

The Dogri of India



India is a complex mosaic of ethnic, linguistic, religious, and social groupings. Because of this diversity, it is extremely difficult to adequately describe any single people group. Ranking second only to China among the world's most populous nations, India has a population of more than 935,000,000. The overall population density is about 762 people per square mile.

The 2.1 million Dogri are located mainly in the northern states of Jammu and Kashmir. They can be found between the plains of the Punjab and the snowy mountains bordering the Kashmir Valley. The name *Dogri* is geographical rather than ethnic. *Dograth* refers to the hilly country between the Chenab and Satjaj Rivers, where many of them live. Another 817,000 Dogri live across the border in Pakistan.

The Dogri are a hardy people, divided into several castes and sects. Their language, Dogri-Kangri, is a mixture of Sanskrit, Punjabi, and Persian and is an Indo-Aryan language.

What Are Their Lives Like

About 73% of India's population lives in rural areas and is engaged in some form of agriculture. Many are farmers barely growing enough to survive. Farms are extremely small and often very fragmented. The raising of livestock, particularly horned cattle, buffalo, horses, and mules, is a central feature of the economy. Because of Hindu influence, however, these animals are used almost exclusively as beasts of burden rather than sources of meat.

Indian culture is primarily Hindu-oriented. Many Hindu institutions, including the rigid caste (social class) system, have wide-ranging effects on Indian society. The word "caste" basically means breed, race, or kind. Indian society is divided into hierarchical castes which are usually endogamous (marriage only within the caste). Castes may be defined by occupation or by kinship and lineage, but there are exceptions. Nevertheless, caste is so fundamental to the social organization of India that it prevails in all parts, except some of the tribal populations. Not enough is known about the Dogri to accurately place them in the caste system; thus, their particular lifestyle cannot be adequately described.

The people of Jammu are simple, open-hearted people with a good sense of humor. They are generally good-looking, smart, tall and well-built. Most people eat three meals a day and have been known to drink alcoholic beverages. Their social life is reflected in festivals and fairs, most of which are associated with religious events. Sadly, the region has been ravaged by war for many years, and the border between India and Pakistan is much disputed.

What Are Their Belief?

The Dogri are 65% Hindu and 33% Muslim. The term "Hinduism" came into use about A.D. 1200, but clearly identifying what Hindus believe is difficult. The religion has no founder, no prophet, and no instructional system. It is a way of living much more than a theology; it is a philosophy more than a religion. Contrary to popular belief in the West, Hinduism is not an ancient, fixed set of beliefs. It is instead a body of customs, practices, and beliefs that go through major changes every few hundred years.

The majority of Hindus, but not all, believe in a supreme being. Some respect all life and eat only vegetables, while others will gladly eat meat from sacrifices in the temple. To some, their religion is highly personal; to others, it is impersonal. While most Hindus worship *Brahman* (the creator),

Shiva (the destroyer), *Vishnu* (the preserver), and the goddess *Shakti*, they also worship a pantheon of other minor gods, their incarnations, spouses, or offspring. A belief in reincarnation is one of the few unifying features of Hinduism.

What Are Their Needs?

The Dogri have portions of the Bible and Christian radio broadcasts available in their own language. In addition, two missions agencies are currently targeting them. The few Christian believers need discipleship materials to encourage and strengthen them in their walk with the Lord. Fervent intercession and increased missions efforts will be required to reach the Dogri with the Good News of the Gospel.

Prayer Points

- Ask the Lord of the harvest to send additional laborers to share the Gospel with the Dogri of India.
- Ask the Holy Spirit to grant wisdom and favor to the missions agencies that are targeting the Dogri.
- Pray that the Jesus film and Christian discipleship materials will be made available to the Dogri.
- Ask God to anoint the spiritual ears of the Dogri as they listen to Christian broadcasts in their own language.
- Pray that God will give the Dogri believers many opportunities to share the love of Christ with their own people.
- Take authority over the spiritual principalities and powers that are keeping the Dogri bound.
- Ask God to raise up prayer teams who will begin breaking up the soil through worship and intercession.
- Ask the Lord to bring forth a triumphant Dogri church for the glory of His name!



See also the following related groups:
[the Dogri of Pakistan.](#)

Statistics

Latest estimates from the World Evangelization Research Center.

THE PEOPLE

- **People name:** Dogri
- **Country:** India
- **Their language:** Dogri-Kangri
- **Population:**

(1990) 1,944,900

(1995) 2,139,500

(2000) 2,336,800

- **Largest religion:**

Hindu 65%

Muslim 33%

Sikh 1.9%

- **Christian:** <1%
- **Church members:** 2,139
- **Scriptures in their own language:** New Testament
- **Jesus Film in their own language:** None
- **Christian broadcasts in their own language:** Available
- **Mission agencies working among this people:** 2
- **Persons who have heard the Gospel:** 751,000 (36%)

Those evangelized by local Christians: 109,100 (6%)

Those evangelized from the outside: 641,900 (30%)

- **Persons who have never heard the Gospel:** 1,388,500 (64%)

THEIR COUNTRY

- **Country:** India
- **Population:**

(1990) 850,638,100

(1995) 935,744,300

(2000) 1,022,021,300

- **Major peoples in size order:**

Hindi (High Hindi) 9.5%

Telugu 7.8%

Maratha 7.4%

Bengali 6.4%

Hindi (Bazaar, Popular) 5.5%

- **Major religions:**

Hindu 78.2%

Muslim 12%

Christian 4.3%

- **Number of denominations:** 8

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