



BAIGA TRIBE

MADHYAPRADESH

LOCATION

- The Baiga are an ethnic group found in central India, primarily in the state of **Madhya Pradesh**
- Also in smaller numbers in the surrounding states of **Uttar Pradesh**, **Chhattisgarh** and **Jharkhand**.
- The largest number of Baiga tribe is found in **Baiga-chuk** in **Mandla district** and **Balaghat district** of Madhya Pradesh
- Madhyapradesh – **4,14,526**
- Chhattisgarh- **89,744**
- Jharkhand – **3,583**





HISTORY

- Relations with the British during colonial rule were favorable overall;
- The only substantial point of contention between the two parties was limitations based of **Bewar** by the British (shifting agriculture).
- As India sought independence from British rule, mythological traditions about Mahatma Gandhi began to emerge, superhuman status being ascribed to him by the Baiga.
- Nevertheless, Gandhi's attitude toward alcohol prohibition did result in some negative Baiga sentiment.



LANGUAGE

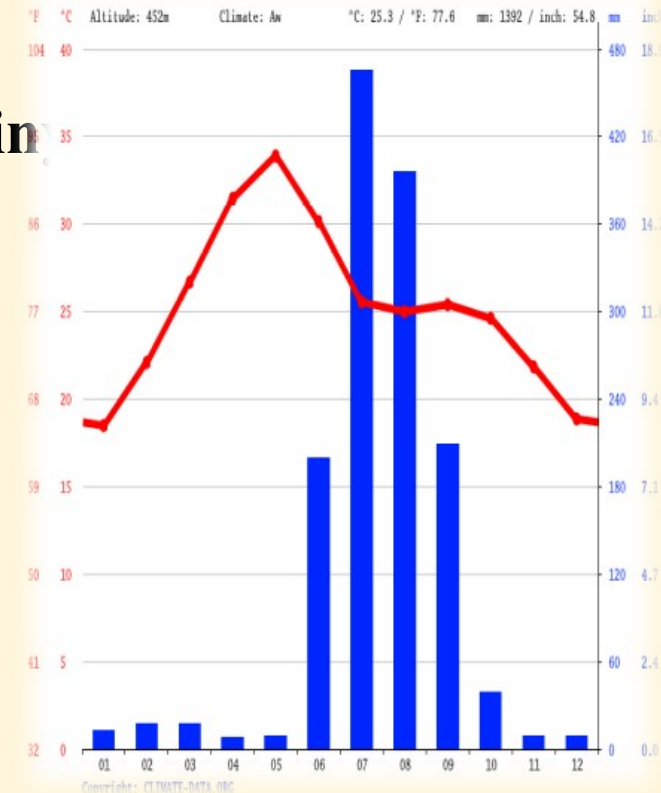
- Though most Baigas interact with outsiders in **Hindi** and they have also picked up few local languages. Among them, they talk in a language called '**Baigani**'.
- It takes its style from Chattisgarhi and is also influenced by **Gondi language** and mostly the tribesmen from Mandla district have adopted it as a language.

୧୨୩୪୫୬୭୮					
ସୋର ଗୋମୋଟ					
୧	୨	୩	୪	୫	୬
୭	୮	୯	୧୦	୧୧	୧୨
୧୩	୧୪	୧୫	୧୬	୧୭	୧୮
୧୯	୨୦	୨୧	୨୨	୨୩	୨୪
୨୫	୨୬	୨୭	୨୮	୨୯	୩୦



CLIMATE

- Madhya Pradesh has a **subtropical climate** with three distinct seasons:
- **Winter** (December to February), **Summer** (March to May) and **Rain** season (June to October).
- In winter, the mean **minimum temperature** is **10°C**, though it can drop as **low as 1°C** and rise to a mean **maximum temperature** of **25°C**.
- The climatic conditions of **Mandla** are characterized by a **tropical climate**. In winter, there is much **less rainfall** than in summer.
- The **average annual temperature** in **Mandla** is **25.3 °C**
- The annual **rainfall** is **1392 mm**





Who are the Baiga Tribe?

- The Baiga Tribe are people who have a **rich cultural heritage** and a deep connection to **the land**.
- The Baiga people have a reputation for being **skilled hunters** and **gatherers**, and they have a unique way of life that is worth exploring.
- The history of the Baiga tribe is fraught with challenges, including displacement from their **ancestral lands** and discrimination from other communities.
- Despite this, the Baiga people have managed to **maintain** their **culture** and **traditions** through the generations, and they continue to be an important part of India's diverse **cultural landscape**.





FOOD

- Baiga cuisine primarily consists of such **coarse grains** as **kodo millet** and **kutki**,
- Also involves the use of very little **flour**.
- Another staple food of the community is **pej**, a **drink** that is prepared from **ground macca** or from the water left from **boiling rice**.
- The **mahua flower** is used in numerous ways in Baiga cuisine.
- Mahua beverage (a **fermented drink made of sun-dried mahua flowers**)
- Is not only popular among the members of the Baiga tribe but is also used as **holy water** or **elixir during various festivals and ceremonies**.





OCCUPATION AND ECONOMY

- The Baiga practised **slash-and-burn cultivation**.
- Now, they are mainly dependent on **minor forest produce** for their livelihood..
- The major part of Baiga earning is **spent on food and clothing**.
- They are adept **woodcutters** and extremely skilful at using the **axe**, including its use for hunting.
- Baigas have been traditionally skilled hunters and could hunt small animals such as **deer, hares and peacocks** with a single throw of their axe.





CLOTHING

- Baiga men wear **truss** and cover their heads with a **piece of cloth**.
- Baiga women, on the other hand, wear **dhoti** to cover their body.
- During special occasions, men wear **haptos & patka** i.e shirt, a small **piece of cloth** around their **waist** and **jacket**, and cover their head with a **turban**
- Women wear **saris** and are very fond of **silver jewellery and ornaments**.





RELIGIOUS BELIEFS

- **Traditional Practice of Shifting Cultivation and Cropping:**
- The Baiga's tribe farming system is called **Bewar**. It is a shifting cultivation mostly practiced on **hilly slopes**, where contour bonding cannot **prevent soil erosion**.
- The practice involves **cutting bushes and branches of trees** and laying them out on slopes for drying. The branches are then **burnt**, leaving behind a layer of ash on which **seeds of crops** are broadcasted a week before the **rains** are expected.
- The Baigas do **not plough** the earth. They believe that the lands are like **mother's breast** and they are not supposed to scratch their mother's breast **again and again** by ploughing the earth.
- The Baiga are **fierce protectors** and **worshippers** of the **forest** and **Mother Nature**.



Traditional Practice of Shifting Cultivation and Cropping.

CULTURE

- **Tradition of Folk Medicine among Baiga Tribe:**

- The tradition of **folk medicine** is still followed by the Baigas.
- Various parts of plants are used as **herbal medicines** for any type of body ailments i.e. body pain, headache, cough, stomach pain, cold, fever, cut or small accident etc.



- **Tattooing Tradition amongst Baigas:**

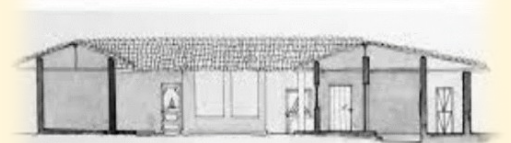
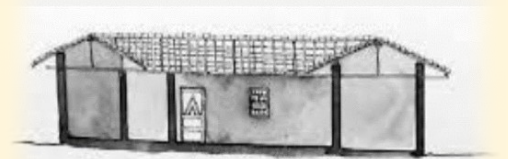
- Among the **women tattooing** is an integral part. They decorate different parts of their body with different tattoo marks.
- Long strips of **parallel lines** are made on the face, especially on the forehead. Different types of marks are made like moon, triangles, crosses, dots and others.
- The women who specialize as tattooing artists are called **Godparents**
- They are well aware about the **different types of tattoos** favoured by various tribes. Tattooing amongst the tribes begins from **the winter season** and continues **until summer**.



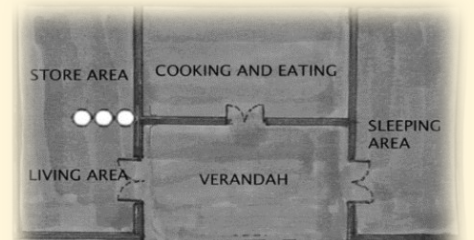


HOUSING AND ARCHITECTURE

- In the **old Baiga tolas** (colony), all the houses were built around a **central empty space**, that means, all the houses had a combined **kharna** or **courtyard**, in the middle of this courtyard, a **fire** was lit in the evening. The traditional Baiga house consists of **one** or **two** **rooms** with a **gabled roof**.
- A fence made of **Sachchar's wood** surrounding the courtyard and the house is called '**parda**' to protect from **wild**.
- The walls of the house were earlier made of **chirra, anhedra, ravai** or **bamboo sticks**, which were **plastered with mud from inside**.
- Thatch was also earlier made with **Chirra** or **Mova grass** or **Chhindi leaves**, which are now made from **Kavelu**.



SECTION

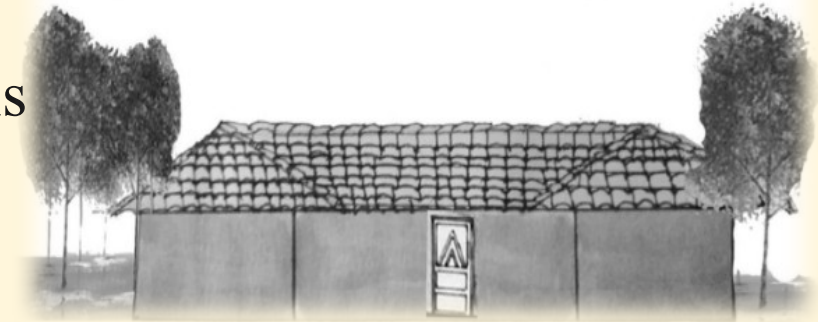
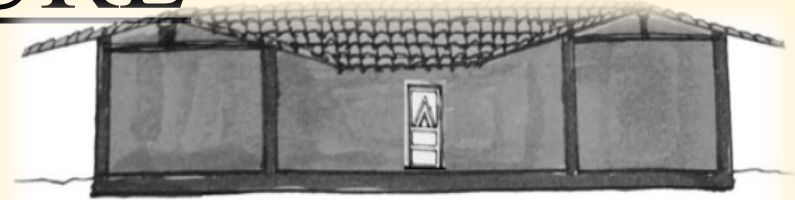


PLAN



HOUSING AND ARCHITECTURE

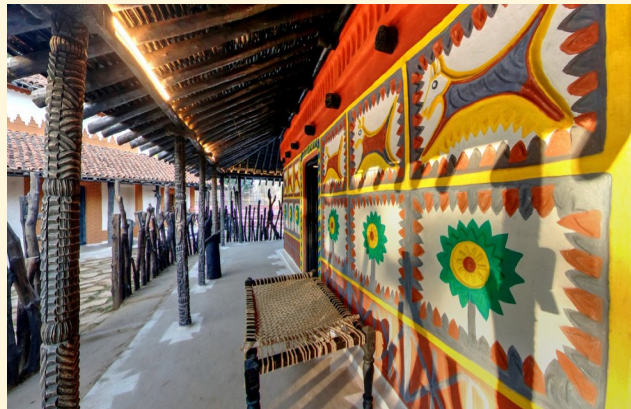
- As you enter a baiga house you may find a water pots called ‘**padhenda**’ in front of you
- A **big bamboo-clay** pot ‘**khoodari**’ for keeping grains, pulses and salt, a ‘**chulha-bartan**’ (stove) on right side and some tools on left side in the house.
- In these houses, the workmanship of men on the **wooden doors** and **door frames** and the aesthetic sense of women shining in the clay on the walls is often seen.



SECTIONAL ELEVATION



EXTEROR WALL



COURTYARD



INTERIOR



ART AND FESTIVALS

- The **main festival** of the baiga tribe was **karma** or **karama**. The karma festival is celebrated on the **hindu month** called **Bhadrapada**.
- On this day folks go in the woods to **collect fruits and flowers**, and they worship **Karma Devta**, a tribal goddess who is represented with a branch of karma tree.
- The most important thing of this festival is the cutting of **three branches** of the '**karam**' tree.
- They also worship the **tiger** and calls it **Baghesur**
- **Tattooing** is an integral part of Baiga culture, every age and body part has a specific tattoo reserved for the occasion called '**Godna**'.
- The Baigas speak in the **dehati** (local) language, having long lost their **original language**.

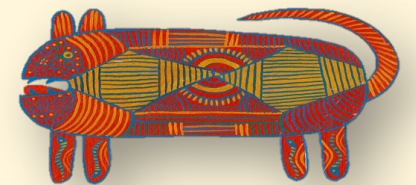
Karma dance



Dancing ground called "Akhara"



Outfit for festival



Tattooing called 'Godna'.