

Batukamma: A Floral Festival as an Expression of Women's Culture and Environmental Harmony in Telangana

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Abstract:

Batukamma is a colourful vibrant festival in Telangana celebrated by women as an integral part of identity. The festival celebrate with flowers that grow extensively in each region. This festival is a symbol of Telangana cultural identity. It celebrates the inherent relationship between the earth, water and human beings. It represents cultural sprit of Telangana. Historically Batukamma mean festival of life and was celebrates to thank goddess Parvathi for her blessings for the crop harvest. It celebrates for nine days during Vijayadashimi Navarathridays. This research article discuss about the birth of Batukamma its meaning, birth, manner of celebrating festival and its benefits were discussed in this paper.

Keywords: Batukamma, Boddemma, Saddula Batukamma, feudatories, bruhath.

Batukamma festival is a symbol of culture and tradition of Telangana. A festival that highlights the specialties of Telangana and its identity. It is celebrated by women folk with flowers that grow exclusively in each region. This festival is celebrated as per the Satavahana calendar for nine days starting from Pitru Amavasya which is in Ashvayuja month, which is also called Mahalaya Amavasya and celebrated with much fanfare.

The first day of the festival is called Engili Puvvu Bathukamma celebrated on Petra Amavasya, on this day naivedyam are food offering was prepared with rice floor with seasam seeds or coarsely ground wet rice. Second day is called Atukula Batukamma falls on Padyami the first day of Aswayuja Masam food or naivedyam offered was boiled lentis, Jaggery flattened parboiled rice and milk, the third day is Muddapappu Batukamma and the food offering is softened boiled lentils, milk and jiggery. The fourth day of celebration is called Nanabiyyam Batukamma falls on Tadiya this day the food offerings are wet rice, milk and jiggery. The fifth day of the festival was known as Atla Batukamma falls on Chaturthi, the food offerings are pancake made from wheatlets or Dosa. The sixth day is known as Aligina Batukamma, this day no food offerings is made. The seventh day falls on Sashthi is called as Vepakayala Batukamma and the food offerings are rice flour shaped into the fruits of neem tree is deep fried. Vennemuddala Batukamma which falls on the eight day of Saptami and food offerings on this day are sesame, butter or ghee and jaggery. The ninth day or the last day of the festival celebrated on Astami is known as Saddula Batukamma, five types of cooked rice dishes were the food offering for the they are Curd Rice, Taramind Rice, Lemon Rice, Coconut Rice and Sesame Rice. On this last day immersion of Batukamma in water bodies is celebrated with utmost devotion and enthusiasm. Gowramma, the

symbolic ideal of Gowri made of turmeric is taken back from Batukamma before immersion and every married woman applied a paste of this on her Mangalashtra that makes the solemnization of her marriage and also her husband is protected from all evils.

Batukamma is a beautiful flower stack arranged in seven concentric layers in the shape of Gopuram (Temple) and this flowers like silver Cock's Comb, Celosia, Cassia Auriculate, Cucurbita, Ajwain, Marie Gold, Chrysanthemum, Marvel, Hibiscus, Globe Amaranth, sky blue duster vine, the flowers used in preparing Batukamma has unique medicinal values and have a great quality of purifying water and such flowers when immersed in abundance into the pond have the effect of clearing the water and making the environment much better flowers and leaves used for preparing ideals of Batukamma help in preventing water borne diseases as they possess various medicinal properties and additionally used in medication for diaestioa, as an anti – inflammatory agent, in preparing poultices for bruises etc., The Songs sign on this occasion relate to real life events, relations and rituals, at the end of each stanza in this songs end with the words like Uyyala, Kol, Volalo, Chandamama is used.

Batukamma festival which is celebrated in Telangana has a unique historical back ground. According to Puranas goddess Gowri is that she often a fierce fight killed Mahishasura the demon. After this she went into deep sleep due to fatigue. The prayer to awaken her is described as Batukamma. Harithi who was regarded as a deity during the time of Satavahanas and Ikshvakus appears in Buddhist Jathaka Stories. She was originally a child carrying demon but after listening to the Buddha's teaching, she became a gentle child protecting goddess. She was also worshipped during Chalukya period, this goddess was worshipped as Batukamma in later times.

Chalukya's of Vemulawada were feudatories of Rasthrakuta Kings. In the wars between Cholas and Rasthrakutas, this Chalukya's sided the Rasthrakutas. In 973 CE Chalukya Tailap – II, defeated the Rasthrakuta King Karka – II declared independence and established Chalukyan kingdom. After the death of Tailapa his son Satyashraya became the King. When Chola king Parantaka Chola was in trouble while defeating the attack from Rasthrakuta King, learning that Raja Rajeshwara deity in Vemulava Temple will help those in troubles. Temple will help this is trouble Parantaka Chola become the devotee of Raja Rajeshwara, the deity of Vemulawada and he also named his son as Raja Raja. Raja Raja's son Rajendra Chola attacked as a chief of army and got victory on Satyashraya. As a sign of his victory he took the bruhat (Huge) Shivalanga to his father as a gift. In 1006 Raja Raja built Bruhalishwaralayam and installed this Linga. Taking away the Shivaling from Vemulawada to Tanjavuru down hearted people of the kingdom. After leaving the kingdom in the form of Linga along with an attempt with a console Parvathi (Bruhalishwaramma) in the temple here and to inform sorrowfulness to Cholas, Batukamma is arranged with flowers like Meru Mountain. On its top Gowramma made with turmeric is placed and is recounted with sing and play for 9 days. Dispatching her in water and calling her back to take a shape of a festival.

Batukamma was also very popular during Kakatiya period. It is know that the vassals of Kakatiyas was also organized this festival. The house deity of the Kakatiyas was Kushmandini Devi which means Gowrd vine, hence the practice of worshipping Pumpkin creeper. Pumpkin flowers during Batukamma pooja started during their time. There are evidences that the Batukamma festival was held during the Qutubshahi period as well "Qullith" written by Ibrahim Qutubshah has details of the festivals celebrated by the people during the time. This festival also celebrated during Ashifjahi period. But during this period Batukkam was celebrated not with joy but with tears during that period. The

Rajakaras's who created anarchys raided the villages and robbed the people, there are many horrific and brutal incidents of women being stripped and rapped in front of their husbands across Telangana.

After the formation of Telangana State, the Telangana Government declared Batukamma festival as a State Festival and gave permanent priority to this festival. Since then, this festival has become a tradition to be played in schools, colleges, offices, and factories.

Batukamma is a festival that teaches harmony and diversity among desperate groups, different mindsets of human beings.

Conclusion:

Batukamma is more than a festival; it is a cultural institution that integrates ecology, gender participation, and historical continuity. It promotes harmony, unity, and environmental awareness while preserving the cultural identity of Telangana. The festival stands as a symbol of the deep connection between nature and human life and continues to thrive as a living tradition.

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