

Jatapu

Location (Major): Rayagada, Gajapati

Language: Kuvi (Dravidian)

Population: 14890 (as per 2011 census report)

Major festival & Rituals: Pongal (Pondugu) Bhagudi, Dussera, Nuakhia



The Jatapu is said to be a civilized section of the Kondhs, who speak Kondh language on the hills and Telgu on the plains and are now practically a distinct tribe. They are divided into several exogamous totemic septs (Vansas) named after natural objects. They follow patrilineal rule of descent and patrilocal rule of residence. Negotiation marriages are common and crosscousin marriage is the most preferred form. Other ways of acquiring spouses are by capture, elopement, service, and exchange. Junior levirate and sororate, divorce, remarriage of widows, widowers and divorcees are also permitted. They have no restrictions against polygyny though such instances are few. Bride price (Oli) is paid in cash. Nuclear family is predominant among them though in few cases, polygynous and extended families are found. Generally, they cremate the dead but bury those who die of unnatural death caused by snake bite, cholera, small pox, child birth, attack of wild animals etc. Death pollutes not only the concerned family or lineage but also the entire populace of the village. Mourning is observed for three days and mortuary rites, on the fourth day. They worship Zakeri or Sakeri Penu as their chief deity and village shrine. They have the cult of ancestor worship. Their sacred specialists are Disari (Austro loger), Jani (priest) and Pojuri (Shamanin). At the village level Naik or Dora acts as the traditional secular chief.