

BALI PRATIPADA

This falls on Karthika suddha ekadasi. It is on this day, "Vikrama era" commenced and traders observe it as New Year day and open their new account books, this day is also called Bali pratipada.

Story of Bali pratipada

Kalaneni, Mali, Bali, Jamba, Vala and Paka were all asuras. Bali, Jamba, Vala and Paka were killed by Lord Indra. Bali, though killed in the battle by Indra (under the name of Sakra) was brought back to life by Sukra, the guru of Asuras by his occult powers.



Bali performed the sacrifice called Viswajit and became all powerful and conquered the three worlds. Aditi, the mother of Gods was greatly upset by the defeat of the devas and sought the help of her husband, Kasyapa. In response to her prayers Maha Vishnu was born as Aditi's son. However, he later became a talented Brahmachari and due to his short stature came to be known as Vamana. Raja Bali was performing Ashwamedha Yaga, when Vamana happened to visit him. Bali received him with full honours, washed his feet with his wife, Vidhyavali and offered to gift all his possessions to Vamana without the least hesitation.

Bali, therefore, later came to be known as Mahadatta Raja Bali. Vamana asked Bali for the earth measurable by three steps of his feet as dana. Bali readily agreed and even

when to the extent of saying, "Why did you not ask for the whole earth? I would have given you". Vamana, knowing well that Bali was a King of good deeds, was speaking with pride. To curb his pride, suddenly Vamana grew up higher and higher to cosmic dimensions put one foot on Earth, the next on the Sky and asked king Bali as to where he could put his third step. Bali calmly answered, "Kindly place third step on my own

head". While so doing, Lord Krishna pushed King Bali to the underworld, Patala. Immediately, the Lord, in the form of Vamana, blessed Bali and told him that he did all these to curb his pride and said, "O, King, you will be the king and have sway over Sutala (Patala). You will later become Indra".

Bali asked for a boon that Karthika suddha ekadasi should be celebrated in his memory. Hence this day come to be known as "Bali pratipada".

The Marathi School and the Maharashtra Association Building Trust, Chennai.