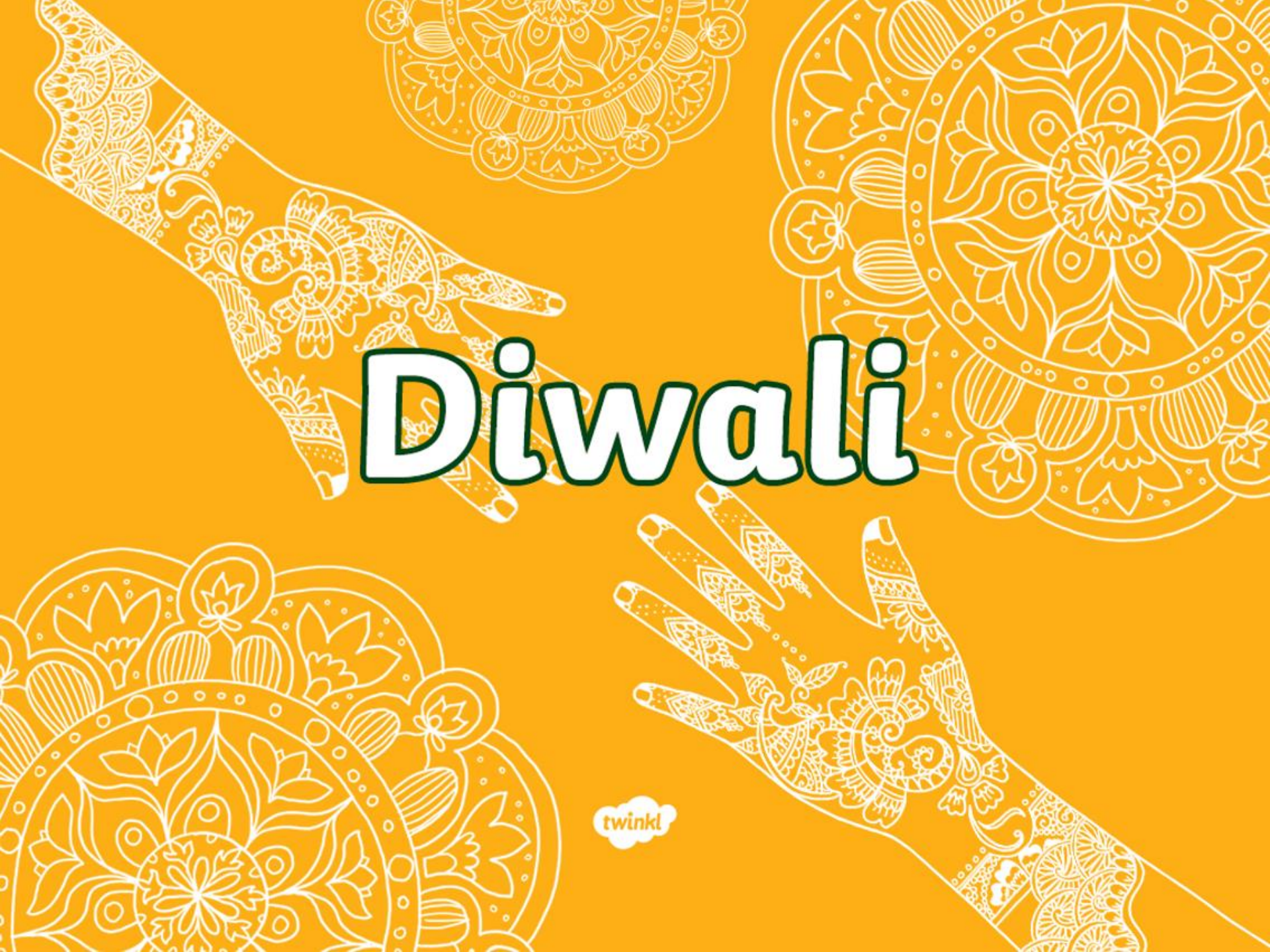


# Diwali



# What is Diwali?

Diwali is a very important holiday in India.

It is a Hindu 'festival of lights' which celebrates the New Year.

The word Diwali means 'row of lighted lamps'.

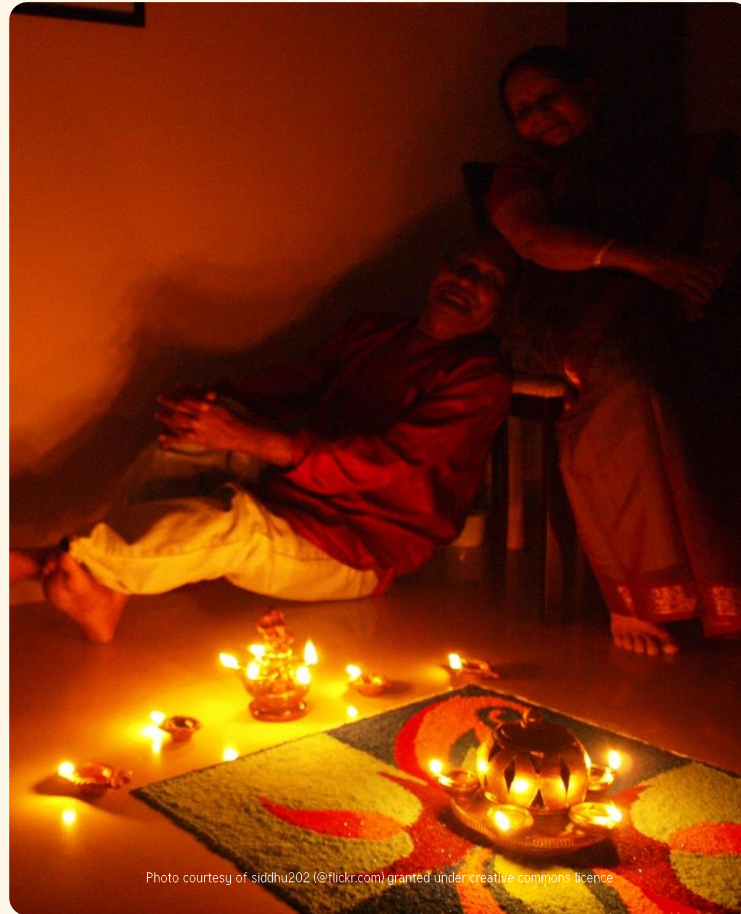


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# Celebrating Diwali

The festival usually honours **Lakshmi**, the goddess of wealth.

Lamps are lit to help Lakshmi find her way into people's homes.



Lakshmi



Diya lamp

They also celebrate a Diwali legend, the story of the return of **Rama** and **Sita** to Rama's kingdom after fourteen years of exile.

# Celebrating Diwali

The festival is a time for:

- spring cleaning
- decorating the home with lots of lights
- wearing new clothes
- exchanging gifts
- preparing festival meals
- putting on huge fireworks displays

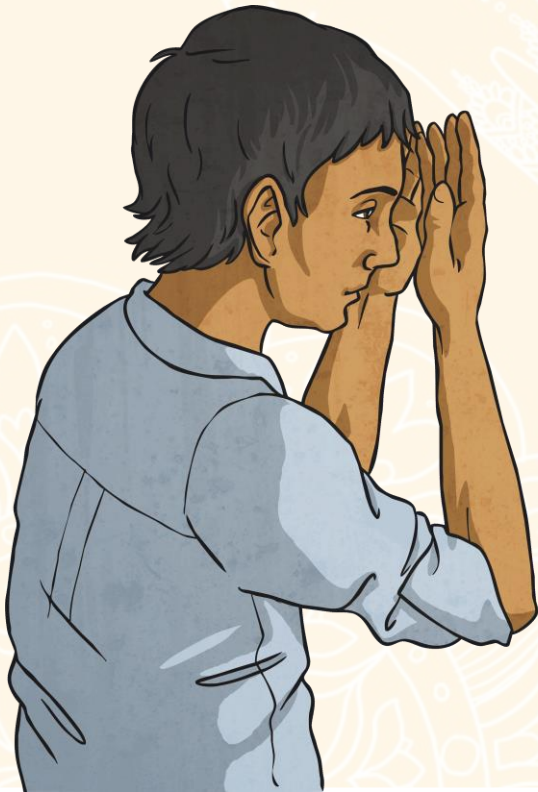


Hindu family praying

# Celebrating Diwali

In India, Hindus leave the windows and doors of their houses open so that Lakshmi can come in.

Rangoli are drawn on the floors of the house. These are patterns and the most popular subject is the lotus flower.



Lotus flower

# The Meaning of Diwali

The festival celebrates the victory of good over evil, light over darkness and knowledge over ignorance.

The legends that go with the festival differ depending on where you are:

- In northern India, Diwali celebrates Rama and Sita's return from exile.
- In Nepal, Diwali commemorates the victory of Lord Krishna over the demon king Narakaasura.
- In Bengal, it is associated with the goddess Kali.



Rama and Sita

# Holi Festival

twinkl

# What is Holi Festival?

- It is also known as the festival of colours.
- It was originally celebrated in North India (where it is a national holiday) but is now celebrated in many parts of the world.
- Its marks the beginning of spring, usually in March.



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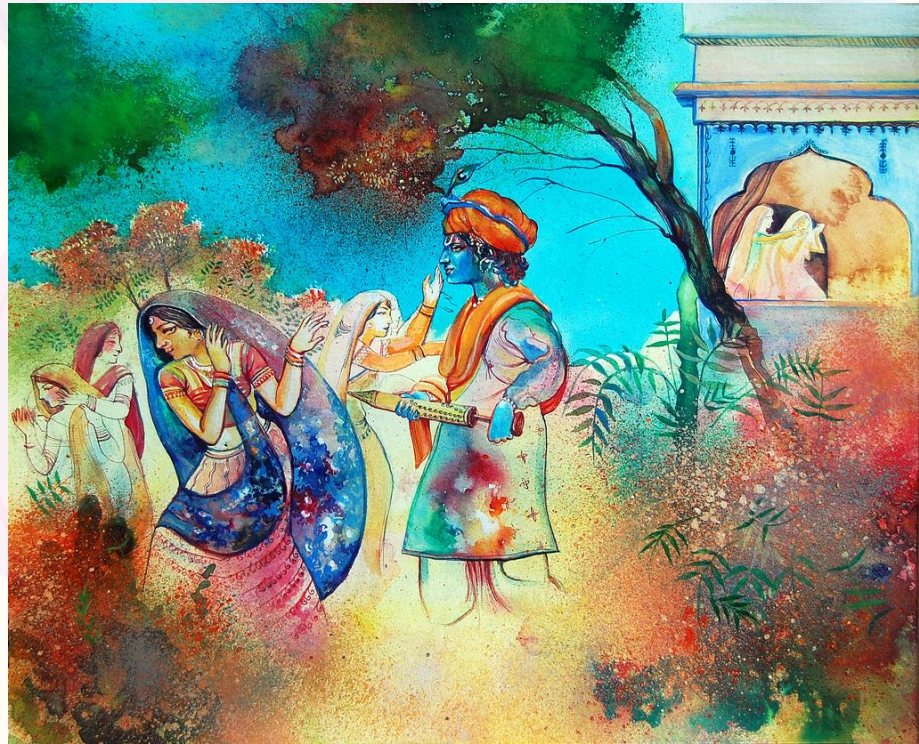


# Religious Meaning

Holi is also a Hindu celebration.

It celebrated Krishna, and the legend of Holika and Prahlad.

Hindus believe that Krishna threw water over milkmaids as a child. This developed into the games of Holi.



# Religious Meaning

There is also the story of Prahlad.

Prahlad was a prince.

The king (his father) wanted everyone in his kingdom to worship him. Prahlad refused and worshipped lord Vishnu instead.

The king's sister Holika, who was immune to fire, tricked her nephew Prahlad into sitting on her lap in a bonfire in order to destroy him, but because she was using her powers for evil, the plan failed and Prahlad emerged from the fire unharmed, while Holika was devoured by the flames.

In some parts of India effigies of Holika are burnt on a fire. Ashes from Holi bonfires are thought to bring good luck.

# Celebrations

Celebrations start with a Holika bonfire on the night before Holi.

People sing and dance around the fire and roast grains, popcorn and coconut around it.

They also throw chickpeas on the fire.

Last year's rubbish is burnt to represent new beginnings.

Effigies of Holika are burnt on the fire in some parts of India

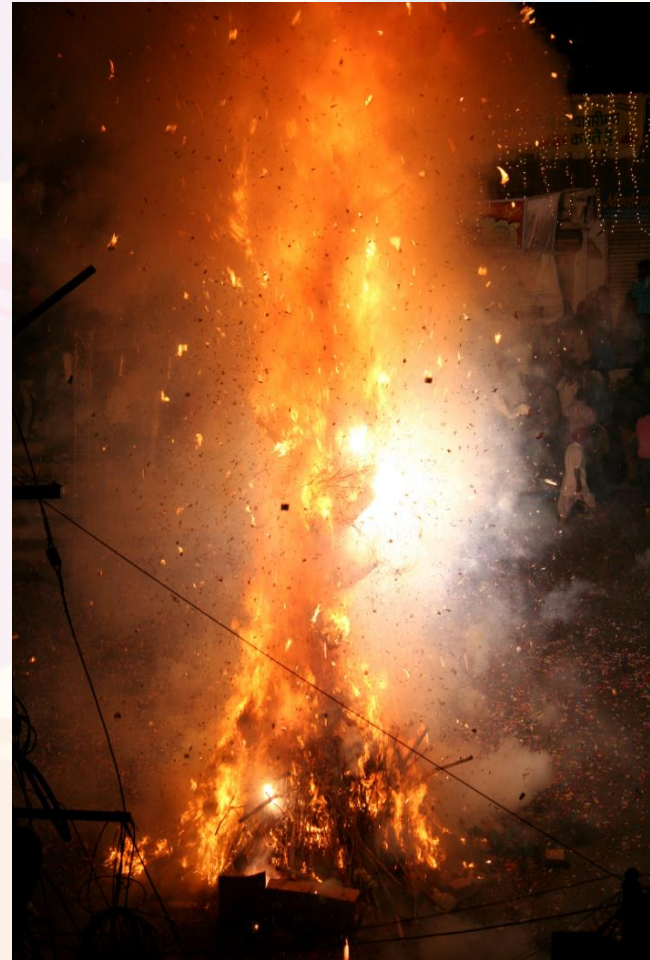


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# Celebrations

The next day people of all ages go out on the streets for a carnival of colours.

Everyone plays, chases each other with dry powder and coloured water.

Some people carry water guns and water balloons filled with coloured water, ready for a water fight.

People sing, dance and have fun together, no matter who they are.



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# Celebrations



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