

BAIGA:

Location: Sundargarh, Balesore

Language: Chhattisgarhi (Indo Aryan), Odia (Indo Aryan)

Population: 338 (As per the 2011 Census Report)

Major Festivals & Rituals: Dussera, Bidi, Phag, Hareli, Pola



The Baiga, known as *Bhumiraja* or *Bhumijana* ("lords/sons of the soil"), are a tribal community with rich cultural traditions. Their society is patrilineal, preferring monogamy and cross-cousin marriages, while permitting remarriage, levirate, and sororate. Baiga settlements are uniclan and follow totemistic exogamous divisions within endogamous groups. They practice burial rituals and are governed by a traditional panchayat led by a Patel or Gountia. Baiga women are renowned for their distinctive and artistic tattoo markings, reflecting deep cultural identity.