

## Maha Puja Navarathiri & Vijaya Dhasamiumat Hindu at the Sri Mariaman Temple in Medan City

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### **Abstract:**

*This research is a research conducted to determine the procedures, components of the ceremony, and to know the function and meaning of the Nava Rathiri and Vijaya Dhasami celebrations for Hindus in Medan City. This study used qualitative research methods and data collection was carried out by following the ceremony held directly by the Maha Puja Navarathiri & Vijaya Dhasamiumat Hindu ceremony at the Sri Mariaman Temple, Medan City. This research was conducted at the Srimariaman temple, where the navaratri is carried out for nine days every night in a row by Hindus living in the city of Medan. The result of this research is that this celebration is a worship for goddesses who have fought long ago against evil, namely giants. This celebration performed at Worship was done to please the goddesses for nine days as many days as it took for the goddess to defeat the evil monster. This is in accordance with its implementation, which is for nine days in the Tamil month of purification. There are many components used in this statement, from a series of flowers, coconut, trinkets, and many more. Worship is done to restore the good qualities of humans and defeat the bad qualities in humans because basically every human being is created for good. There are many components used in this statement, from a series of flowers, coconut, trinkets, and many more. Worship is done to restore the good qualities of humans and defeat the bad qualities in humans because basically every human being is created for good. There are many components used in this statement, from a series of flowers, coconut, trinkets, and many more. Worship is done to restore the good qualities of humans and defeat the bad qualities in humans because basically every human being is created for good.*

### **Keywords:**

*Nava Rathiri; Vijaya Dhasami*

## **I. Introduction**

Navarathiri is a big day for Hinduism. Navarathiri is a nine-night Hindu festival that is celebrated in the Tamil month of purification every year. This festival has a series of puja and worship events. This ceremony is also in conjunction with Vijaya Dhasami which is held on the tenth day as the peak night as well as the day of freedom for Hindus or better known as the New Year for Hindus Cudamani, (1980).

Hinduism is one of the recognized religions of the six religions in Indonesia. Hinduism is known for its thick and very interesting religious ceremonies. This religious ceremony has become a highly respected tradition and is the hallmark of Hinduism. In Medan City, the development of Hinduism is not too big, but Hinduism exists at several points in the city of Medan. And in celebrating holidays such as Navarathiri, Hindus gather in one temple and hold joint events, such as the two-day Navarathiri celebration at the Srimariamman Temple, which is located in Madras Village which is nicknamed Little India (Kumar, 2009).

As one of the religions practiced by the Indian Tamil Tribe, the religious ceremonies of Hindus in Medan are more or less closely related to the traditions in India Sinar (Lukman, 2008). This is certainly very interesting to study about the religious ceremonies of how people Hindus in Medan carry out this ceremony. Moreover, the traditions and traditions of the Hindu community are not well known by the Indonesian people in general, especially for the author himself. Scientific studies that discuss the Navarathiri tradition in Hindus are also still minimal, so with this paper, we hope that the Navarathiri ceremony in Hindus will be better known. This is what motivates researchers to conduct research related to the Nava Rathiri and Vijaya Dhasami ceremonies among Hindus in Medan City.

Navarathiri and Vijaya Dhasami is a religious ceremony that has become an annual ritual in Hindu communities around the world, as well as people in Indonesia, especially Medan City. This ritual is usually carried out in October which is held for nine nights. As a ritual that is only carried out once a year, of course this ritual is in the spotlight and raises curiosity for the surrounding community, especially as we know that the number of people who are Hindu in Medan is not too large compared to other religions such as Islam or Christianity.

Research related to this ritual worship has been done before, for example in Theresia's research (2015) in her research discussing the Nawaratri ceremony which is carried out in Hinduism. The Nawaratri ceremony is held to commemorate the victory of dharma (good) over adharma (evil). This ceremony is a ceremony to honor Sri Rama's victory against Rawana which is also called Dasamukha (ten-headed). The Nawaratri ceremony is carried out by following stages, namely the first stage is abhisegen (statue purification), and after that arathi (the process of surrounding the holy statue by means of holy fire and the holy place in the direction of the needle rotation three times), and alankaram (decorating the statue). This relevant research has differences and similarities with the research to be carried out. This can be seen from the topics discussed in this study, namely both discussing Hinduism and discussing the Nawaratri ceremony. Referring to the research above, this article draws a lot of data about the way the ceremony of meaning and function is carried out in Hindu prayer services.

Furthermore, Pasaribu (2018), a study that discusses the structure and meaning of the Bhajan text, its musical structure, and textualls in the Hindu Tamil community in Medan City. The method used in this research is a qualitative method with field research techniques through the work process, namely: literature study, observation, interviews, recording or documentation of activities, transcription and laboratory analysis. Referring to the research above, this article draws a lot of data about the ceremonial rituals performed by the Hindhu Tamil community at the Shri Marriamman shrine, Medan.

Research by Agung Suharyanto, et al (2020), Function and Meaning of Bhajans in Hindu Religious Ceremonies at the Shri Mariamman Temple, Medan City, SITAKARA: Journal of Arts & Cultural Education, 5 (2): 1-15. A research article that aims to determine the function and meaning of music in the implementation of Hindu religious worship at the Shri Mariamman

Temple, Medan, North Sumatra. The results of this study found that the role of music in the worship of Hindus as a means of worshiping Sang Yhang Whidi, music is used as a form of accompaniment to the songs called mantras as worship prayers. The meaning contained in it is singing accompanied by music that signifies sincere, truly devotion, uplifting, worship, delivery of prayers and gratitude of Hindus to Sang Hyang Whidi.

Every religion also of course has its own beliefs, besides that every religion also has a big day which we also often call the day of freedom. For example, Eid al-Fitr for Muslims, Christmas for Christians, Vesak Day for Buddhists, and other religious ceremonies which are days of freedom and victory for humans. Likewise with Hindus who of course have beliefs related to the day of victory. This ceremony is a day of victory for Hindus who have been free from all evil. This is a very interesting study, especially since researchers are not Hindu and have never participated in this ceremony before. This is certainly a new thing for researchers at the same time and the results of this research will certainly be very useful for gaining insight through writing that tells about this ceremony, especially writing and studies about Navarathiri and Vijaya Diasaskan, especially in the form of Indonesian, the number is very small, while researchers consider that this ceremony very interesting and become one of the rituals with a characteristic that really needs to be introduced to many people.

## II. Research Methods

This study used qualitative research methods. The research approach used in this study is a qualitative approach. What is meant by qualitative research is research that intends to understand the phenomenon of what research subjects experience holistically, and by means of descriptions in the form of words and language, in a special natural context and by utilizing various scientific methods (Moleong, 2007).

This research uses a descriptive approach where the descriptive approach does not seek or explain relationships, does not test hypotheses or make predictions, this research is aimed at collecting actual information in detail that describes existing symptoms, identifying problems or examining prevailing conditions and practices, making comparisons and evaluation, determining what other people are doing in the face of the same problem and learning from their experiences to determine future plans and decisions. Another characteristic of descriptive research is that the researcher acts as an observer, he only categorizes behavior, observes symptoms, and records them in his observation book (Basrowi & Suwandi. 2008).

The types of data needed in this study are primary data and secondary data. The two data sources are: primary data, which is data obtained from the first source, either from individuals or individuals such as interviews or the results of filling out questionnaires that are usually carried out by researchers (Bungin, 2007). In this study, primary data were obtained from interviews with informants who were considered to know the information and problems studied in depth and could be trusted to be valid data sources. In addition, primary data in this study were also explored through direct observation or observation of events or objects related to the research objectives, namely the celebration of Nava Rathiri and Vijaya Dhasammi

Secondary data, namely data obtained indirectly and often called the method of using documents, because in this case the researcher does not directly obtain data from informants or individuals but makes use of data that has been generated or processed by other parties. In this research, secondary data is obtained through books, libraries, magazines / journals, documents, archives and sources from the internet which provide a lot of secondary data.

In collecting research data, data collection techniques are used. The first is observation or observation is one of the methods used in research. In a narrow sense, the method of observation is carried out through systematic observation and recording of the phenomena being investigated. In a broad sense, observation is a complex process composed of various biological and psychological processes. In the observation, the researcher took part in the celebration three times, the first was done on the 3rd day of the celebration, the next was on the 5th day and the last was on the closing day of the celebration.

The second is an interview is a conversation with a specific purpose. This conversation is carried out by two parties, namely the interviewer (interviewer) who asks the question and the interviewee (interviewee) who provides the answer to the question. Researchers use interviews to get primary data from informants, this is where the main part of the research lies, namely knowing directly the object being studied. Interviews were conducted directly with informants, one of which was the leader of the ceremony, who knew all the meanings of the celebration. Then we interviewed the congregation around the place of celebration

The third is documentation, namely important notes about past events. Documents can be in the form of writings, pictures, or monumental works of a person. In this study, the documentation method is used as data that supports the validity of the data obtained and to strengthen the research results because there is evidence from the research itself. In this case, the researcher uses pictures and documents that are relevant to the research and pictures when conducting interviews. In this study, documentation in the form of research photos and several videos taken by researchers when conducting research directly into the field.

### **III. Results and Discussion**

#### **3.1 The Order of the Navaratri and Vijaya Dhassami Celebrations**

Nava Rathiri is one of the religious ceremonies that are still highly respected by Hindus in Medan. Although the number of Hindus in Medan is still small, the religious ceremonies and traditions have always succeeded in attracting the attention of the public. Hindus in Medan always have their own way to celebrate their big day with distinctive packaging.

According to the results of our interview with one of the Parisada administrators in Medan, Pak Manugren stated that, "the Nava Rathiri Ceremony itself consists of a fairly long series of activities, namely nine days in the Tamil month of purification. This series of events takes the form of puja and worship for the goddesses that are believed by Hindus. The first puja is Dewi Durga Puja, the second is Dewi Maha Laksmi Puja, and the third is Dewi Saraswati Puja. Each of these puja is performed for three consecutive nights. This puja is performed at the Shri Mariamman Temple Medan. This celebration is a worship for goddesses who have fought long ago against evil, namely giants. Worship is done to please the goddesses for nine days just as it took the goddess to defeat the evil monster."

During the nine days of worship, the people who gather at the temple will carry out a series of events, namely, singing several songs of praise for the worshiped goddess, then reading books by the people and finally pandindita lecturing on the contents of the Veda scriptures. At the time of worship, people usually bring offerings to the gods and goddesses such as flowers, milk, sari cloth, coconuts and others.

The worship program starts from 18.00 to 19.00 WIB at the Srimariamman temple in Medan. Before entering the temple, every Hindu must first clean himself by washing their feet

and hands in the place that has been provided. For Hindus, cleaning themselves before entering the temple is very obligatory and important. A temple is a holy and clean place and for that, before entering it, every devotee must first clean himself. At the appointed time, all Hindus around the Srimariamman Temple gather at the temple marked by the sound of a bell. When the bell is rung it means that the worship will begin, the ringing of the bell is a way to remind people that the time for worship has come.

The first day until the third day is worship for the goddess Durga, the goddess of salvation. The fourth to the sixth day is worship for the goddess Lakshmi who is the goddess of fortune. On the seventh day until the last day, which is the ninth day, is the worship of the goddess Saraswati as the goddess of arts and education. The tenth day is the day of victory and is the culmination of the Nava Rathiri celebration on the tenth day all devotees celebrate victory after nine consecutive days of worshipping at the Temple.

### **3.2 The Ceremonial Components used in the Nava Rathiri and Vijaya Dhasammi Celebrations**

According to Geertz (1968), it is clear that belief arises from social influences and religious symbols. A person born into the world does not create a religion and culture to believe in and practice, but that religion or culture has indeed been accepted by society as one religion and culture. That is how a person does not need to invent language to begin speaking. So religion according to Geertz (1968) although it is a free choice, it is not born from a person but is taken from the practice of society and religious symbols that have been formed.

These religious symbols and practices are what embody belief in a society. This includes prayer readings, dhikr, obedience to the sultan or leader, and religious practices. Geertz explains how the relationship between the existing social structures in a society and the arrangement and manifestation of symbols and also how members of society realize integration and disintegration with these symbols. Geertz generally sees religion as a cultural system. Culture is not defined as a pattern of behavior but as a pattern for behavior, which is built on a series of rules and guidelines used by humans to regulate behavior.

Hindus at the shrine during the Nava Rathiri celebration, firstly, a bell when performing the panindita prayer will ring a bell which functions as a tool to restore the concentration of the people. According to Pak Manugren, the bell was rung so that people who were worshipping sometimes got bored, then the bell was sounded so that the congregation returned to concentrate on the songs of praise being sung. A container in the form of a sentless, which is a place for items that are offered by the congregation to be presented to the goddesses. The items on offer are usually in the form of flower saris, coconut and milk.

The songbook contains songs of praise for the worshiped goddess, and each goddess who is worshiped has a different song. The songs of praise that are sung for Dewi Lakshmi, Dewi Saraswati and Dewi Durga are not the same. Drum, tabla and tambourine as musical instruments that are used at worship times to accompany the songs sung by the people. As stated by Wiflihani (2016), that "every piece of music certainly contains a message to be conveyed to the audience. The message is in the form of noble and noble values which are very useful for the development of the human soul. Furthermore, Ali (in Wiflihani, 2016) said that music in several regions of Indonesia mostly has functions related to ceremonies of death, marriage, birth, and religion. In addition, the sounds produced by certain musical instruments are also believed to have magical powers (Wiflihani, 2018). Therefore, there are several musical instruments that are used as a means of ceremonial activities or community religious activities. One religion that

makes music to accompany every religious activity is Hinduism. This is related to how art creates sacred spaces and integrates with these sacred ritual processions (Murtana, 2011).

### **3.3 The Function and Meaning of the Celebration of Navaratri and Vijaya Dhassami**

According to Hinduism there are three human traits which are commonly referred to as Triguna. Human nature consists of setaum (goodness), rajas (lust) and tamas (ignorance) (Ardhana, 2002). According to the results of our informant's statement, Mr. Manugren stated that for Hindus these three characteristics are things we often encounter in humans.

Setaum, rajas, and tamas are traits that often exist in humans, every human being must have good qualities, no matter how bad a human is, there must be good qualities even if only a little, while the nature of lust is the most dominant in humans the desire to get rich quick, want to have like owned by someone else. Well, while ignorance does not mean that it is not smart, but ignorance, for example, if a man meets a beautiful woman, he is immediately stupid and wants to be used like that, that is the ignorance that often occurs in humans."

These three basic human traits are one of the reasons Hindus worship for nine days. This worship for Hindus is called the Navaratri celebration. Navaratri is one of the major celebrations for Hindus which is celebrated for nine consecutive days.

Worship is done to restore the good qualities of humans and defeat the bad qualities in humans because basically every human being is created for good. At the time of worship, all the people sing hymns of praise to the goddess being worshiped. The songs that are sung are not just sung normally but must be lived out word for word in the song lyrics so that people can feel peace in the song lyrics.

The worship as a whole served to honor and worship the goddesses. but in practice worship is divided into three forms and the division of things that are prayed for and the division of the goddesses that are worshiped. Worship on the first day of the goddess Durga is carried out for three days to function to pray for safety and welfare. Hindus perform their prayers, begging the goddess Durga to always accompany and guard them whenever and wherever they are.

The second worship is to the goddess Laksmi, the goddess of fortune. At this time of worship, everyone who is present prays that they will be overflowing with luck by the goddess. Hindus have a philosophy that is applied in everyday life as an application of worship to the goddess of fortune. Hindus are given the doctrine by the panindita so that they do not only worship but there are real actions from that worship. As our informant said, Mr. Magda, a panindita at the Srimariam Temple.

"Reduce your sleep so you will get more sustenance. this is one of the philosophies that must be applied by Hindus in him. So the human race cannot just pray but they also have to work. How can we be rich if we don't want to work but don't just work, we have to pray to God because if God doesn't bless what we do, it's all in vain. "

This philosophy is one of the ways by Hindus so that each of their followers does not resign themselves to situations like according to Karlmax's opinion. Religion is a social system used to neutralize unfavorable situations of the heart. Although sometimes in practice, many people only understand religious knowledge, but not its practice.

In the last worship, namely the goddess Saraswati as the goddess of science and art. This worship is done so that the goddess gives intelligence to Hindus, especially those who are still in the stage of studying.

After worshipping the last nine days, a victory celebration is held on the tenth day. On the tenth day it is referred to as Vijaya Dasami, Dasara or Dussera (Dussehra). The word Dussehra, which means tenth day in Sankrit, is the culmination of the Navratri celebration. On this last day, Hindus celebrate the victory of Rama from Ravana (Ravana), which also symbolizes the victory of good over evil forces. The celebration ends with the burning of the statue of Rahwana.

This celebration is a worship for goddesses who have fought long ago against evil, namely giants (Ravana). Worship was practiced to please the goddesses for nine days just as it took the goddess to defeat the evil monster. Now for Hindus this celebration is a way of overcoming the evil that is within themselves and awakening the good.

#### **IV. Conclusion**

The Nava Rathiri ceremony itself consists of a series of activities that are quite long, namely nine days in the Purattasi Tamil month. The first puja is Dewi Durga Puja, the second is Dewi Maha Laksmi Puja, and the third is Dewi Saraswati Puja. Each of these puja is performed for three consecutive nights. During the nine days of worship, the people who gather at the temple will carry out a series of events, namely, singing several songs of praise for the worshiped goddess, then reading books by the people and finally pandindita lecturing on the contents of the Veda scriptures. At the time of worship, people usually bring offerings to the gods and goddesses such as flowers, milk, sari cloth, coconuts and others.

The bell when performing the Panindita worship prayer will ring a bell which functions as a means of returning the concentration of the people, a container in the form of sentless, which is a place for items that are offered by the congregation to be presented to the goddesses, Song books that contain songs of praise to the goddess who are worshiped, and each goddess who is worshiped has a different song, drums, tabla and tambourine as musical instruments used at the time of worship to accompany the songs sung by the people.

Worship is done to restore the good qualities of humans and defeat the bad qualities in humans because basically every human being is created for good. At the time of worship, all the people sing hymns of praise to the goddess being worshiped. The songs that are sung are not just sung normally but must be lived out word for word in the song lyrics so that people can feel peace in the song lyrics.

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