



# Diwali

2020-11-14 / India

**Diwali, Divali, Deepavali, or Deepawali is the Hindu festival of lights, usually lasting five days and celebrated during the Hindu Lunisolar month Kartika (between mid-October and mid-November).**

What is Diwali?

Diwali, also known as Deepavali or Dipavali, comes from the Sanskrit word dipalavi meaning row or series of lights.

Rajnish Kashyap, general secretary and director of Hindu Council UK, explains that the festival, which is one of the most significant for those of the Hindu faith, can trace its origins back to ancient times when the end of the summer harvest season was celebrated with much pomp and splendour.

It signifies the triumph of light over darkness and good over evil and sees millions of lamps lit at homes, temples, shops and public buildings across the world, Mr Kashyap tells The Independent.

To illuminate the path through which they return and in order to guide them home, (clay lamps) are lit everywhere and the world is bathed in golden hues of light, Mr Kashyap explains.

Lakshmi, the Hindu goddess of wealth, fortune and prosperity, is also celebrated in Hindu households during the festival.

Diwali coincides with the Sikh celebration of Bandi Chhor Divas, a religious holiday that commemorates the release of Sikh Guru Hargobind Ji from the Gwalior Fort in India in the 17th century.

The Guru, who was imprisoned by the Mughal Emperor Jahangir, was standing against the emperor regime oppression of the Indian people, says Gurmeh Singh, CEO of Sikh

Community and Youth Services and secretary general of the Sikh Council UK.