



Glory of Bharath » INDICA

Indian culture and tradition is one of the oldest in the world and the only one that is still surviving. What is the source of strength and power which sustained the Indian civilization and made it survive several years despite many onslaughts of history? Civilizations survive on the foundation of universal truths. The wise of India have discovered two basic truths of life; one - the essential infinitude and divinity of all souls; two - the essential oneness and solidarity of universe and life.



Despite the diversity, India today stands as one nation because of the samskar that passed on over the generations. It is this heritage that embellishes every moment of life with spiritual significance and divine fervor.

'Indica' is a journey through interesting and meaningful traditions of India along with the celebrations attached to that particular custom. We begin with Pushkaras.

Sindhu (Indus) River Pushkar

In India, water has been an object of worship since time immemorial. It has diverse socio-religious uses and plays a central role in many religious ceremonies and rites. Pushkar is celebrated for every river in India once in 12 years. This year (December 19 - 31, 2009) it is that of River Sindhu or Indus.



The sacred and magnificent river Indus

The Pushkar legend

An interesting myth is attached to the Pushkar. A Brahmin called Tundila, after a prolonged penance, was granted a boon that he would remain permanently with Siva, who took the form of water, one of his eight incarnations. Ever since, Tundila became the chief of all water sources in the universe and came to be known as "Pushkara", the one who caters to the needs of the whole world.

Brahma, the creator, wanted water for creation. He pleased Siva through penance, and secured a boon that Pushkara would live in his kamandalam. However, the planet Brihaspathi sought a boon from Brahma that Pushkara be placed at his command, as water was essential for mankind. Pushkara refused to oblige Brihaspathi as he did not want to leave Brahma and laid the condition that if he were to go with Brihaspathi, Brahma should accompany him.

Brahma resolved this ticklish situation: Pushkara would stay with Brihaspathi for 12 days when the latter was entering a zodiac sign and 12 days when he was leaving it. On all days during the period in between, Pushkara would stay with Brihaspathi for a length of two muhurthams (auspicious time) in the afternoons.

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Brahma, accompanied by all the other gods, would go to a holy river ruling the moon sign in which Brihaspathi was staying for the stipulated period. Thus, Pushkara could be with Brahma as well as with Brihaspathi. This caused Pushkarams to take place in 12 rivers every 12 years. During Pushkarams, people believe that their sins will be washed away and that they will become healthy, wealthy and purified if they take a holy dip in the rivers. People also pay homage to their departed ancestors during this time.

River Sindhu

Sindhu in Rig Veda is referred as one of the rivers of Sapta Sindhus. The river got its name of Sindhu or Sindh through which it flows. It is the great river of the world. It originated from the Kailasa mountain near the Mansarovar in Tibet. The basin of this river gave birth to the ancient Indus Valley Civilization. Indus rises in Tibet near the Mansarovar Lake, flows west through Kashmir and Pakistan and then empties itself in Arabian Sea through the Rann of Kutch. River Indus provides the key water source for the economy of India and Pakistan. It is considered auspicious because of the Hindu belief that Aryans settled on the banks of Sindhu and thus, Hinduism started.



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