

## Detailed Study of Mahli Tribe

### Mahali Tribe

Jharkhand has the largest population of Mahli in India. It is a crafts tribe of Jharkhand. They are very skilled in bamboo art. The highest population of this tribe is found in Ranchi district.

Most of the Mahli in India is found in Jharkhand only. These are art-loving tribes. The traditional occupation of this tribe is to carry palanquins and make bamboo.

## **Sub caste**

Risley has divided it into 5 sub-castes:-

**1) Bansphod Mahli** - They make a living by selling bamboo products.

**2) Patar Mahli** - Along with making bamboo tools, they also do agricultural work. They are mainly found in the Tamad region of Ranchi.

**3) Tanti Mahli** - Their main function is to carry the palanquin and play the baja in marriage.

**4) Sulanki Mahli** - These are agricultural laborers.

**5) Mahli Munda** - These are mainly found in Lohardagga. They do agriculture and labour.

## **Classification**

From the ethnic point of view, Mahli is kept in the Dravidian category. Its native language is Mahli which is on the verge of extinction. They currently speak Sadri Mundari and Santali languages exclusively. It is placed under the Sadan tribe.

## **Social life**

Their society is patriarchal. Often windows are not found in their houses. Same-sex marriage is prohibited. There is a custom of Vadhumulya which is called Pauntaka.

## **Religious life**

The main deity of this tribe is Surji Devi. Apart from this, worship of Bad Pahari and Mansa Devi is done with pomp. They worship the ancestors in the name of "Godam Saki (Old-Old-Old Worship)". The Mahlis of Silli region perform "Utur Puja" with great pomp. Bangri, Hariyari and Nawakhani are its main festivals. Its religious head is called Pahan.

## **Gotra**

Mahli society is divided into many gotras and each gotra has totem like:- Kesariyar, Dungriyar, Hansdagiya, Kantiyar, Indwar, Manelwar, Barwar,

Tudu, Kisku, Soren, Besra, Hembrom, Murmu, Marandi, Baski, Paddy Tumrang, Copper, Barla, Nag, Khalko, Toppo, Kauri, Kandir etc.

### **Political life**

Its rural governance system is called Parganet government system, whose head is the Parganate.

### **Important facts of Mahli tribe**

1. Predominance of blood group B positive is found in Mahli and Kol tribes.
2. The great lyricist of Nagpuri, Ghasiram belonged to this tribe, who

is known by the people as “Vidyapati of Nagpuri”.

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