



Rana Punja Bhil

Why in News

Recently, a **dispute has erupted** in Rajasthan over the **hoisting of a flag** on the statue of **Rana Punja Bhil, a historical figure considered as a hero by the tribal Bhil community.**

- After the [Amagarh fort dispute](#), this is the second issue in Rajasthan within a month.



Key Points

- **About Rana Punja Bhil:**
 - He was a contemporary of **16th century ruler of Mewar, Maharana Pratap.**
 - He is considered to be a **significant character** who **bolstered the strength of Pratap** during his battles with **Mughal emperor Akbar.**
 - When **Maharana Pratap was readying for the battle with Akbar**, the tribal Bhil community voluntarily came to his assistance and at the time the Bhil army was commanded by Punja.
 - Owing to his status as a commander, he was **bestowed the title of Rana.**
- **Bhil community:**
 - **About:**
 - The Bhil are **one of the largest tribal groups**, living in **Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Rajasthan.**
 - They are the **biggest tribe in Rajasthan.**
 - They are classified as [scheduled tribes](#) in Rajasthan.

- The **name is derived from the word 'billu'**, which means bow.
- **Bhil women** wear traditional saris while men are dressed in long frocks and pyjamas. The woman put on heavy ornaments made of silver, brass along with rosaries of beads and silver coins and earrings.
- **Importance of the Community:**
 - The Bhil are known to be **excellent archers** coupled with **deep knowledge about their local geography**.
 - Traditionally, experts in **guerrilla warfare**, most of them today are **farmers and agricultural labourers**. They are also skilled sculptors.
 - They have **exercised significant influence** in the **Mewar region** and throughout the past, the Rajput rulers of the region have forged alliances with the tribal group.

Other Tribes in Rajasthan

▪ Sahariyas:

- Sahariyas are one of the **most backward Rajasthani tribes**.

▪ Minas:

- Minas is the **second biggest** tribe in Rajasthan.
- They are known to be the inhabitants of Indus Valley Civilization.

▪ Gadiya Lohars:

- Gadiya Lohars are known to be a **small Rajput Rajasthan tribe**.

▪ Garasias:

- Garasias are another small Rajput Rajasthan tribe.

▪ Others:

- There are other Rajasthan tribes also, which include **Kathodi (found in Mewar region), Sansi and Kanjar**.

[Source: IE](#)

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