHERRY HERITAGE FESTIVAL' around the perimeter and '2017' in the center. The main body of the poster is yellow and contains the text: 'Coming together to celebrate Pondicherry's rich & diverse heritage', '5th to 26th February 2017', 'Architecture, Culture, History, Traditions, Art in all its forms, Nature & Spirituality.', and website links: 'www.pondicherryheritagefestival.org' and 'https://www.facebook.com/PHF2017/'. At the bottom, it lists 'Organized by' (INTACH) and 'Supported by' (The Government of Puducherry, Departments of Tourism and Departments of Art & Culture).



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