



FESTIVALS OF INDIA

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GANESH CHATURTHI:

Ganesh Chaturthi also known as Vinayaka Chaturthi or Vinayaka Chaviti is a Hindu festival commemorating the birth of the Hindu god Ganesha. The festival is marked with the installation of Ganesha's clay murtis privately in homes and publicly on elaborate pandals. Observances include chanting of Vedic hymns and Hindu texts, such as prayers and vrata. Offerings and prasada from the daily prayers, that are distributed from the pandal to the community, includesweets such as madaka as it is believed to be a favorite of Ganesha.

The festival ends on the tenth day after start, when the idol is carried in a public procession with music and group chanting, then immersed in a nearby body of water such as a river or sea, called visarfan on the day of Anant Chaturdashi. In Mumbai alone, around 150000 statues are immersed annually. Thereafter the clay idol dissolves and Ganesha is believed to return to his celestial abode.

Ganesh also known as Ganapati, Vinayaka, and Pillaiyar, is one of the best-known and most worshipped deities in the Hindu pantheon. His image is found throughout India. Hindu denominations worship him regardless of affiliations.



RAMADAN

Ramadan is also spelled Ramazan, is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar, observed by Muslims worldwide as a month of fasting, prayer, reflection and community. A commemoration of Muhammad's first revelation, the annual observance of Ramadan is regarded as one of the Five Pillars of Islam and lasts twenty-nine to thirty days, from one sighting of the crescent moon to the next.

**History:**

The month of Ramadan is that in which was revealed the Quran; a guidance for mankind, and clear proofs of the guidance, and the criterion (of right and wrong). And whosoever of you is present, let him fast the month, and whosoever of you is sick or on a journey, a number of other days. Allah desires for you ease; He desires not hardship for you; and that you should complete the period, and that you should magnify Allah for having guided you, and that perhaps you may be thankful.

Religious Practices:

The common practice is to fast from dawn to sunset. The pre-dawn meal before the fast is called the suhur, while the meal at sunset that breaks the fast is called iftar.

Muslims devote more time to prayer and acts of charity, striving to improve their self-discipline, motivated by hadith: "when Ramadan arrives, the gates of Paradise are opened and the gates of hell are locked up and devils are put in chains."

Christmas

Christmas is an annual festival commemorating the birth of Jesus Christ, observed primarily on December 25 as a religious and cultural celebration among billions of people around the world. A feast central to the Christian liturgical year, it is preceded by the season of Advent or the Nativity Fast and initiates the season of Christmastide, which historically in the West lasts twelve

days and culminates on Twelfth Night. Christmas Day is a public holiday in many countries, is celebrated religiously by a majority of Christians, as well as culturally by many non-Christians, and forms an integral part of the holiday season organized around it.

The traditional Christmas narrative recounted in the New Testament, known as the Nativity of Jesus, says that Jesus was born in Bethlehem, in accordance with messianic prophecies. When Joseph and Mary arrived in the city, the inn had no room and so they were offered a stable where the Christ Child was soon born, with angels proclaiming this news to shepherds who then spread the word.

Christmas played a role in the Arian controversy of the fourth century. After this controversy ran its course, the prominence of the holiday declined for a few centuries. The feast regained prominence after 800 when Charlemagne was crowned emperor on Christmas Day.

In Puritan England, Christmas was banned, with puritans considering it a Catholic invention and also associating the day with drunkenness and other misbehavior. It was restored as a legal holiday in England in 1660 when Puritan legislation was declared null and void, but it remained disreputable in the minds of some. In the early 19th century, Christmas festivities and services became widespread with the rise of the Oxford Movement in the Church of England that emphasized the centrality of Christmas in



Christianity and charity to the poor, along with Washington Irving, Charles Dickens, and other authors emphasizing family, children, kind-heartedness, gift-giving, and Santa Claus, or Father Christmas.