

Significance of Fairs and Festivals in 'Telangana- A Study

P. NARESH

Lecturer in History Pingle Govt. College for Women , Waddepally, Hanamkonda.
E-mail: palnatinaresh06@gmail.com

Abstract: *The Telangana culture in India has a cultural history of about 5,000 years. The Telangana region is rich in natural resources. The Rivers Godavari and Krishna along with their tributaries made the land very fertile and highly productive. The Geographical aspects, Polity and Economy of the region determined the culture of Telangana. The hills and water resources have shaped the life and culture of the people in Telangana. The region emerged as the foremost centre of culture in Indian subcontinent. The ruler's patronage and interest for culinary, arts and culture transformed Telangana into a multi-cultural region where two different cultures coexist together. The region's major cultural events have been celebrated Fairs and Religious festivals. There are several fairs like Bonala Jathara, Peddamma Jathara, Sammakka Sarakka Jathara, Kondagattu Jathara, Kothakonda Jathara, Komaravelli Jathara, Iloni Jathara, etc. Bonalu, Bathukamma, Dasara, Diwali, Ugadi, Sankranthi, Milad un Nabi and Ramzan these are religious festivals in Telangana. Keeping in view the various fairs and festivals being celebrated in Telangana state, this paper has been proposed to bring to light make a study on the various aspects of fairs and festivals, particularly the history and significance of the festivals and fairs.*

Keywords: *Natural Resources, Fairs, Religious Festivals, Multi-cultural region*

Received : 12 November 2023

Revised : 30 November 2023

Accepted : 02 December 2023

Published : 30 December 2023

TO CITE THIS ARTICLE:

Naresh, P. 2023. Significance of Fairs and Festivals in Telangana-A Study. *South Asian History, Culture and Archaeology*, 3: 2, pp. 255-263.

Introduction

The Telangana culture in India has a cultural history of about 5,000 years. The Telangana region is rich in natural resources. The Rivers Godavari and Krishna along with their tributaries made the land very fertile and highly productive. The Geographical aspects, Polity and Economy of the region determined the culture of Telangana. The hills and water resources have shaped the life and culture of the people in Telangana. The region emerged as the foremost centre of culture in Indian subcontinent. The Satavahanas were the earliest known rulers of this region. They were sowed the seeds of independent and self-

sufficient village economy, this remnants of which can be felt even today. In Medieval Telangana, the Kakatiyas, the Qutub Shahis and the Asaf Jahi dynasties (also known as the Nizams of Hyderabad) were continued to the rule. The Kakatiya Dynasty ruled the entire Telugu speaking areas during 11th & 13th C,A.D from Warangal as their Capital. We find several lakes and tanks constructed by the Kakatiya Rulers in all most all the villages in Telangana. The Kaktiya Rulers Ganapathi Deva and his successors Rudrama Devi and Pratapa Rudra had provided stable administration and promoted Agriculture, Trade & Commerce. Their revenue administration was designed to meet the military and financial challenges in those times. The prosperity of the land attracted foreign travelers like Marco Polo to visit Warangal. The ruler's patronage and interest for culinary, arts and culture transformed Telangana into a multi-cultural region where two different cultures coexist together. Thus, the Telangana have been making to the representative of the Deccan Plateau and its heritage with Warangal and Hyderabad being its epicenter. The Kakatiya temple architecture in the Telangana, have in the list of UNESCO World Heritage Site. The region's major cultural events have been celebrated Fairs and Religious festivals. There are several fairs like Bonala Jathara, Peddamma Jathara, Sammakka Sarakka Jathara, Kondagattu Jathara, Kothakonda Jathara, Komaravelli Jathara, Iloni Jathara, etc. Bonalu, Bathukamma, Dasara, Diwali, Ugadi, Sankranthi, Milad un Nabi and Ramzan these are religious festivals in Telangana.

Important Fairs in Telangana

Bonala Jathara (Mahankali Jathara): Bonala Jathara is a Hindu Festival where Goddess Mahankali has been worshiped. The Bonala Jathara has been celebrated during the Ashada Masam that falls in July or August. This festival has been celebrated in the twin Cities of Hyderabad, Secunderabad and other parts of Telangana. Special worship is performed to Goddess Ellamma on the first and last day of the festival. This festival has been considered as a festival to thank the goddess after fulfilling the vows. Bonam means 'meal' in Telugu and is an offering to Mother Goddess. The women at home decorate a new clay or brass pot with milk, rice cooked with jaggery, neem leaves, turmeric and vermilion. The women carry these pots on their heads and offer bonam including the bangles and sarees to the Goddess at temples. Kali is worshiped in various forms like Maisamma, Pochamma, Ellamma, Dokkamma, Peddamma, Poleramma, Ankamma, Maremma, Nukamma etc, among the Bonas.

Peddamma Jathara: Peddamma Gudi is a Hindu temple located at Jubilee Hills in Hyderabad of Telangana. It is very famous during the festive season of Bonalu. The word "Peddamma" literally means 'Mother of Mothers' or "Supreme Mother". She is one of the 11 village deities and the most one of the supreme. This temple has been visited every year in the month of June-July on the occasion of Bonala festival. Mahotsavam and Rathotsavam of this goddess are held in February.

Chevella Jathara: (Rangareddy) Sri Sri Chevella Lakshmi Venkateswara Swamy Temple is located in Chevella Village of Ranga Reddy District. This temple has been visiting a deeply spiritual experience. Unlike Tirupati, the Lord here is in the form of stone. Swami's festivals are held every year in the month of Chaitra.

Nagoba Jathara: Nagoba Jathara is Gond tribal festival held at Keslapur village of Inderavelly Mandal in Adilabad district of Telangana. This is the second biggest tribal carnival and celebrated by Mesaram clan of Gond & Pardhan tribes for 10 days. The tribal people from Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Orissa and Madhya Pradesh belonging to the Mesram clan offer prayers at the festival.

This fair has been starts in the Hindu lunar month of Pushya Masam. A ceremony called 'Bheting' is an integral part of it. The newly married brides have been introduced to the caste deity in the first fair here.

Sammakka Sarakka Jathara: The Sammakka Saralamma Jathara is celebrated in Warangal is reported to have been built during the 12th century. The temple has no mythological background relating to the construction of the temple; instead, it is believed to be built in the memory of two tribal women. The main deity(s) of the Sammakka Saralamma temple have two brave women, who stood up for their community and it's qualitative. They were became Martyrs in the battle. According to the legend, once a troop from the Koya tribal community was returning from a trip, when they were saw a little girl have been playing with the tigers. The head of the troop were saw the girl and inspired by her bravery, he adopted her and named as Sammakka. Later she was married a headman of a neighboring tribal group and have a daughter named as Sarakka. They were (Both the mother and daughter) protested the Kakatiya kings, who forced the tribes to pay taxes. They were fought bravely and reportedly lost their lives. The Koya community people were constructed this temple as a token of gratitude. Annually, the event called Sammakka Saralamma jatara which is considered as one of the largest tribal festivals in the world. The deities have been brought from the forest to a spot for a period of 10-12 days, when more than one crore devotees offer prayers and gift 'bangaram', which is pure jaggery to the deities. The entire place has been reverberating with divine chants and elaborate arrangements are made for this Jathara with thousands of buses arriving with pilgrims.

Yedupayala Jathara: The Edupayalu Vana Durga Bhavani temple built in 12th century. It is one of the most famous and powerful pilgrim destinations in the region, dedicated to Goddess Kanakadurga. This is a picturesque shrine located amidst the lush green forest and natural stone formations inside a den. The location marks the confluences of seven rivulets into the Manjeera River and hence the name Edupayala, which means Edu (seven) and Payalu (streams). The destination attracts around 30 lakhs devotees annually not only from Telangana State but also from neighboring states such as Karnataka and Maharashtra to worship to the Goddess Durga.

This Jathara (fair), a three-day grand affair celebrated during Shivaratri in the month of February. In the rainy season, the river water flows in heights and reaches the foot of the goddess and thousands of devotees come to Edupayala to watch this amazing event.

Gollagattu Jathara: Peddagattu or Gollagattu Jathara it is located in Durajpally village in Suryapet District of Telangana. This festival was done in the name of Lord Lingamantulu Swamy and Goddess Choudamma every two years. It is the second biggest religious jathara in the state of Telangana after Sammakka Saralamma Jatara in Tadvai mandal (medaram) of Mulugu District. Although, mainly the Yadava community have been participates in large numbers, people of all castes and religions flock here from the states of Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu.

Kondagattu Jathara: Sri Anjaneya Swamy Temple situated in Kondagattu town of Karimnagar area is one of the famous shrines in Telangana. Set up on a hill amidst pleasant slopes, valleys and invigorating springs, it is dedicated to Lord Hanuman. The temple is enhanced with designs of gods and goddesses on its exterior and dividers.

The sanctuary other than the principle divinity of Anjaneya Swamy likewise has the symbols of Lord Venkateswara, Goddess Alwaar and Sri Laxmi. Here one can see the life statue of Lord Anjaneya. Stairs have been given to enable guests to go up to see the statue from lacking elbow room. As indicated by neighborhood legend, around 300 years prior a rancher Singam sanjeevudu in the wake of losing one of his wild oxen, resulted in these present circumstances hillock scanning for it and rested here. Ruler Anjaneya came into his fantasy and revealed to him the whereabouts of his bison. As he woke up and checking out the hillock, he found a lighting up symbol of Anjaneya. He at that point manufactured a little sanctuary for the ruler at current area. The present structure was worked

by Krishna Rao Deshmukh amidst twentieth century. The aficionados trust that individuals who don't have kids will be honored by offering 40 day petitions to Lord Anjaneya Swamy. Hanuman Jayanti is the fundamental celebration celebrated here. Numerous enthusiasts perform Hanuman Deeksha for a time of 41 days amid Hanuman Jayanthi and visit Kondagattu Hanuman Temple by walk. It is believed that in excess of 4 lakh individuals visit this Temple amid Hanuman Jayanthi.

Bejjanki Jathara: Bejjanki is a mandal in the newly formed district of Siddipet. It was previously part of Karimnagar district. Bejjanki Jathara is one of the biggest fairs in Siddipet and Karimnagar districts. Bejjanki Jathara has been comes on the very first pournami of the Telugu calendar which is Chaitra Pournami.

Melli Cheruvu Jathara: Shambulingeswara Swayambhu Temple is located in Mella Cheruvu village of Hujurnagar taluka of Suryapet district. This god fair is held for 5 days from Maha Shivratri.

Siddulagutta Jathara: Sri Navanatha Siddeshwara temple is located in Armoor at Nizamabad district. There are beautiful rock formation around this temple with extends up to 2 K.m. legend says that, on this hillock and hence it is called as Navanathapura. There are many temples on the hillock namely Shivalayam, Ramalayam, Hanuma Temple, Durga Devi Temple and all these temples are believed to be Swayambhu Temples. Inside these caves is a Shiva Temple, where the Shiva Lingam is said to be swaymbhu or self-manifested. The entrance to this cave temple is a door that is barely three feet. Just outside the exit point of this narrow cave is a Ramalayam and the temple tank, Jeeva Koneru.

Komuravelli Jathara: Komuravelli Mallikarjuna Swamy Temple popularly known as Komuravelli Mallanna Temple is a Hindu temple located on a hill in Komuravelli village of Siddipet district in Telangana state. It is located near Siddipet on SH-1 Rajiv Rahadari. The primary deity is Mallanna or Mallikarjuna Swamy who is an incarnation of Lord Shiva. The deity is also called as Khandoba by the Maharashtrian people. The temple is located about 85 kilometers from Hyderabad. Mallanna along with his consorts Golla Kethamma, Goddess Ganga and Medalamma, Goddess Parvati are at the main temple. The Oggu Katha singers sing the tale of Mallanna here. Devotees offer prayers to Mallanna with the help of Oggu Pujaris who draw a rangoli called as Patnam (A form of offering prayers to Lord) in front of Lord Mallanna inside temple and also in temple's verandah. Large number of devotees visit the Mallanna temple during Maha Shivaratri when the Pedda Patnam is celebrated and also during the Agni Gundaalu which is celebrated on the sunday falling before the Ugadi. The festive season, called as Jatara begins from Sankranti and lasts till Ugadi. Large number of devotees offer prayers to the deity on all sundays which falls in between Sankranti and Ugadi. Another temple, Konda Pochamma temple is nearby which is visited by the devotees who visit Mallanna temple.

Inavolu Jathara: Inavolu Mallikarjuna Swamy Temple situated at Inavolu village of Vardhannapet Mandal Warangal District and Telangana State is one of the ancient Lord Shiva temples in South India. The temple dates back to 11th century and was built by Kakatiya rulers. It was built with 108 pillars and has a giant magnificent Nruthaya Mandapam on eastern side. Historical Kakatiya Keerti Toranams (Giant Rocky Entrance Gates) were initially constructed here and subsequently at Warangal fort. The presiding deity Shiva lingam of the temple referred to as 'Ardhapranavattam' (Shivalinga with half doom). The temple has four entrance gates with rich architectural carvings that epitomizing the cultural sophistication of Kakatiya dynasty. The temple was built by a minister Ayyanna Deva of Kakatiya Kingdom – hence the name Inavolu. The presiding deity Sri Mallikarjuna Swamy is considered as one of the incarnations of Lord Siva. Mostly the Yadavas patronise the temples built for the deity.

Koravi Jathara: Sri Veerabhadra Swamy temple is located in Kuravi mandal of the Mahabubabad district in Telangana. This temple has been dedicated to Lord Veerabhadra who was appears majestic with three eyes and ten arms. According to local legends, this temple was built in 900 A.D by Bhimaraja

of Vengi Chalukya dynasty. Later the Kakatiya ruler Betaraja-I has been undertook the restoration of the temple. Kakatiya kings were worshippers of Lord Shiva. They were built many temples throughout the empire. Just one kilometer away from the Veerabhadra Swamy temple, there is a large tank with an area of 100 acres. It has great potential to develop as a tourist destination. Kuravi is unique for its culture. So many Tribel and non-tribel people comes to temple to get blessings of the god. Maha siva rathiri festival is biggest event in Kuravi.

Malluru Jathara: The Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy temple is located on a hilltop in a dense forest in Mangapet mandal of Mulugu district. The Chintamani Falls, a natural spring flowing through dense forest, is the most prominent in the region. The local tribes were believed that the spring which flows from the dense forest beneath the tree roots, contains a variety of miraculous medicines for skin diseases. It is a local custom to visit Narasimha Swamy at Koluva in Mallur during the (Vasantha Ruthuvu) summer season. The fair is held for three days.

Kotthakonda Jathara: Kothakonda Jatara or Kothakonda Veerabhadra Swamy Brahmotsavam has been celebrated during the Makar Sankranti in Telangana. This Jatara is starts at Kothakonda Village in Bheemadevarpalle mandal of Karimnagar district. The beautiful hills have been surrounding to kotthakonda village. This temple dedicated to Sri Veerabhadra Swamy (an incarnation of Lord Siva). On a rocky hill adjacent to this village are the ruins of a large fort with massive gateways with beautiful carvings similar to those of the Kakatiyas. There are five ponds on the hill. At the foot of this hill is the temple of Veerabhadra Swamy. Thousands of pilgrims from Telangana region come to Kothakonda fair which is held for three days in January every year.

Kodavatancha Jathara, Kommala Jathara and Venkateswara Jathara are celebrated for three days held at jointly Warangal district.

Important Festivals in Telangana

Boddemma: Bodemma festival is one of the two most traditional festivals of Telangana state. Boddemma, Bathukamma, festivals are the most favorite festivals of Telangana women. This festival has been grand celebrated for all women in Telangana region. In this fesitval time, some of the changes have been made depending on the region. In the some of the region the boddemma festival has been started from Bahula dashami tithi five days before Amavasya. While in other places three days before bahula dwadashi the Boddemma has been stacked. In some of the other regions, the Bhadrpada begins before the new moon (Mahalaya) and worships the Boddemma for nine days, and on the ninth day of play and with songs, i.e. the new moon day of Mahalaya, Immerse. Bathukamma is celebrated from Mahalaya Amavasya to Ashvayuja Suddha Navami. The Boddemma has been prepared in four different ways in different parts of Telangana. The name 'Boddemma' has synonyms like 'Botte', Bodipa' and Potti. The word 'bodda' also means 'Atthi Tree'. This is known as 'Madibara Tree' and 'Udambara Tree'. Udambaram have been generally worshiped to get children and get married. It can be assumed that this Udambara/Medi Puja, composed of nature, became 'Bodda Puja' and got popular. Boddemma dances can be compared to 'Garbo' dance. One opinion is that 'garbho' means 'gobbi'.

Bathukamma:- Bathukamma is a colourful and vibrant festival of Telangana and celebrated by women, with flowers that grow exclusively in each region. This festival is a symbol of Telangana's cultural identity. Bathukamma comes during the latter half of monsoon, before the onset of winter. The monsoon rains usually brings plenty of water into the fresh water ponds of Telangana and it is also the time when wild flowers bloom in various vibrant colors all across the uncultivated and barren plains of the region. The most abundant of these are the 'Gunuka Poolu' and 'Tangedu Poolu'. There are other flowers too like the banti, chemanti, nandi-varadhanam etc. Bathukamma is celebrated by the

women folk of Telangana, heralding the beauty of nature in vibrant colors of multitudinous flowers. The festival begins a week before the grand ‘Saddula Batukamma’ (the grand finale of the Batukamma festival) which falls two days before Dussehra. The women folk normally get back to their parent’s home from their in-laws and breathe the fresh air of freedom to celebrate the colors of flowers. For one complete week, they make small ‘Batukammas’, play around them every evening and immerse them in a nearby water pond. On the last day, the men folk of the house go into the wild plains and gather the flowers like gunuka and tangedi. They bring home bagfuls of these flowers and the entire household sits down to make the big ‘Batukamma’. The flowers are carefully arranged row after row in a brass plate (called taambalam) in circular rows and in alternate colors. As evening approaches the women folk dress colourfully with the best of their attire and adorn lot of ornaments and place the Batukamma in their courtyard. The women of neighborhood also gather in a large circle around it. They start singing songs by circling it repeatedly, building a beautiful human circle of unity, love, sisterhood. After playing in circles around the “Batukammalu”, before the onset of dusk, the women folk carry them on their heads and move as a procession towards a bigger water body near the village or town. The procession is extremely colourful with the decorations of women and the “Batukammalu”. Songs of folklore are sung in chorus throughout the procession and the streets resonate with them. Finally, when they reach the water pond the “Batukammalu” are slowly immersed into water after some more playing and singing. Then they share the ‘maleeda’ (a dessert made with sugar or raw sugar and corn bread) sweets amongst the family members and neighborhood folks. They return to their homes with empty ‘taambalam’ singing songs in praise of Batukamma. The songs of Batukamma echo in the streets until late night during the entire week. Batukamma celebrates the inherent relationship between earth, water and the human beings. During the entire preceding week, women make ‘boddemma’ (a deity of Gowri – mother Durga – made with earthly mud) along with Batukamma and immerse it in the pond. This helps reinforce the ponds and helps it retain more water. The flowers used in Batukamma have a great quality of purifying water and such flowers when immersed in abundance into the pond have the effect of cleansing the water and making the environment much better. In times where the fresh water ponds are gradually diminishing and dwindling away it is indeed a pride of Telangana that its womenfolk (with mostly agrarian background) inherently know how to make them better by celebrating the beauty of nature. It is something we indeed have to feel proud of. The festival heralds the beauty of nature, collective spirit of Telangana people, the indomitable spirit of women folks and also the scientific approach of the agrarian people towards preserving the resources of nature in a celebrative way. Hence, Bathukamma is the icon of cultural identity of Fairs and Festivals of Telangana.

Dussehra: Vijayadashami also known as Dussehra or Navaratri is an important Hindu festival celebrated in Telangana. Vijayadashami, a festival that symbolizes the victory of good over evil, is celebrated with traditional fervor, devotion and gaiety across Telangana. The name Vijayadashami is derived from the Sanskrit terms “Vijaya-dashami” which means victory on the day of Dashami. Dashami is tenth lunar day of a Hindu calendar month

Diwali: This festival has been originated in the Indian subcontinent and is likely a fusion of harvest festivals in ancient India. It has been mentioned in early Sanskrit texts, such as the Padma Purana and the Skanda Purana. The Emperor Harsha refers to Deepavali, in the 7th-century Sanskrit play Nagananda, as Dīpapratiṭipadotsava (dīpa = light, pratiṭipadā = first day, utsava = festival), where lamps were lit and newly engaged brides and grooms received gifts. Rajasekhara referred to Deepavali as Dipamalika in his 9th-century Kavyamimamsa, wherein he mentions the tradition of homes being whitewashed and oil lamps decorated homes, streets and markets in the night.

Diwali was also described by numerous travelers from outside India. In his 11th-century memoir on India, the Persian traveler and historian Al Biruni wrote of Deepavali being celebrated by Hindus on the day of the New Moon in the month of Kartika. The Venetian merchant and traveler Niccolò de' Conti visited India in the early 15th-century and wrote in his memoir, "on another of these festivals they fix up within their temples, and on the outside of the roofs, an innumerable number of oil lamps... which are kept burning day and night" and that the families would gather, "clothe themselves in new garments", sing, dance and feast. The 16th-century Portuguese traveler Domingo Paes wrote of his visit to the Hindu Vijayanagara Empire, where Dipavali was celebrated in October with householders illuminating their homes, and their temples, with lamps. It is mentioned in the Ramayana that Diwali was celebrated for only 2 years in Ayodhya.

Sankranti Festival: Makar Sankranti also referred to as Uttarayana, Makar, or simply Sankranti, is a Hindu observance and a festival. Usually falling on the date of January 14 annually (January 15 on a leap year), this occasion marks the transition of the sun from the zodiac of Sagittarius (dhanu) to Capricorn (makara). Since the sun has made this transition which vaguely coincides with moving from south to north, the festival is dedicated to the solar deity, Surya and is observed to mark a new beginning. Many native multi-day festivals are organised on this occasion all over India.

The festivities associated with Makar Sankranti are known by various names including Makara Sankranti in Kerala, Magh Bihu in Assam, Maghi Saaji in Himachal Pradesh, Maghi Sangrand in Punjab, Maghi Sangrand or Uttarain (Uttarayana) in Jammu, Sakrat in Haryana, Sakraat in Rajasthan, Sukarat in central India, Pongal in Tamil Nadu, Uttarayana in Gujarat and Uttar Pradesh, Ghughuti in Uttarakhand, Dahi Chura in Bihar, Makar Sankranti in Odisha, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Goa, West Bengal (also called Poush Sankranti or Mokor Sonkranti), Uttar Pradesh (also called Khichidi Sankranti), Uttarakhand (also called Uttarayani) or as simply, Sankranti in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, Maghe Sankranti (Nepal), Songkran (Thailand), Thingyan (Myanmar), Mohan Songkran (Cambodia), Til Sakraat in Mithila, and Shishur Senkrath (Kashmir). On Makar Sankranti, Surya (Hindu solar deity) is worshipped along with Vishnu and goddess Lakshmi throughout India.

Makar Sankranti is observed with social festivities such as colourful decorations, rural children going house to house, singing and asking for treats in some areas, melas (fairs), dances, kite flying, bonfires and feasts. The Magha Mela is mentioned in the Hindu epic Mahabharata. Many observers go to sacred rivers or lakes and bathe in a ceremony of thanks to the Sun. Every twelve years, the Hindus observe Makar Sankranti with Kumbha Mela – one of the world's largest mass pilgrimage, with an estimated 60 to 100 million people attending the event. At this event, they say a prayer to the Sun and bathe at the Prayagaraj confluence of the River Ganga and River Yamuna, a tradition attributed to Adi Shankaracharya. Makar Sankranti is a time of celebration and thanks giving, and is marked by a variety of rituals and tradition.

Peerla Panduga: Muharram, also called Peerla Panduga is an important festival in the state of Telangana. Muharram is a festival marked by processions. During this occasion, a relic called Alam is taken out as a procession. Ashurkhana, representing a group of Sufi Shrines, is the area where the procession takes place, Many Muslims and even Hindus take part in this festival by chanting Ya Hussain as they participate eagerly in this procession. In Dabeerpura area of Hyderabad, Hindus are considered alambardaar, which means standard-bearers at the famous shrine of Bibi Ka Alawa. Hindus throng in thousands to worship the holy relic of Alam since it is believed that a darshan of this Alam gives them solace and peace of mind. On this special day of Muharram, Hindus visit Sufi shrines. Peerla Panduga is actually an occasion of sorrow when the Hindu devotees respect the sentiments of their Islamic brothers and and participate in a solemn procession. The deities are brought from the

forest to a spot for a period of 10-12 days when more than one crore devotees offer prayers and gift 'bangaram', which is pure jaggery to the deities. The entire place reverberates with divine chants and elaborate arrangements are made for this Jathara with thousands of buses arriving with pilgrims. The Badeshahi Ashurkhana in Hyderabad has a rich 400-year old history and is also home to the maximum crowds during this festival. Thousands of Hindus visit this shrine, especially during the 9th and 10th day of the festival. Several foreign tourists also witness the proceedings of these festivities. The final day involves Alam being carried on top of an elephant as a procession from Bibi ka Alawa towards Masjid-e-Ilahi. The festival is also celebrated in many rural regions of Telangana close to Sufi shrines or Durgahs.

Ramzan: Ramzan is the ninth month as per the Islamic Lunar calendar. Ramadan/Ramzan begins after the month of Shaban, when the new moon is sighted. In case new moon is not seen after 30 days of Shaban, then Ramadan begins. The month of Ramzan lasts for 29 or 30 days based on the sighting of the moon. If the moon is sighted during the night of 29th fast, then the month of Shawwal begins next day and Ramadan is over. The first of Shawwal is the Eid called Eid-ul-fitr for distinguishing this from Eid-ul-azha (Bakri Eid). Ramzan is believed to be the month in which the Quran was revealed and involves fasting done by all able-bodied men including women and children who have reached puberty. During Ramzan, the people who fast do not eat or drink right from dawn to after sunset. Eid al-Fitr is a holiday in Telangana, which celebrates the end of Ramadan and marks the first day of the Islamic month of Shawwal. The Muslim holy month of Ramadan is observed with fervor by Muslim brethren in Hyderabad and other parts of Telangana. Sirens blare in unison from hundreds of mosques across the city for 'sahr' which is also the pre-dawn meals. The Muslim-majority in old city and other neighborhoods of Hyderabad become abuzz with activity while thousands throng the mosques for the purpose of 'Namaz-e-Taraveeh' or the special prayers offered daily during when priests recite Holy Quran. The biggest congregation is witnessed at historic Mecca Masjid near Charminar. Special arrangements are made at many mosques and function halls for women folk to offer their prayers. Shopping for groceries and other items during this month continues until late night. The historic city of Hyderabad with a rich Muslim heritage comes vibrantly alive during this holy month. Most of the hotels sell lip-smacking Haleem, a dish cherished by people after 'Iftar' or breaking the day's fast. Tonnes of dates and fruits are sold every day to break the fast. Ramzan is a time of immense festivities, The Islamic holy month of Ramadan is observed with fervor by Muslim brethren in Hyderabad and other parts of Telangana. The biggest congregation is witnessed at the historic Mecca Masjid near Charminar where the popular Hindu-Muslim unity comes alive in Telangana, which is a cradle of secularism.

Christmas: The Christians in Telangana celebrate Christmas on 25th December every year. They go to churches and pray their Lord Jesus Christ with great devotion. There are several churches in all the districts of Telangana. The Medak town is an important center of Christians. The Medak Church is the largest church in Asia. It was built in the year 1915. Warangal, Dornakal are also important centers of Christian churches in Telangana.

Conclusion

Keeping in view the various fairs and festivals being celebrated in Telangana state, this paper has been proposed to bring to light make a study on the various aspects of fairs and festivals, particularly the history of the festivals and fairs. The culture of the people, their beliefs, traditions and customs could have been examined. The tourism potential of these colorful festivals would also be studied. The Tourism industry is going to generate several employment opportunities to the skilled and unskilled youth including women.

References

- Adapa Satyanarayana & Dyavanavalli Satyanarayana, *Telangana Rastra Avatharana Udyamalu (Telugu)*.
- B.SL Hanumantha Rao, *Andhrula Charitra*.
- Bhangya Bhukya, *A cultural History of Telangana (From the Earliest Times to 1724 AD)*.
- Damera Venkata Surya Rao, *Telugu Vari Pandugalu Parvadinaalu Purana Vivaranalatho (Telugu)*.
- Department of Language & Culture, Govt of Telangana, *Culture of Telangana*.
- Dr. Dasharathula Narsaiah, *Palukuballa Bathukamma*.
- Dr. Prabhavathi Chitiala Reddy, *Bathukamma*.
- Harikrishna Mamidi, *Cultural History of Telangana*.
- Kambampati Satyanarayan, *Andhrula Charitra Samskrithi*.
- Narender Luther, *Telangana: The State Formation – The Untold Story*.
- PC Agarval, *Indian art and Culture*.
- PV Sastri, *Kakatiyulu*.
- Ramakrishna.C, *History of Telangana*.
- Santhosh Kumar. V, *Telangana History Culture*.
- Srivastava. S.C, *Telangana History in Telugu*.
- Telugu Academy, *Telangana Charitra Samskrithi (English)*
- Telugu Academy, *Telangana Charitra Samskrithi. (Telugu)*