

Gorehabba



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Gummatapura is a tiny village situated in the Karnataka-Tamil Nadu border, where Gorehabba is celebrated a day after Balipadyami. Gorehabba is celebrated by splashing cow dung on each other. Before the villagers start playing with the cow dung, there are a few interesting rituals which are followed.

Starting early morning, men, women and children begin collecting cow dung from all over the village and dump it in a place designated for it, behind the Beerappa temple. Later, half naked children go all around the village collecting oil and butter for offering pooja at the temple. After the required oil and butter are collected, they offer pooja at the Karappa temple which is about one km away from the Beerappa temple. Once the pooja is done, the villagers come back in a procession. On the way back, one person is designated as a Chadikora (sneak). He is then fixed with a mustache and beard made of grass, seated on a donkey and brought to the temple in a procession.

After reaching the temple, the Chadikora's mustache and beard are removed and buried in the pit where the heap of dung has been deposited. Pooja is offered to the heap of cow dung and then starts the fun! Immediately after the pooja is offered, a handful of cow dung is splashed on the priest which is the green signal for the others. Every single person in the village is pushed into the pit and smeared with cow dung. Thousands of people from the nearby villages gather to watch the game.

Later, an effigy of the Chadikora is made and taken to the Kondigekara Gudda (a hillock nearby) to be burnt. A chicken too is burnt along with the effigy. The villagers clean themselves in the lake, come back to the village and abuse the Chadikora. It is also believed that participating in the cow dung splashing game cures people of all kinds of disease, which is one of the reasons for keeping the tradition alive, even after hundreds of years.