***“*कभीरजामंदीतोकभीबगावतहैनृत्य*,* मोहब्बतराधाकीहैतोमीराकीइबादतहैनृत्य*.”***

Humans’ highest and most enduring aspiration has been to attain immortality by defeating death since the beginning of consciousness. This desire is so intense and pervasive that all of man’s inventions and progress are rooted in it, directly or indirectly. The Upanishads express this aspiration beautifully in three lines, stating a desire to move from relative experience to absolute experience and from the domain of death to the realm of immortality.

Even primitive man recognized that life manifests itself in rhythm, with heartbeat, breathing, and walking all being fundamentally rhythmic. He believed that by engaging in a sacred rhythmic activity, he could celebrate life and experience a sense of immortality, albeit temporarily.

Dance and music were the most exalted rhythmic activities for celebrating life, which is why man began dancing long before he learned to speak. Some scholars believe that dance is the mother of all arts. Despite his inability to conquer or transcend death, man has discovered a way to achieve a secret sense of immortality within his mortal existence by immersing himself in dance. This sense of immortality is felt most deeply within the body.

Consequently, numerous tribal and non-tribal communities engage in dance not for the purpose of performance but as an expression of life’s joy. Such dances are referred to folk dances, in contrast to the more intricate and highly evolved classical dances.

However, this distinction does not hold true within the diverse and extensive spectrum of Indian dance forms. Classical styles of Indian dance are designated as *shastriya-nritya* in Sanskrit or Hindi, meaning a dance according to a *shastra*, or a manual or compendium of rules. The *shastra* may be a written treatise or strictly an oral tradition. For instance, Kathak, the prominent classical dance style of North India, lacks a written *shastra*. The *shastra* purportedly composed for the Manipuri dance style faces skepticism and is not endorsed by numerous Manipuri gurus. The grammar of dance techniques for these two classical styles is well preserved in the oral tradition. The shastras transmitted through oral traditions deserve equal consideration as their written counterparts since the Vedas, the most revered scriptures were meticulously preserved through oral transmission for centuries. *Shastriya-nritya*, a form of classical dance, adheres strictly to its own conscious grammar and is invariably presented before an audience. Some of the dances classified as folk are always performed before an audience, while others, particularly celebratory dances, do not require an audience. For instance, the Chhau dances of Eastern India fall into the folk category and are consistently presented before an audience. Some styles, such as Mayurbhanj Chhau and Seraikela Chhau, possess their own deliberate grammar. Consequently, the distinction between folk and classical dance often leads to confusion. A potential solution could involve categorizing all dances performed before an audience as ‘Art dance’ known as *Kalatmak-nritya* in Hindi/Sanskrit.

The terms ‘folk’ and ‘classical’ have become widely recognized, and introducing additional labels could cause confusion. Imagine life as an endless river, where each dancer represents a wave. The rhythmic rise and fall of these waves honour the river’s flow. However, to truly celebrate the river, a multitude of waves is necessary. Folk dances often involve group performances rather than solo acts. When dancing in harmony with other dancers, each individual feels magnified, transcending their singular existence. The most ecstatic experience is found in group dancing.

**RELIGION AND FOLK DANCE <H1>**

To gain a deeper insight into Indian art and culture, it becomes essential to grasp the fundamental concepts of the Hindu religion, as everything in this country is related to religion. The Hindu religion, often referred to as ‘Hinduism’, is a complex and ancient spiritual tradition. However, the term *Hindu* itself is somewhat misleading. The original name for this religion and philosophical system is *Sanatana Dharma*, which translates to ‘eternal truth’ or ‘eternal duty’ in Sanskrit. The concept of Dharma is completely different from religion. Both terms have distinct literal meanings, highlighting their conceptual differences. The word *religion* originates from the Latin roots *re* (meaning again or back) and *ligare* (meaning to bind or fasten). Consequently, religion implies a form of binding or connection. Conversely, the term *dharma* is derived from the Sanskrit verbal root *dhri* which implies *to hold*. The distinction between holding and binding becomes evident when we consider that home holds, whereas a prison binds. Hence, Sanatana Dharma implies that which perpetually holds or sustains. But what exactly does it uphold?

According to traditional Indian thought, an eternal struggle exists within each human being—a battle between gods and demons. The term *devata* refers to a god, while *devi* signifies a goddess. Both words share a common verbal root, *div*, which implies *to shine*. Gods are also known as *sura*, derived from the root *sur*, meaning *bright*. In contrast, demons are called *asura*, signifying *not bright* or *dark*. Human qualities are categorized as either noble and bright or base and dark. Among these aspects, the ego stands out as a potent force. A *devata* is entirely free from ego, while an *asura* is full of ego. Indian mythology abounds with tales of conflict between the *devatas* (gods) and the *asuras* (demons). The *asuras* prevail when the *devatas* succumb to ego, leading to the domain of heaven falling under demonic rule. However, when the gods shed their acquired ego, they reclaim their heavenly sovereignty, known as *svarga*, the realm of brightness. The same kind of war always goes on inside a human being. Attaining complete freedom from ego is an arduous task for any human being, achievable primarily through the practice of yoga and its ultimate realization. While shedding ego entirely may be challenging, one can strive to exist without being egotistic. *Sanatana Dharma*, often referred to as eternal way of life, guides individuals toward non-egotistic, ensuring that the brighter aspects of their nature outweigh the darker, more base elements. Importantly, *Sanatana Dharma* is not merely a religion; it represents a holistic way of living that transcends religious boundaries, making it inherently secular. Unlike formal religions, it does not advocate for conversion, and historically there was no structured process for adopting this way of life.

Unfortunately, over time, dogmatism infiltrated *Sanatana Dharma*, leading to the concoction of conversion practices. What was once a pure concept has now taken on religious overtones, often manipulated by priestly communities and politicians. The Vedic culture serves as the foundational bedrock of *Sanatana Dharma*. The culture, as well as the dharma, originated from great thinkers who lived in the vicinity of the Sindhu River. Some of the first outsiders to encounter the Vedic culture were travellers and traders of Arab and Persia (now Iran). In ancient times, the pronunciation of ‘S’ as ‘H’ was prevalent in that region. Consequently, the people residing near the Sindhu River were referred to as ‘Hindus’. These individuals played a crucial role in introducing the Vedic culture and dharma known to Europeans. Thus, the term *Sanatana Dharma* eventually became synonymous with the Hindu religion. In certain Western languages, the ‘H’ sound is pronounced softly. The river Sindhu, known as Hindu, by Middle Eastern communities, acquired the name ‘Indus’ in European languages. Similarly, the country where the Sindhu River flowed, came to be known as India.

The great thinkers and philosophers who shaped the *Sanatana Dharma* were called *rishis*. These highly intuitive mystics documented their profound spiritual experiences through metaphysical poetry found in the Vedas and Upanishads. Their quest involved understanding the relationship between individual human beings and the vast cosmos, as well as the connection between fleeting time and eternal existence.

Through deep meditation, they directly perceived a presence beyond the constraints of time and space—an entity they termed Brahman. The central goal of *Sanatana Dharma* is to experience, even momentarily, the eternal presence of Brahman. The path of yoga, although challenging for ordinary individuals, was designed to facilitate this realization. Interestingly, these sages recognized that artists could catch glimpses of Brahman by immersing themselves completely in their art.

Bhatta Nayaka, a prominent aesthete from the 9th-10th century likened the aesthetic experience—where the subject becomes absorbed in the aesthetic object—to the blissful state of ecstasy or the encounter with Brahman. According to Bhatta Nayaka, “The aesthetic relish is poured forth spontaneously by the artistic expression, like a cow, for love of her children; for this reason, it is different from that which”.

# NORTH INDIA <H1>

## **Jammu and Kashmir <H2>**

**“In the lap of the Himalayas, Jammu and Kashmir is a symphony of snow-capped peaks and the melodies of Dal Lake.”**

**– Gulzar**

The Jammu and Kashmir region boasts a vibrant cultural heritage, complete with renowned dances that grace major events and weddings. Additionally, special dances are performed during other occasions, including birthdays and crop harvesting ceremonies. These traditional dances are not only popular within the region, but also attract the attention of people from all over the country. They have become an integral part of the region’s rich culture.

Kashmir is commonly referred to as the 'Crown Jewel of India'. Its breath-taking scenic beauty takes you on a spiritual and enchanting journey that transcends human experience. The region is home to a beautiful culture, religion, and history, with snow-capped mountains and verdant farms adorning the landscape.

The inherent customs practised in the region, such as festivities, crafts, and varied art forms, infuse joyfulness into people's lives. The region's dance forms, especially the folk ones, exhibit the many colours and traditions of the area.

The folk dances of Kashmir are Kud, DUMHAL, Rouf, Bhand Pather, Bachha Nagma, Hafiza Dance, Bhand Jashan, Bacha Nagma, Wuegi- Nachun.

Amir Khusro’s famous quote on Kashmir, **“Gar Bar-ru-e-Zaminast; Haminast, Haminast Haminast,”** perfectly justifies the splendour of this place.

## ROUF DANCE <H3>

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| **Origin**: The Rouf dance has its roots in the Muslim community of the Jammu and Kashmir Valley. Over time, it became popular among all communities in the region. |
| **Etymology:** The meaning of Rouf comes from Sanskrit language and refers to a semicircle. |
| **Inspiration:**   * The song sung while dancing draws inspiration from lovemaking of a bee. * It also expresses joy of harvest with mystical poetry. |
| **Theme**: Spring is celebrated with enthusiasm in the Muslim community, just like other festivals such as Eid-ul-Fitr. This celebration reflects the joy and happiness that is associated with other Muslim festivals. |
| **Occasion:** It is performed during spring in Ramzan and Eid, cultural festival, weddings etc. |
| **Performers**: Women |
| **Performance**:   * Groups of three to four women stand facing each other while holding hands. * They sway their feet rhythmically back and forth, mimicking the movement of bees as they approach and leave tulip flowers. * During casual gatherings, only a few singers are needed to accompany the delightful folk dancers. * For grand stage performances, traditional instruments like the rabab are played in the background.   Figure 8.2: In the Rouf Dance, the groups of three to four women stand facing each other while holding hands. |
| **Significant Attraction of the Dance**: ‘Chakri’, a sequence of complex steps (footwork) that women perform during the dance, is its significant attraction. |
| **Attire:**   * The performers wear Salwar Kameez with an embroidered Pheran and a headscarf known as Kasaab or Daejj. * Additionally, traditional silver jewellery is worn to further enhance the overall look. |
| **Musical Instruments:**   * Rouf, a form of music, has a traditional association with not using any musical equipment. * However, in stage performances, folk instruments such as noet, tumbakhnari, and rabab are commonly used. |
| **Songs:**   * Rouf songs are typically selected based on different events and occasions, although the dance presentation style remains consistent. * The song that is used for the dance involves one group asking questions while the other group responds in the form of a song. For instance, in a popular Eid Rouf song, one group may sing “Eid aayi ras ras Eidgah Waswai” (Eid has gradually arrived). The other group replies with “Eidgah wase Weyi” (Let’s go to Eidgah). Ramzan rouf: Retav Manz Reth kusui jan. |
| **Facts:**   * The pronunciation of the name varies between villages, where it is generally called *ruf*, and cities, where it is called *row*. * Unfortunately, Rouf is now only performed at marriage celebrations, as younger generations of Kashmiri women have little interest in learning or performing it. |
| **In Pop Culture:** Bumbro Bumbro song from the Hindi language movie Mission Kashmir is an example of this dance form. |

## DUMHAL DANCE <H3>

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| **Origin:** The Dumhal dance, which originated in Jammu and Kashmir, India, is known for its popularity as a folk dance. |
| **Theme:**   * In memory of his Guru, Shah Sukar Saloni executed this dance performance to commemorate his teachings. * The purpose of the dance was to fulfil the wishes of people who were on a pilgrimage to the Ziarat shrine. |
| **Tribe:** Wattal tribe of Jammu and Kashmir |
| **Occasion:** It was performed on special occasions, such as Urs, are the times when the performance takes place. |
| **Performers:** This dance is exclusively performed by the male members of the Wattal community, and only on certain occasions and designated places. |
| **Performance:**   * The dance is performed by a group of dancers. * The commencement of the dance involves the use of drums that produce a sound so loud that it attracts a large gathering of people. * A procession is formed by men who carry a banner and march to a designated area. * The dancers, in a procession, express the region's culture vividly and with charm. * A flag is carried and planted into the ground to convey a message. * In addition to dancing, they sing beautiful tunes in chorus. * The drum is utilized as a musical instrument to create music. When synced with songs, they produce fantastic sounds and a delightful experience. * The men commence dancing around a banner that is planted in the ground. * This sort of dance is usually performed as a ritual on special occasions. |
| **Attire:** The performers are wearing elaborate, multi-hued garments featuring lengthy robes and pointed headgear adorned with various beadwork and other decorative elements. |
| **Songs:**   * The dancers perform folk melodies that they sing in a chorus. * The tunes they perform are traditional and passed down through generations. * The singing is accompanied by dancing. * The melodies are typically upbeat and lively, and often tell a story. |
| **Musical Instruments:** Drum, etc. |
| **Facts:**   * The Sufi movement is believed to have given birth to this folk dance, which was originally created by Shah Sukar Saloni to pay tribute to Baba Nasim-U-Din-Gazi, his Sufi mentor. * Although it is mostly performed by male dancers, women have recently taken part in a few performances of this dance. * The professional religious Dumhal dancers were summoned by individuals who were impacted by drought, illnesses, or infertility in order to receive the blessings of God. * The Dumhal dance was traditionally performed by the men belonging to the Wattal tribe. |

## KUD DANCE **<H3>**

Figure 8.3 Kud Dance

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| **Origin**: The middle mountain ranges of Jammu and Kashmir are where Kud, a customary community dance, is typically performed. |
| **Theme:**   * A ritual is conducted at night to pay tribute to the gods Lok Devatas as a sign of gratitude. * This celebration serves to thank the Gram devata, who is the village deity, for safeguarding crops, cattle, and people from natural calamities. |
| **Occasion:** Special events, festivals, and the rainy season when maize is harvested are important occasions on which this dance is performed. |
| **Performers:**   * This dance is usually performed by farmers from the local area, with people from neighbouring villages also joining in on the festivities. * One unique aspect of the Kud dance is that both young and old individuals participate equally, making it an even more captivating experience.   Figure 8.3 The Kud Dance is usually performed by both young and old individuals. |
| **Performance:**   * The Kud dance involves groups of 20 to 30 dancers who are typically farmers. * It is performed as a gesture of thanks to God and often continues late into the night. * People of all ages and genders, including both locals and visitors, are welcome to participate in worshipping Lok Devatas. * This dance is typically performed in the mountainous regions around Jammu during the rainy season. * Kud dance is characterized by fast beats that inspire spontaneous movements, including jumping forwards and backwards. * The dance includes many interesting and intricate movements, with the rhythm and beats of the music dictating the dancers' actions. * Even those with no experience can easily join in the beauty and fun of Kud dance, which can be mesmerizing and engrossing for all involved. |
| **Attire:**   * The men in churidar kurta with a turban on their heads and the women in salwar kameez will welcome you with a whole heart. * Everyone is in their best attire and dances through the night and celebrates in a festive spirit. |
| **Musical Instruments:** Dance performances often incorporate unique musical instruments such as chhaina, drums, narsingha, and flute. |
| **Facts:**   * A bonfire is surrounded by people of all ages, dressed in their finest attire, to celebrate throughout the night. * The purpose of this gathering is to show gratitude to the local deity, ‘Gramdevta’, who protected the farmers and villagers, their livestock, maize crops, children, and families from natural disasters. * Khem Raj is the recipient of the Rashtrapati Award in Kud Dance. |

## HIKAT DANCE <H3>

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| **ORIGIN:** One of the most well-liked traditional dances in the state of Jammu and Kashmir is the Hikat dance. |
| **THEME**: Hikat represents happiness and delight. |
| **OCCASION:**   * The harvesting season, Dusshera celebration, cultural programmes, and other festive occasions are typical events for the performance of the hikat dance. |
| **PERFORMED BY:**   * The dance was originally created by children, but later, it was modified by adults to suit their needs. * Eventually, it gained popularity and became a dance form that was enjoyed by the entire community. * A boy and a girl in Hikat join as dancing partners and hold each other by extending their hands. |
| **HOW IT IS PERFORMED:**   * Two individuals engage in the Hikat dance, holding hands and reaching across to grasp the other’s wrist. * They then lean backwards slightly. * The music commences with a slow rhythm, and they gradually spin, before the tempo picks up and they start to swirl faster. * Eventually, they spin freely with delight and revel in the gentle force of the wind. * In the past, no musical instruments were used during the performance of the Hikat dance, but nowadays, the sound of Rabab and drums can be heard accompanying this joyous folk dance. * It’s a simple circle, but the experience can bring great pleasure when standing in a blooming field surrounded by mountain peaks. * People of all ages and genders can be found enjoying the uplifting atmosphere of the Hikat dance, as they sing and dance together. |
| **ATTIRE:**   * Colourful attire is worn by everyone. * Salwar Kameez is worn by women. * Pathan Kurta is worn by men. |
| **SONGS:**   * The character of the songs sung is romantic, and both girls and boys take part in singing them. |
| **MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS:**   * In Kashmir, Rabab, a type of string instrument that is plucked, is commonly used to provide musical accompaniment. * Additionally, Tumbaknadi, which is a type of drum unique to Kashmir, is also typically used. |
| **FACTS:**   * The Hikat dance is enjoyed by people of all ages and genders as they revel in the joyous breeze. * Hikat is a dance popular among women in Jammu and Kashmir, which is a modified version of a game played by children. * The addition of music to the circle game transformed it into a beloved folk dance of India. * During the Dussehra festivities, people sing and dance around a collection of Raghunathji images that are brought from various temples in the area. * The valley witnesses a delightful dance, which is typically performed during the onset of spring. |

## BACHA NAGMA <H3>

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| **ORIGIN:**   * One of the prominent forms of folk dance in Jammu and Kashmir, India is Bacha Nagma. * Afghans of Kabul are credited with the parentage of this dance * It is an offshoot to the HAFIZA NAGMA dance form (by female |
| **ETYMOLOGY:**   * The origin of “Bacha Nagma” can be traced back to two distinct words - “Bacha” which has its roots in Persian and ultimately derives from the Sanskrit term “vats”, while “Nagma” comes from Urdu and Hindi and refers to a melody or tune. * Together, the term is used to describe a form of dance performed by children. |
| **OTHER NAME:**   * Certain regions of Kashmir refer to it as Bacha Gyavaun. * The celebration of kid dancers is known as Bach Nagma Jashan. |
| **THEMES:**   * It is an expression of Celebration. * It is very famous in folklore of Kashmir. |
| **OCCASIONS:**   * Many years ago, people developed a dance that they performed during the harvest season. * The purpose was to celebrate the joy of harvesting. * Over time, the dance became more popular among the people. * Today it is performed at various social gatherings, including weddings, festivals, and religious occasions. |
| **PERFORMED BY:**   * Boys in their teens wearing female attire. |
| **HOW IT IS PERFORMED:**   * Highly skilled and exceptionally talented young performers usually perform the dance. * Each dancer is accomplished and skilled in their own genre of dance. * To resemble women, the dancers wear traditional women’s attire and makeup, and follow the Hafiza style of dance. * These young teenagers have supple bodies, which makes it easier for them to perform flexible moves. * They receive expert training to adopt the Hafiza dance form of Kashmir. * The young age of the dancers makes their voices sweeter, allowing them to sing while dancing. * They are trained to retain their voice’s sweetness, which creates a soothing ambience. * The dance group consists of a maximum of six to seven members, with no singer. * One of the dancers serves as the lead singer, while the others join him in the chorus. * The spinning movements in the dance resemble those of Kathak, and the dancers wear clothes like those of Kathak dancers. * Their faces are adorned to represent a girl’s. * The dancers move around the dance stage with dignified movements. * The singing and Ghungroo playing continue throughout the night, enhancing the song’s aesthetic nature. * The simple yet lively and poised nature of the dance captivates the audience. |
| **ATTIRE:**   * The youthful males are seen gracefully dancing and enjoying themselves while wearing vibrant, lengthy skirts and dresses. * They also have a veil, known as a ‘Dupatta’, draped over their heads, which is a significant symbolic representation of women in many cultures. * This attire is reminiscent of the traditional clothing worn in the Kathak dance form. |
| **MUSICAL INSTRUMENT:**   * Rabab (plucked chordophone, Shehnai, Dukra ( Dugi- Tabla pair), Tumbaknadi, Ghunghroo, Sarang. |
| **SONGS:**   * Different kinds of songs are present such as Erotic, Humorous, Pathetic, Heroic, Spiritual, Peaceful, and Wondrous. * These songs are sung by bacha and are accompanied by beautiful dancing that portrays various emotions. * The songs are like the ones sung in the Hafiza dance, which includes Sufi Kalam or lyrics dedicated to the divine power and spirit. * The Chhakri singers and instruments accompany Bacha Nagma. * Some songs have lyrics that resemble the Persian style of literature. * Nowadays, the lyrics are composed to represent a fun theme or comedy to attract the audience. * It was a common local practice for Bacha Nagma singers to perform dance along with the singing of a narrative song for entertainment purposes.   **NOTE:**   * A Sufi Kalam performance consists of an *ustad* and three musicians (all the vocalists and instrumentalists) introducing the shake (alaap) before presenting the bath (mystic and/or romantic verses) of a maqam (raga). * Sufi Kalam was the music form favoured by the elite, while the masses enjoyed traditional forms of folk music like Chhakri, Rouf, and Wanwun. * Chhakri is folk music sung to the accompaniment of *Sarang, rabab, tumbaknari and not*t. |
| **HISTORY:**   * The Hafiz Nagma, a dance form performed by female dancers, was eventually replaced by Bacha Nagma for various reasons. * The local belief is that the concept of boys dancing in female attire has historical significance dating back to the Mughal emperor Akbar's rule. * After Akbar captured Kashmir, he wanted to diminish the gallantry of the men residing in the place by forcing them to dress like women to prevent them from displaying their heroism and bravery. * Kashmiris believe that Mughal Emperor Akbar forced Kashmiri men to wear feminine gown-like dresses called pheran to counteract the manly valour of its people and remove any possible future trouble. * In the 1920s, the ruling Dogra Maharaja officially banned Hafiz Nagma in Kashmir, stating that it was losing its Sufi touch and becoming too sensual and, hence, amoral for society. * With the same songs, female Muslim dancers were replaced by young Muslim boys who dressed as women, giving birth to Bacha Nagma. Some studies by respected academic personnel reveal that this dance form was mainly promoted by the Afghans in Kabul. * The dancers not only wore women's dresses, but they also decorated themselves with various ornaments and jewellery. The dance movements were performed with such dignity and expertise that it was almost impossible to distinguish the boys from the girls' dance performances. |
| **FACTS:**   * The origin of the dance known as Bacha Nagma is said to be from the Afghans of Kabul. * It is believed to have been derived from the Hafiza Nagma dance form. * The Bacha Nagma dance is still a popular folk dance in Kashmir and is considered an important aspect of its culture. * The dance form challenges gender norms by simultaneously mocking and reinforcing them, creating a sense of ambiguity around gender identity. * It is often performed during wedding celebrations in Kashmir, particularly during boat processions on the Jhelum River. |

## PUNJAB <H2>

The state of Punjab is known for its rich variety of folk dances, which showcase the exuberance and enthusiasm of its people. Among the most prominent and popular are Bhangra and Giddha. In addition, other dances, such as Luddi, Sammi, Kikkli, Gatka etc., are also quite popular. These dances are characterized by lively steps, verbal comments, movement subtleties, and uninhibited liberation, making them an expression of the victorious soul, an explosion of emotions, and a sudden release of energy. The energetic and enthusiastic youth of Punjab are directly represented in these dances. The lively feet of the Punjab people spontaneously begin to move to the drumbeat or the rhythm of some other folk music instrument, giving up resistance and instantly giving birth to a folk dance.

“Punjab, where the soil is imbued with the spirit of valour, and every field echoes the rhythm of Bhangra.”

– Bhagat Singh

## BHANGRA DANCE <H3>

Figure 8.4 Bhangra Dance

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| **Origin:** It originated in the Sialkot district of majha Punjab region of India ( modern-day Pakistan and India) with Punjabi farmers as a cultural and communal celebration. |
| **ETYMOLOGY:** The word BHANGRA originates from BHANG or HEMP, major harvest product. |
| **Occasion:**   * It is associated with the vernal VAISAKHI festival. * Mainly done by Punjabi farmers during the harvesting season while doing agriculture chores. * It showcased a sense of accomplishment and welcome the new harvesting season. |
| **How it is performed:**   * Several dancers (male and female) execute vigorous kicks, leaps and bends of the body to the accompaniment of shorts songs called BOLIYAN with the rhythm of the dhol. * Couplets of folk song called boli or dhola is sung with refrains like- balle-balle, oai-oai, uhun-uhun etc. |
| **Instruments:**   * Dhol, Idiophones like cymbals and chimta (nowadays) |
| **ATTIRE:**   * Dresses worn are very bright, colourful and bold to symbolize the joyful and celebratory nature of the occasion.   **Men**: Turban, kurta, waistcoat  **Women:** Long flowing clothes with fine jewellery.  **Symbolism of colour:**   * yellow – sarson or mustard * Red/ Saffron – Auspicious occasion * Green - prosperity |
| **In pop culture:**   * Raaniyan di raunaq – India’s first all women bhangra competition. * D.J REKHA- first south Asian women to bring popularity to bhangra in U.S. * FREE STYLE BHANGRA: It is a fusion of traditional bhangra with western dance music. |

## GIDDHA DANCE <H3>

Figure 8.5 Giddha Dance

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| **Origin:**   * It is a popular folk dance of women in the Punjab region. Of INDIA. * It originated from the ancient ring dance of Punjab of undivided india. |
| **THEMES:**   * A Celebration of Joy. |
| **OCCASION:** Ceremonial giddha is performed during the Teejan of sawan festival held in July, for 12 consecutive days. |
| **PERFORMED BY:**   * Women performs during harvesting, festive or social occasions (marriage or child birth). * It is accompanied with rhythmic clapping, with a traditional folk song performed by elderly women in background. |
| **How it is performed:**   * Dancers form a circle and participates in pair, takes turn to come to the centre and sing boli. * It is a CALL and RESPONSE form of dance. * It is as energetic as BHANGRA with feminine grace, elegance and flexibility. * It consists of singing, clapping and enacting the BOLI (one or two couplets) with a wide subject range from household chores to the internal conflicts between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law. * Boli is punctuated with an enthusiastic refrain- phrase “Balle Balle”. |
| **ATTIRE:**   * Women wore salwar Kameez and Ghaghara in bright colours with jewellery. * Hair is dressed in two braids and folk ornaments with a tikka on the forehead. |
| **Other forms:**   * GIDDHA OF MALWA is famous for its gusto and speed. * It is originally performed by elderly men to keep the families spirit high, when the bride leaves her parental home. |
| **Musical Instruments:** Dholak etc. |
| **IN POP CULTURE:**   * “The Glory of Giddha” a short film by Abu Jani and Sandeep Khosla. * Boliyaan Giddha song from Hindi movie Aloo Chaat |

## SAMMI DANCE <H3>

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| **Origin:**   * It is a traditional dance form originating from the tribal belt of Punjab (sandalbar, Amritsar and pothohar region of Punjab in Pakistan). |
| **THEME:**   * Dance of Celebration. |
| **TRIBE:** Baazigar, Sansi, Lobana and Rai Sikhs performs this dance. |
| **Performed by**: Women and is similar to giddha dance |
| **ATTIRE:**   * Women wears bright colourful kurtas with tehmet (lower cloth) and head is covered with a thick cloth called BHOCHHAN. * Hair is knit into thin plates in intricate patterns and remaining length of hair is one full plait. * A special ornament shaped like an inverted lotus called phul-chowk or Suggiphul is fixed in the middle of the head as a hair accessory. |
| **How it is performed:**   * Often danced in a circle with a slow flow, Dancers while forming the ring swings their hands from sides and bring to the front. * People implement a hopping sequence, along with using sticks in their hands. * Without any musical instrument the rhythm is achieved through beating of feet, clapping and chutki ( sound produced by pressing thumb and sliding on middle or index finger). * It is a dance of controlled movement and even the DEVTAS (angels) gets intoxicated seeing this. |
| **LEGEANDRY TALE:** Originally performed by Princess Sammi of Marwad to show the excessive emotions of her separation from Rajkumar Such Kumar of Rajasthan. |
| **IN POP CULTURE:** Sammi Meri Waar by Umar Jaswal and Quratulain Balouch is a popular song of this dance. |

## HARYANA. (H2)

Haryana, primarily an agricultural region, has a rich spiritual tradition with many saints, sages, and martyrs. In this land of hardworking farmers, people have composed and continue to perform folk dances and songs for all kinds of occasions. These dances and songs are a beautiful reflection of the ups and downs of life in Haryana. The state’s folk dances are an important part of its cultural heritage and bring people together in a spirit of unity and celebration. Whether for festivals, fairs, or ceremonies like weddings, births, or harvests, people gather to dance and enjoy themselves. Some of the major folk dances of Haryana include Jhumar, Phag, Daph, Saang, Dhamal, Loor, Gugga, Khoria, and Gagor.

**“From Kurukshetra to the modern hubs, Haryana stands as a testament to the confluence of tradition and progress.” – Devi Lal.**

LOOr DANCE (H3)

Figure 8.6 Loor Dance

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| **Origin:**   * It is a traditional dance form of Haryana, India. |
| **Etymology:**   * The word ‘Loor’ means a girl ( In the bangar area - Haryana) |
| **THEME:**   * It depicts the joy and gratitude of farming community. |
| **OCCASION:**   * Performed during the month of phalgun (specially Holi festival). * It marks the spring season and sowing of Rabi crops. |
| **PERFORMED BY:** Women of all age groups |
| **How it is performed:**   * During the harvest season to celebrate a bountiful crop women performs this dance by moving in a circle or semi-circle manner standing in two rows. * The dance and songs depicts events in the life of a girl ( birth to marriage). * A symbolic pigeon is referred to take the letter of his wife to the husband working in army. |
| **ATTIRE:**   * Girls wear traditional attire of ghagra, kurti, chundri and Chunda while performing. |
| **SONGS:**   * The songs are in format of question and answers. |
| **OTHER NAME:**   * It is also called LOORI DANCE. |

## KHORIA DANCE (H3)

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| **ORIGIN:**   * The Khoria dance is one of the well-known folk dances of the Haryana region of India. |
| **THEME:**   * The women perform this dance that also serves as a prayer for the safe return of the married family and the newly wedded couple. * Daily affairs of the people with important events like – harvest, agricultural work, weddings etc. |
| **OCCASIONS:**   * Weddings and other significant celebrations are occasions on which the dance is typically performed. |
| **PERFORMED BY:**   * Women exclusively perform the Khoria dance. |
| **HOW IT IS PERFORMED:**   * A dance is performed by a group of dancers, and the most significant aspect of this dance is its speed, making it one of the fastest folk dances. * The performance starts with the dancers twisting their costumes to a slow rhythm and standing in their places. Slowly, the pace of their dance quickens as they move forward. * As the pace increases, the group begins to disintegrate, and the women break away from their original formation. * The steps become more complex and colourful, further increasing the tempo. * A small group of three members reach the centre of the stage, while the others split up. * They hold their hands across their chests and begin to twist their legs, showcasing their balance and the beauty of this dance. * The women continue to spin at high speed, while the couple in the group sways and opens a space for themselves. * The rest of the group cheers and claps for them. * In the final stage, the dance is primarily performed around the circumference. * During the performance, the women act out the entire wedding ceremony through mime. * To protect their houses while the men are away at the bride's house, the women stay up all night to perform this dance. * The dance when performed looks mesmerising and breathe taking with its beautifully synchronised steps and fast paced movements. * The bright colourful costumes worn enhances the performance. |
| **ATTIRE:**   * Dancer’s don full gold skirts along with colourful chuniri’s, and accessorize with heavy jewellery featuring silver or gold embellishments, which adds to their stunning and graceful appearance. * The heavy embroidery on the clothes complements the jewellery, resulting in a very pleasing overall effect. |
| SONGS:   * Traditional Haryanvi Folk songs are sung which has stories involved based on the themes of the performance. |
| **MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS:**   * The instruments used are dholak, Harmonium, Chimata, damru, Duggi, Dhak, Jhaal, Ghunghroo etc. |
| **FACTS:**   * This is a form of jhumar dance, which is exclusive to women, is quite popular in the central regions of Haryana. * This dance is performed while waiting for the groom to bring his newly wed wife home. * However, it should be noted that young children are not allowed to participate in this dance due to its suggestive nature. |
| **IN POP CULTURE:**   * The Famous Haryanvi folk song” Kabootar mere dunge pe baitha” * The Famous Haryanvi song “ Chatak Matak”, 52 Gaj ka Daman by Renuka Panwar has glimpse of this dance. |

## SAANG DANCE **(H3)**

Figure 8.7 Saang Dance

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| **ORIGIN:**   * Saang, a form of folk-dance theatre, is widely admired in the Indian state of Haryana. * It is a rural dance drama that portrays the theme of love, narrating ancient and contemporary stories of bravery, selflessness, humour, and other aspects that hold human attention. |
| **ETYMOLOGY:**   * The meaning of SAANG or SWANG is disguise or to impersonate. |
| **THEMES:**   * Mythological love, popular history, and religious themes are often intertwined in various narratives. * Additionally, these narratives also emphasize secular values. The conclusion of most dramas usually involves the triumph of good over evil. Some examples are:- AIDS, Health, hygiene etc. |
| **OCCASIONS:** Religious Festivals, Awareness programmes, Cultural gatherings etc. |
| **PERFORMED BY:**   * In the Swang theatre, it is customary for men to exclusively perform, even in female roles. * Women were not permitted to take part in the performances, and thus all parts were played by male actors. |
| **HOW IT IS PERFORMED:**   * The performance begins with a hymn that praises Bhawani, the goddess of knowledge, called 'bhaint' or offering. * It is a request for her to open the doors of knowledge and bless the singer's tongue with pure expression. * The play's core components are Chamolas, Kafias, and Savias. * The play starts with a brief introduction and then moves on to mimicry, which gives Swang theatre its name. * In Swang theatre, actors engage in long question-and-answer sessions and must be able to improvise dialogue and exchange quotations, puns, proverbs, and songs effortlessly. * The focus is on dialogue rather than movement. * The performance is characterized by singing and dancing, and there is always a clown character called the makhaulia (jester). * Traditionally, Swang theatre is performed only by men, who also play female roles that often require elaborate makeup and costumes, but female troupes are not unheard of. * Religious stories and folk tales are acted out by a group of ten or twelve people in an open-air theatre. * Amateurs or new actors typically perform in this folk drama, which is either played in the open or on a specially constructed platform. * The performance has very few actors; a single performer portrays multiple roles, and costumes are changed on the stage itself. * One of the essential characters in these plays is the eunuch or hijra, which is featured in all Margi (classical) and desi (folk Sanskrit) plays. |
| **ATTIRE:**   * Traditionally, the approach taken may vary depending on the story being told. |
| **MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS:**   * Different musical instruments such as ektara, kharta, dholak, sarangi, and harmonium are utilized to add variety and depth to the conversation. |
| **STYLES:**   * Swang has two significant styles, namely Rohtak and Haathras. * The Rohtak style uses Haryanvi (Bangru) language, while the Haathras style uses Brajbhasha. |
| **MYTHOLOGICAL THEMES:**   * Mythological stories that are well-known include Raja Vikram Aditya, Ranveer-Padmavat, Jaani Chor, Prahalad Bhagat, Gopi Chand, Bharthari, Harishchander, Raja Bhoj, Kichak Badh, Draupadi Chir Haran, Jaani Chor, Pingla Bharthri, and other ancient literature tales. * Additionally, Punjabi love stories such as Pooran Bhagat and Heer Ranjha are also quite popular. * Historical and semi-historical themes that people enjoy including Raja Rissalu, Amar Singh Rathor, Sarwar Neer, Jaswant Singh, Ramdevji, and so on. * Lastly, people also enjoy reading romantic stories like Sorath Rai Diyach, Nihalde, and Padmavat. |
| **FACTS:**   * Swang is a form of folk theatre that has been present in India for the longest time. * The traditions of Nautanki, Saang, and Tamasha are believed to have originated from Swang. * The term Swang refers to the art of imitation, which translates to Rang-Bharna and Naqal-Karna. * Swang involves the use of theatrics and mimicry, or naqal, in combination with songs and dialogue, all of which are carefully chosen. * Swang theatre is a traditional Indian folk-dance drama that is popularly practised in Rajasthan, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, and the Malwa region of Madhya Pradesh. * Kishan Lala Bhat is credited with laying the foundation of the modern style of folk theatre in Haryana, which led to the development of the Swang theatre. * Dip Chand Bahman, from the village of Shiri Khunda in Sonipat, is one of the most famous figures associated with Swang theatre. He was fondly called the Shakespeare or Kalidasa of Haryana. * Some artists attribute the origin of Swang theatre to Kavi Shankar Dass, a poet artiste from Meerut. * The Swang/Saang performance has been around since the time of Kabir Sant and Guru Nanak.   **NOTE:**  The customs of Swang that have been around for a long time include:   * "EK MARDANA EK JANANA MANCH PAR ADE THE RAI" * The story is started by a male and a female performer. * "EK SAARANGI EK DHOLAKIA SAATH MEIN ADE THE RAI” * A performance can be enhanced by the addition of a Sarangi player and a Dholak player. Both players should be included in the performance to achieve this enhancement. |

PHAG DANCE (H3)

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| **ORIGIN:**   * The Phag dance is a well-known traditional dance style that originates from the Indian state of Haryana. |
| **ETYMYLOGY:**   * The dance gets its name from the Hindu calendar month of Falgun, during which it is performed. |
| **OTHER NAMES:**   * The dance is commonly known as Faag or Phaag. |
| **THEMES:**   * During this dance, people commemorate the season of harvesting and enjoy the pleasant weather. * They express gratitude and rejoice for a fruitful harvest. |
| **OCCASIONS**:   * The celebration is centred around a dance that is observed during the months of February and March and is associated with the changing of seasons. |
| **PERFORMED BY**:   * The Phag dance is participated in by both men and women. * On some occasions, it is solely performed by men. * This traditional dance is showcased by the agricultural community of Haryana. |
| **HOW IT IS PERFORMED:**   * Men and women form groups in this dance, and both exhibit passionate moves. * Women showcase their graceful manners, while men dance with enthusiasm. * The rhythm of the music drives them to express their emotions through their hands, eyes, and feet. * The dance involves various movements, which require proper coordination. * They sing in the ancient Daamal style that dates to the distant past, which is a combination of dance and song. * Though it is a mixed dance, sometimes it is performed only by men, and the songs are different in such cases. * The joy and energy exuded by the dancers can be felt while watching them perform. |
| **ATTIRE:**   * The Phag dance does not require any special costumes as it is usually performed by villagers who wear their everyday clothes during the dance. * However, on special occasions, both men and women wear vibrant clothing. * Women usually wear a ghagra-choli with a dupatta and some jewellery. * Men, on the other hand, wear a Kurta, Pyjama, and a colourful Pagdi (turban mostly VIBGYOR) during the dance performance. |
| **SONGS:** The song used during Phaag dance varies depending on whether it is performed solely by men or both men and women. |
| **MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS:**   * Various musical instruments such as Dholi, Dholak, Nagada, Tasha, and Harmonium are utilized. |
| **FACTS:**   * In the language of common people, the name Falgun was transformed into Faag or Phag. * The months of Faag or Phag are particularly significant because farmers typically have little time to dance and celebrate. * These are the only months when they have finished sowing their crops and are eagerly awaiting the harvest. |

DHAMAL DANCE (H3)

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| **ORIGIN:**   * The origin of Dhamal, a folk-dance form in the Haryana region of India, can be traced back to the time of the Mahabharat. |
| **COMMUNITY:** The Gurugram region is known for the popular Dhamal dance, which is traditionally performed by the **AHIR** community. |
| **THEMES:**   * The joy experienced upon a successful harvest. |
| **OCCASIONS**:   * This dance is performed by men only during the Phalgun month on nights with a full moon. * It is customary for the dance to be performed outdoors. |
| **PERFORMED BY:** This dance is performed exclusively by men. |
| **HOW IT PERFORMED:**   * A dance performance that involves around fifteen to twenty dancers is customary in this region. * During the performance, the male participants create a semi-circle and bow down to the ground in prayer seeking blessings from Lord Ganesh, the Goddess Bhavani, and the Trinity of Brahma, Vishnu, and Mahesh. * This dance is usually performed on a good harvest. * The performance commences with the player playing a long note on the Been, followed by musical instruments like Dhol, Tasha, and Nagara to set the rhythm for the dance. * After seeking blessings from the deities, the performers rise to their feet in a semi-circular position and dance to the beat. * Some of the performers carry medium length sticks wrapped with tinsel, while others carry large Daphs edged with frills of bright coloured fabric to create music. * The performers jump a lot during the dance, which is a way of expressing their joy and is an essential part of the choreography. * They also imitate the non-participant women to add an element of humour to the dance. * Using shuntis and Daphs, the performers showcase their individual skills to create musical effects. They sing and dance to the sound of the Dhamal beats. |
| **ATTIRE :**   * It is all traditional. * Kurta, Dhoti (a loincloth), and a matching piece of cloth wrapped around the turban are worn by MEN as attire for their lower body and headgear respectively. * In their hands, dancers are seen carrying large dhaps. |
| **SONGS:**   * The tunes performed express both the toils and affections of the villagers, portraying their desires, yearnings for love, moments of happiness, and instances of sadness. |
| **MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS:**   * The orchestra is made up of older musical instruments such as Sarangi, Been, Nagara, Dholak, Tasha, Khartals, and shuntis, which are tinsel and tassels located at both ends of the sticks. |

## HIMACHAL PRADESH <H2>

**“From the apple orchards of Shimla to the adventure trails of Manali, Himachal Pradesh is an ode to both serenity and thrill.”**

**– Ruskin Bond.**

The region now known as Himachal Pradesh, which is mostly mountainous, has been inhabited since prehistoric times and has seen multiple waves of human migration from other areas.

The area was mostly governed by local kingdoms throughout its history, with some of them accepting the suzerainty of larger empires.

Today, Himachal Pradesh has managed to preserve its culture even in the modern era, with folk dances of the region being performed every year at fairs, festivals, and other cultural events.

Himachal Pradesh boasts a long list of unique dances for every occasion, in every form and for every region. The folk dance is typically performed during local fairs and on joyous occasions such as marriages and the arrival of deities, with women and men dancing gracefully in traditional costumes. In this article, we provide information about Himachal Pradesh’s popular and traditional dance. Some of the famous folk dances include Nati, Dangi, Chhanak Chham, Demon (Rakshasa) Dance, Kayang Mala, Dalshon and Cholamba, Dhure, Shan and Shabu, Laaldi Ghughti, Swaangtegi, Jhora, and others.

## **CHHAM chhank DANCE <H3>**

Figure 8.8 Chham Chhank Dance

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| **Origin:**   * It originate from the Lamas of lahul spit region of himachal Pradesh, India. |
| **THEMES:**   * To pay tribute to BUDDHA. * Theme rotates around the killing of “ evil king” who is a symbolic of evil tendencies in humans, natural calamities, diseases and epidemics. |
| **OCCASION:**   * It is performed during the CHAKHAR festival ( held once in 3 years). |
| **PERFORMED BY:**   * The sects of Buddhist – usually monks and lamas in the courtyard of monasteries during religious and other festivals, as a part of the celebrations. |
| **HOW IT IS PERFORMED:**   * It is a very slow moving dance in circular movements accompanied with musical instruments. |
| **ATTIRE:**   * Dancers wear a typical head gear called Chhank. * Costumes are made of golden, black and yellow cloth decorated with traditional motifs in patch work is very distinctive. * Swords and knives are carried by some dancers covering half of their faces with a piece of black cloth. * Musician wears traditional lama libas along with beautiful headgear with yellow feathers. * Dancer wears a mask. * The cap worn is called FILTER. |
| **MUSICAL INSTRUMENT:**   * The instruments used are Tangchim ( long straight trumpet) and Ghhan ( a barrel shaped drum), Cymbals etc. |
| **LEGENDRY STORY:**   * According to legend, the piousness of this dance wards off evils and spirits. * Considered as a form of meditation and offering to the god. * The deities that usually form the characters of this performance include the god of wealth and YAMA or god the death, along with the demons. * Other deities are padmasambhava or second buddha. |

## **NaTI DANCE (H3)**

Figure 8.8 Nati Dance

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| **ORIGIN:**   * Nati refers to the traditional dance of sirmur, kullu, and Shimla region of Himachal Pradesh, India. |
| **THEME:**   * It depicts **RAASLEELA** or dances concerning Hindu god Krishna and Gopi’s and the entertaining plays of Chandra Valli. |
| **OCCASION:**   * It is performed during the LOSAI or new year and celebrates new harvest ready for reaping, Dusshera festival and other cultural occasions. |
| **HOW IT IS PERFORMED:**   * The dancers join their hands and make slow swaying movements ( lasya variety of dance) and they dance either by making circles or by standing in rows on music and rhythm. * Dancers sings while performing. |
| **PERFORMED BY:**   * Traditionally by men but now performed by women mostly of any age group. |
| **ATTIRE:**   * Boomani, silver chains, floral shawls, shoes, decorated caps, sashes, churidars and swirling tunics, Lachhi, Gachi, Ghaghara. * **MEN WEARS**: Topa kalagi (woollen cap), Balay ( big gold ear ring), Chopla ( white woollen upper garment), Patka (scarf), pyjama and pula ( shoes) * **WOMEN WEARS:** Ornaments of gold and silver known as Gorkhadu (gold earring), long (nose ring), Kanganu or mirdri ( bangles), Chanki and Tunki. * Clothes like- thipu (red scarf), pattu, suthan, puhla( shoes made from fibre). * Ornate fan in one hand and Colourful Handkerchief in other hand. |
| **DIFFERENT FORMS:**   * Mahasuvi nati, sirmauri nati, kinnauri nati, Brada nati, Kullvi Nati etc. * There are a total of 13 types. * **SPECIAL OCCASIONS:** These are of 3 types – Dhili, Pheti and Bashri. |
| **MUSICA INSTRUMENTS:**   * The musical instruments are Dhol, Nagara, Narsingha, karnal, shehnai, sarna etc. |
| **FACTS:**   * This dance is recorded in the Guinness book of world record as the largest folk dance with 9892 participants (JAN 2016). * Event phrased with “PRIDE OF KULLU” with a message “ SAVE GIRL CHILD” was organised on 26th oct 2015, around 13000 participants from all parts of kullu district participated. * This dance is also popular in jounsari community in Uttarakhand.  The Lahaul district residents have a unique traditional dance known as “Garphi,” which is not a component of Lahauli culture. |

## UTTRAKHAND <H2>

**“In the lap of the Himalayas, Uttarakhand is a heaven of spirituality, where the Ganges descends from the heavens to nurture the land.”**

**– Swami Vivekananda.**

The state of Uttarakhand in India is not only known for its stunning natural beauty but also for its diverse cultural traditions that are celebrated throughout the country. The culture in this region is a unique combination of the public’s love for nature, which is not found anywhere else. Uttarakhand is home to many divine places and natural heritage sites, and the locals have preserved their folk culture with great respect. The festivals and religious ceremonies in this region are filled with a variety of folk culture, including folk instruments, songs, singing styles, dances, paintings, and crafts. The folk dances in Uttarakhand are particularly noteworthy, and there is an incredible range of them, just like the folk songs. Dancing is an integral part of the people’s lives in Garhwal and Kumaon. Like other states in India, the locals of Uttarakhand express their joys and sorrows through dance. Some of the popular folk dances in Uttarakhand include Hurkiya Baul, Jhoria, Chholiya, Pandav Nritya, Chapeli, Mukhota Dance, and many more**.**

## **Hurkiya baul (H3)**

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| **ORIGIN:** This dance originated from the Kumaon region of Uttarakhand, India. |
| **ETYMOLOGY:**   * Hurkha means drum. * Baul means songs. |
| **THEMES:**   * The Tales of bravery from local history mostly about the brave Chand kings of Champawat. |
| **OCCASION:**   * Performed during the sowing season (paddy and maize) and it is a community dance. |
| **HOW IT IS PERFORMED:**   * Following a dance like movements women works together with their labouring hands. * Songs are rendered by Hurkiya ( chief singer) and accompanied by beats of Hurkha. * It looks very synchronised. |
| **COSTUMES:**   * The attire is traditional. |
| **MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS:** Hurkha ( drum) etc. |

## **Pandav nritya (H3)**

Figure 8.10 Pandava Nritya

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| **ORIGIN:**   * Intermingled with Hindu history of PANDAVAS, practised in garhwal region of Uttarakhand, India. |
| **THEME**:   * It is a ritual re-enactment of stories from Hindu epic – MAHABHARTA through singing, dancing and recitation. |
| **OTHER NAME:**   * It is also known as Pandav Lila. |
| **PERFORMED BY:**   * Villagers, it’s more of a community dance. |
| **HOW IT IS PERFORMED**:   * The ritualistic drama features actors who spontaneously becomes possessed by spirits of their character and begin to dance. * It is performed outdoor but not in the linear manner, any episode can be chosen. * Performance is called as ‘SRADDHA’. * Performance lasts from 3 days to months in some villages, in the month of November to February. * Most awaited episode is “GAINDA” – battle between arjuna and nagaarjuna. |
| **MUSICAL INSTRUMENT:**   * The instruments used are Dhol, Damau ( single headed drum) and Bhankore( two long trumpets) etc. |
| **FACT:**   * Weapons used in the battle are never allowed to touch the ground, so they can retain the power and is taken care of till the next LELA. |

## JHORA DANCE (H3)

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| **ORIGIN:**   * It is a community driven folk dance of uttrakhand which originated in the Kumaon region. |
| **THEMES:**   * To break caste barriers and unite people. |
| **OCCASION:**   * It is performed generally during spring season, weddings, fair/festival |
| **PERFORMED BY**:   * Local people of all communities comprising of men and women. * Numbers of participant has no limitation. * Can last up to 24 hrs, dancers keep joining. |
| **HOW IT IS PERFORMED:**   * The villagers participates in this community dance. * By holding each other’s arms and moving in circles and performed in evening and morning. * Dancers bend their bodies smoothly and sway their bodies with every beat starting from left to right. * It looks very synchronised and appealing for the watchers. |
| **ATTIRE**:   * Costumes are a critical part of performance, dressed in the glamourous best. * Mostly it’s all traditional for the participants.   **Women** – traditional ornaments like – Bangles, Necklace, ear rings etc. |
| **SONGS:**   * It is more like a conversation between men and women, it’s unique in it’s execution. |
| **STYLES:**   * Do Manjhila Jhora dance is a style of this dance form. |
| **MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS:**   * The instruments are Hurka ( traditional drum), cymbals, flute etc. |

# UTTAR PRADESH <H2>

**“From Ayodhya to Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh is a mosaic of faiths, where spirituality weaves the fabric of existence.”**

**– Kabir**

Society's way of life is defined by culture, which comprises people's attitudes towards others, their behaviour, habits, and methods of commemorating various aspects of life. Moreover, it includes ways in which individuals express themselves through fine and performing arts.

Uttar Pradesh has bestowed upon humanity two of its most significant epics: Ramayana and Mahabharata. The cities like Mathura and Varanasi have a historical legacy dating back nearly 2000 years.

Since ancient times, Uttar Pradesh has been enriched by various streams of culture, predominantly those that originated from the teachings of Buddha and Mahavira, the 24th Jain Tirthankara. The holy places such as Ayodhya, Kashi, Mathura, Prayag, and the Himalayan hermitages are the primary sources of Brahmanical culture. Mathura has revealed numerous buried ancient arts, including both Brahmanical and Buddhist varieties, while Kashi has preserved living Hindu art.

Uttar Pradesh is a land of immense cultural and religious significance, home to the Taj Mahal, the seventh wonder of the world, the spiritual centre of the world, Varanasi, and the holy Kumbh Mela, among many other wonders. The state is filled with remnants of its past and heritage that can be observed through its people's way of life, festivities, celebrations, and language. The entertainment industry of Uttar Pradesh has played a significant role in shaping not only India's history but also its present and future. Moreover, Uttar Pradesh is known for its various folk dances, including Raslila Dance, Ramlila Dance, Khyal Dance, Nautanki Dance, Naqaal Dance, Swang Dance, Charkula Dance, Chhapeli Dance, Dhurang Dance, Rai and Shaira Dance, and Kajri Dance.

## RAAS leela <h3>

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| **ORIGIN:**  This divine dance style derives its origin from braj region, cities of MATHURA and VRINDAVAN in Uttar Pradesh, India. |
| **CREATION:**   * It is created from Hindu scriptures such as “ **BHAGAVATA PURANA”.** * It is a folk tradition that has incorporated elements of Indian classical dance, music and drama. |
| **THEME:**  The themes are:-   * Life tales of Krishna ranging from childhood till adolescence. * Divine love of Gopikas from Braj for Krishna. * Relationship of Krishna and Radha is also explored etc. |
| **PERFORMED BY:**   * Mandalas ( a performance group) who roam from one place to another. |
| **HOW IT IS PERFORMED:**   * Performed in a mandap decorated with green leaves (mostly mango leaves). * The Centre of mandap is occupied by one male and female dancer representing Radha and Krishna. * The Gopi’s encircle them and perform the dance with the narration of a story through songs. * The performance feels heavenly and mesmerising with the divine energy spread across. |
| **ATTIRE:**   * Costumes are similar to those worn in Vrindavan.   **MEN:–** Colourful dhoti mainly yellow, upper body with heavy ornaments, headgear comprising peacock feather.  **WOMEN:–** Ghaghara, choli with dupatta and fine jewelleries. |
| **MUSICAL INSTRUIMENTS:** Dholak, flute etc. |
| **OTHER NAME:** RASA |
| **INSPIRED OTHER STYLES:**   * Raas Leela form of dancing has also been incorporated in a few classical Indian dance style such as Manipuri, Kathak and Bharatnatyam. |
| **SONGS:** The songs used is RASIA ( Radha - Krishna love based theme song). |
| **MUSIC**:   * It is extremely slow and rhythmic. |
| **EMPHASIS ON**:   * Darshan – seeing through sound. * Bhava – a particular mood/ sentiments. |
| **DIFFERENT DRAMATIC FLAVOURS:**   * Different dramatic flavours – friendship, servitorship, parental love, conjugal love, amazement, humour, chivalry, compassion, fury, fear and dread. |

## **CHaRKULA DANCE (H3)**

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| **ORIGIN:**   * This dance is performed in the Braj region of Uttar Pradesh. |
| **THEME:**   * The performers dances to the strain of **‘ RASIYA’**- songs of lord Krishna. |
| **OCCASION:**   * It is performed third day after Holi ( Radha’s birth). |
| **PERFORMED BY:**   * It is performed by women. |
| **HOW IT IS PERFORMED:**   * The performer is trained to balance the charkula on her head with two burning lamps in both her hands. * She covers herself with the odhani and balances the lighted lamps on her head and dances with the drum beats. * It is a solo dance which is performed in darkness, hiding the dancers identity. * One dancer passes the charkula to another after a round is complete. * This dance is a symbol of strength and balance. |
| **ATTIRE:**   * Women wears a long skirt reaching the toes and a blouse with a odhani (a veil). |
| **STAGE PROPS:**   * It is a fabrication of either iron or wood multi-tiered circular pyramid like structure with 108 burning lamps. |
| MUSICALL INSTRUMENTS:   * The instruments are Drum, Idiophones like Jhanj and Chimta etc. |
| **VILLAGES SPECIALISED IN THIS DANCE FORM:**  – Oomri, Khemri, Sonkh, Mukharayi etc. |
| **MYTHOLOGICAL STORY:**   * With a charkula on her head Radha’s grandmother ran out of the house announcing her birth. * This dance celebrates the happy victory of Krishna and cowherd community of braj over Indira. * Re- enactment of Govardhan Leela of Krishna, charkula is lifted on head. |

**Khyal DANCE (H3)**

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| **ORIGIN:**   * Agra region of Uttar Pradesh, India, is as an important centre of origin of this dance form |
| **THEME:**   * Mythological tales of bravery, sentiments, romance, from the puranas etc. are the main themes of this dance form. |
| **PERFORMED BY**:   * It is mostly performed by males with a USTAAD well versed in dance and song moves . |
| **HOW IT IS PERFORMED:**   * Performance starts with an invocation, which begins with hymns to the respected deities. * Clown is an integral part of the performance. * It is a Highly dramatized play-dance form. |
| **POPULAR FORMS:** - The forms name is categorised either by city, acting style, community or the author.   * **Jaipuri khayal.** * **Abhinaya khayal** * **Ali Baksh khayal** * **Gadhaspa khayal** etc. |
| **MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS:**   * The instruments used are flute, dholak, harmonium, cymbal, tabla etc. |

## **Kajri DANCE (H3)**

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| **ORIGIN:**   * The birth of this dance form takes place in Mirzapur of Uttar Pradesh, India. |
| **THEME:**   * Longing of a maiden for her lover as the black monsoon clouds comes hanging in the summer skies. |
| **OCCASIONS:**   * Before the arrival of monsoon to express joy and happiness. |
| **PERFORMED BY:** Women in groups or pairs. |
| **ATTIRE:**   * The dancers wear tight and short blouses ( choli), a flared skirt and a dupatta covering head and shoulder. * Heavy jewelleries – bangles, anklets, ear-rings, necklace, * Costumes often resemble dance pattern of kathak school. |
| **SONGS:** Jhula lyrics or Swing songs. |
| **FORMS:**   * It is a genre of semi classical singing. * Performed on a performance platform * Dhumnuiya kajri ( sung by women on monsoon evening). |
| **LEGENDRY STORY:**   * King Kantit Naresh’s daughter KAJALI unrequited desire to meet her husband and the unbearable pain of expression at the feet of **GODDESS KAJMAL** is known as kajri song. |
| **OTHER CITIES / STATES WHERE IT IS PERFORMED:**   * In U.P – Banaras ( now Varanasi), Mathura, Allahabad (now Prayagraj) * Bihar – Bhojpur |
| **PERSONALITIES ASSOCIATED:**   * Pandit channulal Mishra * Shobha Gurtu * Siddeshwari Devi * Girija Devi * Rajan and Sajan Mishra. |
| **IN POP CULTURE:**   * Folk singer Malini Awasthi famous song “RELIYA BAIRAN PIYA KO LEKE JAE RE.” |

# NORTH-EASTERN INDIA <H1>

## **MIZORAM <H2>**

**“In the northeast, Mizoram is a land of azure hills, where the bamboo forests whisper tales of Mizo folklore and traditions.”**

**– Lalsawma**

Mizoram is a state located on the north-eastern border of India, and it is known for its myths, mysteries, and aesthetic beauty. It is a mountainous region with captivating peaks, enchanting valleys, and meek tribal villages, interspersed with rivers and crowned with mist. The state shares its border with Myanmar, and it is said that Mizos migrated to this land hundreds of years ago.

Mizoram is referred to as the songbird of the northeast, and it is a state adorned with scenic spots and vibrant cultural entities. The cultural boundary of Mizoram is reflective of the tribal communities inhabiting this alluring state, known as the Mizos. The different tribes and communities living together in Mizoram have unique features of their own, making it the land of diverse tribes and races of people.

The Mizo people have a variety of dances, which they perform to the accompaniment of musical instruments like the gong and drum. The folk dance and music of Mizoram are interesting and delightful and reflect the colourful spirit of the locales. Most of the dance forms in Mizoram are group dances, and the folk dances include Chailam, Cheraw, Khuallam, Bamboo dance, and many more.

## KHUALLAM DANCE (H3)

Figure 8.11 Khuallam Dance

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| **ORIGIN:**   * It is a folk dance practiced in Mizoram, India. |
| **THEME**:   * Journey of soul and bravery of a warrior is the main theme of this folk dance. |
| **ETYMOLOGY:**   * Khual means guest * Lam means dance.   Together it is called – **Dance of the Guests.** |
| **OCCASION**:   * It has a religious significance for mizo people and is performed during the ceremony called ‘KHUANGCHAWI’. |
| **HOW IT IS PERFORMED:**   * It is a community dance which is performed in large numbers. * No song is played. * Dance is performed with the accompaniments of the sounds of gongs called DARBU (local name) * Neighbours of other villages are invited while performing. * Community feast followed after the dance. |
| **REASON FOR THE PERFORMANCE:**   * In order to claim distinguished place in the society one has to attain the coveted title of ‘THANGCHHUAH’. |
| **ATTIRE**:   * Puandum ( a traditional hand woven mizo cloth) is wrapped over the shoulders and the dance is performed by swaying the cloth. * Puandum is of red, black and yellow in colour and has green stripes. * Puandum is an indispensable item which every girl has to take along when she gets married. * It is used to cover the body of their husband when he dies. |
| **MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS**:   * The main instruments are Darbu, drum etc. drums |
| **MYTHOLOGICAL STORY:**   * One achieves a place in paradise only after acquiring the title of ‘Thangchhuah’, achieved by mastering either hunting or dancing. * Because soul after death goes either to ‘Pialral’(paradise) or ‘Mitthi khua’ (hell). * Creative forms that are performed to gain the title of ‘Thangchhuah’ gave birth to the occasion of Khuangchawi in Mizoram. |

## CHERAW DANCE (H3)

Figure 8.12 Cheraw Dance

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| **ORIGIN:**   * A very old traditional dance of Mizos tracing its existence from 1st century A.D. |
| **THEME:**   * Protection of dead child from Pu Pawla. |
| **HOW IT IS PERFORMED**:   * Originally a ritual dance but now done at any time. * It is a dance of skill. * It involves quick reflexes with matching deftness of feet. * Non dancers boys or girls squat on the ground holding long bamboo poles. * Bamboos are held in such a way that it creates a squarish dancing space on the ground. * Poles are clapped rhythmically and dancers alternately steps in and out of the square. |
| **PERFORMED BY**:   * Mainly by the girls of mizo tribe. |
| **ATTIRE:**   * Traditional colourful skirts, matching blouses, headgear decorated with beads and feathers. |
| **MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS:** The main musical instrument is gong which is accompanied by other instruments. |
| **OCCASION:**  It is performed during religious festivals, social gatherings etc. |
| **MYTHOLOGICAL STORY:**   * It is inspired by a mizo myth according to which PU PAWLA is the custodian of paradise.   **STORY**:   * When a child dies, the spirit proceeds towards Pialral ( the heavenly abode of the dead). * Cheraw dance is performed to propitiate the death of the child. * As this dance protects the spirit of the child from being harassed by Pu Pawla and directly entering into the paradise. |

## CHAILAM DANCE (H3)

Figure 8.13 Chailam Dance

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| **ORIGIN:**   * It is practised among the tribes of Mizoram, India. |
| **THEME:**   * The Reciting of the heroic deeds of the past and praise the honoured guest. |
| **PERFORMED BY:**   * It is performed by both Men and women. * Chailam embodies the spirit of joy among the people. |
| **HOW IT IS PERFORMED:**   * In a circle men and women stands alternatively in a group. * Women holds men’s waist and men holds women’s shoulder. * Musicians co-ordinates the dance in the middle. * Dance starts on the beats of the drummer. * Rhythmic swaying of the dancers to the left and right with the fourth stroke of the drum with chai song singing. * In old days, chai dancers used to drink beer continuously during singing and dancing. |
| **OCCASION:**   * Chapchar Kut ( one of the most important mizo festival) |
| **ATTIRE:**   * Traditional attire of mizo people. * Female dancers wear ethnic jewelleries which include – necklace, bangle, ear rings etc. |
| MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS:  The instruments are drum, horns of mithun etc. |
| **SONGS:**   * chai song * It has a unique feature because spontaneous lyrics in triplets are made on the spot. |
| **FORMS:**   * It has four versions. * **Chai Lamthai I** * **Chai Lamthai II** * **Chai Lamthai III** * **Chai Lamthai IV** |
| **MYTHOLOGICAL STORY:**   * A king went for hunting with his men but failed and returned disappointed. * On seeing his men disheartened, king invited them for a feast in the evening at his palace. * Everyone was served Rice beer drink and after getting intoxicated the party was followed by singing, dancing and the sumptuous feast. * This became a every year thing from that time and took the centre stage as a celebration. |

# **MEGHALAYA <H2>**

**“In the abode of clouds, Meghalaya is a symphony of rolling hills, living root bridges, and the cascading beauty of Cherrapunji.”**

**– Michael Syiem**

Meghalaya, known as the "abode of clouds", is a stunning destination that captivates nature enthusiasts with its unspoiled beauty.

With its varied topography, this north-eastern state offers visitors the chance to discover some of the most hidden aspects of nature.

Meghalaya boasts an incredible array of natural wonders, making it a paradise for those seeking peace and tranquillity. It is home to some of the most breat-taking places to visit, including Shillong, Cherrapunji, Tura, William Nagar, and many more. Additionally, it is a fantastic destination for adventure seekers, with opportunities for mountaineering, rock climbing, trekking, hiking, and more.

Dance is an integral part of Meghalaya's culture. No celebration in Meghalaya is complete without music and dance. From births to weddings and anniversaries, dancing is a significant aspect of the Meghalaya community.

Their music is often accompanied by the sounds of nature, such as waterfalls, bird calls, insect sounds, buzzing bees, and more. The folk dances of Meghalaya include shad sukmysiem, shad nongkrem, derogata, do Dru Sua, lahо, wangla dance and many more.

## **KA SHAD SUK MYNSIEM <H3>**

Figure 8.14 Women in ka shad shuk mynsiem attire

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| **ORIGIN:**   * This dance form originated in the region of Meghalaya, India. * Shad Suk mynsiem is khasi way of offering their thanks to the creator for all the blessings and bountiful harvests received- characterised by many symbolic rituals, dances and the best of traditional apparel. |
| **THEME**:   * Khasi people believes that god exists in everyone, be it animal, human or an object. * Shad Suk Mynsiem (the dance of peaceful hearts) festival signifies the same. * It is an agrarian festival and celebrates the optimism for the coming year. * Spring is symbolic as a season of rebirth, sowing the seeds for the next seasons symbolises the new beginning. * Layout of dancers teaches the distinctiveness of the Matrilineal societies that celebrates this occasion. |
| **OCCASION:**   * It is held during the month of April. * It is an annual spring dance, performed to celebrate harvesting and sowing. * Dance accompanied with music is the biggest highlight of this festival. |
| **PERFORMED BY:**   * It is performed by Both male and female (unmarried) of Garo and khasi tribe |
| **HOW IT IS PERFORMED:**   * **IT IS A THREE DAY FESTIVAL** * **Day 1** – Shad Nahkjat ( opening dance comprising drummers, pipers, some male dancers) * **Day 2** – Shad Wait ( actual dance, male and female equally participates). * **Day 3-** Shad Mastich ( warrior dance, men and women dance in pairs) * The dance of the maidens reflects their roles in the community. * Male and Female dance in two separate circles. * **Men**:- The turbaned men in ceremonial apparel are the protectors, they surround the female dancers armed with the waitlam (sword) and symphiah (whisk). * **Women:-** The keepers of the hearth, home and lineage of the clans are in the middle. |
| **MUSICAL INSTRUMENT:**   * Music changes from time to time and so does the rhythm and tune. * Tang muri – flute with Nakra ( big drum)and Ksing padiah ( small drum),Cymbals, sharati, shyngwiang, duitara ( stringed instrument), Spanish guitar ( now used) etc. are played. |
| **ATTIRE:**   * Traditional attire with ornaments. * **Female**: Clad in best silk.. * Ka Jingpim Shad ( a cloth draped from wait to ankle), Ka Sopti Mukmor ( a full sleeve blouse with lace work all around the neck). * Ki Sohshkor Ksier ( gold ear-rings), braid adorned with fresh flowers ( kapangsngiet ksias Ne Rupa), Ki Mahu (silver armlets), Kikhadu Ne ki syngkha ( golden bracelets), U Kynjiri tabah ( silver chain around the neck), a white handkerchief. * The crown of pure silver with white flower called Tiewlasuban attached to the back of crown represents modesty and dignity. * **Male**: Men wears Ka Jain Spong Khor ( golden silk turban), U Taban ( silver chain across the shoulders), Silver quiver and arrows tied to the waist, a dangling animal tail, Ka Jainboh (maroon silk cloth worn like a dhoti), Ka Waitlam ( ceremonial sword), Ka Rumar ( handkerchief). * Carries silver quiver with silver arrows on their back. |
| **OTHER NAMES:**   * Weiking Dance * Shad Phur ( old name ) |
| **MYTHOLOGICAL STORY:**   * Khasi hills of Meghalaya are known as the land of dance and songs accompanied by wide variety of unique instruments and music. * Song sung is Phawar- a song comprising of chants, ballads and verses which contains stories about martyrs and other legendary Heroes among khasi. * First time organised on 14th April 1911 at weiking grounds. * This festival is symbolic where the women stands for the seeds and the men are the metaphors of the cultivators. * The role of the man in Hynniewtrep society is to be advisor, leader and protector which is represented in the nuances of Shad Suk Mynsiem rituals. * Chasity of the dancer is represented by the lasubon flower ( an important totem for the hynniewtrep clans ) * The white Handkerchief carried by women dancers stands for their maidenhood and virginity. |

## **WANGALA DANCE (H3)**

Figure 8.15 Wangala Dance

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| **ORIGIN:**   * It is a traditional dance form of Garo community, performed during the wangala festival in the Meghalaya region of India. |
| **THEME:**   * It is celebrated in the honour of the sun god and to thank the god for bountiful harvest |
| **OCCASION:**   * It is Celebrated between September -December, this festival is a way to promote and preserve the Garo’s cultural identity. * Generally lasts from 2-3 days upto a week. |
| **PERFORMED BY:**   * Group of male and female dancers. |
| **HOW IT IS PERFORMED:**   * Wangala dance festival is usually held in the caves of Garo Hills known as Dobakhol or cave of the bats ( it has large deposits of stalagmites). * Male and female moves in a rhythmic pattern to the beats of traditional garo music. * Siju pillar is decked out in floral arrangements and leaves, sacrifices is made to the god at the base of it. * First day: Rugala ( pouring of rice beer) and Cha-Chat-So-A ( incense burning) are the rituals performed by Kamal ( priest) inside the house of a Nokma(chieftain) of the village. * Second day: Kakkat is performed. * Dama Gogata (wangala dance) is performed on the last day. * Chambil Mesaa or the Pomelo Dance are performed during these days. |
| **ATTIRE:**   * Dancers are decked out in Dakmanda, Daksari or Gando ( vibrant colourful traditional clothing). * Dome (elaborate headpieces made of bamboo and feathers) . |
| **MUSICAL INSTRUMENT:**   * Dama (drums), Primitive flute ( made up of buffalo horns), gong. |
| **OTHER NAME**: Festival of Hundred Drums. |
| **SONGS:**   * Katta Doka ( talking in a singing / traditional tribal rapping) * Ajia, Dani Doka ( describing wangala by singing) |
| **IN POP CULTURE:**   * Opening ceremony of RISING SUN WATER FEST-2022 was conducted at Meghalaya’s umiam lake. * Members of Garo tribal community performed Wangala dance. |
| **STORY ATTACHED:**   * First Hundred drums Wangala festival was organized on 6th and 7th December 1976 at Asanang (India). * It comprises Garo tribes of Meghalaya, Nagaland, and assam of India . Greater Mymensingh of Bangladesh too participates in this state sponsored event. * Misi-A-Gilpa-Saljong -Galapa ( the sun god) is thanked through this. * Siju – a sacred pillar which is regarded as a symbol of the strength and cohesion of the garo people as a whole. * Songsarek (animistic ) villages such as Sadolpara in west garo hills district of Meghalaya practices the traditional (original form ) wangala dance. |

## **NONGKREM DANCE (H3)**

Figure 8.16 Nongkrem dance attire.

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| **ORIGIN:**   * It is an integral part of cultural heritage of Khasi community of the Meghalaya region of India. * It is a traditional dance. |
| **THEME:**   * To thank the goddess Ka Blei Synshar for a good harvest and to seek her blessings for the future. |
| **OCCASION:**   * It is a 5-day long annual festival celebrated in the month of November. |
| **HOW IT IS PERFORMED:**   * This festival takes place in Smit ( cultural centre of khasi hills). Performed in two circles. * Ka Shad Mastieh – dance performed by men in outer circle by holding sword in their right hand and white yak hair whisks in their left hand. * Ka Shad Kynthei – performed by women in inner circle. * Moving in the rhythmic patterns to the beats of traditional khasi music. * Performed in front of Ka Syiem Sad (queen mother) and Ki Sohblei ( high priest) sitting on a raised platform and offers prayers and blessings to the dancers. * Pomblang Ceremony is performed by Ka Syiem Sad along with Sohblei to offer scarifies (goat) to the deity of khasi people. |
| **PERFORMED BY:**   * It is performed by Young men and women (unmarried) |
| **ATTIRE:**   * Young khasi women wear colourful traditional attire and jewellery while performing the dance. |
| **MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS:**   * The instruments are Drums , tangmuri, Flute etc. |
| **ETYMOLOGY:**   * Nongkrem means Goat killing ceremony. |
| **IN POP CULTURE:**   * Local food such as – Jadoh, Tungrymbai, ja stem, Dohkhlieh etc and handicrafts are a special attraction during these festivals. |

## **LAHO DANCE (H3)**

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| **ORIGIN:**   * It is a famous dance form of Meghalaya performed by pnar tribe of jaintia hills. |
| **THEME:**   * For the prosperity and well-being of the people of Meghalaya. * To seek blessings and get rid of evil spirits. |
| **OCCASION:**   * Behdienkhlam ( chasing away the demon of cholera) festival celebrated in July after sowing period. |
| **PERFORMED BY:**   * Men and women of pnar tribe. |
| **HOW IT IS PERFORMED:**   * During the festival of Behdienkhlam , this dance is performed as it’s part. * This folk dance symbolises the rich taste and culture of pnar tribe. * A girl dances holding her arms with two boys on her left and right. * A recitation from a person known as cheer-leader with strong, sweet and clear voice without any musical instruments. * Dance is totally synchronised and looks harmonious. * People of Meghalaya make ‘Dien khlam, Khnong’ and Symlend’ from the tree trunks ( especially pine trees). * These tree trunks are placed in each locality, sometimes also in front of the respective houses, after erection of the tree ritual follows and ultimately trunks are pulled down. * These festival ends with consuming rice -beer and famous loho dance. |
| **ATTIRE:**   * Traditional colourful costumes and ornaments (gold and silver) * Male uses limited jewellery |
| **MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS:**   * No musical instrument, usually ribald couplets are recited. |
| **OTHER NAME:**   * Chipiah dance |
| **FACT:**   * In Harp tribes of Meghalaya this is known as Wangala dance. |

# **ASSAM <H2>**

**“Assam, where the Brahmaputra flows as the lifeblood, nurturing a tapestry of tea gardens and diverse cultures.”**

**– Bhupen Hazarika**

Assam is the largest northeastern state in India in terms of population and the second largest in terms of area.

It shares its borders with Bhutan and the state of Arunachal Pradesh to the north, Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh, and Manipur to the east, Meghalaya, Tripura, Mizoram, and Bangladesh to the south, and West Bengal to the west.

Assam is home to three of India's six physiographic divisions:-

The Northern Himalayas (Eastern Hills), The Northern Plains (Brahmaputra Plain), and the Deccan Plateau (Karbi Anglong).

The state boasts untouched natural beauty, exotic dance forms, emerald tea plantations, and mouth-watering cuisine.

Assam is a breathtakingly beautiful state and the most eye-catching in India. It is blessed with endless expanses of tea plantations that stretch across the state, giving it a majestic look. The Brahmaputra River and magnificent hills offer imposing vistas that are sure to leave you awestruck. Assam is home to many incredible gems that underline the beauty of this diverse state. Places like Guwahati, Jorhat, Sualkuchi, Tezpur, Hajo, and Diphu are far beyond anyone's imagination.

Assam has an exotic culture that is full of life, and its folk dances are no exception. The state is known for many folk dances such as Bihu dance, Bagurumba dance, Ali Ai Ligang dance, Bhortaal Nritya dance, Deodhani dance, Hamzar dance, Satriya NRITYA, Jhumur dance, and many more.

## BIHU DANCE <H3>

Figure 8.17 Bihu Dance

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| **ORIGIN:**   * It is an indigenous folk dance of assam, India. * It’s origin rooted in ancient fertility cults (population and land) as per legends. |
| **THEME**:   * Bihu dance is an expression of youthful exuberance and vigour. * Amidst nature’s pristine beauty, youth performs this dance accompanied by erotic sentiments. |
| **OCCASION:**   * It is celebrated in mid-April. * Advent of spring and Assamese new year |
| **PERFORMED BY**:   * It is performed by Young men and women. |
| **HOW IT IS PERFORMED:**  **Traditionally:** It was performed outdoors by local farming communities in fields, groves, forests or on the banks of rivers, especially under the fig tree.   * It is performed in a group usually by young men and women forming a circle beginning with a slower tempo and gradually gains momentum. * Brisk steps and rapid hand movement is the dancing style. * Men plays the musical instruments while the women places their hands above their hips with their palms facing towards , forming an inverted triangular shape. |
| **MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS:**   * The instruments are Drum( double headed dhol ), Pepa ( made up of buffalo horn), Manjire, Tokka (bamboo clappers) etc. |
| **ATTIRE:**   * Traditional attire is centred around the red colour theme which signifies joy and vigour. * **Women:** Gitigee (kind of headgear), agoo (mekhela), Lagu richa (chaddar), beautiful ornaments. * **Men** : Dhoti, Gomocha (towel) and chapkan (shirt) |
| **TYPES OF BIHU FESTIVAL:**   * **Bahag Bihu or Rangoli Bihu** celebrated in spring, ushers assamese new year, sowing time and wedding season. * The songs are of erotic sentiments. Bhahag is the derivative of the first day of lunar month of vaishakh. * It has four stages :- Goru Bihu (cattle), Manhu Bihu (human being), Gosain Bihu ( gods, Namghar shrine), Bihu Urva ( sending away the Bihu) * **Kankali Bihu or kati bihu** celebrated in lunar month of kartik (or kati in colloquial assamese) corresponding to September / October. * Paddy seedlings are transplanted. * Usually dance is not performed during this bihu. * **Magh Bihu or Bhogali Bihu** celebrated in lunar month of magh corresponding to December / January . * Agni(god of fire) is worshipped with chanting mantras. * Houses are full of harvested grains. * Dances performed are more vigorous and faster in tempo. |
| **HISTORY:**   * The word Bihu is a derivative of the Sanskrit word Visuva that means equinox. * The earliest depiction is in 9th century sculptures found in Tezpur and darrang districts of assam. * Bihu is mentioned in the inscriptions of the 14-th century Chutia-king lakshminrayan. * During colonial times this dance was looked down upon in assamese society because of the sexually charged nature of the dance which clashed with the Victorian ( Queen Victoria) views. * In 1962 bihu dance was performed first time on stage as a part of cultural event in Guwahati. * The origin of Magh bihu can be traced back to the Fire-worship festivals of ancient times. * Guinness world record :- On 14th April 2023, a group of 11,000 participants performed largest bihu dance in one single venue at Indira Gandhi Athletic stadium ( Guwahati ). |

## DEODHANI DANCE (H3)

Figure 8.18 Deodhani dance

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| ORIGIN:   * It is of Bodo origin. * It evolved from the two places of assam – Mangaldai and Uttar lakhimpur. |
| THEME:   * Performed at the time of manasa Puja, the worship of snake goddess Mansa or Marei / Maroi. |
| **ETYMOLOGY:**   * Deo means God. * Dhani means woman.   **Literal meaning** ’A women possessed by god (shaman)’. |
| PERFORMED BY:   * Both Women and Man |
| **HOW IT IS PERFORMED:**   * It is a Centuries old 3 days festival. * It Begins at the end of assamese month of shaon and at the beginning of Bhadra month ( during august) * Deodhani depicts the dance of a shaman woman or a man when possessed by a spiritual being. * It can be performed either solo or group (3-4 women) * It is performed to the accompaniment of songs sung by an Ojapali are known as Xuknoni in undivided darrang district and in undivided kamrup district it is accompanied by Kamrupi bor-Dhol’s. * The most difficult part of the dance is performing with a Daa ( sharp weapon / sword) * Scarifies of Goat and Pigeon . * Each god or goddess has his/her own Deodha who is called janki or ghora. |
| **PROPS:** Sword and shield |
| **ATTIRE:**   * Dancers wear Mekhala ( a traditional dress of assamese) in muga, red blouse as their dress combination along with traditional jewellery. * Women dresses like a warrior and keeps her hair loose flowing with the movements. |
| **MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS:**   * Joidhol (a cylindrical percussion instrument), Khutitaal ( palm sized cymbal). |
| **FORMS:**   * Male shaman form is also present which is called – * ‘Jaki’ in south kamrup (assam) * ‘Deodhai’ in other parts of assam. |
| **OTHER NAME:**   * Bhawani charai |
| **LEGENDRY STORY:**   * Behulaa ( a character in padma purana) had to dance before the goddess Manasa to get back her husband’s ( lakhindar) life. |
| **FACT:**   * The deodhani nritya was observed at the Maa Kamakhaya temple as a festival since the year 2007.   It is believed that people taking part in this form of dance inherit some superficial powers from Goddess Kamakhya. |

BARDWI SIKHLA (H3)

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| **ORIGIN:**   * It is a boro folk dance of Assam region of India. |
| **ETYMOLOGY:**   * “Bar” means wind * “Dwi” means water * “Sikhla” means girl. * In assamese, Bardwi Sikhla is called ‘Borodoisila’. |
| **THEME:**   * With the intention to welcome the monsoon, girls dance and portrays themselves as storm and rain. |
| **PERFORMED BY:** Young women, Bodo tribe of assam. |
| **HOW IT IS PERFORMED:**   * It is one of the most colourful and rhythmic dance of the tribe. * The dancers performs with bamboo clappers in their hands which provides the rhythm for their movement and hair is kept loose. * While dancing the dancers form different patterns like circular, horizontal and parallel. |
| **ATTIRE:**   * Colourful costumes are worn by the dancers. |
| **OCCASION**: It is performed during the Bwisagu (spring ) festival. |
| **MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS:**   * Kham ( big drum), Sifung (flute), Charinda ( an indigenous string instrument), Jota ( made from iron/tama) and Cymbal. |
| **MYTHOLOGICAL STORY:**   * The legendary fairy Bardwi Sikhla had the power to control wind and water to create rain, thunder and hailstorm. * She used to come in the spring season and rejuvenate the surroundings. * Trees and plants blossom and greenery appears everywhere. * She is commemorated to welcome the monsoon by the Bwisagu festival. * This dance form is the enactment of her nature. |

## JHUMUR DANCE (H3)

Figure 8.19 Jhumur Dance.

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| **ORIGIN:**   * It is a traditional dance of tea tribe communities of assam, India * It originated from the core of the cultural enthusiasm of the working class * It is a dance form of Sadan ( Indo-Aryan ethnic groups of Chotanagpur plateau) |
| **THEME:**   * The workers at tea gardens of assam find their voice of expression through this traditional folk dance form and derive serenity, joy and happiness from jhumur. |
| **OCCASION :**   * Usually performed during autumn season in assam, ritual worship, courting and love making, prayers for rain. * Occasion of karam puja( a week long worship of raja karam) and Tushu puja. |
| PERFORMED BY: It is performed by boys and girls, usually tea workers working in the sprawling tea gardens of assam. |
| **HOW IT IS PERFORMED:**   * It is mostly performed in open areas like field or under a tree. * The female dancers performing are accompanied by male dancers to maintain the rhythm and vocal while playing the musical instruments. * Performed to the rhythmic accompaniment of the Madal ( two headed hand drum) hung around the shoulders of the men. * Female dancers mostly perform the dancing part by holding each other’s waist and moving hands and legs forward / backward synchronously. |
| **ATTIRE:**   * The costumes of jhumur naach is quite different from the other traditional dresses so it can be easily identified. * Men wears long traditional dresses. * Women wears sarees with broad borders. |
| **MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS:** Traditional instruments – drum, flute, pair of taal, nagara etc. |
| **SONGS:** This dance incorporates songs and dialogues which depicts the joys, sorrows, yearning and aspirations of everyday lives of people. |
| **STORY**: It is believed that Jhumur was originally a means of recreation between phases of tedious agricultural work. |
| **FACT:**   * This dance gets its name (jhumar) from the dangling bells worn around the ankles that makes a jingling sound as the dance commences. * The tea tribes of assam is an oldest tribe of this state, completed almost more then 100 years. * This dance is also performed in few parts of west Bengal, Odisha, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, East and north-east india. * Bhaduria dance performed as a celebration for the bountiful monsoon is a variation of the jhumar dance. |
| **OTHER NAME**: Chah Baganar Jhumar Naach or Tea Garden’s Jhumar dance. |

# **NAGALAND <H2>**

“**Stalingrad of the East**”

Nagaland is a charming state located in the Northeast of India, renowned for its picturesque landscapes and rich cultural heritage. The people of Nagaland are known for their warm hospitality and deep-rooted pride in their traditions and religions. The state is home to a diverse range of tribes, which adds to its cultural richness.

The breath-taking hills of Nagaland make it a perfect destination for those seeking peace and tranquillity. Its serene ambience helps visitors to unwind and relax. The locals adorn themselves with unique headgear during traditional dance performances, and the state’s cuisine is renowned for its deliciousness. Nagaland's vibrant festivals and age-old traditions make it distinct from other states in India.

Fairs and festivals are observed throughout the year in Nagaland, where the colourful tribes reside. The state's ethnic tribal culture is celebrated worldwide for its grandeur. Every tribe has its own unique fairs and festivals, which are celebrated with great zeal and enthusiasm. Cultural activities such as dance and music are an integral part of these celebrations, reflecting the Naga's love for life.

Nagaland is home to several folk dances, including Modse, Agurshikukula, Butterfly Dance, Aaluyattu, Sadal Kekai, Changai Dance, Leshalaptu, Khamba Lim, Mayur Dance, Monyoasho, Rengma, Seecha and Kukui Kucho, Shankai and Moyashai, War Dance and Zeliang Dance, among others.

AOLING-LOKPU DANCE <H3>

Figure 8.20 Aoling Lokpu Dance.

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| **ORIGIN:** Konyak celebrates this, they are the largest among all seventeen tribe. |
| **THEME:**   * To showcase their cultural heritage and pass on their traditions to the next generations. * It is the end of sowing season. |
| **PERFORMED BY**:   * Male |
| **HOW IT IS PERFORMED:**   * It is a traditional dance known as aoling dance. * The dance is characterized by its rhythmic and energetic movements. * The songs are the folklore of konyaki tribe * Spears and guns are used in dancing * Animal and birds sacrifice includes chicken and other domestic animals. * In first three days women weaves traditional colorful clothes, animals are sacrifice and delicious meals are prepared. * Fourth day Includes dressing up and singing folk song. * Fifth and sixth day is spent with family and village is accounted for cleaning. |
| **OCCASION**:  The occasion is Aoling festival, which falls in the first week of April.   * It is a six day festival, crowned unique names * First day: Hoi Lah Nyih. * Second day: Yin Mok Pho Nyih * Third day: Mok Shek Nyih * Fourth day: Lingyu Nyih * Fifth day: Lingha Nyih * Sixth day: Lingshan Nyih * It is the biggest festival in the district of Mon. * This festival coincides with Konyak new year. |
| **MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS:**   * Log drum, bamboo flute and gong etc. |
| **ATTIRE:**   * Warrior dresses with brass replicas of human heads as a mementos of head hunting. * They Carry guns also. |
| **HISTORY:**   * It is among the most popular festival of Nagaland. * Konyak tribe people were known as the deadliest of all tribe. * This festival is celebrated for good harvest. * Prayers to god is considered as the main act of this festival * Welcoming the ongoing season of spring and forgive each other. * People believe in generosity of divine spirit and in return they blesses them.. |

## CHANG LO or CHOKRI (H3)

Figure 8.21 Chang Lo attire.

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| **ORIGIN:**   * The colourful dance from originated from the land of Nagaland, India. |
| **TRIBE:**   * It was created for the first time by a tribe called Chang tribe. |
| **THEME**: It is performed in the start of the harvest season. |
| **PERFORMED BY:**   * Male and female dancers |
| **HOW IT IS PERFORMED:**   * In ancient time this dance was supposed to be performed after the victory is achieved over an opponent during battle. But now a days, * It is a three day festival. * it is a collective dance that include dramatization. * Dancing technique involves foot movement with a very little upper body movement. * Dancers need training to attain expertise in balancing and co-ordination. * This dance involves a lot of clapping and chanting |
| **ATTIRE:**   * Chang lo dancers wear Armor. * Male dresses in traditional Naga warrior Armor. * Female artist wears more feminine and vibrant clothing. |
| **OCCASION**:   * In the present time, a three day festival called ‘Poanglem’ features chang lo performance. |
| **MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS:**   * The instrument used is drum etc. |
| **OTHER NAME:**  It is also called “Su La” |
| **LEGENDRY STORY:**   * According to an old legend, The chang ( a local tribal group) created this style of dancing to celebrate their victory over the enemy. |
| **PROPS:**   * The props used are Dao, Spears and shield |
| **FACT:**   * It is different from the zeliang dance of zeliang tribe |

## BUTTERFLY DANCE (H3)

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| **ORIGIN:**   * It is a traditional folk dance of the Chakhesang tribe of Nagaland, India. |
| **THEME:** This dance embodies the spirit of chakhesang tribe and is a representation of femineity, elegance and grace. |
| **OCCASION:** |
| **PERFORMED BY:**   * Men and Women |
| **HOW IT IS PERFORMED:**   * Dancers arrange themselves in a circle and move in perfect synchrony. * Mimicking the flutter of a butterfly wing’s with their arms and legs. * Dancers sing while dancing |
| **ATTIRE:**   * Traditional Chakhesang attire which includes brightly coloured shawls, headbands and ornaments. |
| **MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS:**   * The instruments used are Bamboo flute, drum etc. |
| **FACT:**   * It is named after the butterfly which is a symbol of beauty and grace in their culture. * It is also a traditional social dance of HOPI tribe of Arizona U.S.A held during the month of august and September after gathering the harvest. |

## KUKI DANCE (H3)

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| **ORIGIN**:   * Kuki’s are the indigenous tribe of Nagaland and this dance is an important part of their culture and tradition. |
| **THEMES:** Celebration of Joy. |
| **OCCASION**: Festivals, weddings and important occasions. |
| **PERFORMED BY**: Men and women both. |
| **HOW IT IS PERFORMED:**   * It is a lively and energetic dance. * Steps are intricate and synchronised on the movements of the musical instruments. * Dance is characterised by its fast tempo and acrobatic movements, with dancers often leaping and jumping in the air * It is performed using bamboo sticks. |
| **ATTIRE**: The dancers dresses in traditional colourful attire. |
| **MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS**: The musical instruments used are Drum etc. |

## ZELIANG DANCE (H3)

Figure 8.22 Zeliang Dance.

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| **ORIGIN:** This dance originated from the Zeliangrong tribe of Nagaland, india. |
| **THEME:** It is a celebration of unity and inspiration to the tribe. |
| **PERFORMED BY**: Men and Women |
| **HOW IT IS PERFORMED:**   * It is an artistic dance form which includes clapping and chanting. * This dance takes place on the dry ground ( nowadays stage). * Dancers enter the ground in a row doing some peculiar movements and once all in, dancers form the geometrical shapes like circle etc. * Upright upper body and forceful stomping of feet on the beats of the drum is the prime elements of this dance. * It’s a mock enactment of war scenario. * Dancers clap their hands and recite hymns in chorus throughout the dance. * The group moves till they complete one round and then they repeat. * All dancers are barefoot. |
| **ATTIRE:** The costumes are colourful and unique.   * Men wears a loincloth decorated with thread work, supported by a plain white cloth tied around the waist. The portion of leg from ankle to knee is covered by a stocking type material. Chunky metal jewellery is the highlight of their look. Headgears are elaborate having multiple rings of colourful cloth and bamboo sticks attached circularly with a tuft of feathers tucked on one side. * Women wears : Blouse and skirt upto knee length, silver necklaces, earrings, armlets and anklets. |
| **MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS:**   * The instruments used are drum ( made from animal skin and wood underneath) , jemji ( a horn used), some bamboo instruments are also used. |
| **OCCASION**:   * Mileinyi festival (march) and Langsimnyi festival (October) |
| **HISTORY:**   * Nagaland is a state inhabited by the bravest tribes found in India. * Zeliangrong tribe is found in the hilly terrain of Mount Barail in Nagaland. * Zeliangrong tribe gives equal status to women unlike other tribes of Nagaland. |

## ARUNACHAL PRADESH (H2)

**“Nature’s sanctuary, where every mountain peak whispers tales of tranquillity and mystique.”**

**–Tenzing Norgay**

Arunachal Pradesh is a state in India that boasts flourishing valleys, cascading waterfalls, pristine lakes, and scenic landscapes. It is an ideal destination to unwind and spend some quality time away from the monotony of city life.

It is a state that is known for its natural, cultural, and traditional attractions. It is a peaceful state that every wanderer dreams of visiting to refresh and rejuvenate. The state is home to several enchanting places, including Tawang, Bomdila, Ziro, Itanagar, and Pasighat, each highlighting the rich culture and tradition of the state while taking you on a journey through history.

Arunachal Pradesh is a land of tribal communities, and because of the numerous tribes in the state, its cultural diversity and richness are astounding. Folk dances are an excellent way of showcasing one’s culture, and the people of Arunachal Pradesh love to dance and are known for their joyful nature.

The folk dances performed during festive occasions and moments of happiness depict the emotions and gratitude of the people. They represent the socio-cultural heritage and robust value system of the tribal lineages in the state.

Folk dances of Arunachal Pradesh can be classified into four distinct types, each of which is naturally performed for a variety of purposes. Festive Dance Shows are mostly celebration-oriented folk dances performed on specific occasions, while Ritualistic Dance is a traditional dance style performed with zeal in Arunachal Pradesh, based on ceremonies.

Recreational dance is something that people do in their leisure time. These dances are not part of any ceremony or festival, but they are performed on special occasions to create a pleasant and joyous atmosphere. Pantomimes are a type of dance-drama that depicts a mythical narrative with a message. Arunachal Pradesh is home to several popular folk dances, including Aji Lhamu, Roppi, Hurkani, Ponung, Lion and Peacock dance, Hurkani, Buiya, Chalo, Rekham Pada, Popir, and Wancho etc.

## **BUIYA DANCE (H3)**

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| **ORIGIN:** Digaru Mishmis tribe of arunachal Pradesh performs this dance. |
| **THEME:** A joyful dance bindig people together or entertainment is the main theme. |
| **PERFORMED BY**: Men and Women of all age groups, elderly are often spectators. |
| **HOW IT IS PERFORMED:**   * This dance remains an attraction because of the unique formations combined with the beats of different instruments. * The performers forms a straight line with one dancer standing behind the other. * When the music plays with the sound of the gong the buiya dancers starts moving from the front end of the passage to the rear. * The movement is effortless with the right foot put forward to move ahead by one step. * Then the left heel is based on the left leg with slightly bent knee. * These movements are repeated till the end of the episode. * Another movement involves skipping a step. * Women makes small graceful jumps to move forward and the men makes much higher faster jumps. * Music stats at a slower pace and slowly picks up the pace. * Sometimes dance is performed without any music aswell. * There is no formal training for this dance. |
| **OCCASION:**   * This dance is performed for the prosperity of the one dancing and for their households. * Grand feast, family gathering, festivals like – Tazampu, Duiya and Tanuya. * In different festival this dance holds different meanings. |
| **ATTIRE:** This dance has no particular dress code.  Performers wear typical tribal wear.  **Men:-** dresses in a jacket with no sleeves on the top and a loincloth on the bottom, a turban on the head, ear-rings and some jewellery around the neck and the wrist.  **Women:** A long wrap skirt and a blouse, another smaller skirt is wrapper over the long skirt, A side bag is hung on their shoulder, different types of jewellery like- Necklace, large silver ear-plugs, silver fillets with straps studded with coins or cowries. |
| **MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS:** Instruments like gong, drum, cymbal etc are used. |
| **SONGS:** It can be sung solo or chorus as well. |
| **FACTS:**   * The Digru Mishmis tribe performs two types of dances. * A) Buiya : it has two types of movement and purpose is entertainment only. * B) Nuiya : it is a rutual dance performed by priests. |

## **CHALO DANCE (H3)**

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| **ORIGIN**:   * It originates from the Nocte tribe of the beautiful north-eastern state of arunachal Pradesh. This dance is a part of Chalo Loku festival of arunachal Pradesh. |
| **THEME:**   * It was a way of saying good bye to the past season by Nocte tribe. |
| **PERFORMED BY**:   * Men and Women of all age group. |
| **HOW IT IS PERFORMED:**   * It is performed at the chief’s courtyard and so the costumes of dancers has to be traditional. * The dance is synchronised with the beats of the drum and people sing songs. |
| **OCCASION:**   * It is a yearly grand festival taking place in October and November. * It is celebrated just before the framers harvest the paddy. |
| **ATTIRE**: this dance forms has no dress code but when at the chief’s courtyard the dress code is traditional.  **Men** : A loincloth (dhoti) on bottom, top is bare and usually adorned with silver and bamboo jewellery, headgear is made up of white feathers attached and many decorative pieces.  **Women:** A blouse and a cotton skirt upto knee length, They also tie a matching piece of cloth on their waist.  Both men and women wears metallic rings, anklets, armlets and earpieces. |
| **MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS:** Drum |
| **ETYMOLOGY:**   * In noctes the term Loku is derived from ‘Lofe’ ( to drive out) and Rang-ku ( season). Thus Loku means to drive out the old season of the year. |
| **FACT:**   * The name Chalo Loku translates to paddy cultivation in English. * It is a 3 day long festival with each day having its own significant rituals that holds a value for these tribal people. * Famlam (first day) – it starts with sacrifice of pigs and buffalos, and fed to all people of the village. * Chamkatja (second day): It is marked by chamkat ceremony.   All villagers headed by their chiefs visit a place situated in outskirts called ‘Chaatam’.  Everyone prays for a better harvest and well-being of family.  Relative and friends exchanges gifts.  Chief of the tribe also hosts the villagers and there this Chalo / Chamwangbong dance is performed for two/three hours.   * Thanglangja ( third day) : starts with breaking eggs by the chief and other elderly people.   The eggs are believed to be an indication for the future, based on this field plots are chosen for Jhoom cultivation in following year.   * Following this everyone gathers at the “Songlongthong”( the courtyard of the chief’s house) , where traditional chalo dance is performed by the villagers. |
| **FAREWELL SONG:**   * Loku La Liem Ta Chongpo Lazu Ta Panri La Chun Ta Ja Ja Chono Ja Nep Aba Huro Ja Tao Hangloma Cha Cangloma “ * Meaning : Blooming flowers have fallen down, fruits have mellowed, Loku also ended.   Go away Loku and please come in the next year with a new spirit and with the blessings that we will reap good harvest. |

## **WANCHO DANCE (H3)**

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| **ORIGIN:** It originated from the Oriah festival of wancho tribe, who are an autochthonous race of arunachal Pradesh. |
| **THEME:**   * The dance brings all members of the tribe together which creates a feeling of solidarity. |
| **PERFORMED BY:** Men and Women |
| **HOW IT IS PERFORMED:**   * The festival begins with prayers then music and dance are organised for entertaining the villagers. * Wancho dance is performed at this Oriah festival. * Both men and women engage in dance. * Usually take turns to performs accompanied by songs sung by them. * The performance begings with men singing and dancing. * The basket carried by all male dancers has decorations of wild boar tail hair, animal skulls, shells and colourful beads and there is a bell attached to the bottom of the basket which produces a jingle sound while dancing. Dancers synchronise their steps on this jingle sound. * Men carries a sword in their right hand which they wield during the dance making peculiar thrusting movements with it, it’s unique. * Once the men end their song, women enters and starts a song. * They match steps to the song and the song sung is a reply to what the men conveyed through their song. This process is repeated for multiple times. * Men makes a round configuration and moves around while dancing, On the other hand women forms two straight lines facing each other. |
| **OCCASION:** Celebration takes place in spring month of march and April which lasts for a week or two. |
| **ATTIRE** : Traditional attire is must for this performance.  **Men:**   * Bare body on top and a loincloth on the bottom. * The cloth is usually light in colour with dark borders and beads for detailing. * Cane made band around the waist. * Ivory or cane arms bands, bead necklace, coin necklace and cluster of red thread in the ears are the accessories donned by men. * Men carries swords with golden handle enhanced with goat hair. * Wears a head gear formed out of bamboo and hornbill feathers in it. * Basket of cane around the waists.   **WOMEN:**   * Wears a traditional blouse and wrap a skirt around their waists. * Necklace made up coins and beads embellish the look. * Arms are decorated with metallic jewellery. * On feet they wear anklet and toe rings. * Headdress or headbands are full of colourful adornments. |
| **MUSICAL INSTRUMENT**: The instruments used are Bell etc. |
| **Props:** Sword |
| **Facts:**   * Wancho tribes has relations with the Nocte tribe of arunachal Pradesh. * Wancho tribe shares cultural similarities with Konyak tribe of Nagaland. * Wanchos were known as Nagas of the east or Banferia nagas during british administration. * In the days of Ahom king, wanchos were called Bar-mithunias, Haru-mithunias, Baneferias, Bar-Banchang, Haru-Banchang etc. * The tribal name wancho became accepted after independence. * Wanchos are commonly known as bounty hunters. * Myths: Wanchos migrated to their current environment from Nyannu, located to the southwest beyond the Patkai Hills or Purvanchal Ranges. * As there is no documentation of his tribes migration to current location, Oral tradition shows their presence even before 1828 A.D ( before ahoms period) |

# TRIPURA <H2>

Tripura, situated in the northeast of India, is a magnificent cultural destination. The region is characterized by verdant valleys and hills that add to its aesthetic appeal. The grand palaces of the state, set against a natural backdrop, serve as a testament to its fascinating history.

Tripura is a princely state in north-eastern India that is renowned for its rich cultural heritage, remarkable architecture, and breath-taking natural beauty. The state boasts of pristine lakes, rolling mountains, and ancient temples. The historical significance of Tripura can be seen in its various sites of interest, such as Ujjayanta Palace, Jagannath Bari, Neer Mahal, Heritage Park, and others. The state is also home to Hindu and Buddhist sculptures that date back to the 8th and 9th centuries, which can be explored in Pilak.

Tripura is a culturally diverse land that is home to many different tribal groups. Each tribe has its own unique folk dances that are centred around the seasons of harvest and crops, as well as the daily activities of the tribal people. These dances were originally performed among the tribes themselves to mark special events or occasions and to enjoy each other's company. Nowadays, these dance forms are performed for a larger audience as a means of entertainment and to spread awareness about tribal life and culture.

The major folk dances of Tripura include the Hozagiri dance of the Reang community, Garia, Jhum, Maimita, Masak Sumani and Lebang boomani dances of the Tripuri community, Bijhu dance of the Chakma community, Cheraw and Welcome dances of the Lusai community, Hai-Hak dance of the Malsum community, Wangala dance of the Garo Community, Sangraiaka, and others.

## HOJAGIRI DANCE (H3)

Figure 8.23 Hojagiri Dance

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| **ORIGIN:** It originated as a form of worship, offering gratitude to goddess Lakshmi, the deity of wealth and prosperity. |
| **THEME:** It is a celebration of grace, balance and cultural heritage |
| **OCCASION:**   * Performed in lunar month of Bhadra ( august / September), Festivals, Weddings, celebratory occasions. * The reang practice Jhum (shift) cultivation, when the crop is ready for harvesting Hojagiri dance is performed to invoke goddess Lakshmi for the bumper crop. |
| **PERFORMED BY:** It is performed by women (4-6), in a group. |
| **HOW IT IS PERFORMED:**   * The rituals starts with worship of nine gods and culminates in worshipping goddess Mailuma (Lakshmi). * The performance combines rhythmic movements, acrobatics and skilful balancing of pots on the head. * The dancers, predominantly women, forms a circle or a line, swaying to they rhythm of traditional music and beats. * Choreography involves intricate footwork, hand gestures and body movement that exude elegance and poise. * Dancers show their agility and skills through acrobatic elements like spinning, twirling, balancing on a single leg, thus captivating the audience with their precision and hold. * The remarkable aspect of this dance is balancing multiple earthen pots on the head, often adorned with decorative items like flower garlands or oil lamps while performing the intricate dance steps. * Only lower half of the body is moved, done to create special rhythmic movement. * It is a slow hip and waist manoeuvring dance. * It takes 30-40 minutes for the completion. * This dance tries to bring out the day to day life of the jhum cultivators in various phases i.e. – from ythe day of sowing to harvesting. * Men plays the musical instruments and sings the song. |
| **ATTIRE:** Traditional attire.  **Male**: Kamcwlwi borok ( for upper body), Rikutu ( loincloth), with some ornaments.  **Women**: Colourful traditional attire Rikutu ( upper garment), Risa ( colourful flowing skirt) embellished with intricate embroidery and mirror work, Rignai ( upper garment ) is worn around the waist and over the shoulder, adorned with traditional jewellery like- necklace, earrings, anklets etc. |
| **MUSICAL INSTRUMENT:** Kham ( drum with two sides skin surface), Sumui, flute made from bamboo, Bamboo cymbal. |
| **Props:** A baling ( wide circular rice cleaning article made up of cane), a pitcher or kalash, a bottle, a household traditional lamp, a plain dish and a handkerchief, for each member. |
| **SONGS:**   * Sung by male members, lyrics of the songs are simple and holds no relation to the ongoing dance. |
| **STORY:**   * Pots on the Head: the incredible display of balance symbolises the harmony between nature, fertility and the aspirations of the community. * Pots also represents the wealth and abundance sought from goddess Lakshmi. |
| **FACT:**   * The pitcher on the head is balanced similar to the Karagam dance of tamil nadu. * The correct nomenclature of this ethnic group is BRU, although the name ‘Reang’ was accidentally incorporated by Indian government during a census count. * The dance was once called Hodagiri among reangs and was solely performed on the day of Maikhlungmo puja, conjointly called Hindu deity puja for bulk production of paddy and different crops, The third day of Dusshera goddess Mailuma (laxmi) is worshipped and this dance is performed on that day. * Reang tribes are also known as Tripuri tribes. * Satya Ram Riang was awarded Sangeet Natak Academy award by government of india for his relentless effort to preserve and promote hojari dance in india and abroad. He has also established a school to teach this dance. * 2023, IPL match held at the ACA stadium at barsapara (assam), Hojagiri dance was performed in the opening ceremony. |

## **LEBANG BOOMANI (H3)**

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| **ORIGIN**: It is an harvest dance form practiced by original inhabitants of north-eastern Indian state of Tripura. |
| **THEME:**   * the lebang dance is the depiction of the catchment of the Colourful insects ‘Lebangs’( Green Cicadas) who approaches the hill side in hoards seeking the sown seeds. * More catch, better harvest. |
| **PERFORMED BY**: Girls mostly, sometimes men too join |
| **HOW IT IS PERFORMED:**   * The dance movements of Lebang Boomani dancers portrays the procedure of catching the colourful insects ‘Lebangs’ with the aide of tokkas (bamboo clappers) * This dance is named after distinctive bamboo clapper with a drone. * While playing the clapper the drone wire is also plucked rhythmically. * Men attracts attention of lebang insects out from their hideouts with the help of bamboo clappers and women catch hold of them, they wave their attractive scarf. * The sound of the drone attracts a kind of grass hoppers. * Dancers gather the grass hopper and put them in a bamboo bags attached to the costume they wear. * The grasshoppers are eaten with relish and it is believed that if the catch is sizeable then a bumper crop will be harvested. * Grasshoppers coming in large numbers also attracts birds. * Tak-Dutreng ( a bamboo made idiophone) is rhythmically sounded to drive the bird away. * - Melodic content of the accompanying music is provided using the instrument Sarinala. * Sometimes, men also join the dance. * Dancers sings while dancing barefoot. * The choreography patterns changes from time to time. * Women dances in the inner circle and men dances in the outer circle. |
| **OCCASION:** During monsoon season after the Garia puja. |
| **ATTIRE:**  **Men** : lion cloth at bottom, with a cardigan and a upper body cloth, head covered with a scarf.  **Women:** They wear bangles, nose rings, silver chains and ear rings composed of bronze. Flowers are worn by women as a jewel |
| **MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS**: Pung (drum), Tak- Dutreng ( idiophone), Tokkas (bamboo clapper), Sarinala ( string instrument), Khamb, flute |
| **Fact:**   * It is also known as Lebang Bumani. * Lebang boomani and Gaira dance (performed during sowing the crops) are the two dances belonging to people of Tripura. |

# MANIPUR <H2>

**“In the northeast, Manipur is a jewel of cultural diversity, where the Loktak Lake reflects the tranquillity of a region untouched by time.”**

**– Ratan Thiyam**

Manipur, an Indian state located in the northeast region, is known for its surreal beauty that leaves many amazed. This state is blessed with dense forests and rolling hills, which captivate the heart of every travelller who visits here.

Blanketed with dense forests and rolling hills, Manipur is a magical Indian state that leaves many in wonder and disbelief. This north-eastern state is famous for its distinct classical dance forms, traditional festivals, delicious cuisines, sacred shrines, and simple living. The breath-taking attractions of Manipur include Imphal, Ukhrul, Bishnupur, Thoubal, and Chandel.

Manipuri is not the only dance form popular in the Northeast state, as there are several other folk dance forms worth knowing. Dance plays an important role in the daily life of Manipur, not just as an art form but also as a means of expression that is closely linked to the social fabric. Manipuri dance is entirely religious and its objective is to offer a truly spiritual experience to both performers and audiences alike. Dance is regarded as an important aspect of all socio-cultural rites and is seen as a form of devotion that holds great significance in Manipuri culture.

In accordance with Manipuri folklore, Lai Guru Sidaba created seven Laibangthous (Gods) and seven Lainuras (Goddesses) when he created the earth, and these celestial beings levelled the planet's uneven terrain with their dance.

With its distinctive clothing and simple yet elegant rhythm, Manipur's folk dances captivate audiences. Their folklore is of exceptional quality, and the dances themselves are both sacred and secular, ceremonial and recreational. Ritualistic dances are performed during specific rites, ceremonies, or sacrifices and are inherently spiritual and religious in nature. Ariba pala, Raas, Kabul dance, and many more are among the various Manipuri folk dances.

## **ARIBA PALA (H3)**

Figure 8.24 Ariba pala.

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| **ORIGIN**: It originated in Manipur when Vaishnavism swayed the region. |
| **THEME**: Depiction of life of Shri Chaitanyadev ( great Vaishnav saint) and worship of Lord Govindaji during Astakaal. |
| **PERFORMED BY**: Group of men |
| **HOW IT IS PERFORMED:**   * Vocal singng and percussion music of Pung (drum) are the life and breath of this dance. * Group consists of 16 performers, divided into two sub-groups. * First group is led by main singer called – Ise Hanba and the other group is led by Dubar. * The latter group answers the questions asked by the former group. * There are two pung (drum) players who plays a significant role in the dance. * The performance begins only after when Mandava Mapu ( a very senior artist with deep technical knowledge about this dance) takes his specified seat. * Two drummers enters after Mandava Mapu presides over. * The two groups already seated in a semi-circular manner in the arena gets up and Isei Hanba begins invocatory song. * Perfromers imagine that they are at Nabadwip ( birth place of Shri Chaitanyadev). * This performance is the depiction of his life through singing, drumming and dancing. * Performance is very controlled and well knit. |
| **OCCASION:** This dance is performed in temples and domestic spaces. |
| **ATTIRE** : Dancers wear white pheijom (dhoti), spherical turbans |
| **MUSICAL INSTRUMENT**: Drum etc. |
| **FACT:**   * Ariba Pala evolved after Vaishnavism swayed the region around four centuries ago. * Ariba Pala ( Bangladesh pala) was the root of Manipuri Sankirtana or Nata Sankirtana. * Nata Sankirtana was introduced by Rajarshi Bhagyachandra. * A Manipuri musician singing kirtana is called Nata ( Sanskrit term). * Now-a-days, Nata sankirtana plays the role of Ariba pala ( Bangladesh pala), the most important of ancient pala. * Sankirtana: Ritual singing, drumming and dancing in Manipur was inscribed on the list of UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity during 8th session of the UNESCO Inter-governmental Committee meeting in Baku, Azerbaijan, dec 2013. |

# FOLK DANCES OF EASTERN and CENTRAL INDIA <H1>

## **BIHAR <H2>**

**“In the heart of India, Bihar echoes with the wisdom of Nalanda, where history is inscribed in every brick.”**

**– Chanakya**

The state of Bihar is famously associated with culture, music, art, and religion. Bihar has a rich history, dating back to the dawn of civilization. Sita, Lord Rama's wife, is believed to have been born in Bihar. The city of Pataliputra, now known as Patna, was established by the renowned Mauryan emperor Ashoka in 270 B.C. Bihar is also the birthplace of Buddhism and Jainism, both of which emerged as a reaction against Hinduism. The founder of Jainism, Vardhman Mahavira, attained nirvana in Bihar. Similarly, another prince who meditated under the Bodhi tree in Bodhgaya, also in Bihar, became the Buddha. Kautilya, also known as Chanakya, hailed from Bihar and authored the first treatise in the field of modern economics, called the Arthashastra. Bihar also gave birth to the tenth and final Sikh guru, Guru Gobind Singh, who attained sainthood in Bihar.

The various tribal and folk songs, along with the diverse dance forms in Bihar, reflect the people's emotional upheavals, values, hopes, beliefs, and traditions. Bihar's music and dance are as diverse as its numerous tribal groups, enriching the state with love, music, art, and diversity. Some of the popular dance forms in Bihar include Karma Dance, Jhijhia Dance, Kajri Dance, Jhumar Dance, Bhojpuri Jhumar

Dance, Magahi Jhumar Dance, Jharni Dance, and Jat Jatin etc.

# ****JAT- JATIN DANCE**** (H3)

Figure 8.25 Jat Jatin

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| **ORIGIN**: A famous folk dance of the Bihar region.  It is most famous in North Bihar, namely in Mithila and Koshi regions. |
| **THEME:** Originally, it explains the difficult situation the lovers Jat and Jatin faced because of separation.  Now it’s more of a social awareness-themed performance like drought, flood, etc. |
| **OCCASION:** Festivals, Marriage ceremonies, Monsoon moonlight nights |
| **PERFORMED BY**: It is an activity that involves the involvement of both genders.   * However, the participation of males is not necessary when it comes to the creation of a female dressed in male attire. |
| **HOW IT IS PERFORMED**:   * It is performed on the moonlight night during the monsoons. * It is usually performed in PAIRS. * Various topics like poverty, sorrow, love, and arguments between lovers or husband and wife are also enacted. * The Jat-Jatin dance is characterized by gentle bodily movements which are not complicated. * The steps involved are dynamic and energetic, consisting of four steps forward and an equal number of steps backwards. * The rhythm of the dance is maintained through six, seven or eight beats, namely Dadra, Teevta, and Kerwa. * Although the footwork is not very intricate, the graceful movements of the limbs complement the overall performance. |
| **ATTIRE**: Women: - They wear Colourful dresses and shiny jewellery.  Men:- traditional dresses were worn by men.   * Actors dress differently when performing on stage or at public events, compared to when they perform in rural areas. |
| **MUSICAL INSTRUMENT**: Drum, Flute, jhaal etc. |
| **In pop culture**: Songs in the Maithili language like:   * Chamra ke khetwa mein chhapar chhupar paniya… * Tikwa jab jab manauli re jatwa…. |
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# JHIJHIAN DANCE (H3)

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| **ORIGIN**: This is the cultural folk dance of Mithila and Bhojpuri region of India and Nepal. |
| **THEME**: The dance is a way to show devotion towards the goddess Durga.   * She is considered the goddess of victory, and to protect one's family, children and society from witches and dark magic. |
| **PERFORMED BY**: Generally, Women and girls perform Jhijhiya in groups of five to fifteen for ten consecutive evenings, starting from Ghatasthapana (first day) and ending on Bijaya Dashami (last day of Dusshera)**.** Men also participate. |
| **HOW IT IS PERFORMED:**  - The Jhijhiya songs are sung while performing the dance by rotating around and around at a fixed position.  -During the dance, the performers place earthen pitchers on their heads and rotate while dancing.  - A fire lamp is placed inside the pitcher, and multiple holes are made on it.  - It is believed that if a witch can count the holes on the pitcher, the dancer will die immediately**.**  - The Jhijhiya dance begins after dancing at a holy site on the first day of Dusshera.  - After the formal start of the dance, it is customary to go from house to house and perform the dance.  - The dancers then request the owner of the house for grains and food, which will be offered on the final day.  - On Vijayadashami, final prayers are conducted, and the collected grains and money are used to host a feast. |
| **OCCASION:** Dusshera, festive occasions etc. |
| **ATTIRE:** The costumes typically feature bright and vibrant colours, which reflect the festive nature of the dance. Additionally, the attire is adorned with mirrors, embroidery, and intricate designs, which add a touch of glamour to the overall look. As a result, the costumes are visually captivating during performances.  The attire worn during the Jhijhiya dance in Bihar typically includes the following elements:   * **Angarkha**: A long, tunic-style upper garment with a flared silhouette, known as Angarkha, is traditionally worn. It is usually adorned with intricate embroidery and mirrorwork. * **Dhoti:** Male performers wear Dhoti, a traditional lower garment. It is a long piece of cloth that is wrapped around the waist and legs. * **Kurti:** Female performers wear a shorter tunic-style top that reaches the waist, known as Kurti. It is often embellished with colourful embroidery and mirror work. * **Lehenga or Ghagra**: Women wear a Lehenga or Ghagra, which is a flared skirt reaching the ankles. It is typically adorned with vibrant patterns and designs. * **Odhni or Dupatta**: Both male and female dancers wear a long scarf draped over the shoulder or head, known as Odhni or Dupatta. It adds elegance to the costume and can be used for various movements during the performance. * **Accessories**: Traditional jewellery, including necklaces, earrings, bangles, and anklets, is often worn by performers. * These accessories are typically made of silver or gold and are adorned with colourful stones and beads. |
| **MUSICAL INSTRUMENT**: Dholak tassa, Manjhira, bansuri, Harmonium |
| **SONGS:** While performing the dance, two types of songs are typically sung.   * The first type of song is a tribute to the goddess. * The second type is intended to protect against witches and dark magic. * These songs are an integral part of the dance and serve important purposes during the performance. * Below is a Jhijhiya song verse in the Maithili language, accompanied by its English translation.   *Tohare bharose Brahama Baba, Jhijhiya banailiai ho,*  *Brahma Baba Jhijhari par hoinyoun asawar* (in Maithili)  We humbly follow Jhijhiya, seeking your blessings, Father Brahma. Father Brahma, please join us in this observance. (English translation) |
| **ANOTHER NAME**: Jhijhari |
| **LEGENDARY STORY**: The dance form’s origin is uncertain, as it has been passed down orally.   * Legend has it that King Chitrasen had an infatuated queen who used black magic to pretend she was ill. She demanded Balruchi’s blood as the only cure, but he was freed by soldiers who brought deer blood instead. * Balruchi met an old witch in the forest, who adopted him when he asked for food and a place to stay. When the king and queen passed through the forest, they found Balruchi, but neither recognized him. * The king recognized Balruchi when he sang a song he knew. The old witch hurt Balruchi when he left with the king and queen, but the queen countered with magic to defeat her. * Balruchi was declared as the king’s successor, and the queen ordered tantrik rituals for his protection, which the public adopted. |
| **IN POP CULTURE**: In the 2023 Nepali movie “Ek Bhagavad Ra Ek Geeta”, a Jhijhiya tune was featured. The tune was based on folk lyrics. |

# CHHAU DANCE (H3)

Figure 8.26 Chhau Dance

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| **ORIGIN:** In Eastern India, the states of Bihar, Bengal, and Odisha. |
| **THEME:**   * The dance encompasses a variety of styles, ranging from joyous folk dances that celebrate martial arts, acrobatics, and athletics to more structured dances that incorporate religious themes found in Shaivism, Shaktism, and Vaishnavism. * The themes for these dances include local legends, folklore, episodes from the Ramayana and Mahabharata, and other abstract themes. |
| **ETYMOLOGY:** Chhau originates from Chhaya means shadow**.** |
| **PERFORMED BY:** The dance is a form that is typically performed by a group of men. |
| **OCCASION:** It is celebrated regionally, particularly during the spring season every year i.e. CHAITRA PARAB and during Sun festival.   * The dance is known for bringing together people from various socio-economic backgrounds, in a joyful and spiritual atmosphere. |
| **HOW IT IS PERFORMED:** It is a form of mask dance to narrate mythological stories by using vigorous martial arts movements.   * Chhau dance is a type of Indian dance that combines elements of semi-classical, martial, and folk traditions and is often spelt as Chhou dance. * This dance form may have emerged from a blend of classical Hindu dances with the ancient traditions of regional tribes. * The beginning of every Chhau dance show in Purulia involves a prayer to Lord Ganesha, who is a significant figure in Hindu mythology and is known as the god of success. * Male dancers perform the dance in an open space known as akhada or asar during the night. The dance is accompanied by traditional folk music played on the reed pipes, mohuri, and shehnai. The music ensemble is accompanied by various drums, including the cylindrical drum dhol, large kettle drum dhumsa, and kharka or chad-chadi. * The dance is rhythmic and follows the beats of the music. |
| **WHERE IT IS PERFORMED:**   * During nights in open spaces or fields. * MASHAALS (FIRE POLES) or Electric lights surround the dance arena**.** |
| **STYLES / FORMS:** For differentiation among these, the names of the districts are prefixed**.**   1. **SARAIKELLA CHHAU (JHARKHAND)**  * The foundation of Seraikela Chhau is **Phari-Khanda Khel**, signifying the play of sword and shield. * This style involves the use of masks as a crucial element. * The Seraikella Chhau originated in Seraikela during the reign of Kalinga's Ganapati Rule. * It is currently performed in the administrative headquarters of the Seraikela Kharsawan district of Jharkhand. * The technique and repertoire of the Seraikella Chhau were developed by the former nobility of this area, who served as both performers and choreographers. * Nowadays, people from all walks of life dance to Seraikella Chhau. * The Seraikella Chhau is performed with symbolic masks, and the acting conveys the character being portrayed. * This dance is particularly popular during the spring festival of Chaitra Parva, and it involves the participation of the entire community.  1. **MAYURBHANJ CHHAU (ODISHA- without mask)**  * The earliest dance in the Mayurbhanj Chhau is called **Ruk-maar-nacha**, which translates to the dance of attack and defence. * This dance is particularly popular during the spring festival of Chaitra Parva, and it involves the participation of the entire community. * It is technically identical to the Seraikella Chhau.  1. **PURULIA CHHAU (WEST BENGAL)**  * Purulia Chhau dance is held during the Sun festival. * The Purulia Chhau employs elaborate masks that take on the shape of the character being depicted; for instance, the face mask of a lion character is that of a lion, and the actor wears body costumes and moves on all fours. * These masks are made by potters who create clay images of Hindu gods and goddesses. They are mainly obtained from West Bengal's Purulia district. * The unique and traditional mask is what sets Purulia Chhau apart from other forms of the dance. * The performances end with a confrontation between two warriors. * There are two folk dances still practised in some remote villages of Orissa, which have leg extensions like those of Chhau. * These dances are **Paikali** and **Amdalia-Jamdalia Nacha**, in which the dancers adorn themselves with small branches of mango and jamun trees and dance while holding them. * In some numbers of these dances, masks without eyeholes are used. It is believed that these two dances are the precursors to Chhau. * It was also influenced by Nachni dance, which played a crucial role in shaping Chhau’s current identity. |
| **SIMILARITIES BETWEEN ALL FORMS**:   1. The leg extensions in Chhau styles are quite similar. 2. Chhau dances are traditionally performed as part of the Chaitra Parba festival, which takes place on the final day of the lunar month of Chaitra (March/April). 3. The same musical instruments are used in all Chhau styles.  * Including the Dhol, * a barrel-shaped drum with two faces. * the Dhumsa or Dhak ( a type of large kettledrum) * the Mahuri, a reeded wind instrument like the Shehnai, but with a sharper timbre. |
| **EVOLVED WITH TIME:**   1. The Mayurbhanj and Seraikela styles of Chhau have been highly developed thanks to the support and enthusiasm of the former princely states. These styles possess all the necessary elements of a classical dance. 2. Although less developed, Purulia Chhau is a highly dramatic style of Chhau that is known for being the most vigorous of all |
| **MASK – THE DIFFRENTIATOR**:   * Different Chhau styles vary in their use of masks. * Masks are used in some styles, while others don’t use them. * The styles of Seraikela and Purulia use masks in Chhau performances. * The masks used in Seraikela are more complex, whereas those used in Purulia are more dramatic. * The Mayurbhanj Chhau style does not incorporate the use of masks. |
| **THE AWE FACTOR:**   1. The Seraikela Chhau uses masks to create an intricate and poetic world of fantasy and beauty that draws from magnificent dreams. 2. The Purulia Chhau uses theatricality to bring our myths to life in a palpable way. 3. Without masks, the Mayurbhanj Chhau uses intense and passionate movements that are both free and rich, creating a visual poem that reflects nature’s storms, volcanoes, rivers, and lagoons. |
| **STORIES**: The Chhau dancers perform stories derived from various Indian literary works, including the Ramayana, the Mahabharata, the Puranas, and other Hindu epics, folklores etc. |
| **DERIVATION**:   * Chhau, a dance style that originates from East India, is believed to have its roots in the Sanskrit word Chaya, meaning shadow, image, or mask. * Some scholars link it to the Sanskrit root Chadma, meaning disguise. * Sitakant Mahapatra, suggest that it is derived from the Odia language word Chhauni, meaning military camp, armour, or stealth. |
| **FEATURES**:   1. Chhau dance in Purulia and Seraikella styles involves the use of masks as a crucial element. 2. The expertise in dance, music and mask-making is communicated through oral tradition. 3. In the northern region of Odisha, masks are not used during the Chhau dance performance, but they are utilized by the artists when they first step onto the stage to introduce themselves to the audience. 4. The Chhau dance has two styles that incorporate masks and combine elements of dance and martial arts.  * **KHEL**: Mock combat techniques. * **CHALIS AND TOPKAS**: Stylised gaits of animals and birds. * **UFLIS**: Movements inspired by the daily activities of village housewives, are all part of this dance. * Chhau dance, particularly the Purulia style, was influenced not only by **Paika and Natua, but also by Nachni dance**, which played a crucial role in shaping Chhau’s current identity.  1. **NACHNI DANCE**: was the primary source of the female gaits and movements that Chhau dance incorporated, bringing elegance, sensuality, and beauty to the dance form through the **Lasya Bhava from the Natya Shastra**. 2. Meanwhile, **SHIVA’S TANDAV STYLE** of dance is credited for the masculine male dance movements in Chhau. 3. Although there are different interpretations of tandava and lasya, the most accepted definitions have been mentioned above. 4. The relationship between lasya and tandava is a subject of debate in Sanskrit texts, and Mandakranta Bose has critically analysed this in his dance analysis. |
| **MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS**: Reed Pipes, Mohuri, Shehnai, Cylindrical drums, dhol, dhumsa, Chad-Chadi etc. |
| **RECOGINITION**:   * The UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity included the Chhau dance in 2010, recognizing its significance.   **GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES:**   1. The Government Chhau Dance Centre was established in 1960 in Seraikella, by the Government of Odisha. 2. The Mayurbhanj Chhau Nritya Pratisthan was established in 1962 at Baripada. 3. These institutions offer training to local gurus, artists, patrons, and Chhau institution representatives and sponsor performances. 4. The state government sponsors the Chaitra Parva festival, which holds great importance for the Chhau Dance. 5. The Sangeet Natak Akademi has set up a National Centre for Chhau Dance at Baripada, Odisha |
| **IN POP CULTURE**: Barfi, a Hindi movie, incorporates the Purulia Chhau in various scenes. |
| **FACT:**   1. **INTANGIBLE HERITAGE**: Purulia Chhau Dance has been included in UNESCO’s world heritage list of dances. 2. **G.I TAG**: The Chhau mask of Purulia is registered under Geographical Indications. 3. The Sutradhar community’s artists create these chhau masks, which undergo a series of stages during their production. 4. According to Mohan Khokar, this style of Chhau dance has no religious or ceremonial significance; it is purely a form of community celebration and entertainment. 5. The Royal family and renowned dancers such as the late Shree Rajkumar Suvendra Narayan Singhdeo and Late Brajendra Narayan Singhdeo were patrons of Seraikella Chhau, along with our revered gurus Padma Shree Suddhendra Narayan Singhdeo and Guru Padma Shree Kedarnath Sahoo who later became performers themselves. |

# WEST BENGAL <H2>

**“From the Sundarbans to Darjeeling, West Bengal, is a journey through mangroves, hills, and the warmth of Bengali hospitality.”**

**– Rabindranath Tagore**

Bengal, situated on the eastern edge of India, is an intriguing place with a unique culture at every turn. It is one of the most colourful and culturally rich states in India, famous for its mouth-watering cuisine, melodious music, and lively festivals. Bengal’s folk dances are incredibly expressive, full of elegance and colours, and are an excellent way to tell stories. They reflect the people’s faith and traditions, and experiencing them at least once is a must. The state of Bengal is bustling with life and wonder, making it one of India’s most popular states. Besides its architecture and sweets like the famous Rasagullas and Sondesh, Bengal has a staggering array of folk dances that are yet to be discovered. Each of these dances is prevalent in its respective region and celebrated with great enthusiasm. The garments and graceful hand movements of the dancers are a bonus for the spectators, who are lucky to witness these dances. Most of these folk dances have symbolic meanings that can be challenging to decipher. Therefore, a list of popular Folk Dances of West Bengal is provided below to help understand them a little better: Baul Dance, Santhali Dance, Gambhira Dance, Mundari Dance, Gajan Dance, Durga Puja Dhunuchi, Bratachari Dance, Laghur Nritya Dance, Dhali and Paika Nritya Dance.

# BAUL DANCE (H3)

Figure 8.27 Baul Performance with Ektara

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| **ORIGIN:**   * They hail from Bangladesh and various neighbouring Indian states, including West Bengal, Tripura, Assam’s Barak Valley, and Meghalaya * The Bauls are a collection of mystical musicians who combine elements of Sufism, Vaishnavism, and Tantra. |
| **THEMES OF SONGS**:   * Baul songs have always had a penchant for adapting to social and economic advancements, in addition to featuring conventional themes inspired by rural life. * The contemporary Baul compositions frequently discuss mystical subjects using modern, metropolitan, and technological language, and it is common to find Baul verses that mention elements such as cell phones, radio stations, football games, and television. |
| **HOW IT IS PERFORMED**:   * Individuals usually perform baul dances, but they also perform duets or group dances at their akhda. * Bauls shake their heads and locks of hair or twirl around and move their arms and feet while dancing, but there are no ritualised gestures. * The dance involves the ektara in a prominent role, which is sometimes held close to the ears and sometimes high up. * This dance is particularly popular in the Kushtia and Jessore districts of Bangladesh and the Burdwan and Birbhum districts of West Bengal. |
| **ETYMOLOGY**: The name Baul has a disputed origin, and its etymology is a topic of debate.   * According to popular belief, the term “Baul” originated from the Arabic word “Baur,” which connotes a sense of arbitrariness, chaos, or madness. * Shashibhusan Dasgupta has proposed that the origin of the word may be traced back to the Sanskrit word **VATULA**, which has several meanings, including “enlightened”, “detached from the world”, “god’s madcap”, “seeker of truth”, and “lashed by the wind to the point of losing one’s sanity”. * Another possible origin is **VYAKULA**, which means “restless” or “agitated”. * Both derivations are consistent with the contemporary sense of the term, which refers to individuals who are inspired and have a fervent desire for a spiritual life. * Such individuals seek to realise their union with the eternal beloved, known as Moner Manush, who resides in the heart. * The term Baul signifies madness and is associated with intense love, as depicted in the folk song “Pagol Chara Duniya Chole Na.” This line suggests that the world requires madness to thrive. |
| **PERFORMED BY**: Men and Women   * Sevadasis, also known as “service slaves”, are women who dedicate themselves to serving ascetics. * In the act of devotion, a male Baul can have one sevadasi associated with him. * The people have high regard for folk dance due to its highly spiritual and cosmic values. |
| **MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS**: Bauls utilize various musical instruments.   * Ektara (which is a single-stringed “plucked drum” drone instrument made from bamboo, goatskin, and carved from the epicarp of a gourd) * Dotara (a long-necked fretless lute, usually has four metal strings, even though its name means “two stringed,” and it is crafted from the wood of a jackfruit or neem tree) * Khamak (which is a one-headed drum with a string attached to it that is plucked), and is similar to the ektara, except that it does not employ bamboo to stretch the string, which is held by one hand while being plucked by the other. * Drums such as the duggi ( a small hand-held earthen drum). * Dhol and Khol * Kartal (small cymbals) * Manjira * Bamboo Flute * Ghunghur and Nupur are anklets with bells that ring while the person wearing them dances. |
| **ATTIRE**: Eastern India’s Bauls wear vibrant orange and red clothing and have a distinct manner of congregating. |
| **GROUPS:**   * Bauls are categorized into various named groups, with each group following a designated Hindu or Muslim guru. * There exist other communities that have recognized or associated themselves with Bauls. * Communities such as  1. Darbesi 2. Nera 3. Two sub-sects of Kartabhajas namely Aul and Sai. |
| **CLASSES:**   * There exist two types of Bauls.  1. One who are ascetic and refuse to indulge in family life. 2. The other who lives with their families.  * The ascetic Bauls give up their connection with society and family and depend on donations to survive. * They do not have a permanent residence, but rather move around from one akhda to another. |
| **COMMON IDEOLOGY:**   * All the bauls had one belief in common - that God resides within the heart of every individual, and no organized religion, prophet, or priest can assist in finding Him within. * According to them, both temples and mosques act as obstacles in the path of truth, and hence, the search for God must be carried out by each person individually and independently. |
| **INFLUENCES:**   * The culture of Bengal was significantly influenced by the songs and way of life of the Bauls. * Among the various artists who were inspired by the Bauls, Rabindranath Tagore was particularly impacted, as evidenced by his numerous speeches about them during the 1930s in Europe. * He compiled an essay based on these speeches, which eventually became his English book **“The Religion of Man”.** |
| **REKNOWNED PLACES:**   * The Baul Dance culture is well-known in various places. * Such as Malda, Bankura, Birbhum, Rampurhat, Bardhhaman, Medinipur, Nadia, Dinajpur, and Murshidabad. * At one time, Bauls were only found in rural areas of West Bengal, but over time, this culture has also spread to urban areas of West Bengal. |
| **EVENTS**:   * A Mela (fair) is held in Jaydev Kenduli village of Birbhum district, West Bengal, on Makar Sankranti in the month of Poush to commemorate the poet Jayadeva. * The fair is so popular amongst Bauls that it is also known as “Baul Fair”. * During Poush Mela in Shanti Niketan village of West Bengal, numerous Bauls gather to captivate people with their music. * “Baul Fakir Utsav” is an annual music event that has been held in Kolkata since 2006. * Bauls from different districts of Bengal and Bangladesh come to perform over a period of two days. |
| **HISTORY:**   * The exact origin of the Bauls is uncertain. * The term “Baul” has been documented in Bengali literature dating back to the 15th century. * The word is mentioned in Vrindavana Dasa Thakura’s “Chaitanya Bhagavata” and Krishnadasa Kaviraja’s “Chaitanya Charitamrita”. |
| **FACT:**   * Every year, many Bauls and their devotees attend the Jaydeb Mela in Kenduli, near Bolpur, during January. The event draws large crowds. * Bengali Bauls are an integral part of the rural cultural fabric. * In 2005, the Baul tradition of Bangladesh was included in the list of [Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Masterpieces_of_the_Oral_and_Intangible_Heritage_of_Humanity) by [UNESCO](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/UNESCO). * The philanthropic ideology and everlasting art form of the Bauls had a significant impact on the freedom movement. * Lalon is the most famous Baul Saint and is also recognized as Lalongeti. Baul is another name for Lalon |
| **IN POP CULTURE**:   * In London, during the Hyde Park concerts of 1971, 1972 and 1978, a Baul family performed on stage before thousands of people, including The Rolling Stones. * Famous Baul song by [Gagan Harkara](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gagan_Harkara): “ Ami kothai pabo tare, amar moner manush je re” * The ideology of Baul had a strong impact on Tagore’s own musical compositions, which also feature many Baul tunes. * The message of non-sectarian devotion through love, promoted by Baul music, has also influenced other Bengali poets, including Kazi Nazrul Islam. * The following well-known [*Rabindra Sangeet*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rabindra_Sangeet) is heavily influenced by Baul theme:   *“Amar praner manush achhe prane tai here taye shokol khane Achhe she noyōn-taray, alōk-dharay, tai na haraye--* *ogo tai dekhi taye Jethay shethay* *taka-i ami je dik-pane”*   * Western Bauls group who can be found in America and Europe. * They are led by Lee Lozowick, a disciple of Yogi Ramsuratkumar. * While their music is characterized by rock, gospel, and blues, they still maintain the essence of Eastern spiritual practices. |

# GAMBHIRA (H3)

Figure 8.28 A Gambhira Performance

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| **ORIGIN:**   * Gombhir or Gambhira or Gamvira is a type of Bengali song and dance that originates from the Bengal region, which is now known as north-western Bangladesh and north-eastern West Bengal, India. * The art form of Gambhira is said to have originated from the cultural practices of the Koch people who lived in the Malda region. |
| THEME: The themes are social, political, economic, and moral issues of contemporary culture and society. |
| **STORIES BEHIND THE LEGACY**:   * Gambhira used to be celebrated as a Puja in ancient times. * However, during the Middle Ages, several Hindu communities began celebrating the Puja of Dharma Thakur, a notorious Hindu deity, during the last three days of the Bengali year. * This later came to be known as the SHIVA GAJAN. * In history, Shiva was believed to be present during actual performances. * In Bengal, Gambhira is a famous devotional dance performed by worshippers of Shakti. It derives its name from the dance hall of the Chandi Mandir, which is known as Gambhira. There is a specially constructed pavilion for the dance in front of the shrine. * One of the most popular devotional dances in Bengal is Gambhira. The tunes of Gambhira are believed to have originated from the worship of the god Shiva because he is also known as Gambhir. * Loko Utsav is a popular festival in Malda, and Gambhira is a significant part of it. * This festival is confined to Malda and is known as "Loko Utsav" or Local Festival. It has become the heartbeat of the people living in rural areas. * It is closely associated with local agricultural customs, particularly the cultivation of mangoes, as well as the veneration of the Hindu deity Shiva. |
| **WHO PERFORMS:**   * The Rajbanshi, Chnai, Koch, and Mahali communities are primarily known for celebrating the festival Gambhira |
| **OCCASION:** Chaitra Sankranti, LOKO Utsav   * The lifestyle of village people is reflected in the word “Lok”, and they celebrate their happiness by coming together during the “Loko Utsav” festival. |
| **HOW IT IS PERFORMED:**   * The Gambhira dance is usually performed on a song with the same name. * The performance includes two main dancers and a chorus. * Prior to the performance, an idol of Shiva is installed in an open hut. * The performance itself is typically divided into five parts. * All characters, including females and goddesses, are played by male performers. * The two main dancers enact the roles of nana (maternal grandfather) and nati (grandson), respectively. * The performer who plays the character of Nati wears a string of bells around his ankles. * Through this dance, the performers engage in dialogue and express their concerns about social, political, economic, and moral issues of contemporary culture and society. * The chorus repeats the catchphrase from the song behind the two main dancers. * This dance form combines various art forms, including dialogue, dance, songs, and music, and appears like a documentary dance form or a folk play. * When the chorus repeats the refrain, the two main dancers perform the dance, and when they sing and perform, the chorus takes a backstage. * The Gambhir dancers of Maldah are famous for wearing masks during the performance. * Performers undergo rigorous training and preparation before the performance. * The performance is divided into different segments, each showcasing different aspects of the dance form. * The audience often participates in the performance, adding to its overall impact.  1. **FIRST PART**: This performance is called bondolan, and performers sing and dance together to invoke Shiva.  * An actor portraying Shiva, costumed with matted hair and tiger skin, listens to the troubles of the audience.  1. **SECOND PART**: This part consists of solo dance performances, with dancers wearing masks, makeup and costumes to represent deities such as Kali, Chamunda, Shiva or individuals from Puranic literature. 2. **THIRD PART**: This part of the performance, charyari, is a skit performed by four actors, and the subject matter changes between scenes.  * The acting is accompanied by gestures, comical body movements, and music to heighten the comedy. * The music is often adapted from popular songs from Bengali and Hindi cinema to match the tone of the skits. * The dialogues do not follow a set script and tend to be improvised around an overarching theme.  1. The skit is followed by a performance featuring satirical comments and sociopolitical critique through song and dialogue. 2. **TOPPATHUNGRI**: A brief musical interlude known as toppathungri is then performed before the final part of the performance. 3. **FINAL PART**: It is called “reporting,” this involves actors playing the role of media persons reporting on current issues in the area. |
| **COSTUME:**  The Gambhira folk dance of West Bengal is known for its vibrant and charming costumes worn by both male and female dancers. These traditional attires are an essential element in reflecting the cultural heritage of the region. The Gambhira costumes have their unique features, and here are some details about them.   * **Male Costume**: * Male Gambhira dancers typically dress in a dhoti, which is a rectangular piece of cloth that is wrapped around the waist and extends down to the ankles. * The dhoti is often made from cotton or silk and is frequently decorated with colourful borders or patterns. * They match the dhoti with a kurta (long shirt) that is loose-fitting and comfortable, which can be plain or adorned with intricate embroidery. * The kurta is generally short-sleeved. * The dancers may also wear a vest over the kurta to add an extra touch of elegance. * To complete the outfit, a colourful headgear or turban is often worn, which adds a hint of regality to the overall appearance. * **Female Costume**: * Female dancers who perform the Gambhira dance, are seen donning vibrant and ornate saris. * These saris are essentially long pieces of fabric that are wrapped around the body, with one end draped over the shoulder. * The fabric used in making these saris is usually rich in colour and features traditional motifs or intricate patterns. * The dancers may opt for saris made from silk, cotton, or other lightweight fabrics that allow for fluid movements. * To complement the sari, a matching blouse is also worn, which can either be simple or decorated with embroidery and embellishments. * The dancers also accessorize themselves with traditional jewellery, such as necklaces, earrings, bangles, and anklets, to enhance their overall look. * **Accessories:** Gambhira dancers don a range of accessories to enhance the visual appeal of their performances, in addition to their main costumes. * Both male and female dancers wear metal or wooden bangles on their hands and colourful thread bracelets on their wrists. * They may also adorn their fingers with rings and finger ornaments. * To make their performances more captivating, they often apply decorative face paint or makeup to accentuate their facial expressions. * **NOTE:** The attire used for Gambhira showcases the cultural legacy of West Bengal and aims to enhance the visual appeal to match the lively and emotive dance routines. * The vivid hues, detailed designs, and customary ornaments are instrumental in capturing the essence of this enchanting folk dance style. |
| **FEATURES:**   * The Gambhira dance is a significant part of the traditional performing arts in the region. * With its lively music, rhythmic movements, and vibrant energy, it has become an integral part of West Bengal’s cultural fabric. * Bengali culture regards folk dancing as a special part of their traditions, complementing their good practices with colour and ceremonies. * Initially, these dances were mainly for farming or worship purposes. * West Bengal’s Gambhira folk dance serves as a testament to the state’s rich cultural heritage. * The dance mesmerizes its audience through its performances and educates them, connecting them with their roots. * Gambhira serves as a bridge between the past and the present, reminding us of the importance of preserving and celebrating our diverse traditions. * By appreciating and promoting Gambhira, we contribute to the vibrant tapestry of West Bengal’s cultural legacy and keep the spirit of this enchanting dance form alive for generations to come. |
| **MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS:**   * Musical instruments like harmonium, flute, Dhak (a cylindrical drum), Dholak ( a hand drum), cymbals and Judi are used while performing the Gambhira dance. * Additionally, they wear ankle bells called NATI on their feet. |
| **MUSIC:**   * The music of Gambhira is influenced by an earlier tradition called Bolbahi or Bolbhai, which comprises songs and skits featuring portrayals of local events, figures, and controversies. |
| MASK: The local Sutradhar community make masks using neem and fig trees.   * Occasionally, they also crafted masks out of clay. |
| **SONGS:**   * The origin of Gambhira’s songs is believed to be associated with the worship of the deity Shiva, also known as ‘Gambhir’. * The folk songs are performed by local artists in troupes and often consist of written verses. |
| **REGION WHERE PERFORMED**:   * Gombhira performances are mainly concentrated around the Malda District in West Bengal (India). * In Bangladesh, the Chapai Nawabganj District serves as the primary centre for this tradition. * The nearby districts of Rajshahi and Naogaon are also popular for this art form. |
| **TRANSFORMATION WITH TIME:**   * Comparisons have been made between earlier versions of gambhira and the festival of Gajan, which also placed emphasis on the worship of Shiva. * Gambhira festivals were originally held for a period of four to five days, with the performative components occurring on the second and third days. * These were referred to as **Choto Tamasha**, where children would perform masked dances, and **Bado Tamasha**, where adults would enact skits. * In the early twentieth century, gambhira underwent a significant transformation and became recognised as a public platform for villagers to present their concerns to deities such as Shiva, who was considered an ally of the people. * Since then, it has maintained its popularity and relevance by highlighting local issues through public satirical skits. * Gambhira is still performed by troupes today in various regions, including Dinajpur, Rangpur, and Rajshahi in Bangladesh. * In these regions, figures of a maternal grandfather and his grandson are used to critique socio-political issues. * It is also performed in the Malda and Murshidabad districts of West Bengal (India) |
| **FROM THE AUTHOR’S PEN:**   * In the book “Addyer Gambhira,” Mr. Haridas Palit made a comment that in ancient times, a house that resembled Chandimandap was referred to as Gombhir or Gambhira. * Pushpajit Roy has stated in his book “Gambhira” that Gambhira is not just a type of song, but it represents a complete ritualistic play. |
| FACT: -   * Although this dance has lost much of its popularity, it is still performed in Rajshahi. * It is often spelled as GOMBHIR or Gambhira or Gamvira. * The Election Commission (EC) has collaborated with Chhau performers from Purulia and Gambhira artistes in Malda to boost voter turnout in the upcoming elections. * To achieve this goal, a deal has been struck with Doordarshan to broadcast these programs. |

# JHARKHAND <H2>

**“In the heart of Chotanagpur plateau, Jharkhand is a repository of tribal cultures, where the hills echo with the rhythm of local traditions.”**

**– Birsa Munda**

Jharkhand, a relatively new state carved out of Bihar in 2000, is home to many hidden treasures that are yet to be discovered by most people. Nature in this state is at its finest, with gentle flowing rivers such as Damodar, Brahmani, Kharkai and Subarnarekha adding to the natural charm of the region. Jharkhand is a place where one can hear silence, and taste the elegance of nature, with hill streams bubbling like a young adivasi's laughter. Abundant mineral wealth, flora and fauna make this state a true heaven on earth. The many tribes that inhabit this part of the country are spread all over the state, with Jharkhand emerging culturally as an important multi-ethnic state.

Jharkhand is home to over thirty indigenous communities that coexist harmoniously. The Santhals, Oraons, Mundas, Kharias, Hos and Cheros are some of the major tribes that have rich cultures and traditions, celebrating several colourful festivals. As these tribal communities began clearing forests for settlements, their journey of life is reflected in the rhythm of different tribal and folk dances of the state.

Jharkhand is a land of diverse culture, with natural wonders thriving alongside its inhabitants. The cultural heritage of Jharkhand is a fusion of different civilizations, ways of life, traditions and more. The different tribal communities residing in Jharkhand are closely intertwined with nature, and the folk culture of their tribes, with unique histories behind their songs and dances, is a major attraction of the region.

Various tribal groups inhabit Jharkhand, and their way of living is deeply connected with nature. The folk culture of the tribals is one of the main attractions of Jharkhand, with their folk songs and dances having unique histories. These dances are an integral part of India's rich folk culture and have their own stories and significance. Jhumair, Mardana Jhumair, Janani Jhumair, Domkach, Lahasua, Jhumta, Fagua, Paika, Chhau, Firkal, Mundari and Santali are some of the folk and tribal dances in Jharkhand.

# JHUMAIR DANCE (H3)

Figure 8.29 Janani Jhumar

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| **ORIGIN:** The Sadan tribe, who are an Indo-Aryan ethnic group from Chotanagpur Jharkhand, have this folk dance associated with their culture. |
| **THEME:** The joyful lives of the tribal people of Jharkhand are celebrated through this lively folk dance. |
| **OCCASION:** Harvest season and Festivals. |
| **PERFORMED BY**: It is a broad dance performed by men and women separately. |
| **HOW IT IS PERFORMED:**   * The dance is typically performed outdoors. * Performers stand in a line while holding hands, singing couplets, swaying their bodies, clapping hands, and occasionally jumping in unison. * The dance follows a human chain formation. * Typically, men are the ones who dance while singing the melodic tune that accompanies the dance. * The dancers always move in a circular shape, holding each other's hands as they go. |
| **VARIETIES / STYLES:**  The following are different types of Jhumar dance:   1. Khortha Jhumar 2. Kurmali Jhumar 3. Panch Pargarnia Jhumar 4. Nagpuri Jhumar 5. Mardani Jhumar  * Mardani Jhumar is also known as Mardana Jhumar. * It is a type of folk dance that is primarily performed by men. * In the Indian states of Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, and Odisha. * This dance is usually performed during fairs that follow the harvest season. * During this dance, men wear ghungroos, hold swords and shields, and dance in a circle by holding each other’s hands. * Dancers move in groups, holding hands and forming long lines. * They bounce and stir together, causing fluttering movements and wandering feet on the ground. Their shoulders and arms brush against each other as they move forward. * The musical instruments used in this dance include Mandar, nagara, dhak, and Shehnai or Bansi (bansuri). * The dance movements reflect masculine energy. * Sometimes, female dancers known as Nacni also accompany the men.  1. Janani Jhumar  * Janani Jhumar, also known as Janani Jhumair. * It is a traditional folk-dance originating from the Chhota Nagpur Plateau region of Jharkhand, India. * This dance is performed exclusively by women. * This dance is accompanied by the music of instruments such as mandar, dhol, and Bansi. * During the dance, the women hold each other’s hands and form a linear line, moving in a circular motion. * The dance movements are characterized by their feminine grace. * While women sing and dance, men play musical instruments. * The Janani Jhumar is typically performed during the festivals of Karam and Jitiya. * It is also known as Angnai when performed in the courtyard. * Depending on the occasion and dancing style, Angnai can be divided into several types, such as Chandhantari, Pahilsanjha, Adhratiya, Bhinsariya, Udhaowa, Thadauwa, Lahasua, Khemta, Daiddhara, and Raskrida. * The dance is classified into various categories based on the region, including Purbaha, Pachhimaha, Uttaraha, Dakshinaha, Sonpuriya, Nagpuriya, Jashpuriya, Gangpuriya, Henthghatiya, and Assamiya. * The dance season begins in the month of Ashadh (June-July) and continues till Deouthan till Kartik (October-November). |
| **SONGS LYRICS:**   * The Jhumair lyrics are composed using everyday language and typically illustrate the joys and sorrows of everyday life, with a focus on love and pleasure. |
| **MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS:**   * Mandar, Dhol, Nagara, Bansuri, Shehnai, and Dhak are all instruments used in the music. |
| **COSTUMES:**   * The performance’s mood is accentuated by the vivid costumes that are full of colour. |
| **OTHER STATES PERFORMING JHUMAIR**: This Indian folk dance is popular in several Indian states.   * Jharkhand, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Assam, Bihar, and West Bengal. |

# FAGUA DANCE (H3)

Figure 8.30 Fagua Dance

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| **ORIGIN**: The Sandhikal of Falgun and Chaita are celebrated through a dance. |
| **THEME**: The arrival of the spring season is commemorated by performing a dance, which is believed to be a time of happiness and rejuvenation. |
| **OCCASION:**   * Holi is celebrated by the people through a performance known as the Phagua dance. * This dance is typically performed in the Phagun month of the Hindu calendar, which falls between February and March. * The exact dates of the celebration vary every year based on the lunar calendar. |
| **PERFORMED BY:**   * Male oriental dance has been traditionally performed by men, but nowadays, it is also performed by women. * This dance is a community activity that encourages everyone, regardless of their caste, creed, or gender, to participate and celebrate together. |
| **HOW IT IS PERFORMED**:   * Phagua is a lively dance that is performed by male dancers. * In some regions, a few female dancers also participate in the dance. * The dance is accompanied by folk songs and drumbeats, which form an essential part of the performance. * As the dancers move to the music, they throw coloured water and powder at each other. * The dancers exhibit a variety of movements, with professionals or skilled dancers usually performing the dance. The dance is characterized by fast paced and acrobatic movements, with the dancers executing jumps and spins while holding their props. * They also form circles and lines and engage in mock battles with each other. * As the dancers move, a singer loudly sings folk songs, creating an atmosphere that reflects the joy in the hearts of the people.   **TRADITIONAL FORM**:   * A traditional Phagua dance performance usually begins with the dancers gathering in a circle around the musicians, who are usually positioned in the centre. * The dancers then move in a synchronized manner, following the rhythm of the drums and other instruments. * As the performance progresses, the dancers incorporate the use of their props, such as sticks or swords, into their movements. * They also create different formations and patterns, including circles, lines, and zig-zags. * The dancers often showcase their acrobatic abilities, performing jumps and spins in the air, which adds an element of excitement and thrill to the performance. * Some dancers may also perform solo acts, highlighting their individual skills and talents. * Throughout the dance, the music and movements become progressively faster and more energetic, building up to a climax towards the end of the performance. * The dancers may also engage in simulated combat with each other, using their props to create mock battles. |
| **ATTIRE:**   * The attire worn by the dancers is as vibrant and colourful as the festival itself. * **WOMEN:** They typically wear bright-coloured traditional sarees or lehengas, along with jewellery and bangles. * **MEN:** They wear dhotis and kurtas in equally bright colours, complemented by turbans or headbands. * The fabric used is satin and has a shiny finish, making it visually appealing. * A cloth of contrasting colour is tied around the waist, while a turban is worn to complete the traditional look * Both men and women wear scarves and carry props such as sticks, swords, or shields. * The costumes and accessories are often adorned with intricate embroidery, mirror work, and other decorative elements, which enhance the overall visual appeal of the performance. |
| **MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS:**   * The Phagua dance, a folk dance performed during the Holi festival, is accompanied by traditional musical instruments that contribute to the overall festive atmosphere. * The dance is accompanied by various instruments such as the dhol, nagada, shehnai, flute, and dhak. * The dhol and nagada are percussion instruments that provide rhythmic beats, while the shehnai and flute add melody and harmony. * The dhak is a type of drum that is used to create a loud and powerful sound, particularly during the more intense parts of the performance. * Skilled musicians who are well-versed in the traditional music of Jharkhand play these instruments, and their music is an integral part of the Phagua dance. * The dance features loud beats produced by instruments. * The lively and energetic rhythm created by these instruments complements the dance movements of the performers, making the Phagua dance of Jharkhand a unique and captivating experience. |
| **PROPS**: Sticks, swords, and shields are all examples of props. |
| **OTHER STATES**: Phagua, a type of dance, is well-liked by the tribes living in Jharkhand and the neighbouring states of BIHAR. |
| **A LEGACY:**   * Phagua dance serves as a means of both entertainment and cultural preservation within the region. * This dance has been handed down through the generations and is an essential component of the social and cultural tapestry of the Jharkhandi people. |
| **MYTHOLOGICAL STORY:**   * The religious significance of the dance is attributed to its celebration of Lord Krishna, who is associated with the Holi festival. * Moreover, it is believed to symbolize the triumph of good over evil, marking the victory of the deity Vishnu over the demon Holika. |
| **A FEEL GOOD FACTOR:**   * The Phagua Dance of Jharkhand is a mesmerizing form of folk dance that encapsulates the essence of happiness, festivity, and togetherness. * It has its roots deeply embedded in the cultural fabric of the region and serves as a medium for the community to unite, express their enthusiasm, and celebrate the onset of spring. * The dance’s lively movements, vibrant attire, and rhythmic beats create an exhilarating ambiance that leaves a long-lasting impression on everyone, be it performers or onlookers. * Not only does the Phagua Dance preserve Jharkhand’s cultural heritage, but it also strengthens the bonds of harmony and camaraderie among its people. * Through its dynamic showcase of artistry and tradition, the Phagua Dance continues to captivate and inspire generations, ensuring that the rich cultural legacy of Jharkhand thrives and flourishes. |
| **IN NEWS:**   * 1st November 2023: The Governor delivered a speech at the Maharashtra Raj Bhavan Mumbai during the State Formation Day programme of Jharkhand on Wednesday, November 1st, 2023. * This event was organized under the ‘Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat’ initiative of the Indian Government. * The cultural performances included folk dances and traditions from Jharkhand, which were presented by local artists. * The cultural programme showcased dance forms such as Chhat Puja, Chhau dance, Kavad Yatra, Paika dance, Fagua dance, Karam dance, Maghe dance among others. |

# ODISHA <H2>

**“In the land of temples and beaches, Odisha is a mosaic of ancient traditions, where the Konark Sun Temple stands as a testament to artistic brilliance.”**

**– Kalpana Dash**

Odisha is renowned for its cultural heritage, which comprises diverse art forms, and among them, dance holds a significant place. The traditional dance forms of the state are deeply rooted in ancient scriptures, temple customs, and local legends, which showcase the vibrant and dynamic cultural landscape of Odisha.

Odisha's folk dances are a treat to watch and a visual delight. The earthy rhythmic foot-tapping music is so mesmerizing that it urges you to shake a leg or two, even if you don't understand the song at times. The beat of the drums, melodious songs, graceful body movements with unique poses and simple steps combine to become a dancing delight. The bright and stunning costumes, accessorized with colourful beads, silver ornaments, and charming headgear, jangle and clang, add to the freshness of the traditional rural flavour. Folk dances in Odisha are closely associated with games, festivals, marriages, and religious ceremonies. Every dance form has its local variations as they are influenced by the respective local tradition, way of living, or social environment. These dances have significantly enriched the cultural heritage of the country. Some of the major folk dances that you can find in Odisha are Chhau, Gotipua, Danda Nata, Sambapuri, Dalkhai, Chaitighoda, and Medha Nach, etc.

# SAMBALPURI DANCE (H3)

Figure 8.31 Sambalpuri Dance

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| **ORIGIN:** The Sambalpuri folk dance has its roots in the Sambalpur District of Odisha and is a traditional dance style of western Odisha. |
| **A CULTURAL HERITAGE:**   * The Sambalpuri folk dance is a form that displays the techniques of martial arts. * Throughout history, there have been numerous examples of wars where the brave sons of the country fought with courage. * One such instance is the “Kalinga War,” which demonstrated exemplary bravery. * In the third century BC, the people of Odisha fought against Ashoka’s powerful army. * Emperor Kharavela proved his loyalty by conquering and establishing his country in large parts of India. * These dance forms continue to embody the spirit of the people, and the remnants of a rich cultural heritage that existed in ancient times are still evident in the portrayal of heroic exploits. |
| **THEME:**   * The theme of this dance form is the eternal love story of Radha and Lord Krishna. * The Sambalpuri dance forms are mostly performed to convey the prayers to the deities. |
| **PERFORMED BY:**  A dance form named Dhalkhai is performed by the young girls of several communities of Soura, Mirdha and Binjhals tribes during Bhaijiuntia, Dussehra and several festive occasions.  The performing artists are young women of different tribes in different districts of Odisha.  In this case, male artists include women, such as drummers and musicians. |
| **OCCASIONS:** Harvest season, festivals, Fairs, Weddings etc. |
| **HOW IT IS PERFORMED:**   * The presentation of Sambalpuri dance is enthralling and enjoyable for everyone in attendance. * Tribal and rural culture is infused in both the singing and dancing of this performance. * Throughout the show, young girls intermittently sing and dance, forming lines or semicircles while singing traditional Dalkhai songs. * This unique genre includes the phrase ‘Dalkhai Go’ as an address to a girlfriend. * To the enigmatic Dhol Rhythm, the girls dance while keeping their legs close together and kneeling during some movements. * For others, they move back and forth in a half-sitting position. * At times, the girls create clockwise and anti- clockwise circles during their performance. |
| **SONGS:** The songs are a special genre with the addition of ‘Dalkhai Go’ which is an address to a girlfriend. |
| **SONGS COMPOSITION:**  The love story of Radha and Krishna, the episodes from Ramayana and Mahabharat, and the description of natural scenery are represented through the songs. |
| **MUSIC:**   * The acoustic instruments used in the folk music of western Odisha enjoy a special status for their rarity. * Moreover, these instruments are the real objects that create the indisputable presence of beautiful human styles. * ‘Dulduli’ music, a music orchestra of western Orissa’s folk music, combines Dhol, Nisan, Tasha, Jhanj, Dandua Dhol, Mandal, and Muhuri. |
| **MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS:**  Dhol, Madhuri, Nisan, Jhanj, Dandua Dhol, Mandal, Tasha and many other musical instruments are also included in this dance. |
| **FORMS:**   * Sambalpuri folk dance is another form of Dalkhai dance. |
| **ATTIRE:**   * The attractive attire worn by the dancers consists of Sambalpuri Sarees, which are very eye-catching. * The dancers also wear animal feathers on their heads, adding to their overall appearance. * The Sambalpuri Saris worn by women are usually colourful and vibrant. These saris are adorned with a variety of dyed yarns made from different materials and feature floral and animal motifs that suit the folk dance perfectly. * In the dance, the women wear a scarf draped over their shoulders, with the ends held below by both hands. |
| **JEWELLERY:**   * They use several silver ornaments such as local Katria, Bandria, and Bahati to appear magnificent. * The dancers adorn herself with traditional jewellery including bangles, armlets, bracelets, necklaces with thread khagala, Pan Petri, flowers on the head, earrings, nose rings, and anklets. * The red Alta applied around the dancer's feet enhances the liveliness of the dance. * The male dancer wears a simple khadi cloth and a Sambalpuri Hawaii shirt. * He ties a red towel around his waist, and his ornaments consist of a herbal root necklace and a turban adorned with peacock feathers. * The Sambalpuri dance is a source of pride for Odisha. |
| **TRANSFORMATION WITH TIME:**   * Sambalpuri dance forms have undergone numerous changes since their inception, aimed at making them more appealing, comfortable, and impactful, despite factors such as dialect, climate, and behavioural diversity in Sambalpur. * **Originally,** this dance was performed to appease the gods, placate the invisible soul, also known as atma, and to combat evil. * These dances were traditionally performed during weddings, festivals, fairs, and during the harvest season. |
| **REACHABILITY**:   * The dance form of Sambalpuri has gained immense popularity due to its enthralling and exciting presentations such as ‘Rasarkeli’, ‘Dalkhai’, ‘Maelajad’, ‘Bayar man’ and ‘Chutuku Chuta’. * The dance is known for its striking features of scintillating foot movements and teaming pauses. * The heart-thrilling rhythm of dhol, drum, flute, and dholak along with the tinkling of ghungroos adds to the overall appeal of the dance. * The Sambalpur Kala Parishad, which is responsible for the promotion of this dance, has played a vital role in its revolutionary growth. |
| **LEGENDRY FOLKLORE:** According to legend, Sambalpur’s first Chauhan king, Balaram Dev, found the image of the presiding deity of Sambalpur under a silk cotton tree in the middle of the 16th century AD. |
| **AUTHOR’S PEN:**   * In his famous book “Geographika”, Greek geographer Ptolemy describes the existence of Sambalpur in the second century AD under the name “Sambalaka” on the banks of the Mahananda River. * The modern names of Sambalpur and Mahanadi refer to the ancient names Sambalaka and Mahananda, respectively. * In Taverner’s travelogues, a French traveler, there is a reference to a region rich in diamonds called “Sumelpur” that supplied them to the Roman Empire. * The current Sambalpur is the Sumelpur referred to in the travelogues. |
| **A GLOBAL TOUCH**:  During the 18th G20 Summit held in Delhi in 2023, Kristalina Georgieva, the head of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), couldn’t resist the urge to dance to “Dalkhai Re,” a Sambalpuri folk song |
| **IN POP CULTURE:**   * One of the most popular recorded songs in Sambalpuri Odia is “Rangabati”. * The song features Krishna Patel, a female singer who was awarded the Padma Shri in 2023, and Jitendra Haripal, a male singer who was awarded the Padma Shri in 2017. * The song has gained worldwide fame and is set to be released in Chinese. Korean dancers performed to the song during the 7th World Water Forum in Daegu, South Korea. * It was also featured in the Bollywood movie Kaun Kitne Pani Mein directed by Nila Madhaba Panda. * Additionally, MTV India’s Coke Studio Season 4 remade the song with composer Ram Sampath, Sona Mohapatra, and Rituraj Mohanty. * Anupam Nayak, an Odia choreographer known for combining dance and fitness, has launched a new brand called “Bworkz” |

# GHUMURA DANCE (H3)

Figure 8.32 Ghumura Dance

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| **ORIGIN:**   * The dance form is native to Kalahandi and has its roots in the Indrāvati Peninsula. * The picturesque waterfall in the valley was first stumbled upon by the Chindaka Nagas of Chakrakota. The dance style gradually expanded into the regions between Indravati and Mahanadi, hinting at its origin dating back to the 10th century A.D. |
| **ETYMOLOGY:**   * The word Ghumura is formed by combining the words GHUM+UU+RAA. * The term “Ghum” refers to an earthen pot, “Uu” means creation, and “Raa” stands for sound. * Therefore, Ghumura refers to the earthen pot from which the sound of “Ghum”, “Ghum” is created. |
| **PERFORMED BY:**   * This is a male dance performed by 15 to 40 persons. |
| **TRIBES WHO PERFORMS:**   * The Gond, Kondhs, and Bhatars tribes traditionally perform this dance. |
| **OCCASIONS:**   * The dance that the tribes of Kalahandi perform is typically reserved for religious and traditional occasions such as Nuakhai or Dusshera. * The dance is traditionally performed during Gamha Poornima, which occurs on the full moon day of the lunar month of Shravan, typically falling in July or August. * In modern day Singers sing and dance to the tune of Ghumura at social functions and religious festivals also. |
| **WHAT IS GHUMURA:**   * The name of a musical instrument made of an earthen pot is Ghumura. * The instrument is two feet long and is a hollow earthen pot. * The face of the instrument is covered with the skin of the monitor lizard. * It is tied on the waist and left shoulder of the dancer. * Ghumura is a long-sized instrument used for musical purposes. * Females use Ghumuria, which is the feminine counterpart of Ghumura. |
| **HOW IT IS PERFORMED:**   * In the past, it was used during wartime to encourage soldiers. * According to tradition, the performers of “Ghumura” first perform the puja-rituals of the instrument on the auspicious day of “Chitalagi-Amabasya” and practice it every evening from then onwards. From the day of the “Nuakhai” festival to the “Vijaya Dashami” festival, they perform “Ghumura” at various locations. * Occasionally, there is a competition between two parties, each comprising of twenty to twenty-five men. * The Ghumura, which is hung on the neck of the drummers with the support of a rope, makes it easier to play. * As soon as the drummer starts drumming the Ghumura, singing and dancing commence. * The dance that is performed to the accompaniment of this drum is called Ghumura Naat. * The performer ties ropes around their waist and chest or shoulders to swing the “Ghumura” up to their belly and beat it with their hands. * They play the musical instrument while standing and dance during performances using their right and left forefingers. * They line up in rows and the singer who accompanies them sings a verse from a selection of songs designated for the dance. * The singer may occasionally perform verses that were written or improvised by them. * While the singer is singing, the dancers stand and play their drums quietly. * Once the verse is finished, the dancers play their drums loudly and dance energetically. |
| **ATTIRE:**  The attire of Ghumura is like that of a tribal dance, hence it is categorized as a folk dance. |
| **UNIQUE CHARACTERSTIC:**   * This form of martial dance demands the simultaneous display of music, dance, singing, song, and acting, making it a challenging task to execute. * The Ghumura dance, although categorized as a folk dance, is heavily influenced by the classical form, which is evident in the style of the singer, dancer, and the beats played by the Nissan player. |
| **MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS:**   * The Ghumura dance is often accompanied by musical instruments such as Nissan, Jhaanja, Mahuri, and Mardal. |
| **OTHER FORMS:**   * The contemporary form is Ghumura-Ladhei or Badi-Ghumura in Kalahandi, which is very meaningful, attractive, and enchanting. |
| **CATEGORISATION:**   * Ghumura” is classified as an “Avanaddha Vadya” type of musical instrument in accordance with the scriptures. |
| **TRANSFORMATION OF WAR DANCE IN FOLK DANCE AND MUSIC:**   * In ancient times, Ghumura was a favoured instrument of Gods and Demons during the war. * Kings and soldiers of Odisha later adopted it as their primary war music. * The song was integrated with Ghumura’s music and dance and became a means of exercise and entertainment for soldiers during leisure time. * Paikas developed Ghumura as their primary means of entertainment during British rule. |
| **SOCIAL MESSAGE:**   * It is also used to give social messages like forestation, saving girl children, literacy, etc. |
| **EPIC TEXT MENTIONS:**   * In the “Madhya Parva” of “Sarala Mahabharata,” Ghumura is mentioned in the following verse: “Dhola Madala Gadi je Ghumura Bajai Ghumura je Ghumu Ghumu hoi Garajai”. |
| **MYTHOLOGICAL STORIES:**   1. In accordance with the Chandi Purana, Durga, the eternal deity of Shakti, asked all the heavenly Gods and Goddesses to contribute their weapons, as instruments and conveyances, to slay the demon king Mahisasur.  * The Ghumura instrument was one of the war-musical instruments collected, which was formed by combining a portion of Dambaru, a musical instrument of Lord Siva, and Veena of goddess Saraswati.  1. The Ghumura was utilized as a musical instrument during war by Gods and Goddesses, as stated in the Mahabharata. 2. The capital of the king Gogingh Daitya, Mahisasura's grandson, during Satya Juga-Jenabali-Patana, according to Sarala Mahabharata.Many people consider Junagarh to be the Jenabali-Patana of that period. Nonetheless, the Madhya Parba of Mahabharat mentions Ghumura with a description of the killing of Gosingh Daitya. 3. Some people believed Ghumura was the war music (Rana-Badya) of Ravana, the demon king of Lanka, and Lanka-garh. Goddess Lankeswari, Ravana's favourite goddess, is worshipped in the area.  * According to them, after Lanka was destroyed by Hanuman and Ravana was slain, Goddess Lankeswari migrated from Lanka and settled in Jenabali-Patana (now Junagarh, Kalahandi), where she is worshipped. |
| **A LEGACY:**   * The district of Kalahandi is also recognized by the name of “Ghumura”. * It is a type of “Veera vadya” which symbolizes the bravery and courage of warriors and could boost the morale of soldiers when played. * The sounds produced by this musical instrument uplift the spirits of weak individuals and instil a sense of strength and energy in warriors. * It can also create a sense of fear among enemies. In the past, during the reign of kings and emperors, “Ghumura” was designated as the military musical instrument and was played during battles. |
| **FROM WRITER’s PEN:**   * Shivam Bhasin Panda, a poet, wrote Ghumura Janma Bidhan in 1954, based on a myth. * According to Nandini Bhasin and Gaganeswar's account of the origin of Ghumura, Chandra Dhwaja established the dance, which was later taken over by a demon named Karttabirya Asura. * Mahisasura's war music, as described by Sarala Dasa, is also referred to as Ghumura. |
| **HISTORICAL EVIDENCES:**   * The objects made of terracotta and stone, which were discovered from a medieval site in Nehena, located at 3 km from Khariar, bear a striking resemblance to the Ghumura object that dates to the 9th and 10th centuries. * Records suggest that the Ghumura dance was quite popular during the 12th century A.D., as is evident from a stone-hole scene of a person playing the Ghumura instrument in the Nritya Mandir of Konark Sun Temple. * Another scene of the Ghumura dance is depicted in the Bhimeswar temple in Bhubaneswar, which confirms the origin of the Ghumura dance to the 10th century A.D. |
| **DEVELOPMENT AND SPREAD:**   * The Ghumura dance form holds significant importance during various cultural and religious festivals celebrated in the Kalahandi and Koshal regions. Ghumura is widely acclaimed and appreciated not only in Odisha but also across India and globally. * The country has chosen the Ghumura Dance to participate in several international events that are to be held in Delhi, Moscow, and other locations. |
| **ACCEPTANCE:**   * It is uncertain whether Ghumura was originally a caste-based dance or not, however, it has become a popular dance in the Kalahandi region and is now considered a part of folk culture. * Over time, Ghumura has evolved and is now performed by people from various castes and communities. * It is believed that Ghumura may have originated as a dance of a particular caste before being adopted by different groups and becoming a widely accepted mass dance form. * Today, “Ghumura” is not only prevalent in tribal-dominated regions but has also spread to many non-tribal regions. It is recognized as a “Taala-vadya” musical instrument. |

# MADHYA PRADESH <H2>

**“Land of mystique and spirituality, where the Narmada flows as a silent witness to the tales of devotion and artistry.”**

**– Tansen**

Madhya Pradesh is often called a cultural museum of India, as it brings together several religions and is home to some of the country's most notable tribal communities. These tribal groups have contributed significantly to the rich cultural heritage of the region, blending their indigenous customs with those of other communities. This has resulted in the incorporation of various forms of folk dances in the state's repertoire of traditional dances. Indeed, tribal culture is the foundation of Madhya Pradesh's diverse and vibrant cultural landscape.

The folk dances of Madhya Pradesh are an integral part of its culture and traditions. The state's diverse population includes several religions and well-known tribal communities. The tribal culture has been the driving force behind the integration of various folk-dance forms into the state's traditional dance styles.

The state's primary folk dances include a range of tribal and folk traditions.

Madhya Pradesh boasts several folk dances, such as Jawara, Matki, Aada, Khada Nach, Phulpati, Grida Dance, Selalarki, Selabhadoni, and Maanch.

## MATKI DANCE <H3>

Figure 8.33 Matki Dance

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| **ORIGIN:** The nomadic tribes of Madhya Pradesh are known for performing this popular folk dance. |
| **ETYMOLOGY:** The dance form known as “matki” is named after the clay pots that women carry on their heads during the performance.  In Hindi, the word “matki” means “earthen pot”. |
| **OCCASIONS:** Weddings and birthdays often involve this dance form.  This dance is typically performed during the Holi festival and other similar celebrations. |
| **PERFORMED BY**: Women |
| **HOW IT IS PERFORMED:**   * The happiness and excitement of the tribe is expressed through this dance, where dancers balance water pots while performing in a circular motion. * They skilfully balance Makti with brisk movements of their hands and feet, while their face remains covered with veils. * This folk dance can be performed both solo and in groups. * The technique of this dance requires the performer to balance an earthen pot or pitcher on their head while dancing to the rhythmic beats produced by the dhol. * The dance involves women moving in a circle around the pot, while clapping their hands and singing traditional songs. * The tempo of the dance is lively and fast-paced. |
| **ATTIRE:**  During the matki dance, women adorn themselves with saris or ghagra that are embellished with various ornaments. |
| **TRIBE PERFORMING:** The Gond tribe’s women, who are also known as the ‘Dangiya’ tribe, are the ones who perform it. |
| **MUSICAL INSTRUMENT**: Dhol (a type of drum) |
| **MUSIC**:   * This folk-dance native to the Malwa region features a unique melody that is exclusive to this dance. * Additionally, the music played during this dance is highly rhythmic and is usually performed by male musicians. |
| **VARIATIONS:** There is another variation of the dance known as Aada and the Khada dance. |
| **PRESENT DAY**:   * This unique cultural feature, particularly in the Malwa region of Madhya Pradesh, has developed into a form of dancing over the years. * Many individuals in the villages still use the matki for fetching water from a well or pond for their household needs. * This practice serves as a reminder of the profound connections that exist between people, nature, and festivities. |

## **JAWARA DANCE (H3)**

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| **ORIGIN:**   * The peasant community of the Bundelkhand region in Madhya Pradesh usually performs this harvest dance. |
| **ETYMOLOGY:**   * The name “Jawara” signifies grains. |
| **THEMES:**   * The happiness and joy of the farmers who have achieved a successful harvest are embodied in it. * It’s a method of commemorating a fruitful harvest and the resulting earnings. |
| **OCCASIONS:**   * This folk dance is performed after the harvest season ends. |
| **PERFORMED BY:**   * Both Men and Women |
| **HOW IT IS PERFORMED:**   * The Jawara folk dance is a performance that requires a high level of skill, and not everyone can participate. * Dancers must execute complex steps while using heavy props. * To gain the experience needed to perform, dancers must learn the dance for several years and then perform during festivals. * This dance is passed down from generation to generation. * During the Jawara dance, female dancers carry a heavy basket of Jawara crops on their heads to represent the significance of crops in our lives. The dancers move in a swaying motion, keeping their bodies rigid while balancing the basket on their heads. * This act is performed before and during the dance performance, and it requires a lot of stunts and prop balancing. * Both male and female dancers can participate in the Jawara dance. * At the start of the dance, the dancers showcase their balancing skills by balancing lit lamps on their hands and heads while maintaining balance while standing on each other. * As the music picks up, the dancers start to move with enthusiasm. * The dancers hold each other from the waist while moving forward and backwards, and they also sway their bodies in a manner like a peacock with its feathers. When the rain comes, peacocks dance with joy, and when good crops come, peasants dance with joy. * The Jawara dance is accompanied by music played by the villagers using traditional musical instruments such as cymbals and bells. * The dance is also accompanied by the folk songs of the region. |
| **ATTIRE:**   * **FEMALE** dancers adorn themselves with vibrant knee-length dhotis and traditional jewellery, which allow for maximum leg movement during this intricate and rapid dance form. Any sort of binding clothing is discouraged as it can pose a potential hazard to the dancers. * **MALE** dancers wear colourful shirt tunics paired with Nehru jackets and dhotis that allow for ease of movement. * A significant aspect of the attire for both male and female dancers is the cloth that is wrapped around their head and adorned with peacock feathers, which symbolize the resemblance of the dance to a peacock. |
| **MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS:** Instruments such as cymbals and bells are included. |

# CHHATISGARH <H2>

**“In the heart of India, Chhattisgarh is a tapestry of tribal cultures, ancient temples, and lush landscapes, where every river narrates stories of resilience.”**

**– Guru Ghasidas**

Chhattisgarh, an Indian state, is renowned for its rich cultural heritage and distinctive and lively culture. The region is home to over 35 vibrant tribes, each with its own rhythmic folk music, dances, and dramas that offer a glimpse into the state's culture. Pandwani, a well-known dance drama in the state, is a musical rendition of the great Hindu epic, Mahabharata. The region also has other famous dance styles.

Chhattisgarh, one of India's ancient states, shares borders with Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, and Telangana. The state's tribal population has created many original folk performances based on their cultural beliefs, which are an essential aspect of the state's culture. The dance of Chhattisgarh is characterized by special costumes and accessories, fast movements, and perfect timing, giving it a distinct quality and identification. The stories of Chhattisgarh are also of great significance.

Gaur Maria, Panthi, Raut Nach, Pandwani, Vedamati, Kapalik, Bharthari Charit, and Chandaini are some of the significant folk dances in Chhattisgarh.

## **RAUT NAACH (H3)**

Figure 8.34 Raut Naach

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| **ORIGIN:** The state of Chhattisgarh is where this particular folk dance has its origins. |
| **THEMES:** The Raut Nacha is a representation of devotion to Lord Krishna and commemorates the victory of “good” over “evil”. |
| **OCCASION:**   * A week-long celebration called Raut Nacha is a well-liked entertainment form. * It takes place after Diwali on Dev Uthni Ekadashi or Dev Uthaan. * This day marks the awakening of gods after a short period of rest. |
| **PERFORMED BY:** The performance of this style of dance involves a group of male and female dancers. |
| **HOW IT IS PERFORMED:**   * The mythical stories are represented earnestly through performances that involve battle, dance, and music. * The dance signifies a battle between Lord Krishna and the evil king Kansa, with the Yadavas celebrating their victory through a mock duel. * Dancers usually perform in groups, donning bright and colourful attire, and dance to the beat of music and songs sung by other group members. * This dance is typically performed at night to worship Lord Krishna. * The followers of Lord Krishna describe his playful behaviour through stories and songs, which is reflected in the dance moves of performers moving around in groups. * The dancers equip themselves with sticks, metal shields, and bells tied to their waists and ankles to perform ancient battles that honour heroic warriors and the eternal triumph of good over evil. * The performers display full devotion and eagerness in their roles, which is reflected in their perfect performances. * The sticks and metal discs that they beat together while dancing is the main attraction of the dance. * Sticks and metal shields are an essential component of this tribal dance, which is essentially a “victory dance” that celebrates the triumph of “good over evil” (i.e. Lord Krishna and the Yadavas defeating the evil king Kansa). * This dance is not taught as a professional dance but is passed down as a cultural tradition from generation to generation. |
| **CLAN:** The activity is primarily carried out by the Yadava community or Yaduvanshis, who are believed to be the offspring of Lord Krishna. |
| **SONGS:**   * During dance performances, it’s common to hear recitations of the couplets of Kabeer and Tulsidas. * Similarly, the singing of a “Doha” is a significant aspect of Chhattisgarh culture and is often incorporated into festive events. |
| **MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS:**Instruments included in the list are dholak, mandar, and chimta etc*.* |
| **ATTIRE:**   * The performers don colourful and glittery costumes while adorning themselves with bells tied around their waists. * **FEMALE** dancers wear sarees. * **MALE** dancers dress in simple Kurta and Dhoti, with turbans covering their heads. * Peacock feathers are used to decorate their backs. * The dancers also use ankle bells, known as ghungroos, to add more melodies to their performances. |
| **MYTHOLOGICAL STORY:**   * According to popular legend, Raut Nacha is a traditional dance form that was created to celebrate the triumph of Lord Krishna and the Yadava clan over the wicked ruler, Kansa. * It is believed that during the conclusion of the holy festival of Diwali, when the deities are thought to be active, the Yadavas perform this holy dance as an act of worship to Krishna, the Lord of cowherds, also known as ‘Gopinath.’ |
| **RESEMBELANCE:**   * The Raut Nacha is a dance form that is reminiscent of Krishna’s dance, also known as the ‘Ras Leela’, and is known for its amorous nature. |
| **A REPRESENTATION:**   * One of the forms that showcases the folk heritage is represented by this dance. * It has two aspects, namely, the folk heritage of the state and the cultural heritage of the state. * The main purpose of performing it is to display the heritage of the region. * All the performers are attired in a manner that highlights the significance of their region to the spectators. |

## **PANTHI DANCE (H3)**

Figure 8.35 Panthi Dance

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| **ORIGIN:**   * A significant ritual of the Satnami community of Chhattisgarh is demonstrated through this Indian folk dance. * The people hold the Durg region in high importance, and this dance serves to showcase their reverence. |
| **THEMES:** A tribute to the teachings of Guru Baba Ghasidas and other Saint gurus. |
| **OCCASION:** The celebration of this dance takes place on the birth of Guru Baba Ghasidas (i.e. 18th December 1756) that takes place on Maghi Purnima. |
| **PERFORMED BY:** The dance is mainly executed by the male dancer. |
| **HOW IT IS PERFORMED:**   * The performances of this dance are highly vocal and are accompanied by beautiful songs. * The dance is incredibly expressive, depicting its emotions vividly. * Only male dancers participate in the performance. * During the dance, the dancers move around the Jait khamb, singing songs that honour their spiritual leader. * These songs also reflect the philosophy of Nirvana, promoting the spirit of abandoning their Guru and following the teachings of sacred poets such as Kabir, Guru Ramdas Ji, Dadu, etc. * The whistle is blown in between songs to signal a change in steps. * The lead dancer of the group motivates others by chanting “Aaha, Aaha” loudly. * Performing this dance requires great flexibility and endurance as it involves a variety of challenging steps. * The performance begins with slow, fluid movements of the body. * The group leader sings a song while the others follow with a short song. * Dancers with curved bodies and swinging arms continue to dance until their dedication is taken away. * As the rhythm accelerates, they indulge in acrobatics and even create human towers. * The dancers who participate in this dance are usually people or members of the Panthi Nritya Mandir. * The high notes at the end of the song signify its termination and surprise the audience with its high level of pace and changeability of steps. |
| **MUDRAS REPRESENTED:**   * The dancers pay homage to their Guru by performing a range of ‘Mudras’ that include Jait Khamb, Jai Stambh, Dharti Pranam (which is a gesture of respect towards the earth), and Phool Arpan (which involves offering flowers). |
| **SONGS:**   * The significance of human life, along with powerful spiritual messages and an emphasis on devotion towards the almighty, is portrayed in dance-related songs. * These songs communicate the teachings of Saints like Kabir, Ravidas, and Dadu, as well as the philosophy of Nirvana. |
| **ATTIRE:**   * Panthi dancers dress themselves in colourful traditional attires. * To accompany the attire, they also wear minimal ornaments. * Simple vests, short dhotis up to the knees garlands on the neck, white tilak, Ghunghroo , waistband and turban on their heads are the main features of this dance group. * Excessive clothing and decoration are also not suitable for panthi dancers. |
| **MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS:**   * The rhythmic sounds of traditional instruments like Mridanga and Jhaanj drive the movements of the dancers, who also keep time with the pounding beats of drums, banjo, dholak, tabla, and Casio. |
| **INSIDE STORY:**   * The Satnami community in Chhattisgarh practices this traditional folk dance. * They follow the Satnam panth, which was founded by the revered Saint Guru Ghasidas. * The dance holds a religious significance and is considered a natural form of devotion. * It is believed that the philosophy of Nirvana is central to the Satnami community, and their dance reflects this belief. |
| **FAMOUS PERSONALITY:**   * Devdas Banjara established his legacy by showcasing the world his unique dance form. * Despite lacking any formal dance training, Devdas formed a band and performed across the globe. * His significant contribution to the development of the Dalit community earned him the prestigious Guru Ghasi Das Award. * Moreover, he and his team’s exceptional achievements in the field of traditional dance were recognized with the Presidential Award. |

# SIKKIM <H2>

Sikkim, located in the North-eastern part of India, is a state that rests alongside the imposing Himalayan Mountain range. It is famous for its vibrant monasteries that add vivid colorus to its emerald background.

The state of Sikkim is a mesmerizing and picturesque place with super-steep valleys, verdant woodlands, and wealthy groves, all of which will leave you spellbound. It has a long list of marvelolous attractions,such as Pemayangtse Monastery, Kanchendzonga National Park, Nathu La Pass, Tsango Lake, and Rumtek Monastery, all of which are a perfect blend of history and nature.

Despite the diversity of religions practicsd in Sikkim – Buddhism, Hinduism, Christianity, Islam, and Sikhism – there exists a spirit of religious harmony. The state’s motto, “Yeh Des Hai Sikkim, Ye Sabka Desh Hai” (This is Sikkim, this is the land of all), reflects the inclusivity and respect for all faiths.

Sikkim's traditional folk dances express its cultural heritage. The state is home to many ethnic castes and tribes, each with its own interesting folk dances. The Lepchas, Bhutias, and Nepalese are the major inhabitants of Sikkim, and each community has its own distinct dance forms. These traditional dances are accompanied by the tunes of many musical instruments and are an inseparable part of Sikkim's culture.The renowned Mask Dance is a popular dance form of the Sikkimese people, while Singhi Chaam and Yak Chaam are the popular Tibetan dance forms. The Bhutias' various dance forms include Lu Khangthamo, Gha to Kito, Chi Rimu, Gnungmala Gnunghey, Be Yu Mista, and Tashi Zaldha. The Nepalese have different dance forms such as Maruni, Tamang Selo, Dhaan Naach, Dau Ra Jane, and Sebru Naach. The Lepchas enjoy Zo-Mal-Lok, Chu Faat, Kar Gnok Lok, Dharma Jo, Mon Dryak Loks, Tendong Lho Faat, and Mun Hait Lok. Finally, Rechungma and Talachi are known as Sikkimese dance forms.

## **TENDONG LHO RUM FAAT (H3)**

Figure 8.36 Tendong Lho Rum Faat

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| **ORIGIN:**   * One of the oldest and most important festivals is Tendong Lho Rum Faat. * It is a traditional dance performed by the Lepcha community of Sikkim. |
| **THEME:**   * Every year, people gather to celebrate Thanksgiving at Saviour Mountain during the festival. |
| **OCCASION:**   * The celebration takes place for three days in the 3rd month of the Tibetan Lunar Calendar, which falls between July and August each year. * Although the celebrations can be observed throughout the state, a large festival is arranged in Namchi, the administrative centre of South Sikkim and the location of the revered Tendong Hill. |
| **PERFORMED BY:**   * Men and women both take part in the dance. |
| **HOW IT IS PERFORMED:**   * Every year, usually in August, Sikkim celebrates a grand fiesta that involves a trek from Ravangla up to Tendong Hill. * This festival is a major highlight and attracts trekkers and adventure enthusiasts from various parts of the nation who come to satisfy their adrenaline rush while soaking themselves in the cultural and mythological essence of the local tribal communities. * For three days, people from the Lepcha community embark on a trek to the hill, navigating through dense forests and sparkling streams and rivulets. * During this time, the tribal people-built models of the Tendong Hill at the entrance of their facade and worshipped it, seeking blessings for a happy and wealthy life. * To get the blessings of the almighty, they dance and sing, wearing masks. * The Lepchas are led by their priests, Boongthing and Mun, who pray to the Almighty Goddess Itbu-Debu-Room-Daor - the creator and destroyer of the Lepchas of Sikkim. * They also offer chee (millet beer) to save them from death by deluge. |
| **NAME MEANING:** The meaning of Tendong Hill, which comes from the Lepcha dialect, is “the hill of the raised horn.” |
| **PRIME LOCATION:**   * Namchi is where the prime venue is located, and it happens to be the home of a sacred hill in the southern part of Sikkim. |
| **MUSICAL INSTRUMENT:**  During the dance, a variety of musical instruments are played including the Palitkeng (which is a flute with four holes), the Pentong (which is a flute), the Nibryok palit (which is a double-barrel flute), the Satsang (which is a Sarangi), the Tanbuk (which is a Veena), the Tang Dar (which is a small round drum), the Chakpurjang (which is a longish drum), the Bom Pochuat (which is a kind of whistle), the Tangue (which is a small instrument made of bamboo and played with the tongue) and the Romu (which is a cymbal) |
| **LEGENDRY STORY:**   * During the creation of the Earth, as the Himalayan Range was forming, the Lepcha people were the primary inhabitants of the planet. * According to Lepcha mythology, a massive volcanic eruption destroyed the sources of the Teesta and Rangeet rivers, Naho and Nather Pokh, causing continuous rain for 40 days. * This led to floods, loss of life, and property damage that nearly decimated the Lepcha tribe. * However, during this time, Tendong Hill emerged like a horn from the head of a deity. * People began climbing the hill to escape the disaster, and from that day forward, the Lepcha people have worshiped this sacred hill, which translates to “the hill of the raised horn” in English, as a symbol of the creator who saved their ancestors. |

# FOLK DANCE Forms OF WESTERN INDIA (H1)

## **RAJASTHAN (H2)**

**“Land of royal hues, where every turban and ghagra is a brushstroke on the canvas of tradition.”**

**– Meera Bai**

Rajasthan, which is located in the northwestern part of the Indian subcontinent, is the cultural capital of India. The capital of Rajasthan is Jaipur, situated in the east-central part of the state. It was formerly known as Rajputana, which means "The Country of the Rajputs," and its current name means "The Abode of the Rajas." Throughout history, Rajasthan has been governed by a variety of rulers, including the Marathas, Rajput, and Muslim rulers, resulting in a diverse culture, numerous forts with a wide variety of architectural styles, languages, and arts and crafts, including the famous folk dances of Rajasthan. Despite being largely a desert, it is one of India's most popular tourist destinations, attracting both domestic and international visitors.

The culture of Rajasthan is heavily influenced by tribal or folk music since the state was once dominated by tribal groups. The dances and songs are similar to ballads, telling stories of heroic deeds and eternal love stories. Others are devotional songs. These dances are performed on various auspicious occasions with the aim of expressing happiness and joy, as well as narrating stories in a unique and captivating way. The rise of princely states during medieval times also contributed to the development of folk dances, as the rulers patronized various arts and crafts.

Rajasthan's liveliness, culture, and traditions are reflected in its folk music and dance forms. Each region has its own form and style of folk entertainment, with different dances and songs, due to the numerous cultures and rulers who have governed Rajasthan. These dances are vibrant, energetic, and incredibly captivating. The Kalbelia dance from Jaisalmer and the Ghoomar from Udaipur are two of the most popular dances.

# GHoomar DANCe. (H3)

Figure 8.37 Ghoomar Dance

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| **ORIGIN:** The traditional folk dance of Rajasthan is called Ghoomar, also spelt as ghumar and is also known as jhumar. |
| **THEMES:**  This dance is usually associated with the female gender and is also a representation of the beginning of womanhood.  A girl who has reached adulthood may perform this dance to signify the transition from childhood to womanhood. |
| **ETYMOLOGY:**  The term Ghoomar originates from the word ‘ghoomna’, which translates to spinning around or doing pirouettes. |
| **TRIBE:** The worship of Goddess Saraswati was originally performed by the Bhil tribe. Later, this practice was adopted by other communities in Rajasthan. |
| **OCCASION:** The Ghoomar dance was used to symbolize special occasions such as weddings, festivals, religious events, the start of rain, Holi, and Diwali. It was also used to welcome newlywed brides to their in-law’s homes. |
| **TRADITIONAL RITUAL:** After the wedding ceremony, a traditional dance called Ghoomar is performed by the bride at her in-law’s house. This age-old custom signifies that the bride is considered equal in status to the revered deity, Goddess Lakshmi. The first dance of the bride is believed to bring prosperity and good fortune to her in-laws’ home. |
| **PERFORMED BY:**  Local women in Rajputana used to perform the Ghoomar dance, which later became popular among the Rajput elite women as well.  It was a women-only dance performance, and men were not permitted to participate in it. |
| **HOW IT IS PERFORMED:** - The folk dance Ghoomar is performed by women with a ghoonghat on their heads, which covers their faces.  - The dance involves a circular formation, with the dancers moving round and round while performing intricate footwork.  - The dancers move both clockwise and anti-clockwise, synchronizing their hands and footwork with the beat of the music.  - The ghagra, the traditional attire worn by the dancers, enhances the beauty of their movements.  - The tempo of the dance is fast, but the dancers never miss a step or swirl.  - The dancers sometimes clap to the beat and sometimes join their hands while circling around.  - The pirouetting is a crucial part of the dance, even though it may appear dizzying to the audience.  - The synchronization shared by the dancers is truly mesmerizing, from the colours of their dresses to their movements.  - The Ghoomar dance may continue for hours or even the entire night, with no time limit.  - The highlight of the dance is the twirling sequence of lehenga-clad women to the beat of folk songs and a dhol.  - The dhol sets the tempo for the dance, while the heavy anklets worn by the dancers create musical vibrations.  - The dance steps include leg work, hand movements, clapping, snapping, and pirouetting, all performed in a circle formation.  - In some places, the dancers may perform Ghoomar with earthen pots or brass pitchers on their heads, along with fire pots held in their hands.  - The harmony witnessed in the Ghoomar dance has made it a symbol of a state and the entire nation. |
| **CONTEMPORARY TIME GHOOMAR:**  The dance form has been adopted by the Udaipur, Jodhpur, and Kota-Bundi regions of the state.  Each region has developed its own unique version of the dance that can be recognized by experts.  The Ghoomar dance from Udaipur incorporates elements of Garba, while Jodhpur’s version features more intense limb movements.  The Kota-Bundi region has added a distinctive, catchy tune to their interpretation of the dance. |
| **MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS:** Dhol, Anklets etc. |
| **ATTIRE:**   * The Ghoomar dance is commonly associated with women, and as a result, the costume for the dance is designed to give it a more feminine feel. * The traditional flowing skirt called Ghagra, which is adorned with beautiful and colourful patterns and sequence works, and the choli, a blouse that complements the heavily embroidered skirt, are the primary attire for the dance. * As the dance form has a history associated with royalty, the women who perform it usually cover their faces with a veil, which is designed in a beautiful pattern and made of opaque cloth. * The jewellery worn during the dance also plays a significant part in the overall visual appeal of the performance. Heavy ornaments are a must to complete the entire look. * The dance performance is a grand event, not just because of the occasion, as the ladies put a lot of effort into the dance details, with their outfits being the main showstopper. |
| **SONGS:** Traditional songs like “Gorband”, “Podina”, “Rumal” and “Mor Bole Re” are often a part of Ghoomar. These songs may revolve around the legends of royalty or their customs.  **- "Chirmi Mhari Chirmali" is one of the famous Ghoomar songs.**  **- "Aave Hichki" is a traditional Ghoomar song from Rajasthan.**  **- "Ghoomar" is another popular Ghoomar song.**  **- "Jawai Ji Pawna" is a Rajasthani folk song that is often played during Ghoomar dance.**  **- "Taara Ri Chundadi" is a song that is commonly associated with the Ghoomar dance form.**  **- "Mharo Gorband Nakhralo" is a well-known Ghoomar song.**  **- "Mhari Ghoomar" is a song that is considered a classic in the Ghoomar genre.**  **- "Ghoomar Re Ghoomar Re" is a catchy Ghoomar song that many people enjoy dancing to.** |
| **HISTORICAL STORY:** The Bhil tribe was defeated by the Kachhwaha Rajput clan to gain control over the territory. Following a necessary conflict, the two families lived together in harmony. As was common during that time, the royal Rajput family adopted the dance form of the Bhil community. Additionally, the women of the royal court also participated in performing the Ghoomar dance on various occasions. This is how the dance form became associated with royalty. |
| **INTERESTING FACTS:**   * A survey conducted by an online travel advisory website in 2013 ranked Ghoomar as the 4th most popular local dance in the world. * In 1986, Maharani Rajmata Goverdhan Kumari of Santrampur established the Gangaur Ghoomar Dance Academy with the aim of preserving the Ghoomar dance form. * She was recognized for her significant contribution to the arts and was awarded the Padma Shri in 2007. |
| **IN-POP CULTURE**:   * In the movie Padmavati, Deepika Padukone had to practice for over a month and a half to perfect her footwork for the Ghoomar number. * The song Aave re Hichki from the Hindi movie Mirzya has roots in the traditional Ghoomar dance. * Another Ghoomar song with a contemporary style is Dholi Taaro Dhol Baajo from the movie Hum Dil De Chuke Sanam. |

## **KALBELIA DANCE (H3)**

Figure 8.38 Kalbelia dance

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| **ORIGIN:**   * The tribe known as the Kalbelia hails from Rajasthan, India and are skilled in the art of snake charming. * They inhabit the Thar Desert region. |
| **THEMES:**   * Performing is an essential aspect of Kalbelia culture, and it is typically conducted during happy celebrations. |
| **OCCASION:** Holi |
| **PERFORMED BY:**   * Men and women alike perform the dance, which is considered a vital component of their culture. |
| **DEITY:**   * The Kalbelias follow the Hindu religion and have a cultural inclination. * They perform snake-worshipping rituals and venerate Naga and Manasa deities. * Their holy day is celebrated as Naga Panchami. |
| **HOW IT IS PERFORMED:**   * The Kalbelia dance is known to be one of the most sensual dances among all the Rajasthani dances. * The Kalbelia folk dance is typically performed by women from the Kalbelia community on the tunes of Been and during times of celebration. The dance is not taught through any formal training system, manuscripts, or written text. * The dancers, who are all females replicates the movements of a serpent. * Male participants are responsible for playing musical instruments to create the rhythm on which the dancers perform. * The dancers have traditional tattoos and wear jewellery and garments richly embroidered with small mirrors and silver threads. * As the performance progresses, the rhythm becomes faster and faster, and the dance follows it. |
| **MUSICAL INSTRUMENT:**   * Traditionally, various instruments have been used to create the rhythm on which the dancers perform. Some examples include the pungi (a woodwind instrument that was used to capture snakes), as well as the dufli and been (poongi). * The khanjari is a percussion instrument that is also commonly used in this context, along with the morchang, khuralio, and dholak. |
| **SONGS:**   * The Kalbelias take pride in their dances and songs, which serve as a symbol of their identity and reflect their ability to adapt creatively to changing socio-economic conditions while retaining their place in rural Rajasthani society. * Their songs draw inspiration from folklore and mythology, and during Holi, special dances are performed. * The poetic skill of the Kalbelia is showcased by the spontaneous composition of lyrics and improvisation of songs during performances. * These songs and dances have been passed down through generations as part of an oral tradition without any written texts or training manuals. |
| **OTHER NAMES:** Sapera and Jogira, Gattiwala and Poogiwara, Snake Charmer Dance are alternative names for the same thing. |
| **ATTIRE:**   * The **MEN** who perform the Kalbelia dance wear a piercing called Apadravya. * The dancers are **WOMEN** who wear flowing black skirts and imitate the movements of a snake by twirling and dancing. * Their attire consists of an upper-body garment called an angrakhi, a headscarf known as the odhani, and a lower-body cloth called a lehenga, all of which are embroidered with a mix of red and black hues. * The dancers’ skin is adorned with traditional tattoos, and they wear jewellery and clothing that are richly embroidered with small mirrors and silver threads. * The complete outfit is predominantly black with red decorative laces, and the embroidery patterns on the black dress resemble a black snake with white spots or white stripes. * Kalbelia dancers are known to wear a lot of traditional jewellery. |
| **TRADITIONAL WORK:**   * In the past, Kalbelia males used to transport cobras in cane baskets to different households of villages, while their female counterparts sang, danced, and requested for donations. * The Kalbelia community holds the cobra in high regard and supports the idea of preserving these reptiles by not harming them. |
| **RECOGINATION:**   * UNESCO declared the Kalbelia folk songs and dances of Rajasthan a part of its Intangible Heritage List in 2010. |
| **FACT:**   * The Kalbelias has developed a deep understanding of the local flora and fauna over many generations. As a result, they possess knowledge of herbal remedies for various ailments, which serves as an additional source of income for them. * Since the Wildlife Act of 1972 came into effect, the Kalbelias have been forced to abandon their traditional occupation of snake handling. * The Kalbelias practice customs that differ from those of most Hindus. * The men of the Kalbelia community adorn an Apadravya. * Contrary to the rest of the country's Hindu population, the Kalbelias bury their dead instead of cremating them. * In the Kalbelia tradition, the groom is required to pay a price to the bride's father for her hand in marriage, while the groom's father is responsible for financing the wedding. |
| **IN-POP CULTURE:**   * GULABO SAPERA, who is a renowned kalbeli dancer was awarded with the Padma Shri by the Government of India in 2016. * In 2021, she was also presented with the Bharat Gaurav Award. * Morni Bagama bole koyal song from Hindi movie lamhe is an example of this dance. |

# GUJARAT (H2)

**“Gujarat, where the Sabarmati Ashram stands as a pilgrimage of peace, and the Kutch desert whispers tales of resilience.”**

**– Mahatma Gandhi**

Gujarat is renowned for its festivals. The music and dance that accompany these celebrations breathe life into the soul with energy and happiness. Gujarat is blessed with rich performing arts, and its dance forms are popular worldwide.

The most popular dance celebrations in Gujarat date back to the ancient era of Krishna. Singing and dancing with the flute and other instruments, along with dance forms like Garba, Garbi, and Raas, are legendary. A unique folk-dance form known for its variations with dandia or stick Raas. There are different styles of executing dandiya steps, such as Dodhiyu, simple five, simple seven, popatiyu, Trikoniya, Lehree, three claps, butterfly, hudo, two claps, and more.

During the Navratri celebrations, a festival of music and dance, these music and dance forms are enjoyed by people of all communities, age groups, and cities in Gujarat. People from all over the world come to Gujarat to enjoy this traditional and religious festival.

In Gandhinagar, Gujarat, cultural programs like Vasantosav, Kutchh Utsav, etc. feature interactive cultural music and dance performances from all over Gujarat's cities. Modhera Dance Festival is one of Gujarat's major annual classical and traditional dance festivals. All artists and emerging performing artists exhibit their talent against the backdrop of the Sun Temple at this annual event hosted by the Gujarat department.

Gujarat's music and dance performers bring innovations in music, choreography, and costumes and have enthralled audiences with their beauty and tradition. Gujarat's arts have mass appeal.

When someone mentions Gujarat, the first thing that comes to mind is color, vibrancy, culture, and, of course, folk dances. Gujaratis love to celebrate every auspicious day with tremendous pomp, show, and celebration since it is one of the most ancient lands of festivals. Folk dances of Gujarat are an essential element of the culture there. The traditional dances and dramas are vivid, colorful, and dynamic, and they genuinely depict the culture. Gujarati dance forms are remarkable in that most of them are centuries old but have been effectively conserved over time. Most art traditions can be traced back to antiquity. People of the state are known to have a natural ability to sing and dance. The numerous types of folk dance forms are certainly a visual feast and mirror the culture of Gujarat.

Some of the popular dance forms in Gujarat include Garba, Dandiya Raas, Bhavai, Hudo, Padhar, Tippani, Dangi Dance, and RAAS. Additionally, the Tippani dance is another folk dance form that is widely performed in Gujarat.

## **GARBA DANCE (H3)**

Figure 8.39 Garba Dance

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| **ORIGIN:**   * The dance form of Garba has its roots in Gujarat, India. * It is a way of showing reverence and devotion and is celebrated for nine consecutive nights with dancing. |
| **ETYMOLOGY:**   * The word comes from the Sanskrit language and is related to the term “GARBH”, which pertains to the womb, indicating the state of pregnancy or gestation - a symbol of life. |
| **THEMES**: The Garba dances are a way of celebrating fertility, showing respect to various mother goddesses, and honouring womanhood.  These dances are a customary practice in Gujarat, where they signify a girl's first menstrual cycle and later, her upcoming marriage. |
| **OCCASION:**   * The longest and largest dance festival in the world is Navratri, during which Garba is traditionally performed. * Navratri is a Hindu festival that spans nine nights and is devoted to Durga, the feminine form of divinity and her nine forms, ranging from the fierce Kaalratri to the smiling Kushmanda who created the universe. * Garba is also performed at social gatherings like weddings and parties. |
| **PERFORMED BY:** Typically, Garba performers are women and young girls, even though some men also participate in these dances. |
| **HOW IT IS PERFORMED**:   * Garba is a religious practice that involves going barefoot and can be performed on various surfaces, just like other Hindu rituals and worship practices. * By walking barefoot, people show respect for the earth, which they believe to be sacred and the source of all life. * The foot is considered as a medium for the vital energy of the earth to travel through humans as the earth is believed to possess generative powers. * Dancing barefoot is believed to offer another way to connect with Devi. * The participants move in concentric circles, with each circle moving in an opposite direction, while moving counterclockwise. * The dance starts with slow steps, which gradually increase in tempo until everyone's feet are in sync, creating a trance-like experience. * The dance forms have simple steps that are easy to follow, making it an inclusive activity suitable for people of all ages, abilities, and skill levels.   **TRADITIONAL PERFORMANCE:**   * The customary way of performing the dance is by circling around a clay lamp that contains a light, known as a “Garbha Deep” or by presenting an image of the Goddess, Durga (also known as Amba) at the centre of concentric rings, which is revered by all. * The lantern signifies life, especially the fetus in the womb, and the dancer’s pay homage to Durga, who is the manifestation of divinity in its feminine form.   **MODERN GARBA:**   * Dandiya Raas, a dance traditionally performed by men, has had a significant influence on Modern Garba. * The fusion of these two dances has resulted in the dynamic and energetic dance form that is witnessed today. |
| **ATTIRE:** Garba and dandiya are usually performed in colourful clothes by both men and women.   * **WOMEN** and girls wear a three-piece outfit called Chaniya choli, which consists of a choli, an embroidered and colourful blouse, a chaniya, a flared skirt-like bottom with intricate work, and a dupatta, usually worn in the traditional Gujarati manner. * Chaniya Cholis are adorned with embroidery work, mirrors, stars, mati, beads, shells, etc. Women traditionally wear jhumkas (large earrings), necklaces, bajubandh, chudas and kangans, Kamar bandh, payal, and mojiris. Bold eyeliner or kajal and bindis are also essential parts of the Garba look. * **MEN** and boys wear a Kediyu, consisting of kafni pyjamas, a short round kurta called Ghagra, which is above the knees, pagadi on the head, bandhani dupatta, kada, and mojiris. * Men also wear oxidized or silver bracelets and necklaces. * The dandiya sticks are usually made of wood. |
| **MUSIC:**   * Gujarat offers a variety of lively music styles, ranging from traditional Dandiya songs like Kanhaiya and O Gori to contemporary Bollywood Garba music. These diverse musical styles represent both urban and rural cultures. |
| **MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS:**   * Indian percussion instruments that are auspicious for the occasion include the dhol, drum, and double-reed organs or shehnai, which are played by professional artists. * In recent years, modernization has resulted in the use of bongos, synthesizers, harmoniums, and octapads, which are also commonly seen. |
| **SONGS:** The subjects of the nine goddesses are usually the focus of Garba songs. |
| **TYPES OF GARBA:**   * **Taali Garba** involves people dancing in a close formation and using their legs and hands to make symbolic movements in unison. * They must clap after each step, for example- Jhume re gori song in Gangubai Kathiawadi movie of Hindi film industry. * **Tran Taali Garba** requires the dancer to clap three times after completing one full step. * **Garba Hinch** entails the participants forming a circular pattern and clapping while moving forward. As the beats quicken, so does the dance. * **Daandiya** represents a mythical battle between Durga and Mahishasura, with the dandiya symbolizing the Goddess' sword |
| **SYMBOLISM:**   * The circular dance form of Garba represents the cyclical nature of time in Hinduism. * As the dancers move in a circle, they embody the endless movement of time from birth to life, death, and rebirth. * Amidst this perpetual movement, the only constant symbol is the Goddess, who remains unmoved. * The dance signifies that the Divine, represented in feminine form, is the only unchanging entity in a world that is constantly changing. * The Garbha Deep, a vessel used during the dance, is symbolic of the human body, which is home to the Divine energy of Goddess Devi. * By performing Garba around this symbol, humans honour the presence of the Divine within them. While the universe and everything in it evolve and change, the power of Goddess Durga within the souls of the dancers remains eternal. |
| **MYTHOLOGICAL TOUCH:**   * In Hindu mythology, Navaratri was celebrated after the victory of Goddess Durga over Evil, and Garba was an important part of revelling in the deity’s power. The goddess wielded her sword with great fury to vanquish the demons and bring about peace through destruction. * The Dandiya sticks used in Garba symbolize the goddess’s invincibility and her sword. |
| **VARIATIONS IN CELEBRATION:**   * Navaratri festivities in Gujarat consist of an arti ceremony, followed by dance performances. * Dandiya Raas, a dance form that involves using sticks, is also a part of the celebrations. * In certain regions of Northern India, Ramlila, a dance-drama that portrays the life of the Lord Ram, is organised during Navratri. * The event commences on the first day of Navratri and culminates on Dussehra. |
| **COMMON PERCEPTION OR NOTIONS:**   * The difference between Garba dance and Dandiya dance is often a source of confusion. * Both dances originate from Gujarat but are performed on different occasions. * **Dandiya dance** is performed in Vrindavan Gardens in praise of Lord Krishna. Unlike Garba dance, Dandiya dance involves colourful sticks. **Garba dance,** on the other hand, involves more hand motions, clapping, and circular dance formations. |
| **GLOBAL PRESENCE:**   * Garba and Dandiya Raas are well-liked in the United States, with over 20 universities holding huge Raas/Garba competitions annually, featuring professional choreography. * The biggest Garba event in North America, in terms of attendees, takes place in the Canadian city of Toronto every year. * The British Gujarati communities are big fans of Garba, with their own Garba evenings that are widely popular among the Gujarati community worldwide. |
| **RECOGINITION:** Garba was awarded the Intangible Cultural Heritage tag by UNESCO in December 2023. |
| **FACT:**   * The Limca Book of Records recognizes the United Way as the world’s largest garba ground. * Garba from Gujarat has been enlisted as the 15th Intangible Cultural Heritage element from India in the list. * This inclusion emphasizes the significant role of Garba in promoting social and gender inclusivity by serving as a unifying force. * Similar folk dances to Garba can also be found in different parts of India, mainly in Tamil Nadu in the southeast and in Rajasthan, Gujarat’s north-eastern neighbour |

## **HALLISAKA Dance (H3)**

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| **ORIGIN:**   * A significant cultural dance form originating from Gujarat is Hallisaka. * Its importance is highlighted in the Harivamsha Purana. |
| **MYTHOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION**:   * Raas in various forms found throughout India can trace their origin to Hallisaka, as described in detail in the Khil Bhaga Harivamsha (Vishnu Parva, Chapter 20) of the Mahabharata. * The Harivamsha Purana mentions specific styles of dancing like Tal Raaska and Dand Raaska, which are also referred to as Hallisaka. * Originally starting as a form of Sanskrit drama, it eventually evolved into a popular sport and dance. |
| **THEME**: Shri Krishna pastime stories and his Gopi’s. |
| **HOW IT IS PERFORMED:**  - A group of dancers create a circle by joining their hands together.  - The rhythm of the dance is maintained by clapping, and a beautiful song accompanies it.  - A handsome young man representing Lord Krishna stands in the centre of the circle of women.  - The dance is performed by two Gopikas forming a mandala, with Lord Krishna at the centre.  - The performance includes Apsaras such as Rambha, Hema, Mishrakeshi, Tilottama, Menaka, etc.  - The foot movements of the dancers express the rhythm through measured steps, using toes, heels, and legs, with varying speed and timing.  - This graceful dance is enhanced by group performances, chorus singing, and other creative elements, and it concludes with songs depicting the pastimes of Shri Krishna. |
| **OCCASION:** Sharad Purnima ( full moon night). |
| **MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS**: Flute, Mridang etc. |
| **TRACING IT’S ORIGIN:**   * The Hallisaka Dance is an ancient form of dance that can be traced back to a significant work of Sanskrit literature known as the Harivamsha. * This literary work consists of approximately 16,375 verses and was composed sometime between 200 B.C. and 500 A.D. * It was later added to the epic Mahabharata. * The stories in the Harivamsha are centred around Krishna, who is depicted as a herdsman, and later, his interactions with the gopis in the Krishna-Gopi Leela. * The Harivamsha had a profound impact on Indian music and is said to have influenced various composite genres in Indian cultural expression, including the Chhalikya songs and the Hallisaka dance. |
| **SONGS:** Melodious sons mentioning the stories of Krishna and the folklores. |
| **LEGENDRY STORY:**   * During the Govardhan-Leela event, the girls witnessed Shri Krishna’s effortless feat of lifting the Govardhan mountain with his little finger, and this made them realize that Shri Krishna was the most powerful being at that time. * The brides among the Gopis were inspired to invite Shri Krishna to join them for the Hallisaka dance, which was scheduled to take place on the bright moon of the upcoming Sharad Purnima. * As Shri Krishna danced with the Gopis, they became deeply engrossed in the dance, and their hearts were filled with appreciation. * Suddenly, God disappeared, causing the Gopis to feel immense sadness and longing for his presence. In their sorrow, they began to recall the pastimes of Shri Krishna. * Eventually, Shri Krishna reappeared and resumed dancing with the Gopis, and it is believed that this is the origin of the popular folk dance known as “Bahuri Syam Sang Raas Rachayon”. |
| **SCHOLARS VIEW:**   * Scholars believe that Hallisaka is the predecessor of Raas and is also identical to Raskrida. * Acharya Neelkanth, in his commentary, wrote, “Haslish kredern eksya punso bahubhi: stribhi: kredn saiv raskeed,” which roughly translates to “Hallisaka is plough handle and also Saiv Raskeed for many women.” |

# MAHARASHTRA (H2)

**“Maharashtra, where the vibrant colours of festivals and the sound of dholki create a tapestry of celebration.”**

**– Lata Mangeshkar**

Maharashtra, a state located in the west of India, is often associated with Vada pav. However, the state is also famous for its colourful cultural heritage, in addition to its delicious and authentic cuisine. One of the most interesting aspects of this heritage is the traditional dance forms of Maharashtra. Amravati, a city located in Maharashtra, is renowned for its rich cultural and historical significance. These dances are a portrayal of the state's history, folklore, and artistic expression.

Dancing is an integral part of Maharashtrian culture, and several folk dances are performed during festivals, weddings, births, and harvest times. Today, traditional dances such as Lavani, Dhangarigaja, Lezim, Koli, and others are popular across Maharashtra.Traditional dance is a crucial component of Maharashtra's cultural identity. These dances are not only artistic expressions but also a celebration of life, rituals, and folklore. They play a significant role in various festive occasions, religious ceremonies, and cultural events, bringing people together in joyful harmony.

## LAVANI DANCE(H3)

Figure 8.40 Lavani Dance

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| **ORIGIN:**   * The 18th and 19th centuries saw the origin of the lavani dance in Maharashtra. This dance form gradually gained popularity in the adjoining regions of Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, and along the Konkan coast. |
| **ETYMOLOGY:** The origin of the term Lavani is traced back to ‘Lavanya’ which implies ‘beauty’, as per the customary beliefs. |
| **WHAT IS LAVANI**:   * Lavani refers to a blend of customary singing and dancing that is typically executed to the sound of Dholki, a type of percussion instrument. * The art form is renowned for its robust rhythm and has played a significant role in the evolution of Marathi folk theatre. * The songs that accompany Lavani performances are sung at a brisk pace. |
| **TYPES OF LAVANI**:   * There are various sub-genres and types of Lavani, each with its own unique characteristics. * These forms are said to have originated from the Prakrit Gathas, which describe two types - the Nirguni Lavani and the Shringari Lavani.  1. The **Nirguni Lavani** is a form of philosophy and is performed with devotional music, which is very popular in Malwa.  * This form emphasises introspection and the concept of the formless divine.  1. The **Shringari Lavani** is a more sensual form, written by male poets and performed by female dancers.  * The Shringari Lavani, which is the most widely recognised form, celebrates love, romance, and sensuality through its flirtatious movements and lyrics. |
| **THEMES:**   * It has traditionally explored a wide range of topics, including society, religion, and politics. * Within this genre, the theme of love between men and women is explored in many different forms - from a married woman’s menstruation to the sexual union between husband and wife, as well as their love for one another. * Other themes include soldiers’ amorous exploits, wives bidding farewell to their husbands who are going off to war, the intense pangs of separation, and adulterous love. * Lastly, childbirth is also a common theme explored in Lavani’s performances. |
| **OCCASIONS:** Customary celebrations, childbirth, marriage, festivals encouragement of soldiers, entertainment etc. |
| **PERFORMED BY**:   * It used to be mostly women, but nowadays, men also engage in it. * The Lavani dance was primarily performed by Dhangars or shepherds residing in Solapur, Maharashtra. It’s worth noting that this form of Lavani is not frequently performed in other parts of the state. |
| **HOW IT IS PERFORMED**:  There are two variations of Lawani, which differ based on the type of performance.   1. **Fadachi Lawani**  * This type of performance gained immense popularity through Marathi films, which used to have tamasha as a central theme. * Artists perform a dance publicly on a stage while singing. * The songs typically revolve around female beauty, a lady waiting for her prince charming, or other Shringarik subjects. * Sometimes, the song takes the form of a question-answer, where one of the parties asks a question, and the other party answers it, all through music.  1. **Baithakichi Lawani**  * This type of performance does not involve dance. * The singer recites in a private mehfil. * Expressions are conveyed mainly through singing and facial gestures. Thus, it mainly focuses on singing, with Indian classical music being prominent. * The compositions are mainly based on Thumri. * The singer also needs to have a basic knowledge of acting. * Notably, it is a kind of Mujra that is exclusively performed for men and is located away from the village. * Ladies or families do not have access to watch it. * The songs contain sexually explicit double meanings. |
| **ATTIRE:**   * The women who perform lavani typically don a nauvari sari that is approximately 9 yards in length. * This type of sari is wrapped and is known to be more comfortable than other sari variations. * They fashion their hair into a bun (Juda in Hindi or ambada in Marathi) and adorn themselves with ornate jewellery, including thushi (necklace), bormaal, pohehaar, zumka (earrings), Ghungru, kamarpatta (a waist belt), bangles, sindoor, and more. * A large Bindi of deep red colour is often applied to their forehead as a finishing touch. |
| **SONGS:**   * The ‘Lavani’ songs are generally sentimental, while the dialogues often feature biting social and political satire. * Typically, these songs are performed with dance, which tends to be playful and erotic. |
| **MUSIC:**   * The music which is played during the worship of the Nirguni sect is widely listened to in the region of Malwa. |
| **MUSICAL INSTRUMENT:** The instruments included are Dholak, Manjeera, Daf, Harmonium, Tuntuni (a unique string instrument), and Gunghroo. |
| **SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTORS:**   * Marathi Shahir poet-singers such as Parasharam, Ram Joshi, Anant Fandi, Honaji Bala, Prabhakar, Saganbhau, Lok Shahir, and Annabhau Sathe are well-known names in the field of Marathi music and poetry. * Honaji Bala, one of the prominent Lavani performers, is credited for introducing the tabla as a percussion instrument in Lavani performances. * He is also known for his contribution to the Baithakichi Lavani form. * Lok Shahir Bashir Momin Kavathekar is a contemporary Marathi poet who has made a significant contribution to the field of Marathi literature. * His compositions have been performed on stage by renowned artists such as Surekha Punekar, Sandhya Mane, and Roshan Satarkar since the 1980s. * Satyabhamabai Pandharpurkar and Yamunabai Waikar are some other contemporary artists who have made significant contributions to Marathi music and poetry. |
| **STIGMAISATION OF THE ART FORM:**   * Lavani developed a close relationship with women from the oppressed castes, leading to the art form being stigmatized. * This is evidenced by a well-known Marathi saying, “Lavani va bai chya nadane Peshwa budalee”, meaning “Lavani and women brought down the Peshwa rule”. |
| **FACTS:**   * During ancient times, Maratha Lords and Kings used to provide patronage to Lavani dancers. * Lavani was initially used to entertain and boost the morale of tired soldiers. * During the late twentieth century, Lavani poet Bashir Momin Kavathekar extensively wrote Lavani for Tamasha Troup’s of Maharashtra. * Lavani's origins can be traced back to the 1560s, but it became popular during the later days of the Peshwa rule. * Honaji Bala introduced tabla in place of the traditional dholki and developed the Baithakichi Lavani subgenre, which is presented by the singer in the seated position. * Many Lavani dancers belong to some castes of Maharashtra, such as Mahar Kolhati and Matang. * Bin Baykancha Tamasha (tamasha without women) was co-founded by two Lavani dancers in 2000, which started the trend of cross-dressing men performing Lavani for urban audiences. However, the idea of men performing Lavani is common in several rural areas in Maharashtra. * Lavani is the only dance form that expresses all the secrets of women's desires and amorous feelings in a very expressive and aggressive way, without any societal constraints. * Maharashtra is home to approximately 600 small groups of Lavani performers and up to 40 slightly larger Lavani dance groups. * Traditionally, one complete performance of Lavani is enacted throughout the night, and when it is completed, they close the curtains with the burning of Manmatha's mount. * Although traditionally performed solely by females, there are rare male performers called Kinnars or Nats. * Lavani is closely related to Tamasha, another dance form. * Religious motifs like the Krishna-Radha storylines and older devotional folk songs of the Vaghya Murali, wherein Krishna himself took the form of a Maratha warrior, were also drawn upon in Lavanis in the Tamashas of the 18th century, and his interactions with the Gopis occurred in animated colloquial Marathi. |
| **IN POP CULTURE:**   * The Lavani genre became more accessible to the masses due to the significant role played by films. Marathi language movies, such as Pinjara and Natarang (featuring songs like Apsara Aali and Wajile Ki Bara), not only attempted to merge traditional music with social messages but also portrayed Lavani in a positive light. * Additionally, Hindi movie songs like Kolhapur Se Aayee from the movie Anjaam, Mala Jau De from Ferrari Ki Sawaari, and Pinga from Bajirao Mastani also helped popularize the Lavani genre. |

## **KOLI DANCE (H3)**

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| **ORIGIN:**   * The Koli community of Maharashtra practices the Koli dance, which is an expression of their ethnicity and traditions. |
| **THEME:**   * The celebration of Kolis always involves the Koli Dance, which is a dance that mirrors the rhythm of the sea waves. |
| **OCCASION:**   * The Koli community has a significant cultural heritage that includes the Koli dance, which is typically performed at weddings, festivals, and other social events. |
| **PERFORMED BY:**   * The Koli dance is usually performed in a group comprising of men and women. The performance involves participation from both genders. |
| **HOW IT IS PERFORMED:**   * The Koli Dance is popular for its vibrant costumes and lively movements that feature shiny beads and sequins. * This dance style has many different variations across the region, all with unique choreography. * During the performance, fishermen stand in two rows with small oars, which are essential tools for fishing, in their hands. * They move these oars in a synchronized rhythm, mimicking the motion of rowing a boat. * Additionally, they sway the oars back and forth, creating the illusion of a boat riding the waves of the sea. * Fisherwomen stand in a separate row, holding hands and moving towards the men who are dancing. * Together, they move in unison, showcasing the movements of rowing a boat and fishing. * The dance features a range of synchronized movements that include jumps, turns, and claps, all perfectly matching the beat of the music. |
| **ATTIRE**:   * **FEMALE** dancers who typically wear green saris that are draped up to their knees in a traditional style unique to the Koli community. * These saris are often made of cotton or silk and come in bright colours such as red, yellow, green, or blue. * The dancers also wear a choli and complement their attire with jewellery like necklaces, earrings, and bangles. * **MALE** who performs the Koli Dance prefer to wear lungis around their waists, creating a triangular shape. * They also sport Koli topi, which is commonly made of cotton or silk and comes in red or white color. |
| **MUSIC:**   * The Koli folk dance music serves a dual purpose; it provides entertainment while also preserving and promoting the cultural heritage of the Koli community in Maharashtra. * The music is a reflection of their deep-rooted connection with the ocean and their way of life, which, in turn, contributes to the diversity and richness of the culture of Maharashtra. |
| **SONGS:**  This dance is often performed with popular songs such as Me Dolker, Aga Pori Sambhaal, Dol Doltai, Paru Go Paru, and Valav Re Nakva. |
| **MUSICAL INSTRUMENT**:   * The dance’s music is usually performed using traditional instruments like the dholki, which is a hand drum, Tasha, a type of cymbals, manjira or hand cymbals, and sometimes the harmonium, a keyboard instrument. * Additionally, the music may also incorporate other instruments like the Halgi, a traditional weapon that produces sound when struck by a stick, Zanj, a metal bell or bell that produces a ringing sound, and Tuntuna, an instrument similar to a guitar or mandolin. |
| **FACT:**   * They hold the sea and boats in high regard and perform regular worship ceremonies for them. * This traditional dance portrays the challenges they face while catching fish, which is their sole means of sustenance. |
| **IN POP CULTURE:**   * The song “Humko Aaj Kal Hai” is from the Hindi movie “Sailaab”. * The Hindi movie “Dil Hai Ki Manta Nahin” has a song called “Galyan Sakli Sonyachi”. |

# GOA <H2>

**“From the bustling markets to the serene backwaters, Goa is a journey of contrasts, a harmonious blend of tradition and modernity.”**

**– Wendell Rodricks**

Goa’s folk dances have a long-standing tradition that dates back thousands of years. These dances come in countless forms, reflecting the lifestyles, cultures, and aspirations of various strata, religions, and castes of Goan society. Among the traditional dances performed by women is Dekhni, which is a rare blend of traditional and modern music. Fugdi and Dhalo are two of the most performed folk dances in Goa. Additionally, the Kunbi is a tribal folk dance. During the Shigmo festival, women perform the lamp dance while holding lamps on their heads. Morulem, presented by the backward community during Shigmo, is another traditional folk dance. Zagor, a folk play presented in different villages of Goa by the Gawda community, is another popular dance. Finally, the Dhangar is a vigorous session of worship and dance performed during Navratri, and Mando is a love song that represents the mingling of Indian and Western traditions.

## DEKHNI DANCE (H3)

Figure 8.41 Dekhni Goa

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| **ORIGIN:**   * The traditional folk culture of Goa is where Dekhni dance originates from. * This dance form is said to have been influenced by ancient art forms and rituals of the region, combining elements from Hindu and Christian traditions. |
| **WHAT IS DEKHNI DANCE:**   * Dekni or Dekhni is a traditional Goan dance form that combines Indian melody and Western rhythm to create an alluring performance. |
| **ETYMOLOGY:**   * In the Konkani language, the term ‘Dekhni’ signifies a spellbinding beauty. |
| **THEME:**  Themes of love, romance, and social issues are frequently depicted in this style of dance. |
| **OCCASION:**   * In Goa, there are several festive occasions where one can experience dance performances. * These occasions include Ganesh Chaturthi, Christmas, other festivals, and New Year celebrations. |
| **PERFORMED BY:** This activity is exclusively for females, and it is typically carried out by Christian women dressed in traditional Indian clothing. |
| **HOW IT IS PERFORMED:**   * The dance consists of graceful movements and serene remedies. * It starts with one woman initiating the dance, and others join in as it progresses. * Dekhni dance typically depicts the life of a Devdasi girl, who is a servant of God and performs dances in temples and social events like weddings. * The dance is performed exclusively by women. * It combines western rhythms and Indian melody, borrowing some gestures from classical dances like Kathak and Bharata Natyam. * The performance becomes graceful through a conversation between a girl and a boatman in the form of a melodious song. * During the performance, the dancers hold pantis, small clay lamps with a wick floating in oil or artis, and move to the beat of the Ghumat, a folk drum. * The sound of the ghungroo adds to the overall musicality and footwork of the Dekhni Dance. |
| **ATTIRE:**   * The cultural heritage and aesthetic traditions of Goa are reflected in the costume and dress attire of Dekhni Dance, which features vibrant colours, intricate jewellery, and graceful draping of the sari. * The sari is the main attire for female performers, while the blouse or choli is often decorated with embroidery, sequins, or beads. * The traditional jewellery worn by dancers includes elaborate necklaces, earrings, bangles, and anklets, made of gold or silver and featuring traditional designs or gemstones, which add to the beauty of the performers. * Dancers usually wear a traditional tiara or maang tikka adorned with jewels or decorative elements in the centre of the forehead and may carry small handheld props like fans or scarves, which they incorporate into their movements during the performance. * In addition, performers apply traditional makeup, including bold eye makeup, red or maroon lipstick, and decorative bindis on the forehead, enhancing the visual appeal of the overall costume. |
| **SONGS:**   * There are only a few dekhni songs that still exist today, which were composed and scored a long time ago. * The song ‘Heir to India and Terror of Goa’ is a call to resist Portuguese rule. * One of the most popular Dekhni songs is Hanv Saiba Poltodi Vetam, written by Carlos Eugenio Ferreira (1860-1926). * It was first published in Paris in 1895 and later in Goa in 1926. |
| **MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS:** Ghumat ( a folk drum) etc. |
| **HISTORY:**   * The dance is said to have originated from the Goan Devadasi system where women dedicated their lives to serving God, following the same system. * These women did not marry or have families of their own and instead performed in temples and in front of God. |
| **FACTS:**   * Kuxttoba is credited with one of the earliest dekhni dances, which is estimated to have taken place around 1869. * The dekhni dance is often linked to individuals who converted from Hinduism to Christianity during the Portuguese era. |
| **IN POP CULTURE:**   * The famous song “ Na maangu sona chaandi” from the Hindi movie Bobby is inspired from the famous dekhni dance. |

## **DHALO DANCE (H3)**

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| **ORIGIN:**   * A customary folk dance known as Dhalo is quite well-liked in Goa, India. |
| **THEME:**   * Performing Dhalos is a way to seek divine intervention and protection from malevolent forces, as well as to promote the well-being of family members and establish peace in the village. |
| **OCCASION**:   * The month-long festival is observed as per the Hindu calendar, beginning on the full moon day which is locally called “Dalyachi Poonav”. |
| **PERFORMED BY:** Women are the ones who perform the dance. |
| **COMMUNITIES INVOLVED:** The dance is performed by the people of Kunbis, Bhandari, Naik, Gabit and Gaudi communities. |
| **CUSTOMARY PRACTISE:**   * The celebrations usually commence on either a Wednesday or Sunday. * Ahead of the festivities, women adorn the open space of their homes and the temple with rangoli. * Women from neighbouring villages are welcome to participate in the dance, excluding widows, who do not partake in the dhalos. * During the festival, women offer talli, which includes rice, Moog, and jaggery. * These ingredients are then cooked and served to those present. * The leader of the village, known as Mandkann, invokes a salutation to the divinity and Earth Mother, seeking their blessings for the entire village and the festival rituals. |
| **HOW IT IS PERFORMED:**   * The Dhalo dance, which is one of the most popular rural dances of Goa, is performed in a sacred open space called mand, where visitors are not allowed to wear shoes. * The village residents gather there to sing, dance, and play music as part of a traditional performance. * To start the performance, the leader of the group greets the mother of the world and asks for her blessings for their dance and ceremonial rituals. * They pray to Mother Nature for the protection of their village from any harm and to ensure the successful completion of the festival without any negative predictions. * The dance typically involves two rows of women facing each other and swaying back and forth while singing about their life stories and contemporary society. * The songs and dances describe various events and narratives. * The Dhalo is performed for the first six nights. * The songs that accompany the Dhalo were originally about Krishna’s romance, Ramayana, and Mahabharata, but in recent years, Marathi and Hindi songs have also been included. * On the last day, women wear fancy dresses and even take on the roles of men. |
| **ATTIRE:**   * Sarees, scarves and traditional jewellery were worn by women, who adorned their hair with flowers (gajra). * They dressed very attractively on the final day of the festival. |
| **MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS:**   * Dhol, Shehnai, Mridanga, tabla, dholak, kansallem, Tasso, chowgudo, and tambura etc. |
| **SONGS:**   * The dance is typically accompanied by songs sung in Konkani or Marathi language. * These songs usually revolve around religious or social themes. * The traditional songs performed during Dhalo focus on Krishna’s romance, Ramayana, and the Mahabharata, but recent additions to the repertoire include Marathi and Hindi songs. |
| **THE RAMBHA PERFORMANCE:**   * A performance titled ‘Rambha’ is presented at the conclusion of the festival. * The narrative of the play revolves around twenty-one Rambha sisters who wish to see their only brother. * The sisters’ ages range from fourteen to sixty-five years old. They gather on the terrace and call out for their brother. As they call out, the brother appears on the terrace, and they are reunited. * This is the only male role in the Dhalo dance form, known as “Bandhav”, and no other man can take part in it. |
| **FACT:**   * On festive occasions, it was customary for individuals to embellish their residences and places of worship with rangoli designs. * Dancing was prohibited for widows and Husbands (male partner). * During the rituals and dancing, moog food, rice, and jaggery were prepared and offered to the attendees. |
| **IN POP CULTURE:** dhalo songs by singer divya Nayak is very popular |

# FOLK DANCE ForMS OF SOUTHERN INDIA (H1)

## **KERaLA <H2>**

**“God’s Own Country, where the backwaters cradle tales of tranquillity, and the hills are draped in the lush greenery of tea plantations.”**

**– A. P. J. Abdul Kalam**

The people of Kerala have a deep appreciation for their cultural heritage and are committed to preserving it. The stunning beauty of the state is showcased by the shimmering backwaters, the swaying coconut palms, and the traditional Kerala dance forms. During cultural events and festivals, locals demonstrate their love for these dance forms. The performances are accompanied by classical or Carnatic music and are sure to leave you in awe.

The various Kerala dance forms have gained popularity both within the state and worldwide. Each dance form is unique and has its own style of expression, costumes, gestures, and adornments. Interestingly, the folk dances of Kerala are rooted in classical dances and mythological tales that are deeply ingrained in tradition. Some of the popular folk dances of Kerala include the Tullal dance and the Thiruvatharakalli dance.

**TULLAL DANCE (H3)**

Figure 8.42 kolam Thullal

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| **ORIGIN:**   * The ceremonial dance known as Kolam Tullal is an intriguing tradition that originated in Kerala, India. * It is thought to have originated from the Tinta group of the Kaniyar caste. |
| **ETYMOLOGY**: Thullal’ is a term that refers to ‘caper’ or the act of ‘leaping or jumping around playfully’. |
| **KOLAM:**   * A Kolam is a vibrant and intricately designed mask or headgear, or a combination of both. * The person who wears it, along with a suitable outfit, is also known as a Kolam. |
| **A BELIEF:** The society believes that kolams are powerful beings sent by Lord Shiva to eradicate evil and bring prosperity. |
| **THEME:** The Bhagavati cult has a strong connection with this dance. |
| **OCCASION:** Cultural programmes, temples, and festivals are some of the places where it can be seen being performed. |
| **PERFORMED BY**: A dance performance that is usually performed by women or girls alone. |
| **HOW IT IS PERFORMED**:   * A tale from the Puranas is narrated in verse and combined with dance to create a solo performance. * To celebrate the arrival of the mythical King Mahabali, Kolam is a colourful and vibrant dance form accompanied by traditional percussion instruments like chenda, thakil, and maddalam. * A procession of Kolam dancers is led by young girls in traditional attire, each holding a plate of offerings and an oil-fed lamp. The priest, wearing jingle bells on his ankles, accompanies the procession, which ends with the Kolams being brought to a tastefully decorated stage with banana stems and lampstands. * The dance is performed in circular formations, with the dancers moving gracefully with their feet and hands in a synchronized manner. They wear colourful traditional attire and intricate makeup and jewellery. * The highlight of the Kolam Thullal is the intricate patterns drawn on the floor with coloured powder, believed to invite the deity's blessings. * The Kolam Thullal not only celebrates the festival but also reflects the rich cultural heritage of Kerala. It is a beautiful display of grace, rhythm, and colour that has been passed down from generation to generation. * The Thullal performer is accompanied by an orchestra of mridangam or thoppimaddalam (percussions) and cymbals, with a singer repeating the verses. * The invocation song is sung by the cymbal player before the dancer faces the orchestra and bows. After that, the dancer performs a smooth flourish of steps and body movements while facing the audience and expressing the meaning of the verse with facial expressions, hand gestures, and body language. * In Thullal, the roles of the raconteur and actor are continuously switched, with the dancer occasionally using brisk footwork and rhythmic body movements to break up monotony. Despite the lack of variation, the dance is given utmost emphasis from beginning to end. * The performance takes place in the compound of a temple or the courtyard of a house, without the use of a formal stage. |
| **ATTIRE:**   * The performer's costume and makeup resemble that of a Kathakali artist. * Yellow arsenic mixed with blue is used to paint the face, while the eyes are blackened, and the lips are reddened. * The full-face painting is maintained for the purpose of expressive advantage. * The dancer wears a breastplate embellished with golden pearls, necklaces, and colourful tassels. * The white waist clothes are in the form of skirts. * The headgear is small and made of light wood, adorned with bright stones, and decorated with golden paper. * The bracelets, amulets, and waistlets are almost identical to those used in Kathakali. |
| **SONGS:** The thullal songs use straightforward Malayalam and are characterized by their candidness, cleverness, and humour. |
| **MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS:**   * Drums, including Chenda, Maddalam, and Timila, as well as idiophones like gongs and cymbals, contribute to percussion music. * The sound of horns, known as Kompu, punctuates the music. |
| **CATEGORISATION**:   * The principles outlined in the Natya Shastra, authored by Bharatamuni, are closely followed by it. * The most prominent among its three variations are Ottanthullal, Seethankan, and Parayan Thullal, with Ottanthullal taking the forefront.  1. **Parayan Thullal-**  * The slowest tempo dance is performed in this style, which has a different stance from the other two. The dancer stands upright and uses gestures to express the songs' meanings. There is usually no action or dancing involved in this type of performance. The outfit is unique, with a crimson floral garment around the waist, a black fabric crown headdress, and necklaces adorning the chest. The face is painted with a pale-yellow colour. * This type of Thullal is performed in the morning and is known for using the Sanskrit meter Mallika. Out of the three types of thullal, Parayan Thullal has the slowest tempo.  1. **Seethankan Thullal-**  * The pace of this performance is intentionally slow, with emphasis given to gestures over vocal actions. Seethankan Thullal is typically performed at midnight and requires a minimum of three people, two of whom play musical instruments, while the third sets up the performance. The performer’s outfit is unique, and they wear yellow-coloured powder on their face. * The kakali meter is commonly used in this dance style.  1. **Ottan Thullal**-  * One of the most popular Thullal dances is recognized for its unique and breath-taking attire. The outfit includes a knee-length skirt made by wrapping a long piece of white and red fabric around a waist string. The costume also features a chest plate adorned with various coloured beads, glass, tinsel, and ornaments. The dancers wear wooden ornaments that are vividly painted on their shoulders and wrists, and jingling bells are fastened just above their calves. The performers apply green paint on their faces, and black paint is used to highlight their eyes while their lips are coloured red. The headpiece is also highly decorated. The Ottam Thullal music has a rapid tempo and rhymes, and the dance itself is performed at a swift pace. |
| **THE STORY**: Kunchan Nambiar is said to have fallen asleep while playing Mizhavu to accompany Koothu at Ambalapuzha temple in a story. The Chakkyar, who was performing, teased, and insulted him. Nambiar, unable to bear the insult, wrote a Thullal story on the same night and performed it the next day evening while the Chakkyar started his Koothu. The new art form attracted the entire audience present for Chakkyar Koothu, and Nambiar wrote more Thullal stories and presented them before the audience, thus starting a new art form and a new branch of literature in Malayalam. Kunchan Nambiar brought classical themes and art forms out of temple culture and introduced social satire to the common masses, breaking the monopoly of upper classes over the arts and culture. Some scholars believe that Nambiar restructured the already existing Thullal art form in other art forms like Padayani, etc. |
| **FACTS:**   * The Tovil and Kolam rituals of the Sinhalese people in Sri Lanka bear similarities to the ritual in question. * Thullal, a popular art form, was founded in the 18th century AD by the renowned Malayalam poet Kunchan Nambiar. * Thullal’s popularity can be attributed to its use of simple Malayalam language and incorporation of wit and humour. |

## THIRUVATHIRAKALI DANCE (H3)

Figure 8.43 Thiruvathira Dance

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| **ORIGIN:** A distinct form of dance known as Thiruvathirakali is performed exclusively in the state of Kerala, India. |
| **OTHER NAMES:**   * Thiruvathirai or Ardra Darshan is an important festival celebrated in the southern parts of India. * It is also known as Arudra Darshan and falls in the Tamil month of Margazhi. * Kaikottikali and Kummikali are two variations of the same art form. They are also known by these names. |
| **THEMES:**   * The practice is prevalent in various regions of South India and is aimed at attaining a state of calmness and serenity in one’s married life. * This mode of artistic expression is known to be a regular occurrence. |
| **OCCASION:**   * The art form of singing the praises of Shiva Parvati is typically performed by women during Onam and Thiruvathira day, which occurs during the Malayalam month of Dhanumas (December-January). * Such performances usually take place in Shiva temples and other similar locations. |
| **CUSTOMARY PRACTICE:**   * The day before Thiruvathira is marked by the commencement of ceremonies, which involve partaking in a special meal known as Ettangadi. * The ingredients of Ettangadi include sorghum, yam, kachil, berry, yam, lentil, sugar, and honey. * This meal is consumed at night, just before the commencement of the ceremonies. * However, it is worth noting that this particular ceremony is not observed in current times. |
| **PERFORMED BY:**   * Women who desire eternal marital happiness and bliss are the ones who perform, and occasionally, men also participate in the Rudra tandava portion. |
| **HOW IT IS PERFORMED:**   * Women dressed in traditional Kerala attire can be seen in groups of up to eight or ten. During the day, Dasapushkas are collected in front of the house, and on the day of Thiruvathira, women take an early bath and observe noyambu (fasting), consuming only rice foods on that day. * Thiruvathirakali begins after sunset. Women must stay awake throughout the night, and group dancing is an easy way to spend the night and keep the villagers entertained. * After midnight's Thiruvathira nakshatramudhi, the dancers sing devotional songs and bring dasa flowers, along with Ashtamangalyam, holding the lamp to the house. Later, they wear these flowers in their hair, a practice called half-breeding. * The flowers are lit by singing songs praising the deities of each flower, and crows are also seen. * Typically, girls move in a circle around an intricately decorated pookalam (flower rangoli), situated at the centre of which is a nilavilakku (traditional brass lamp). * During Thiruvathira, a group of girls playing the game will see a heroine (leader) who sings the first line, and the ensemble responds to the same line. * The group members step and clap their hands to the rhythm of the song. * In circular patterns around the nilavilakhu (a ceremonial lamp), the dancers sway rhythmically to sinuous movements. * This style of dance is referred to as the 'Lasya,' which is a feminine dance. * The steps performed during the pooja are straightforward, making it easy for even the uninitiated to participate in the game. * Additionally, the performers are well-trained men who include an element of Rudra tandava (Lord Shiva's dance of destruction of the universe). |
| **STYLES AND VARIATIONS**:   * Thiruvathirakali has two styles: southern and northern. The Southern style is more intricate and advanced compared to the Northern style, and it also has variations. |
| **ATTIRE:**   * The attire worn by women while performing Kaikottikali dance is very impressive and reflects the traditional Kerala style. They drape themselves in white saris which are paired with a gold-bordered mundu and neriyathu, the two-piece traditional cloth. * The mundu is draped around the lower part of the body, while the neriyathu is worn over a blouse. Women usually tie their hair in a bun and adorn it with a fragrant jasmine garland. |
| **SONGS:**   * The dance is accompanied by traditional folk songs that narrate the story of Parvati’s longing for Lord Shiva’s love and strength. * The songs also draw inspiration from Krishna-Leela, Shakunthalam, Kuchelavritham, and Dhruvacharithram. * Additionally, devotional songs are sung as a tribute to Saraswati, Ganapati, and Krishna. * The festival of Onam is celebrated in Kerala to honour King Mahabali, and special songs are sung in his praise. |
| **RAGAS:** Hussaini, Bhairavi, and Kamboji are some of the commonly used ragas in songs. |
| **MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS:**  Instruments like the harmonium, tabla, cymbals, thimila, edakka, and others are commonly used in music. |
| **MYTHOLOGICAL STORY:**   * Accounts of Thiruvathirakali can be traced back to the ancient festival of Thiruvathira. The festivities usually take place in the Malayalam month of Dhanu, which falls between December and January. On the full moon day, which is also the birth star of Lord Shiva, the celebrations begin. * According to legend, Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati tied the knot on this day, making it an important festival for marital harmony. * In Hindu mythology, it is believed that the dance of Thiruvathirakali represents marital bliss and female energy. It is said that this energy was responsible for reviving Lord Kama Deva, who was reduced to ashes because of Lord Shiva's wrath. * While the festival is most popularly celebrated in Kerala, it is also known as Ardra Darshanam in Tamil Nadu. |
| **FACTS:**  - It is believed that performing this dance can bring about a long and happy married life and a successful marriage of one's choice.  - The first Thiruvathira festival after a girl's marriage is known as Poothiruvathira.  - In ancient times, this dance used to be performed for 28 days, starting from Thiruvathira day until the next month's Thiruvathira.  - In some places, an 11-day program takes place during the month of Dhanum.  - The graceful movements of the devotee in this dance show their deep reverence for the Almighty.  - This dance form is performed during the annual Utsav festival at the Sri Nataraja Temple in Chidambaram, Tamil Nadu.  - According to historical evidence and stone inscriptions, this dance form is said to have originated over 1500 years ago.  - During the festival, the idols of Lord Shiva as Nataraja ( known as Adalvallan in Tamil) and his consort Parvati or Shivagamni are taken in a large procession outside the temple.  - The stories depicted in Kaikottikali are inspired by Kathakali, a profound dance form of Kerala. The Raga Chaya aspect of Kaikottikali is derived from Kathakali.  - This dance form is reminiscent of the primordial fire dance performed by prehistoric people around the fire, moving in a circle. |
| **IN POP CULTURE:**   * Padma Shree Leela Omchery is among the most famous composers associated with the art form. * The dance form has made recent history when a group of 2639 women performed the dance in Mumbai on the 9th of November, 2012, which was recorded in the Guinness Book of World Records as the largest Kaikottakali dance ever performed. |

# TAMIL NADU (H2)

**- “Tamil Nadu, where the temples narrate stories of Dravidian artistry, and the classical dance forms echo the rhythms of centuries.”**

**– Bharathiya**

The folk dances of Tamil Nadu exhibit a blend of regional autonomy and state-specific features, which have been developed to its pristine heights from a very early age. These dances have provided continuity to the Indian tradition through centuries of Indian history, adapting to new conditions and assimilating influences.

The culture of Tamil Nadu has integrated dance or Nadagam as an intrinsic part, which is rooted in the ancient dance-drama form called Therukoothu. The traditional folk dances of Tamil Nadu comprise numerous individual and group forms, which are not only practised for their heritage but also to offer entertainment. The tribal dances of Tamil Nadu range from the simplest form of a puppet show to the Poikkal Kuthirai Attam.

Several dance forms practised in Tamil Nadu are centred on a story that aims to entertain the audience or to pay homage to a deity. It is highly prevalent for the dancers to dress in animal costumes for many dances in Tamil Nadu, exhibiting the strong link between nature and the Gods. They dress like peacocks for MayilAttam, as horses while performing Poikkal Kuthirai, as bulls in Kaalai Attam, as snake-like dresses for PaampuAttam, and as bears in Karadi Attam.Folk dances in Tamil Nadu are rich in variety, including Karakattam, Kavadi Aattam, Devarattam, Kolattam, MayilAttam, Ottan Koothu, Poikkal KuthiraiAattam, Puliyattam, Shattam Dance, and Koothu. These dances play a vital role in representing the cultural heritage of Tamil Nadu and provide a unique insight into the artistic and cultural traditions of the region.

## **MAYILATTAM DANCE (H3)**

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| **ORIGIN:**   * Mayilattam is a type of dance that is both artistic and religious in nature. * It is traditionally performed in Hindu temples located in Tamil Nadu and Kerala, India**.** |
| **ETYMOLOGY:**   * The dance of peacock is what the name literally signifies, with “mayil” meaning peacock and “attam” meaning dance. |
| **THEMES**:   * To honour Lord Subrahmanya, who is also known as Kartikeya or Murugan. He is the son of Shiva and Parvati. |
| **OCCASION:**   * The dance style is usually showcased during Pongal, a harvest festival celebrated in Tamil Nādu, as well as Thai Pusam and Kartigaideepam. |
| **PERFORMED BY** :   * Females, typically, perform this dance wearing beautiful peacock costumes. |
| **HOW IT IS PERFORMED:**   * This dance has more of a traditional significance than being a form of entertainment or art. * The female performers are dressed up as Lord Subrahmanya riding on a Peacock. * Mostly professionals perform this type of dance as it demands strength and the capability to balance the attire while dancing. * The dancers imitate the movement and style of a peacock as part of the dance movement. * They show how the bird cleans its feathers with its beak and legs with meticulous planning and execution. * The melody is followed by close steps at a slow rhythmic speed, and as the time and rhythm speed up, each movement follows a circular pattern. * The performers of Mayilattam wear costumes from head to toe with headdresses and peacock feathers that can be opened and closed using a thread, and they perform specific dances. * They dance on a tall piece of wood attached to the end of their feet. * This dance is performed in all Lord Subrahmanya or Murugan temples during festivals as a tradition. * The styles and choreography of the dance highlight the movements of peacocks and call for extreme flexibility, stamina, and agility from the performers. |
| **ATTIRE:**   * The costume for the Mayilattam dance plays a crucial role in completing the performance. * The dress code adds to the charm of the dance. During the dance, the dancers dress up as peacocks and wear peacock feathers with movable beaks in front, which are tied with a thread and can be manipulated from within the dress. * The flashy dress is primarily in shades of blue. |
| **MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS:** Tabla, Cymbal etc |
| **RESEMBELING DANCE:**   * Great skill and practice are essential for a good performance. * There are different variations of Mayilattam such as  1. Kaalia Attam (bull dance) 2. Karadi Attam (bear dance) 3. Aali Attam (demon dance) 4. Pambu Attam (snake dance).  * Typically, the language used in these performances is Tamil and Malayalam. |
| **FACTS:**   * Mayilattam dance has been carried out in Tamil Nadu and Kerala as an offering for Lord Subrahmanya in Hindu temples since the Sangam period, which lasted from the 3rd century BC to the 4th century AD. * Rural women used to perform this dance to honour Lord Subrahmanya, and it originated in the Tamil Nadu region. * Peacock, which is the Vahanam, or the vehicle used by Lord Muruga, is worshipped, and revered in these states, as it is associated with this dance form. Several peacock dance traditions have been developed in countries like Myanmar, West Java in Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and the Indian subcontinent in Southern India. * Kumaranalloor Mani, who played a key role in popularizing the Mayilattam dance, is one of the noted performers. * However, due to the extensive stamina and skill it requires, the number of Mayilattam performers is decreasing. * Efforts are being made to preserve this creative art form. |

## **KUMMI DANCE (H3)**

Figure 8.44 Kummi Dance

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| **ORIGIN:** The Kummi dance is an ancient and significant form of village dance from the Indian state of Tamil Nadu. |
| **ETYMOLOGY:**   * The origin of the term Kummi is believed to come from the word ‘Kommai’, which refers to performing a dance while clapping one’s hands to keep time. |
| **THEMES:** This dance portrays the daily routines of Tamil Nadu’s rural population. |
| **OCCASION:**   * The Kummi dance is traditionally performed on special occasions like the Pongal festival when the harvest season begins. * Additionally, it is also showcased during personal events such as weddings, childbirths, and the Manjal Neeratu Vizhaa ceremony which celebrates a young girl’s attainment of puberty. |
| **PERFORMED BY:** This dance is typically performed by women, but in some versions, men also participate. |
| **HOW IT IS PERFORMED**:   * A group of Tamil women typically perform Kummi dance in a circular formation. However, this folk dance takes on various forms. * Some places have a simple version with rhythmic clapping, while in other places, the dancers imitate different harvesting activities. * The women stand in a circle and perform the dance, clapping their hands in rhythm. * As other women join, they too begin to sing and dance. * The dance steps are repetitive, with the group holding hands, moving forward, bending down, and clapping their hands. * One woman leads the singing with a favourite song, while the others join in the dance. * Each performer takes a turn singing a new line, and the dance ends when everyone gets tired. * Kummi dance places great importance on facial expressions. * In some local variations, men also participate with the women. * In this type of dance, the men form a circle with sticks in their hands, while the women stand inside in a smaller ring. * The beauty of this dance form lies in the synchronization between the clapping of the women’s hands and the beating of the men’s sticks. * The dance is usually performed on the ground and decorated with banana leaves. |
| **ATTIRE:**   * There is no specific dress code for the Kummi dance, which means there are various costume options available. * Typically, young girls wear pavadai chattai, while teenagers wear pavadai dhavani, and adult women wear saris. * Men usually wear their typical white loincloth along with a kurta or a shirt. |
| **UNIQUE FEATURE:**   * The dance performance stands out for the absence of any accompanying music. This is a unique element of the performance. |
| **MUSICAL INSTRUMENT:**   * The act of performing this dance dates to a time before instruments were even invented, which means that there are no particular instruments that are associated with it. * Instead, all that is required to inspire people to move their feet is the sound of clapping hands and the beating of sticks, which is accompanied by the sweet and melodious singing of women. |
| **SONGS:**   * The performance of the Kummi dance is accompanied by singing the Kummi songs. * Different variations of Kummi dance are available to learn and perform, such as Poonthatti Kummi, Deepa Kummi, Kulavai Kummi, Kadir Kummi, Mulaipari Kummi, and more. |
| **ART OF CAVES:**   * Kummi is a type of Koothu or dance where a large group of people come together and perform. * It’s a dance form that involves forming a chorus, with people swaying in a circle or standing on either side, clapping their hands to the music while gracefully waving their legs, hips, and head, and bending and straightening up together. * Kummi is widely popular in the rural areas of Tamil Nadu and Kerala. * According to legend, Kummi originated from the art of caves. |
| **FACT:**   * The Kummi dance originated in a time when there were no musical instruments available for use. * Numerous poets, including Subramania Bharathiyar, have supported the growth of this dance form, with Kummi Paatu being one of Bharathiyar’s contributions. * Kolattam and Pinnal Kolattam are two dance styles that are like Kummi. * Additionally, the Tamils of Sri Lanka also participate in this dance. * Kummi songs have become a popular component of modern-day Kothiyottam festivities. |

# KARNATAKA <H2>

**“In the heart of the Deccan Plateau, Karnataka is a blend of technology hubs, rich history, and the serene landscapes of Coorg.”**

**– R.K. Narayan**

Karnataka, a state in India with a rich history and cultural heritage, has made significant contributions to Indian culture. One of its most notable contributions is in the field of dance, with various dance styles originating from Karnataka and influencing India's cultural landscape. These dance forms not only showcase artistic expression but also reflect the cultural past of the state.

Karnataka has played a vital role in shaping Indian culture, owing to its diverse traditions and customs. Its cultural influence can still be seen today, and one of its most significant contributions is the creation of several renowned dance forms that continue to charm audiences across the world. Karnataka is home to a vibrant and diverse tradition of arts, including folk dances and puppetry.

Traditional dances in Karnataka include kunitha, which is a traditional dance form of the state accompanied by music. Karnataka's folk dances include Devare Thatte Kunitha, Yellammana Kunitha, and Suggi Kunitha.

## **DOLLU KUNITHA DANCE (H3)**

Figure 8.45 Dollu Kunitha

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| **ORIGIN:**   * The folk dance known as Dollu Kunitha originated from the Kuruba community of Karnataka. * The dance involves the use of the dollu, which is a percussion instrument native to the region and has two heads that are beaten during the performance. |
| **ETYMOLOGY:** The art form is best described by the terms Dollu and Kunitha, which mean drum and dance respectively. |
| **COMMUNITY PARTICIPATING:**   * The Kuruba (or Kuruba Gowda), Deevaru, Nayakaru, and Uppararu communities are participating. |
| **THEME:**   * The purpose of the performance is to satisfy Beereshwara or Beeralingeswara, the deity worshipped by the Kuruba Gowdas of Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh, who are also known as Halumathasthas. * This type of dance frequently depicts tales from folklore, mythology, and rural existence. |
| **OCCASION:**   * Various temple festivals, cultural events, and celebrations include the performance of Dollu Kunitha. * It is a popular feature in the procession of the Karaga festival, Mysuru Dasara, Jambu Savari, Bengaluru Habba festival, and others. |
| **PERFORMED BY:**   * In the past, only Kuruba men were involved in the activity, but eventually, women and people from other communities started participating as well. |
| **MAKING OF DOLLU:**   * The percussion instruments utilized during the performances are constructed from the wood of either neem or palm trees. * Skilled craftsmen shape the bark of these trees into sizeable, hollow drums. * The left aperture of the drum is covered with goat hide, while the right is covered with sheep hide. * These large drums are fastened to the waist of the performers, who strike them with a large stick and their hands in alternating motions. |
| **HOW IT IS PERFORMED:**   * Dollu Kunitha involves a group of 10-12 drummers and multiple dancers performing together in a synchronized manner. * The dance is led by a performer at the centre with cymbals, who controls the movements of the group. * The performers form a semi-circle, and the dance is characterized by alternating slow and fast rhythms. * The dancers move in unison, creating visually appealing patterns and rhythms, while incorporating fast footwork, spins, jumps, and expressive hand gestures. * The performers tie huge drums to their waists and play them with two round and thick sticks. * The beats are counted using a method called 'Guni', where a strike with the bare hand to the left and a strike to the right with a stick are played alternatively. * The count or guni increases with the increase of the dollu beats. * The dancers also wear jingling anklets on their ankles, adding a musical element to their movements. * Performing Dollu Kunitha demands a lot of stamina and endurance since the heavy drums need to be held for hours while dancing. * Traditionally, only well-built men used to take part in Dollu Kunitha. * However, there have been many variations seen in performances lately, such as the use of smaller drums and such. * The performances usually end with a grand finale of a human chain. * The dance exudes an enthusiastic and joyful energy that leaves an impact on the audience. |
| **ATTIRE:**   * The performance’s visual liveliness is enhanced by the costumes worn by the dancers. * The **MALE** dancers wrap a sarong or dhoti around their lower body, leaving the upper part exposed. * They also tie a black sheet rug over the sarong or dhoti. * The **FEMALE** dancers dress up in sarees and tie their hair in a circular bun, attaching leaves to it. They also tie white cloth around their arms. * The clothing and dance style reflect the ancient culture. * To add a musical touch to their movements, dancers wear jingling anklets on their ankles. * The sound of these anklets complements the drumming and adds to the overall auditory experience. |
| **OTHER FORMS:**   * The dances are designated based on the deity, symbol, or instruments used by the dancer, which are either balanced on their head or held in their hand. * Other variations of this dance include Devare Thatte Kunitha, Yellammana Kunitha, Suggi Kunitha, and Alagu Kunitha, among others. * Puja Kunitha is a different type of dance in which the dancers carry a wooden structure that has a deity on their heads. * Pata Kunitha, Gorava Kunitha, and Kamsale are some of the other common ritualistic dances. |
| **A REPRESENTATION:**   * Dollu Kunitha is a remarkable representation of the varied cultural heritage of Karnataka. * According to popular belief, Dollu Vadana is akin to the Bhajana of Beeredevaru. * The term Beeradevaru means Eeredevaru, where Eera stands for water. In the Dravida culture, Shiva is revered as Eeredevaru. |
| **KURUBA’s HISTORY:**   * Dollu Kunitha, a traditional dance form, has been passed down through generations of Kurubas in Karnataka. * The Kurubas, traditionally shepherds, practiced transhumance pastoralism in the Deccan region with their domestic livestock consisting of sheep, goats, and cattle. * The name ‘Kuruba’ is derived from the word ‘kuri,’ which means sheep. * Historically, the dance required sheer strength, stamina, and muscle power, and was performed by Kuruba men only. * The dance was taught by male teachers exclusively. |
| **MYTHOLOGICAL STORY:**   * Dollu is linked to Lord Shiva, who is renowned for his aggressive and intense dance (bhairava tandava dance) when he becomes upset. * The oral tradition of this literature is known as ‘Halumatha Purana’ or Kuruba Purana, which is known for its expressive nature. * The origin of the dance form lies in a tale from mythology about a demon called Dollasura, who was a devout follower of Lord Shiva. * Shiva, pleased with Dollasura’s devotion, granted him a boon. * However, Dollasura became arrogant and wished to either consume Lord Shiva or be granted immortality. * Shiva refused to grant him any of these and Dollasura became enraged, swallowing Shiva in anger. * In response, Shiva expanded himself inside Dollasura’s body, causing his stomach to burst and killing him. * Shiva then made a rope from the demon’s intestine and tied it tightly on both ends. * The hands of the demon became sticks and Shiva started playing the dollu and dancing. * Shiva offered this gift to the Kurubas, his devoted followers once he finished it. * Using the drum presented by Shiva, the Kurubas created Dollu Kunitha to pay homage to Beeralingeswara, a manifestation of Shiva. * Even nowadays, the Halu Kuruba tribes in Shimoga continue to adhere to this tradition. |
| **FACTS:**   * Lord Shiva is believed to be the first manufacturer and player of Dollu, according to various folk legends and puranas. * In Beereshwara temples, Dollu, the primary instrument used in the worship, is hung using a thick thread tied to hooks in the ceiling. The dollu must be beaten every time the worship is offered to Beereshwara. * Dollu Kunitha, a dance form, is renowned for its excellence in Shimoga and Chitradurga districts. This dance is not only a mode of entertainment but also aimed at the spiritual well-being of the performers and the audience. * Deevaru of Shivamogga District have included Dollu mela as part of their worship. * In earlier times, it was thought that Dollu Kunitha was the domain of well-built men, but now women are as competent as men in Dollu Kunith troupes. * Dollu Kunitha has gained widespread popularity, starting from northern Bijapur to Belagavi, Bellary, Raichur, Kalaburagi, Chikkamagaluru, Dharwad, Chitradurga, Shivamogga, and Tumakuru etc. * Sri Choodamani Ramachandra is the first woman artist to perform and teach Dollu Kunitha, a popular folk-dance form in Karnataka. * Drum Dance is another name for Dollu Kunitha. |
| **IN POP CULTURE:**   * Dollu is a 2022 critically acclaimed Indian Kannada- language drama film. This movie received many awards including National Award. |

# ANDHRA PRADESH (H2)

**“Andhra Pradesh, where the sun kisses the temples and the rivers narrate ancient sagas.”**

**– Sarojini Naidu**

Andhra Pradesh, located on the south-eastern coast of India, is a state that is known for its emerald greenery, soul-soothing rivers, serene temples, and rice agriculture. While the state is popularly called the ‘rice bowl of India,’ it is also rich in indigenous art and culture. One of the most notable aspects of Andhra Pradesh’s culture is its traditional dances, which are highly regarded and performed in various parts of the country. The state is home to several famous folk dances, which are usually performed in a group during festivities and family ceremonies. These dances are accompanied by traditional musical instruments and are a source of happiness and joy for the villagers, who sing and dance together, creating moments of harmony and togetherness. Some of the well-known folk dances of Andhra Pradesh include Vilasini Natyam, Andhra Natyam, Bhamakalpam, Veeranatyam, Dappu, Tappeta Gullu, Lambadi, Dhimsa, Kolattam, and Butta Bommalu.

## **ANDHRA NATYAM DANCE. (H3)**

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| **ORIGIN:**   * The classical temple dance of Andhra, known as Andhra Natyam, has been practised for the last 2000 years. * It was first developed in the courts of Andhra Ikshvakus. |
| **ANDHRA NATYAM:**   * Andhra Natyam is an art form that combines the richness of Sanskrit and Telugu languages, with the power, playfulness, and prowess of elements that speak with viewers fluently, as well as convey the deepest philosophies, human emotions, and expressions, ultimately leading to the mould of classicism. * It is a solo performance by a female artiste known as Eka Patra Kelika. * This dance form takes you through three worlds, each with varied themes. * One of devotion within the sacred spaces of temples. * Two of measured candidness within a court. * Three, the vastness of narration in an open space that connects the artists with the evolving audiences. * Here, the stories are told and retold to the masses. |
| **OTHER NAMES:**   * Other names of Andhra Natyam include Agama Nartanam, Kelika, Darbar Ata, Kutcheri Ata, Karnatakam, Nattuvamelam, and Meju Van etc. * Agama Nartanam is the name given to the dance that is performed in accordance with Agama Sastra. * Kelika is the name of the dance that is performed for entertainment purposes. * Darbar Ata is the name given to the dance that is performed in the presence of gods in the Kalyana Mandapa or the courts of kings. * Karnatakam is the name of the dance that is performed according to traditional classical music. * Nattuvamelam is the name given to the dance that is performed under the expert leadership of a female dancer. * Meju Vani is the name of the dance that is performed by an expert and scholarly female dancer. * All these names were commonly used over 45 years ago, but they were eventually consolidated under the name Andhra Natyam. |
| **OCCASIONS**:   * Cultured and dedicated female artists used to perform it in Buddhist aramas, temples, royal courts, festivals, and local gatherings. |
| **PERFORMED BY:**   * This dance, which was originally a temple dance, is now performed by solo female artists under the Nattuva Melamu tradition. * The performance takes place within the temple on the Kalyana mandapas or even outside by dedicated female artists. * Nowadays, men also participate in the dance by dressing up and impersonating females. |
| **TRADITIONS:**   * The dance forms of southern India have traditionally been classified into two major categories. * Men traditionally perform **NATYA MELAMU**, such as Kuchipudi, Kathak, Yakshaganamu, and other similar dances. * Performed exclusively by women, **NATTUVA MELAMU** is a traditional dance form that includes styles such as Mohiniattam, Odissi, and Bharatanatyam. |
| **HOW IT IS PERFORMED:**   * The female performers of Andhra Natyam use delicate body movements and graceful gestures in their dance, known for its slenderness and elegance. * To begin, the dancer enters the stage with **KUMBHA HARATHI** (a pot carrying a flame) and recites **CHURNIKA** or HYMNS (a lyrical praise to God). * Following the **PUSHPANJALI**, she presents **NRITTA** ( which is pure dance), followed by **NRITYA** (pure dance with expressions) and finally **ABHINAYA** ( which is drama), all based on the works of Annam Acharya, Kshetragna or Siddhendra Yogi. * **SATTVIKA ABHINAYA**, the divine gestural language, is a major highlight of Andhra Natyam. * In addition, the dancer is required to learn classical music and sing while dancing. * If the dancer is unable to sing, she must move her lips in accordance with the supporting artist who sings in the background. * **NOTE**: When the performer is a man, it is customary for him to wear clothing that resembles that of a woman. |
| **STYLES / FORMS :**   * It is performed in 3 styles.   **Aradhana Nrityam (Temple Dance)**   * The Agama Sastra prescribed the marga-style dance as a form of worship dedicated to the gods. * Deva Ganikas, the temple dancers, performed in the Natya Mandapa only in the presence of the main deity. * Traditional Kumbha Harathi was used as part of the worship of God. * The Agama Nartanam, performed in the presence of Lord Shiva, was distinct from the one performed in the presence of Lord Vishnu or the Ashta Dikpalakas. * The Devanartakis, or temple dancers, performed this dance form from early dawn till the temple closed at night, using Sanskrit as the language.   **NOTE:**   * The primary sources of Agama Sastra, which help to evoke bhakti rasa, are the **Upanishads and Vedas.** * **Agama Sastra** provides a detailed explanation of this tradition, including a description of the types of instruments used and guidelines for composing poetry. * When worship is expressed through dance and music, it is referred to as “**Ranga Bhoomi**”.   **Asthana Nrityam (Dance in Kings Courts)**   * This dance form, infused with Desi tradition, is typically performed in the courts of kings known as Kacheri or Darbar ata. * The Asthana Narthakis, or court dancers, also referred to as Raja Narthakis, are highly cultured and educated individuals with expertise in poetry, literature, arts, dance, music, and politics. * These performers, including poets, scholars, royal visitors, and other experts, entertained the king’s court with their music and dance. * To keep the King and his subjects engrossed, the Raja Narthakis must stay alert and improvise at all levels. * Sanskrit and Telegu are the languages used in these performances. * Many historical records demonstrate that Raja Narthakis are well-respected among the people. * However, court dances ceased after the end of the monarchy in India.   **NOTE:**   * The **ASTHANA SAMPRADAYA** is known for performing a selection of items, such as Sabda, Swara, Sahithya Pallavis, Sabdam or salam jatis, Padavarnams, Padams, Javalis, Slokas, etc. * A **KELIKA** in a temple has a different meaning than a kelika in the court of a king. * When it comes to the depiction of Padam, **SAATVIK ABHINAYAM** is the predominant style. * The version of "**ANVAYAM**" has a unique Slokabhinayam style. * **PADYAMS** are also performed as part of the repertoire.   **Prabandha Nrityam (Dance for general audience)**   * This dance form is a blend of education and entertainment. * It is based on Puranas and Vedanta and includes Parijatams, Kalapams, and Bhagavatham, which are meant to benefit the common people. * This repertoire is performed in public places and is used for storytelling. * These dances are usually performed during important festivals and celebrations. * As a part of the Prabandha Nartanam, Kalapams, such as Bhamakalapam, Gollakalapam, Radhamadhavam, and others, are performed. * The language used in these performances is Sanskrit and Telegu.   **NOTE:**   * Performers used to portray Krishna and his beloved wife, Satyabhama in the dance known as **PARIJATA NRITHYAM**. * The **BHAMAKALAPAM** was performed for nine consecutive nights outside the temple in the Nattuva Mela tradition. * This performance was referred to as **NAVAJANARDHANA PARIJATHAM**. |
| **EXPRESSIONS AND TECHNIQUES:**   * The dance form of Andhra Natyam incorporates the use of texts such as Abhinaya Darpana, Bharatarnavam, and Nrittaratnavali for **NRITTA** and **NRITYA** techniques. * For **ABHINAYA**, Bharata rasa prakaranam, Rasa manjari, and Rasarnava sudhakaram are utilized. * To **PERFORM** Kshetrayya padams, javalis, and Jayadeva’s ashtapadis are also included. |
| **ATTIRE:**   * A saree is a common costume for dancers made of richly shimmering silk. * It is designed to fit above the ankles and is pleated along the legs. * Dancers usually wear heavy jewellery and ties (GAJRA) flower in their hair. * Additionally, heavy eye makeup is applied to make the face more expressive. |
| **MUSIC:**   * Desi variations added to Carnatic music |
| **MUSICAL INSTRUMENT:**   * The Tanpura and/or the Surpeti provide the drone. * The mridangam and the manjira offer the rhythmic accompaniment, which can be supported by kanjira, murchang, or ghatam. * The veena (Saraswati veena), venu, or violin can handle the melodic accompaniment. * The dancer's feet have additional rhythmic accompaniment provided by the ghunghroo. |
| **SONGS:**   * Abhinaya is emphasized in the performance of Raga bhava, which involves the use of compositions in Telugu and Sanskrit by different vaggeyakaras from ancient times. |
| **HISTORY:**   * The Andhra Natyam style of dance is formed by combining several classical dance forms and shares many similarities with Kuchipudi and Bharatanatyam, as well as older dance styles such as Dasiattam, Kacherittam, and Chinnamelam etc. |
| **FACT:**   * Andhra Natyam is a traditional form of dance that originated as a temple dance and has been documented through Buddhist aramas like Nagarjuna Konda and Amaravati, as well as sculptures and literary sources such as King Hala's Gatha sapthasathi. * Originally called Lasya Nartana and practised exclusively by temple dancers, this dynamic style of dance is now commonly referred to as Andhra Natyam and includes court dances by courtesans known as **kalavantulu** and open-air performances for the public, known as **kalapam**. * During the Mughal and British Empire rule, Andhra Natyam became dormant. * However, Padma Shree Dr Nataraja Ramakrishna's tireless efforts helped revive the dance form, which was renamed Andhra Natyam and began to flourish around 50 years ago. * Although often confused with Bharatanatyam due to their similar steps, Andhra Natyam is distinct from Bharatanatyam in terms of culture and tradition. Andhra Natyam shares a history with Vilasini Natyam, and many traditional dances were prohibited when the Devadasi Act was passed. * Andhra Natyam is similar in style to Bharatanatyam and is based on **Nandikesvara’s 'Abhinaya Darpana' and Bharata's 'Natya Shastra'**. * The present-day version of Andhra Natyam differs from the original version in terms of its stylish costumes, makeup, ornaments, and orchestra. |

## **VEERA NATYAM DANCE (H3)**

Figure 8.46 Veera Natyam

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| **ORIGIN:** An ancient dance form of Andhra Pradesh is known as Veera Natyam, which is also referred to as the Dance of the Brave. |
| **ETYMOLOGY:**   * The meaning of Veera is brave, while Natyam means dance. * Therefore, Veera Natyam stands for the dance of the brave. |
| **THEMES:**   * The performances revolve around Daksha yagna, a ritual where a fire is ignited, and the dancers’ bodies are pierced with tridents and spears. |
| **COMMUNITY PERFORMING:** The Veeramusti community in Andhra Pradesh is known for performing a style of dance that is quite popular among the devotional followers of Veera Bhadra. |
| **OCCASIONS:**   * Skilful techniques and dexterous hand movements are involved in Veera Natyam, a traditional dance form that is performed in every Shiva temple in Andhra Pradesh. * Nowadays, Veera Natyam is not limited to religious events but is also performed on various occasions, such as marriage functions, vows fulfilment ceremonies, cultural functions, and religious processions etc. |
| **PERFORMED BY:** Men carry out this practice. |
| **HOW IT IS PERFORMED:**   * This dance dedicated to Lord Shiva is an intense display of anger and embodies fierce postures. * The beauty of this dance lies in the precision of the hand movements and footwork, which have been passed down through generations and perfected through devotion to Lord Shiva. * Every step of Veera Natyam tells a story of courage and heroism, and each one holds great spiritual significance. * **FIRST STAGE:** During the first stage of the dance, the dancers make their appearance on stage while holding a plate called "Veera Bhadra Pellam". * This plate bears a camphor fire and is carried from the palms to the elbows. * Meanwhile, a priest in the background chants mantras. * The dance goes on to the tune set by a variety of percussion instruments until the fire on the plate is extinguished. * This stage also includes the recital of the ‘Khadgalu’, where a pujari wields a long sword, representing Veera Bhadra. * **SECOND STAGE:** * In the second stage, the performers hold a long-consecrated pole that is marked with Vibhuti, or sacred ash, representing the ‘Dhwaja Sthamba’ of the Lord. * Bells are tied to the top of the pole. * **THIRD STAGE:** * The third stage of the dance involves the performers using spears and tridents, which are pierced into their hands, ankles, and tongues. * This stage is called ‘Narasam’. * The performance concludes with a 'Mangala Aarti' in the name of Lord Shiva. * The performers use flaming tridents for this final act. * Veeranam being the main instrument in the performance. * Veeranatym is much more than just a dance. It is an expression of the performers' extreme devotion and bravery. * Furthermore, it forms a unique connection between art, tradition, and spirituality. |
| **OTHER NAMES:**   * It is also known as Veerangam and Veerabhadra Nrityam or Veerbhadra Natyam. |
| **ATTIRE:**   * The knee-length dhotis worn by the dancers are both attractive and colourful. * To secure the dhotis in place, the dancers also use waist sashes, also known as waistbands. * The dancers adorn their bodies with Vibhuti, a sacred ash. * In addition, they tie ghungroos, a type of musical anklet, to their feet. * The jewellery worn by the dancers is both traditional and enchanting, as well as exquisite. * The colours of the clothes worn by the dancers represent rage, anger, and passion. * These colours also symbolize fire, which is the most fearsome element in the world. |
| **SONGS:** Using mantras or hymns is a common practice. |
| **MUSICAL INSYTRUMENTS:**   * The ‘Veeranam’ (war drum) is a significant percussion instrument utilized in this dance style. * Thambura, Soolam, Dolu, Thasha, and Veeranam are among the other instruments used. |
| **MYTHOLOGICAL STORY**: As mentioned in Hindu Mythology.   * Daksha, who was the father of Goddess Sati, arranged a Yagya once. * All were invited except for Lord Shiva. * Sati, who wished to meet her childhood friends, attended the event without her husband. * However, she was not welcomed warmly at her father’s place. * An argument ensued between Daksha and Sati eventually. * When she could no longer bear the insult towards her husband, she self-immolated using the Agni within her called Yogagani. * The story behind Veera Natyam is based on her sacrifice. * Shiva loved Sati dearly and was deeply saddened by her demise. * He was so heartbroken that he cut a lock of his hair which gave birth to two incarnations - Veerbhadra and Bhadrakali. * These incarnations brought tremendous power to the world, which was too intense to bear. * The destruction and grief that followed these incarnations were immense.   **NOTE:** Knowing this tale is crucial before trying to understand Veera Natyam, as understanding Shiva’s emotions after Sati’s death is of utmost importance.  Dancers aim to bring these emotions on stage when they perform Veera Natyam. |
| **FACTS:**   * The dance form called Veera Natyam has its origins in Shaivite temples where it was performed as a ritual in honour of Lord Shiva. * This is a very devotional dance that derives its name from Veerabhadra, the form of Lord Shiva that is worshipped during the performance. * Veerbhadra is one of the oldest divine incarnations on earth. * The folk-art form of Veera Natyam is very culturally and religiously significant and is popular in the East and West Godavari districts of Andhra Pradesh, especially in Khammam, Kurnool, Anantapur and Warangal regions. * The Veeramusti community of Andhra Pradesh is believed to be the descendants of cohorts of Lord Veerabadra. * The birthplace of Veerbhadra is Draksharamam (Daksha vatika) which is in the East Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh. * The dance is also known as the Pralayam or the dance of destruction. |

# TELANGANA. (H2)

Telangana, a southern state of India ,is known for its lively culture and diverse folk dances. Although it was separated from Andhra Pradesh, it still holds the age-old cultural heritage of the region. The traditional Telangana dance has evolved over the centuries, and it is still performed with great enthusiasm by local performers. These dances are often accompanied by regional music styles that add to the uniqueness of the experience.

**“In the heart of Deccan Plateau, Telangana is a tale of ancient forts, intricate art forms, and the aroma of Hyderabadi biryani.”**

**– P. V. Narasimha Rao**

The vibrant colours, intricate movements, and mesmerizing music make these dance forms a true reflection of the rich cultural heritage of Telangana. The costumes worn by the dancers showcase the diverse culture of the region and add to the beauty of the performance. Religious rituals and ceremonies often accompany these dances, enhancing their meaning and creating a magical atmosphere for spectators.

Telangana's folk dances, such as Gussadi, Lambadi, Perini Sivatandavam, and Dappu, have become increasingly popular among tourists from around the world. It is a cultural wonderland that immerses you in its rich history, artistry, and vibrant energy. These music and dance forms are performed with great enthusiasm all over the state, making Telangana a unique and captivating destination for anyone who wants to experience its cultural beauty.

## **LAMBADI DANCE (H3)**

Figure 8.47 Lambadi Dance

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| **ORIGIN:** The origin of the Lambadi dance can be traced back to Anupu village (Telangana), which is located near Nagarjuna Konda in Andhra Pradesh, India. |
| **TRIBE**:   * The Banjara tribe has a folk dance called the Lambadi dance. * Banjara tribe, a community of nomads from Andhra Pradesh. * This folk-art form has been passed down through generations and has a rich tradition and heritage that spans centuries. * The Banjara community is known for their nomadic lifestyle, and they are often involved in the selling of various commodities as they move from one place to another. * Over time, as they settled in certain areas for longer periods, the art forms that were native to their community became increasingly popular and were learned by others. |
| **THEMES:** This dance portrays the routine responsibilities of a farmer, such as harvesting, sowing, planting, and reaping etc. |
| **OCCASION:**   * The Lambadi community performs this dance during various celebrations and occasions. * It is also exhibited in cultural festivals, weddings, and other cultural events, both within the community and in broader Indian cultural settings. * These tribal people move from one house to another during festivals like Dussehra, Deepavali and Holi, dancing and receiving alms. |
| **PERFORMED BY:**   * The dance is performed by both males and females. * It is primarily executed by women belonging to semi-nomadic clans such as ‘Lambadis’, ‘Banjaras’ or ‘Sugali’ or Lambada. * Men are not forbidden from participating in this dance, but they mainly support the females and play instruments while they dance on stage. |
| **HOW IT IS PERFORMED:**   * The Lambadi dance is performed with the intention of pleasing the gods for a good harvest. * This dance form is dominated by women, who perform it with fervent grace and lyricism. * The dancers’ subtle sensuality adds to its appeal. * The dance is characterized by rhythmic footwork, graceful hand gestures, and expressive facial expressions. * During the dance, female dancers mostly dance in sync with the male drummers to offer homage to their Lord. * The hand movements of the women resemble the acts of planting, sowing, and harvesting. * As they dance around a fire in the night’s beauty, the images of deities are worshipped. * Over time, the Lambadi folk dance evolved into a dance of celebration. * The accompanying music played on traditional instruments adds an energetic and melodic dimension to the performances. * This dance form not only entertains and engages audiences but also fosters a sense of identity, unity, and pride among the Lambadi community. |
| **ATTIRE:**   * The female dancers adorn themselves in bright blouses that are embroidered with exquisite designs and embellished with mirrors. * Their skirts are also made of lively fabrics and feature intricate embroidery and mirrorwork. * They complete their look by draping veils or odhanis over their heads and shoulders to add a touch of gracefulness. * The Lambadi dancers also accessorize with chunky silver jewellery, such as necklaces, earrings, nose rings, anklets, and chudas (hand ornaments), showcasing their appreciation for artistry and beauty. * The combination of these intricate costumes, vivid colours, traditional jewellery, and elaborate details creates a captivating spectacle during Lambadi folk dance performances. * Overall, the costumes and apparel used by Lambadi dancers bear a striking resemblance to those worn by women in Rajasthan. |
| **SONGS:** The language used in the songs is Lambadi. |
| **MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS:**   * This folk dance incorporates several musical instruments such as dholak, mandolin, duff, and manjeera. * The tempo of the dance is set by the rhythmic beats of the dholak, and the harmony is added by the melodic tones of the mandolin. * The duff provides sharp percussion, and the manjeera contributes tinkling cymbal sounds, resulting in a mesmerizing musical accompaniment. |
| **HISTORY:**   * The Lambadi community has a rich cultural heritage, and their folk dance has a fascinating history that goes back centuries. * This dance style has its origins in the nomadic way of life of the Lambadi people, who have ancestral roots in Rajasthan, Gujarat, and parts of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana in India. * The Lambadi community, historically known as the Banjaras or Gypsies, lived a migratory lifestyle, travelling long distances in search of livelihood and trading opportunities. * During their travels, they developed Lambadi folk dance to communicate, entertain, and preserve their cultural traditions. * The dance form evolved over time, influenced by the diverse regions they traversed and the interactions they had with neighbouring tribes. * This mixture of cultural elements and artistic expressions contributed to the unique style and essence of Lambadi folk dance. |
| **FACTS:**   * Numerous folk dances have their roots in Telangana, with each community having its own distinctive culture, including dance forms, music, and tales. Some communities also have their own musical instruments. * This dance carries immense cultural importance, as it reflects the customs, traditions, and way of life of the Lambadi community. It serves as a powerful tool for storytelling, preserving their cultural heritage, and promoting a sense of community pride. * During the 3rd National Tribal Festival, held in Raipur, folk artists presented this dance in November 2022. |

# PERINI SIVATANDAVAM DANCE (H3)

Figure 8.48 Perini Sivatandam Dance

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| **ORIGIN:** An ancient dance form from Telangana, India is known as Perini Shivathandavam, or Perini Thandavam. |
| **ETYMOLOGY:**   * “Perini” is derived from the Sanskrit word “Prerana”, which translates to “encouragement” or “motivation” |
| **THEMES:**   * Honouring Lord Shiva, the Hindu deity, this ritual was traditionally conducted before soldiers went to battle in ancient times. * The belief is that it was performed as a tribute to Lord Shiva. |
| **OCCASIONS:**   * Male performers used to showcase their dancing skills in the King’s palace and temples prior to the soldiers departing for war. * Lord Siva is widely regarded as the ultimate dancer, and Perini aims to help the performer attain a higher level of consciousness like that of Shiva. |
| **SECTS:**   * The warriors and sects of Veeras, Maheshulu, Pasupathi’s, and Mylarudevulu used to perform a dance form known as eka Patra. * This dance was aimed at invoking the spirit of Lord Siva within themselves, seeking his blessings for courage, strength, and a successful return from the battlefield. |
| **PERFORMED BY:**   * Males are typically the ones who perform this type of dance. * However, in ancient times, there have been instances of females also participating in this dance. |
| **HOW IT IS PERFORMED:**   * The dance performed before the idol of Lord Shiva by warriors before leaving for the battlefield is called **'Dance of Warriors**.' * This dance was performed on special platforms in front of temples and has both spiritual and artistic significance. * Perini Sivatandavam is a male dance form that is believed to be the most invigorating. * This pure form of dance **celebrates the mystic 'Om'** and incorporates **Vira, Raudra rasas of Lord Shiva**, whose spirits are invoked by dancers. * The dance mainly involves five elements, including Water, Air, Wind, Earth, and Fire. * The warriors performed this dance before the idol of **Lord Nataraja** as a mode of worship before leaving for the battlefield with the motto of invoking Shiva to dance through them. * The dance begins with **Gargara** and ends with **Shiva Panchamukha Shabda Nartanam** in praise of Lord Shiva. * The dancers perform energetically to the rhythm of the drums and continue until they feel the power of Shiva in their bodies. * This dance is characterized by intricate footwork, leaps, jumps, and swift spins. * The dancers exhibit a sense of controlled energy and intense expressions, reflecting the power and dynamism of the warrior spirit. * The movements are executed with precision and grace, often accompanied by rhythmic chanting and drumming. * The role of mridangam is very special in Perini, as the sound of mridangam produces vibrations in our body, with each beat having a start, induces and **ebbs the vibration (Osthapathi, Parakasta, and Anthardhana**). * The music used in this form of dance involves the use of bells, drums, conch, and rhythmic syllables that change the entire atmosphere, helping the dancers reach a point of frenzy. |
| **REPERTOIRES:**   * The Perini dance usually starts with Gargharam and finishes with Siva Panchamukha Shabda Nartanam, which is a dance praising Lord Siva. * In the Perini repertoires, Pancha Mukha Sabdam Nartanam is based on the worship of the five elements - Prithvi (Earth), Jala (Water), Thejo (Fire), Vayu (Air), and Akasha (Sky). * It involves less of Hasthabinayam and more of akasha charis, bhramaris, and karanas and expresses the mood of the five elements in a unique way. * This dance is usually performed at the end of the performance. * **Gargharam** is a dance that involves various quick movements of the anklets, consisting of six parts - **Lakhadhimi, Siriberam, Halabedem**, **Patnam, Patavatam**, and **Suripatem** and begins with sama pada posture. * In the Perini's Vishamam repertoire, the dancer depicts **AkashaChari** and **BhumiCharis** on the sound of mridangam. * **Vishamam** starts with Akashachari and ends with **teermanam**, which is performed five times in Perini instead of the usual three. * **Bhavasyram** is a repertoire where postures and hand gestures are expressed in a rhythmic dance. * Perini has other repertoires like **Bhramana Nartanam**, which has twenty-five varieties of Bhramara, such as Dhasina, Vama, Brujanga, Lath, Chatra, and Kanda. |
| STYLES:  There exist two types of Perini:   1. **Perini Siva Thandavam** is meant for men. 2. **Perini Lasyam** is meant for women.  * Classical dance comprises two styles:  1. **Marga STYLE:** which is more inclined towards spirituality. 2. **Desi STYLE:** which is more engaging and dramatic.  * Perini is officially categorized under the Desi style. |
| **ATTIRE:**   * The costume of the dancers typically consists of traditional clothing such as vibrant dhotis, angavastrams (shawls), and various ornaments. * To enhance the rhythm of their footwork, they may also don Salangai (anklets) and adorn their bodies with turmeric paste.   **NOTE:**   * According to Jayappa Senani’s book **"NRITTA RATNAVALI**", a Perini dancer should wear ornaments made of seashells or gold. * The dancer is expected to apply ash all over their body, set their hair upright and tied, and hold a dummy cobra or wand in one hand and a 'chamaram' in the other hand. |
| **MUSIC:**   * The Perini Sivatandavam music typically features percussion instruments such as the Dolu (a large cylindrical drum), Tasha (a pair of kettle drums), and tambura (a stringed instrument). * The tambura's melodies and the drums' beats combine to create an energetic and captivating atmosphere. * In Perini, the mridangam plays a unique and important role. * With every beat, the sound of the mridangam induces vibrations in our body, which start, intensify and then diminish (known as Osthapathi, Parakasta and Anthardhana). * The usage of mridangam in Perini is more like that in **Drupada Sangeetham**, evoking a majestic feeling of Veera rasa, unlike its usage as an accompaniment to Carnatic music. |
| **MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS:**   * The main instruments used in the orchestra include mukhaveena, mridangam, nadaswaram, talas, sruthi, bells, drums, dolu, tasha, tambura, and conch. |
| **ANGAS:**   * Kala Krishna, a renowned exponent of Perini, has identified five components of the dance form - Ghargaram (footwork), Vishamam (acrobatics), Bhavashrayam (depiction of nature, animals, and demons), Kaivaram (eulogizing kings and gods), and Geetam (music). * However, Nataraja Ramakrishna chose to reconstruct only two of the components, i.e., the Ghargaram and Vishamam portions. |
| **LITERATURES MENTIONING:**   * The Perini dance form has been mentioned in Sanskrit and Telugu literature, such as:- * Panditha Raya Charitra by Palkuri Somana. * Bharatham by Tikkana * Uthara Hari Vamsham by Nachanna Somanatha * Bhimeswara Puranam - Desi Nrityas by Srinatha Kavi. * Valmiki Chaitra & Raghunayaka Abhyudhayam by Ragunatha Nayaka * Rajagopala Vilasam by Chengala Kavi * Palnathi’s Veera Charita * Nandikesvara’s Abhinaya Darpana.   **NOTE:**   * While Palkuri Somana’s book mentions Perini dance as a male-only domain, other literature supports the idea that even female dancers, particularly the Raja Narthakis, performed this dance form. |
| **HISTORY:** **PERINI DURING KAKAKTIYA REGIME**   * Perini Sivatandavam is an extremely energizing and stimulating dance form. * It is believed that the dancers, who were warriors, performed this dance as a mode of worship before heading to the battlefield. * The dance was performed in front of the idol of Lord Nataraja with the intention of invoking Lord Siva to dance through them. * The dance was so powerful that it gave the dancers a spiritual awakening, and they felt the power of Lord Siva at a physical level. * This dance form was particularly important during times of frequent invasion threats when courage was essential. * The Perini dance was part of the daily ritual, and even the Saiva cult gained momentum during this period. * The dance was performed six times a day in a ritualistic manner, with each performance dedicated to Lord Siva as Sivaparana during peacetime and as Rudraparana to inspire warriors to go to war. |
| **FACTS:**   * Perini is a type of art that belongs to the **Natya melam tradition**. * The available historical evidence suggests that Perini was at its peak during the time of Kakatiya’s, who spread more of Veera Saivam. * The Kakatiya’s established their dynasty in Warangal and ruled for nearly two centuries. * The rulers of Kakatiya, such as Ganapathi Deva, Pratapa Rudra Deva of Warangal, and Rani Rudrama Devi, who were all admirers of Lord Shiva, played a significant role in promoting the warrior dance form. * Ganapati Deva's commander of the elephant corps, Jayana Nayak, is said to have performed the dance before his army to boost morale. It, therefore, became a natural method to stimulate the warrior spirit. * However, the art disappeared from the scene after the fall of Kakatiya’s due to a lack of patronage. * The invocation music in this dance was called ‘Melaveempu’ or ‘Melaprapthi’. * Dr Nataraja Ramakrishna revived the art form by studying old manuscripts and sculptures at Ramappa Temple. He has given more importance to the tradition followed while reinventing the art form rather than the text in totality. * He has revitalized primarily the male aspect of Perini dance form as opposed to the evidence seen in the texts and sculptors, wherein both genders are portrayed to have performed Perini dance. * The sculptures near Garbha Grihi (Sanctum Sanctorum) of the 13th-century **Ramappa Temple** at Warangal provide evidence of this dance. * Jayapa Senapati's **Nritta ratnavali,** a dance treatise written in the courts of Ganapathi Deva (1199-1261 AD), and the sculptural representation on the thousand-pillared temples and shrines at Palampet and Ghanapur in Warangal district provide crucial insights into a powerful and vigorous masculine dance style that was performed to inspire warriors before going to the battlefield. * According to historians, Perini Shivatandavam is like the ferocious dance form practiced by the aborigines of New Zealand and America. * Most of the dancers who performed this art form were from the Veer Saiva cult. The art form is approximately 800 years old. * The female variant of Perini Shivatandavam, known as Perini Lasyam, is performed with graceful yet vibrant movements. * While Jayapasena conceptualized nritta-based dance and called it ‘Perini’. * Abhinaya Darpan defines nritta as bodily movements without evoking Rasa Bhava. * Jayapa sena also authored a Sanskrit treatise, Nritya Ratnavali, which is an authoritative text on Indian dance. * HHThandava itself is the name of the dance of destruction performed at the end of each Kalpa. * Another feature of Perini is **Srunga Nartanam,** which depicts Lord Siva dancing for Parvati set in a twilight backdrop. |
| **IN POP CULTURE:**   * Vedantam Sastri, a renowned teacher, had a student named Vempati Chinna Satyam who became an accomplished dancer and received the title of Andhra Ratna. One of his notable contributions was choreographing the Thandava dance for NTR in the movie Narthanasala in 1963. |