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RAJASTHAN STATEHOOD DAY

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“Rajasthan is a land known for its splendid culture and glorious history. The people of Rajasthan have always been remembered for their bravery and valour. The people of Rajasthan are known for their industrious nature. I salute the people of Rajasthan and convey my best wishes for the development journey of the State.”

-Prime Minister Narendra Modi¹

Introduction²

Rajasthan- ‘Land of Kings’ or ‘Land of Kingdoms’- is India’s largest state by area. The state is located in the northwestern part of country and is a home of cultural diversity. Its features include the ruins of Indus Valley Civilization, Temples, Forts and Fortresses in almost every city.

Rajasthan is divided into nine regions: Ajmer, Hadoti, Dhundhar, Gorwar, Shekhawati, Mewar, Marwar, Vagad and Mewat which are equally rich in its heritage and artistic contribution. These regions have a parallel history which goes along with that of the state.



The State was formed on 30 March 1949 when Rajputana – name as adopted by British Crown was merged into the Dominion of India. [Jaipur](#) being largest city was declared as capital of the state. Rajasthan is a land locked state and has borders with Punjab and Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh in the East and Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh in the South.

The early history of Rajasthan features some of the great Maharanas, Nawabs and Rulers. Prominent among them were Prithviraj Chouhan, Samrat Hem Chandra Vikramaditya (also

¹<https://www.narendramodi.in/the-pm-greets-the-people-of-rajasthan-on-rajasthan-diwas-7367>

²<https://rajasthan.gov.in/AboutRajasthan.aspx>

known as Hemu), Mughal Emperor Akbar, Maharana Udai Singh, Maharana Pratap, Raja Maan Singh and others.

Rajasthan's formerly independent kingdoms developed a rich architectural and cultural heritage, which is evident even today in its numerous forts and palaces, which have been further enriched by features of Muslim and Jain Architecture.

History of Rajasthan³

The history of the Indian state of Rajasthan goes back to about 5000 years ago. This history can be classified into three parts owing to the different epochs- Ancient, Medieval and Modern.

Ancient Period, up to 1200 AD

Rajput clans emerged and held their sway over different parts of Rajasthan from about 700AD. Before that, Rajasthan was a part of several republics. It was a part of the Mauryan Empire. Other major republics that dominated this region include the Malavas, Arjunyas, Yaudhyas, Kushans, Saka Satraps, Guptas and Hunas. The ascendancy of the Rajput clans in Indian history was during the period from the eighth to the twelfth century AD. The Pratiharas ruled Rajasthan and most of northern India during 750-1000 AD. Between 1000-1200AD, Rajasthan witnessed the struggle for supremacy between Chalukyas, Parmars and Chauhans.

Medieval Period, 1201 - 1707

Around 1200 AD a part of Rajasthan came under Muslim rulers. The principal centres of their powers were Nagaur and Ajmer. Ranthambore was also under their suzerainty. At the beginning of the 13th century AD, the most prominent and powerful state of Rajasthan was Mewar.

Modern Period, 1707 - 1947

Rajasthan had never been united politically until its domination by Mughal Emperor - Akbar. Akbar created a unified province of Rajasthan. Mughal power started to decline after 1707. The political disintegration of Rajasthan was caused by the dismemberment of the Mughal Empire. The Marathas penetrated Rajasthan upon the decline of the Mughal Empire. In 1755 they occupied Ajmer. The beginning of the 19th Century was marked by the onslaught of the Pindaris.

Geography of the State⁴

Rajasthan is located in the north-western part of the subcontinent. It is bounded on the west and northwest by Pakistan, on the north and northeast by the states of Punjab, Haryana, and Uttar Pradesh, on the east and southeast by the states of Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh, and on the southwest by the state of Gujarat. The Tropic of Cancer passes through its southern tip in the Banswara district. The state has an area of 132,140 square miles (342,239 square kilometres). In the west, Rajasthan is relatively dry and infertile; this area includes some of the Thar Desert, also known as the "Great Indian Desert". In the south-western part of the state, the land is wetter, hilly, and more fertile. The climate varies throughout Rajasthan.

³https://rajasthan.gov.in/RajasthanHistory.aspx?menu_id=41

⁴https://rajasthan.gov.in/LandAndEnvironment.aspx?menu_id=40

Demography and Communities⁵

- Rajasthan has an unusual diversity in terms of people, customs, culture, costumes, music, manners, dialects, cuisine and physiography. The people of Rajasthan belong to different castes and tribes.
- In the area around Jaipur, Alwar, Bharatpur and Dholpur in the southwest of the state, locals belong to the Minas, Meos and Banjaras, GadiaLohars communities and were mostly travelling tradesmen and artisans.
- The Bhils, famed archers of the legends and one of the oldest tribes of India inhabit the districts of Bhilwara, Chittaurgarh, Dungarpur, Banswarara, Udaipur, and Sirohi. The Grasis and nomadic Kathodis live in the Mewar region.
- The Sahariyas are found in the Kota district, and the Rabaris of the Marwar region are nomadic cattle breeders.
- The important communities of Rajasthan are the Rajputs, Jats, Brahmans and the traders. The Rajputs are the martial race, known for their chivalry and valour. The Brahmans were the priests and teachers while the Mahajans are still the backbone of the village economy. The Jats and the Gujars are the agricultural communities.
- According to Census 2001, **79 Languages and 138 Mother tongues** were found in Rajasthan.⁶



- Several communities of professional performers - the Bhaats, Dholis, Mirasis, Nats, Bhopas and Bhands, spend their lives going from village to village. The villagers patronise them and even participate in their performances.

Economy⁷

- Rajasthan's economy is primarily agricultural and pastoral. Wheat, Pearl-millet and Barley are cultivated over large areas, as are pulses, sugarcane, and oil seeds. Cotton and tobacco are the state's cash crops.
- Rajasthan is among the largest producers of edible oils in India and the second largest producer of oil seeds.
- Rajasthan is also the biggest wool-producing state in India and the main opium producer and consumer. There are mainly two crop seasons.

⁵<https://rajasthan.gov.in/CitizenAndCommunity.aspx>

⁶https://www.censusindia.gov.in/2011-documents/lsi/lsi_Rajasthan/4_introduction.pdf

⁷<https://environment.rajasthan.gov.in/content/environment/en/rajasthan-state-biodiversity-board/about-rajasthan/rajasthan-at-a-glance.html>

- The water for irrigation comes from wells and tanks. The Indira Gandhi Canal irrigates north-western Rajasthan.
- The main industries are mineral based, agriculture based and textiles. Rajasthan is the second largest producer of polyester fiber in India.
- Rajasthan is pre-eminent in quarrying and mining in India. The Taj Mahal was built from the white marble which was mined from a town called ‘Makrana’.

Art, Culture and Cuisine of Rajasthan⁸

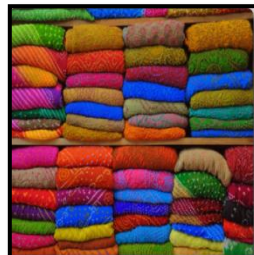
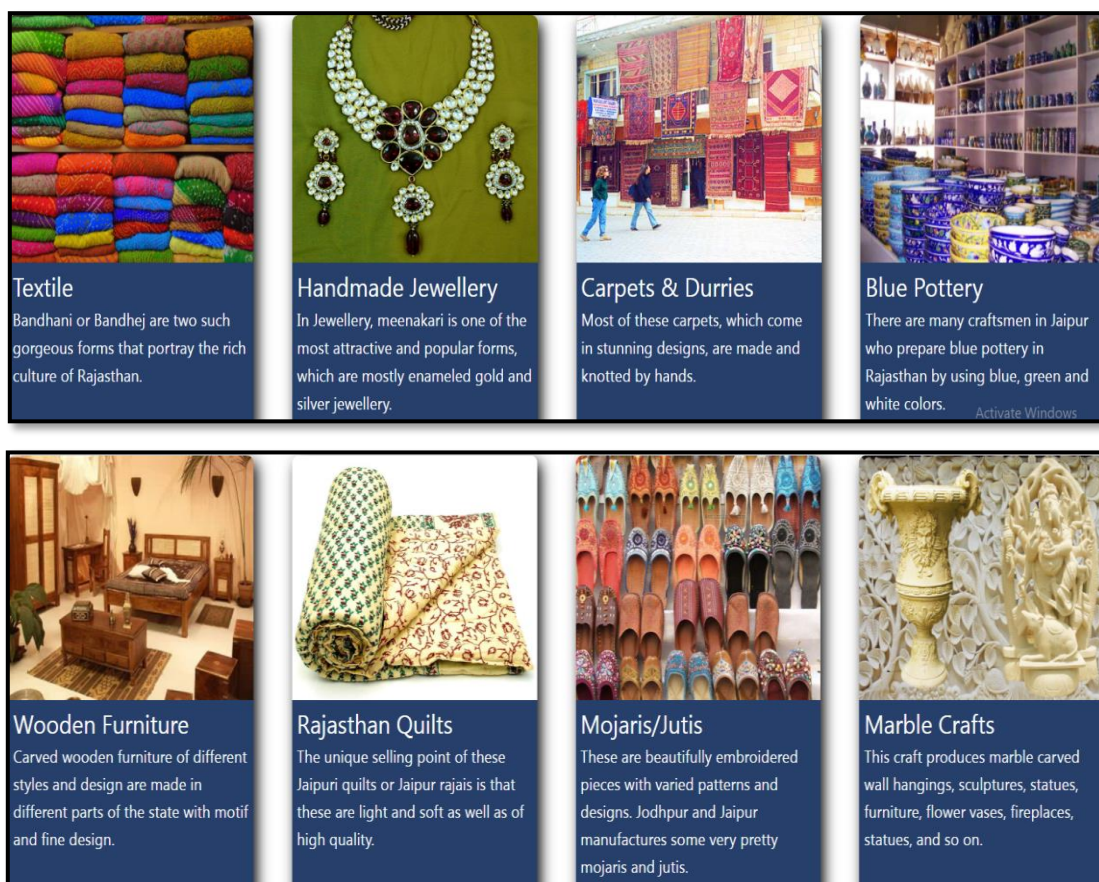
Well known as the treasure trove of India, Rajasthan stands among the richest states of the country in terms of art and craft. Not only within India but also abroad, Rajasthan is famous for its handicrafts work like Paintings, Blue Pottery, Stone Carvings, Wood and Sandal Wood Work, Carpets, Metal Work, Leather craft, Lac work, Weaving etc. The creativity of the artists can clearly be seen by the use of flamboyant designs and vibrant colour patterns that they use while preparing their products.



- **Rajasthani Music** has given the country notable musicians. Major schools of music include Udaipur, Jodhpur and Jaipur. Jaipur is a major Gharana which is well-known for its reverence for rare ragas. Jaipur-Atrauli Gharana is associated with Alladiya Khan (1855–1943) who was among the great singers of the late 19th and early 20th century. Alladiya Khan was trained both in Dhrupad and Khyal styles, though his ancestors were Dhrupad singers. The most distinguishing feature of Jaipur Gharana is its complex and lilting melodic form.
- Rich Rajasthani culture reflects in the tradition of hospitality which is one of its own kind. Varying degree of geography has resulted in a **rich cuisine** involving both vegetarian and non-vegetarian dishes. Rajasthani food is characterized by the use of Jowar, Bajri, legumes and lentils, its distinct aroma and flavor achieved by the blending of spices

⁸ <https://industries.rajasthan.gov.in/content/industries/rajasthan-foundation/arts-culture-lifestyle/culture-lifestyle.html>

including curry leaves, tamarind, coriander, ginger, garlic, chili, pepper, cinnamon, cloves, cardamom, cumin and rosewater. The most famous dishes include *Daal-Baati-Churma* and *Ker-Sangri*.



Textile
Bandhani or Bandhej are two such gorgeous forms that portray the rich culture of Rajasthan.



Handmade Jewellery
In Jewellery, meenakari is one of the most attractive and popular forms, which are mostly enameled gold and silver jewellery.



Carpets & Durries
Most of these carpets, which come in stunning designs, are made and knotted by hands.



Blue Pottery
There are many craftsmen in Jaipur who prepare blue pottery in Rajasthan by using blue, green and white colors.



Wooden Furniture
Carved wooden furniture of different styles and design are made in different parts of the state with motif and fine design.



Rajasthan Quilts
The unique selling point of these Jaipuri quilts or Jaipur rajais is that these are light and soft as well as of high quality.



Mojaris/Jutis
These are beautifully embroidered pieces with varied patterns and designs. Jodhpur and Jaipur manufactures some very pretty mojaris and jutis.



Marble Crafts
This craft produces marble carved wall hangings, sculptures, statues, furniture, flower vases, fireplaces, statues, and so on.

Source

Travel & Tourism:

Rajasthan is a perhaps one of the most colourful states of India and a land of unending diversity. Whether it is about the ‘pink’ in Jaipur or the ‘blue’ in Jodhpur or the ‘golden hues’ of Jaisalmer, the barren landscape is swathed in colours of the rainbow.⁹ The state has some of the most beautiful palaces and forts in the country.¹⁰

- **Dholpur-** It used to be the seat of the Dholpur princely state before Independence, and today is a city of diverse culture and historical grandeur. The red sandstone from Dholpur is famous throughout the country and was famously used in the construction of the Red Fort in Delhi.¹¹



⁹ https://rajasthan.gov.in/TravelTourism.aspx?menu_id=20040

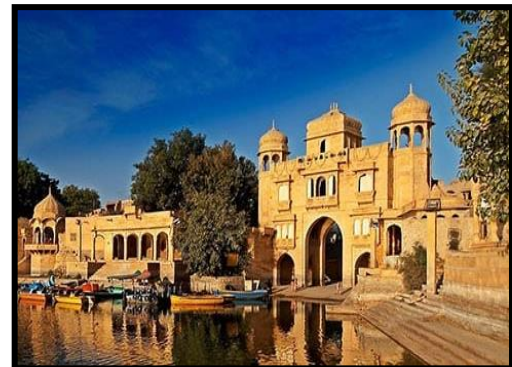
¹⁰ https://rajasthan.gov.in/TravelTourism.aspx?menu_id=20040

¹¹ <https://www.tourism.rajasthan.gov.in/content/rajasthan-tourism/en/tourist-destinations/dholpur.html#a-ride-around-the-ramsagar-sanctuary>

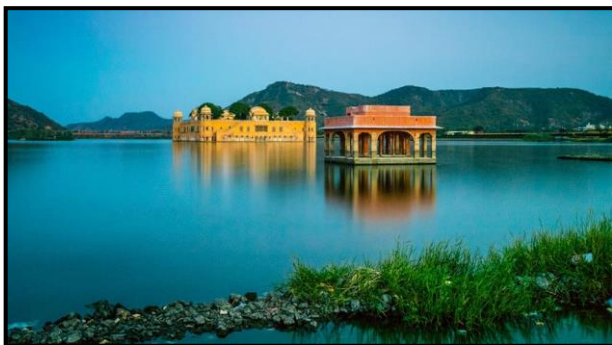
- **Chittorgarh-** Chittorgarh resonates with stories of Rajputana bravery, pride and passion. Chittorgarh is named after its most imposing structure, the Chittorgarh Fort which stands atop a 180 metre high hill and is spread across 700 acres.¹²



- **Jaisalmer:** The city of Jaisalmer also acts as the guard to western Rajasthan (and India's) frontier. This 'Golden City' is located close to the Pakistan border and in close proximity to the Thar Desert. The city's most prominent landmark is the Jaisalmer Fort, also called Sonar Qila (**Golden Fort**).¹³ The Wood Fossil Park or Aakal is located about 15 kilometres away from the city. Here, one can discover and trace geologic tragedies that occurred in the Thar Desert 180 million years ago.



- **Ranthambore Fort-** The noteworthy Ranthambore Fort was built by the Chauhan rulers in the 10th century. Due to its strategic location, it was ideal to keep the enemy at bay. The fort is characterised by temples, tanks, massive gates and huge walls. Constructed in 944 AD, Ranthambore Fort has witnessed many sieges and battles. An architectural marvel, the fort includes many attractions such include Toran Dwar, Mahadeo Chhatri and Sametonki Haveli within its premises. The presence of a mosque and temple within the fort precincts bears testimony to the secularity of the Rajput kings.¹⁴



- **Jal Mahal-** One of the most wonderful sights in Jaipur is the beautiful Jal Mahal or Lake Palace. The light, sand coloured stone walls and the deep blue of the water make for a wonderful contrast. The palace appears to float in the centre of

¹² <https://www.tourism.rajasthan.gov.in/chittorgarh.html#chittorgarh-fort>

¹³ <https://www.tourism.rajasthan.gov.in/jaisalmer.html#jaisalmer-fort>

¹⁴ <https://www.tourism.rajasthan.gov.in/content/rajasthan-tourism/en/tourist-destinations/ranthambore-fort.html>

Man Sagar Lake, where its magnificent exteriors can be enjoyed by tourists.¹⁵

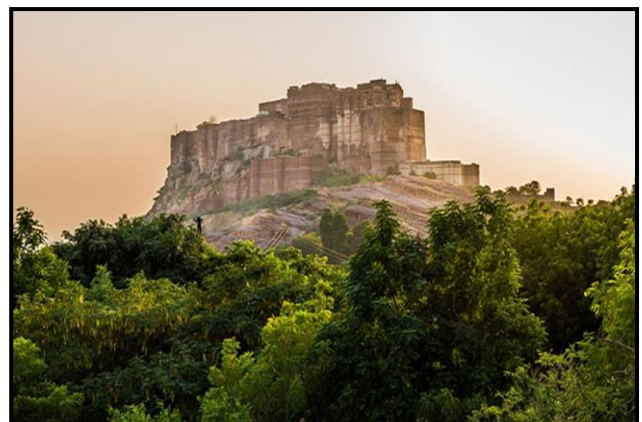
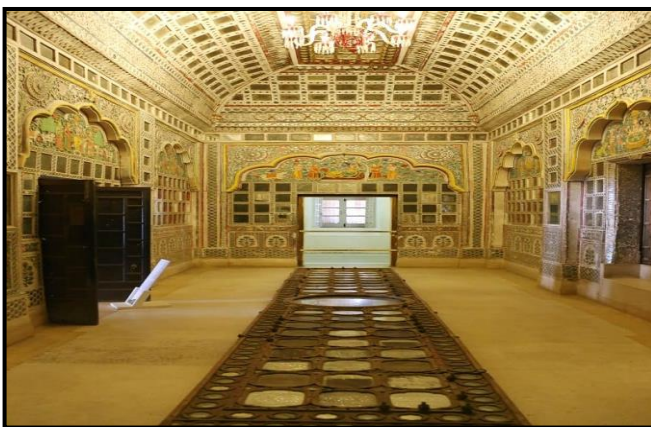
- **Hawa Mahal-** Hawa Mahal, literally the Palace of Winds, was built in 1799 by the poet king Sawai Pratap Singh as a summer retreat for him and his family. It also served as a place where the ladies of the royal household could observe everyday life without being seen themselves. This unique five-storey structure is a blend of Hindu and Islamic architecture, and the exterior, with its small latticed windows (called jharokhas), resembles the crown of Lord Krishna.¹⁶



- **Sambhar Lake-** Sambhar Lake is one of the largest inland salt lakes. Apart from producing a large percentage of India's salt supply - it also an incredible place to spot birds including large flocks of flamingos.¹⁷



- **Mehrangarh Fort-** Mehrangarh, the fort of Jodhpur, crowns a rocky hill that rises 400 feet above the surrounding plain and appears both to command and to meld with the landscape. One of the largest forts in Rajasthan, it contains fine palaces and preserves in its museum many priceless relics of Indian courtly life. In 1459, Rao Jodha, a fifteenth-century chief of the Rathore clan, began to build a new fort six miles to the south of Mandore, his then capital. A strategic location was chosen for the new fort: an isolated rock providing high elevation and good natural defenses. The fort was named Mehrangarh, meaning 'fort of the sun' – a reference to the clan's mythical descent from the Sun god 'Surya'. Over 500 yards long, the fort wall is seventy feet wide and rises in places to a height of one hundred and twenty feet.¹⁸



¹⁵ <https://www.tourism.rajasthan.gov.in/jaipur.html#anokhi-museum-of-hand-printing>

¹⁶ <https://www.tourism.rajasthan.gov.in/jaipur.html#anokhi-museum-of-hand-printing>

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¹⁸ <https://www.tourism.rajasthan.gov.in/jodhpur.html#mehrangarh-fort-and-museum>

- **Sheesh Mahal-** Situated within the compound of Mehrangarh Fort is the glass palace of Jodhpur, popularly known as Sheesh Mahal. This magnificent piece of architecture is adorned with walls of mirror work that stretch across ceilings and to the floors. It is superimposed by the mirror work of brightly painted religious figures cast in plaster.¹⁹

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