

# Hazaras

March 18, 2021

**In news :** Some of the ethnic Haras have been killed recently

## About Hazaras

- Hazara is one of two Ethnic groups in Afghanistan(second one is Pashtun). Hazara people are minorities in Afghanistan, as they are Persian speaking, and they usually live in the center of the country.
- **Language:** A Hazari dialect of Persian/a dialect of Dari (Farsi dialect) called Hazaragi
- **Native/location:** Majority of them live in the mountainous region of Hazarajat, in central Afghanistan. And others live in the Badakhshan mountains
- **Origin:** The word Hazara means 'thousand' in Persian but given the Hazaras' typical physical features, current theory supports their descent from Mongol soldiers left behind by Genghis Khan in the 13th century.
- **Religion / sect:** Vast majority follow the Shi'a sect (Twelver Imami) of Islam. A significant number are also followers **of the Ismaili sect while a small number are Sunni Muslim.**
- **Culture:** They are famous for their music and poetry and the proverbs from which their poetry stems. The poetry and music are mainly folkloric having been passed down orally through the generations.

## Historical link

- Hazaras are believed to have settled in Afghanistan at least as far back as the thirteenth century

- The Hazaras are said to be descendants of Genghis Khan, the founder of the Mongol empire, and the Mongol soldiers who swept through the region in the 13th century.
- The community also shares physical similarities with the Mongols and their speech, specific terms and phrases, reflect strong Central Asian Turkic influences, setting them apart from their neighbours in Pakistan and other communities within Afghanistan.
- Around 1773, the mountainous region of Hazarajat in modern-day central Afghanistan was annexed and made a part of the territories of Afghan Empire under Pashtun ruler Ahmad Shah Durrani.
- The Sunni Muslim majority under the Pashtun ruler resulted in further marginalisation of the Shiite Hazara community, to the extent that in the 18th and 19th century, they were forced to leave fertile lowlands in central Afghanistan and make the dry, arid mountainous landscape their new home.