Glossary of Vernacular Terms

Abhyas gat  Study circle
Adhyaksha  President
Adivasi  Tribal
Agaria  An iron-smelting community
Ahar-pyne  A system of irrigation used in South Bihar
Alvan  A salt-making community
Amavasya  New moon day
Amba Bhavani  A form of Durga, a Hindu goddess
Andolan  Social Movement
Angarok  A community which specializes in guard duties
Angom  A clan of the Meitei community of Manipur
Araghatta  Water wheel
Arakere  Traditional water harvesting structure found in Karnataka
Arthashastra  An ancient Indian text, written by Kautiliya, on theories and principles of government
Atishbaz  An explosive-manufacturing community
Bachao  To save, to protect
Badhik  A butcher community
Bafand  A community specialized in dressing cotton
Bahurupi  A community of actor-mimics
Baidyakar  A community manufacturing musical instruments
Bajandar  A community of professional singers
Bakarwal  A goat-herding community
Bandukkhar  A gun-manufacturing community
Bansphor  A community which specializes in making baskets from bamboo
Barangaja  A system of mixed cropping practised in the Himalayas
Barui  A community which specializes in growing betel leaves
Bawarchi  A community of cooks
Bazaar  Market
Beej  Seed
Beldar  An earth-cutting community
Bets  Elevated islands found in the Rann of Kachchh, Gujarat
Bhabar  Steep gravel slopes found in the Shiwaliks
Bhadawar  A pastoral community
Bheri  Fish ponds in Eastern Kolkata
Bhu  Earth
Bhuihar  A landowning community
Bhuinya  A landowning community
Bhuiyars  A landowning community
Bhumij  Autochthsonous or indigenous people
Bhumikara  A landowning community
Birjia  A tribal community in the Chhota Nagpur plateau, Bihar
Bishnoi  A community in Rajasthan noted for its conservation practices
Buna  A weaving community
Charcha  Discussion
Chauk/Chabutra  Village square
Cheeno  Snatch, grab
Chipko  To hug; also the name of a forest-protection movement in the Himalaya
Chitrakar  A community of painters
Chunari  A lime-making community
Churihar  A bangle-making community
Dalit  Person of low caste, untouchable
Dasara  Ten-day festival celebrated through much of India around September-October
Dravya  Natural substance
Desi Ahar  A brand of organic agro-produce (literally, “Indigenous food”)
Devikere  Traditional water harvesting structure found in Karnataka
Diwali  A festival of lights celebrated over most of India around October-November
Dhan  Wealth
Dhup  Incense
Erokka Punnami  Name of a festival celebrated in the Andhra Deccan area
Eri  Ancient tanks found in Tamil Nadu
Gaddis  Pastoral nomads living in Himachal Pradesh
Gatlu  A germination ritual performed in the Andhra Deccan area
Gauchara  A system for community care of cows
Gharat  Traditional watermills
Gaon  Village
Godown  A place used for storing fodder
Gomostha  A clerk
Gond  A tribal community in Central India
Gram sabha  Village council
Guna  Distinct quality, virtue
Guhis/kuhls  Diversion channels found in the Western and Central Himalayas, built to draw water from hill streams or springs
Haats  Village markets
Humara/Humare  Ours
Irula  A tribal community in Tamil Nadu
Jan  People
Janapadanivesa  The programme of creating new settlements as described in the Arthashastra
Janapadasampat  Major source of wealth
Jameen  Land
Jatra  Fair
Jetavana  A pleasure garden in the ancient town of Sravasti
Jhaptto  Grab
Johad  Simple mud and rubble structure built across a water channel to hold rainwater
Kakmara  A crow-hunting community
Karma  Definite role in life, fate
Kato  To cut
Katte  Traditional water harvesting structure in Karnataka
Kheti  Farming
Khadins  A system of water run-off farming developed by Paliwal Brahmins of Jaisalmer, Rajasthan
Kharif  Crops grown between the months of July and October
Khuman  A clan of the Meetei community of Manipur
Kola  Traditional water harvesting structure found in Karnataka
Krishi  Agriculture
Kunds  Covered underground tanks with an artificially prepared catchment area to increase run-off, found in the Thar Desert, Rajasthan
Kunte  Traditional water harvesting structure in Karnataka
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lohar</td>
<td>Blacksmith</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mahila Samities</td>
<td>Women’s organisations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mahotsav</td>
<td>A big celebration or festival</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malakar</td>
<td>Garland maker</td>
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<tr>
<td>Malayalis</td>
<td>A tribal community in Tamil Nadu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maldhari</td>
<td>A cattle-herding community in Gujarat</td>
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<tr>
<td>Manav</td>
<td>Humankind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandal</td>
<td>Group/Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>Manusamhita</td>
<td>According to Indian mythology Manu was the first man and the legendary author of Manusamhita (code of law)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matha</td>
<td>Religious establishments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meichal Purambokku</td>
<td>A common term for community land in Tamil Nadu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meitei</td>
<td>A community in Manipur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monpas</td>
<td>Buddhist tribes living in Kameng and Tawang areas of Arunachal Pradesh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moirang</td>
<td>A clan of the Meitei community of Manipur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Munda</td>
<td>A tribal community in the Chhota Nagpur plateau, Bihar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Murukku</td>
<td>A popular south Indian snack</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muthuwan</td>
<td>A tribal community in Tamil Nadu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nagula Panchami</td>
<td>A day on which snakes are worshipped</td>
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<tr>
<td>Navdhanya</td>
<td>Collective term given to nine grains used to propitiate the nine planets in Hindu ritual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ningthouja</td>
<td>A clan of the Meitei community of Manipur</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nistar</td>
<td>Forest produce rights</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oraon</td>
<td>A tribal community in the Chhota Nagpur plateau, Bihar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Papad</td>
<td>A popular Indian snack</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paayasam</td>
<td>Sweet pudding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panchayat</td>
<td>Elected village council</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parikrama</td>
<td>Circumambular journey, often on a sacred pilgrimage route</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paryavaran</td>
<td>Environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patel</td>
<td>Village headman</td>
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<tr>
<td>Patta</td>
<td>Land ownership document</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patra</td>
<td>Leaf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ped</td>
<td>Tree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedda Panta</td>
<td>Cropping season in the Andhra Deccan area</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peddala amaasaya</td>
<td>The day of ancestors. In the Andhra Deccan, foxtail millet porridge is offered to departed ancestors on this particular day.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Phats</td>
<td>Shallow marshes found in the central valley of Manipur</td>
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<tr>
<td>Phoomdi</td>
<td>Floating islands of decaying vegetation in Loktak Lake, Manipur</td>
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<tr>
<td>Phal</td>
<td>Fruits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phool</td>
<td>Flowers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plathi</td>
<td>Name given to healers among the Kani tribes, Kerala</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pooja</td>
<td>Worship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polelu</td>
<td>A sweet pancake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prakriti</td>
<td>Nature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prasad</td>
<td>Offering to the gods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rashtriya</td>
<td>National</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rebari</td>
<td>Pastoral community in Rajasthan and Gujarat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samgha/Sangh</td>
<td>Establishment/Association/Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samiti</td>
<td>Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samriddhi</td>
<td>Prosperity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samskriti</td>
<td>Culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santhal</td>
<td>A tribal community in central India</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sapera  Snake charmer
Sarpanch  Head of a Panchayat
Sasi  Seedling
Shravan  A month in the Hindu calendar, around July/August
Shlokas  Sacred verses or chants
Shudra  Lower castes, the lowest of the four strata according to the Hindu varna system
Sindur/Kumkum  Vermilion, applied on their foreheads by married women to signify their marital status
Soligas  A tribe in the BRT Wildlife Sanctuary, Karnataka
Soonyam Pandugu  A festival celebrated around December in the Andhra Deccan
Surangam  Traditional water harvesting structure found in Kasaragod district, Kerala
Terai  The thickly forested foothills of the Himalayas, in the States of Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh
Thengapalli  Voluntary patrolling by rotation
Todas  A tribe living in the Nilgiris, Tamil Nadu
Tulavina  Cotton carder (A community whose name is derived from its occupation)
Ugadi  A festival to celebrate the beginning of the Telugu New Year
Vahana  Vehicle of a deity
Paryavaran Vahini  Environment group
Van  Forest
Vanaspati Van  Botanical gardens
Vav  Step well
Viharas  Religious establishments
Volakere  Traditional water harvesting structure found in Karnataka
Warli  A tribal community in Maharashtra
Willu Pattu  Song of the Bow (A traditional art form of Tamil Nadu)
Yatra  Journey
Zabo  A system of cultivation practiced in Kikruma village, Nagaland.
Zamindar  Local feudal landlords who acquired the right to collect revenues or taxes from an area of land during British Rule. The system was abolished after Independence