

# India's Major Festivals



# Diwali

- ▶ Most well known
- ▶ Festival of lights
- ▶ Symbolized victory over evil
- ▶ Lamps are lit for hope for mankind, new beginning and positive qualities one should have.
- ▶ Celebrated for five days in the month of Oct/Nov
- ▶ The name "Diwali" is a contraction of "Deepavali" which translates into "row of lamps". Diwali commemorates the return of Lord Rama (Hindu God) from his fourteen-year-long exile and vanquishing the demon-king Ravana.

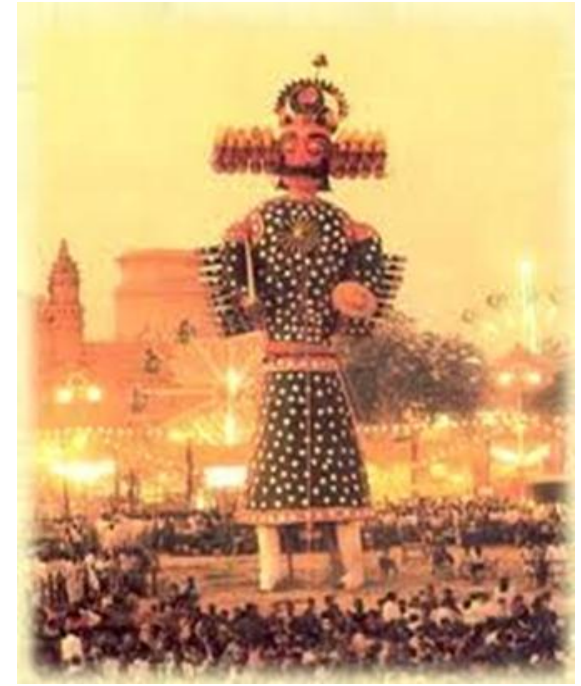


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# DASSERA

- ▶ The festival of Dassera, also known as Vijaydashmi, is one of the fascinating festivals of India and is celebrated with joy and enthusiasm.
- ▶ It is celebrated on occasion of Lord Ram (Hindu God) killing devil Ravana.
- ▶ Effigies of ten headed Ravana are burnt in the evening.
- ▶ In few parts of India, it is in honor of Goddess Durga.



# Holi

- ▶ Celebrated on the day after the full moon in early March
- ▶ Festival to celebrate good harvest
- ▶ Spring festival
- ▶ Also called the “Festival of Colors”
- ▶ Day one = bonfire is lit at night
- ▶ Day two = people go around and throw colored powder and water at each other
- ▶ End with a feasts at a friends house in the evening



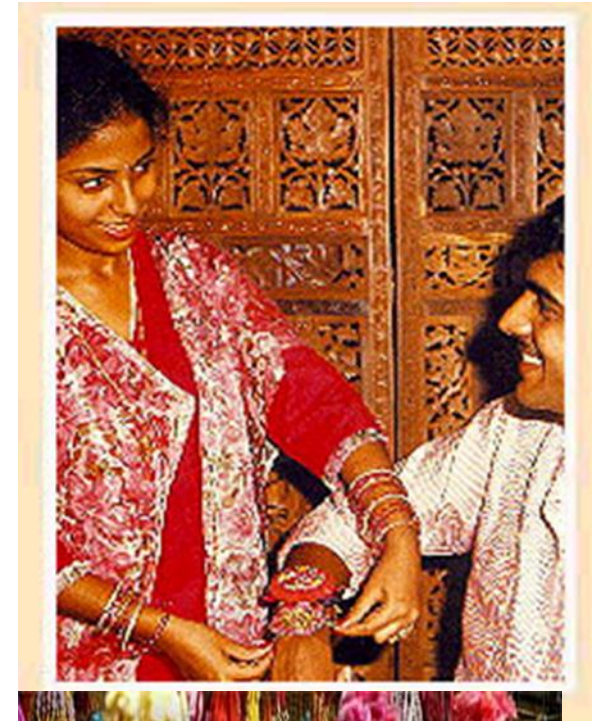
# Ram Navami

- ▶ Ninth day of the Hindu Lunar year (March)
- ▶ Birthday of Lord Rama (Hindu God)
- ▶ Starts off with prey to the Sun
- ▶ End of the day the Rama is taken to a procession on the street
- ▶ Hindus are supposed to fast
- ▶ Temples are decorated and readings of the Ramayana take place



# Raksha Bandhan

- ▶ Raksha = protection
- ▶ Bandhan = lasting bond
- ▶ Celebrates the relationship between brothers and sisters
- ▶ Thread-tying ceremony (rakhi)
- ▶ Sister recognizes the bond between them
- ▶ Brother vows to look after her
- ▶ Feed each other sweets & Brothers give some gift to sisters



# Janmashtami

- ▶ Celebration of the birth of Lord Krishna
  - Reincarnation of Lord Vishnu
  - Giver of the Bhagvat Gita
- ▶ Celebrated differently in North and South
- ▶ In south.....
- ▶ Begin the festival by fasting on the previous day
- ▶ Followed by a night-long vigil commemorating the birth
- ▶ At midnight, the deity of the infant Krishna is bathed, placed in a cradle and worshipped
- ▶ The early morning, ladies draw patterns of little children's feet outside the house with rice-flour paste, walking towards the house
  - Symbolizes the entry of the infant Krishna into his foster-home





# GANESH CHATHURTI

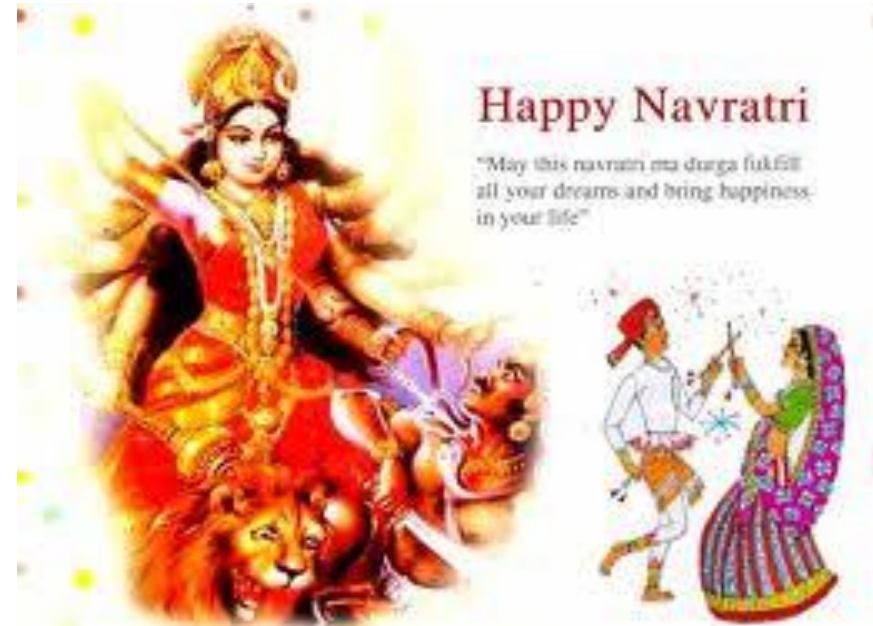


- **He is considered to be the god of wisdom, prudence and prosperity.**

- ▶ The *Ganesh festival* is on the 4th day of the bright half of Bhadrapad (September).
- ▶ This festival is celebrated for 10 days from Ganeshchaturthi to Anantchaturdashi – the final 10th day of his immersion

# Navratri

- ▶ Nine days of dance
- ▶ 10 days during Sept–Oct
- ▶ Honor supreme mother goddess – Durga
  - Symbolizes good over evil
- ▶ Celebrated differently throughout India
- ▶ Usually with song, dance and merriment



# Eid

- ▶ Eid ul-Fitr, often abbreviated to Eid, is a Muslim festival that marks the end of Ramadan, the Islamic holy month of fasting. Eid is an Arabic word meaning "festivity", while Fitr means "conclusion of the fast".



# Ramadan

- ▶ Ramadan – is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar, and a time when Muslims across the world will fast (do not eat) during the hours of daylight. The day Ramadan begins is decided by the sighting of the new moon. Muslims believe that the gates of Heaven are open and the gates of Hell are locked for the duration of Ramadan.



# Baisakhi

- ▶ Baisakhi is an ancient harvest festival of North India, in Sikhism, it is one of the most significant holidays in the Sikh calendar, commemorating the establishment of the Khalsa by the 10th Sikh Guru, Guru Gobind Singh.
- ▶ It is also celebrated as Harvest Festival



# Gurpurab

- ▶ This is a festival of Sikhs. This is the anniversary of a guru's birth or death; marked by the holding of a festival. A Gurpurab in Sikh tradition is a celebration of an anniversary related to the lives of the Sikh gurus.
- ▶ Observance of these anniversaries is an important feature of the Sikh way of life.



# Christmas

- ▶ Christmas :generally observed on December 25th by Christians to commemorate the birth of Jesus, the central figure of Christianity. Christmas said to be originated from an old English word meaning “Christ’s mass”



- ▶ Submitted by Sadhvi
  - ▶ St Mary Convent Lucknow ,Grade VTH
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