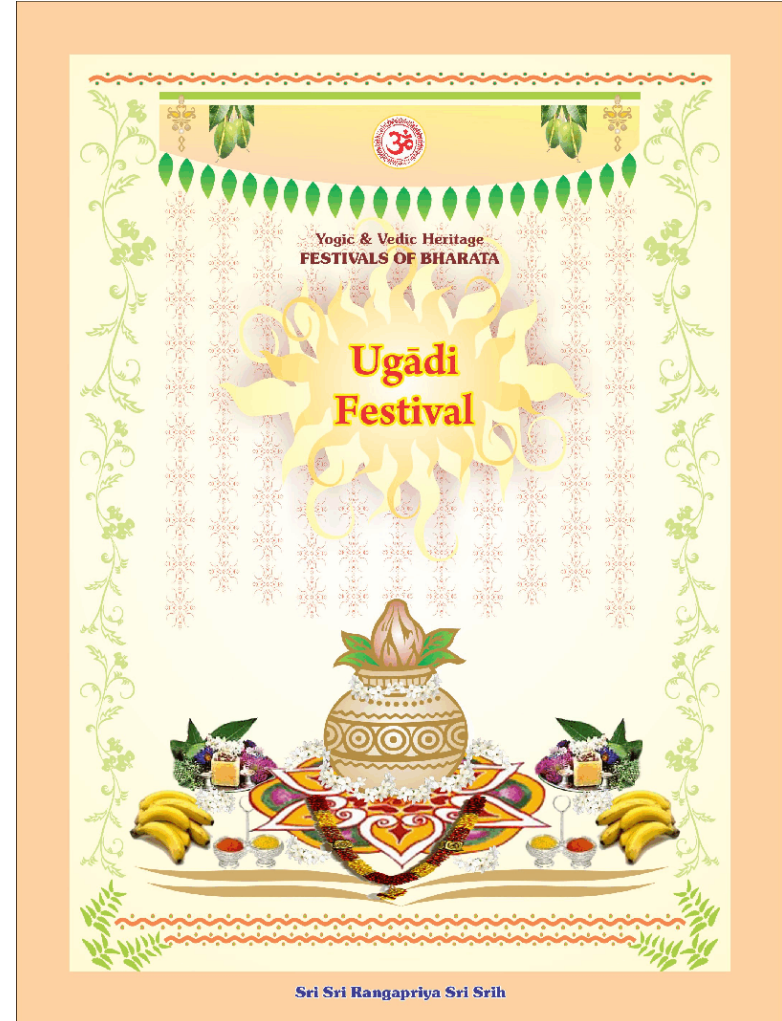




Bharatha Samskruthi Prakashana
 No.37/8, G4, Leesa Apartment, 4th Cross,
 Lalbagh Road, Bangalore 560 027
 Phone : 080-22278231, 26765381, Mobile : 9448078231
 URL : www.bharathasamskruthi.com
 Email : bspllg@gmail.com



Title : *Ugādi Under Yogic & Vedic Heritage FESTIVALS OF BHĀRATA* - A collection of Festivals of India, Original in Kannada by Sri Sri Rangapriya Sri Srih, Translated into English by Prof. K.S. Sridharan, Dr. Hungi Eswara, and Viswanatha Sharma, and Published by Bharatha Samskruthi Prakashana, Bangalore-560 027.

E-Edition : January 2016 No. of pages: 46 Price: 25

We Dedicate this Sacred Treasure at the holy lotus feet of

Sriranga Mahaguru and SriMata

© with publisher

Published by:

Bharatha Samskruthi Prakashana

No.37/8, G4, Leesa Apartment, 4th Cross,
Lalbagh Road, Bangalore 560 027

Phone : 080-22278231, 26765381, Mobile : 9448078231

URL : www.bharathasamskruthi.com,

Email : bspllg@gmail.com

Cover Design : Chandranatha Acharya

Inside Pictures : Basavaraj R Algur

Copies available at :

Bharatha Darshana,

No.163, Manjunatha Road,
2nd Block, Thyagaraja Nagar,

Bangalore 560 028; Ph: 080-26765381

Printed By :

Laser Line Graphics,
Bangalore 560027

Transliteration followed in this book

अ	आ	इ	ई	उ	ऊ	ऋ	ॠ	ऌ	ॡ	ए	ऐ	ओ	औ	अं	अः
a	ā	i	ī	u	ū	ṛ	ṝ	ḷ	ḹ	e	ai	o	au	am	ah
क	ख	ख	ग	ङ											
ka	kha	ga	gha	ṅa											
च	छ	ज	झ	ञ											
ca	cha	ja	jha	ña											
ट	ठ	ड	ढ	ण											
ṭa	ṭha	ḍa	ḍha	ṇa											
त	थ	द	ध	न											
ta	tha	da	dha	na											
प	फ	ब	भ	म											
pa	pha	ba	bha	ma											
य	र	ल	व	श	ष	स	ह								
ya	ra	la	va	śa	sha	sa	ha								

Example:

क	का	कि	की	कु	कू	कृ	कृ	क्लृ	के	कै	को	कौ	कं	कः
ka	kā	ki	kī	ku	kū	kṛ	kṛ	klṛ	ke	kai	ko	kau	kam	kah



Ugādi* Festival

Ugādi is the very first festival which comes on the first day of the month of *Caitra* every year. This is a great festival which is celebrated all over India and considered an important festival in the *Śāstras*. The multifaceted importance of this festival can be summarised as follows:

1. This day is an auspicious beginning of the year, season, month, the fortnight and above all, is in the form of an introduction for the whole year. This is a day on which a plan of activities for the whole year is to be drawn up and an auspicious resolve to be made to act accordingly. And a day, when a discreet arrangement has to be contemplated after reviewing the performance of the previous year. There is a belief that resolves made on this day will be entirely very influential. Resolves for that matter, made on any day by men

of great will power can be strong and effective. But, in the case of laymen, it is quite possible that the resolves and vows taken on this day, by virtue of the glory of the beginning day of the year to cause a deep impact on all their endeavours.

Some have a feeling that any incident good or bad, happening on this day, may recur throughout the year. Whatever may be the fact, it will help people to feel inspired, to look for the good fruits of *Dharma* and *Karma* throughout the year, as their minds will be in a good state as a result of laudable contemplations and deeds performed on that day.

2. The planet corresponding to the week day on this day of *Ugādi*, is considered the reigning deity for the whole year. For example, if it is a Thursday, *Br̥haspati* (Jupiter) will be the reigning Lord for the entire year.

Lord *Prajāpati* created the world at dawn on the first day of the *ŚuklaPaksha* of the month of *Caitra* and initiated the reckoning of time. Then he handed over the limbs (components) of time to gods and commanded them to continue the work of creation.

“चैत्रे मासि जगद् ब्रह्मा ससर्ज प्रथमेऽहनि ।

शुक्लपक्षे समग्रं तु तथा सूर्योदये सति ॥

प्रवर्तयामास तथा कालस्य गणनामपि”

—*Says the Brahmapurāṇa.*

3. The *Smṛtikaustubha* says, “God took the *avatāra* of *Matsyā* during the daytime of *Vishkambhaka Yoga* when the star of the day was *Revatī*.” (The significance of this creation and incarnation will be explained later.)

4. If it is a new year day as per the solar calendar, the day and night will be of equal duration, as that day will be invariably a ‘*Vishu*’ (vernal equinox). This equability lends a special inspiration to the *sādhakas*.

5. The *Vasantanavarāthra* begins on that day, which heralds the worship of *ŚrīRāma* and *Durgā*.

6. A highly auspicious time spanning a duration $3\frac{1}{2}$ hours called *muhūrta*, occurs every year (on certain days.) And it is believed, *Ugādi* is one such day.

7. The reckoning of *VikramaŚaka* said to be begun by emperor *Vikramāditya* in North India, and the *Śalivāhanaśaka* by king *Śalivāhana* in South India, begins from this *caitra śukla prathama* only.

8. Not only the followers of the vedic tradition, even the Iranians observe the beginning of the year from this day only, and they call it ‘*Nauroj*’. Thus this festival day is very important from both the scriptural point of view and the belief and traditions of the common man.

Let us consider the various names and their meanings associated with this *Parva*.

Various Names associated with the festival of *Ugādi* and their significance.

In the Tamil country *Ugādi Parva* is called *Citra Vishu*. In North India it is called by the names *Samvatsarapratipadā*, *Navavarsha- pratipadā*, *Samvatsarārambha* etc., All these names are in accordance with the significance of this festival.

The word *Ugādi* means the beginning of a *Yuga*, “युगस्य आदिः”. The three well known meanings of the word *Yuga* are, the yoke, a twofold thing and a special (duration of) time. Here, the word (*Yuga*) denotes the (special) time. The four yugas are *Kṛtā* (*Satyā*), *Tretā*, *Dvāpara* and *Kali*. They begin on *Vaiśākhaśuklatṛtīya*, *Kārtikaśuklanavamī*, *Bhādrapada kṛṣṇatrayodaśī* and *Māghapūrṇimā* respectively.

वैशाखे शुक्लपक्षे तु तृतीयायां कृतं युगम् ।

कार्तिके शुक्लपक्षे तु त्रेताथ नवमेऽहनि ॥

अथ भाद्रपदे कृष्णत्रयोदश्यां तु द्वपरम् ।

माघे च पौर्णमास्यां वै घोरं कलियुगं स्मृतम् ॥

But the *Cāndra Ugādi* referred to here falls on the day of *Caitraśuklaprathamā*. This day does not conform to the reckoning of any of the above *yugas*. And this does not conform to the meaning of the following *śloka* also.

(नवम्यां शुक्लपक्षस्य कार्तिके निरगात्कृतम् ।

त्रेता सिततृतीयायां वैशाखे द्वापरं युगम् ।

दर्शे वै माघमासस्य त्रयोदश्यां नभस्यके।

कृष्णे कलिं विजानीयात् ज्ञेया मन्वन्तरादयः (अग्नि 209-14 II)

Although this is not the beginning of any *Yuga* in the real sense, this can be termed as the beginning of the *Satya yuga* in a way, because it has (abundant) right features to start a life full of Dharma and congenial to Satya. Śrī Raṅgamahāguru also has, in his divine message on the day of Ugādi, commanded that this day can be taken as the beginning of Satyayuga. This suits the description given in Brahmapurāṇa that Lord Brahma created the world on this day.

The Lord of *Satyaloka* created the world on this day. This goes to say that he started the *Satyayuga* on this day, as it possesses right merits, and people can plan for a life full of *satya* and *dharma*, and start living accordingly. To say that the world came into existence on the dawn of this day is nothing but saying that the light of *Jnānasūrya* comes up, and the *Satyayuga* commences from that light. Otherwise, a question arises whether the sun existed even before creation, if the purport that "The Lord created the universe after sunrise" is taken in the ordinary sense.

b) *Samvatsara* means a year. It is a time when seasons change.

“सर्वर्तुपरिवर्तस्तु कालः संवत्सरः स्मृतः”

So, it is appropriate to call this day as the beginning of the *Samvatsara* or year. And it is also apt to call this day as *samvatsara pratipat* or *pratipadā*, as this (day) falls on the first day of *caitra* as per the lunar calendar.

c) According to the *Sauramāna* system, *Ugādi* is celebrated on the day the of vernal equinox. Therefore it is called "*Citra Vishu*."

Thus, it can be understood that all the words used to denote this festival are meaningful.

How is this holy and auspicious day celebrated in our country now? How can we understand it in its real form? What do the *śāstras* and traditions say about the time, hymns, procedures, *prayoga*, and the things to be used in the festival? What is the significance of these? We shall now take up these points for discussion.

This festival is celebrated generally in all the regions of our country in homes, monasteries, *āśramas* and temples. This festival is celebrated on a much grand scale in South India. A person who has great admiration for Indian culture feels sad, because we do not celebrate this festival with the same grandeur, as Christians celebrate their new

years' day. ["It is a pity that we, Hindus do not celebrate our New Years' Day as grandly as the Christians do theirs, and in North India, especially, the New Year's Day is a festival for namesake only in Hindu homes, though it is observed there in some temples." (P.S. Sharma in *Utsavacandrika* page 3)] We need not feel elated or depressed by comparing us with them in this regard. On the other hand, it is more proper to find for ourselves, as to what the noble *Arya Bhāratīya* sages, who bequeathed this festival to our culture and tradition, told us about the way it has to be celebrated, the purpose to be achieved by that, and how we are celebrating this festival in view of them now.

As stated earlier, this festival is being celebrated nowadays in some places just as a ritual for its sake. In some places it is celebrated with a huge expenditure, wasting of things, and with decoration and pomp. And in some places where it is celebrated in a somewhat better manner, customs such as taking the oil bath, decorating the house, offering special worship to God, listening to the new *pañcaṅga*, remunerating the astrologer (Almanac reader), chewing the neem sprouts with jaggery and pepper, and enjoying a variety of dishes with friends and relatives are observed in a routine way. But no one seems to bother why all these are done like this and whether they need to be done with any

refinement. Also, many among the present day youth, leave most of the rituals and customs "generously" to the care of the elders and promptly land themselves at the time of lunch! Among the four *purushārthas* enumerated by the *jnānis* viz *Dharma*, *Artha*, *Kāma* and *Moksha*, only the third one, i.e. the gratification of senses, is being enjoyed by people to a small extent. But those who cannot afford in terms of money or resources, grieve that they could not celebrate the festival on a grand scale.

And how should one get to know the ideal way of celebrating a festival? One has to study what our *śāstras* and traditions say about the right time, materials and the manner (of celebration the festival). One has to understand their secret by discrimination, discussion and practical application in a scientific way. If necessary a few changes can be incorporated, without causing discord to the basic principles. Let us now study in some detail, what the *Śāstras* and traditions say in this regard, and practical issues.

Regarding the Time: *Cāndramānayugādi* should be observed on the first day of *Caitra śuddha*, (प्रतिपत् = प्रथमं प्रतिपद्यते चंद्रमाः अस्यां दर्शनीयतां इति प्रतिपत्) This occurs in the spring season and in *Uttarayana* only.

On that day, the *Prathamā tithi* should be

prevailing at the time of Sunrise. In case the *prathamā* extends from the time of sunrise on the first day to the sunrise on the second day or, if the *prathamā tithi* does not pervade at the time of sunrise on both the days, the celebration should be on the first day only.

“वत्सरादौ वसन्तादौ बलिराज्ये तथैव च” ।

पूर्वविद्धैव कर्तव्या प्रतिपत् सर्वदा बुधैः ॥

(*Nirṇayasindhu*, *vrddhavāsishṭhavaacana*)

Malamāsa is not auspicious for any celebration. If *Ugādi* happens to come in *Malamāsa*, should we celebrate it in that month or it in the *Śuddhamāsa*? 1) According to some, the beginning of the year is no doubt in that *Malamāsa* only. But, customs like oil bath, flag hoisting, listening to the *Pañcanga*, chewing the neem sprout etc which are a part of the new year day, should be observed on the first day of the *Śuddha māsa*.

“प्रतिगृहं ध्वजारोहणं, निम्बपत्राशनम् वत्सरादिफलश्रवणं अभ्यङ्गश्च शुद्धमासप्रतिपदिकार्यः” (धर्मसिन्धु पु 38)

2. Some others are of the opinion that taking of oil bath and taking the New Year's vow should be done in *Malamāsa* itself. निष्कर्षस्तु.... मलमास एव कार्य इति वयं प्रतीमः” (निर्णयसिन्धु. प्रतिपन्निर्णय) The opinion that the *Śuddhamāsa* is commendable for all auspicious religious functions is proper.

And as said above, it is considered auspicious to

perform *Ārogyavratas* and *Tilaka Vratas* also on *Caitra śuddha Prathama* only.

If *Ugādi* is to be celebrated according to *Sauramāna*, then it should be done on the day of *Meshasaṅkramaṇa*. (vernal equinox) The rituals for that auspicious day such as meditation, *dāna* and *tarpaṇa* should be observed either 10 *Naḍis* before or after that auspicious time of *Sanikramaṇa*.

“वर्तमानतुलामेषे नाड्यस्तूभयतो दश”

b) **Vidhividhānas (Procedures):** On that day, early in the morning, taking oil bath with gingelly oil is a must.

वत्सरादौ वसन्तादौ बलिराज्ये तथैव च ।

तैलाभ्यङ्गमकुर्वाणः नरकं प्रतिपद्यते ॥ (वसिष्ठवचनं, निर्णयसिन्धु)

Holding bandal paste and *akshatā* in hand, an auspicious vow should be taken that the *vrata* is being observed on that day for the pleasure of god and attainment of the four *purushārthas*. After the daily worship, the *Mahāśāntikarma* has to be performed. By this all the sins get absolved, and long life, contentment, happiness, nourishment and happiness both in this world and the other worlds are obtained.

“मङ्गल्या च पवित्रा च लोकद्वयसुखावहा”

In the beginning, Lord *Brahma* should be worshipped with *Arghya* and *Pādyā*. That Lord holds a rosary and a *sruva* in the right hand, and a

sruk and a *Kamaṇḍalu* in the left hand. The devotees should meditate upon him, who is looked upon as shining like gold, with a long beard, and with a mass of matted hair.

तस्यामादौ च सम्पूज्यः ब्रह्मा कमलसम्भवः ।

पाद्यार्घ्यपुष्पधूपैश्च वस्त्राङ्गारभूषणैः ॥

अक्षमालासुव्रं दक्षे वामे सुचकमण्डलू ।

लम्बकूर्चं च जटिलं हैमं ब्रह्माणमर्चयेत् ॥ (अग्निपुराण 176-3)

Lord *Brahma* should be worshipped with the *mantra* “ॐ तत्सत् ब्रह्मणे नमः” and also with the *Brahma Gāyatri (mantra)*. Then, the Lord of Time, in his components such as *Kalā*, *Nāḍī* and *Muhūrta* should be worshipped with names ending with “*namah*”

(*Brahma*, *Kāma*, *Nimesha*, *Truṭi*, *Lava*, *Kshaṇa*, *Kāshṭha*, *Kalā*, *Nāḍī*, *Muhūrta*, *Rātri*, *Divasa*, *Paksha*, *Māsa*, *Rtu*, *Ayana*, *Varsha*, *Ugādi*, *Graha*, *Nakshatra*, *Rāshi*, *Karana*, *Yoga*, and the reigning god of the year, are the various components (limbs) of the lord of time. In this worship, the following gods along with their huge entourage viz., *Kula Nāga*, *Manu*, *Indra*, *Dakshakanyas*, *Subhadra*, *Jayā*, *Śastra*, *Astra*, *Buddhi*, *Kubera*, *Nalakūbara*, *Nidhi*, *Bhadrakālī*, *Surabhi*, *Veda*, *Vedāṅga*, *Vedānta*, *Vidyādhidevatas*, *Nāga*, *Yaksha*, *Suparṇa*, *Samudra*, *Uttarakuru*, *Narakhandā*, *Pātāla*, *Saptanaraka*, *Varāhāvatāra*, *Saptaloka*, *Pañca bhūta*, *Prakṛti*, *Purusha*, *Ahaṅkāra*, *Parvatha*, *Gaṅgā* rivers,

and other *Saptarshis*, *Pushkarādi tīrtha*, *Chandas*, *Airāvata*, *Uccaiśravas*, *Dhanvantari*, *Gaṇesha*, *Shanmukha*, *Vighna*, *Skandagraha*, *Skandamātā*, *Roga*, *Vālakhilya*, *Keśava*, *Agastya*, *Nārada*, *Vyāsā* and other sages, *Apsarās*, *deities somapa*, and *Asomapa*, *Tushita*, *Āditya*, *Rudra*, *Ashvinī*, *Sādhyas*, *Maruts*, *Viśvakarma*, *Lokpālas*, *Āyudha*, *Vāhana*, *Kavacha*, *Āsana*, *Dundubhi*, *Daitya*, *Rākshasa*, *Gandharva*, *Piśāca*, *pitṛ*, *preta*, *suble deities conceived by the mind* and *Lord Viṣṇu*, have to be worshipped.)

It is well known that this is the day on which the Lord took the incarnation of *Matsya* and also the day on which *ŚrīRāma* returned to *Ayodhya* after completing fourteen years of exile in the forest and the day on which the citizens of *Ayodhya* began celebrating the praising of the slaying of *Rāvaṇa* by *Rāma*. And also the day on which *Devendra* made a gift of clothes and ornaments to the king ‘*Vasu*’. And so, on this day one should remember those glories of the Lord and of *Indra* and worship them. All these (gods) should be worshipped by performing *Homas* with names ending with *Svāhā*. The god of fire carrying the name *Yavishtṭha* should be invoked and the above said *homa* should be performed. *Gurus* and their family members should be honoured with clothes and ornaments. And after listening to the learned astrologer who reads out the details of the chiefs of the new year and the related

predictions, etc., he should be honoured. He should be offered the *Pañchāṅga* and a water pot in particular. The poor, belonging to all sects, should be suitably gifted with alms. The *śloka*-

प्राप्ते नूतनवत्सरे प्रतिगृहं कुर्याद्ध्वजारोपणम्

स्नानं मङ्गलमाचरेद् द्विजवरैः साकं सुपूज्योत्सवैः ।

देवानां गुरुयोषितां च शिशवोऽलङ्कारवस्त्रादिभिः

सम्पूज्या गणकः फलं च शृणुयात्तस्माच्च लाभप्रदम् ॥

summarizes the above said things.

Then, the *śloka*,

शतायुर्वज्रदेहाय सर्वसम्पत्कराय च ।

सर्वारिष्टविनाशाय निम्बकन्दलभक्षणम् ॥

should be meditated upon, and the tender neem sprouts offered to God should be taken (as *prasāda*). Tender neem leaves and flowers should be mixed with jaggery or pepper, salt, asafoetida, cummin seeds and omam seeds and crushed. After this is consumed, other food items should be taken.

पारिभद्रस्य पुष्पाणि कोमलानि विशेषतः ।

सपुष्पाणि समादाय चूर्णं कृत्वा विधानतः ।

मरीचं लवणं हिङ्गु जीरेकेण च संयुतम् ।

अजमोदायुतं कृत्वा भक्षयेद्भोगशान्तये ॥ (ब्रतोत्सव पुट 30)

The general precepts such as *Brahmacarya*, truth and composure of mind have to be observed on that day.

Thus, the discipline enjoined by the *śāstras*

regarding the rituals on that day have been taken note of. Let us now discuss whether these are just glorifications of blind beliefs, or the ones merely rooted in our emotions, or are really rational, or are capable of causing auspiciousness in the *ādhyātmika*, *ādhidaivika* and *ādibhautika* spheres or the ones which foster the achieving of the *Purushārthas*.

In all the cultured societies of the world the custom of celebrating the New Year's Day on a particular day is prevalent. In this context, the uniqueness of the culture of our great sages, pertaining to the *viveka* in choosing the most appropriate time for the *Ugādi* festivals which is comprehensively suitable for the achievement of the *Purushārthas*, can be specially taken note of. All the aspects chosen by them such as the *Ayana*, *Rtu*, month, *Paksha* and *tithi* happen to be best suited entirely and beautifully for the deeds and purposes of that day.

Among the two halves of the year, viz the *Dakṣiṇāyana* and *Uttarāyana*, the former is the path associated with the *Pitṛs*. धूमो रात्रिस्तथा कृष्णः षण्मासा दक्षिणायनम्” But the *Uttarāyana* refers to the path of the gods. “अग्निर्ज्योतिरहश्शुक्लः षण्मासा उत्तरायणम्” (गीता 8-24) This is also referred to as the daytime of gods. As it is enjoined that *Ugādi* is the auspicious time mainly for the worship of gods, it is indeed

most appropriate that it is chosen in the *Uttarāyaṇa*, which is very conducive for the travel in the path of gods.

The *Vasanta ṛtu* (the spring season) in which we celebrate *Ugādi*, is the king of seasons. It is the season most dear to *devatās* and Lord *Mādhava*. It is the season when nature, adorned with colourful flowers and tender leaves, seems to send the message newsness.-"Now, my plants, trees and creepers having shed the worn out and dried leaves look brilliant with a grandeur of newness. Likewise, you shake off the old disgusting *samskāras* and tread new steps in the path of the attainment of auspicious goals of *Satya*, *Śiva* and *Soundarya*. Make propitious vows of auspicious wishes and auspicious resolves. They proclaim the message of morning prayer" Make your vedic hymns meaningful with the refrain" "तन्मे मनश्शिवसङ्कल्पमस्तु". (This is the message obtained by the sentimental persons when they experience the external beauty of Mother Nature.) Then, a kind of tranquility is also felt in the dispositions within, and an inner attraction is experienced conducive for the realization of the *Parampurusha*, whose glory is sung by the *jnāni* poets with the hymns like "तदेव रम्यं परमनयनोत्सवकारणम्", "अस्ति भाति प्रियम्", आसेचनकं अपर्याप्तामृतम्", experiencing the beauty of supreme *Parampurusha*. Persons who surrender to this

attraction happily are really the blessed and fortunate ones.

The temperate climate of the spring season is very conducive for the worship of deities and for the collection all the materials necessary for the worship. The first three seasons, viz. *Vasanta*, *grīshma* and *varsha*, are predominantly warm seasons. They symbolize Lord *Śiva* or *Agni*. The other three seasons *Śaradṛtu*, *Hemantṛtu* and *Śisirṛtu* are predominantly cold seasons. They symbolise *Soma* or *Śakti*. The coming together of *Agni* and *Soma* (*agnīshoma* or *Śivaśakti*), is the cause of the creation of the world.

“अहमग्निर्महातेजाः सोमश्चैषा ममाखिका ।
अहमग्निश्च सोमश्च प्रकृत्या पुरुषः स्वयम् ॥
अग्नीषोमात्मकं सर्वं जगत् स्थावरजङ्गमम्”

(ब्रह्मपुराण 1-2-28-40 Page, 431, अनुषङ्गपाद.)

It is indeed appropriate to venerate that the creator chose this time of the confluence of the warmth and cold, for the creation of the universe. Creation is nothing but the external coalescence of these two forces. When the coalescence is inwards it is *Samādhi* or deep meditation. This is the opportune time which lends inspiration for the *Samādhīyoga* and also to draw out a plan for everyday life, which is in accordance with that *samādhīyoga*. When *Madhu* and *Kaiṭabha*, in the

beginning of creation, stole the *Vedas* which contain the secrets of creation, the Lord incarnated himself in the form of a fish, killed the two demons, and retrieved the *Vedas* on this day, by teaching it to Lord *Brahma*. So *Caitra* is more in concordance as the festival at the beginning of the year compared to *Vaiśākha*.

Now about the month (of the festival *ugādi*). The lustre of *Vasanta* is seen both in *Caitra* and *Vaiśākha* months. Even so, it is justified in choosing *caitra* itself for the celebration of the beginning of the New Year, as it is the first month. And, this is the time when flowers and sprouts bloom and nectar is produced (in them). (*Vaiśākha* is the month when the juice of nectar ripens). Thus, it, is more in place to consider *Caitra* itself for the festival in preference to *Vaiśākha*.

Now, regarding the *paksha* or the fortnight. Of the two fortnights, it is the *śuklapaksha* which is more dear to the *devatās*. (*Kṛṣṇapaksha* is dear to the manes). It is the right *paksha* for the celebration of *Ugādi*, in which the worship of Gods is prominent. Again, food is the causative factor for our birth and nourishment, and plants produce that food. This fortnight which is called ‘*Āpūryamāṇa*’ causes the moon who is the king of plants, to wax, and is the fortnight which nourishes prosperity, happiness and robustness.

“ओषधीभ्योऽन्नम्, अन्नात्पुरुषः” “अन्नाद्भूतानि जायन्ते, जातान्यन्नेन वर्धन्ते” (तैत्तिरीय उपनिषत्),

Prathamā tithi is also a day during which the first digit of the moon appears. Therefore it is appropriate to consider it as the first day of the year. On other days, the moon will be seen either partially or fully. Such days will either be intervening days or the last days of (the digits of) the moon and not the initial days.

All these are (aspects) regarding the observance of *Ugādi* as per the lunar calendar. Now let us dwell on the time of observance of *Sauramāna Ugādi*. The stipulated time for that in the vernal equinox. The *ayana*, the season and the month of the *Sauramāna Ugādi* happen to be same ones as that of *Candramāna Ugādi*. Over and above, the importance of the day can be explained thus -This day is called as *San̄kramaṇa* or *San̄krānti*. It is the day when the sun crosses one constellation and enters the next. These *rāśis* are twelve in number. Each one of them is a knot in the tree of time. Among them the *Vishu* or *Vishuvath* is the holiest. Even among them, *Mesha San̄kramaṇa* is considered *Mahāvishuva*.

महाविषुवमाख्यातं कृतिभिश्चित्रसंज्ञितम्

At this time of *vishuva*, even as the external sun moves on the signs of the zodiac, the internal

sun (of the *jīva*) merges with the *sushumnā* and naturally begins to have a plunge in the *Samādhis* state. And that is why it is said that this time of confluence is best suited for *dhyāna*, *pūja* and *tarpaṇa*. We have to note that *Vishu* is the time when the length of the day and night should be equal.

The “confluence” and “similarity” stated above should not be construed as accidental happenings. It is the natural evenness of the unity of the inner and the outer, as per the law of nature. They should not be mistaken for mere poetic glamour symbolizing the inner merge. They are great truths, which can be experienced by sincere *Sādhakas*, when they are in a deep state of meditation. (It may be remembered here that Śrī Raṅgamahāguru had proved through training, that this significance can be demonstrated to those who have the knowledge of Naḍī Vijnāna) Thus, the extraordinary time stipulated by our great sages is the best suited time for meditation on the self and spiritual synthesis. This time is most suited for the worship of gods with *ādhidaivika samanvaya*. It is also the time endowed with nature’s beauty, conveniences and propriety etc. and has *ādhibhoutika samanvaya* and stands as a hand mirror to the wonderful *Kālavijnāna* of our sages, as this time is consistent with the accomplishment of all the *purushārthas* attainable

in all the three spheres (viz *Ādhyātmika*, *Ādhidaivika* and *Ādhibhautika*), with the grace of god and human efforts.

The propriety of rituals and materials used (for the worship) and rituals.

Now let us discuss the importance and propriety of the materials used, and the rituals performed during *Ugādi* festival.

The objective of the festival of *Ugādi* and the rituals and the things prescribed for the festival as per *śāstra* and traditions, is the attainment of the *Purushārthas*. viz., the attainment of *Dharma*, *Artha*, *Kāma* and *Moksha*. We can note that the great sages have prescribed that certain things have to be observed which help the well being of our body, senses, mind and the intellectual power (*Buddhi*). They have instructed that these should not be done mechanically, but should be observed with a solemn vow along with the propitiation of gods within. When done so, our intellect delves very deep and the fruits pertaining to the three deep spheres are obtained. i.e., not just in the sphere of *ādhibhūta*, but the fruits of the other two spheres also are attained (*Ādhibhūta* refers to the external world; *ādhidaiva* refers to devatas who control our inner world and *adhyātma* to the all-pervasive soul.)

1. **Oil bath:** Taking oil bath early in the

morning on that day is a must. We have noted that *śāstras* prescribe only gingelly oil for that. We have also noted that a warning also is there that hell is certain for those who do not take oil bath on that day. Let us now discuss the appropriateness of the oil bath and the general and special benefits that are obtained by having it.

It is common knowledge that oil bath taken time-to-time brings us a number of physical benefits. It is said that one should have oil bath every day. This helps to get over old age, ill effects of vāta, fatigue; helps in maintaining good eye sight, composure, robustness, long life and good sleep; protects the health of the skin, brings beauty and strength to the body.

अभ्यङ्गमाचरेन्नित्यं स जराश्रमवातहा ।

दृष्टिप्रसादपुष्ट्यायुःस्वप्नसुत्वक्त्वदादर्यकृत्

says the *Āyurveda* (This line is quoted from the work *Vāgbhaṭīya*)

If this oil bath is taken in the prescribed manner, it helps one to maintain good health of the body and the mind. *Ugādi* is indeed a great time knot (*parva*). It is a powerful time which bestows special and quick results. If a person takes oil bath with a good resolve, the results shall be more powerful in addition to the strength of the mind. The state of the body and mind gets clean and hale,

congenial to the observance of the rituals of that day. It is natural that a person who experiences the benefits of that treatment gets inspired to enjoy it time and again. Thus, this augurs well to become a joyous beginning for the "vow of health,"

This is the material aspect of it. Over and above this, the resultant relaxation and the gladdening of the senses facilitate the attainment of a state of complete happiness which the *yogis* call '*dhātusāmya*'. It is the ultimate state needed for the meditation upon the *sāttvika devatās*, and the superior most and omniscient God ('*धातुप्रसादान्महिमानमीशं*', कठ.. उ. - 2-20) And no need to mention again that the oil bath taken as prescribed, helps to reach that state, and abounds in greatness. Therefore, oil bath should not be given up deeming it a carnal pleasure. Students of meditation should have massaging done and should take the oil bath suitably. It may be remembered here that experts say it should be rightly understood that, this oil bath is not something which just provides bodily pleasure, but an integral part of *Yoga* practice as well

2. Decoration of the house We have noted how the *pūja* room and the house should be decorated specially with festoons, flags and *rangavalli* etc., The decoration is a feast to the eyes and makes the mind fresh. In this regard ŚrīRaṅgamahāguru had

said - "This beautification should not just end being a feast to our eyes. It should be radiant with the beauty of an art work and materials, which elevate one to the divine state that causes spiritual delight. Otherwise this Alankāra (decoration) may attract a remark viz Alam Kāra* (Enough of this tiresome work).

The flag hoisted high on that day, should have symbols in tune with spirituality. It should be pleasing and auspicious, and it should be the *Vaijayanti* (victory) banner of *Dharma*, which reminds us of the acts of the Lord like the destroying of the evil forces. **At this point we remember the holy message of our Guru-"That flag with its holy message should indeed touch the pinnacle lotus feet of the Lord."** The person who hoists the flag should conduct himself in the path of *Dharma*. If not, he comes to be called 'dharmadhvaja' (The one who flaunts the features of a *Dharmanishṭha* though he possesses no faith in *Dharma*.) न लिङ्गम् धर्मकारणम् - Mere external religious marks or signs cannot render a person religious in the real sense. It will be a great sin if a person doesn't act accordingly, in spite of knowing the facts.

"To be mistaken is a misfortune to be pitied. But to know the fact and not to conform to it is a mistake which heaven and earth condemn."

Vow: The ordainment that a solemn vow should be taken on that day with the words. 'I am going to observe *Ugādi*', sounds very meaningful. In this vow, at the outset, the Lord who is beyond space and time, is remembered with the words " *Harih aum tatsat*", Then, the time and place of performing the festival and its purpose will be brought to our minds. This helps one to remember that though God is beyond time and place, the (present) place and time are his very body. The glory of the particular parts of that body will also be remembered. The goals of the ritual taken up (on that day) also get firmly rooted in memory. By all this, the ritual itself becomes powerful in the real sense of the word. यदेव विद्यया करोति तदेव वीर्यवत्तरं भवति Any act done without this realization may become weak, futile, or sometimes may prove dangerous also. A person who desires to fell fruits from a tree should know the distance between himself and the fruit and the tree, the stone he is going to throw, and the speed at which it should fly and the force he has to use to throw the stone. There is no need to describe how dangerous and useless it will be, if a blind person simply keeps on throwing stones.

A ritual done without the desire for the fruit and done with the vow "This is for the love of God and in the form of service to Him" is no doubt excellent. It is fine even if it is done with a good

intentioned vow, and with a desire which is not opposed to the love of god. This does not result in any kind of harm to *Dharma*. Because, a desire, not going against *Dharma*, is indeed auspicious and a form of God himself.

“धर्माविरुद्धो भूतेषु कामोऽस्मि भरतर्षभ”

If *darbhas*, *akshatās* and *gandha* are held in the hand at the time of making a solemn vow, repugnant *samskāras* get warded off and they (the auspicious things) pave way for the free flow of the contemplated objectives.

3. Worship of God: It is a *nityakarma* to worship God everyday. And it is very appropriately prescribed that Lord *Brahma* and the *Kālapurusha* (Lord of time) who is like the body of *Brahma*, should be worshipped on that day along with the *Ishṭadevatā*. We celebrate the festival with a just inquiry, which is in accordance with the words "This is the day of the beginning of *Satyayuga*." Therefore it is very appropriate to worship God in the form of the very first creator, on that day. A *Samvatsara* is a special form of reckoning of time. Therefore, it is equally appropriate to worship *Kālapurusha* on the beginning day. So, it is very appropriate to worship *Prajāpati* and *Kālapurusha* together. This is because, the *Kālapurusha* is an extension of *Prajāpati* and his very glory, and another form of

the Lord himself. The custom of worshipping *Prajāpati* as *Kālapurusha* has been in vogue in our country since ages. Because the *Vedas* declare - "*Samvatsara* is the image of *Prajāpati*. *Prajāpati* is *Samvatsara* itself."

संवत्सरस्य प्रतिमा यां त्वां रात्र्युपास्महे ।

ता न आयुष्मती प्रजा रायस्योषेम संसृजः ॥ (अथर्व 3-9-10)

स ऐक्षत प्रजापतिः इमां वात्मनः प्रतिमाम्

असृक्षीयत संवत्सरमिति, तस्मादाहुः प्रजापतिः संवत्सर इति

(शत, 11-1-61)

स्वयंभूः प्रजापतिः संवत्सर इति संवत्सरः

असावादित्यो य एष पुरुषः ॥

(तै.उ. 4-29-14)

Thus it is very proper to worship *Prajāpati* and his glory, and pray to to him with the words "O Lord, grant me the strength to understand the nodes of Time and to achieve *Dharma*, *Artha* and *Kāma* with that knowledge and also to utilize (that knowledge) in the great task of the crossing of Time itself." It is stated in the chapter of *samvatsarapratipādā of Vratārka* as follows:-

"There was no measure of time before this point. (On this day Lord *Prajāpati* called a meeting of all the *devatās* and blessed them with (the knowledge of) planets, months and seasons) From that point down to this day, we have been following of *dharma* in our tradition.

“ततःप्रभृति पूर्वतरैः यो धर्मः पूर्वेः कृतः अद्यापि रूढः सुतरां स

कर्तव्यः प्रयत्नतः” - So, There is no need in particular to describe the great importance and usefulness of this prayer on this special occasion.

5. **Homa:** A heartfelt prayer should be offered in the beginning of the worship. Afterwards, God should be invoked and worshipped in idols, water and sacrificial fire, in keeping with one's ability, as this (worship) is also an extension of *antaraṅga pūja* itself.

स्थण्डिले प्रतिमायां वा वह्नौ वा हृदयेऽपि वा । (स्मृति सं. I-198)

भगवन् पुण्डरीकाक्ष हृद्यां तु मया कृतम् ।

आत्मसात्कुरु देवेश बाह्ये त्वां सम्यगर्चये ॥ (सात्वत आराधनकल्प)

Among these, the holy fire is the most suitable medium for performing *pūja* externally. This is because *Agni* is his effulgent body, He is His form of radiance, His reflection, His image, His representative et al. God should be invoked in that. *Ājya*, *caru* etc have be offered in that, and through that, the worship of God as a *Yajnarūpi* should be accomplished.

“अग्नौ समिद्धार्चिषि सप्ततन्त्रोरातस्थिवान्मन्त्रमयं शरीरम्” (“O Lord you take the *mantramaya* body in the sacrificial fire burning in the *samits*.) “अग्नौ क्रियावतां देवः” God appears to the performer in the (sacrificial) fire. Meditation of God is *Antaryoga*. If the *Bahiryoga* is combined with that, then it will be a *yoga* par excellence

“अन्तर्योगं बहिर्योगं यो जानाति विशेषतः । त्वया मयाप्यसौ वन्द्यः शेषैर्वन्द्यस्तु किं पुनः” ॥
(घेरण्डसंहिता)

It is indeed very appropriate that, in the *Ugādi* festival, *Agni* the medium of worship is called “*Yavishṭha*”. Because ‘*Yavishṭha*’ (*Atiśāyena tamabishṭhanau*) means the youngest. At the beginning of creation, *Śakti* was worshipped as something very minute. *Agni*, who symbolizes power, is considered as the youngest and so this usage is indeed appropriate. Later in the process of evolution, at its zenith, *Agni* should be considered as *Jyeshṭha*.

5. **Listening to the *Pañchaṅga*:** *Tithi*, *vāra*, *nakshatra*, *yoga* and *Karaṇa* are considered the five constituents of the *Kālakosha*. Our everyday *Karmas* should be performed with a clear knowledge of these five. And that too, worshipping the *Kālapurusha* on that day, obtaining his favour, listening to the (reading) of the 5 *aṅgas*, and the observance of the auspicious beginning through them, are indeed powerful religious acts. Listening not just to the 5 *aṅgas* of that day, but to the general *yoga* of the planets, stars etc of the whole year, helps to plan the activities of the entire year. In addition to this, offering of suitable remuneration to the *daivajna* with gratitude, who judiciously reads out the *Pañcāṅga*, makes the worship virtuous.

6. **Dāna:** To offer alms in one's capacity in all the nodes of Time is a meritorious act. It is specially laid down to offer a gift of *Pañcāṅga*, water pot and clothes and ornaments in addition to the general *Annadāna*, on the day of *Ugādi*. The offering of the *Pañcāṅga* cited earlier, is indeed a part of worship. As it is the beginning of summer, all acts such as offering of *Jalapātra*, distribution of drinking water, butter milk and *pānaka* by setting up *aravattiges* etc. are virtually a tradition suiting the (warm) season.

While offering clothes, one must have the heartfelt feeling that it is the gift of *Devendra* to *Vasubhūpati*. This gift has to be given with divine feelings. And the one who receives it must also have the same feeling.

“विष्णुर्दाता विष्णुर्द्रव्यं प्रतिगृह्णामि वै वदेत् (अग्नि पु. 289-50)
"(The giver of the *dāna* is none other than *Vishṇu* and the thing given is also *Vishṇu*. And I receive it with this feeling.) If the "give and take" is done this way, the giver obtains *Puṇyapurushārtha* and no harm touches the receiver also.

8. **Special Naivedya:** The special *Naivedya* to be offered to God and later to be taken by the devotee on the day of *Ugādi* is the (mixture of) neem, neem flowers and tender neem. A festival is an occasion to eat sweets and to be happy. Then, why indeed our ancestors have prescribed bitter

neem as a '*Ugādi* special?' Was it to provide a change for the tongue which gets dull because of eating sweet dishes in other festivals? Such ideas may occur only to those who think that one of the important motives of life is the gratification of the tongue. But when viewed scientifically, it becomes clear that this *naivedya* taken on that day will bring in great benefits, in the *ādhibhautika*, *ādhidaivika* and the *ādhyātmika* spheres.

Neem has a great medicinal value in curing bone related ailments and toxic infection. If it is consumed while (chanting and) recalling the spirit of the words “शतायुर्वज्रदेहाय”, the (effective) combination of the will power and the power of the medicine will yield quick results. There is also a practice of consuming the paste prepared by crushing neem with jaggery. This is also a good combination. Because, the bitter neem contains *vātadosha*. “कटुतिक्तकषाया वातं जनयन्ति” (चरक, 1-7) And sweet jaggery taken with neem removes the bad effect of *vāta*. *Caraka* says मधुराम्ललवणास्त्वेनं शमयन्ति” (चरक 17) The sweetness in jaggery reduces the bitterness of the neem and renders it easily palatable. This is an added benefit.

The combination of neem and jaggery, just as it is beneficial to the body, can be effective when taken sentimentally also. It reminds the ideal of the

resolute *yogi* who leads a sober life, taking evenly both happiness and misery.

(सुखदुःखे समे कृत्वा लाभालाभौ जयाजयौ'' (गीता 2-38)

This is an essential lesson, not just for a *yogi*, but for all laymen. This shall provide an inspiration to gather evenness, not only on the day it is consumed, but for the whole year, or for that matter, the whole life.

"Jeevanavellā bevu bella

Aritu bāluvane kaligala malla"

(The whole life is but a mixture of happiness and sorrow.

The one who leads a life with this understanding is indeed a strong man)

There is a practice of mixing neem with sugar candy also. Though sugar removes *vāta*, the sweet content in that increases phlegm.

In order to reduce that effect, adding of astringent pepper to it is also in vogue. This combination removes all the three-fold *doshas* namely *Vāta*, *pitta* and *kapha* and acts as a general remedy for all diseases. Sometimes, salt is added instead of sugar. Though salt gets rid of *vāta*, it causes phlegm. But pepper takes out that phlegm. And if cummin seeds and *omakki* (lingusticum ajwaen) are added, the combination has the

properties of removing *Ushṇa*, *Pitta* etc. All these are effects on the body.

At the same time, one should observe that there is a unique divine reason for prescribing the above mentioned paste of tender leaves of neem as *naivedya* to God. This paste is dear to the principal deity of the *Ugādi* festival. Just as *modaka* is very dear to *Gaṇapati* and dishes of bengalgram are very dear to *Hayagrīva*, the combination of neem and neem sprout etc. is very dear to *Prajāpati kālapurusha*, the reigning deity of *Ugādi*. It should not be surmised in the general sense that God literally consumes these and he also harbours greediness (to eat). On the other hand, it should be taken in the sense that the spiritual centers in the body congenial to the propitiousness and perception of that God to whom the *naivedya* is offered, can get opened up, if this *prasāda* is consumed.

Thus, all the things and rituals prescribed by *jnānis* for the *Ugādi* festival are full of meaning. We can note that they pervade all the areas of life and bestow upon the worshipper, *punya*, *purushārtha* and *paramārthas*.

A few important questions, answers and summation.

A few questions that come up regarding the observation of this *Ugādi* will be answered now and

the discussion will be concluded on this topic herewith.

Some of the questions relate to the time of observing this festival. The rest relate to the materials used, and the *vidhis*. All these questions require to be answered rationally.

The first of these questions pertain to the time prescribed for this *parva*, which is being celebrated as per *Sauramāna* or the *Cāndramāna* calendars. The discussion on this topic is very important as it is pertinent not just to *Ugādi* but to all the prescribed rituals.

Sauramāna refers to the reckoning of time based on (the "movement" of) the sun. The time during which the sun (relatively) moves from one constellation to the other in the zodiac, is called *San̥kramaṇa* or *sankrānti*. The time interval between two consecutive *san̥krāntis* is one month. Twelve such months make a year. These twelve months have 365 days in all.

The *Cāndramāna* system refers to the movement of the moon. The day on which he "disappears" in the sky, is a newmoon day. The time span between two new moon days is one month. Usually one year comprises of 12 such months. During some years, an "extra month" (*adhikamāsa*) is also counted.

दर्शाद्दर्शस्तु चान्द्रः स्यात् त्रिंशद्दृष्ट्वैव सावनः ।
मासः सौरस्तु सङ्क्रान्तेः नाक्षत्रो भानुवर्तनात् ।

(In the *Cāndramāna* system, the period of time from the first day of the *Śuklapaksha* to the next new moon day is considered *Amāntamāsa* and the period of time from the first day of the *Kṛṣṇapaksha* to the next full moon day is called *Pūrṇimānta māsa*. The word *Sāvana* refers to a sacrifice or a yajna. According to this system a month has 30 days and the year has 360 days. Only in astronomical and astrological calculations, the *Nākshatra* and *Bārhaspatyamānas* will be of more use. *agnipurāṇa* 13-30)

The *Sauramāna* system is more in vogue as *Deśācāra* in *TamilNadu*, *Dakṣiṇa Kannada*, Bengal, Punjab, Nepal and some other places. And in Karnataka and Andhra and in some other places, *cāndramāna* system is more in use as *Deshācāra*.

Which of the two systems is credible? If both are credible, which is superior of the two? Which tradition can be best for celebrating *Ugādi*? These questions arise naturally and our answers are as follows:-

Both the systems are authentic as they are based on scientific calculations.

Since both the systems are authentic, as they are based on scientific calculations, both are equally

recognized throughout the country. For example, both *sauramāna saṅkranti* and *Cāndramāna amāvāsya* are observed by all people belonging to the *Sanāthana Ārya Bhārata* traditions and culture throughout the country. So far as rituals are concerned, it is better to follow the custom of the region. Not just because it is the custom of the region, but the inner and outer nature effected by factors such as climate, latitude and longitude of that region, and the food habits there are to be considered here. If a *parva* is celebrated by people accustomed to the region where a particular is 'māna' prevalent, a unique effect is produced. This can be understood by those who can examine the matter minutely.

It is a general rule that people who have migrated and settled in a new place for a period of twelve years (or more), should follow the customs of the new place. But it may become necessary to adapt some changes with respect to *upāsana* and relevant rituals. Actually, the *Śastras* say that separate *mānas* are ideal for different religious rites. Statements such as "*Cāndramāna* is ideal for *vratas*. The *sauramāna* is ideal for *smārtakarma* and marriage etc. The *sāvanamāsa* is ideal for fire sacrifices and disbursing salary. The *nākshatramāna* is ideal for *abhisheka*" can be seen in them. "ब्रते चान्द्रमसं शस्तम्" "सौरं स्मार्तेष्वनिन्दितम्"

“विवाहादौ स्मृतः सौरः यज्ञादौ सावनः स्मृतः । अभिषेके तु नाक्षत्रं सावनं वेतनादिषु” (स्म.चं. ५)

The custom of following *cāndramāna* for *pitṛāryas* is also in vogue. Following of the *Sauramāna* system is also there. (*śastras*) support both the above *mānas*.

आब्दिके पितृकार्ये च चान्द्रो मासः प्रशस्यते । (अग्नि 173-3)

पित्र्ये चान्द्रमसं शस्तं” “ब्रते चान्द्रमसं शस्तं न श्राद्धेषु कदाचन ॥

(स्म. सं. 5)

(It is in place to remember the accomplished words of the Mahāguru who said "The *cāndramāna* which indicates *pitṛyanamārga* (moon's path) is ideal for performing *pitṛkarmas* like the *śrāddha*. The *Sauramāna* which indicates the *devayanamārga* (the path of the sun) is ideal for marriage etc., where the worship of gods is primary.")

As both the worship of gods and *pitṛs* is performed on *Ugādi*, both the *mānas* are ideal for that.

2. Presently, *Ugādi* is being celebrated according to both *Sauramāna* and *cāndramāna* in the *Vasanthā R̥tu*. There are several reasons also possible to guess that the new year was being celebrated in the past, in various seasons in our country.

In Sanskrit, there are two synonyms for the

word "year", viz *varsha* and *śarat*. It is possible that, in different parts of the country, the new year was being celebrated on some specific days during *varshartu* and *śaradrtu*. Further, both *Kātyāyanasmṛti* and *Amarakosha* very clearly state that the first day of the New Year falls in the *mārgaśīra māsa*.

The word ‘*āgrahāyana*’ which refers to the month of *mārgaśīrsha* also substantiates the point. “आदाय मार्गशीर्षादि द्वौ द्वौ मासौ ऋतुर्मतः” “मार्गादीनां युगैः क्रमात्” (अग्रे हायनं यस्य the one which has the year in its front). So, why should *Ugādi* be celebrated in *vasantartu* only, some may ask. This can be clarified as follows:

In the discussion pertaining to the appropriate time for the celebration of *Ugādi*, it has been expounded earlier that the *vasantartu* is ideal for that. But it should not be misconstrued that it is unscientific to begin the year in the *Varshartu*, *sharadrtu* or the *mārgaśīramāsa*. Even now, they can be called ‘*Vidyāvatsarārambha*’, so far as the study of certain *vidyās* are concerned. We see the seeds sprouting in *Varsha rtu*. The *upākarma*, i.e., the initiation to the study of the *Vedas* which contain the knowledge of God’s creation, is generally performed in that season only. The climate in the *śaradrtu*, which is free from rains or clouds, is very ideal for the beginning of the study of *kshatravidyā*

(military science) and also for the military expedition by the trained.

“यात्रायै चोदयामास तं शक्तेः प्रथमं शरत्” (रघुवंश - ४)
This is the right time for *sanyāsis* also to begin their spiritual conquest. The greatness of *Mārgaśīrsha* is eulogized by the Lord himself in the *Bhagavad Gītā* - “मासानां मार्गशीर्षोऽहम्” This is the time when plants and trees stoop with ripe fruits. Cows yield milk in plenty during this season. It is the time of *Navāgrayaṇa Pūja*, and the most suited time to begin the study of *Purāṇas* and history.

In this way, every season in the year is significant in one way or the other. And, it does not need to be explained again that the spring season is most appropriate for the celebration of *Ugādi*, as it fosters all meritorious deeds.

3. *Vishu*: *Vishu* means a period of time when both the day and night are of equal duration. “समरात्रं दिने काले विषुवद्विषुवं च तत्”

Such a time occurs twice a year - on the 23rd of September and on the 21st of March. This conforms to the modern scientific almanac also. But traditionally, *Tulā Saṅkramaṇa Vishu* is observed on the 18th of October and *Citravishu Ugādi*, on the 14th April, or a day in its proximity. A question naturally crops up as to which is right. Here, there is no need to quarrel prejudicially over the

rightness of the traditional almanac or the modern almanac. "*Pañcāṅga hodare nakshatra hoyite*" (Do the stars perish if the almanac is lost) is an adage in Kannada which hints that it is wise to observe the accurate positions of the planets and stars and incorporate corrections wherever necessary. In this context we respectfully remember the words of our Mahāguru, who had stated "Now and then, some changes take place in the stellar bodies. Once in sixty years, the Śankusthāpana has to be done in a proper place and after noting the changes, calculations in our almanacs need to be corrected as necessary. But such duty of recognising has stopped for hundreds of years in our country. The responsibility to revive it and to correct the variations that may have occurred in our calculation is upon us.")

B) 1) The next set of questions relate to the things needed for the worship and the modalities. Some people may not be able to afford to perform in detail the rituals viz *dāna*, *homa* and *pūja* etc. enjoined by the *Śāstras* and traditions pertaining to this festival. Some many not have sufficient time. How should such people observe the festival? Can they make some changes in that? (We wish to say that) they have to understand clearly the significance of the festival. The central point of the festival is the worship of *prajāpati* or *Kālapurusha*

and preparing a good plan for the religious acts to be performed for the entire year. This has to be done invariably. Those who do not have the means to celebrate the festivals in the way prescribed by traditions, may accomplish them by *dhyāna* itself. They can offer God a thing called the mind filled with *bhakti*, *śraddha* and *viveka* and attain the *paramārtha*.

This is touchingly brought out in a dialogue between *Janaka* and *Yājñavalkya* in the *Shathapatha Brāhmaṇa* (XI -3-1), King *Janaka* asks the sage - How do you perform *agnihotra* when either milk or cereals are not available?" The sage answers saying, "using wild fruits and roots". Then *Janaka* asks "In case they are also not available." "Using water" replies the sage. The king further asks, "If you do not get even water, how will you perform *agnihotra*?" "By (using) the truth of *śraddhā* only." This was the reply of the *Yogirāja*, borne out of his adherence to truth and own experience. A quotation from the scriptures may be remembered here "यं यं क्रतुमधीते तेन तेनास्येष्टं भवति (तै.आर. II) (Even by the mere study of the hymns the fruits of the of the *yajna* are obtained)

But those who can afford should observe these festivals as prescribed in the *śāstras* without any kind of miserliness, and should perform *dāna*,

dharma, *homa* etc. with suitable things. “वित्तशाद्यं न कुर्वति”

As the worship, *dāna*, *homa* etc. prescribed for this festival are *Kāmya karmas*, can true devotees of god also perform them?-some many entertain such a doubt. Our reply for this is, let the *Paramaikāntis* and *paramahamsas* perform the rituals only for the pleasure of God. But nothing wrong, there is the rest of the people to perform them for the fulfillment of desires also, if they (the desires) are not opposed of *Dharma*.

“धर्माविरुद्धो भूतेषु कामोऽस्मि भरतर्षभ” (गीता XI-II)

With these discussions, we would like to conclude this chapter, acquainting the readers with the details of the celebration of *Ugādi*. While giving a general description of *Bhāratiya* festivals, it was declared that their features, names, time and the things used and the ways and methods of performing them are all full of significance, extensive, full of *jñāna* and *viñāna*, and an abode of *purushārthas* and *paramārthas*. While making a study of (the discussion pertaining to) *Ugādi*, a major festival which can be observed by all, and which comes in the very beginning of the year, the discriminating readers should judge after testing them on the touch stone of logic, whether the above features are in tune with that and whether the

synthesis is beautiful and satisfactory. Our *trikaraṇapūrvaka namaskāras* to those great men who churn out the truth, without either bias or attachment, and who experience the truth for themselves and vouchsafe it for the welfare of mankind.

