

The Bir Bkiram Story.

This story is a continuation of the Sana Patta. It tells of how the goddess Anarani provided the food and sustenance for the Raj Gond's well-being on earth.

This is a compilation of the story told by Atram Gangu Patel of Saleguda and Todasam Gudi of Ranjiguda. It was translated with the help of Abdul Majid Master, retired teacher from Bellampalli and Ginnedhari.

On the island of Chaudah Bhuvan Sujanghat a stork lived called Porodk Pite (bird) on the great oceans. This laid an egg there, from it Subgian Bir Bikram was born. He was a very truthful ruler, full of knowledge. He was wise in all knowledge and philosophy. He was as bright and beautiful as the sunbeams. With all beauty he grew to the age of twelve or thirteen.

At that time a couple called Bich Khand Guru and his wife Son Devi lived on the Chaudah Singh Bhuvan Singar Dip Island. They had seven daughters. First was Suni Lakshmi, second was Arandwanthi, third was Parandwanthi, fourth was Kamanpati, fifth was Chikatamothi, sixth was Dipamlakshmi, last was Lakshmi Devi (Anarani). When he reached the age of majority Bir Bikram married the two sisters, Arandwanthi and Parandwanthi. They were equally beautiful and had the same lovely complexion. They were very sensible and did not leave the Raja (King Bir Bikram) alone even for a minute. They were so loved that the Raja did not leave them for a moment. The two sisters served their Raja with great care.

On waking up every day and after ablution and fully bathing himself he would worship the Suriya Deva (the sun) and other gods. His house pen (deity) is Sani Matta and they worshiped it every day.

Many years passed and Shembu acquired power over the world from Niranjan Guru. The power to rule over numberless things was put in his hands. Shembu had to look after the good and bad of the world. Vishnu Deva had to see the good and bad of Nau Khand. Bir Bikram Raja, a very sensible man, ruled Singar Dip. Then Shembu created trees and hills and mountains, birds and animals and everything of numberless kinds. In this way the creations multiplied day after day. Nobody knew what they were eating. Some were eating leaves, some were eating fruits and some were eating herbs. On one day all the sensible deities and the big gods and the small gods, hundreds and thousands, gathered in the city of Bir Bikram. They discussed about many things. They all complained that there was no food to eat. How shall we get food and who is so powerful that they can go and get food in this beautiful island of so many creations. Then an old sensible man stood up and said, "Listen to me, we canna all do this, but in this beautiful world there is one handsome raja, called Bir Bikram, who was born in a stork's egg. He is very powerful. He always worships god and Suriya Bhagavan (the sun). He can do the necessary". Then all of them said, "It is wonderful that he was born from an egg." Then the old god began to narrate the wonderful birth of Bir Bikram. This is the story of his birth...

On the shores of a vast ocean the Korordk Pite (bird) was living. That bird bathes in the ocean every day at sunrise and flies into the sky in search of food. In this way years passed before it became fully matured. One night under full moon she was looking at the moon and enjoying its brightness. It fell in love with the moon and was thinking that it had no mate. If such a beautiful young boy should become my husband I would dance and laugh and do whatever I like with him. If her lover, the full moon, became her husband, she would have a baby in her womb. She began to weep. Understanding her deep love, the moon came down to the earth to reward her. The moon began to speak, "See, my dear, you are very sincere. Listen to what I have to say. In the future of the world your name must become immortal". Then, seeing the moon, the Porodk stood up and greeted it with reverence with his palms held together.

“Get up early and after bathing at sunrise and, facing the sun, pray to Bhagwan to give you a shining boy. Then the Sun will reward you.” Saying this the moon vanished. As she was asked she bathed at sunrise and was begging Suriya Deva (the sun) to fulfil her wish for a child. The Suriya Deva was very pleased at her devotion and she came down to earth and asked her what her wish was. Then the Porodk said, “I want to have a child like you.” Then Suriya Bhagwan said, “That is not a difficult thing to do. You will give birth to a child like me. He will rule over the Singar Kali. There will not be difficult.” Saying this it vanished. After saying this she was pregnant for nine months and nine days and nine hours and then it laid a three and a quarter forearms length egg. From that egg Bir Bikram was born. By the wish of Suriya Bhagwan he was a most sensible raja. After growing up the boy worshiped Suriya Deva every day. On the Andar Gandun Dip the daughters of And Guru (Bich Khand Guru), and Porodk (bird) were holding golden pots and had come to the shore of the ocean to wash. When they saw the most beautiful Bir Bikram, they both fell down stunned. After a while they got up again and were gazing at his beauty, at his youthful and shining face. Just like the rays of the sun, and eyes like the Jamun fruit and a white shining milk coloured forehead, and lips like the flame-of-the-forest tree. His feet were like pearl shells. If his eyes are seen once, they will never be forgotten. These two girls were thinking in their hearts that this man should be their mate. Fully in love with the sight of him and falling down and getting up they both reached home and told their father of his beauty.

Then And Guru (Bich Khand Guru) performed the marriage of these two girls, Arandwanthi and Parandwanthi, to Bir Bikram. In this way the birth of Bir Bikram took place through the wish of Suriya Baghavan. He was born with all the five elements (Bhutalk). One is Brahma (creation), two is Sikati (darkness), three is Mahatu, four is Madankar, five is Panchatan Matralu (the five elements). That is why the five wen saga is called Soyam Survasi Raja.

After saying this, and one day seeing good omens, all of them went to Bir Bikram’s ruling court (durbar). Standing in front of Bir Bikram respectfully and putting their palms together they told him what they wanted. Then Bir Bikram was sitting on his throne with pearls around it. They had all gathered there to think over how to get the Ana Prasadam (food offering). They all talked for a day and a night but no solution was suggested. Late in the night they all went to sleep inside the *durbar* (court). Even Bir Bikram went to sleep in his cot. As they thought and thought their whole bodies gave off heat like flames. They all wanted to drink some water for their thirst. Then Bir Bikram remembered his two queens. He thought that if at all they were near to him he would feel more at ease. My queens would give me water. Thinking this he got up and went to the door. Standing there he called the queens to him, calling twice. They ran to him asking, “What do you want?” He said, “I am very thirsty. Give me water.” Then the two queens said, “We cannot come into the Raj Durbar because many of the Gods are sleeping there. Our feet may touch their clothes, or our feet may tread on someone by mistake.” Then the raja found himself in a dilemma. “Oh my god. All the while I was only thinking of one thing but it was not solved. Now I am thirsty I am unable to get water.” Then the two queens understood his problem and understood why he was in difficulty. “Listen to what we have to say. We have a younger sister called Anarani. If you bring her here we will talk both good and bad with you. We will lead our lives with you. But until you bring her we will not stay with you.” When they said this Anarani he felt satisfied as if he had quenched his thirst and completely satisfied his appetite. He rushed up to the stables. He thought of Anarani and demanded that a horse be brought to him. Abruptly a horse leapt up to him with joy. He sat on it and went to see the queen and stood before them. They all felt very happy. They bowed down before him and lifted him off the horse and washed his feet and took him inside and sat him on he pearl covered cot. They brought warm water in a golden pot and cold water in another golden pot and bathed him. Then they prepared food of peacock eggs and *pusiri* (quail) egg. After eating to his satisfaction he sat on the horse and set off for Anarani.

Riding on the horse he passed the outskirts of his city. There he wondered where to go and where to find her. Puzzled in this way he thought of Suriya Deva. She came and appeared to him and said to him, "Go to Brahma Lokam (the world) and ask him and he will show you the way." Bir Bikram Raja then went to see Brahma. He stood in front of him with his palms together. Then Brahma asked him, "Where have you come from and for what reason?" Then Bir Bikram asked, "Oh Deva, I have come in search of Anarani. Please show me where to find her. As there is no food in my Singar Kail we are undergoing many problems. You only have to wait. Kharma Dharma and Shembu Deva's work is to create things. And Vishnu Deva's work is to see whether everything is good or bad. But in the world of mankind all creations, birds, animals and all living creatures and the greatest beings, the humans, were all starving from hunger. "We don't know where to find food. Therefore I am wandering hither and thither to find the place of Anarani. I have come to you to ask this." Then Saraswati said, laughingly, "You are speaking very well." Then Brahma said, "Bikram Raja, you have a very great task and you will have to go a very long way. I am frightened whether or not you can do it." Then Saraswati interrupted them, "Don't be frightened Bir Bikram. I know all about it. Listen to me. For a hero it is a six plus six, twelve months journey. You must follow the way she leads in the direction that Suriya Deva rises daily. When you get there, on the edge of the ocean, you will find a banyan tree. Its branches are spread very wide. Wait under its branches and in its shade. After you pass seven oceans and the junctions of the seven oceans, you will find the place of the trunk of the tree. Go to sleep there. When you sleep there you will find out where Anarani lives."

Bir Bikram left Brahma on horseback. After many days and having travelled far he saw the banyan tree's branches. Keeping under its shade he reached its trunk and went to sleep. The branches of the tree are so wide that its width stretches out 12 kos in all directions. A Raja Hamsa pair of birds (two swans) had built a nest and lived there for twelve years. Every year the chicks were eaten by the king cobra, which lived in the trunk of the tree. On the day that he slept under the tree these two birds, after eating food the whole day on the oceans, came back and rested in their nest. After a long midnight rest the female bird persuaded the male to tell a story. But the male bird did not hear her request. Then the female bird became angry and flew away. Seeing this the male bird asked it to come back and hear the story. "See my dear queen, we have lived here year after year. God has given us many chicks but they have not survived. But today I am wondering because a great maharaja is taking rest under our tree. From his face I can see that he has set off on a great task. It seems that he is dreaming of the thing that he has come to do. If at all he is a sensible and knowledgeable man he can hear our grievances (tale of woes). If he listens to us and helps us in our problems, we may also help him in return. See the snake that lives in the holes of the trunk will become as thin as a hair when it comes out and become as fat as a seed storage bin. There is one diamond in its mouth. When he comes out the light of the diamond will show him the way to go. When it finds its prey, it puts the diamond to one side and its eats to its full satisfaction and while returning it again puts the diamond back in its mouth. The deed should be done when it puts the diamond down. Then the snake should be taken out in three pieces.

Bir Bikram, sleeping under the tree, heard this story and watching the holes in the trunk, he waited for the snake to come out. Later it came out. Then Bir Bikram fearlessly cut the snake into pieces and held the diamond in his hands. 'Jag Jag', it was shining like the sun. He stood looking at it amazed. Then the two Raja Hamsa birds (swans) appeared in front of him and greeted him. Then they praised him for his actions. "Your deeds are most miraculous and we are both happy and glad to do whatever you want. Please tell us why you have come here." The Raja replied, "You sincere birds, I have come on a very important mission. My job is to find Anarani. Show me where she lives. Show me how to go there."

"Oh Maharaja listen to us. You will have to cross five oceans. In the depths of the oceans stomach, where the five oceans mingle, there is a shining current. Just there at sunrise a shining creeper shoots up. After shooting up, at the time of

breakfast, it grows large. By midday the unripe fruits will develop and ripen. Pluck that fruit and out of it a beautiful baby girl will be born. After five hours it will vanish. There will be two pegs, one here and one there for watching it. These pegs will all be beating each other with the sound "Kar Kar".

"You have come to do this and if you feel that you can do it, then we will take you there on our backs through the air. You will have to take a dagger of life with you. Bir Bikram became very happy on hearing this and said that there was no trouble, "Don't think otherwise, I have come to do just that. Even if I lose my life I am not worried. My queen can look after my death ceremony."

He prepared to go. The two Raja Hamsa birds (swans), flying side by side, joined their wings together and made a seat for him. They flew on through the sky just as the sun was rising. When they arrived, it was midday. The two birds said, "Be careful, hold on to the Dagger of Life. "*Jiv dan katar.*" Now it is time for the fruit to develop and ripen. We will fly close by that fruit. You must be careful. Take it. Be successful." Then they flew close to the fruit. There he saw a high mountain like walls. He was very frightened by them. He was so amazed that he just stood still. He was unable to cut the fruit. Then the bird asked him if he had done it. He said, "No, no". Again the bird flew close to the fruit. He was ready with his dagger and he was able to cut it. The birds asked him if he had done it. He replied, "Yes, yes." The birds were glad and returned. It took two months to return. They said, "You will have to perform its ritual formalities very carefully. You will not have any troubles from this time on. Your city will always flourish. Nothing will trouble you. You will find all the seeds in this fruit. It should be hidden and kept behind seven curtains. In its storage place the floor should be daily re-muddied. And all around it seven lights should be kept alive. They should be fuelled with ghee (purified butter) from the cow. And it must be worshipped in the morning and evening." The birds spoke like this. Then Bir Bikram stood up and greeted them and he put the fruit in the Ganga Mali Juri (the ascetic's begging bag). Devoting it, he set off on horseback. When he sat on the horse he felt satisfied and well fed and the horse also felt well fed. In this way he travelled on and on, day after day. After four years of journeying day and night, he again reached the outskirts of his city and stopped his horse. Then he went into his garden and put his bag down. He put the rest of his things beside the well and he went into his city. All the people of the city felt very happy.

Then he said to his queens, "Oh my dears, I have brought your *issru gundi* (younger sister). We have to make her enter the city with full ceremony, *Waja Gaja.*" The queens were happy to hear this and so were all the people. The servant girl heard these words and was very unhappy in her heart. She said, "If this queen enters this house I will be driven away. Bikram Raja will not keep me in his city. Then there will be Anarani wherever you look. There will be no work for me to do." She planned to go first to the garden to see Anarani and she rushed there. Seeing what was in the bag she felt very happy. Then Anarani got her head out of the bag and she saw the woman standing there and asked her, "Oh sister, who are you?" She said, "I am the servant girl. I am the sweeper of the Raja's *darbar* (court) and his *kuthcherry* (courthouse). The Raja asked me to go first and wait at your bequest. So I have come there."

Then she began to praise Anarani, "You are so beautiful and marvellous. Please give me a new dress." Anarani gave her an elephant like sari (*yeni mula dikla*) and a jacket (bodice) with golden threads. She gave her a silver neck ring (bracelet) with diamonds in it. She felt glad that she was as great as Anarani. She spoke to Anarani saying, "Oh sister, I will take the lice out of your hair (a friendly gesture) until the people come and fetch you. Let us sit on the parapet of the well."

She began to tell a story and when Anarani bent her head, pretending to look into her hair for lice she pushed Anarani down the well. Then she got into the bag and pretended to be Anarani. She covered it with a cloth and sat there. All the people were expecting Anarani to be beautiful and felt very happy. They all performed puja and *Waja Gajah* and brought her into the city. All the queens made her sit on the cot and washed her feet and sprinkled the water over their heads.

Then the two queens, who had been in the house said, "Oh dear younger sisters don't you want to see our faces. You have come to our house and we are glad to see you. Up to now we were only two but now we are three. We three can live happily in the house together." But the fake Anarani just covered her head and did not come out. The Raja kept her in the highest storey of his house and daily in the morning after a full bath he came to her for puja.

Now the real Anarani, who had been pushed into the well, formed into a beautiful flower. Then the farmer, who took the water for irrigating his field, came out and started lifting the water with a *motta* (bullocks and a huge bucket). The farmer's wife was directing the water into the irrigation channels. Then she went to a spinach plot. After two or three bucketful's came down the channel and ran into the plot and the flower blossomed. She saw it and was astonished at its beauty. "What flower can this be? I am so old but I have seen nothing like this. God must have shown me such a beautiful flower." She went to pluck it but it became spinach. And that plant also appeared very beautiful. She plucked the plant and wanted to make it into a curry. She wanted to cut it into pieces and she had brought a knife. But at once it became a girl. Then seeing the girl, the husband and wife were very happy. "What is this miracle? First it was a flower, then a spinach plant, then, just as we were about to cut it, it became such a beautiful girl. They brought her up as their daughter. As she grew and grew the status of their house got better and better. It was a great wonder that wherever one looked there was gold and diamonds. Then all the citizens began to talk about this miracle. Also the king was told about it. He said, "I have brought Anarani yet I have nothing, but this man has nothing but he is getting wealthier and wealthier." So he went to the fake Anarani and asked her, "I have brought this from so far and with such effort why are you not giving me food?"

Then this fake Anarani said what had to be done, "Oh Raja, it is better for you to drive her out of this city if you want the food of Anarani for yourself." Then Bir Bikram ordered the young people to drive the other girl out of the city. They did as they were ordered. Then, from there, Anarani, in disguise, walked past the business men's houses. She stood weeping beside a *komati's* (businessman's) house. Then the Komati, who was performing his puja, came out and saw her. He was astonished at her beauty and asked who she was and why she was crying. She said, "I am the daughter of all of you, but I am very hungry and need something to eat." He said, "Oh my dear mother, I am very unhappy to give you food. I only have dates in my shop and marking nuts (*koka*). That is all I have to eat, but you may have it. Our Raja has brought Anarani, but still she is not helping us." She replied, "Oh my dear businessman brother, do not feel anything, you will get everything and I will be your scales." Saying this she disappeared.

Then Anarani said to herself, "Bikram Raja, you have given me so much trouble. You took me from my city saying that I would be treated like a queen. But where have you kept me? You have given me so much trouble." Then she went direct to Nau Khand Patar Dip to see Shri Shek. She told him her grievances. Then Shri Shek asked her to go back Bir Bikram Raja. He said to her, "Try to live with him then all the creations, the humans, the animals and the birds and every other kind of creature can have food from your presence." But she refused to go. He asked her why she would not go, and she said, "My place has been occupied by a servant woman. She has taken my incarnation. Thinking that she is me, he is doing puja to her. My words are not taken into account. I was put into great trouble so I came here to you (Why should I go back there)." When Shri Shek suggested to her, "Go directly to the Marwari's (business man's) throne. I will go and report what you have said to Bir Bikram." Then she went to the house of the Marwari. Then Shri Shek visited Bir Bikram in the fourteen storied Sujan Ghat, the residence of Bir Bikram, and, in a dream, the entire story of Anarani was related to Bir Bikram by Shri Shek.

(The dream). Oh, Bir Bikram Maharaja. Whatever efforts you have made to get Anarani are all in vain. You brought Anarani to give food to all. You brought her but you are worshipping another, thinking that she was Anarani. You are

performing puja, but she is not Anarani. She is only your house servant. At the start, when you brought and kept Anarani in the garden, the servant hid herself in the garden secretly and praised Anarani so much, in order that Anarani should give her ornaments. Anarani was trapped by her words and dressed her and gave her ornaments. But the servant, after putting all these things on, asked her to sit on the parapet of the well to take the lice out of her hair. While she was sitting there she pushed Anarani down into the well and she covered herself with a cloth and sat in the bag in which Anarani had sat. Then you picked up the bag and you kept her in your house and worshipped her as if she were Anarani.”

This enraged Bir Bikram and he got up. He called all the young and old and they all drove the servant girl out of the house, by beating her black and blue until she was beyond the outskirts of the city. There they tied her legs and hanged her from a tree. They all took long sticks from their houses and beat her. Then the sticks were put around the tree. Then they rebuked her saying that, “You are a nonsense girl. You have caused us to drive Anarani from our houses. The food that was to come to our houses was prevented by you. You have thrown all our food away.

Then Bir Bikram thought about how he was going to get Anarani. He set off for the Marwari's house and he found her dancing all over the place there. He stood before her respectfully and asked her to come outside the house. He worshipped her as a deity, and requested her to forgive him for his mistakes. He had been unaware of the trap that the servant had set him. He asked her to excuse him. Then he asked her to come to his house. He argued with her that all the animals; the birds and humans were hungry for want of food. After asking her many times she was just feeling glad to come to his city on the conditions that she should only stay for six months. Then she returned again to the Marwari's house. For this reason, however much we Koitur earn, the wealth and products will only last for six months and for the rest of the six months all the wealth goes to the house of the Marwari (money-lending business man). That is why we *Koitur* (Raj Gonds) have to go to the house of the Marwari in order to take on loan the seeds and things for food. From that time on all the living creatures are getting their food to their satisfaction for six months and for the other six months it is only with great difficulty and taking loans from the Marwaris.

Then Bir Bikram, seeing that for six months the people would have problems, begged her to come for the other six months. He persuaded her and she followed him up to the outskirts of the city. There the earth split open and gave way to her and she jumped into the chasm and disappeared into the underworld. From there she said “Oh, Bir Bikram Raja, in the future whoever worships the deity of Kota Parandoli, called Koswen Reytad, Agin Dhud Reytad, Jang Bai (Anarani is here called Jangu Bai), will get *Dopa Men Jawa* (*dopa* – a leaf cup. *men* = measure, *jawa* = a milky soup of millet; meaning have good stores of food). Jangu Bai and myself are of the same incarnation. All may call her Anarani and all may call her their sister 'Bai'. I am now going to meet Shri Shembu and I will take the place of Parvati.”

Then Anakarnadu, a boy, was born to Arandwanthi Queen. His marriage was performed with Bhui Lakshmi. Then by that couple, Anarkarna and Bhui Lakshmi, Anesirad was born. Then at Bur Jal Machua (Keslapur) Anesirad became the ruler.

Kinship Diagram of Divine Characters

See below: the Raj Gondy deity Anarani or Jangu Bai, the main character of this story, is parallel/equivalent to Parvati, the Hindu goddess of fertility, love, beauty, harmony, marriage, children, and devotion; as well as of divine strength and power.

