

## **BHUMIJ:**

Location (Major): Balesore, Mayurbhanj, Keonjhar, Sundergarh, Dhenkanal

Language: Bhumij (Austro-Asiatic Group)

Population: 283909

**Major Festivals:** Karama, **Dhulla puja**, **Vadhnaparab**, **Makar**



The Bhumij, meaning "born from the soil," are early settlers and settled agriculturists organized into four endogamous groups with exogamous totemic clans called *killi*. They follow a patrilineal and patripotestal family system, with marriage customs that include negotiation, bride price, levirate, sororate, and cross-cousin marriages. Birth pollution is observed for nine days, and while adults are cremated, children under twelve are buried. Social disputes are handled by the village headman, known as the Sardar, with the help of elders. The Bhumij worship the Sun God (Sing Bonga), Dharam, and various nature deities responsible for health, crops, and protection.