

SWACHH BHARAT MISSION

The Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM), launched by the Indian government on October 2, 2014, is a transformative initiative aimed at enhancing sanitation and cleanliness across the country. Marking the 145th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, the mission reflects his vision of a cleaner and healthier India. This comprehensive program is divided into two main components: the Swachh Bharat Mission (Urban) and the Swachh Bharat Mission (Rural). The primary objective of the Swachh Bharat Mission is to eliminate open defecation by promoting the construction and use of toilets, thereby ensuring a cleaner environment and improved public health. The mission also seeks to encourage solid waste management, hygiene, and sanitation practices, aiming for a holistic improvement in the quality of life for all citizens. In the urban context, the SBM focuses on improving sanitation infrastructure, waste management systems, and public awareness. In rural areas, the emphasis is on building household toilets, creating open defecation-free (ODF) villages, and fostering community-led sanitation activities. One of the mission's flagship initiatives is the construction of household and community toilets. The government provides financial incentives and technical support to encourage people to build and use toilets. Special attention is given to marginalized communities and areas lacking sanitation infrastructure. The Solid Waste Management promotes effective waste management practices, including waste segregation at source, recycling, and composting. Urban areas are encouraged to establish waste processing facilities and adopt scientific methods for waste disposal. The mission underscores the importance of community participation in sanitation efforts. It fosters awareness through campaigns, educational programs, and public engagements. Activities such as cleanliness drives, workshops, and rallies are organized to instill a sense of responsibility and encourage behavioral changes. Effective monitoring mechanisms are put in place to assess the progress of the mission.

This includes regular inspections, audits, and feedback mechanisms to ensure the quality and sustainability of sanitation projects. In addition to toilets, the mission focuses on upgrading existing sanitation infrastructure, including public toilets, sewage systems, and waste treatment plants. Urban areas are encouraged to improve their sanitation facilities to meet international standards. Since its inception, the Swachh Bharat Mission has achieved significant milestones. The mission has also contributed to enhanced cleanliness and sanitation in public spaces, including roads, markets, and tourist spots. The increased awareness and engagement have led to better hygiene practices and a cleaner environment.

Charming Chenab

G.L. KHAJURIA

Literally speaking, Chenab acronymises a Persian derivation, Cheen means china and aab means water, can notating thereby China's water. But with the revolving wheel of time, the learned school of thought negated it and attributed that the origin of Chenab is from 'Tandi- a small village or hamlet in Himachal Pradesh (HP) adjoining our state. Even in Sanskrit texts, Chenab river finds its mention as a nectar-clear water having its origin from higher reaches of Himachal Pradesh.

According to our great epics, the Mahabharatand the Harivansha Purana, there is mention of the origin of these two mighty rivers- Chandra and Bhaga from higher reaches amidst the Himalayan region of Himachal Pradesh. And after traversing through longer distances ultimately confluence at Atholi, little below padder (Kishtwar) around 306 kms serpentine is named as chandrabhaga, Chandra literally means Moon and BhagaCannotates Luck or virtue. The Chenab or Chandrabhaga as well occupies a very significant place in our revered Rigveda , wherein it has been mentioned as 'Askini'.

Apart from, the Greeks have made a mention about Chenab river in more than many ways. Askesines and Chandrabhaga as Sandropagos viz the man eater or Alexandrapagas as the devour of Alexander the great, who attempted to cross this mighty river and had to suffer disastrously.

The Neelmat Purana, a historical tratise of Kashmir mentions about Chenab or chandrabhaga most prominently. Poster, a well - renowned traveller in 1783 AD extensively Journeyed through Kashmir and named this mighty river as chanan. And Vigne, another traveller-cum-explorer in 1783 AD, originally travelled the vale of Kashmir and recorded in his travelogue the chenab's water from Moon.

And very rightly has as such 'Jean Naudou' a French traveller- cum-authorhas commented about Chenab as a beautiful, echanting river having the biggest vibrant, lush green forest in its back drop and explains further regarding the location together with other affiliations as such: 'To the east and the south-east, Kashmir is in communication with upper valley of chandrabhaga and at the foot of frontier ridge which separates the basin of vistasta' the 'Jhellum. Kashavata used to constate an independent principality mentioned one single time in Rajatrangni (Kalhana) but many times in the modern chronicles.

Downstream, Bhadaravakasa was attached to champapura, while more to the south and west campa, vallapura was an independent state where Biksacra were taking refuge, and of whom, a princess was forming a part of harem of Sussala, mentioned many times by Kalhana.

The river Chenab or chandrabhaga after confluencing at Atholi sweeps down surpentine taking turns and twists on sharp bends sometimes too narrow and deep and at places oftenly with broader width all along its under lying bed -rocks of sub-Himalayan , pre-cambrian region relatively unchangeable in its entire route. The river, of course, accumulates various rivulets, Nallahs on its either side of the catchments thereby enhancing its quantitative flow like fiery flames. The river as such forms a narrow gorge cut out of hard rock filled up with perpetual flow of water and is locked up in the rock forming a dam-like shape. And a mega DulHasti proejct generating huge power potential is the first of the formation in the history of the Charming Chenab.

And still down below , the river has been dammed at Baglihar hydroelectric power project near Batote. The damming of these two hydro- electric projects have provided an ample scope of power generation. But at the same time has indeed lost its natural beauty, its enchanting tones and charming white foaming watery upheavels forever and ever.

The mighty and majestic Chenab or Chandrabhaga is having a nectar-like crystal water with very fast flow spanning its either bank, debouches from hills down and travels hundreds of thousand kilometres in the land-locked mountainous terrain and the plains down below. The river as such emerges out at Aknhoor after passing through Salal and Sawalakot power project and the river flows to Pakistan inter-mingling Tawi, Ravi, Satluj, Beas and other rivers, rivulets and streams. The river as such confluences other mega rivers, en route, with gushing flow and finally drains down into Arabian sea.

(The author is Former Dy. Conservator of Forest, J&K)

JAGDISH CHANDER RAINA

Ganesh Chaturthi, a 10-day long festivalmarking the birth of the Elephant Headed Deity Ganesha, the god of prosperity and wisdom. It begins on the fourth day (Chaturthi) of the month of Bhadarpada (7th of September, 2024) the sixth month of Hindu Calendar. In Shiv Purana there is a description of an incident whereMaaParvati created Lord Ganesha - the god of wisdom, knowledge, prosperity, and happiness - with sandalwood paste. Goddess Parvati left Lord Ganesha to guard the place while she was taking a bath. He restricted Lord Shiva to enter the place as per orders of MaaParvati. This made Lord Shiva furious, and he severed Lord Ganesha's head. MaaParvati was infuriated to see this and threatened to end the whole creation. After knowing the truth, he revived Lord Ganesha and gave him new lifeby replacing the head of an elephant Gajasura who wished Lord Shiva to adorn his head after his death. Seeing the love and devotion of his son Ganesh towards him and Parvati Lord Shiva blessed and ranked him in the foremost of all gods and told devotees to worship Ganesh before starting any auspicious activity.

On the complain of Parvati (Umaji) that is it possible to have an offspring like that? Shankara said, "Hey, Uma, why you are worrying? To who you think solid bodied (Sthulkaya), long eared, big bellied, short stature and small eyed, is neither an ordinary bodied-being nor a god (Devta). You should not give consideration to the shape of the body parts but see their qualities (Gunas). Long ears tell us to listen as much as possible before speaking. Long nose guides us to consider every breathing a vital one and to remember god every time. Small and downward eyes point for keeping oneself polite and soft. The raised right hand tells us for blessedfulness and left hand to raise weapons against bad people (Asuras) and to offer "Laddu" to the good people. He will be worshipped first among all gods, will be destroyer of all obstacles and will be famous with many names." On listening about the wonderful qualities if this strange boy all the doubts of Umaji were cleared. Thereafter She along with Shankara prayed Lord Ganesha. The Lord Ganapati is the most adorned and versatile of all Hindu Gods. The worshipping of this elephant headed deity is done first of all the gods and is pleased with little of prayers. Lord Ganesha is an Epitome of Wisdom and it is believed that he has written the Shlokas of Mahabharata spoken by Rishi Ved Vyasa

RAVI ROHMETRA

Lord Vinayaka, Ganesh ji, Ganpati ji, Vinayaka is the darling of the masses. Ganesh Chaturthi brings people of all religion, caste and creed together.

Ganesh Chaturthi is celebrated with great devotion all over India. People bring home murtis (Idols) of Lord Ganesha and celebrate the festival by worshipping the Lord in a special way for a day and a half, 3 days, 5 days, 7 days or 11 days depending on the family tradition and commitment of each individual.

On the last day of worship the idol is taken out in a colourful and musical procession to be immersed traditionally at a beach.

This is one of the most popular festivals in the Country. There are several reasons for this. Ganpati is after all a popular God. His blessings are invoked at most religious ceremonies as He is the one who can remove all obstacles to success. He is the giver of fortune and can help to avoid natural calamities.

Ganpati, the god of wisdom and the benevolent deity of the dynasty of Peshwas who ruled Maharashtra inculcating a special culture in the state. Ganpati is the herald of auspicious beginnings and is the beloved deity of all.

Religion in India is still a living force and Indians appreciate and cultivate the festival spirit even in this age of industrialization and political upheavals. Ganesh Festivals bring people together and make the nation move forward and grow. Ganesh Festival is very popular in our country.

The birth of Lord Ganesh is on the 4th day of the bright half of Bhadarpad Shukla (August/September). This festival is celebrated for 10 days from Ganesh Chaturthi - birth-date-to Anant Chaturdashi - the final 10th day of his immersion. Everyone loves this deity with his curving trunk, potbelly and big flat ears. He is the benevolent protector of the innocent, yet the ruthless destroyer of evil. His mount is a rat.

In several states of India, but especially in Maharashtra clay idols of Ganesh in varying sizes are made and sold. The idols are purchased and brought home the day previous to Ganesh Chaturthi, which is the day of Hartalish when women keep fast and invoke the blessings of goddess Parvati, who is Ganesh's mother.

In streets and commercial establishments community worship is offered to a life-size or even a bigger image, installed on an erected platform. Lord Ganesh is very fond of sweets and hence kheer, pancharit, fruits and sweets and specially modaks are placed before him as "Naivedya" or "Bhog". After the ritual worship this "Bhog" is distributed as "Prasad".

On the day of immersion, which is either on 3rd, 5th, 7th or 10th day after performing the

Ganpati Bappa Morya Agle Baras Tu Jaldi Aa



at Vyas Gufa (Natural Cave) at Mana Badrnath.

The Life and its Idol Incarnations give below mentioned messages to the humanity that:

Be A Good Listener

Being a good listener is extremely important to handle any situation. You should always listen first, then speak. Elephant Ear's of Ganeshji can be used to exemplify the message of how important it is to be a good listener.

Maintain Balance

It is quite important to maintain a balance in life. Be it home or work or fun and games, or anything else in life. You should always maintain a balance in life. One of the Lord Ganesh's feet rests on the ground and the other one is folded which teaches us the importance of balance in life.

Respect Everyone

Lord Ganesh always teaches us to respect everyone and be humble to everyone. Lord Ganesh always teaches us that nobody is unequal and everyone should be treated in the same way you want them to treat you. We all know that Ganesh's vehicle is a mouse. This teaches us about humility and how to respect even the tiniest of creatures.

Use Your Knowledge and Power wisely

No matter how much knowledge or power you have, you should use it for the welfare of the society instead of using it in a way that is wrong. Your knowledge and power is your most powerful weapon.

Accept Your Imperfections

Nobody is perfect and everyone has their own imperfections. You should accept these imperfections with your

whole heart and not think about anybody else.

As per DvadashNamawali Mantras Ganeshji's12 names are chanted Sumukhaya (One who has a beautiful face), Ekadantaya (One having one Tooth), Kapilaya(Wish Cow or Cow of Plenty),Gajakarnakaya(One with Ears of an Elephant), Lambodaraya (One with a large belly),Vikataya(One who is ferocious or the Mischapen),Vighnanashaya(Destroyer of obstacles), Vinayakaya (One who has the qualities to lead),Dhumeraketave(????????????????The Lord of a smoky color), Ganadhyakshaya(Leader of the Ganas), BhalaChandraya (One who wears the moon on his head), Gajananyaya(One Who has the face of an elephant "Ganapati"). In some parts of the country the worship of "Ashtavinayakji" is done.In Hindu verbatim the phrase "Shri Ganesh" signifies start of new work, function or project especially something good and positive. Almost every Hindu Ritual, Katha, Puja, Ceremony or Religious Performance starts with the worshipping of Lord Ganesh. The auspicious Hindu festival of Ganesh Chaturthi is celebrated annually with pomp and grandeur. It is also known as Vinayaka Chaturthi or Ganesh Utsav.

Ganesh Chaturthi celebrations and jubiliations are observed all across the country. Ganesh Chaturthi is a traditional festival celebrated in many parts of India, but its grandeur and enthusiasm in the state of Maharashtra, Karnataka, Telangana are unmatched. It wasn't always a big part of

Maharashtra's culture until it arrived during the Maratha rule. Initially, Ganesh Chaturthi was more of a family affair. However, a significant transformation happened during freedom struggle when Bal GangadharTilak (1856-1920), a prominent leader played a crucial role in turning Lord Ganesh into a powerful symbol of cultural and religious unity among the people of Maharashtra as a way to resist British rule. The British government was strict about political opposition and rebellion, but it didn't interfere with religious customs. So, the Ganesh festival became a platform to display national unity. In 1893, Tilak transformed Ganesh Chaturthi from a yearly religious celebration into a full-blown public event "Ganeshutsav".

People observe the festival by bringing home the idol of Ganapati Bappa for one-and-a-half days, three days, seven days, or ten days. They perform shapana of the idol, pray to Lord Ganesh, perform rituals, offer bhog, fruits, sweets and observe fast also. Besides pandals are also erected at public places with installation of "Ganesh Idols" by the social, cultural and religious organizations with the participation of people from all walks of life. Special and most exquisite sweet delicacies, including modaks, laddoos, and barfis, Foods for workshops, Prasadams and Bhogsare a common sight and treat during this festival. The 10-day-long Ganesh Chaturthi festival creates an atmosphere much like a carnival. It's a festival known for its abundance of sweet treats because Lord Ganesh is believed to have a sweet tooth and the devotees are served Prasadam after daily workshops. The festival of Ganesh Chaturthi is now celebrated globally in almost every country of the world by the NRIs. Ganesh Visarjan marks the conclusion of the 10 day Ganesh ChaturthiFestival, where the idols of Lord Ganesh are immersed in water bodies symbolising the cycle of creation and dissolution. This year the Ganesh Visarjan will take place on September 17, 2024. The sacred festival propagates peace, harmony and festivity as it bridges gap between the people.

The people eagerly anticipate and wait for the arrival of this Lord of happiness, wisdom and harbinger of peaceful coexistence.

The idols are carried in grand processions from homes and pandals to rivers, lakes, seas or other water bodies in all the cities and towns of India accompanied by chants of "GanpatiBappaMorya, AgleBarasTuJaldi Aa", Bhajans, DJs, Drum Beating and Dances.

(The writer is Joint Director of Agriculture (Retired))

Special on Ganesh Chaturithi



"Puja", the idol is taken out in a procession by people who dance and sing. On the 10th day - the Anant Chaturdashi day, the sea fronts are packed with surging mass of humanity as the idols of Ganesh are carried towards their watery rest among shouts of "Ganapati Bappa Morya, Pudhaachya varshi lavkar ya" (Return early next year, Oh Victorious Lord Ganesh).

Many interesting legends about the birth and the greatness of Lord Ganesh are found in old ancient religious texts. He is considered to be the god of wisdom, prudence and prosperity. The worship of this god is coming down to us right from the Vedic times. Every religious ceremony is completed even today with invoking his blessings at the very beginning with the solemn recitation of "Om Ganeshaya Namaha" (I bow to Thee Lord Ganesh). It is believed that Lord Ganesh put down on paper the shlokas of our great epic Mahabharat as Maharshi Ved Vyasa dictated them to him. Sant Gyaneshwar's Gyaneshwari starts with praise of Lord Ganesh.

Since the days of Chatrapati Shivaji Maharaj the founder of the Maratha Empire this Ganesh Festival was celebrated on a grand scale in Pune and later on the Peshwas themselves participated in this festival, as Ganesh was their family deity. Today this festival is the most colourful and happy event in the religious, social and cultural life of India specially that of Pune and Mumbai. - See more at:

Traditional Ganesh stories tell that Lord

Ganesh son of goddess Parvati consort of Shiva Parvati created Ganesh out of sandalwood paste that she used for her bath and breathed life into the figure. She then set him to stand guard at her door while she bathed. Lord Shiva, who had gone out, returned and as Ganesh didn't know him, didn't allow him to enter. Lord Shiva became enraged by this and asked his follower Ganas to teach the child some manners. Ganesh who was very powerful, being born of Parvati, the embodiment of Shakti, defeated Shiva's followers and declared that nobody was allowed to enter while his mother was bathing. The sage of heavens, Narada along with the Saptarishis sensed the growing turmoil and went to appease the boy with no results. Angered, the King of Gods, Indra attacked the boy with his entire heavenly army but even they didn't stand a chance. By then, this issued had become a matter of pride of Parvati and Shiva. Angry Shiva severed the head of the child. Parvati seeing this became enraged. Seeing Parvati in anger Shiva promised that her son will be alive again. The devas searched for the head of dead person facing North, but they found only the head of a dead elephant. The brought the head of the elephant and Shiva fixed it on the child's body and brought him back to life. Lord Shiva also declared that from this day the boy would be called Ganesh (Gana Isha : Lord of Ganas).

According to the Linga Purana, Ganesh was created by Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati at the request of the Devas for being a Vighnakartaa (obstacle-creator) in the path

of Rakshasas and a Vighmahartaa (obstacle-averter) to help the Devas achieve fruits of their hard work.

Domestic celebration in Maharashtra In Maharashtra, most Hindu families also install their own small clay statues for worship on Ganesha Chaturthi. As per the tradition of their respective families, the domestic celebrations come to end an end after 1, 3, 5, 7 or 11 days when the statues is taken in a procession to a large body of water such as rivers or sea for immersion. Due to environmental concerns, a number of families now avoid the large water bodies and instead immerse the statue in a bucket or tub at home. After a few days the clay is used in the home garden. In some cities, a public eco-friendly process is used for immersion. Some Hindus also install the clay images of Ganesh in their homes. It is believed that Ganesh bestows his presence on earth for all his devotees during this festival. The festival is celebrated as a public event since the days of Shivaji (1630-1680). While celebrated all over India. It is most elaborate in Maharashtra and other part of Western India. Outside India it is celebrated widely in Nepal and by Hindus in the United States, Canada, Mauritius Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Cambodia, Burma, Fiji, Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana. The festival also celebrated in Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Goa, Mumbai, Pune, Visakhapatnam, Bangalore, Chennai and Jammu. Every year when Ganesh Chaturthi arrives, a large number of his devotees in Mumbai and other parts of Maharashtra determine not to harm any mouse or rat. It is because the mouse is the vehicle of God Ganesh. Many faithful devotees felt that rats/mice are Vahan of the Ganapati Bappa so harming them will attract curse from Ganesh.

Ganesh is the remover of all obstacles and bestower of boons

Aarti Shree Ganesh Ji ki

Jai Ganesh, Jai Ganesh, Jai Ganesh Deva, Mata Jaki Parvati, Pita Mahadeva, Jai.....

Ek Dant Dayavant, Char Bhujia Dhari, Mastak Par Sindur Sohe, Muse Ki Sawari, Jai.....

Andhan Ko Aankh Det, Kodian Ko Kaya, Banjhan Ko Puttar Det, Nirdhan Ko Maya, Jai.....

Har Chadhe, Phool Chadhe, Aur Chadhe Meva, Ladooan Ka Bhog Lage, Sant Kare Sewa, Jai.....

Dheenan Ki Laaj Rakho, Shambu Sutwari, Kamna Ko Poora Karo, Jag Balihari, Jai.....

(The writer is Social Worker & Writer)