

In this manner Sindhis are true followers of Vasudhaiva Kutambakam.

Sindhi Festivities

Sindhis, having religious bend of mind, observe many fasts and perform rituals on various days of a week as well as a month. Mondays are for Shaivaites, when followers of Lord Shiva undertake fast and perform puja. A special preparation, called Rot is distributed as Prasad on this day. Tuesdays are reserved for the followers of Lord Hanuman. They do not shave on this day. The fast is observed and Bundi is distributed as Prasad on this day. Thursdays are reserved for the followers of Mother Goddess (Devi) who observe fast and certain restrictions for their food on this day. Fridays are observed by Daryapanthis, the followers of Water God. On this day various dishes of fish are prepared for food. On Saturdays the followers of Lord Shani give in alms the oil and pulses, etc.

Sindhis observe Gyaras (eleventh day of each fortnight of the month), Satnarain (full moon day of the month), Umas (new moon day of the month), Chodas (fourth day of each fortnight of the month) and Sankranti (the day on which moon moves from one zodiac sign to another). On all these days Sindhis observe fast and perform rituals connected with the particular day. They usually end their fast after offering milk to moon. There are 24 Gyaras days in a year and each of them is known by its specific name. Some of them are more famous and are considered auspicious. Hence celebrated by Sindhis. Following days are observed by Sindhis as their festival/festivities days.

Cheti Chand: On this day Sindhi New Year starts. This day coincides with Gudi Parva of Maharashtra. This is the birthday of Shri Uderolal, commonly known as Jhulelal. His birthday is now celebrated as 'Sindhyaat Day'. Sindhis prepare Bahrano and after performing puja immerse Bahrano in the river.

Chet Naurata: Many sects of Sindhis undertake worship of Jagdamba Devi during the period of first nine days of the bright fortnight of Chet (April-May). Sindhis observe Ekano (taking the food only once on each day of the period). On eighth day Sindhis perform puja and feed girls.

Ram Naumi: Ninth day of the bright fortnight of Chet (April-May), considered to be the birthday of Lord Rama is celebrated by Sindhis.

Vesakh Sanan: Sindhis consider Vesakh month (from full moon day of Chet (April-May) to full moon day of Vesakh (May-June) an auspicious period. They bathe everyday in the river water and undertake fast for full month. Brahmins are given alms, earthen pots and vinjni (Indian fan) on Gyaras, the eleventh day of the fortnight.

Akhan Tij: Akhan is derived from Akhand meaning imperishable and tij means third day of the bright fortnight of Vesakh (May-June). This day is celebrated as birthday of Parashurama, an incarnation of Vishnu. Ladies observe fast on this day and give alms. The alms given on this day do not perish and bear fruit to the giver.

Chatur Chodas: Fourteenth day of bright fortnight of Vesakh (May-June) is celebrated as Narasimha Jayanti. Narasimha is another incarnation of Vishnu who saved devotee Prahlad from his Rakshash father Hirnyakashyap. Sindhi observe fast on this day and offer puja to Lord Narasimha.

Vesakh Purnima: The full moon day of Vesakh (May-June) has special importance because on this day the bathing of Vesakh month come to an end.

Dev Shayani Gyaras: The eleventh day of the bright fortnight of Vesakh (May-June) is called Dev Shayani Gyaras. It is said that on this day Vishnu, the Protector of the world goes to sleep on the bed of Shesh Nag. From this day onwards the destroying power of universe takes charge. This power prevails in the universe till the Vishnu wakes up and starts his work of protection. That day is called "Dev Prabodhni Gyaras".

Nirjala Gyaras: The eleventh day of the bright fortnight of Jeth (June-July) is called Nirjala Gyaras. Sindhis observe fast on this day and do not take even a drop of water. Because of this it is called Nirjala. Bhimsen, one of Pandavas, also observed this fast during their Banvas.

Jethi Umas: New Moon Day of the month of Jeth (June-July). Month Jeth too is considered to be auspicious by Sindhis. This being the end of Jeth Sindhis prepare Sesa as promised by them and while observing puja they take clay and water in their hand and say as under:

"Isar ghorī chhori, aandi Ganga lorhi" etc.

Chaliho: The day, on which the Sun enters zodiac sign Cancer during the month of Akhar (July-August), the followers of Lal Saeen start observing fast which lasts for forty days. This period is called "Lal Saeena jo chaliho". Choumaso or monsoon season too starts from this day. The followers of Lal Saeen prepare Bahrano everyday for all the forty days and after performing puja they immerse Bahrano in the water every day. On the fortieth day of the fast the Bahrans from different parts of the city as well as from private houses join at one place and proceed to a river to immerse all of them in the water.

Gogro or Nang Panchami: This day belongs to Snake God i.e. death. As such Sindhis perform puja to please death. On the fifth day of the bright fortnight of Sawan (August – September) the followers of Snake God preserve fast and worship Snake by offering him the milk and fruits. The Snake brings the death. This also indicates that we should show mercy towards other creatures of the universe as also show kindness even towards our foes.

Nandhi Thadhri: This festival is celebrated on the seventh day of the bright fortnight of Sawan (August-September). On this day Sindhis place Akhriyun Tikryun on the bodies of the children and the old members of the family to relieve them of any misfortune. After performing this puja they eat food which was prepared a day before. The hearth is put off on the previous day after preparing the food for Nandhi Thadhri and it is lighted only on the day after Nandhi Thadhri. Sweet cakes and some special preparations made for this occasion are liked by Sindhis very much.

Narel Poonam: On full moon day of the month of Sawan (August-September) Sindhis offer coconuts to the River God. Brahmins change their old sacred thread (Janiyo) on this day and wear a new one. This day is also celebrated as "Raksha Bandhan" in whole of North India. It has now become a festival of Sindhis as well. It is called 'Shravani' as well.

Tijri: On the third day of the dark fortnight of Sawan (August-September) unmarried girls and married ladies observe fast of Tijri. The Brahmin sows moong seeds on the eleventh day of bright fortnight of Sawan (August-September). The ladies who perform the fast of Tijri collect sprout of moong in the morning of Tijri for worshipping. In the

evening ladies hear the story from Brahmin, offer milk to the moon and end their fast. This festival is equivalent to 'Karva Choth' celebrated by other communities of India.

Vadi Thadhri (Shitla Shayan): This festival falls on seventh day of the dark fortnight of Sawan (August-September). Sindhis prepare Sweet cakes and other eatables a day before Vadi Thadhri. On Thadhri day Sindhis perform the puja of Shitla Mata by sprinkle water on all the members of the family so that Shitla Mata does not put them to trouble. After that they take the food prepared a day before. Like on Nandhi Thadhri the hearth put off on Chhath is lighted only on the day after Vadi Thadhri i.e. Ashtami which is Krishna Janmashtami.

Krishna Janmashtami: On the eighth day of the dark fortnight of Sawan (August-September) Lord Krishna was born in Jail in Mathura. This day is therefore celebrated as Krishna janmashtami. Sindhis, who follow Vaishnava Cult, observe fast on this day and end it in the night when Lord Krishna was born. Vaishnava Mandirs are decorated and community festivities are held.

End of Lal Saeen Chaliho: The observation of Lal Saeen Chaliho, which started on Kark Sankranti, comes to an end after forty days on Singh Sankranti day. On this day the followers of Lal Saeen end their fasts and in the night immerse Bahrano in the river.

Sowing of Barley seeds, Vachh Puja and Sowing of Satana: On the twelfth day of bright fortnight of Sawan (August-September) Sindhis perform puja of the calf. Those who observe this festival do not take wheat cakes on this day. On this day Sindhis sow seven types of cereals. On the Chand (new moon day) of Bado (September-October) the Satana sown earlier are immersed in water after performing a puja.

Bhitar Puja: Sindhis do not look at moon on fourth day of the bright fortnight of Bado (September-October) because it is said that if one looks at moon on that day the people will make false allegations against them. In order to save oneself against these allegations Sindhis perform puja of Bhitar (clay ball) and throw it towards moon.

Shinhan Satain: On the seventh day of bright fortnight of Bado (September-October) Sindhis put clay-boats and clay-oxen on Chahj or fan and perform the puja.

Maha Lachmia ja sagra: On the eighth day of bright fortnight of Bado (September-October) Sindhis tie Maha Lachmi's sagra. These sagra contain sixteen cotton strands with sixteen knots and dipped in yellow turmeric solution. While tying these sagra they hear the story of Maha Lachmi.

Ban Badhri (Vaman Jayanti): Sindhis observe this as the day on which Lord Vishnu had tied Raja Bali of underworld. Sindhis put some clay balls in water and float a boat made of grass in it and perform puja.

Maha Lachmi and Atha Sabhais ja Sagra: Maha Lachmi Sagra which are tied on the eighth day of the bright fortnight of Bado (September-October) are untied on this day i.e. the eighth day of the dark fortnight of Bado (September-October). While performing puja Sindhis keep fried sweet cakes in a dish together with a clay horse, light a lamp and hold in their hands the untied sagra. They hear the story from Brahmin, put the sagra on the horse and after palau end the ceremony. On this day the ladies of Sakhar and Shikarpur side tie Atha Sabhaia jo Sagra which they untie on the third day of the bright fortnight of Asu (October-November).

Shradh: Starting from the first day of the dark fortnight of Bado (September-October) till the Umas (new moon day) Sindhis, like all Hindus, perform Shradhas of their

departed near and dear ones. They call Brahmin and after feeding him obtain his ashirvad on behalf of the departed near and dear ones.

Manghan ja Khira: The Shradh of the children is performed on the thirteenth day of the shradh fortnight, i.e. a day before the Umas. On this day Brahmin is offered only Milk and therefore it is called Manghan ja Khira.

Pitar Adieu: On Umas the last day of the Shradh Sindhis say adieu to Pitaras. On this day they spread cow dung in front of their house, keep an un-cooked wheat cake there and light sixteen lamps placed on that wheat cake. After that they put a cloth around their neck and bow before the lamps and say "Pitara tusi tusman thyo".

Asu's Chand: On the day after Umas of Asu (October-November) Sindhis take out Bahrano of Lal Saeen. In vedic period this day was named as 'Sharat Sanpat'. On this day Sun enters Tula Rashi of Zodiac signs and travels towards south of the globe. Rishis used to perform Havans on this day.

Naurata: From the first day till ninth day of bright fortnight of Asu (October-November) Sindhis observe Naurata during which period they perform puja of nine Devis. On eighth day they perform Havan and feed girls. On ninth day Naurata comes to an end.

Dasharo: The tenth day of the bright fortnight of Asu (October-November) is celebrated as Dasharo. On this day Lord Ramchandra had conquered Lanka. People gather at a place and observe puja of a tree and say 'Kandi Ramchandra ji vandi' Then they burn the effigies of Ravan, Meghnad and Kumbhakaran and light fireworks to celebrate Dasharo. The clay collected from that spot is considered to be the Gold of Lanka and businessmen keep a portion of it in their cash box.

Sharad Poonam (Beginning of Kartik Sanan): After monsoon the sky remains clear during the month of Asu (October-November). The full moon day of this month is called Sharad Poonam. People enjoy the moonlight and remain awake for whole night. They believe that Lakshmi comes down and bestows the person who is awake on this day. From this day people start bathing in holy river for one month. The period lasts till the full moon day of Kartik (November-December).

Aahoi Puja: On the fourth day of dark fortnight of Asu (October-November) the Brahmin sows moong seeds and lights a lamp. On the seventh day of dark fortnight of Asu (October-November) the Aahoi puja is performed.

Bachha Baras: On twelfth day of the dark fortnight of Asu (October-November) Sindhis perform puja of cow along with its calf. The puja is performed at the twilight of the day.

Dhan Teras: On thirteenth day of dark fortnight of Asu (October-November) Sindhis perform puja of Lord Dhanvantari. It is said that Dhanvantari is one of the fourteen Ratnas which came out of the Khir Sagar when it was churned by Deviates and Rakshas. He held the pot of Amrit when he came out of the Ocean. He is the author of Ayurveda. People purchase something new on this day.

Dyari: It is an important festival. On this day Lord Ramchandra had come back to Ayodhya and ascended the throne. People of Ayodhya lighted innumerable lamps to celebrate the occasion. Till this day the day is celebrated as the festival of lamps.

Sindhis have a peculiar way of celebrating this festival. The businessmen perform puja of Lakshmi in the evening and maintain new account books on this day. In the night Sindhis light Melhora (Jawar stalks with cloth dipped in mustard oil at one end) and say "Dyaria Jo Dio Ditho, Nandho Vado Chibhir Mitho"