



## Sarhul A Festival: Relation between Man and Nature

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**ABSTRACT:** Sarhul is a spring festival amongst Santals, residing in Jharkhand, Bihar, West Bengal and other parts of India. During spring they celebrate Sarhul which depicts the relation between man and nature. Following paper depicts the relation.

Sarhul is celebrated on the third day of the Bengali month Chaitra. Sarhul symbolizes the harmony between nature and human being and also the importance of customs and traditions for fortune and prosperity. The festival begins with the worship of trees and other elements of nature, specially the sacred Sal tree. Village priest {Pahan} offers sacrifices of flowers, fruits, vermillion, rooster and liquor to the Sun God, village Deity, and ancestors. Locals dance holding flowers of the Sal tree.

During Sarhul the village priest fast for couple of days before festival. On the festival day, Pahan put on a new dhoti. His wife washes his feet before he moves for the offerings and puja. She receives blessings from him at this time at the puja three new earthen pots are brought, filled with water on the previous evening, if after puja the pots filled with water remains same then this is a good sign. It indicates good harvest, prosperity, and peace. If the water level is decreased then it is a bad omen. **It indicates famine, flood. After** ritual the pahan distributes Sal flower to the village people as a sign

of blessings. Distribution of the Sal flower amongst the villagers signifies the blossoming of friendship and brotherhood amongst the villagers. After the puja is over, young youths of the area take pahan on their shoulder and take him to his house. During this the girls of the village dance before Pahan. After returning to his own house Pahan's wife takes blessings from him. During puja as mentioned earlier Sal flowers are distributed amongst the villagers. The villagers keep the Sal flowers on the roof of themselves. It is termed as Ful kansi. At the puja the Pahan offers young roosters of different colours to the Sun god, Ancestors and village Deity.

History of the Sarhul festival goes back to the Mahabharata period. It is said that the tribes offered Sal flowers to the ancestors during the month of Chaitra. The Sal tree remain filled up with flowers during this month. It is believed by the tribes that as the Sal tree give shade, wood for fuel, leaves for domestic uses so this is the abode of mother nature. Sal flowers indicate the happiness of the mother nature. So this is the real time for offering and enjoying the Mother Nature and to begin a new year. Blossoming Sal flowers gives a green signal to start a new.



### **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

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