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Ganesh Chaturthi In Udaipur

Considered to be the source of wealth and wisdom, Lord Ganesh is highly revered in the Mewar region and is worshipped with great devotion at the beginning of every auspicious occasion and ritual. Mewar is known for its distinct ways of worship and splendid temples of Ganesh.

On Ganesh Chaturthi, the Maharana used to go for 'Darshan' to Sunder Vinayakji and Pala Ganesh Mandir that were believed to have been built before Udaipur city was founded. At night in the Bada Chouk of Rajmahal, the public gathered to loot coins, coconuts and 'Laddus'. Children would go round the city streets and were given 'Laddus' etc. Students were given sweets by the Maharana.

Veteran journalist Ashok Mathur's blog (ashokmathuronudaipur.com) with over 100 articles on Udaipur's palaces, temples, lakes, gardens, festivals, fairs, wildlife etc. is getting very popular. It has interesting content for Udaipurites as well as tourists.

One gets an inkling of the coming of the big event when artists on the roadside in different parts of Udaipur are seen making idols of Ganesh

in various shapes and sizes and then painting them in all the hues of the rainbow to attract buyers who take them home or install them in 'pandals' that are put up in different parts of the city.

The festival starts, in fact, a day earlier called Sinjara when young boys and girls get new dresses, sweets and a pair of beautifully painted small wooden sticks called 'Dandia' with which they play the next day. Special dishes of various kinds are also cooked.

People get ready early and bathe the Ganesh idol with milk, curds, ghee, honey, sugar, and water. Then it is worshipped with colored thread, sindoor, silver 'vark', 'kumkum' and rice grains. 'Dal-Bati' and 'churma' is offered. So also roasted grains covered with

On this auspicious day, idols of Lord Ganesh are brought in a car, open jeep or truck accompanied by devotees, bands and drum beaters to 'shaminias' set up in street corners, parks, playgrounds, etc. Sthapana is done with 'puja' and 'aarti'. These places hum with activities like singing, dandia dancing, Kavi Sammelan, 'yagnas', 'bhajan sandhyas' and the like for the next ten days.

Image Source: Travel Earth
The festival is being celebrated with great enthusiasm by Udaipurites for a long time. However, it became a public event when in 1991, Jai Maharashtra Ganesh Mandal set up a 'Pandal' near Ghantaghar and organized different cultural programs. In the beginning, a clay idol was worshipped but later on, an environment-friendly wooden one was made and the same one is used year after year.

During the festival at Maharashtra Bhawan, Bhupalpura is on display several facets of the art and culture of the state in the form of music, song, dance, handicrafts, 'rangoli' etc.

Started in 2009, the Utsav of Topwala Raja Ganesh named after the cannon nearby at Udaipol is a good exam-



ple of communal harmony where all the traders including Muslims organize the various programmes jointly.

Thronged by a large number of devotees on this occasion are the Ganesh temples located in different parts of the town.

The temple where the largest number of devotees gather, Bohra Ganesh Mandir in Dhoolkot area near Govt. Museum, Ayad was first of all built by the Joshi family in an open field. Believed to be about 350-year old, the 'pucca' temple was constructed by Maharana Raj Singh. The Maharana gave gold with which attractive ornaments for

the idol were made.

It is said that 70-80 years ago, people who needed money for marriage, business, etc. used to write their requirements on a piece of paper and leave it before the idol. They used to get the amount needed but it had to be returned with interest. Later on, when people did not keep their promise the practice stopped. As money lenders are called Bohra the temple got its name Bohra Ganesh.

A day before Ganesh Chauth there is whole 'night jagran'. Seva begins early in the morning with 'abhishek'. At mid-day, the time of Lord's birth special 'arti' is waved. There

is a 'mela' like scene around the Mandir.

Several rituals are performed at the Khatikwada, Hathipol, temple that has the only 'panchmukhi' idol of Ganesh in the town. It was said that the idol was brought here from the royal palace by some Brahmins while some others believe that it was set up in compliance with divine instructions given in a dream.

Situated in Mallatalai, the 400-year old ancient Dudhia Ganesh Mandir draws a lot of devotees on this day Ganesh Chaturthi. The Mandir got its name as a lot of milk products were offered to the idol. Milk sellers while going out of the

city and returning home put their milk cans here. Hence the name Dudhia Ganesh.

At the Pala Ganesh Mandir, located between Gulab Bagh and Doodhtalai and built by Vrishabh, grandson of the builder of Lake Pichhola, Lakha Banjara about 450 years ago, attracts a lot of devotees

on this day. Only on this day the idol made with clay and cow dung is decorated with gold ornaments weighing two and a half kilos that were unearthed at the site.

The about 300-Year-old Manshapurna Gajananandji Mandir in Jagdish Chowk also attracts a big number of devotees. It is said that once a Maharana took ill and the Maharani prayed to the Lord for his quick recovery. She offered Laddus to the Lord and from that time Laddus are distributed as Prasad.

The idol of Ganesh carved out of a single rock at 400-year old Jada Ganesh Mandir in Chandpole area needs one-kilo sindoor, one-kilo ghee, and 250 'malipanna' for special dressing up.

The Sankat Mochan Gajanan Mandir in Raoji ka hata is believed to have miraculous power of fulfilling the desires of devotees.

The one-century old

Nimadia Ganesh Mandir in Bhatiyani Choutta got its name from a huge 'neem' tree that used to exist near it.

The ten-day-long Ganesh festival concludes on Anant Chaturdashi with the taking of the idols in procession to various water bodies like Pichhola, Fatehsagar, Swaroopsagar and Goverdhansagar. In the morning after the performance of special rituals like 'puja', 'yagna' and 'aarti' the idols are taken in cars, trucks and jeep to the lakes. On the roads leading to the lakes, devotees can be seen singing, dancing and sprinkling 'gula' and 'abeer'. Akharas display daring feats. The whole town reverberates with the sound of 'Ganpati Baba Moria, agle baras tu jaldi Aana'.

To prevent pollution, only biodegradable idols are being made. They are not immersed in lakes but are put in special pools near the lakes. Some religious bodies have taken up to the responsibility to keep the idols till their use the following year.

Celebrated with great religious fervor in homes, temples, and streets all over the city, this festival brings joy and happiness for the devotees of Lord Ganesh.

-Ashok Mathur

Paryushan, The festival of Self-Awareness

Paryushan festival is such a great spiritual festival of eight days of Jain society, which not only illuminates our body, but can awaken the mind. This is such a season that not only the atmosphere but also the mind turns into purity. Aadhi, Vyadhi and Upadhi are treated and lead to Samadhi, which is celebrated every year all over the world. This festival has its own unique importance in the sacrificial culture of Jainism. It is not only a festival; it is considered a great festival. Because this festival is a spiritual festival, and is the only inspiring festival of self-purification. That is why this festival is not only a festival, it is a great festival. It is the most recognized festival of Jain people. The real meaning and purpose of Paryushana is to reside in nature, in the soul, being confined to the senses.

Paryushan festival is an occasion for many types of rituals like chanting, austerity, meditation, worship, anupreksha etc. This great festival is the festival of spiritual brightness. It is a day of introspection; it is time to look within. The Paryushan festival teaches us to look inward. The one watching outside remains on the edge. But one who dives deep finds priceless gems. Man's mind cannot become weightless until it reaches the depths of the inner being and becomes free from weight. Liberation cannot be attained by merely listening to the sermons. It can be attained through the spirit of ultimate meditation or by the classical knowledge of Aradhana-Viradhana.

For this it is necessary to do "Pratikraman". The meaning of Pratikraman is to heal the wounds on daily, fortnightly and samvatsari occasions by treating the mistakes caused due to pramaada and the ulcers or wounds caused by it on consciousness. Pratikraman is the combination of two words, Pra meaning return and atrikraman meaning violation. Literally, it means returning from the violations. As Jain householders, we are supposed to observe the twelve minor vows to minimize the violence towards other living beings which in turn minimizes the damage to our own souls.

Through pratikraman, the causes of mistakes can be discovered, and they can also be remedied. The essence of Pratikraman is come back to yourself. For example, coming from untruth to truth, from bad to good, moving from enmity to friendship. The root cause of today's man who is so dis-

turbed is the lack of introspection. Everyone is blaming the other, but is not able to take even the slightest initiative in admitting his mistake. Through Pratikraman, mistakes made in one's life or inadvertently can be resolved contemplatively. The main purpose of doing pratikraman is to rectify mistakes. The result of pratikraman is - pratikraman of the past, contemporary to the present and denial for the future. The use of Pratikraman is a spiritual practice for purification of these three times - past, future and present. Soul is the creator of sorrow and happiness and destroyer of them. A soul engaged in good tendencies is a friend and a soul engaged in evil tendencies is its enemy. Therefore, one has to make a friend, find his secret within and destroy his enemies, and then his secret will also be found within. In fact, Paryushana is an infallible remedy for inner cleanliness.

The entire Jain society becomes awake and engaged in spiritual practice on the occasion of this festival. In the Digambara tradition, it is recognized as "Dashlakshana Parva". Among them, its opening day is Bhadrav Shukla Panchami and the day of prosperity is Chaturdashi. On the other hand, in the Shwetambar Jain tradition, the day of Bhadrav Shukla Panchami is the day of Samadhi which is celebrated as Samvatsari with complete renunciation, fasting, self-study and abstinence. Even people who are unable to take time out during the year also wake up on this day. Even those who never fast are seen fasting ceremonially on this day. The literal meaning of Paryushan festival is to be situated in the soul. The word Paryushana is formed by adding a prefix and a suffix to it. One of the meanings of Paryushana is the destruction of karma. The enemies of Karma will be destroyed; only then the soul will be situated in its form, so this festival of Paryushan gives inspiration to the soul to reside in the soul.

Paryushan Mahaparva is a spiritual festival; the central element of it is the soul. Paryushan Mahaparva continues to play an ego role in revealing the pure, luminous form of the soul. 'Adhyatma' means closeness to the soul. This is the festival of connecting human-human and modifying the human heart, it is the festival of opening the windows, skylights and doors of the mind. This is the festival of "Kashaya Shaman".



This festival is celebrated for 8 days, in which heat, turmoil has arisen in someone, if a feeling of hatred has arisen towards someone, and then an undertaking is done to pacify him during this time. The 10 gates of religion have been mentioned, in which the first door is forgiveness. Forgiveness means equality. Forgiveness is very important for life, unless there is forgiveness in life, and then a person cannot progress on the path of spirituality. In this festival, everyone tries to make them as pure as possible. A vow of love, forgiveness and true friendship is taken. The mind is strengthened to maintain the purity of food and the decency of conduct and behavior as an integral part of the lifestyle. Human unity, peaceful co-existence, friendship, socialism without exploitation, establishment of international moral values, support of non-violent lifestyle etc. are the main basis of Paryushan Mahaparva. Efforts are expected to make Paryushan Mahaparva a festival of the people, in order that these elements can become a part of the life of the people. Whether a man is called religious or not, whether he believes in self-divine or not, whether he believes in past birth and reincarnation, whether he should resort to non-violence as far as possible in solving any of his problems - this is the heart of the sadhna of Paryushan. Violence cannot be a permanent solution to any problem. Those seeking a solution through violence have only exacerbated the problem. Keeping this fact in front, not only the Jain society, but also the common people should become faithful in the power of non-violence and use it with deep faith. Religion without morality,

worship without character and the imagining of a hereafter reform without purification of the present life is a kind of irony. Religious can only be what is moral. The right to worship should be given to those who are of character. The focus should be on the purification of this life before entering the labyrinth of the hereafter. This is the safe way to proceed in the direction of Dharma and this is the basis of the significance of the festival of Paryushan.

The last stage of the Paryushan Mahaparva is Kshasmavani or apology, which is organized in the form of Friendship Day. In this way, Paryushan Mahaparva and Forgiveness Day - it is a festival to bring one person closer to another. It is a festival to end the distance between human beings and consider each other as their own. It is also said in the Gita, "Atmoupanyas sarvatra, saam-mepashyati yojuna." Shri Krishna said to Arjuna - O Arjuna! Treat the animal as your equal. Lord Mahavira said - "Savvabhavesu in mitti, ver-amijhanakena" I have friendship with all beings; I have no enmity with anyone. Paryushan festival is the festival of worship of the inner soul - it is the festival of self-purification, it is the festival of giving up sleep. In fact, the festival of Paryushan is such a dawn which takes us from sleep to wakefulness. Lead us from the darkness of ignorance to the light of knowledge. So, it is necessary to remove the ego of sleep and get absorbed in the inner soul by doing special penance, chanting, worshiping self-study during these eight days, so that our life will be meaningful and successful.

- Lalit Garg

Renowned Kathak Dancer Vishal Krishna's Performance at SPSU

Udaipur: Under the cultural tie up with Spic Macay the renowned Kathak Dancer of Banaras Gharana Vishal Krishna gave an enthralling performance in the Orientation Programme 'Sangyan 2022' organised at Sir Padampat Singhania University, Udaipur. Vishal's recital, based on Indian mythology gave the dance a spiritual essence. Trained by the Kathak Queen Sitara Devi, he displayed the minute nuances and intricate dance patterns of Banaras gharana. His dance was characterized by perfect sync in melody, rhythm, poetry and facial expressions. He was accompanied by the table player Abhishek



Mishra and classical singer Jay Vardhan.

The magnificent and captivating classical performance was a treat for the dance enthusiasts. Prof. Sadananda Prusty, Provost, Prof. Sanjay Mishra, Registrar, Prof. Vinod Patidar, Dean, Research, Prof. Arun

Kumar, Dean, School of Engineering and Spic Macay Coordinator, SPSU Dr. D.S. Chouhan welcomed the esteemed guest.

His performance was appreciated by the students and faculty members of the University.



Professor (Dr.) Padmakali Banerjee receives the Esteemed Jury Award

Udaipur: The Honourable Vice Chancellor and President of JK Cement's SPSU, Professor (Dr.) Padmakali Banerjee, FRSA, London received the Esteemed Jury Award from AsiaOneat the 18th edition of Asia- Africa Business and Social Forum 2022 under the category of Greatest Brands and Leaders Award 2021-22 at New Delhi on August 25, 2022. The august gathering comprising of Ministers, Corporate leaders, Ambassadors from various countries and eminent personalities from different sectors graced the event with their auspicious presence. AsiaOne Magazine, URS media is the leading International Business & News magazine with a presence pan Asia & GCC. Professor Padmakali Banerjee is also the celebrated author of 'The Power of Positivity - Optimism and the 7th Sense' a popular choice globally.

An astute academician, a prolific leader and an Institutional builder, she has been instrumental in empowering youth, developing leaders and has brought several accolades to the organization.

It is necessary to preserve the historical culture of the tribals - Dr. Parmar

Udaipur: Kherwara MLA and former Higher Education Minister Dr. Dayaram Parmar said that preserving the historical culture of tribals, Gawri dance is imperative. Dr. Parmar was addressing the function as the chief guest in the Gawri dance program organized in his presence at the Block Congress office, Kherwada. He said that the Gawri dance of our society is historical. It is even more essential to maintain our identity that we are tribals.

The proof of this is our identity. Old historical culture, Gavari, folk songs, and old songs are sung in marriage, and it is the identity of the tribals. It is necessary to save it. He said that the artists of Gawri perform their art from village to village where they are invited, out of the house for one and a half months. Artists worship the goddess for a month and a half. It is noteworthy that under the leadership of Jhoti, Samited Jawas Samyukta Gavari Manna Maharaj Samited Jawas, 40 artists performed various arts in the courtyard of Block Congress Office Kherwada. On this occasion, MLA and former Higher Education Minister Dr. Dayaram Parmar, Pradesh District Congress Committee Udaipur Secretary Gajendra Kothari, former Principal Kamla Parmar, General Secretary of Block Congress Committee Kherwara Mohanlal Audichya, Jawas Sarpanch Ramesh Meena, Khandiobar Sarpanch Bhanwarlal Damor, Youth Congress Legislative Assembly Area Kherwada President Ravi Bhava, Lokesh Baser, Ghodi Sarpanch Dilip Parmar, Nafisa Bano, Panchayat Samiti member Thawarchand Damor, Manual Kharaadi, Anil Damor, Bhumendrasin Shekhawat, Devi Lal Parmar Ghodi, Maganlal, and other villagers were present.