



पर्यटन विभाग
DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM

दादरा एवं नगर हवेली संघप्रदेश
U.T. OF DADRA & NAGAR HAVELI

Tribes of Silvassa



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Tribals make up a large part of the population - 75%. The most prominent are Dhodia (16.90%), Kokna (16.85%) and Varli (62.94%), with small groups of Koli, Kathodi, Naika and Dubla scattered across the territory, collectively representing 3.31% of the population.

Dhodias and Dubles mainly populate the Northern part, whereas Koknas and Varlis are found all over the Union Territory.

Varlis

Dhodias

Koknas

Kathodis

Dublas or Halpatis



Varlis

Although commonly associated with Maharashtra, and found in Gujarat too, Varlis actually consider Union Territory of Dadra and Nagar Haveli to be their original home. A tribe of non-Aryan origin, they are the largest tribal group in the territory and constitute 62.94% of the total tribal population.

Rituals are extremely important to the Varlis - they are nature worshippers who regard the Sun and the Moon as the eyes of God. Their main deities are Naran dev, Hirwa, Himai and Waghio, and stone images of these deities are found in tree groves. A *Bhagat* plays the *Ghangal* (a musical instrument made from gourd, bamboo and iron strings) and performs the rituals.

Traditionally the Varlis wear a loin cloth with a small waist coat and a turban. The women wear a knee length, one yard saree - *Lugden* - and adorn themselves with silver and white metal ornaments.



Dhodias

The term Dhodia seems to be derived from *Dhundi*, which means a small thatched hut, and the Dhodias are primarily hut dwellers. They reside mostly in the northern part of Dadra & Nagar Haveli. They are known to be the most educated among all the tribes and are good cultivators. Some own enough farm land to be able to earn a decent livelihood.

Traditionally the men wear a white knee length *dhoti* with a shirt or waist coat, white or coloured caps and ornaments like earrings and silver chains around their waist. The women wear a knee length dark blue saree with an *aanchal* worn from the front and left loose at the back. Popular accessories include colourful bead necklaces, and metal ornaments such as bangles or thick *kadas* around their ankles.



Koknas

The Koknas derive their name from the Konkan region in West India. They have land of their own, produce paddy and are better cultivators than the Varlis. With the introduction of formal education many of them have moved up the social ladder.

Koknas well built and both men and women often tattoo their bodies, especially their foreheads. The men wear a dhoti up to the knees, with a waist coat or shirt and a turban. The women wear traditional colourful sarees that are either knee length or full length.



Kathodis

The Kathodis, called Katkari in the Thane district of Maharashtra, make up 0.08% of the total tribal population of Dadra & Nagar Haveli. Their name is derived from their profession of *kattha* or catechew making.

They are considered to be at the bottom of the tribal social ladder. They usually live in forests, in semi-permanent settlements. Most of them cut wood and collect charcoal. The government has tried to improve their standard of living by engaging them in permanent professions.

They wear minimal jewelry; what is worn adorns the women only.



Dublas or Halpatis

The Dublas, a scheduled tribe that is unevenly distributed in the southern part of Gujarat and the Thane district of Maharashtra, are 2.29% of the total population of schedule tribes in the Union Territory. They have villages all along the coastline and are not forest dwellers like the Varlis and Koknas.

The name Dubla comes from a Sanskrit word, *Durvala*, which means 'obstinate in nature', rather than its colloquial meaning which is 'physical weakness'. They are also called Halpatis; a name that better suits them for their primary profession of ploughing, since they use the *hal* or plough.

The men largely wear dhotis and shirts while the women wear coloured knee length sarees, with the *aanchal* used to cover their heads. They also wear ornaments like earrings, bangles, metal necklaces and thick metal *kaddas* around the ankles.

