

# The History and Legend of Banjara

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## **Abstract:**

In Banjara mythology and legend, the culture, dress and customs of that community are very unique. The myth and legend of such a community has been researched in this article as well as a distinct community with its myth and legend from very ancient times and the reign.

India is a huge country made up of villages. In this country, which is a melting pot of cultures, since time immemorial people with different languages, cultures, traditions and lifestyles have lived together. Although there are many conflicts between castes and religions, the Indian people as a whole have maintained interfaith tolerance. In this view, unity is multiplicity. The harmonious life of unity in diversity is prevalent in the communities here.

Our country is a country with different culture, many communities Landed. Each community has its own way of life tradition, Beliefs and rituals have been preserved from heritage to heritage. Thus even when the community of each race lives together They have their own cultural uniqueness. Such independent cultural The Banjara tribe is one of the many communities with a history.

## **Mythical historical and social background of Banjara**

### **Basic History:**

Banjaras are originally from Rajasthan who migrated from North India to South. Dr.M. Chidananda Murthy in his 1990 research article, "The Banajas came from the north, probably from Rajputana to the south, who came with the Muhammadan army about 300 years ago in the 17th century or earlier. He had thousands of cattle. Being nomads, the habit of pitching separate camps in the middle of the route is still observed among them."\*1

The Banjara, nomadic traders, used to supply grain and war material to the armies of the Mughal emperors through cattle. But when the Mughal rule came to an end, the Banjaras suffered a huge loss. Transport facilities such as trains came into use and the supply work of was completely stopped.

Many scholars are of the opinion that he got the name Lambani because he started trading in salt. Indian caste system caste names are formed based on the profession of the respective caste society. Banjara were known by names like Labhana, Lambada, Mathura, Labani, Labhana, and Sukali. Certainly 'Lambani' is a common name for their caste.

The word 'Lambani' is derived from the Sanskrit word 'lavana'. In Rajasthani language 'Luni' means lava (salt). The Lambanis, who migrated from North India to the South, saw the need for 'salt' in their daily life and made salt an important farm. These people roamed in herds across the forest plains, especially to areas like North India, China, Tibet, Baramdesh, Arabia, etc. for trade. Making and selling salt became a profession and they came to be known as 'Lambanigas'.

According to Dr.M.Chidanandamurthy, 'Lambani' is a customary name for their caste. The Lambanis, who are Hindus, have a special caste of their own. Similarly, lambanigas are called by different names in some

parts of the respective province.

- |  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| 1) Lambani, Lamani, Labana in Karnataka              | 2) Banjara, Charan in Gujarat         |
| 3) Sugali, Labani in Tamil Nadu                      | 4) Labana in Orissa                   |
| 5) Sugali, Sagali, Sukali, Lambada in Andhra Pradesh | 6) Banjari, Banjara, Banjara in Bihar |

Thus Banjara are known by their different names in various states of India.

'Edgar Thurdan' writes about the Lambanigas who are related to Kshatriya origins in war, hunting, guarding. experts Banjara is a caste indicator as well as an agricultural indicator. They were mostly found in South India and depended on professions like animal husbandry, heavy lifting, cow protection, and trade. That is described in the 1991 Madras Census.

"After independent India, reservations have been made for the Banjara caste as per the directives of the respective states by including them in a different, different, caste list.

1. In Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, Karnataka Lambani have been added to the Scheduled Caste (SC) list.
2. Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Orissa have included Lambanigas in Scheduled Tribe (ST) in Bengal.
3. Lambanigas of Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh have been added to General Merit (GM).

### **Legends and Myths :-**

Every caste has its own myths and legends which play an important role. Studying the history of caste is not an easy matter, although there are many sources, many things that are not precisely dated are still lurking in the depths of time. So what is their nature? It is necessary to think about it. A myth is a story related to gods, goddesses, and cultural heroes.

There is no object that is not noticed by the ancestors, and the feelings created by seeing it are given the form of legends or myths when they emerge through the genius of their immaculately pure imagination. The important characteristic of his narration was the poetic style full of exclamations, hyperbole, and the people around him. describing the events that happened in the past to give an image of the man's thoughts about the creation, about the power behind it, about heaven and underworld. All these were not premeditated, but involuntarily, haphazardly emerged around the said events. The stories that arise become legends. Myths are the stories that completely hide those events and give the illusion that the divine elements have gathered and grown up miraculously as if they had happened once upon a time.

### **"Legends are stories that arise in any particular setting, relating to persons, places, events, etc."\*3**

There are two types of these. Local or regional lore, tourist lore, local lore in the form of local or regional lore is less desirable. They are limited to a specific area. In terms of structure it is mainly an action oriented story.

"There is a difference between legend and history. legend is a story that has been handed down. The events in it may be imaginary, but it cannot be said to have happened with certainty. The same can be applied to people and places. But history clearly shows that an event happened with certainty. Similarly, people and places are found in history."\*4

Myths and legends are more helpful in understanding the basic culture of any tribe than the folk tales of that tribe. The mythological, historical, and social background of Lambanigas can be seen in this way.

Not all ethnic groups are specific about their origins. Hence the mythology about this source has to rely on stories from historical sources. In the background of these we have to find the origin of race. Although

there are many differences of opinion among scholars about the origin of the Banjaras, it is necessary to look at their lineage, clan, and heritage in order to find their origin.

The mannerisms, speech, manners, customs, rituals and gotram of Rajasthan's sub-castes like Rajput, Gurjaras, Marawadis, etc. have similarities with the Banjaras. It can be seen that there is a close relationship between these three societies from the point of view of language as well. Thus, there is no doubt that these societies originated from the same source, from the same gotram, as social and cultural relations are found in the Lambani, Gurjaras, Marwadis, and Rajput societies. Due to the mutual similarities, the connection of Banjaras with Rajputana, Rajputs is undeniably seen. Thus it can be determined that the origin of the Banjaras Rajasthan or Marwadis.

Many legends and popular opinions about the relationship between Lambani and Rajputs reinforce this relationship. Here are the main legends about their origin.

### **Myth 1:**

"Once God sowed a seed in the sky and from that seed a girl was born. From that girl's sweat a boy was born. She had sexual desire and the boy rejected it. Then a third boy was born and he consented. From their intercourse the first man of creation was born. From him many children were born. Among them was the son of Kachcha. The sons of Chhad were Nathdad, Joshadad, Khimad, Mota and mola. He was the son of Joshad A blacksmith became a blacksmith. Mota's descendants became Banjaras, while Mola's descendants became Lambanis."\*5

### **Myth 2:**

"Mola was a great devotee of Krishna. Thus, Mola was seen by Radhika as a lover. Since 'Mola' was born celibate, they arranged him for their pastoral care. Seeing that his other brothers were not married and had children, Mola expressed his wish to Radhika. He did not want to disturb Mola's celibacy. The stories that arise become legends. Myths are the stories that completely hide those events and give the illusion that the divine elements have gathered and grown up miraculously as if they had happened once upon a time.

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**Myth 3**

"Creation is based on five principles. Those elements are Agad (Sky) Janad (Earth) Wagad (Air) Dhaj (Fire) and Koldhaj (Water) and this is the creation created by the Creator.

Aadikanda (primordial origin)	dhaj (fire)	Koldhaj (water)	Kavarpal(Jivatma)
Rajapal (human form)	Sojakarana (Politics)	intersection	
Corasantan	Nathada	(Non-Lambanis children)	
Madana	Mola	Jogada	
Khimada	Gorasantan	(Banjara offspring)	
Mota	Kona		
Lakhan Jogi	Vagary	Grabanjara	Marawadi
Kenchra			
Marrage			
Fesalda	Chigalgar Lotya	Gujjar	
Ramachari			
Labhasho			
Rajaparadi			
Uthmanaparadi			
Phasaparadi."*7			

**Myth 4:**

"There were many petty royal families in the Aravalli hills. Lakhanasingh, son of Khairagad Rathod of Marwar, Lohasingh, son of Pawar of Munji of Thara State. Pawar and Randhirasingh Chavan, son of Chavan of Torigada, joined forces with the Kavarpala king of Delhi to hunt. During the hunt, they found Sundara Kanai and began to torment them as there was no one to protect them. Seeing this, King Kavarpala sent him to the village called 'Khodapalli' to be punished. From there, Nath Labana grew up He married three Kanais, who were Naga Brahmins, then Lakhana Singha's son became Rathoda, and Kabir Singh's son became Chavan."\*8

**Myth 5:**

"Prior to the rule of the Mughals, there were many small princely states ruling here. One of them was Rana Pratap Singh, the progenitor of the Rajput dynasty. Some areas of Rajasthan and Delhi were under his control. At that time be Mughal rule began and Akhtar attacked Rana Pratap Singh's 'Udaipur'. Rana Pratapasingha, aware of the adverse situation, could not resist Aktara and went and hid in the mountain 'Haladighata'. Many patriots fled with him. Aktar continued to attack there as well. Rana Pratap Singh was defeated in the Battle of Yellow Ghata. The victorious Aktar sent a message to Rana Pratap Singh that he

would return the kingdom if he surrendered. The self-righteous Rana Pratapasinha refused to agree to this and joined the forest vowing to regain his kingdom in the land of war. Many families joined him in the forest. To defeat Ranaprathapasingh, Aktar started giving many kinds of trouble. The Rajput families, who came to accept the king's oath as their oath, began to suffer ...

Ramji Nayaka had three brothers named Bhima, Khemya and Hema. Bhimanayaka and his wife Dharminibai lived up to their name. They were honest and God-fearing, but after many years of marriage, they did not have children. Thus, he was involved in many vows for the fruit of children.

In Devaloka, 7 goddesses were thinking that they wanted a faithful earthly servant. As Bhimanayaka had no children, she thought that only a child born from her womb could be a worthy servant and gave Bhimanayaka darshan.

He commanded, "The first born child shall be with you for twelve years and thereafter shall be devoted to our service, and he shall be named Sewalal (beloved of service)." Bhimanayaka agreed to it. Next, as a gift from the Goddess, Dharminibai's womb grew and a child was born. The child was named Sewalal as a vow to the goddess. As time passed, Bhimanayaka had three more children. They were named as Hapa, Baddu, Bhana(Pura).

Nomadic Lambanis used to travel from one region to another. Thus Bhimanayaka migrated from Gutti Bellary to Sirasagad (Sirsi) after a few years of Tanda. At this time Sewalal was a boy and used to spend his time there with the Rasus along with their cattle Sakhya Patya. While leaving home, his mother would tie a basket but would not take it. Even if he took it, he used to give it to his friends for cows. When he was hungry, he would go to the bank of the ditch and make seera puris out of sandy soil, he would sing with stones and palm leaves as talas. Thus he starts performing many miracles. Bhimanayaka was delighted to see the glories of his son. But after 12 years, he was crying that he would leave with them.

After a few years Bhimanayaka left his Tanda and moved from Sirasagad (Sirsi) to Magaam near Nizamabad via Hyderabad. Within a few days Bhils kidnapped Bhimanagar Syasand (Bhijadahori) in Magawan and hid him in a place called 'Bhoori Patar'. Chains were tied to its four legs. Bhimanayaka failed to get his bull after fighting with the Bhil people. At last Sewalal miraculously got the bull.

Bhimanayaka, unable to bear the hardships of the Bhil people of Magavam, transferred his Tanda to 'Yaragudda' near Mehubub Nagar. He was thinking of spending more time there as it is a good pasture for cows. But once the cows grazed all the crops grown on the land of Gauda in that town, so Gauda beat him. He tied the cows. Knowing the matter, Seva rushed there and asked Gau...

My son Sewalal disagrees. He said that you can make him serve you if you want. Devi also smiled and said that she would do the same and disappeared.

Sewalal was going to cattle drive with his friends as usual. Devi also came in his dream and asked him to be her servant. Sewalal did not agree to that. He told that "service of parents is more important than service of God". The Devi, who was enraged by this, offered to make Sewalal her servant somehow. She started giving many hardships and tortures to Sewalal. She took his brother Bhana as a sacrifice and stole his 3751 rasmus and all his wealth. She made no time for the agreed porridge.

Despite all these problems, Sewalal continued his persistence. It was inevitable that he should do some work for the susten...

"I have borne fruit," he said. Next, he had children from the woman Chingarya. Sewalal's glory became like spent gold. This news spread throughout the entire country and the entire nation.

Jhari was a pearl merchant from Bombay. His ship, which was carrying pearls in the Indian Ocean, was tossed by the gusts of the storm. Although Zhariya appealed to all the gods. When nothing happened, he



finally prayed to Sewalal. His ship survived the storm. Aparajit brought wealth and offered it to Sewalal in the form of an offering.

Thus Sewalal's fame started growing day by day. The Lambanis stopped worshipping the goddess and came under the influence of Sri Sewalal and accepted him as their god and started worshipping him. Devi could not bear this. As Sewalal began to take his place in the Lambanigar, the idea came to Devi that she should do something to reduce his influence. Thinking in that direction, the goddess thought that the reason for this was the extraordinary power of Brahmacharyas, she married Sewalal, put him in worldly bondage, and thought to reduce his power. She forced him to marry her. She told him that she would arrange Kanai, who was suitable for him. No matter how much Devi tried, Sewalal did not agree with her. Since Tanoo is Bhaya (brother) to all the women of this world, whom can Tanoo marry? That put Devi herself in a dilemma. Then Devi also informed that she will call Kanai of Devaloka, then Sewalal expressed his disbelief that Brahma did not write that marriage is in his God and therefore he too cannot perform marriage. Thus the struggle between Devi and Sewalal continued. Then Devi also told Sewalal that the decision of celibacy should be with Rama and let him go to heaven. Sewalal promised the goddess to come to heaven on a contract of three days.

Sewalal called his brothers Hapa, Baddu and Poora and asked them to bring neem stalks and prepare a bed for it. He told him that no one should warn him, no one should touch him for 3 days, and bhajan should be done continuously with incense and lamps until he gets up from the bed by himself. The brothers agreed to do the same.

Sewalal entered heaven along with the goddess through a bed of neem foothills. Devi proposed her case to Mahadeva, the lord of Devaloka. Then Mahadeva said, "Sevalala is a perfect celibate, why are you making him a criminal, leave him to his country." Then Sevalala was very happy. The humiliated goddess also changed her form and told Sevalala, "She has her sisters in heaven, I will meet them, then let's go to the earth." .

Insulted, the goddess came to earth in disguise with a desire to avenge her insult. She went to Dharmini and told that it has been 3 days since her son Sewalal passed away. No matter how hard Hapa, Baddu and Poora tried, Dharminibai went ahead and touched Sewalal's body without listening. Sewalal's body bounced off the ground thrice and hit the ground. Sewalal obtained the Sayujya degree.

According to the wishes of Sri Shakti Devi, Sevabhaya sacrificed his body at Pauragarh (Pauradevi) in present day Ankola district of Maharashtra region. There he was cremated with ghee on sandal wood and neem wood. Seva Lala from the center of the fire while burning his body  
Saat Peedimai Avatar Leo Chaud Peedimai Guttivalari Mai Phar Jalamyo

(Incarnates in 7th generation. Reborn in Guttivalari in 14th generation)

Famine came in all the four worlds. Mother and son went away and sold chambu (glass) of water for rupees. In the country there was a flurry of stones. The country of Bawan Barada went to ransom. The strong have looted the country, the king's reign has ended, twelve Haradaris have seen light, thirteen Tandas have got a leader, twelve generations again I will incarnate from the northern country, I will come, do not be afraid.

After twelve years from the temple, Sevabhai preached a message to his people, "Gorabhai, do not be afraid of anyone. Stay a mile or two from town, don't keep chickens and pigs, don't go to a hundred and one doctors. If you consume a pinch of my Chita Bhasma, all diseases will be cured." From then on, Sevabhaya became revered as Maryam. From that time, two flags were planted in front of the temple. The red flag was for the goddess, and the white flag was for Sevabhaya."\* 10

Thus there is a deep belief among the Banjaras that Sevabhaya, a legendary person, has re-incarnated as a person of extraordinary power for the protection of the race. The temple of Sri Sewalal at Pauradevi is today a shrine for Lambanigars. There are monasteries of Banjaru community in this town. Every year, about one lakh people of that race wear Sevabhaya garlands and receive various initiations. The Lambanigars interestingly express the biographical miracle of Sri Sevabhaya and his many incarnations in their Kathan Gita. His stories about Sevabhayan are sung for days and weeks and are sung for a long time in their religious festivals.

Lambanis today are progressing fully involved in the process of social transformation by attaining a high status with the society.

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