

I transfer to you. Besides, you will be immune from all diseases. Whoever kills you, will meet with death, soon after. You will dance at the commencement of the rainy season. People will greet you with enthusiasm."

It is because of Indra's blessing that Peacocks are so beautiful in appearance and dance at the onset of the rainy season.

MAYŪRA. An asura who fought against Subrahmaṇya. Skanda Purāṇa, Viramaheन्द्रa Kāṇḍa describes the terrible battle between Mayūra and Subrahmaṇya. Mahābhārata, Ādi Parva, Chapter 65 says that after death, Mayūra was reborn in the world as a King named Viśva.

MAYŪRADHVĀJA. A King of Ratnanagāra. After performing seven Aśvamedha yāgas this King started another Aśvamedha in the Narmadā river valley. The task of protecting the sacrificial horse was undertaken by the King's son Sucitra or Tāmradhvaja. He set out for the conquest of the world with the chief minister Bahudhvaja. On his return, he came across Yudhiṣṭhira's Aśvamedha horse at the city of Maṇipur. The heroic Sucitra encountered Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna who were leading the horse. After making them unconscious, he entered the city with the sacrificial horse.

When they recovered their senses, Śrī Kṛṣṇa disguised himself as a Brāhmaṇa and Arjuna as a Brāhmaṇa boy and they went to Mayūradhvaja's palace. The King welcomed them respectfully. Śrī Kṛṣṇa, in his disguise as Brāhmaṇa told the King that he was coming from Dharmapurī to meet the King's priest, Kṛṣṇa who was to officiate at the marriage of his (Brāhmaṇa's) son. He added that unfortunately on his way through a forest a lion caught hold of his son. Although he prayed to Lord Narasiṁha, the boy could not be rescued. The lion told him that he would release his son, if the Brāhmaṇa persuaded Mayūradhvaja to offer one half of his body as food to the lion.

On hearing the Brāhmaṇa's story, Mayūradhvaja agreed to give half of his body to the lion. Just then his queen Kumudvatī appeared before them and said, "I am the left half (Vāmabhāga) of the King. You may take me and offer me as food for the lion." But the Brāhmaṇa replied that the lion wanted the right half of the King's body.

When the King heard this, he readily agreed to give the right half of his own body. Accordingly, they started cutting his body into two halves. Just then, seeing tears coming down from Mayūradhvaja's left eye, the Brāhmaṇa said:—"I find that you are in great sorrow ; I do not wish to accept a gift which is not given wholeheartedly." Mayūradhvaja explained that his tears were not caused by pain or sorrow. His left side was disappointed in not being able to be of as much service as the right side.

When Śrī Kṛṣṇa heard these words of the King, he resumed his own shape and embraced him and blessed him. After that Mayūradhvaja completed his yāga and started with Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna, taking Yudhiṣṭhira's sacrificial horse with them. (Jaimini ; Aśvamedha : 41-46).

MEDA. A serpent of the clan of Airāvata. This serpent was burnt to death at the Sarpasatra of Janamejaya. (Śloka 11, Chapter 57, Ādi Parva).

MEDHĀ. One of the twentyfour daughters born to Dakṣaprajāpati of his wife Prasūti. Of these, thirteen

daughters including Medhā were married by Dharmadeva. (Chapter 7, Viṣṇu Purāṇa).

MEDHĀTITHI I. Grandson of Svāyambhuva Manu. Svāyambhuva Manu had two sons named Priyavrata and Uttānapāda. Of these Priyavrata married Sarūpā and Barhiṣmatī, daughters of Viśvakarmaprajāpati. Medhātithi was the son born to Priyavrata of Sarūpā. Agnidhra, and others were the brothers of Medhātithi. Medhātithi became the King of Plakṣadvīpa after the death of Priyavrata. (8th Skandha, Devī Bhāgavata). Medhātithi got seven sons named Śāntahaya, Śīśira, Sukhodaya, Ānanda, Śiva. Kṣemaka and Dhruva. They all became Kings of Plakṣadvīpa. The countries they ruled were named after them as Śāntahayavarṣa, Śīśiravarṣa, Sukhodayavarṣa, Ānaudavarṣa, Śivavarṣa, Kṣemakavarṣa and Dhruvarṣa. There are seven mountains showing the boundaries of these states and they are called Gomeda, Cāndra, Nārada, Dundubhi, Somaka, Sumana and Vaibhrāja. In these beautiful countries and grand mountains live a great many Devas, Gandharvas and virtuous men. (Chapter 4, Amṣa 2, Viṣṇu Purāṇa).

MEDHĀTITHI II. A Rajarṣi of the Pūru dynasty.

Genealogy. Pūru—Janamejaya Prācinvān—Manasyu—Vītabhaya—Śuṇḍu—Bahuvīdha—Samyāti—Rahovādī—Bhadraśva—Matināra—Pratiratha—Kaṇva — Medhātithi.

This Medhātithi got two sons named Duṣyanta and Pravīra. It was this Duṣyanta who married Śakuntalā. (Chapter 278, Agni Purāṇa).

Medhātithi was a celebrated sage of Bhārata. The maharṣi referred to in Śūkta 12, Anuvāka 4, Maṇḍala 1 of Ṛgveda is Medhātithi son of Kaṇva. Once Indra coming in the form of a goat drank the soma of Medhātithi and the latter called him 'goat' (Meṣa) and thenceforth Indra got the name Meṣa. (Śūkta 51, Anuvāka 10, Maṇḍala 1, Ṛgveda).

We get the following details about Medhātithi from the Mahābhārata.

- (1) He was a King in the court of Indra.
- (2) Medhātithi had a son named Kaṇvamuni who was popular on the east coast of Bhārata. (Śloka 23, Chapter 107, Śānti Parva).
- (3) Medhātithi observed Vānaprastha and attained Svarga. (Śloka 7, Chapter 336, Śānti Parva).
- (4) Medhātithi was considered to be a sage deserving worship and when he went to see Bhīṣma once Dharmaputra received him with respect and worshipped him. (Śloka 3, Chapter 26, Anuśāsana Parva).

MEDHĀTITHI III. A river. This river is the place of birth of Agni. (Śloka 23, Chapter 222, Vana Parva).

MEDHĀTITHI IV. A sage who was the father of Arundhatī, wife of Vasiṣṭha. This Medhātithi who was living in an āśrama on the banks of the river Candrabhāgā performed a Jyotiṣṭoma yajña. (Kālikā Purāṇa).

MEDHĀVĪ I.

- 1) *General information.* A fierce sage. His father was a sage known as Bāladhi. For a very long time Bāladhi had no children and so, griefstricken, Bāladhi did penance and Medhāvī was born as a result of his penance. Even from boyhood the child showed wonderful powers of grasping things and so he was named Medhāvī. (Chapter 135, Vana Parva).