

Echos of the ancient: Exploring the tribes of India



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India is known for its rich culture, colorful traditions, and endless diversity. But beyond the cities and busy streets, there are communities that have been quietly living in harmony with nature for thousands of years — the tribal people of India. These tribes, often called **Adivasis**, are among the country's oldest inhabitants, and their way of life gives us a glimpse into a time long before modern life began.

Most tribal people live close to forests, rivers, and hills — and their bond with nature is very deep. They don't just live near nature; they worship it. Mountains, trees, animals, and rivers are often seen as gods or spirits. For example, the **Dongria Kondh** tribe considers the Niyamgiri Hills to be sacred, while the **Santhal** people celebrate nature and cattle during the Sohrai festival. Their lifestyles are simple, peaceful, and full of respect for the earth — something we all can learn from.

There are more than 700 tribal communities across India, each with its own language, customs, art, and traditions. Whether it's the **Bhils** of Rajasthan, the Gonds of Madhya Pradesh, or the **Apatani** of Arunachal Pradesh, every tribe is unique. What's truly beautiful is how many of them have managed to keep their old ways alive, even in today's fast-changing world.

Another wonderful part of tribal life is their art and music. It's not just for decoration or entertainment — it tells stories. The **Warli** tribe paints beautiful scenes of daily life using simple shapes. The **Rathwa** people make colorful **Pithora** paintings to celebrate special occasions. Music and dance are also a big part of their lives, especially during festivals and ceremonies. You'll often see tribal communities gathering together, singing, dancing, and playing instruments, they've made themselves.



But despite their rich culture, many tribal communities face serious challenges. As forests are cut down and industries expand, many tribes are being pushed out of their homes. Education, healthcare, and jobs are still hard to access in many tribal areas. And when tribal people move to cities for work, they often lose touch with their traditions.

Thankfully, some efforts are being made to protect tribal rights and support their communities. Government programs and social organizations are working to improve education and healthcare while also helping to preserve tribal languages, art, and stories. These steps are small but important in helping Adivasis feel seen, respected, and included.

India is moving forward quickly, but in this journey, we must not leave our tribal heritage behind. These communities have so much wisdom — about nature, about simple living, about the power of community. By listening to them and valuing their ways, we don't just protect their past — we build a better, more balanced future for everyone.

The voices of India's tribes are truly echoes from the ancient world. When we explore and understand their lives, we connect with something deeply human — something that reminds us who we are and where we come from.

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