

HUMAN birth saddles us with three debts, according to Hinduism. They are: the debt to God, to sages and saints, and to our ancestors and parents.

In line with the obligations, adhering to Pitru Paksha or Shradh rituals are of great importance. They're observed so that the souls of your ancestors can rest in peace.

This year, Pitru Paksha runs from September 6 to 20.

According to the *Srimad Bhagavad Gita*, the body can be destroyed but the soul is eternal.

The Brahma Puran states that on the eve of Krishna Paksh in the month of Ashvin, the Lord of death, Yamraj, grants freedom to all the souls so that they can accept and eat the food prepared by their children for Shradh.

People who don't perform

Shradh for their Pitrus suffer the curse of "Pitru Dosh" as their Pitrus become angry and return to their world with unfulfilled desires.

This causes future generations to face many problems. Thus it is said that Pitru Dosh is prevalent in someone's horoscope.

Causes:

Pitru Dosha occurs when someone in a family dies an unnatural death. It also happens when relatives fail to perform spiritual duties after a relative has killed a cow, destroyed a foetus in a woman's womb or treated parents harshly near the time of their death.

Shradh objectives:

- To try to free yourself from the debt due to ancestors and show them appreciation.
- Enable the souls of

MAHESH BANG



Astrologer, numerologist, palmist, vastu and feng shui expert

Unfounded myths:

It's said all prayer rituals must be stopped during Pitru Praksha. That is wrong.

You can do prayer routines and chant. Continue to light lamps in the morning and evening.

Show even greater commitment to religious duty during this time to please your ancestors and be blessed – but don't do "anushtans" at this time.

Appropriate offerings:

Ancestors accept only vegetarian "Satvik" food, even those who preferred meat while alive. The *Garuda Puran* makes no mention of meat offerings. Ancestors are in another form of life and detest non-vegetarian food and so will not be satisfied. Satvik means no onion, garlic, meat, alcohol, eggs or cigarettes.

ancestors, trapped between Earth and other planes, to progress.

During Pitru Paksha, refrain from:

- All sacred ceremonies such as marriages, births and moving into a new house.
 - Haircuts.
 - Eating non-vegetarian food and using alcohol and tobacco.
 - Eating at others' homes.
- (Having a meal with relatives at their homes is acceptable, but not applicable to priests.)

According to Hinduism, everyone should follow "Pitru Paksha" for the sake of their ancestors. On these days, observe a vegetarian diet.

The person who performs the Shradha pooja during Pitru Paksha must do it with dedication, perhaps guided by an experienced priest.

Remember:

In completing the Shradh, do it on the date your ancestors died. Consult a priest on *thithi* (Hindu dates).

The priest will advise you on the appropriate time for a ritual once you share the dates according to the Gregorian calendar.

If you cannot establish the appropriate time to perform this ritual, then do it on "Sarva Pitru Amavasya" which this year is on

September 20. You can invite the priest and his wife and offer them a meal.

Thereafter, donate five items such as an umbrella, handkerchief and clothing and make a cash donation.

Donated items could include:

- Ghee (purified butter).
 - Rice.
 - Gangajal (water from the Ganges River).
 - Mustard Oil.
 - Wheat.
 - Salt.
 - Steel utensils.
 - Shoes, socks or chappals.
 - Clothing (towels, lungi, kurta).
 - Fruit.
 - Vegetables.
 - Kali Til (sesame seed) and milk.
- Note:**

● Along with the Brahmins, crows are fed the same food because these birds are considered Yama's messengers. Dogs and cows are also fed at this time.

● Include tulsi (devi) leaves in your offering.

● Most important, according to astrology, the best way to avoid "Pitru Dosha" is to care for your parents in their old age.

Readers can send their name and surname, religion, date, place and time of birth and the advice they require to: Mahesh Bang, Tribune Herald, PO Box 47549, Greyville, 4023, or e-mail tribuneherald@inl.co.za or call him at: 083 659 2277 or 031 401 8888



CELEBRATING WOMEN

The Misty Blue Group held its annual Sex in the City Women's Month event two weeks ago at the Square Boutique Hotel and Spa in uMhlanga. Enjoying this year's Rio Carnival theme were Alan Chetty, Jenny Pillay and Danny Guselli.



UKZN COLLEGE BREAKFAST

The University of KwaZulu-Natal's College of Agricultural Engineering and Science hosted a breakfast recently. At the breakfast were Chantal Koorbanally, Brenda Moodley, Roshila Moodley and Shakira Shaik.

PICTURES: SYDNEY REDDY



Also at the UKZN breakfast were, top, Leen Rajpaul, Sally Frost and Tracy Govender. ABOVE: Patience Mdlaka, Sashlin Girray, Patricia Govender and Bongwiwe Mshengu.



SUPERTECH GOLF DAY 2017