

Floral Festival: A Culture of Telangana

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Abstract

The World is full of festivals, cultures and traditions which are formed due to their past experiences and believes, in some areas their culture resembles with festivals. In South India a region of people specially celebrate festival for environment, as it is a major living source to the living beings, the region is newly emerged as a state in India. This paper aims to give small review of the festival as a culture in that region.

Keywords: Floral; Culture; Bathukamma; Women

Introduction

The Earth is created with many incredible things which are supporting the life of human beings; we found our life in the nature which gives everything we want like water, food, shelter etc. and everyone pray for these things to remain forever with us. This nature looks more beautiful with different flowers, each flower has a unique fragrance which attracts everyone and these flowers were used for celebrations and other occasions, we also see various plants in the nature each plant has its own importance.

Earlier day's people learnt the knowledge of medicine and used plants extract as the medicine for various diseases, and it is still continuing. The nature is giving everything we want for our survival, hence it needs recognition and protection, protecting the nature is protecting ourselves. With a respect towards the nature people started praying to plants and flowers then treated the nature as goddess, as it gives everything for our wellbeing and cares like our own mother [1-3].

In South India a region of people follow this culture and celebrate it as a festival every year which start with Mahalaya Amavasya, Pethar Amasa and ends with Durgashtami in months of September/October for 9 days and pray to goddess to remain the happiness with them by giving water, food, health and wealth etc.

Celebration of this festival was followed from their ancestors and still continuing it with the same joy and protecting the environment, this festival is celebrated by all the people of that region (Telangana State). There are many stories for this festival but in general this is a festival of nature to live forever.

Telangana is a newly emerged state and this festival has been recognized by the state government and made this festival as a major 'state festival', in Telugu people calls this festival as "Bathukamma" which mean "Live forever" [4-12].

Importance of Flowers

There are many flowers which are used for making of 'Bathukamma' (floral conical mound) but there are some important flowers among them is Thangedu puvvulu (*Cassia auriculata*), Gunugu puvvulu

(*Celosia*), Banthi puvvulu (Marigold), Chamanthi puvvulu (*Chrysanthemum*), Gummadi puvvulu (*Cucurbita*), Vaama puvvulu (*Ajwain*) etc., each of these plants has medicinal values.

Thangedu (*Cassia auriculata*): This plant is used in Ayurveda, folk medicine and the seeds of this plant are used for treatment of diabetes (Figure 1).



Figure 1: *Cassia auriculata* (Thangedu).

Gunugu (*Celosia*): It is an antibacterial, anti-diabetic, antioxidant and it is used to treat the infected sores (Figure 2).



Figure 2: *Celosia* (Gunugu).

Banthe (Marigold): It contains rich source of Vitamin C and flavonoids, it also contains antioxidants which treats diseases and disorders (Figure 3).



Figure 3: Marigold (Banthe).

Chamanthe (Chrysanthemum): This flower is rich in minerals like magnesium, potassium, manganese, calcium, iron, sodium and it also contain antioxidants which help in treatment of diseases (Figure 4).



Figure 4: Chrysanthemum (Chamanthe).

There are many other plants which are well known for medicinal importance so, the flowers of these plants are chosen for celebration of Bathukamma (Floral Festival), mostly the rural people of this region knows about the folk medicine and they still follow it [13-25].

Way of Celebration

The floral festival (Bathukamma) is celebrated for nine days by all, especially women and teenage girls, for this festival the newly married women come to their parents' home after a long time. Her parents and brothers in the family also wait for her visit on this festival and welcome her with more affection.

This festival is celebrated for nine days and on ninth day they celebrate grandly, men in the family goes to farm fields or forest to gather seasonal flowers and majorly (Gunakapuvvu and Thangedupuvvu) which are most important for this festival as this plants has medicinal values [26-30] (Figure 5).



Figure 5: Making of Bathukamma (floral conical mound).

Men in the family take part in collecting all the flowers and gives to women in their family, women arrange the flowers in big round plate called "Thambulam" they arrange the flowers layer by layer like a conical mound and keep an idol of goddess (Boddemma) prepared with turmeric on top of the flowers [31-36] (Figure 6).



Figure 6: Women playing at Bathukamma.

The women and teenage girls are the main attraction for the festival, in every family a girl child or the women is treated equal to the goddess so, in this festival women and every girl child has importance and their tradition is very attractive, women wear saree along with gold ornaments and the teenage girls wear langa-oni/half saree along with gold ornaments [37-42].

From each family one 'Bathukamma' (Floral arranged in plate) is placed in open ground. All the villagers gather at open place and play in a circle where the Bathukammas are placed in middle of the circle. The play involves with songs on the goddess and sung the stories of the goddess.

After the play the Bathukamma is carried on head to a pond/lake available in the village, the Bathukamma is immersed in pond/lake. Which mean that ponds/lake is major source for the beautiful nature and for survival of every living being so, the pond/lake is filled with Bathukammas (different flowers) and brings beauty to the village ponds/lakes. And the main reason for floral immersion is that the flowers have medicinal importance so, if the flowers are mixed in

lakes/ponds the water becomes pure and clean. They also lit a lamp on top of the 'Bathukamma' the whole night the river looks beautiful with colourful flowers and the lamps on the top of floral arrangement. They remove the idol made of turmeric and keep the turmeric paste to their cheeks, the scientific reason for keeping turmeric paste to the cheeks is that protects from the bacteria and gives glow to the face. After this they share the special foods prepared for the goddess among them, these foods are prepared with rice, wheat, pulses like green gram and jowar (sorghum) with addition of sugar and ghee, the preparation of this food is easy which is very tasty and good for health [43-50] (Figure 7).



Figure 7: Immersion of Bathukamma (floral conical mound).

This festival is also known as an eco-friendly festival and harmless for any other animals, no animal is killed to make special dinners for this festival.

Celebration all over the World

Floral Festival (Bathukamma) is recognized as the Telangana's (a newly emerged state in India) major festival and the government is also promoting the festival and its importance all over the world. It is a festival of environment hence, the state also making awareness to protect the environment.

Telangana people who are staying in different countries like United States, United Kingdom, Dubai, Germany, Singapore etc., are also celebrating the festival and expanding the culture to the World [51-54].

Conclusion

Importance of the environment was known to all but there is a small negligence towards it. There are some people who are really working for protection of the environment and bringing awareness, in South India people of Telangana state celebrates a Floral Festival to remember the importance and treating the Nature as the goddess with a hope that 'protection of environment is protecting our selves', in Telugu the festival is called as 'Bathukamma' which mean 'Live Forever', they pray to the goddess (Environment) to live forever with the people.

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