

	2008 Karl Kübel Stiftung		8	
	Unterrichtsmaterial Indien			"Holi"

The Festival of Holi

This two days festival has got a secular flavour. People of all religions celebrate it in the northern part of India. The functions start on the day after the full moon in early March or April. It heralds the end of winter, when the wheat harvest is gathered in. The night before the full moon, families, friends or groups of people gather and light huge bonfires to burn dry leaves and twigs of the winter. Sometimes people go or dance around the fire. It celebrates the victory of good over the evil.

A. Read the story below and translate into German language:

Once upon a time....

...there was an Indian king named Hiranyakashyapu, who had become very powerful and proud. Soon he wanted to be worshiped like a God.

His own son Prahlad refused, as he was a great devotee of Lord Vishnu. Despite his father's order he continued offering prayers to Lord Vishnu. The King decided to kill his son. Young Prahlad was made to sit in his

aunt Holika's garden. It was believed that Holika could never be burned by fire, so she was asked to sit next to him to let him feel safe.

A bonfire was lit with Prahlad and Holika in its centre. Do you know what happened?

Holika was burned to ashes while Prahlad remained untouched by the help of Lord Vishnu.

Holi: Festival of colours

On the second day is celebrated the festival of colours. This is the festival of the young hearts. Girls and boys, men and women irrespective of caste mix together on the streets and exchange colours. Most of the people nowadays prefer the traditionally prepared herb colours that are good for skin. The celebration can get wild and rough. People smear each other's faces with coloured powder and throw coloured water on each other. Some groups take out processions on streets that feature folk songs and dances. The main significance behind the celebration is fun and enjoyment. Often the festival is connected to God Krishna, because he was always looking for jokes and fun.

Source: Wikipedia.de, festivalsindia.net

B. What kind of festivals do you celebrate in springtime? Describe and compare:

