

Explanation of some important terms

1. **Clan:** The word refers to a group of people who traced their origin to a common ancestor and are related to each other through kinship ties for example most of the tribes in Arabia were made up of clans or combinations of large families such as the Umayyads who were a prosperous clan of the Quraysh tribe.
2. **Chaurasi:** The term refers to an administrative unit of the *Gond* kingdom of Central India comprising modern Madhya Pradesh. The *Gond* kingdom was divided into several *garhs* of which *Chaurasi* was a subdivisional unit.
3. **Banjara:** The term refers to the trader-nomads who constantly moved from one place to another buying and selling goods at profitable rates. In medieval times, they played a significant role in the Indian economy by supplying food grains from villages to towns and cities and also to distant areas. They moved in caravans that were called *tanda*. A *tanda* generally comprised six to seven hundred persons including the families of *banjaras* and their oxen or pack-animals loaded with various kinds of merchandise. How important their role was, at that time, can be understood by the fact that Sultan Alauddin Khalji (1296-1316 CE) had utilized their services to supply food grains to Delhi. The *banjaras* continue to thrive in the central and north-western parts of India, even today.
4. **Jati:** The term *jati* was originally used in the Sanskrit language to mean 'categories'. From the first millennium onwards, the term was used to define social categories based on birth. The term *jati* was based on the pursuit of occupation and determined the social status. During the colonial period the term '*jati*' became synonymous with 'castes'. The ranking of *jatis* was generally decided by ritual status and degree of purity or pollution. However this ranking within a particular range was fluid rather than fixed. Rather than having pan Indian spread, the *Jatis* were more of regional or local groups. They strongly adhered to their defined rules regarding social activity of eating together and rules of marriage.

Source: NCERT (2017) *Dictionary of History for School Children (Trilingual)*, National Council of Educational Research & Training, New Delhi.