

WILD FRONTIERS



East India Tribal Odyssey (Recce Tour)

India: Orissa, Chattisgarh & Andhra Pradesh

Few visitors get to see the real India; to truly experience the daily beauty of the rural landscape away from the crowded urban centres that lie along the main tourist trail. At Wild Frontiers we believe that the time has come to head back into the wild heart of India, to offer a chance to witness firsthand the day to day existence of the vast majority of India's rural population. This extraordinary odyssey takes you on an in-depth journey through the villages and tribes of the eastern states of Chattisgarh and Orissa, to visit some of the most interesting temples and isolated people on the subcontinent, before continuing on to Andhra Pradesh. Remote and largely untroubled by mass tourism, here you can enjoy India at its most authentic and nature at her most beautiful. You will have a chance to visit colourful markets and interact with people whose ways of life have remained unchanged for generations. You will also experience the novelty of staying in some truly fabulous heritage properties and enjoy the sights and sounds of Kolkata and Hyderabad, two of the country's most culturally and historically fascinating cities.

"As usual WF have come up with a varied and unique itinerary and offered us something that bit different from other travel agents operating in the region."

Susie Price

HIGHLIGHTS

- Visit the Indigenous tribes of Orissa
- Explore the temples of Bhubaneshwar, Konark and Puri
- The fascinating markets at Anakadelli and Etikoppaka
- Kolkata, India's cultural heart
- Hyderabad, the fabulous 'City of Pearls'

Duration: 15 Days

Average group size: 5 - 12

Start: Sat 03 Nov 12

Finish: Sat 17 Nov 12



WILD FRONTIERS Adventure Travel Ltd Tel: 00 44 (0) 20 7736 3968 Fax: 00 44 (0) 20 7751 0710

Email: info@wildfrontiers.co.uk Website: www.wildfrontiers.co.uk

Why Wild Frontiers?

As a young, innovative company, Wild Frontiers is delighted to have been voted one of the 'Top 10 Tour Operators' by the readers of both Wanderlust and National Geographic Adventure. We are frequently asked what makes us different from other tour operators, and feel that the factors below answer this important question.

The Traveller's Ethos: WF is a company that has been set up by travellers for travellers, and our ethos is to help adventurous souls get to incredible and inaccessible places in safety and as much comfort as local conditions allow. We are firm believers that travelling is all about the experience and it's the details that make the trip - we specialise in drawing on our own extensive local knowledge and array of contacts to give our clients the very best experience possible.

Personal Service: Our London office is manned by experienced expedition leaders and every trip we run stems from their extensive knowledge - in short, we run the kind of trips that as passionate travellers, we like to do ourselves! When you ring our office, you can be guaranteed to chat to someone that knows the trips and the terrain, and is able to offer sound and practical advice.

Authentic Experiences: Our unique, original itineraries allow our clients to take journeys that venture beneath the surface of the region. Unlike the plethora of 'world specialists' out there who purport to know a hundred destinations, we concentrate on the locations we know and love. We don't run the same tour over and over, thus running the risk of creating a 'tourist circuit' and spoiling untouched regions. Instead, we rarely run any tour more than a couple of times a year and they are on routes we have discovered for ourselves, meaning we are able to give a truly authentic, off-the-beaten-track experience.

Be the First: Our style of travel is all about exploration, and nothing excites us more than opening up new routes to genuine travellers. We keep abreast of new destinations and are often the first to return to places that have vanished from the tourist map. We were the first back into Pakistan after 9/11, the first to return to Kashmir after a decade of tourist isolation, and the first to run a commercial travel trip to Afghanistan for almost 30 years. Since then we have helped bring Colombia, Yemen and Georgia back into the tourist fold, specialising in groundbreaking reconnaissance trips and imaginative expeditions.

Small Group Size: We believe it is imperative to keep the group sizes small. Most trips are limited to a maximum of approximately 12 travellers, thus giving you more access to fragile cultures, better opportunities to interact with local people, and the knowledge you are making less of an impact while there.

Cost of Tours: We believe in an honest, upfront pricing system so you know exactly what the tour will cost before you book. We avoid local payments, 'optional extras' or forcing our clients to split every meal bill. Our tours are provided on a predominantly full board basis, with mineral water, government permits, entrance fees and transport all included.

Added Value: We aim to give our clients the very best (not the least expensive) experience through whatever facilities are available to us. We always try to provide accommodation that is interesting, characterful and convenient, and transport - another important part of any tour - that is as varied and comfortable as possible.

Our clients: Your companions can make or break a trip, and it's lucky therefore that our clients are our greatest asset. Travelling to remote regions is not for everyone, and as such we tend to attract open-minded travellers looking for genuine experiences, and a desire to reach those hard to get to places.

Responsible Travel: Awarded 5 star status by AITO (Association of Independent Tour operators), responsible tourism has always been an integral part of our company ethos and our adventures are designed with the local people, culture and eco-system in mind. For further details please refer to the RT section on this dossier.



Day 1: Tour starts in Kolkata: Arriving in Kolkata today, there may be time to explore a little of the city that was once the capital of British India. Lying alongside the banks of the Hooghly River, the capital of West Bengal once lay at the heart of the Indian struggle for independence and still enjoys a reputation today as a healthy centre of political and cultural thought. This evening we shall enjoy our first dinner at a local restaurant, an ideal opportunity to sample something of Bengal's distinctive cuisine.

Hotel (L,D)

Day 2: In Kolkata: With another full day in Kolkata we have a chance today to explore the sights and sounds of this vibrant and historic city. India's second largest city, Kolkata still retains a number of reminders of its once grand colonial past, especially amongst the elegant old buildings that occupy the streets around Dalhousie Square. The city is also home to the oldest, and largest, museum in the country, a splendidly stately building that houses a stunning collection of statues, paintings and Tibetan *thankas*. One of the city's major attractions is the Victoria Memorial, dedicated to the then Empress of India and specifically designed to reflect a rich fusion of British and Mughal influences. Other attractions include St. Paul's Cathedral and the Kali temple of Kalighat, as well as the bustling markets of Barabazaar and New Market.

Hotel (B,L,D)

Day 3: Kolkata - Bhubaneswar. Drive to Puri via Konark: This morning we fly to Bhubaneswar on the edge of the Mahanadi Delta in Orissa. From here we will drive on to Puri and one of the Hindu faith's most sacred sites. The drive takes us by way of Konark and its stunning 13th century temple. One of India's most popular ancient sites, the Sun Temple is a breathtaking monument that stands on the windswept sand dunes of the Bay of Bengal. Fringed with palm and casuarinas plantations, it is a stunning masterpiece of the 13th century Kalingan style of art and is one of the unrivalled technical marvels that the age has produced. Getting into Puri later this afternoon, the rest of the day is free.

Hotel (B,L,D)

Day 4: In Puri: Believed to be the home of Lord Jagannath, Puri is one of India's most revered Hindu pilgrimage sites. Jagannath is a god created from a rich mix of Indian beliefs, with Hindu orthodoxy and Jain and Buddhist thought combining with strong tribal traditions to create a singularly unique deity. This morning we will pay a visit to the magnificent Jagannath Temple, one of the four holy dhams (abodes of the gods) and a living temple that is home to some 6,000 priests and temple servants. Non-Hindus are not allowed in the temple, so we shall view the chaotic proceedings from the roof of the nearby Raghunandan library, an ideal vantage point to take in the crowded streets and lively bazaars of the Grand Road.

Hotel (B,L,D)

Day 5: Drive to Bhubaneswar; overnight train to Raipur: Driving back to Bhubaneswar this morning we will have time to take a tour around the city before boarding the overnight train on to Raipur. In spite of its fairly modern appearance, Bhubaneswar can trace its ancestry back some 2,000 years and is home to some of India's finest medieval temples. At its religious epoch, the city boasted over 7,000 temples. That number today has been reduced to little more than 500, but it still includes the impressive Lingaraj Mandir and the beautifully ornate Parasuramesvara Mandir. This evening we transfer to the railway station to take the overnight train to Raipur and the rich, tribal landscapes of Chhattisgarh.

Overnight train (B,L,D)

Day 6: Arrive Raipur and transfer to Kanker: Getting into Raipur this morning we transfer on to Kanker, where we will be staying at the Royal Palace, a small but magnificent abode situated in the beautiful green surroundings and still owned by a royal bloodline that can trace its ancestry back to the 12th century AD. Still the residential home of the Maharajahdiraj Uday Pratap Deo, part of the Palace has now been opened up as a hotel and this evening, so long as our royal hosts are around, we will enjoy their company along with a traditional performance of regional music and dance.

Hotel (B,L,D)

Day 7: In Kanker; visit the tribal villages: Today we are escorted by our royal guide around the villages of the Kanker area. We start by heading to Bahigaon village, where we will have an opportunity to witness a colourful dance performance by boys from the local area who live in traditional Gotuls. A remarkable exercise in social development; Gotuls are a form of mixed dormitory living that are distinct to the Muria Gond tribes of north Bastar. Unmarried adolescents are encouraged to develop their own rules and learn how to live together in harmony, away from the influences of adults. Indeed the presence of adults in these educational establishments is strictly taboo. Lunch will be prepared by the villagers and we will share it with some of them before

making our way back to the Palace for dinner.

Hotel (B,L,D)

Day 8: Drive to Jagdalpur: Heading deep into the tribal heartland of Bastar, we move next to Jagdalpur (154kms), the once royal capital of Bastar. Surrounded by lush forest and bounded to the north by the Indravati River, Jagdalpur is the largest settlement in the region and, as such, serves as Bastar's administrative capital. Our journey takes us by way of the villages of Narayanpur and Kondagaon, where we have a chance to discover a rich vein of some of Bastar's finest handicrafts and meet some of the local artisans who make them.

Hotel (B,L,D)

Day 9: Visiting the villages around Jagdalpur: After breakfast this morning we will visit the Muria villages that lie close to Jagdalpur. The Muria are a sub-group of the Gond, the largest of India's tribal groups. Today they occupy the forests and plains of Central India and the banks of the Indravati River. Surviving from farming, hunting and by harvesting the fruits of the forest that surround them, the Muria, unlike the typically nomadic Gond, live in permanent villages. Very much communal, their villages are overseen by a committee of tribal elders and ruled over by a chief. We also have a chance today to visit the Chitrakot Falls, a horseshoe shaped waterfall nestling amongst the Vindhya Hills and known locally as the 'Niagara' of India.

Hotel (B,L,D)

Day 10: Jagdalpur - Jeypore: Our destination today is the large town of Jeypore, set amongst the Eastern Ghats and the Araku Hills in the Koraput District of Orissa. Home to Oriya, Telgu and Hindi speaking tribes, the town lies at the centre of the south-western horn of the region, where we find some of the richest concentrations of cultures and traditions in Orissa. It is this unique mix of languages, cultures and even cuisines that makes this a truly fascinating area to explore. The journey up to Jeypore takes us by way of the tribal village of Kotpad, famous for its weavers.

Hotel (B,L,D)

Day 11: Visit the Market at Anakadelli.

Drive to Vishakhapatnam: Leaving early this morning we make our way through the villages and landscapes of the Ghats. Our destination is the weekly market in Anakadelli, where we will find one of Orissa's most interesting tribes, the Bondos. One of the region's most primitive tribes, but also renowned as one of its most colourful, the women decorate themselves with a dazzling array of beads and rings. Speaking a fascinating variation of the Asiatic language, called Remo, the tribe also follows a somewhat unusual pattern when it comes to marriage, in that the women tend to marry younger men (the idea being that the men will continue to support them when they are old). From here we continue on towards Vishakhapatnam, sandwiched between the hills of the Eastern Ghats and the waters of the Bay of Bengal. On arrival we check into the Taj Gateway, after which the rest of the afternoon is free to enjoy the beach or some personal exploration.

Hotel (B,L,D)

Day 12: Visit the craft village at Etikoppaka - drive to Anakapalle - train to Hyderabad:

Departing Vishakhapatnam after breakfast we head first for the small village of Etikoppaka, on the banks of the Varaha River. The village is famous for its traditional wooden carvings and artefacts, especially its toys and mythological figures and today it provides income for more than 200 artisan families, whose wares are sold all over India. Before leaving the area we also have a chance to visit some of the important Buddhist sites that lie scattered across the countryside including Bavikonda, the oldest of the ancient monuments and a site that can date its origins back to the 2nd century BC. From here we then continue by road towards Anakapalle, where we catch an overnight train on to Hyderabad.

Overnight train (B,L,D)

Day 13: Arrive Hyderabad: We arrive in the city of Hyderabad this morning and stop off at a local eatery for breakfast before completing the journey to our hotel. The 'City of Pearls', Hyderabad is a fascinating blend of Muslim and Hindu cultures that once lay at the heart of the Golconda Empire. This afternoon we head out to explore a little of the city, taking

in the 16th century Charminar, which houses Hyderabad's oldest mosque and the magnificent Golconda Fort. We may also have a chance to explore the markets and bazaars around the Charminar, before heading out for dinner.

Hotel (B,L,D)

Day 14: In Hyderabad: For three centuries Hyderabad was the centre of Muslim power in south India its fabulous wealth derived from its precious gems, including the famous Koh-i-Noor. With another full day in the city, we have ample opportunity to explore further, perhaps returning to the Old Quarter to meander through its bazaars in search of some last minute bargains. Another option is the remarkable Salar Jung Museum, lying along the south bank of the Musi River. Housing an incredible collection of artefacts, miniatures and manuscripts that date back to the 1st century, the museum's hoard was collected by the grand vizier of the 7th Nizam, Osam Ali Khan. Spanning a lifetime of travel and including weaponry, bronzes, Buddhist sculptures and Indian jade, the collection numbers over 35,000 pieces!

Hotel (B,L,D)

Day 15: Tour ends in Hyderabad: The tour ends with breakfast at the hotel.

(B)

Wild Extensions:

There are so many potential extensions to this trip it is hard to know where to begin. Before the tour you could visit the Taj Mahal, Jaipur or any of the other fabulous towns and palaces of Rajasthan.

After the tour take some extra days in Kolkata - which we strongly recommend; visit Darjeeling, Kalimpong or Glenburn Tea Estate; or visit the Sundarbans.

Contact the office for extension specifics.

TOUR DETAILS

Tour Code: A

Tour price: All our tours are priced on a LAND ONLY basis, giving you maximum flexibility when deciding how to get to and from your tour.

Single Supplements: These are NOT compulsory for any Wild Frontiers tour. Where single supplements are available please note that a single room cannot always be guaranteed for every night of the tour as depending on the destination, rooms may be limited. On this tour we are happy to offer an optional single supplement that will cover you for all nights of the tour.

Flights: If you would like us to send you a quote for the suggested tour flight (see GETTING THERE) or on any alternative flight that may suit you better, please let us know.

In all cases, for the latest prices, please refer to our website or contact the office.

Please remember that all Wild Frontiers tour prices mean NO hidden extras, NO local payments or kitty and NO compulsory single supplements.

WHAT IS INCLUDED?

- Full services of a Wild Frontiers Tour Leader with local guides and drivers.
- Meal plan as detailed in the itinerary (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner) with mineral water as required.
- All transport as outlined in the itinerary.
- All accommodation
- All entrance fees, as per itinerary

WHAT IS NOT INCLUDED?

- Visas (if applicable)
- Local airport taxes
- Tips
- Beverages & any costs of a personal nature.
- International Flights
- Airport transfers (unless booking suggested flights through WF office)

GETTING THERE

For this trip our suggested flights (subject to change) are:

02NOV EK002 LHR-DXB 13:35/00:25+1
03NOV EK570 DXB-CCU 02:00/07:40
17NOV EK527 HYD-DXB 10:15/12:45
17NOV EK003 DXB-LHR 14:30/18:15

Key:

LHR - London Heathrow
CCU -Kolkata
HYD - Hyderabad
DXB - Dubai
EK - Emirates Airlines

NB If you wish to arrange your own flights you are completely free to do so and in this case we can arrange any transfers or supplementary accommodation that you may require.

Please note that if you are making your own flight arrangements, we recommend that you only purchase flights that are totally flexible and refundable as due to the nature of adventure travel, itineraries can change at any time. For more information, please refer to our booking conditions.

PRACTICALITIES

Accommodation will be a mixture of Heritage hotels, Government guesthouses - the best available in certain areas of the trip - and probably the best hotel you will ever have stayed in!

All hotels mentioned in the itinerary are subject to availability and if not available substitutes will be of a similar quality.

Transport on this tour includes minibuses, train and domestic flights.

Trip Grading:

Adventure Rating ❖❖❖❖❖

Comfort Grade ❖❖❖❖❖

Fitness Level ❖❖❖❖❖

Cultural Interest ❖❖❖❖❖

Please note that this grading is an indication only and should you have any concerns please contact the office.

Recce Tours: As we all know, the world is a constantly changing place - destinations & routes that were once cutting-edge now regularly find themselves appearing in mainstream brochures. Coming up with truly original tour ideas is a constant challenge but at Wild Frontiers we are committed to offering you a real alternative to the mainstream and each year we plan to run a handful of new and original adventures. These are our so-called Recce Tours and since the very beginning have proven incredibly popular.

Fantastic fun and highly rewarding, Recce Tours will assuredly not go 100% to plan and it is not uncommon for clients to take an active role in tweaking the itineraries along the way. More challenging than our normal tours, these will often require a greater degree of flexibility...they will not be for everyone.

Fitness...

Anyone in a reasonable state of health, with an open mind and a sense of adventure should be perfectly able to cope with this tour.

It may sound obvious but...

Wild Frontiers tours are not always for everyone and it is important to us that the tour you choose is the most suitable. Please therefore take time to read the dossier carefully. All our tours are graded to give an overall picture of the trip but these are only guidelines and you should check the daily itinerary. Should you have any concerns about your ability to partake in any aspect of the tour then please contact the office.

Insurance: Insurance that provides cover for emergency repatriation in case of a medical emergency is compulsory for all tours. You should be aware that many standard insurance policies may not cover you adequately for all aspects of a Wild Frontiers trip and so we strongly recommend that you purchase a suitably designed insurance policy. One such policy is the "Wild Frontiers" policy underwritten by Travel & General Insurance Company plc, which is available to UK and Republic of Ireland residents through our website or via the insurance company direct on 0845 408 0583. Under this policy there are two different levels of cover available and for this trip the minimum requirement would be the Standard policy.

Cover explained:

Standard policy: a comprehensive travel insurance policy that provides cover for all Wild Frontiers activities, including trekking up to 6,000m. This policy does not provide cover for travel to areas where the FCO is advising against all or all but essential travel.

Elite policy: provides the same comprehensive level of cover as the

standard policy. In addition the Elite policy also provides cover for travel to areas where the FCO is advising against all or all but essential travel. The policy will not provide cover for any claims arising from or relating to the reasons why the FCO is advising against travel.

If purchasing the Elite policy you also have the option to **extend the cover** provided by the policy to include cover for claims arising from a terrorist act in an area where the FCO is advising against travel. You can add this cover to your policy when purchasing online or over the telephone.

These policies are only available to those travelling on a Wild Frontiers holiday.

For more information and to purchase your policy online please visit the Insurance section of our website.

The cover is underwritten by the International Insurance Company of Hannover Limited (IICH), who are authorised and regulated by the Financial Services Authority (FSA). Wild Frontiers Limited is an Introducer Appointed Representative of Travel & General Insurance Company plc, details of which can be found at the FSA's website www.fsa.gov.uk.

If you do decide to purchase alternative insurance, then you must ensure that it covers you for every aspect of this trip.

Visas: Visas are necessary for many of the destinations we travel to and while we aim to provide you with the most up-to-date information, requirements frequently change and as such we advise that you check with the relevant embassies or contact our recommended visa agency, Travcour (020 7223 5295) www.travcour.com for the latest advice.

For this tour UK passport holders will require a visa.

Non-UK passport holders should contact the relevant embassies for individual requirements.

Further details will be sent out to you on booking, however ensuring that correct and valid visas are obtained remains the sole responsibility of the client.

Responsible Travel: Responsible travel and sustainable tourism are fundamental ideas that Wild Frontiers has been committed to since our birth. It is our strong belief that these words should not be simply ‘tagged on’ to dossiers and websites but should be at the very core of each trip, and our adventures are therefore designed with the local people, culture and eco-system in mind. We believe that a successful trip not only delivers a unique and unsurpassable journey for our clients, but that it also benefits the peoples whose lands we are privileged to visit.

The Wild Frontiers Foundation: In order to facilitate an enduring support structure for the communities we visit, and to show a commitment to these values, Wild Frontiers has set up a charitable foundation through which we can channel funds to both existing NGOs and our own development projects. In addition to organising ethically sensitive tours, having our own charitable foundation allows us to raise money - through the cost of our tours, charity trips and fund raising events - which can then be used to fund various projects in education, sanitation, reforestations and a number of other important issues facing developing communities. Wherever possible we are happy for our clients to visit these projects to see for themselves where and how this money is being spent. For a full list of partner NGOs please visit our website. Should you wish to donate to the foundation please contact the office for details.

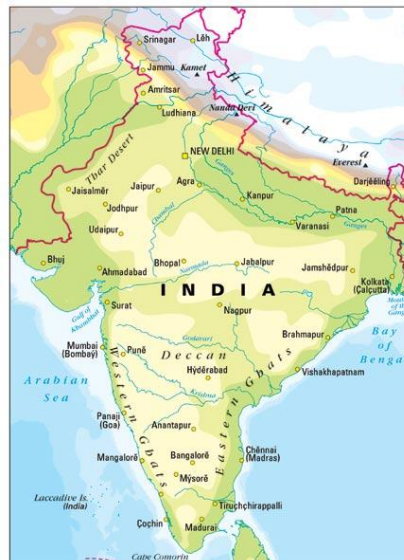
The Environment: Trying to do our bit for the environment, in 2005 we were among the first UK-based travel companies to automatically offset every client’s international flight (if booked with us) with a payment to Carbon Clear to help promote sustainable energy.

Climate: Orissa and Andhra Pradesh enjoy a typical tropical climate, mainly because of their proximity to the sea. They experience three main seasons, namely summer season, winter season and monsoons. Though the weather in the state remains pleasant throughout the year, the best time to explore its beauty is the winter season, which lasts from October to March.

Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO): The FCO travel advice highlights potential hazards people might experience when travelling abroad. Given the nature of destinations offered by Wild Frontiers it is inevitable that from time to time some itineraries contravene this advice. Whilst WF takes the safety and security of its clients extremely seriously, we will not necessarily cancel a trip because of the FCO advice. It is recommended therefore that clients check this advice before booking and contact us if they have any queries or concerns. Please see our website for further information.

Further information:
When you make a confirmed booking with Wild Frontiers we will send you our confirmation pack with complete pre-departure information giving you details on visas, health and vaccinations, packing lists, suggested reading on the region, insurance, photography and other useful tips to make your trip more enjoyable.

INDIA - THE FACTS



Kolkata: Though the first time traveller to India might find the chaotic streets and bustling markets of Kolkata somewhat daunting, wander around a while and you will soon realise that this great city’s stereotypical image of a decaying, squalor-ridden, mass of humanity is largely undeserved. Kolkata, the City of Joy, is in fact a thriving, colourful and extremely artistic place;

described by many as India's cultural heart.

The city is home to some of the most impressive architecture of the British Raj, but it also carries a distinctly Bengali soul. Bengal is home to India's poets and writers, artists and reformers and it is from here that many of the country's political changes are born. There are also plenty of wonderful places to see and things to do. Soak up the Bengali culture at the various museums, galleries, coffee houses and fine restaurants. Explore the historical collections of the Victoria Memorial, one of India's most telling remnants of the British Raj. Stroll through the Maidan in the late afternoon and watch the heart of the city go about its business. Relax at the Botanical Gardens, an oasis of calm in this busy metropolis.



Chattisgarh: Chattisgarh is a new destination and has gained popularity in the last couple of years after the creation of a new State. The fact that the tourism potential of Chattisgarh was totally neglected when it was part of Madhya Pradesh has created an aura of isolation for the green State, and meant that the region has been largely inaccessible. Due to this remoteness and isolation, the human intervention in the jungles is minimal and one can enjoy the nature's beauty. As such, the region is characterised by long stretches of virgin forests that take you back in time, with accommodation facilities limited to the major cities. This gives visitors the a chance to explore 'untouched' India's beautiful countryside and recall life when foliage was the only word associated with the jungles and to understand what the country was like prior to urbanisation.

Orissa: Orissa, in south-eastern India, is a world of made up of lush, green mountains and rice paddies and terraces. 62 tribal groups inhabit this state, in particular the very colourful and unusual

Kondh, Gadabba and famed Bonda, whose animist societies are totally separate from and in great contrast to the traditional Hindu societies found all over India. The best time to see these tribes is at the weekly markets.



Tribal India: In India there is an amalgam of 437 tribes, with 62 inhabiting the Orissa region. According to the 1991 Census, in Orissa the total strength of tribal population is approximately seven million, constituting 22.21% of the total population of the State.

Linguistically the tribes of Orissa are broadly classified into three categories, namely Indo-Aryan speakers, Dravidian speakers, and Austric speakers. The Indo-Aryan language family includes Dhelki-Oriya, Matia, Haleba, Jharia, Saunti, Laria and Oriya (spoken by Bathudi and the acculturated sections of Bhuyans, Juang, Kondh, Savara, Raj Gond etc.). The Austric language family includes eighteen tribal languages namely, Birija, Parenga, Kisan, Bhumiji, Koda, Mahili Bhumiji, Mirdha-Kharia, Ollar Gadaba, Juang, Bondo, Didayee, Karmali, Kharia, Munda, Ho, Mundari and Savara. And within the Dravidian language family there are nine languages, namely, Pengo, Gondi, Kisan, Konda, Koya. Parji, Kui, Kuvi and Kurukh or Oraon.

Despite the linguistic divisions, the tribes have lots of socio-cultural similarities between them and share certain common characteristics. As most of the tribes of Orissa practise agriculture in some form or other, sowing, planting, first-fruit eating and harvest rites are common amongst them. Their common cyclic rites revolve round the pragmatic problems of ensuring a stable economic condition, recuperation of the declining fertility of soil, protection of crops from damage, human and live-stock welfare, safety against predatory animals and venomous reptiles and to insure a good yield of

annual and perennial crops. The annual cycle begins with the first clearing of hill slopes during the Hindu month of Chaitra (March-April) or with the first-fruit eating ceremony of mango in the month of Baisakh (April-May). All rituals centring on agriculture are observed by the members of a village on a common date, which is fixed by the village headman in consultation with the village priest.

The ideological system of the tribes surrounds supernaturalism. The main deities consist of the Sun God, the Mother Earth and a lower hierarchy of Gods. There are also local nature spirits, presiding deities and ancestor-spirits, who are honoured with the offer of sacrifices. Gods and spirits are classified into benevolent and malevolent categories. A peculiarity of the tribal mode of worship is the offering of the blood of an animal or bird, because such rites are thought to ensure happiness and security, abundance of crops, livestock, plants and progenies. Sickness is not natural to a tribal person, it is considered to be result of some evil spirits or indignation of ancestor spirits or gods.



The tribal people have retained their own way of managing internal affairs of the village through two institutions: the village council and the youth dormitory. The dormitory is the core of tribal culture and is well organized among the Juang tribe. Conspicuous in the village, the Mandaghar is the largest hut, which has a wall on three sides and is open at the front. The wooden parts and sidewalls are carried with decorative symbols depicting animals on which the boys hang their changu (a flat tambourine-like drum which is used at the time of dancing). In front of the Mandaghar is a small open space where dance takes place almost every night after the day's work is over. The dormitory is akin to a school of dancing and expression of the communal art of the people. The elders of the

village assemble at the dormitory house every day where they discuss matters concerning the welfare of the village, settle the distribution of swidden and fix date and time for village festivals, etc. In these respects the dormitory may be considered as the centre of social, economic and religious life of the village.

The ceremonies and festivals of the tribes divide into two groups; those that relate to the individual families and those that relate to the village as a whole. The ceremonies relating to the birth of a child, marriage, and death are observed solely by family, whereas the village community observes those relating to various agricultural cycles, eating of new fruits and hunting. Colourful dance and music form an integral part of the festivities and it is mainly through the songs and dances the tribes seek to express their inner feelings, their joys and sorrows, their natural affections and passion and their appreciation of beauty in nature and in man.



Tribal dances have some accompaniments by means of which the rhythm is maintained. This consists of clapping hands, beating drums or an orchestra of different instruments, and a song accompanies each dance. Both men and women, young and old participate but the male members usually provide the accompanying orchestra or music. Tribal dance is characterized not only by its originality and spontaneity but also for its wide range of movements. Many parts of the body such as head, back, arms, feet and fingers are brought into play. Some of the tribal groups put on colourful costumes during their performance.

The artistic skill of the tribal people is also manifested in their dress and ornaments, wall paintings, woodcarvings and decorations. The beautiful wall paintings and floral designs of the Santals

and the icons of the Saoras, which depict geometric designs and stylistic figures of plants and animals, are the best example of tribal art. The multicoloured designs and relief figures of animals and human beings, which decorate the walls of Mandaghar in Juang society, are works of a very high order. Some of the tribal communities like the Bondo and the Gadaba have their own looms by which they weave spectacular textiles. The Bondo women, who are considered most primitive, look majestic when wearing headbands made of grass, necklaces of coloured beads and girdles of brass on their bodies. All these are expressions of their artistic quality and aesthetic sense.



Hyderabad: Once an important centre for Islamic culture, the city is India's southern counterpart to the Mughal splendour of Delhi and Agra. Hyderabad was founded in the late 16th Century by Qutb Shahis, on the banks of the Musi River, following a water shortage that forced relocation from Golconda Fort. Then in 1687 the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb captured Hyderabad and the then subsequent Mughal leaders were viceroys installed by their administration in Delhi. In 1724 Asaf Jah I was granted the title of Nizam-ul-Muk (Governor of the country), and after defeating a rival official took control of the city. The period that followed was that of the Nizams, which allowed the traditions of Islam to flourish. The city's abundance of rare gems and minerals - the world famous Kohinoor diamond is from here - furnished the Nizams with enormous wealth, which facilitated the flourish of culture, art and learning.



There followed seven Nizams that ruled until independence from the British. But independence didn't come smoothly to Hyderabad as the Nizam wanted to remain independent or accede to Pakistan. Nearly a year after India's independence the Nizam rule ended following an invasion by the Indian military - Operation Polo - which took only five days to defeat the Hyderabad State Forces and regain control.

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