

HORRIBLE HISTORIES

COLLECTION

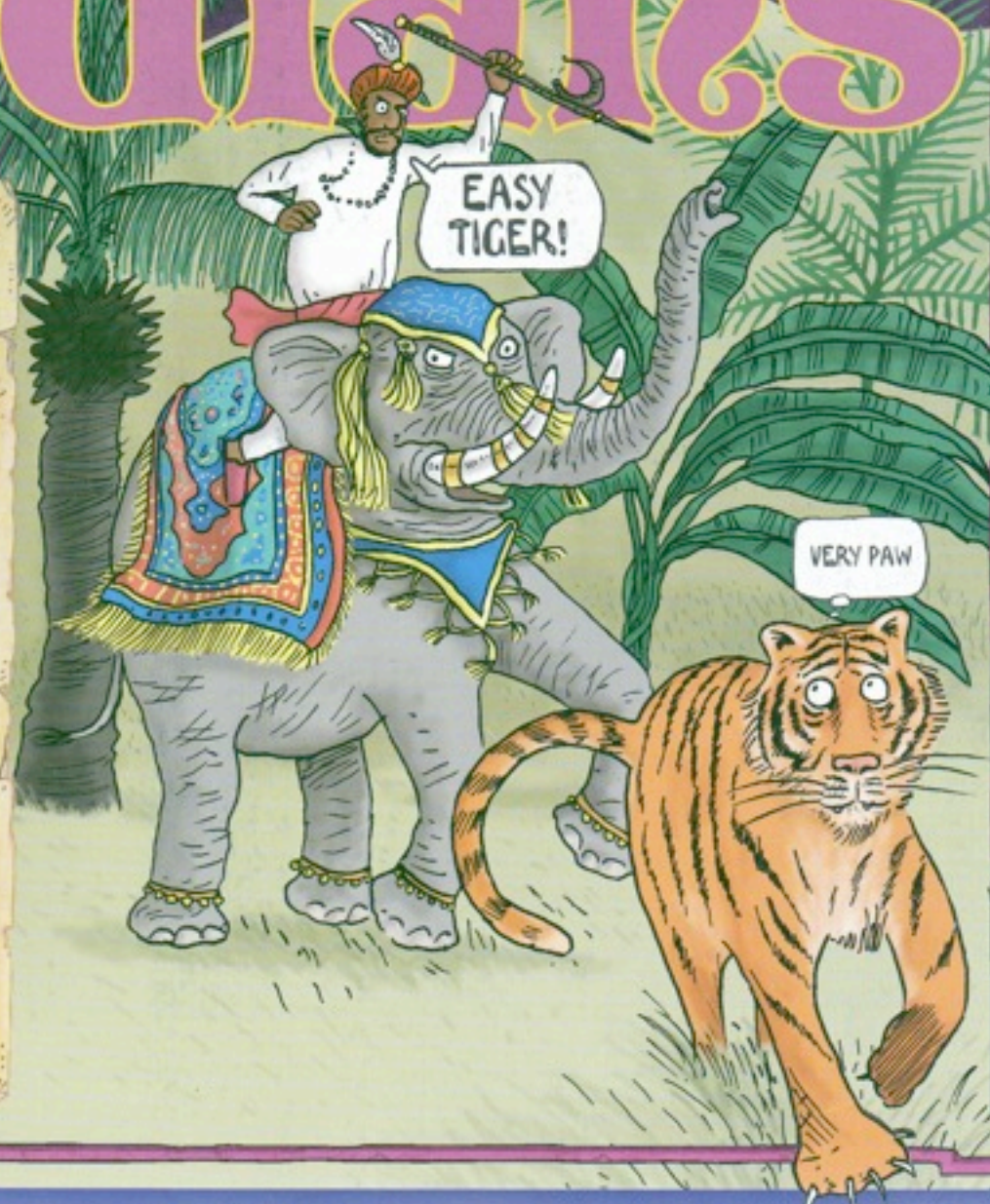
The Incredible Indians

GOD-NESS GRACIOUS!
MEET THE HINDU HOLIES

ART ATTACK –
splash out at a
paint party!

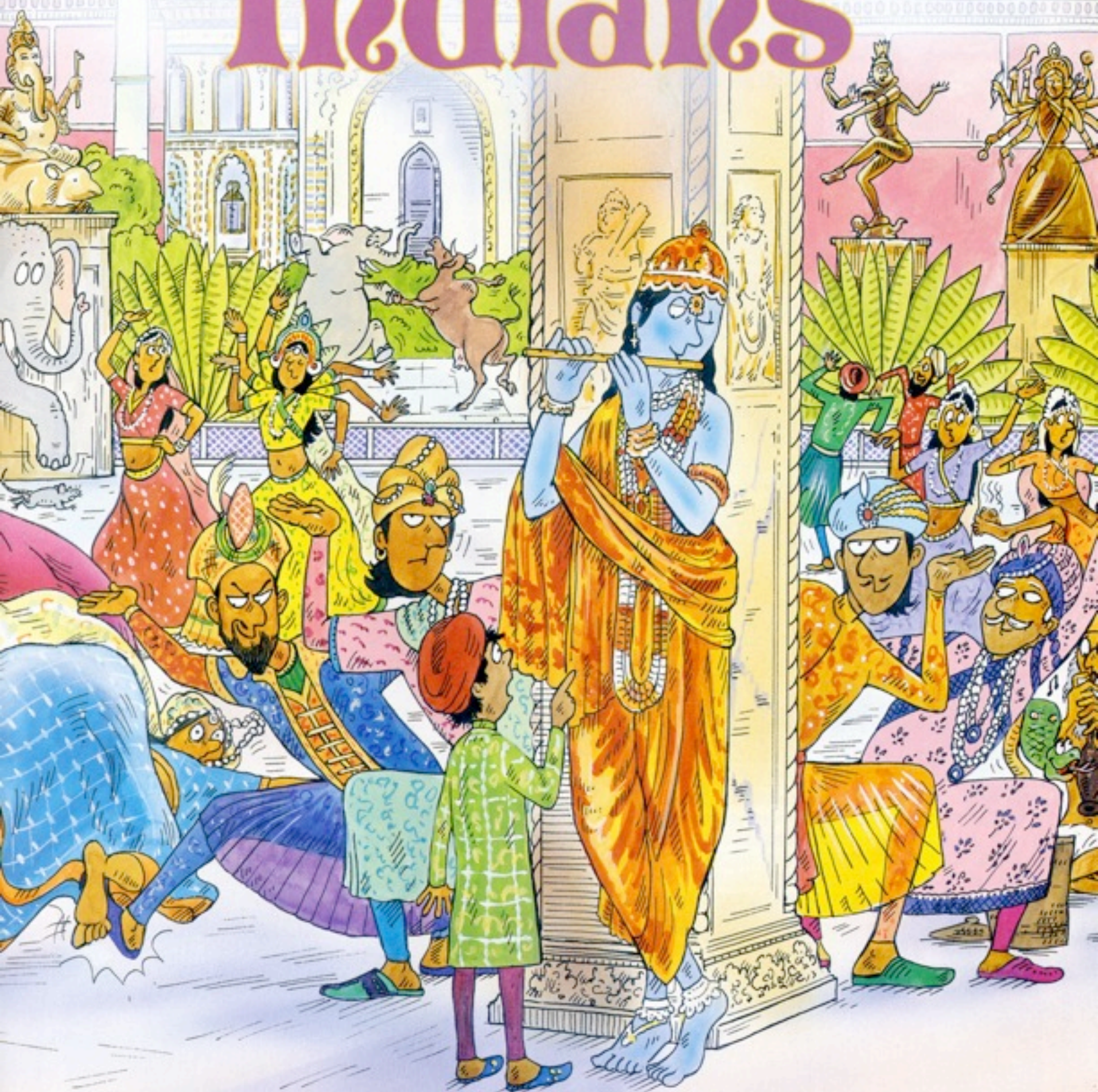
RETURN TO CINDERS:
DARE TO PEEP AT A
PETRIFYING PYRE

Meet the folks –
it's a 'caste' of
thousands!



The Incredible Indians

Join the 'caste' from the past – boogie with gurus, groove with gods and dance with deadly dudes!



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Indus-trial Action!

HOLY COW, IT'S THE STORY OF INDIA! FROM WASHOUT TO "WATCH OUT!", THE SUPER SUB-CONTINENT'S HISTORY IS A TALE OF RISING RIVERS, AWFUL INVASIONS AND RELIGIOUS RUMBLES. YOU COULD SAY IT'S A REAL CURRY-ON!

NOT MUCH IS KNOWN ABOUT THE VERY FIRST PEOPLE OF INDIA. HOWEVER, WE DO KNOW THAT A GREAT CIVILISATION HAD GROWN IN NORTH AND WEST INDIA BY 2600BC. MUCH OF IT WAS BY THE INDUS RIVER. IT WAS A REAL INDUS-TRIAL DEVELOPMENT!

THE INDUS CITIES WERE PRETTY POSH. THE HOUSES HAD BATHROOMS, AND THERE WERE EVEN DRAINS UNDER THE STREET TO CARRY ALL THE SEWAGE INTO THE RIVER.



IT SEEMS THAT THIS FIRST CIVILISATION FELL APART IN ABOUT 1800BC. NO ONE REALLY KNOWS WHY. THE RIVER CHANGED COURSE AROUND THIS TIME, SO MAYBE THE PEOPLE RAN OUT OF WATER OR WERE WASHED AWAY IN A FLOOD.



AFTER THAT WASHOUT, LIFE CARRIED ON AS NORMAL IN THE COUNTRYSIDE... UNTIL SOME HORSE-RIDING WARRIORS CALLED ARYANS RODE INTO NORTHERN INDIA - AND DECIDED TO STAY.



ONE OF THE HINDU BELIEFS WAS THAT THE COW IS SACRED.



THE ARYAN TRIBES SETTLED INTO 16 KINGDOMS... THEN SPENT THE NEXT FEW CENTURIES SCRAPPING WITH EACH OTHER!



AROUND THIS TIME A NEW RELIGION, 'BUDDHISM', BEGAN IN INDIA. IT TAUGHT BEING PEACEFUL. IT OBVIOUSLY HADN'T CAUGHT ON WITH THE TRIBES!

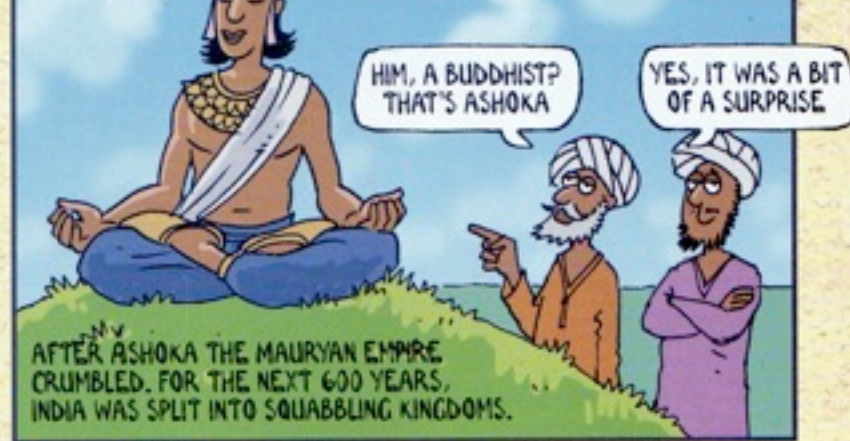
IN 327BC THE GREEK RULER ALEXANDER THE GREAT MARCHED INTO INDIA TO CONQUER IT. LUCKILY FOR INDIA, HIS MEN WERE SO ILL AND TIRED THAT THEY MADE HIM TURN AROUND AND GO BACK TO GREECE.



MEANWHILE, IN THE MIDDLE OF INDIA A PRINCE CALLED CHANDRAGUPTA MAURYA GRABBED POWER AND CREATED A HUGE EMPIRE. HE WAS SO SCARED OF BEING ASSASSINATED THAT HE SLEPT IN A DIFFERENT BED EVERY NIGHT.



CHANDRAGUPTA'S GRANDSON, ASHOKA, MADE THE MAURYAN EMPIRE EVEN LARGER. ASHOKA IS FAMOUS FOR BEING A SAVAGE SOLDIER – AND THEN BECOMING A BUDDHIST BECAUSE HE WAS SORRY HE'D KILLED SO MANY PEOPLE.



IN ABOUT AD320, A NEW EMPIRE EMERGED – THE EMPIRE OF THE GUPTAS. THEY BUILT MANY AMAZING TEMPLES AND PALACES...



BETWEEN AD415 – 455, A TRIBE CALLED THE HUNS KEPT RAIDING THE GUPTA EMPIRE AND NICKING STUFF. THE GUPTAS SHOULDN'T HAVE FELT TOO BAD ABOUT IT – THE HUNS WERE CAUSING JUST AS MUCH BOTHER FOR THE ROMANS.



IN 1001 MUSLIMS FROM AFGHANISTAN BEGAN RAIDING INDIA. 200 YEARS LATER THEY HAD CONQUERED THE CITY OF DELHI AND SET UP AN EMPIRE WHICH WAS RULED BY A SULTAN.



THE SULTANS HAD BOTHER FROM TWO BROTHERS FROM THE SOUTH, HARIHARA AND BUKKA – SO THEY CAPTURED THEM AND USED THEM TO DO SOME DEADLY DEEDS. BUT THE BROTHERS TOOK CHARGE OF A HINDU KINGDOM – AND THEN GAVE THE SULTANS A BASHING!



Terrible Times

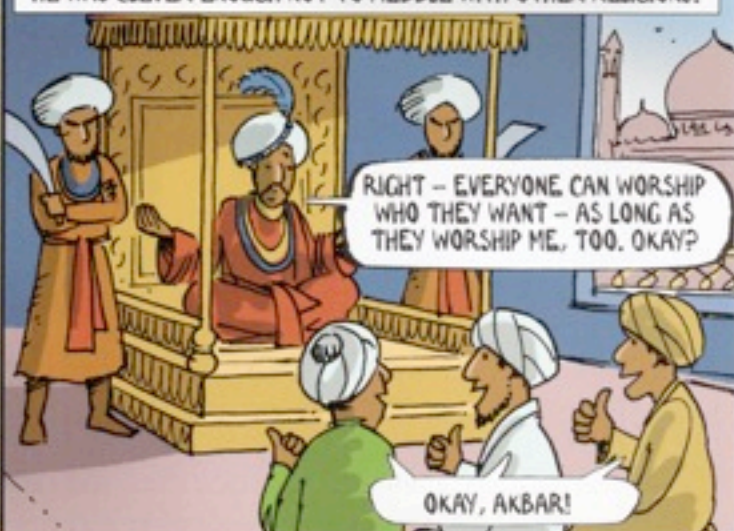
THE SULTANS OF DELHI ALSO HAD TROUBLE WITH OTHER MUSLIMS FROM THE NORTH – SUCH AS BABUR. IN 1526, HE BEAT THE LODHI SULTAN IN A BIG BATTLE, EVEN THOUGH THE SULTAN HAD AT LEAST THREE TIMES AS MANY MEN.

THE ODDS WERE 'LODHI -D' AGAINST ME, BUT I STILL WON!



IT'S NOT SURPRISING THAT BABUR WAS SO TOUGH – HE WAS RELATED TO GENGHIS KHAN! BABUR BECAME THE FIRST 'MUGHAL' EMPEROR OR 'SHAH'.

THE MUGHALS WERE BRILL AT BUILDING MASSIVE MONUMENTS. SOME WERE ALSO SMART RULERS – LIKE BABUR'S GRANDSON, AKBAR. HE RULED MOST OF INDIA WITHOUT TOO MUCH TROUBLE, BECAUSE HE WAS CLEVER ENOUGH NOT TO MEDDLE WITH OTHER RELIGIONS.



BY THIS TIME, EUROPEAN TRADERS HAD HEARD ABOUT INDIA'S RICHES – AND FANCED SOME OF THEM! THE PORTUGUESE TRADERS WERE THE FIRST TO SET UP SHOP – AT GOA ON INDIA'S WEST COAST.



NOT ALL THE MUGHALS WERE MELLOW. ONE RUTHLESS MUGHAL RULER WAS AURANGZEB. HE LOCKED HIS DAD UP IN A TOWER, NICKED THE THRONE AND WAS MEAN TO ANYONE WHO WASN'T A MUSLIM.



HIS WICKED WAYS CAUSED SO MUCH STRIFE, THAT HIS EMPIRE FELL APART AFTER HIS DEATH IN 1702.

LATER SHAHS TRIED TO ACT LIKE THEY WERE STILL IN CHARGE, BUT MOST PEOPLE IGNORED THEM.



NOW THE BRITISH BEGAN TO WORM THEIR WAY INTO INDIA. BECAUSE THERE WASN'T ONE OVERALL RULER, THE BEASTLY BRITS FOUND IT EASY TO TAKE OVER WHEN THEY SHOULD HAVE BEEN TRADING.



BY THE 1800s, THINGS WERE EVER WORSE. THE BRITS HAD GRABBED CONTROL OF MOST OF INDIA – BUT THAT'S ANOTHER SAVAGE STORY...



The Indi



250BC

WHAT A-SHOKA!

As every father desires the good and the happiness of his children, I wish that all men should be happy always.



Our great emperor Ashoka has given up fighting and started preaching peace! It's because he's become a Buddhist – a follower of the beliefs of Buddha. He has had his laws written on pillars and columns all over his empire. They say we should all live in peace. People can hardly believe it – especially the ones he used to petrify! In case our readers forget, let us remind you of what Ashoka was like before.

• When he was young he liked to keep himself busy by crushing rebellions in his father's kingdom.

• Then Ashoka slaughtered all ONE HUNDRED of his brothers to make sure he would get the throne.

• But he didn't stop there. He hunted down his brothers' children too. But it seems that one of the nephews escaped – and was brought up by Buddhists to be a kind kid. It was this nephew's niceness that changed Ashoka's ways.

Here's the Indi's version of how a wicked warrior had a wonderful change of heart...



1. EMPEROR ASHOKA ATTACKED THE NEARBY KINGDOM OF KALINGA. 100,000 KALINGANS WERE KILLED, AND MANY THOUSANDS MORE DIED FROM FAMINE. IT WAS THE BLOODIEST WAR IN THE HISTORY OF THE WORLD SO FAR!



2. BUT THEN A FUNNY THING HAPPENED. ASHOKA DIDN'T SHOUT 'I AM THE CRUELLEST RULER EVER AND YOU ALL MUST OBEY ME'. OUR BROTHER-BASHING, NEPHEW-NOBBLING, MASS-MURDERING EMPEROR... GOT UPSET.



3. THEN ASHOKA CAME ACROSS HIS ONLY NEPHEW. BUT THE BUDDHIST NEPHEW DIDN'T HATE ASHOKA (EVEN THOUGH AWFUL ASH HAD KILLED HIS DAD AND COUSINS). THE NEPHEW FELT SORRY FOR HIM!



4. ASHOKA WAS SO IMPRESSED BY HIS NEPHEW'S FORGIVING BUDDHIST WAYS THAT HE BECAME A BUDDHIST TOO!

EMPEROR BUILDS FOR THE BASHED

Our newly Buddhist emperor has really got into the swing of this 'being nice' thing. As well as creating cool columns and making massive monuments, he's been building schools and hospitals. But not everyone's happy. We spoke to one unhappy customer – a man from Kalinga. He said,



Rulers & Rebels

The Mughals were awesome and evil emperors of India in the 16th century. They built super sights – and had awful fights!

AKBAR RULED: 1556–1605

Claim to fame: Conquering most of India. But Akbar wasn't just a bully. He had a very good idea. Indians were always fighting about whose religion was 'right'. (They still are.) Akbar came up with a new, easy-going religion. As long as you believed in some kind of god you were alright. There was one snag though. One of those gods had to be Akbar himself!

Akbar was batty about books... even though he couldn't read. When he had a book written about how great he was, he made sure it had lots of pictures so that he could understand it!

Daftest deeds: Akbar was brave. Some might say barmy. While drunk at a party he nearly ran onto his sword just to prove how brave he was. Luckily for Akbar a buddy stopped him.

Another time he chased an enemy across a rickety rope bridge over a great canyon... while riding on an elephant. It was a jumbo-sized risk.

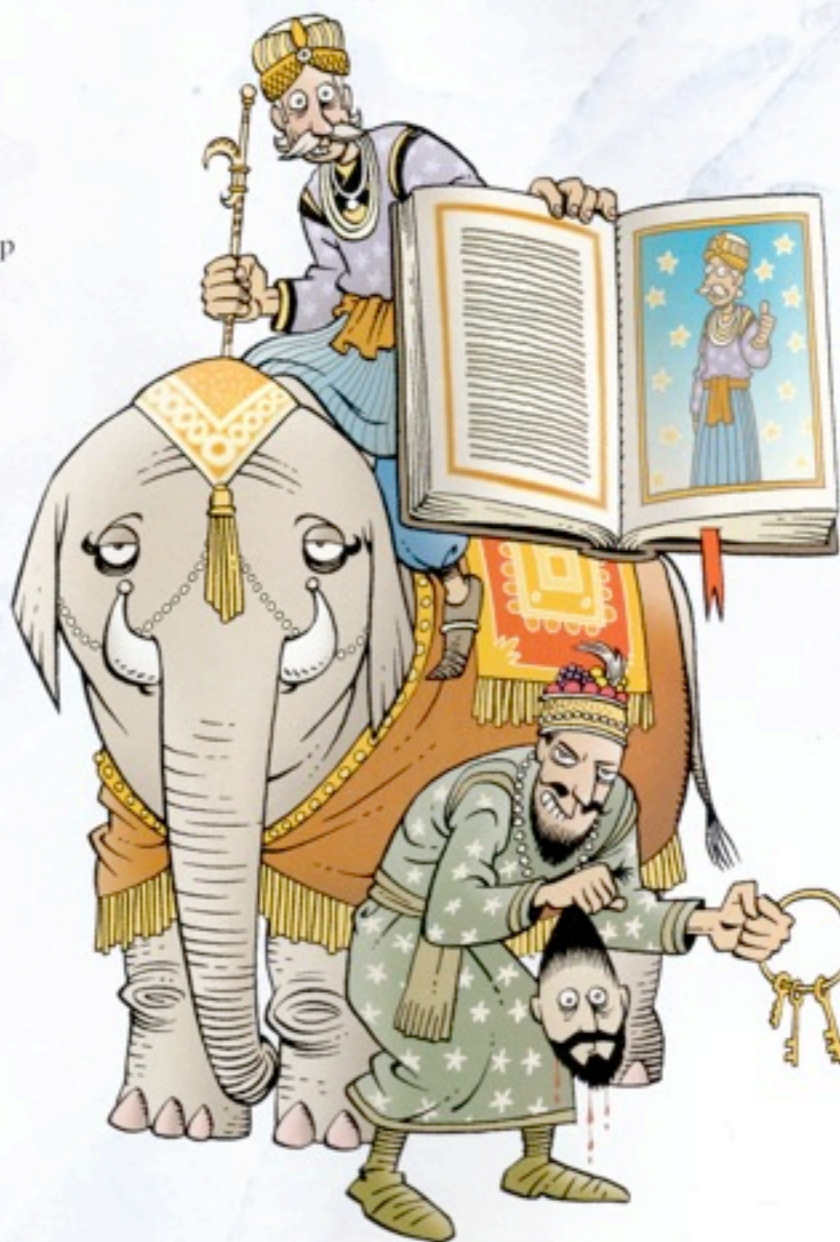
Dirtiest deed: When Akbar stormed the fortress of Chitor in the lands of Rajput, he wasn't pleased he had won the fight – he was angry that the Rajputs had resisted. So he got his men to slaughter over 30,000 of them.

AURANGZEB RULED: 1658–1707

Claim to fame: Being the meanest Mughal ever – and managing to ruin everything for them.

Dirtiest deed: So that he could become the boss, Awful Aurangzeb had his brothers heads cut off and presented to him on a plate. And then he had his dad, Shah Jahan, locked up. But he did make sure his dad had a nice view of the Taj Mahal – the tomb Jahan he had built for his queen. (Find out more about this terrific tomb on page 20.)

Aurangzeb was a Muslim – and a religious rotter. He invented his own beastly religious rules. They



banned music, art – and all other religions! And in case people didn't get the message, Aurangzeb destroyed Hindu temples and had the leader of the Sikhs (a people with their own religion) beheaded.

Daftest deeds: Knitting. When he wasn't busy killing brothers or making life miserable for others, Aurangzeb spent his time knitting caps which he sold at the market. He used the cash to pay for his own tomb.

Three Tiger Tales

Here are three fierce fighters who fought the Mughals with knife and claw! You could say they gave them paws for thought...

RANI DURGAVATI

Claim to fame: Durga was one rough 'rani' (rani means queen.) When a man-eating tiger had been scoffing her subjects, she went off and hunted it down herself.



In fact, Durga was such a roaring success that she came to the attention of the mighty Akbar. He couldn't have a woman who was tougher than a tiger running a kingdom. So Akbar decided to conquer Durgavati's lands. Of course, Durgavati wasn't about to give them up without a fight...

DURGA'S DAMP DEATH

Akbar sent an army to conquer Durgavati's kingdom. Akbar's army was massive compared to Durgavati's – so she decided to attack the invaders from above while they passed through a narrow gorge. She attacked and drove them back, and was about to finish them off – but her counsellors told her to wait. The next day the invaders had climbed to the top and all of Durgavati's advantage was lost. Then, to make matters meaner, it began to rain. The river below, which had been a trickling stream, became a raging torrent. Durga had nowhere to go – and Akbar's army was closing in. She was trapped between a rock and a wet place. Rather than be captured, she stabbed herself to death.



GURU GOBIND SINGH

Claim to fame: Gobind was the last Sikh 'guru' or leader. (Sikhs follow the ways of another guru – Guru Nanak). He was so tough he once sliced a tiger in half. And he turned the Sikhs into fierce fighters.

The case of the special k's

Gobind's dad was beheaded by awful Aurangzeb, so Gobind decided to fight the Mughals. He needed his men to be tough and loyal, so he called a meeting and asked for an awful present... the head of five volunteers. One Sikh went inside the tent. Gobind came out with his sword dripping with blood. Four

more men followed. But Gobind wasn't really cutting their heads off – he was testing their loyalty. What

he actually did was bless them and tell them to always have five 'K's':

Kesh – uncut hair; Kangha – a comb; Kara – an iron bangle; Kaccha – baggy trousers; and a Kirpan – a sword.



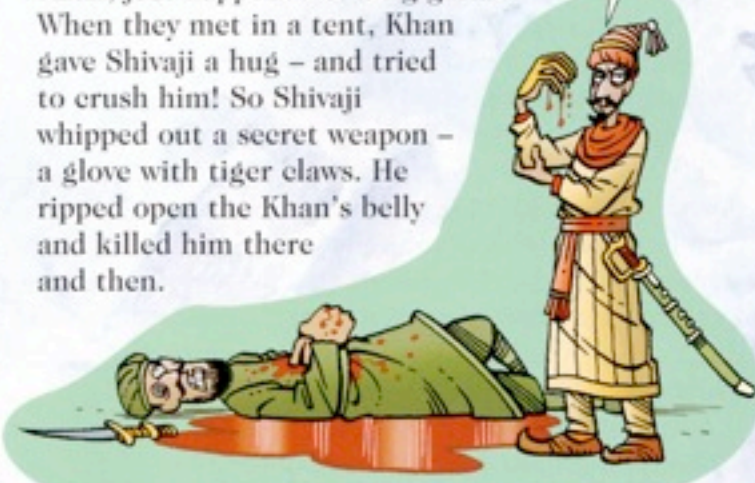
SHIVAJI

Claim to fame: Shivaji took on the mighty Mughals rulers – and won.

Claws for concern

He gave the Mughals so much trouble that they sent a general to make 'peace' with him. This general, Afzal Khan, just happened to be gigantic. When they met in a tent, Khan gave Shivaji a hug – and tried to crush him! So Shivaji whipped out a secret weapon – a glove with tiger claws. He ripped open the Khan's belly and killed him there and then.

HOW'S THAT FOR A KHAN OPENER?



The Groovy Gods

Meet some of the Hindu gods – an all-powerful family with some pretty impressive pets – and a man who became a god 'head'!

BRAHMA – THE CREATOR

Claim to fame: setting the universe in motion. Can't really beat that, can you? Brahma's day is the lifetime of the universe (4,320,000,000 years!).

Top talent: having four heads. He did have five, but the god Shiva cut it off in an argument about who was greater! It stuck to Shiva's hand until he washed it off in the holy River Ganges.

Coollest act: his heads made Hinduism's ancient holy books.

Animal buddy: a white swan.

SHIVA – THE DESTROYER

Claim to fame: being power itself.

Top talents: Shiva takes many fierce forms, such as a demon slayer covered in snakes – or a dancer in a circle of fire who leaps on the back of a dwarf! He also gets his hair washed by the waters of the Ganges.

Coollest acts: Shiva sometimes hangs around with crooks and spooks. (Dare to visit him in this domain? Then turn to page 18.)

Animal buddy: Nanda the Bull.

Shiva has a female flipside – 'Shakti'. Just like your mum,

Shakti can be gentle – or terrifying. She can take the pretty and peaceful form of Shiva's lovely lady, Parvati, or be the cruel killer queen Kali!

VISHNU – THE PRESERVER

Claim to fame: looking after the universe. Tough job!

Top talents: Dreaming. Each day is one of Vishnu's dreams as he sleeps on the serpent of time!

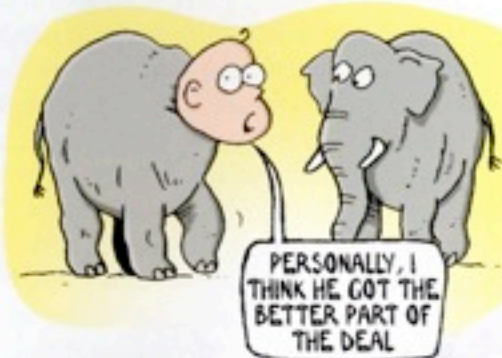
Vishnu is also a bit like a comic superhero. He turns up in the nick of time when mankind really needs help. To do this he takes a special form or 'avatar'.

Animal buddy: Garuda the eagle.



GANESH

Claim to fame: this roly-poly elephant boy is a son of Shiva. But Shiva wasn't much of a dad – he cut off Ganesh's head and replaced it with an elephant's!



Top talents: Ganesh is wise and thoughtful... and gets about by riding on a rat.

VISHNU



KRISHNA

KRISHNA

Claim to fame: being one one of the most adored 'avatars' of Vishnu.

Top talents: he's blue, beautiful and he loves to boogie!

Krishna is often shown playing the flute. He's a cheeky cowherd too.

Coollest acts: Krishna was the villagers friend. Whenever peasants were in peril, Krishna popped up to sort out their problems. For example, he once raised a mountain on the tip of one of his fingers to give some villagers shelter during a savage storm. How's that for an awesome umbrella?

Another time a colossal cobra was going around terrorising villagers. What did Krishna do? Send for a zookeeper? Uh-uh. He danced on its head. If you ever see a cobra – hopefully in a zoo, not in your village! – you'll see it has strange markings on its hood. They are supposed to be Krishna's footprints.

KALI'S BLOODY TONGUE

Kali is the most savage form of Shakti. She has four arms, a necklace of 50 human skulls and a belt of human arms, while she holds an axe, a severed human head, a trident and a bowl of blood!

I NEED FOUR ARMS TO PICK UP THIS LOT!

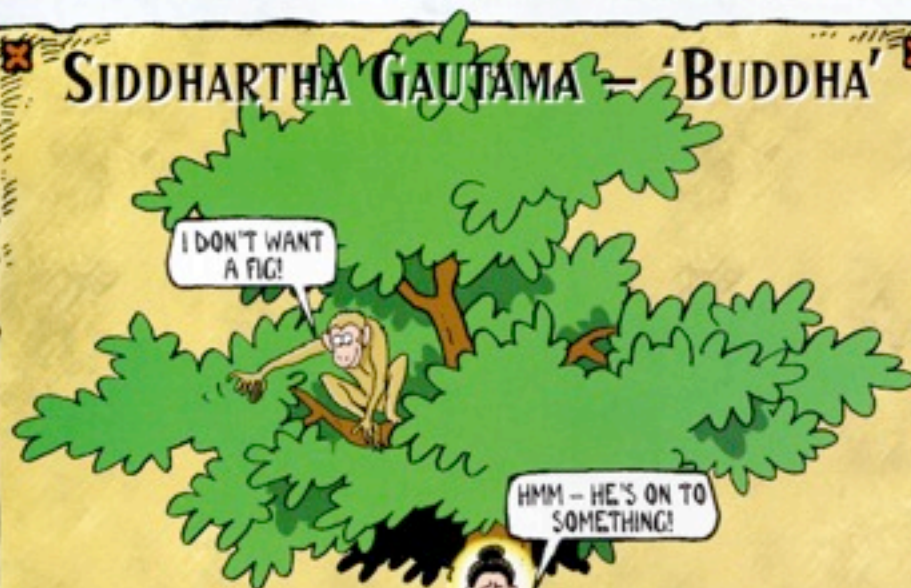


Kali is often shown with her tongue sticking out. Why? Well, the legend says she was given the job of

killing the demon Rakta Beeja. The trouble was that every time a drop of the demon's blood fell to earth a thousand new demons would spring up. What did clever Kali do? She ran a spear through the demon's body and hoisted it up in the air. When the demon's blood poured down, she caught it all on her tongue and swallowed it. So the next time you bite your tongue and it bleeds, think of Kali. (Meet Kali's fierce followers on page 17.)



SIDDHARTHA GAUTAMA = 'BUDDHA'



Claim to fame: born about 560BC, Sid was a prince who lived a very posh life. But that didn't make him happy, so he left all his riches behind and went wandering around India. He was searching for 'enlightenment' – the meaning of life. He found it after about six years when he took a long break underneath a fig tree.

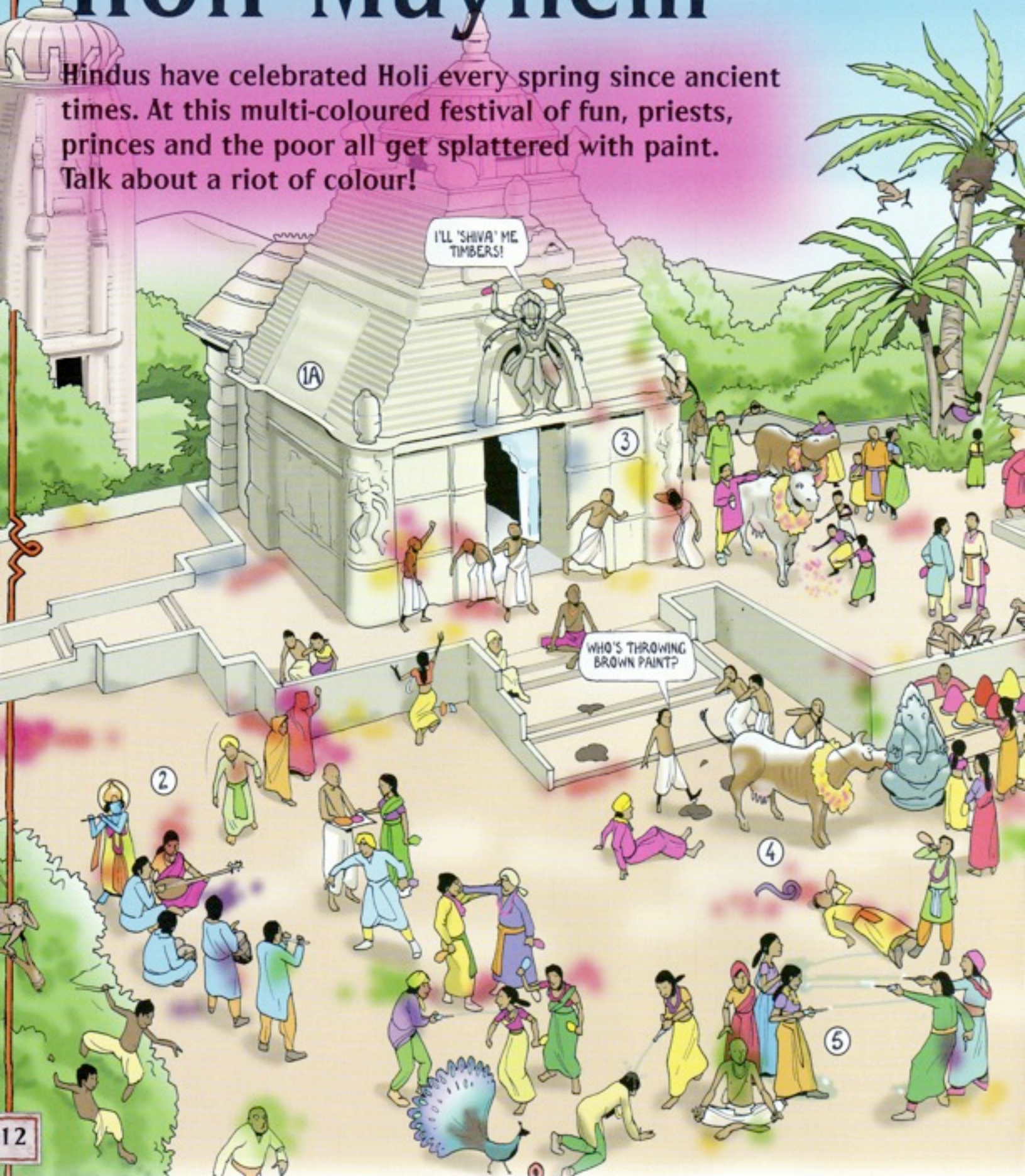
(Maybe it helped him get to the root of things!) The big idea was that wanting stuff caused mankind's troubles.

From then on he was known as 'Buddha' – 'the enlightened one'.

Some say Sid died after he ate a meal of mouldy mushrooms. Which is an awful way for a fun-gi to go.

Holi Mayhem

Hindus have celebrated Holi every spring since ancient times. At this multi-coloured festival of fun, priests, princes and the poor all get splattered with paint. Talk about a riot of colour!



Paint Party

1. Holi is celebrated with potty paint parties all across India – from temples in the north (1A) to temples in the south (1B).
2. Musicians help to get the party jumping. Looks like a blue stranger has joined the band, except he's no stranger – it's Krishna himself! (Holi is closely linked with Krishna.)
3. Hindu temples aren't delicate places that you can't touch. Monkeys, dogs and sacred cows are allowed to stroll around them. And at Holi time the temples get splattered with as much colour as everything else!
4. Cows are sacred – and on festival days they are allowed to wander free and get up to all sorts of mischief. Holi cow!
5. The paint can be thrown in packets – or squirted from water pistols. Bang bang – you dye!
6. Before the festival, great piles of paints are put on sale.
7. The night before holi is marked by a massive bonfire.
8. Some temples – such as the southern one shown here – have great pools in their grounds. At the end of the day, paint-splattered festival folk can wash the colours off in the water. Looks like the water's pretty 'colourful' too!

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Meet the Caste

In ancient times every Indian had to know their place – especially women!

The Aryans who ruled ancient India were very keen on knowing how noble or lowly people were, so they divided society up into 'castes'. These five basic divisions are still around today. They're a bit like streaming in schools, except you can't work harder to get into a better caste – you're born into it. Great if your mum and dad are posh – awful if they're not!

The castes were said to form a body...

KSHATRIYAS were the arms and chest of man. This well-off bunch were kings and warriors in the Aryan times. According to Hindu belief, they were born out of sacred fire – and are protectors of cows. They kept things moo-ving.

VAISYAS were the middle-men – in every way. This middle-class bunch are the middle of mankind's body! They were farmers and merchants. In one story, the Vaisya caste sprang from the belly of the Hindu creator god Brahma. That's hard to stomach.

SUDRAS were the feet of mankind – so they do all the leg work! They could be anything from servants and labourers to blacksmiths – although in ancient times there were some Sudra kings. Sudras may be low but they are not the lowest of the low. That's Dalits.

BRAHMINS were the head. They were the priests, the keepers of the sacred knowledge of Hinduism. Other castes were supposed to treat Brahmins as something special. You may not be surprised to learn that Brahmins were the teacher caste! Being at the top doesn't mean they were super rich – they just got their money from fees for carrying out special events. (Hmm – still sounds like teachers!)

IT FEELS LIKE I'M GETTING THE ELBOW!

DALITS (also known as 'the untouchables') were not supposed to be touched or seen by the other castes. It's as if they were the poo of mankind! As a result they had the smelliest, grubbiest and toughest jobs – such as making leather – or cremating (burning) dead bodies.

Here some awful ancient rules made things dire for Dalits. A Dalit...

- CAN'T drink water from the same well as the upper three castes.
 - CAN'T walk by a Brahmin in case his shadow falls on the Brahmin and 'pollutes' him.
 - CAN'T be educated.
- But a Dalit CAN...
- be killed if he overhears the sacred scriptures.

Sadly, Dalits are still the poorest people in India. Their lives are awful because the other castes make them live separately. They just 'caste' them to one side.



Woeful for Women

It wasn't just the lower classes who had it tough. Women were married early and had to obey their husbands in everything.

In the Middle Ages in India, Hindu women were meant to be married by the time they were ten years old. Some girls were even

MEET MY KIDS, RANJIT AND JAMILA AND THIS IS MY HUBBY – ER, 'THINGY'



2 Don't speak his name You couldn't say the name of your husband or his dad because to do so would be to utter the name of god!

MEET MY BETTER HALF – ER, TWO – FIFTHS



TUT, TUT. THREE MONTHS OLD AND STILL SINGLE.

SHE'S BEEN LEFT ON THE SHELF



married as soon as they were born! The marriage would be arranged by the girl's parents. The husband might be old enough to be the girl's grandfather! Mind you, the husband could be a baby as well. This happened when two sets of parents got together to make the plans. You could say it really was a 'nappy' marriage.

Rotten rules

But a woman's problems didn't stop when she got married. Oh no! Her troubles had just begun. Here are five fearful rules that married women had to live – and die – by...

1 Don't go out alone You weren't allowed to leave the house unless you were accompanied by a member of your husband's household. Even if you were just popping out to the shops.

3 Never act as if you're equal Women were seen as the other half of the divine to men – but not quite an equal half.

NOW FOR MY REVENGE...



4 Have boys If you gave birth to a baby boy – or, better still, several boys – you'd be treated with respect. If your son married, you became his wife's mother-in-law – and the ruler of the household! Then you could get your own back for years of being a humble wife.

5 Don't go to funerals If your son or hubby dies, you weren't allowed to go to the funeral – unless you were prepared to die too...

BRIDE AND GLOOM

In about 510BC a fiery practise began in India. When a posh, dead Hindu man's body was burned, his wife would join him by throwing herself onto the fire and being burnt to death. Talk about carrying on with old flames! (Mind you, with no husband, the widow would have had no food – so burning might have been better than starving to death.) This smoky suicide was called 'sati'. When

the widow was ashes it was a case of sati and sweep.

India's Brit rulers made it illegal in 1829 but it was still sometimes done in the 20th century.

AHH – SHE MUST STILL HAVE THE HOTS FOR HIM!



HORRIBLE HAPPENINGS

The Holy and the Horrid

Here are some of the holiest Hindus – they're your flexible friends! And meet a very scary bunch who really weren't joking when they started 'choking' around.



If you're a proper Hindu, you're meant to go through four stages in your life. At first you're a student... then a householder, then a forest dweller, and then a wandering monk going from holy place to holy place seeking God. But some

people decide to skip some of these stages and go straight to number 4 – by becoming 'sadhus' (say 'sad-oos'). They wander around India with just a walking stick, a single piece of clothing, a simple cloth bag and a begging bowl.

To be extra-holy, sadhus do some extraordinary, awkward or difficult things, such as...

1. Holding up their hand. Sounds easy, but have you ever had to hold up your hand in class for ages, waiting for your teacher to notice? Well, imagine doing that... for the rest of your life!

2. Going wild. Sadhus might retreat to a mighty mountain or live in a jungle with the monkeys.

3. Bending their bodies. Many sadhus do awesomely flexible exercises called yoga.

Don't get the idea that sadhus are saddoes. Other Hindus ask their advice, let them stay in their homes or give them gifts of grub.

Did you know?

Some Muslim holy men show how holy they are by walking across red-hot coals or lying on beds of nails – without getting hurt! They are called 'fakirs'.

IS HE A HOLY MAN OR JUST A FAKIR?



SCARY SCARVES

This is the story of the Thuggees – a bunch who thought it was holy to be horrid.

PARTY POLITICAL
BROADCAST ON
BEHALF OF THE
THUGGEE PARTY

HI! I'D LIKE TO APPEAL TO
YOU ON BEHALF OF THE
THUGGEE PARTY – BETTER
KNOWN AS THUGS!



WE GO BACK OVER 600
YEARS! WE WERE FOUNDED IN
INDIA AROUND THE 1200s

THUGGEE MEANS 'HIDDEN'
'COS THAT'S JUST WHAT WE DID!
WE HID AMONG GROUPS OF
TRAVELLERS AND HELPED THEM
PART WITH THEIR MONEY!



WE ALSO USED OUR SPECIAL
SCARVES TO STRANGLE THEM



BUT WE GAVE THEM
A LOVELY BURIAL!

OUR HOLY PLACE WAS THE TEMPLE
OF KALI IN BINDHACHAL AND WE
WERE VERY HOLY PEOPLE



YES, EVERY DAY WE
SACRIFICED GOATS TO OUR
KALI SO THEIR BLOOD SPILLED
DOWN THE TEMPLE STEPS
NIGHT AND DAY

BUT BY THE 1840s THOSE
INTERFERING BRITS HAD HUNTED US
DOWN AND BANNED US



WE WERE ONLY FOLLOWING
THE OLD WAYS! VOTE TO
BRING BACK THE THUGS!

How is it religious to go around strangling people? Well...

- It's all because of the goddess Kali who the Thuggees worshipped.
- The Thugs believed that Kali strangled the evil Rakta Beeja at the dawn of time – then created two humans from her sweat.
- Kali ordered the humans to worship her – and to strangle anyone who didn't do the same! That's why the Thuggees strangled people.

How did they manage to strangle travellers when the travellers MUST have known the dangers and been prepared? Well...

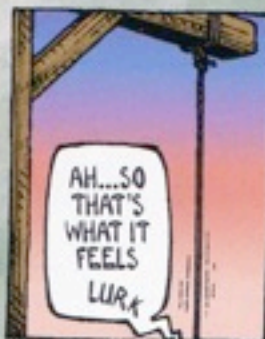
- The Thugs pretended to be travellers and mixed with them on a journey. These journeys were usually between November and May, the 'Travelling season'.

OR 'STRANGLING SEASON'



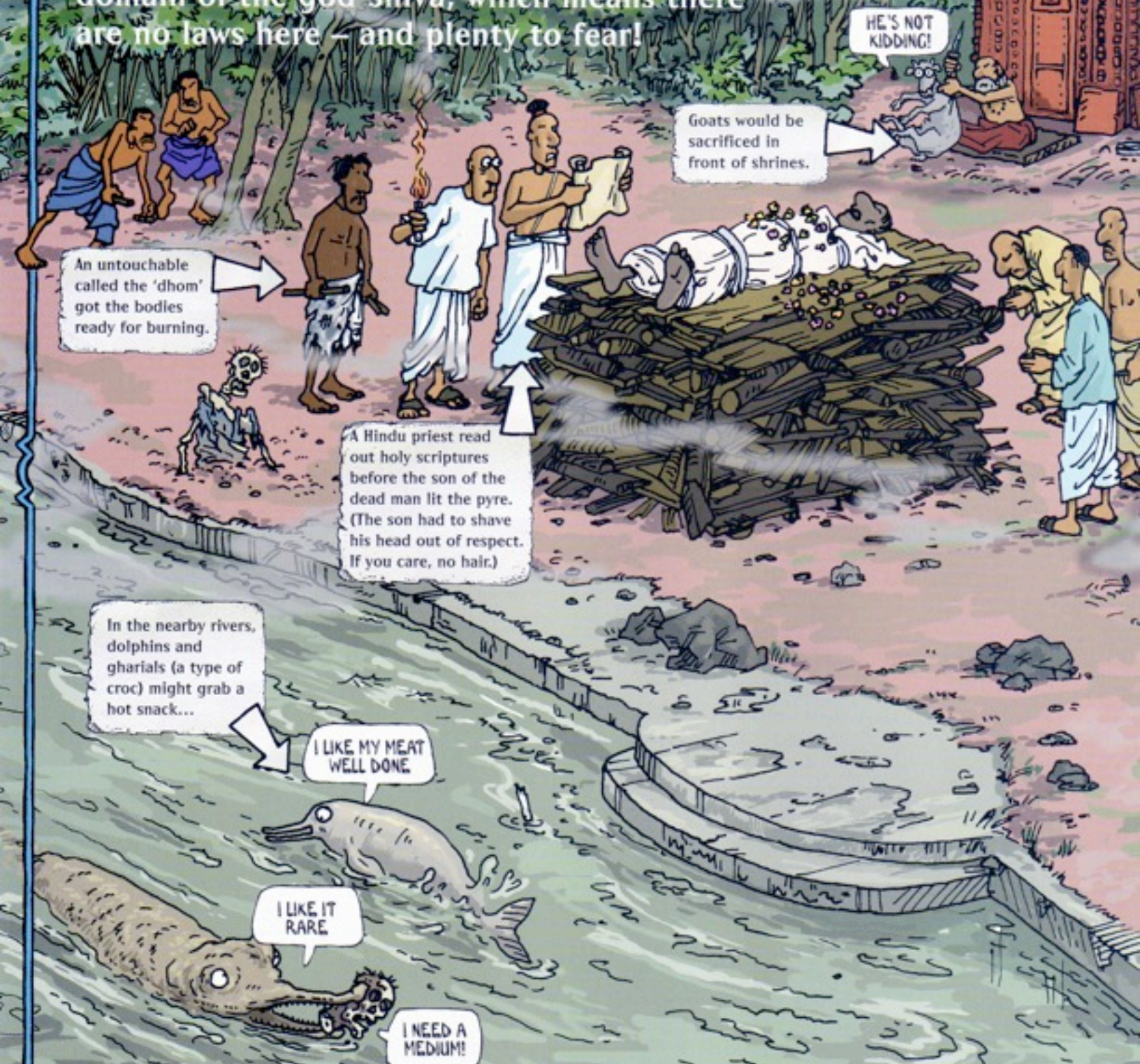
- They were quick killers, using their silk scarves as a noose and attacking from behind – noose over the head, knee in the back and... Cccct! When they had time the Thuggees ate and slept among the their victim's corpses.
- The Thugs cut the victims' bodies with holy gashes then buried them – or threw them down wells, which made the water taste awful. They burned things they didn't take with them so they left no traces: they were 'thuggee' – which means hidden.

But some think that the throttling Thuggee thing was made up by the beastly Brits – as an excuse to hang people and take stuff from temples when they took over India. The Brits hanged many 'Thuggees' – but they didn't use a nice silk scarf.



Pyres of Peril

The places where bodies are burnt are the domain of the god Shiva, which means there are no laws here – and plenty to fear!



An untouchable called the 'dhom' got the bodies ready for burning.

Goats would be sacrificed in front of shrines.

HE'S NOT KIDDING!

A Hindu priest read out holy scriptures before the son of the dead man lit the pyre. (The son had to shave his head out of respect. If you care, no hair.)

In the nearby rivers, dolphins and gharials (a type of croc) might grab a hot snack...

I LIKE MY MEAT WELL DONE

I LIKE IT RARE

I NEED A MEDIUM!

Petrifying Places

Certain spooky sadhus called 'aghoris' lived in the cremation grounds... in shacks made of bones. They lived on gifts from the rich.

Because laws didn't apply in the grounds, criminals would come here to hang out. Looks like this one is doing a bit more 'hanging' than he expected...

HOME SWEET BONE!

Not every corpse in the grounds got cremated. Some sadhus who worshipped Vishnu were buried sitting up. After a while their bones poked through the soil...

Some sadhus danced themselves dizzy – then grabbed a bit of the burnt body and ate it! The mourners weren't supposed to mind.

Often the bodies didn't get completely burnt up – so bits of them were grabbed by hungry dogs.

This is Shiva's place, so snakes are left alone. What a load of old cobras!

Dead Spooky

Funerals in India could be fiery, foul, or refined – it all depended on your religion. Some beliefs were big on burning, while others felt that the only decent way to dispose of the dead was for them to be a dog's dinner. It's still this way in India today. Here are just a few funeral facts...

An Eye-watering Tale

Sati, the savage practise of a widow jumping on to her husband's funeral pyre, is an awful ancient tradition. It's named after the goddess Sati, Shiva's first wife. In the legend, Sati's dad invited all the gods and goddesses to a great fire sacrifice – but he didn't invite his daughter. This got Sati in a right huff. To get her sati-sfaction she jumped into the fire herself – and ruined the occasion.

Shiva was pretty upset. He went into a wild dance trance and threw his discus – which cut Sati's body into 51 pieces. The bits fell all over the land – but Sati's hot eyeballs plopped into the twin lakes of Naina Tal. Plop, plop.

You could say the lakes were sites for sore eyes! Shiva then came out of his trance and went off to meditate. Sati was then reborn as Parvati.



Foul Facts

When bodies are cremated on a funeral pyre, the body gets so hot that the skull explodes! Hindus believe that this is when the soul finally breaks free of the body.



Death wasn't hidden away in India – it was a part of life! Some of the rituals were rotten, and some are best forgotten!

The Gory Aghoris

Cremation grounds weren't just for dead people – sadhus called aghoris hung out there as well. They knew magic and sorcery. Becoming an aghori involved lots of a-gory challenges... including meditating on a dead body in the middle of the night, in the middle of a jungle! The awful thing was that a rotting body fills with wind – and lets out groans and farts!



If you passed this freaky test without freaking out, your Guru (spiritual teacher) would accept you – and teach you the secrets of the universe. Sadly, breaking wind in class won't convince your teacher to tell you any secrets.

SHOW-OFF SHAH

It's not just the Hindus who created incredible places for the dead. The muslim Mughals made massive tombs. If you ask your teacher "What's the top tourist attraction in India?", bet they'll say "the Taj Mahal". They'd be right. The Taj Mahal is the stunning marble monument that Mughal ruler Shah Jahan had built as his wife's tomb. But bet they won't know these three truths about the Taj...



Snack on a Stiff

India is the home of the Parsees.

They follow the Zoroastrian religion, which says fire is holy and dead bodies

are dirty. So they

can't bury the dead, because that would pollute the earth, and they can't burn them 'cos fire is holy. So instead they stack them on massive buildings called 'Towers of Silence'. The bodies are left for vultures to scoff.

The trouble is, vultures are dying out in India, so most of the bodies just lie there and rot. The towers are silent but stinky!

Buddhists in the Himalaya mountains didn't bother with fancy funerals – they just threw the dead down mountains for dogs to devour.

YUM! I LOVE RECYCLING

I DON'T KNOW WHY PEOPLE THROW OUT PERFECTLY GOOD FOOD...

Did you know?

Here's an awful animal death story. If you were desperate for rain to make your crops grow, you had to do a spell that was fatal for frogs! First you filled a bowl with water from five homes in your village. Then you plopped in a frog and sang a song about rain... while you used a crushing stone to squish the frog to a pulp. So the frog had to croak so that your crops would soak.

Heads and Tales

All sorts of gods and goddess were given sacrifices of different beasts. But no one in India would hurt a bull. That did happen in neighbouring Nepal, though. At a bull sacrifice, horns were blown and drums were beaten before the bull was wrestled to the ground and his head put on a block. It was a right ritual racket.

1 It took 1000 elephants to move the marble to make the Mahal.

2 The Taj wasn't exactly Top of the Temple Pops with the Indian people when it was made. Why? The jumbo-sized job costed millions of rupees (a rupee is an Indian coin). Who paid? His suffering subjects.

3 Jahan had plans drawn up for TWO Taj's! The second one was to be exactly the same – but made out of BLACK stone.

ERM – YOUR MAJESTY, ISN'T THAT JUST A TAJ TOO MUCH?



In India, some Kali worshippers who REALLY wanted to impress their goddess went much further. Instead of chopping off an animal's head they would chop off their own. This is very tricky – so don't try it at home! Girls weren't allowed to do this, because Kali only wanted male sacrifices. She thought females were too valuable to kill. Right girls?

Puzzles

You 'Gupta' Be Good!

In the reign of Chandragupta Maurya, strict laws were passed. Match the crime to the pain.

CRIME

PUNISHMENT



1. Stealing goods from someone



A. Having the tip of your nose cut off



2. Stealing from holy places



B. Having both feet cut off



3. Killing a small animal such as a hen



C. Impaled on a stake



4. Stealing from a corpse



D. Have your thumb and forefinger cut off



5. Killing a royal



E. Be smeared with dung in public

Rave Mistakes



MIND YOUR LANGUAGE

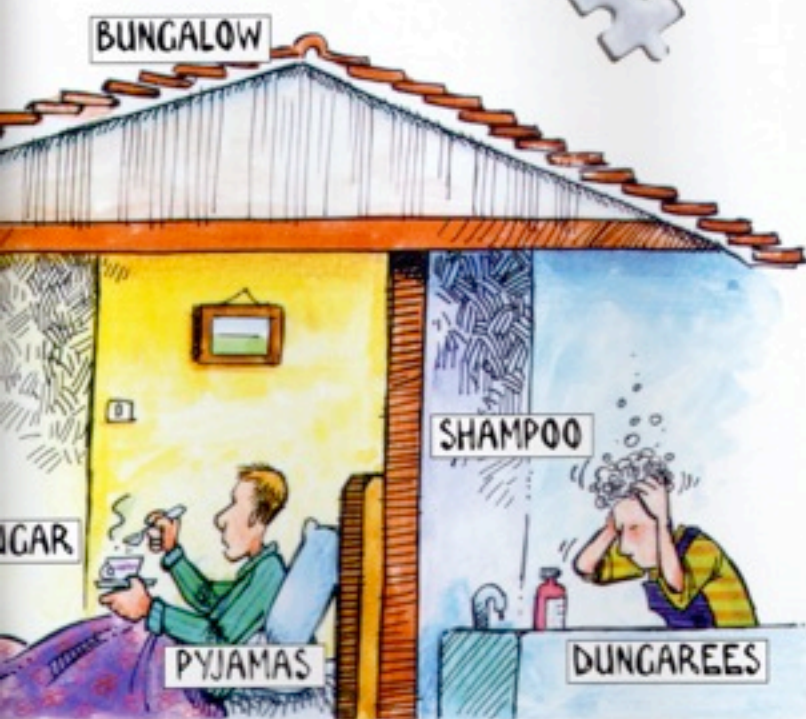
Many words in the English language have their origins in India. Which of these words was Indian in-di beginning?

JUGGERNAUT

TELEVISION



Here's a dancing double-up. Can you spot all of the seven differences between the two pics?



Answers

Mind Your Language
1E, 2D. If you committed a second crime you'd lose all your fingers. A third crime, and you'd lose your hand. If you still didn't take the hint, you'd be executed. 3A, 4B. That was dead foolish. 5F. What a mis-stake. 6C.

Rave Mistakes
The illustration shows a scene of chaos with people running and falling. The text 'Rave Mistakes' is written at the bottom of the illustration.

