

Chapter 52, Stanza 15, that the princes of this country gave presents to Yudhiṣṭhira at the time of his sacrifice of royal consecration.

**VASĀTI I.** A king of the Candra (lunar) dynasty. He was the eighth son of Janamejaya. (M.B. Ādi Parva, Chapter 94, Stanza 57).

**VASĀTI II.** A country in ancient India. The Kṣatriya kings of this country took the side of the Kauravas in the Bhārata Battle and were employed to protect Bhīṣma. (M.B. Bhīṣma Parva, Chapter 51, Stanza 14).

**VASĀTI III.** A King who fought on the side of Duryodhana. When Abhimanyu entered Cakra-vyūha of the army formed by Droṇa this King took a vow that he would commit suicide if he did not kill Abhimanyu and then ran to the scene of the battle. In the fight between Vasāti and Abhimanyu, Vasāti was killed. (M.B. Droṇa Parva, Chapter 43, Verses 8-10).

**VASĀTIKA.** A warrior who fought on the side of the Kauravas against the Pāṇḍavas. He was killed in the fight with Abhimanyu. (M.B. Droṇa Parva, Chapter 44, Stanza 8).

**VĀSAVADĀITĀ.** Wife of Udayana. (See under Udayana).

**VĀSAVARTĪ.** A group of devas (gods). It is said that in the third Manvantara there were five groups of Devas, each group containing twelve persons, known as the Sudhāmās, the Satyas, the Japas, the Pratardanas and the Vāsavartins. (For more details see under Manvantara).

**VĀSAVĪ.** Another name of Satyavatī the mother of Vyāsa. (Mahābhārata, Ādi Parva, Chapter 63).

**VASĀYU.** A son born to Purūravas by Ūrvaśī. (Padma Purāna, Sṛṣṭi Khaṇḍa, 12).

**VASIṢṬHA.** A hermit who was the son of Brahmā.

1) *The three births of Vasiṣṭha.* Vasiṣṭha with the radiance of Brahmā, is very famous in the Purānas. He had three births.

i) *First birth.*

a) *Birth.* Vasiṣṭha is one of the mental sons of Brahmā. This is the first birth of Vasiṣṭha.

“Nārada was born from the lap, Dakṣa was born from the right thumb, Vasiṣṭha from the breath (prāṇa) Bhṛgu from the skin, Kratu from the hand of Brahmā.” In this birth, Arundhatī was the wife of Vasiṣṭha. Arundhatī was known by the name Ūrjā also. There is a Purānic story behind the marriage of Vasiṣṭha and Arundhatī.

In her previous birth the name of Arundhatī was Sandhyā. She was born from the passion of Brahmā. As soon as she was born she grew up. Seeing her exquisite beauty the Prajāpatis were filled with excitement. Even Brahmā, her father, was somewhat excited at her sight. Śiva, who understood this, teased Brahmā. Sandhyā was ashamed. Even after Śiva, Brahmā, Prajāpatis and the others had gone their ways, she remained there blaming her birth. She said to herself: “The moment I was born, I grew up to be a young woman. My father and my brothers looked at me with desire. I also looked at them excitedly. As an atonement for this sin, I will burn my body in fire. I do not want a body desired by my father and brothers. With this decision she went to the mountain Candrabhāga, which is the source of the river Candrabhāgā, and began to perform penance. Brahmā who came to know of this,

was filled with pity and sent Vasiṣṭha to her. He went there in the form of a Brahmin boy and taught her how to perform penance. After the return of Vasiṣṭha she continued the severe penance to Viṣṇu. Her penance became the subject of talk and wonder everywhere. After a short while Viṣṇu appeared before her sitting on his conveyance Garuḍa. She praised Viṣṇu. Viṣṇu was pleased with her and asked what her desire was. She said: “Lord, creatures should not be sexually excited at their birth. They should have sexual desire only when they are grown up. The three worlds must know that I am chaste. In all my births I should not look at anybody except my husband with sexual desire. The man who looks at me with sexual desire should lose his manliness and become a hermaphrodite.”

Mahāviṣṇu agreed to her request. It was from that day onwards that sexual desire appeared in creatures in their grown-up stage only, after they have passed the stages of infancy and childhood. Mahāviṣṇu told her. “It is preordained that this body of yours will be burnt in fire. Medhātithi, (Meghātithi), the son of Priyavrata is performing the great sacrifice called Jyotiṣṭoma which is to be completed in twelve years. It is coming to a close. There is none equal to him because of this sacrifice. That great hermit’s sacrifice is being performed in the basin of this river Candrabhāgā. Unseen by the hermits, you should go there and get into the fire. Because of my blessing you will be born from that fire as the daughter of Medhātithi. You should go into the fire thinking of him whom you want to be your husband in this birth.”

Mahāviṣṇu touched Sandhyā with the tip of his finger. Sandhyā walked to the sacrificial hall. Seen by none, she got down into the fire. She was burnt in the blazing fire. By the order of Viṣṇu; the God fire placed Sandhyā who was burnt in the sacrificial fire, in the Solar region. The sun divided that body into two and placed them in his chariot. The upper portion became the prātassandhyā (dawn) between the day and the night and the lower portion became the Sāyantana Sandhyā (the evening twilight). At the end of the sacrifice, from the centre of the sacrificial fire a girl, like the flame of fire rose up. Medhātithi took that child in his hands and called her Arundhatī. The child became famous throughout the three worlds, as the name stood for the principle that on no reason whatsoever will righteousness be obstructed. (Rodha means obstruction. So Arundhatī is one who cannot be obstructed). In some other Purānas Arundhatī is given as the daughter of Prajāpati Kardama and Devahūtī.

b) *Marriage.* Arundhatī grew up in the hermitage of Medhātithi. Candrabhāgā holy bath which was the playfield of Arundhatī, is even today, known as Arundhatītīrtha. Arundhatī became five years of age. Brahmā saw her when she was playing on the ground after having taken her bath. At the instruction of Brahmā, Arundhatī was entrusted to Sāvitrī and Bahulā for education. Sāvitrī is the wife of the Sun. Arundhatī lived in Mānasa lake with Sāvitrī, Gāyatrī, Bahulā, Sarasvatī, Drupadā and such other celestial women and completed her education. One day Arundhatī happened to see Vasiṣṭha who was shining with radiance. They fell in love with each other. Parents and relatives and the elders came to know of this. Sāvitrī patting Arundhatī blessed her to become the wife of