

Sahapedia

An Open Encyclopedia on Indian Culture and Heritage

BASANT: Documenting an Intangible
Heritage around Indian Spring

Verse VI-28 of Kalidasa's Ritusamhara

“ May the bodiless one, the conqueror of the world, accompanied by the Spring season ever grant your happiness, he whose sharp shafts are the beautiful mango blossoms, whose mighty bow is the lovely Kimshuka leaf of which the string is formed by the row of bees, whose spotless white umbrella is the Moon: whose lordly elephant is the breeze from the Malaya mountain and whose bards are the cuckoo birds”

Is it possible to document fragrance of a spring?

Influence of Spring on the continent's people

1. Its festivals and practices
2. Its performing arts
3. Its literature
4. Its history
5. Its food
6. Its crafts



Spring's influence in

- 1576 languages
- 4635 communities
- 7 religions, countless sects
- 4000 years of history



Festivals and Dance forms

1. Baisakhi is celebrated with bhangra and gidda dance
2. Basant Raas-Lila in Manipuri dance-- traditionally performed in temples on full moon days in April and May
3. In Saraikela, the Sun-festival or Chaitra Parvat is observed by the Maharaja`s family. The rituals associated with it are observed in full detail. The Chhau dance in Saraikela is ceremonially performed on this occasion
4. Bihu Dance is performed in Assam



Music



1. Many ragas are based on seasons. There are specific ragas for spring in Hindustani classical music: E.g. Raga Basant, Raga Bahar
2. Specific genres like hori, dhamaar, chaiti
3. Basant utsav at sufi shrines- Nizam Auliya ki Basant, Khwaja Bakhtiar Kaki ki Basant, Khusrau ki Basant



Spring and India's Political History



Gandhi's Dandi March was in a Spring...Bhagat Singh was hanged in another spring

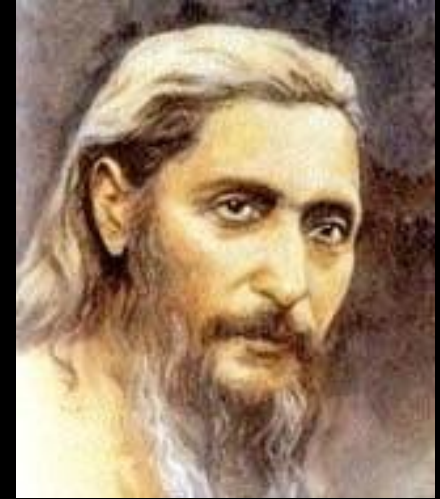
Culinary Traditions and Dress



Yellow sweets like laddu, jiggery, gujiya, etc are eaten and yellow clothes are worn on Basant Panchami

Spring and Indian Literature

Great Hindi poet Nirala was so impressed with this season that he denounced his actual birthday and declared *Basant Panchami* his birth day. *Basant Panchami* is also considered very auspicious day by all those who are in the field of knowledge because this is the birth day of Devi Saraswati, the goddess of wisdom and knowledge. Nirala composed several poems on Basant.



Thanks

Thank you for listening to this presentation. We look forward to your participation and support.