

Chida Dahi Festival

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Today is a very special festival. In fact, that festival took place some five hundred years ago. And from that year and day on verse every year on that particular day, today devotees had been observing this festival. We all love festivals. It's said "utsav priya manavaha." I did not say, I am just repeating the statement that all the manavahas, they like festivals, they like utsav and reason being that we all manavahas, the spirit souls, we come from spiritual sky and there is always festivals there. So, eh, all the souls like festivals. You like festivals?

The name of the festival is Pani Hathi Chida Dahi Festival. The place called Pani Hathi in Bengal on the banks of Ganga not far from Kolkata. This place is also known as the Raghav Pandit place. Raghav pandit big name in Gaudiya Vaishnava world. Raghav pandit he used to reside there. And his sister Damayanti also very well-known personality. And they both used to cook for Gauranga and make offerings to Gauranga and Gauranga comes their everyday and accepts the offerings of Raghav pandit and Damanyanti.

Sometimes, Raghav Pandit was able to see Caitanya Mahaprabhu honouring prasada at his home. He also cooked prasada, dried prasada and bring it to Jagannath Puri. Raghav pandit used to cook lots of prasada, dried prasada at home and bring it to Jagannath Puri and offered it to Caitanya Mahaprabhu. He used to carry a special kind of bag and the way he used to tie kind of cloth Raghaver jholi, Raghaver Jholi Caitanya Charitamrit says so. Caitanya Mahaprabhu in Jagannath Puri everyday he used to take some prasada from Raghaver Jholi and honoured that

in Jagannath Puri outside all year long. So, this Pani Hathi is a place for prasad where prasad is cooked and prasad is served to the Lord.

To that, Pani Hathi one day and this day Raghunath Das Goswami had come he had not become Goswami as yet. He was Raghunath Das Adhikari. He was a family man. Not by choice he was family man. Parents, father especially wanted his son to be married man so that he would not leave home and run to Caitanya Mahaprabhu. It was time tying him. His father tied his son to the wife thinking that he would be bound and not able to leave home. Raghunath Das Goswami when he was just a young boy he had association of none other than Namacharya Srila Haridas Thakur.

Haridas Thakur had come to village of Raghunath Das Goswami. And Raghunath Das was a son of a big big landlord. But as he had an association of Namacharya Haridas Thakur who always chanted,

Hare Krsna Hare Krsna Krsna Krsna Hare Hare
Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare

sadhu-sanga, sadhu-sanga Sadhu-sanga sarva-sastre
Kaya lava-matra sadhu-sange sarva-siddhi haya

Raghunath Das Goswami had association of none other than Namacharya Haridas Thakur. So he had attained perfection by that association. So since then he had total detachment from everything worldly he had no inclination no affiliation no affection total vairagya (detachment). He comes in contact with sadhus. This could be possible outcome of that. So Raghunath Das Goswami he had made many attempts to run away from his home and go join Caitanya Mahaprabhu in Jagannath Puri. But all his attempt had failed. So now he had come to Nityananda Prabhu in Pani Hathi to seek some special benediction so that he would become successful in running away going away from all. So he arrived in Pani Hathi, he met, he

saw Nityananda Prabhu sitting underneath a big banyan tree sitting with many of his associates. “koti surya samaprabha”.

Nityananda Prabhu was as brilliant as sun or many suns. So he was amazed by seeing such a powerful personality right there in front of him. He had Nityananda Prabhu realisation. He realises who Nityananda Prabhu is “Balarama hoilo nitai” Balarama had appeared as Nityananda Prabhu .

“Nanda Nandan jae sachi suta hoilo sae”

Nanda Nanadan had appeared as Sachinandan and Balaram had appeared as Nityananda Prabhu. So when he saw Nityananda Prabhu he was amazed. He fell flat at the feet of Nityananda Prabhu. But he did not offer his obeisances close to Nityananda Prabhu at some distance away he offered his obeisances.

So some devotees had noticed and Nityananda Prabhu also noticed the presence of Rahgunath Das. Why is he not coming closer? He is a thief he is hiding back there. So Nityananda prabhu he stood up he stepped forward and

he placed his lotus foot right on the head of Raghunath Das and then finally he got up Raghunath Das Goswami got up. Nityananda Prabhu you are a thief you must be punished so Raghunath Das was waiting to hear what the punishment is going to be. So Nityananda Prabhu said punishment for you is that you feed myself and all my associates with dahi chida. So Raghunath Das was very happy to hear this kind of punishment. So he immediately sent his assistants his associates into the market in the village with lots of chida and dahi. The chida is called chipped rice, it is the flat rice very flat. Raghunath Das Goswami was not only going to feed dahi chida but

also soaked chida so he also got dahi and yoghurt and milk also. He managed to get 7 big huge pots and four hundred medium sized clay pots. Thousands of smaller size pots and then dahi and chipped rice was soaked in yoghurt, chipped rice

was soaked in milk. So when the news reached that there is going to be dahi chida festivals at Pani Hathi. Many many people came running for free prasad, food for life there was a large gathering Krsna Das Kaviraj Goswami there were countless, you could not count how many people had arrived for honouring dahi chida at Pani Hathi.

So along with Nityananda Prabhu on the platform very special VVIPs, close associates of Nityananda Prabhu had taken seat. Then all around the platform people were sitting, brahmanas were sitting so many more villagers were sitting on the bank of Ganga – this way that way. When all the banks were full people entered the water, knee deep water, waist deep water, they were trying to find place to honour the chipped rice. They also had added sugar, honey, banana, camphor all that kichiri was very special very delicious preparations were made. So everyone wanted to honour this prasad. Then Raghunath Das, he assigned 20 people to serve all these assembled guests. As the serving was on, Raghav Pandit comes right in front of Nityananda Prabhu. He had cooked special dishes. He placed them in front of Nityananda Prabhu and chanted mantras offering him and Raghav pandit started distributing that to his associates. But to Nityananda Prabhu, he said “Sir for you a special prasad waiting at home, what are you doing here?.

Lets go honour prasad at my home.” Yea Raghav pandit said to Nityananda Prabhu. Nityananda Prabhusay no no no that prasad I will eat in evening. Now let me eat this prasad right here. I belong to cowherd community and always like to eat with my cowherd boyfriends. I am going to enjoy my meal right here with my my devotees. So as everyone was about to honour prasadam, Nityananda Prabhu sat in meditation, remembering and calling appealing for the presence of Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Everything is here, the cowherd boys were there, Ganga Jamuna was there only missing was Krsna. Krsna Caitanya was missing so that dahi chida festival,

Nityananda Prabhu was enacting his pastimes honouring prasada food in Vrindavan on banks of Yamuna. So as Nityananda Prabhu remembered and appealed Caitanya Mahaprabhu for his presence, Caitanya Mahaprabhu appeared there.

Gauranga Gauranga Gauranga

But not everybody noticed Lord's presence. Only handful, only some were able to realise. So as Caitanya Mahaprabhu appeared there, Nityananda Prabhu immediately stood up to meet Caitanya Mahaprabhu and then both of these Prabhus Mahaprabhu and Prabhu they were looking all around all around they were seeing, they were surrounded by cowherd men, cowherd boys and they all honouring prasada. Caitanya Mahaprabhu and Nityananda Prabhu were so very much pleased to see that scene. And then Nityananda Prabhu starts feeding Caitanya Mahaprabhu. He was taking some grains, some dahi chida, doodh chida from big pots and throwing.

Nityananda Prabhu was pushing some throwing some grains chip rice right into the mouth of Caitanya Mahaprabhu.

Most of them they were seeing Nityananda Prabhu. They were not seeing Caitanya Mahaprabhu. They were seeing he was picking some chip rice and as it was thrown, they were seeing it going maybe 6 inches or 1 foot forward and disappearing. They were really surprised and wondering what's going on here. And Nityananda Prabhu was bringing Caitanya Mahaprabhu come this and this way, they are escorting and feeding and as everyone was honouring prasada, Nityananda Prabhu said to addressing to all those honouring prasada –

sei annamrita pao, Radha Krsna guna gao

While honouring Radha honouring prasadam, you also have to say Hari Hari so devotees were eating Hari Hari. You are eating and Hari Hari..loud Hari Hari

It is said that I think we did not even filled up the

Banglore's sky but the whole brahmand was filled with the vibration of Hari Hari Hari Hari Hari Hari Hari

sae annamrita pao, radha krsna guna gao

Now say annamrita pao so jao

Otherwise we will be namakharam. If you know being ungrateful, not chanting so they all were honouring prasad, filling their bellies with prasad and filling their mouth and sky with Hari Hari Hari Hari

Hare Krsna Hare Krsna Krsna Krsna Hare Hare

Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare

So then gradually, so then what was happening more people were arriving and more chipped rice was needed. So the chipped rice merchants they were arriving on shutting their shops and Raghunath Das Goswami at any cost he was purchasing all those goods, all those that flat rice and yoghurt and bananas. And after all their goods were sold, they have made good money, Raghunath Das was feeding them free prasad. Their pockets were full and bellies were full free prasad. The devotees finally came, many of them with lots of garlands garlanding Nityananda Prabhu, the garlanding and the sandalwood paste all over his forehead. This comes at the end Caitanya Caritamrita. We always hear at the end of honouring of prasad, then comes the garland then comes the Chandan and then Caitanya Mahaprabhu Nityananda Prabhu were chewing pan and were glancing upon all the assembled devotees with great joy. In all great details that Krishnadas Kaviraj Goswami has taken note of.

So like this the festival during the day had come to an end. So we did not celebrate you did not celebrate the festival during the day but that day 500 years ago, there was another festival in the evening like here we are evening festival evening and that festival was held at Raghav pandit's temple, his family temple home. After the day, festival Nityananda Prabhu took some rest and he arrived in the temple in the

evening devotees also arrived and there was a very very special kirtan and kirtan went on and on and on and the kirtan Nityananda Prabhu was inspiring, inducing everyone to dance and and finally he also started dancing and when Nityananda Prabhu performs kirtan and he begins dancing that that that dance and kirtan becomes all attractive even that attracts Caitanya Mahaprabhu.

Caitanya Mahaprabhu had come during the day and Caitanya Mahaprabhu appeared there in the evening in the kirtan where Nityananda Prabhu was chanting and dancing. And Caitanya Mahaprabhu has also started dancing .

**ajanu-lambita-bhujau kanakavadhatau
sankirtanaika-pitarau kamalayataksau
visvambharau dvija-varau yuga-dharma palau
vande jagat-priyakaro karunavatarau**

Karuna avatarau there are two avatars – One is Gauranga and other is Nityananda.

Radhe Gauranga Girihari ki jai

As soon as we talked about you could see He is dancing, He is here. yatra madhbhakta gayanti– Lord said, I am there where I am remembered, my glories are chanted I am there that is my address. You could find me there. So

we have Gaura Nityananda appear as we are remembering glories of that festival, glories of Gauranga and Nityananda Prabhu Hari Hari

**sundara-b?l? ?ac?-dul?l?
n?cata ?r?-hari-k?rtana me?
bh?le candana tilaka manohara
alak? ?obhe kapolana me?
?ire c??? dara?i b?le
vana-phula-m?l? hiy?para dole
pahirana p?ta-pa??mbara ?obhe
n?pura ru?u-jhunu cara?o me?**

Translation

This gorgeous boy is the darling child of mother Saci, dancing in the kirtana of chanting Lord Hari's names. His forehead is adorned with drawings of sandalwood paste, and His enchanting locks of hair are shining in a splendorous fashion as they bounce upon His cheeks.

His hair is wrapped in a topknot, and a garland of forest flowers sways upon His chest. Wearing brilliant yellow silken garments, He dances with ankle bells tinkling upon His feet.

Sundar lala begins dancing in kirtan. He is a Natavara Gaura Nataraj, Nat means actor, dancer and He is Supreme dancer.

Krsna who dances in rasa dance in Vrindavan with Gopis same Krsna now he has become Krsna Caitanya and He is dancing with His devotees dancing in kirtan and Nityananda Prabhu also dances. He also dances in rasa dance, he has his own set of Gopis. Only two Lords dance with the Gopis – Krsna and Balarama. There is no third Lords who dances with Gopis. Not Sri Rama, not Narasimha, Parasurama only Krsna Balaram and now they are dancing 500 years ago they are dancing in kirtan.

The founding fathers of the sankirtan movement original founding fathers, founders are Gaura Nityandand. Then 50 years ago, the International Society for Krishna Consciousness was founded on behalf of Gaura Nityanand by Srila Prabhupada ki jai.

And today this dahi chida festival is being celebrated internationally and there is also one temple called new pani hatti Navin Pani Hathi. This is the Atlanta and America. I think the name came from Jayapatak Swami Maharaj and I was I was with him 10 years ago on this day celebrating Pani Hatti Festival in new pani hathi that is Atlanta America.

Jayapatak Maharaj was personally there, he was coordinator of that festival mastermind of that festival. Jayapatak Maharaj was first one to promote and propagate this festival. As he had stayed in Navadvipa Mayapur and lots of culture he had picked up. Jayapatak Maharaj ki jai. He should be remembered also yea so that good translation, so that evening after the kirtan two prabhus sat down again everyone did not take the cognisance of the presence of Caitanya Mahaprabhu. They did not take note of. Nityananda Prabhu sat down and he made an asan for Caitanya Mahaprabhu and he was sitting some saw him, some couldn't see him and so many others sat down and then Raghav Pandit and Damayanti cooking was served to these two Prabhus and all other devotees. It is said that that the cooking that took place at Raghav Pandit's kitchen, this cooking was done by Radha Rani herself. Radha Rani would appeared there and do all the cooking. So he could understand who the cook is. She is the best cook in the world- Jai Radhe and also anyone who eat the food cook by Radha Rani he would never get sick.

Hari Hari

Such was the benediction of Durvasa Muni. Durvasa Muni blessed Radha Rani one time and Yashoda knew this benediction that Radha Rani had this special benediction. That's why Yashoda would always insist that Radha Rani coming to Nandagram and doing all the cooking for Krsna. So Radha Rani was cooking in kitchen.

Gauranga Mahaprabhu, Nityananda Prabhu and all others honoured and finally everyone had prasad. Raghunath Das Goswami received the special remnants of Maha Maha prasad. So they stayed overnight. Raghunath Das also stayed and next day Raghunath Das Goswami came to the feet of Nityananda Prabhu and he was begging for special benediction. He said I made so many attempts to leave, run away but I have not succeeded so far – My dear Lord – Oh Varadraj – var means

benediction, raj means giver of what, giver of benediction.

That is also Nityananda Prabhu, Balaram Nityananda, so that morning Nityananda Prabhu gave special benediction. Now all the obstacles have been removed so you will be able to find relief and you will be released from all the bonds. And soon you will arrive in Jagannath Puri and attend the lotus feet of Caitanya Mahaprabhu ki jai. So without benediction of Nityananda Prabhu, Radha Krsna paithe nai.

You cannot attain Radha Krsna, so now Radha Krsna, Sri Krsna Caitanya, Radha Krsna nahi anya. Radha and Krsna they have combined in one form and that is Caitanya Mahaprabhu. So Nityananda Prabhu is Adi Guru eh Balaram so, yasya prasadat bhagavat prasado

If Nityananda Prabhu Adi Guru original spiritual master, he is pleased then Krsna is pleased. So Raghunath Das Goswami had pleased Nityananda Prabhu by organising that dahi chida festival, feeding him, feeding unlimited number of his associates and devotees. He received that benediction and we also pray to Nityananda Prabhu who is merciful always, today he is very very merciful.

He may bless all of us. May you all receive benediction from Nityananda Prabhu so that you could attain we all could attain the lotus feet of Caitanya Mahaprabhu Radha krsna.

May Nityananda Prabhu be pleased with all of you including myself.

Nitai Gaura Preme Nande

Hari Haribol