

PLACING OF THE *VARADHIYO* (GOOD LUCK POT) IN THE NEW HOME

1. One small water pot
2. A new piece of red cloth
3. New coconut
4. 6 leaves of *paan*
5. 6 mango leaves
6. *Khaarak, sopaari*, shell almonds and turmeric pods 2-3 pieces each.
7. Green gram, wheat, rice, sugar - a little of each
8. A small pot of black salt.
9. Some water from the old home.
10. Torans for the doors.
11. One small *Divaa* and garland.
12. Small *ses*
13. *Afargaanyu*

METHOD

Fill the new water pot with little water and add *khaarak, sopaari*, almond, turmeric pods, rice, green gram, and a spoonful of sugar and cover the pot with the red cloth. Arrange the *paan* and mango leaves on the mouth of the pot and put the new coconut on them and put dots of turmeric and *kumkum* on the pot and all the doors of the house.

Make chalk designs on the kitchen platform, place wheat on it and then put the water pot on it and light the *divo* near it. Also place the salt pot and *ses* near it. Then place sandalwood and *lobaan* on the *afargaanyu* and take it around the house and wish for peace, prosperity and harmony.

All the items that have been placed in the *varadhiyo* have a meaning and understanding and living accordingly will definitely bring love and prosperity.

- 1) Water is cool, it quenches thirst so one must keep one's cool all the time.
- 2) The coconut is useful in all its forms; so we must also make ourselves useful in every field.
- 3) The leaves represent greenery and prosperity.
- 4) The grains indicate wealth and abundance and food for the hungry.
- 5) The chalk and toran are a sign of welcome.

The Essence of the various ceremonies before the wedding.

- 1) ***Dahi-Machhi*** : Butter and Ghee (which are both strength giving) are made from Dahi (curd) - so sagan is done with it. Similarly, just as a fish swims with ease in the water, we wish that the couple swim with ease in the ocean of life. *Boi* was used as it was easily available, but any other fish (chocolate or mava) can also be used.
- 2) ***Sakar-Tapko*** : *Sakar* is sent with the horoscope to make the new phase of the life sweet.
- 3) ***Divaa naa Kapdaa*** : Earlier both the bride and the groom used to light a lamp to signify light or brightness in the home and a *Raajmohar* was given to the servant as an act of charity. Now instead, we place a rupee coin in the *Diva*.
- 4) ***Daar ni Pori Pataashaa*** : *Pataashaa* shows the sweetness in life. The outside white covering of the *pori* shows the clear clean mentality and the golden dal represents a clean smooth life.

5) **Taambaa pad** : For setting up a new home- vessels are needed and may they always be full is indicated by putting wheat, *pataashaa-sev*, curd and a coconut in them.

Wheat indicates wealth. *Pataashaa* indicates a sweet nature *Sev* indicates a mixture of sweets and a coconut indicates a life useful in all aspects.

6) **Taambaa no kaasiyo (copper bowl)** : The Hindus call their priest *Gor*. We give a bowl of copper with ghee and Jaggery as donation to the *Mobed*.

7) **Maadav Sarav (The wedding canopy)** : Earlier the tent or canopy for the wedding was put up in front of the house. This required a hole to be dug to place the pole. The Spendarmad Amsaaspand, who is the care taker of the soil needs to give his permission and we must put back what we have removed from the soil. So we put a small offering of metals Gold - Silver and copper. Then put lobaan and ask for a happy successful ceremony. The turmeric as per ayurvedic rules is good for health and beauty. The plant in the pot signifies a fruitful life.

8) **Kharaptu** : The two colours of Turmeric and *kumkum* are put in a design on the wall and all the doors - an indication of health and good behavior.

9) **Supra Uphnaavaa (whinnying)** : The whinnying of the grain in the *supra* shows love and togetherness and pounding of the turmeric pods indicates that the bride is supposed to do housework.

10) **Varni** : It is a ceremony of give and take to show that the girl and boy like each other and that their parents and family are also happy to give their consent to the marriage.

11) **Varadh Pattar** :

Varadh means progress. *Pattar* means letter.

This is a religious ceremony where the Yazads, Amsaspands and Faroharas are given a heavenly invitation to come and bless the couple. Big varadhvaras used to be distributed to show joy and happiness.

12) **Ukardi** : What was left after the prayer and distribution, was looted in a game of fun and frolic to show that the higher souls have been invited and remembered.

13) **Pithi** : This is a ceremony where turmeric is applied on the body of the bride and groom to enhance their health and beauty and to get them ready for the wedding.

14) **Var Behdu** : In this ceremony the bride's sister washes the hands and feet of the groom to show her respects to him and he in return gives her a gift and accepts her responsibility.

The above ceremonies do not pertain to our religion. In Iran there were no such ceremonies, but due to the promise given to Jadi Rana we have adopted the Hindu ceremonies and various changes have taken place in them over the years.

The *kumkum* on the forehead, the glass bangles, ses etc. is not of Iranian origin, but it shows the Parsee character of tolerance, co-operation, friendliness and the honour to keep the promise to the ruler of the land.

We therefore, continue to follow these ceremonies and hope that they are followed as far as possible by all Parsees.