



Porja, Bagata, and Konda Dora Tribes

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Why in News?

The plight of [tribal communities](#) in Andhra Pradesh, who played a crucial role in constructing the **Lower Sileru Hydro-Electric Project (LSP)**, has recently gained attention.

- Despite their crucial contributions in the 1970s, villages nearby Visakhapatnam settled by the **Porja, Bagata, and Konda Dora tribes** continue to face severe shortages of electricity and clean water.

What are the Key Facts About the Porja, Bagata, and Konda Dora tribes?

- **Porja Tribe:**
 - The **Porja tribe (sub-groups: Bondo Porja, Khond Porja and Parangi Porja)**, residing in the Visakhapatnam area of Andhra Pradesh, has a population of approximately **16,479 (Census, 1991)**.
 - The Porjas migrated from Odisha around 300 years ago in search of cultivable land. **Historically, they were employed as palanquin bearers and for other menial tasks.**
 - The term "Porja" is derived from Oriya words meaning "**son of a king,**" reflecting their **historical employment by the Jeypore rulers.**
 - They inhabit the hilly terrains and **practice shifting cultivation, known locally as Podu.**
 - The Porjas practice a **patriarchal system** with **patrilineal descent.** Property inheritance and succession to hereditary offices follow this system, with the eldest son receiving an extra share.
 - Their social practices include **cross-cousin marriages**, a formal bride price system, and **acceptance of pre and post-marital relations. Tattooing is an integral part** of their socio-religious culture.
 - The Porjas **endogamous sub-groups**, each with unique customs, languages, and food habits. Most Porjas in Visakhapatnam belong to the **Parangi Porja group.**
- **Bagata Tribe:** The Bagata are an aboriginal tribe of India, primarily living in the states of Andhra Pradesh and Odisha. They are also known as **Bagatha, Bagat, Bagodi, Bogad, or Bhakta.**
 - Marriage pattern revealed that they strictly follow **lineage exogamy (marrying outside one's clan, or kinship).** Marriage is by **negotiation and elopement. Divorce and remarriage are permitted.**
 - The staple food of Bagatha used to be **millets** of different varieties which are replaced by rice now.
 - Bagathas believe in supernaturalism, magic, witchcraft, evil eye, sorcery, luck, ghosts, shapeless phantoms, etc. They worship nature in the **form of totems and clans.**
 - Traditional tribal headman solves intra-family and intra-tribal disputes, village headman resolves inter-tribal issues, dishonouring or violation of traditional customs, etc.
- **Konda Dora Tribe:** They are a **Scheduled Tribe of Odisha**, inhabit the Konda Kamberu ranges of the Eastern Ghats, spanning south Odisha and Andhra Pradesh.
 - The name 'Kondadora' translates to 'Lords of the Hill,' derived from 'Konda' (hill) and 'Dora'

- (lord). Also known as 'Konda Kapu,' 'Oja,' 'Pandava Raju,' and 'Pandava Dora,' they consider themselves descendants of the mythological Pandavas.
- Their original language, Kubi/Konda, has largely been replaced by Telugu mixed with Odia.
 - Konda Dora settlements are **typically homogeneous** and they live in separate wards in multi-ethnic villages to maintain social distance and ethnic identity.
 - In their society, though **polygyny** and child marriages are not prohibited, **adult marriage and monogamy are commonly practised**.
 - **Cross cousin marriages are preferred and parallel cousin marriages are strictly prohibited.**
 - They have a traditional village council (Kulam Panchayat) headed by a Kula Peda, assisted by a Pillipudamari.
 - They also have an inter-village community council, these councils handle their customary affairs in their respective jurisdictions.
 - The tribe is endogamous, divided into two main groups: **Pedda Kondulu and China Kondulu**, each with several clans. Modernization and cultural contact are transforming their traditional lifestyle.

Note: The Lower Sileru Hydro Electric Project is a 460 MW hydro power project on the **Sileru river** and is situated in the midst of dense forest in the agency area of Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Prelims

Q. Under the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006, who shall be the authority to initiate the process for determining the nature and extent of individual or community forest rights or both? (2013)

- (a) State Forest Department
- (b) District Collector/Deputy Commissioner
- (c) Tahsildar/Block Development Officer/Mandal Revenue Officer
- (d) Gram Sabha

Ans: (d)