



Mangalagiri which means 'The Auspicious Hill'

### GOVERNMENT IMPETUS

Considering the frequency of this festival, both the Government of Telangana and Government of Andhra Pradesh are making several plans and are preparing to handle the rush of pilgrims. It is anticipated that this year will see an average of 4-5 crore people attending the event from all over India and other parts of the world. Since there is an omnipresent belief that whoever visits the festival must take a holy dip in the River Krishna to improve both their physical and mental abilities, there is expected to be a huge effect on the river. The *ghats* in Vijayawada where you can take this holy dip include Metla Bazar, Durga Ghat, Pushkara Ghat, Padmavathi Ghat, Punnami Ghat, Ithanagaram Ghat and Siva Kshetram. The Government has announced several special trains for the Krishna Pushkaram

2016 to cater to the anticipated rush. In fact, the Governments have also made

arrangement for pilgrims who cannot attend the event in person and will send the Prasad/Krishna water to your postal address. Pervaram Ramulu, Chairman of TSTDC (Telangana State Tourism Development Corporation) says, "the river was stone dry until last month, but now, the upper reservoirs are quite full. Our advice to devotees is to visit the *ghats* between Jurala and Srisialam as this would be the best way to reach the river. In most other places there would be a long walk down to reach the river. From the Telanagana Tourism Board we have set up guest houses in Gadwal, Jetprolu, Somasila and Srisialam and Nagarjunasagar already has a guest house. We are expecting the river to be in full spate soon and we also have food courts, doctors on duty and ample parking space."

### PAYING OBEISANCE

As part of the festival, there are a host of *poojas* that you can do. These include the *Pindapradanam*, a unique ritual in which *pindas* (leaves) with offerings are made to departed souls that are set afloat in water as a form of respect to one's ancestors.

This is done as it is believed that this will help their souls attain salvation. On the other hand *Laghusankalpam* is a ritual where one takes a holy dip in the river by uttering prayers to be blessed by the river. The *Prayaschittam* is a ritual akin to confession when people accept their mistakes and seek forgiveness.

Likewise, the *Mahasankalpam Pooja* is performed by priests on the banks of the river to alleviate bad sins or *karma*. The *Ganga Pooja* is a ritual that involves worshipping the river as it is believed that during the Pushkaram, the water from all the 12 holy rivers is divinely mixed with the Krishna river. The *Sariganga Snanam Pooja* is aimed at cordial family life and better relations with one's children and spouse.

The *Gowri Pooja* is performed to appease Goddess Gowri/Parvati and the *Musivayanam* is a tradition in which a married woman is given gifts. In fact, this ritual can also be given to the husband when his wife dies and it is believed

## QUICK FACTS

1. The festival will be held this year between 12<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> August, 2016.

2. The festival is held over a 12 day period

3. For more details log on to: [www.krishnapushkaralu.org](http://www.krishnapushkaralu.org) and [www.krishnapushkaram.com](http://www.krishnapushkaram.com)