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THE FOREST OF FULFILLING DESIRES: SRI KAMYAVANA

[The following is excerpts from the Sri Vraja Mandala Parikrama book, containing the same information discussed by Srila Maharaja on the day of the parikrama:]

caturtha kamyakavanam vananam vanamuttamam
tatra gatva naro devi! mama loke mahiyate
(Adi Varaha Purana)

"Kamyavana is the fourth forest, and also one of the topmost forests, amongst the twelve forests of Vraja Mandala. That fortunate person who performs parikrama of this forest is revered in Vraja Dhama itself."

tatah kamyavanam rajana! yatra balye sthito bhavan
snanamatrena sarvesam sarvakamaphalaprada
(Skanda Purana)

"He Maharaja! Thereafter lies Kamyavana, where Brajendranandana Sri Krsna performed many childhood pastimes. Bathing in Kama and other sarovaras of this forest fulfills all kinds of desires, even the desire for Krsna's premamayi seva, the seva to Krsna that is imbued with prema."

The word kama can only really be used to denote the gopis' prema for Sri Krsna. Premaiva gopa-ramanam kama ity agamata means that the pure prema of the gopikas exists solely to give Krsna happiness, and does not have even a smell of worldly lust (laukika kama). Only this prema is referred to as kama in sastra. The suddha prema of the gopis is wholly opposite to the lusty desires of this world. The only aim of the gopis' kama, which is devoid of all varieties of such lust, is to give happiness to Krsna, the abode of love. Therefore, Srimad-Bhagavatam and other sastras refer to the pure and unadulterated prema of the gopis as kama. Kamavana is the pastime-place where Sri Radha-Krsna Yugala have expressed such transcendental prema. In the forest called Kamavana, one can easily attain even the gopis' visuddha prema in the form of suddha kama, what to speak of being able to fulfill all kinds of worldly desires.

The word kama also means 'extremely beautiful', 'very well adorned' or 'highly attractive'. This very attractive forest within Vraja Mandala is where Sri Krsna sports. It is made exceedingly beautiful by various pleasant sarovaras, kupas (wells), kundas, trees, creepers, flowers, and fruits, and by a variety of birds. Hence, it is called Kamyavana. According to the Visnu Purana, there are eighty-four sacred kundas, eighty-four mandiras, and eighty-four pillars in Kamyavana. It is said that a famous king named Sri

Kamasena established them all. It is also accepted that the devatas and asuras jointly constructed 168 pillars here.

Kamyavana has countless small and large kundas and tirthas, as well as a parikrama of fourteen miles. Vimala Kunda is the famous tirtha or kunda of this forest. After taking bath there, one goes on to take darsana of the other holy places in Kamyavana.

VIMALA KUNDA

This well-known kunda is situated about four-hundred metres south-west of Kamavana Gaon. The following deities preside around Vimala Kunda in this order: (1) Dauji, (2) Suryadeva, (3) Sri Nilakanthesvara Mahadeva, (4) Sri Govardhananatha, (5) Sri Madan-Mohana and Kamyavana Vihari, (6) Sri Vimala Vihari, (7) Vimala-devi, (8) Sri Murali-Manohara, (9) Bhagavati Ganga, and (10) Sri Gopalaji.

According to the Garga Samhita, in ancient times a glorious king named Vimala lived in Campaka Nagari in the country of Sindhu. At first, none of his six thousand queens bore him any children, but by the mercy of Sri Yajnavalkya Rsi many beautiful girls took birth from the wombs of those queens. In their previous births, these girls had been the women of Janakapura who had desired to obtain Sri Ramacandraji as their husband. The girls who took birth in King Vimala's home eventually reached a marriageable age. On the advice of Maharsi Yajnavalkya, the king sent his emissary to Mathura Puri to search for Sri Krsna, whom he deemed to be a suitable husband for his daughters. While on his way, the emissary was fortunate to meet Grandfather Bhisma, who sent him to Sri Vrndavana, since Sri Krsna's was there at that time. Upon arriving in Vrndavana, the royal emissary gave Sri Krsna King Vimala's letter of invitation, which requested Sri Krsna to come to Campaka Nagari and marry the princesses there. After receiving Maharaja Vimala's invitation, Sri Krsna went to Campaka Nagari and brought the princesses back with Him to this pleasing Kamavana, situated within Vraja Mandala. He assumed as many forms as there were princesses and accepted them all. He performed rasa and other sports (krida) with them, fulfilling the long-cherished desire of these kumaris. The tears of happiness that flowed from their eyes filled a kunda, which became known as Vimala Kunda. By bathing in this kunda, all kinds desires, both worldly and transcendental, are fulfilled, and one's heart becomes pure and instilled with Vraja-bhakti.

It is generally said that all the tirthas of the universe come to Vraja during Caturmasya, but that, once, tirtharaja Puskara failed to come. Sri Krsna remembered Yogamaya. Merely by His recollection, a very strong current of water shot out of the earth. Astonishingly, a supremely beautiful and completely pure kisoni appeared from that sacred current. Sri Krsna performed many kinds of water-sports with that beautiful kisoni in the waters of that current. The kisoni completely satisfied parama rasika Sri Krsna with her beauty and pure, prema filled seva, and He gave Her a boon: "From today you will be known as Vimala-devi, and this kunda will be named after you. By taking bath in this kunda, one will get seven times the pious merit of taking bath in tirtharaja Puskara." Since then, this kunda has become known as Vimala Kunda.

Many great risis and maharsis have resided on the bank of this kunda to obtain Krsna-bhakti. It is well known that Maharsi Durvasa and the Pandavas resided here. Every Vraja Mandala parikrama party or pilgrim performing parikrama stays at Vimala Kunda and begins parikrama of Kamyavana from here only.

SRI VRINDA-DEVI AND SRI GOVINDADEVA

This is Kamyavana's most famous temple. One can take the special darsana of Sri Vrinda-devi here, which is rare in Vraja Mandala. Sri Sri Radha-Govindadeva are also present here. Nearby is Sri Visnu Simhasana, or in other words the simhasana (throne) of Sri Krsna. Close by is Carana Kunda, where the lotus feet of Sri Radha-Govinda Yugala were bathed.

After the disappearance of Sri Rupa and Sanatana and the other Gosvamis, the narrow-minded Mughal emperor Aurangzeb destroyed the famous temples of Vrndavana, Mathura and other locations in Vraja. At that time, the Maharaja of Jaipura, who was a great devotee, took the famous deities of Vraja with him to Jaipura. These included Sri Govinda, Sri Gopinatha, Sri Radha-Damodara and Sri Radha-Madhava. On his way to Jaipura, he rested for some days in Kamyavana. The deities were taken from the chariots and kept at various locations where regular services to Them were performed, such as bathing, offering bhoga and putting to rest. They were later carried to Jaipura and other places. Eventually, large temples were constructed at the places where the deities of Sri Radha-Govinda, Sri Radha-Gopinatha and Sri Radha-Madana-mohana had stayed in Kamyavana and pratibhu-vigrahas of the original deities were installed there.

Sri Vrinda-devi came as far as Kamyavana, but she did not leave Vraja to go further. There is thus a special darsana of Sri Vrinda-devi here.

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu and His parikaras, like Sri Rupa and Sri Sanatana Gosvamis, manifested the lost pastime-places of Vraja Mandala. Before their arrival in Vraja, Kamyavana was considered to be Vrndavana. However, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu established the place situated near Mathura as Sridhama Vrndavana. It is impossible for Yamunaji, Cira Ghata, Nidhuvana, Kaliya Daha, Kesi Ghata, Seva-kunja, Rasa-sthali Vamsivata, and Sri Gopesvara Mahadeva to be situated in Kamyavana. Therefore, that place where the pastime-places like Vimala Kunda, Kamesvara Mahadeva, Carana Pahadi, Setubandha Ramesvara and others are present is Kamyavana, and it is without doubt separate from Vrndavana. Vrinda-devi resides in Vrndavana only. She is the adhishthatri devi of the kunjās of Vrndavana and of the pastimes of Sri Radha-Krsna Yugala in those kunjās. Therefore, she now resides in Sri Rupa-Sanatana Gaudiya Matha in Sridhama Vrndavana and the darsana of her there is divine.

In the vicinity of the Sri Govindadeva Mandira, one can have darsana of places like Garudaji, Candrabhasa Kunda, Candresvara Mahadevaji, Varaha Kunda, Varaha Kupa, Yajna Kunda and Dharma Kunda.

DHARMA KUNDA

This kunda lies in the eastern part of Kamyavana. Sri Narayana is present here in the form of dharma. Nearby is a vedi (platform) named Visakha. There is a special rule that one should take bath here on Krsnastami (the eighth day of the dark moon) on Wednesday in the month of Bhadra (Bhadrapada) during the Sravana nakshatra (constellation). Within the area of Dharma Kunda, there are many places one may visit for darsana, such as Nara-Narayana Kunda, Nila Varaha, Panca Pandava, Hanumanji, Panca Pandava Kunda (Panca Tirtha), Manikarnika, and Visvesvara Mahadeva.

The five Pandavas resided in this attractive Kamyavana for a long time during their exile to the forest. Once, Maharani Draupadi and the Pandavas felt very thirsty. It was summer and the nearby sarovaras and other sources of water had dried up. Water was not available anywhere, not even from distant places. Maharaja Yudhishthira gave one empty pot to his valiant brother Bhimasena and told him to fill it with clean water. The intelligent Bhima saw that birds were flying to and from a particular place, so he headed in that direction. After some time, he came to a beautiful sarovara full of clean, fragrant water. Being very thirsty, He thought to quench his own thirst first before carrying water back to his brothers. However, as soon as he stepped in the lake, a Yaksha appeared before him and said, "Answer my questions before daring to drink water, otherwise you will die." Ignoring the order of the Yaksha, the great and valiant Bhimasena filled his palms with some water, at which moment he immediately fainted to the ground.

Noting Bhimasena's delay in returning, Maharaja Yudhishthira sent his brothers one by one to go and fetch water, first Arjuna, then Nakula, and lastly Sahadeva. Upon reaching the sarovara, however, they all met the same fate as Bhima, after attempting to drink water without following the Yaksha's command. Finally, Maharaja Yudhishthira went himself and found his brothers all lying on the ground unconscious. He became very worried. He decided to quench his thirst and then try to revive them; but as soon as he went to do so, the Yaksha appeared and told Maharaja Yudhishthira that he had to correctly answer his questions before he could drink any water. Very patiently, Maharaja Yudhishthira requested the Yaksha to ask his questions.

Yaksha: Who rises the sun?

Yudhishthira: Brahma rises the sun.

Yaksha: What is heavier than the earth itself? What is higher than even the sky? What travels faster than the wind? And what is greater in number than blades of grass or pieces of straw?

Yudhisthira: One's mother is heavier than the earth. One's father is higher than the sky. The mind is swifter than air, and the thoughts that spring from the mind are more numerous than blades of grass.

Yaksa: Which is the best dharma in the world? What is the best kind of forbearance?

Yudhisthira: The best dharma in the world is mercy. To tolerate the dualities of this world, like pleasure and sorrow, profit and loss, and birth and death, is the best kind of forbearance.

Yaksa: Who is the invincible enemy of human beings? What is their endless disease? Who is a sadhu, and who is not a sadhu?

Yudhisthira: Anger is the invincible enemy of human beings. Greed is their endless disease. One who does good to all living entities is a sadhu, and a cruel person who has no control over his senses is not a sadhu.

Yaksa: Who is happy? What is the greatest wonder? What is life's real path? What is newsworthy?

Yudhisthira: He who has no debt, he who is not in a foreign land, and he who is able somehow or other to eat leaves and herbs after cooking is happy. Every day, living beings make their way to the abode of Yamaraja, the god of death, but those who are left behind think they will live forever. There is no greater wonder than this. Argument has no place in determining the correct path. The srutis are diverse, and the opinions of the risis divided. The tattva of dharma is thus very deep. Therefore, the path that is followed by mahapurusas is the real path. Time is roasting all living beings in the pan of illusion and allurements, which represents this material world. It shuffles them with the ladle of months and seasons and cooks them in the fire of the sun planet, which burns up the fuel of day and night. This is the only news in this world.

Yaksa: O Rajan! You have answered all my questions correctly. You may therefore select any one of your brothers and he will return to life.

Yudhisthira: Among all my brothers, let dark-complexioned and very powerful Nakula live again.

Yaksa: Rajan! Why do you want Nakula to be brought back to life? Why not Bhima, who has the strength of ten thousand elephants, or the invincible archer Arjuna?

Yudhisthira: I cannot give up dharma. I am of the opinion that the supreme dharma is to have equal feelings for everyone. My father had two wives, Kunti and Madri. In my opinion, both of them should have sons. Kunti and Madri mean the same to me. I want to preserve this equality; therefore, Nakula should return to life.

Yaksa: O topmost bhakta! You have more respect for dharma than for time and wealth! Therefore, all your brothers should live again.

That Yaksa was none other than Dharmaraja (Sri Narayana) Himself, who had desired to test the dharma of his son Yudhisthira. Maharaja Yudhisthira passed the examination.

Once, when the Pandavas and Draupadi were living here during their exile, Maharani Draupadi went alone one day to take bath in Vimala Kunda. Meanwhile, the Pandavas were at their residence, free of anxieties and deeply absorbed in bhagavad-katha. Jayadratha, the brother-in-law of both Duryodhana and the Pandavas, was attracted to Draupadi. He was waiting for an opportunity to find Draupadi alone so he could kidnap her easily. He would thus dishonor the Pandavas. On this day, fate had it that he found Draupadi alone taking bath in Vimala Kunda away from her residence. Jayadratha tried to take Draupadi with him to his kingdom by threat and guile, but Draupadi, the crest-jewel of chaste ladies, firmly refused. Jayadratha then became very angry. He forcefully pulled her upon his chariot and drove the horses very fast.

Draupadi started loudly calling out to Arjuna, Bhima and Krsna for protection. Somehow, her loud cries reached the ears of Arjuna and Bhima, and the two great warriors immediately ran after the chariot with great speed. Maharathi Arjuna stopped Jayadratha's chariot by shooting arrows of fire at it. Jayadratha jumped from the chariot and fled for his life, but Bhima outran him and caught him. Both brothers submitted Jayadratha before Draupadi and then before Maharaja Yudhisthira.

Bhima was furious. "This tyrant should be killed immediately!" he pronounced.

Arjuna supported Bhima. However, Dharmaraja Yudhisthira pacified them both. "This degraded person has committed an offence at the feet of Draupadi," he said, "therefore, she should choose a suitable punishment for him."

Draupadi, who was very grave, then spoke. "Needless to say, he has committed a horrible offence, yet he is your sister's husband. I cannot bear to see my sister-in-law cry for the rest of her life as a widow. It is therefore best to release him."

Bhima, however, was intent on having him killed. They finally concluded that for a respectable person dishonour is equal to death. They therefore decided to shave his head clean, but in such a way as to give him five sikhas. Similarly, they would shave his face leaving only a beard before releasing him. Arjuna shaved Jayadratha's head and face as planned, thereby dishonoring him. He then released him. Jayadratha went away greatly insulted and performed severe austerities with the aim of killing the Pandavas. Arjuna killed him, however, in the Mahabharata war, by following the instructions of Sri Krsna.

The wicked Duryodhana was always anxious to destroy the Pandavas completely. Once, while the Pandavas and Draupadi were living here during their exile, he invited Maharshi Durvasa and fed him sumptuous, delicious food with great honor. Durvasaji was satisfied and requested Duryodhana to ask for a boon. With folded hands, Duryodhana said,

"Maharaja Yudhisthira is my elder brother. Please accept his hospitality at his residence together with your sixty-thousand disciples. But you should go and be their guest after noon, during the third prahara. The Pandavas are currently living in Kamyavana."

Duryodhana knew very well that the Pandavas served their guests very carefully. Draupadi had a pot that had been given to her by Suryadeva. The cooking done in that one pot could feed innumerable persons to their satisfaction, but once Draupadi ate and cleaned the pot, that pot could no longer provide any further food. Draupadi would feed any guests as well as the Pandavas, and then clean the pot without fail before the third prahara. Durvasaji and his sixty thousand disciples were to arrive there during the third prahara so that the Pandavas would not be able to feed them. Duryodhana expected that the very hot-tempered Durvasa Rsi would curse the Pandavas and thus burn them to ashes.

Maharsi Durvasa is fully aware of the glories of the Pandavas, who are Krsna-bhaktas. However, it is difficult for even the demigods to understand his contrary activities. Only he knows what, when and why he does what he does. Thus, he and sixty thousand risis reached the residence of the Pandavas in Kamyavana in the afternoon. Upon seeing him, the Pandavas became very happy. Maharaja Yudhisthira worshipped him and requested him to accept his hospitality.

Maharsi said, "We are now going to take bath in Vimala Kunda and will come back very soon. You should arrange for our meals. We will eat here." Saying this, Durvasaji left to take bath together with his whole entourage.

The Pandavas now became very concerned. What arrangement could be made to feed these risis? They called Draupadi and asked her if she could arrange to feed a gathering of sixty thousand, but her pot had already been cleaned and turned upside down. She considered hard what to do to save the Pandavas but could think of no plan. At last, she began calling out to her dear friend Sri Krsna in a very distressed voice.

How could Dvarakanatha not come upon hearing her call? He immediately appeared in front of Draupadi and said, "Sakhi, I am very hungry! Give Me something to eat."

Draupadi answered, "You are hungry and I have nothing at home. My pot has been cleaned and is lying upside down. The very hot tempered Maharsi Durvasa together with his sixty thousand disciples are about to come to take their meal. When he finds that there is nothing to eat, he will completely destroy the Pandavas. This will be unavoidable, therefore, first please arrange for them to be fed."

Sri Krsna said, "I cannot do anything without eating and drinking, so please bring your pot."

In a very sad voice Draupadi said, "There is nothing in the pot. I have cleaned it very thoroughly."

"Still, you please bring it. I want to see."

Draupadi brought the pot and put it in Krsna's hands, and Krsna looked into it and became joyful. A very tiny piece of greens was stuck to the side of the pot. Sri Krsna scraped it off with His nail and put in His mouth. He then filled His stomach with water poured by Draupadi's hands. Tripto 'smi! Tripto 'smi! ("I am satisfied! I am satisfied!") He exclaimed, and He began to pat His stomach with His hand. He even belched in satisfaction. Sri Krsna then sent Bhimasena to quickly go and call the risis. The great warrior Bhima, club in hand, started towards Vimala Kunda.

Maharsi Durvasa and his disciples had been bathing in Vimala Kunda when suddenly their stomachs felt so full that they all started belching as if they had eaten a meal. When Durvasaji saw Bhima coming towards them, the memory of the incident with Ambarisa Maharaja entered his mind and he became very frightened. He and his sixty thousand disciples quickly fled to Maharsi Loka through the celestial pathways. Upon arriving at Vimala Kunda, Bhima could not find the risis anywhere. He returned and told Maharaja Yudhishthira and Sri Krsna, "I searched everywhere but could not find them."

After learning what had happened from Sri Krsna, Draupadi and the Pandavas became free from anxiety. If Sri Krsna is satisfied, then the whole universe is satisfied. This is indeed the message of this episode to the universe. This lila of Sri Krsna took place here at Kamyavana.

Another time, while the Pandavas were residing here, the wicked Duryodhana discovered their whereabouts and descended upon Kamyavana with all his brothers, associates like Karna and Sakuni, relatives, friends, and an army of four divisions. For some days, he set up a very festive camp on the bank of Vimala Kunda just to humiliate the Pandavas. When Indra came to know of this, ordered to his general, Citrasena, to arrest Duryodhana. Citrasena defeated Duryodhana's entire army, arrested him and took him to Indra by the aerial pathways, Duryodhana loudly shouting and screaming all the while.

Yudhishthira Maharaja heard his crying and ordered Bhimasena to rescue him, but Bhimasena objected, "Maharaja! Duryodhana wanted to harm us, which is why our best well-wisher Citrasena has caught him and is taking him away. It's best if we remain quiet."

Maharaja Yudhishthira could not tolerate this. He looked at Arjuna and said, "Brother Arjuna! Our brother Suyodhana is in danger, and it is our duty to rescue him. We can quarrel and fight among ourselves over some issue, but in regard to others we one hundred and five brothers are one. Quickly rescue Suyodhana."

The maharathi Arjuna easily released Duryodhana from the hands of Citrasena, the general of the demigods, and brought him down to stand before Maharaja Yudhishthira, who met him very affectionately and respectfully sent him back to his place of residence. But the blackness of coal does not go away even if the coal is washed millions of times with soap. The affectionate behavior of Maharaja Yudhishthira pierced Duryodhana's heart

like a sharp iron rod. He considered himself dishonored, and returned to Hastinapura very agitated. Whoever God protects, no one can harm. Indeed, no one can so much as twist a single hair of someone who is under Sri Krsna's shelter.

Nearby, at Panca Tirtha Sarovara, are some wonderful murtis of the Pandavas and Draupadi. This place is uninhabited, and therefore a thief was able to steal a few murtis some time ago, while others have been broken. Since then, the remaining murtis have been kept in the nearby Kamesvara Mandira, where they are neglected. Dharma Kupa, Dharma Kunda and many other places that seem to be connected with the Pandavas lie close by.

YASODA KUNDA

This place in Kamyavana was the residence of Sri Yasodaji's father. During His childhood, Sri Krsna would sometimes come to stay here with His mother. Sometimes, Nanda Baba and his family and associates used to camp here with their cows. Sri Krsna and the sakhas also used to graze the cows here. This place is very attractive. In Bhakti-ratnakara, it has been mentioned:

dekha yasoda kunda parama nirmala
etha gocarane Krsna haiya vihvala

"See this supremely pure Yasoda Kunda, where Krsna joyfully herded His cows."

SETUBANDHA SAROVARA

On the order of the gopis, Sri Krsna, in the mood of Sri Rama, had the monkeys construct a bridge (setu) here. Even today, one can see the ruins of this bridge of rocks (setu-bandha) in the sarovara.

Ramesvara Mahadeva presides north of this kunda. He was installed by Sri Krsna, when He assumed the mood of Sri Rama. Lankapuri, as a hillock, is situated to the south of the kunda across from Ramesvara Mahadeva.

One day, the supremely playful Sri Krsna was sitting in the shade under the trees on the northern bank of this kunda, together with the gopis. He was enjoying jokes and laughter with vinodini Sri Radhika. At that time, many monkeys from nearby places descended from the trees, being attracted by Krsna's rupa-madhuri, sweet beauty. They offered pranamas at His lotus feet, made sounds of joy, and jumped and danced. Several monkeys took very long leaps from trees on the southern bank of the kunda and landed near His lotus feet. Bhagavan Sri Krsna praised the bravery of those monkeys.

Watching this wonderful lila charmed the gopis. They began to describe the astonishing lilas of Bhagavan Sri Ramacandra and said that He also took help from monkeys. At that time, Lalitaji said, "We have heard that in Treta-yuga the greatly powerful Hanumanji

crossed the ocean with one jump, but today we are seeing with our own eyes monkeys cross this sarovara in a single jump."

Hearing this, Krsna proudly declared, "Do you know, I was Sri Rama in Treta-yuga. I performed all these lilas in the form of Rama."

Praising the amazing lilas of Sri Ramacandra, Lalita said, "You are a liar. You were never Rama. Such bravery is impossible for You."

Sri Krsna smiled and replied, "You don't believe Me, but I did take the form of Rama, and I married Sita after breaking the bow of Siva in Janakapuri. On the order of My father, I roamed through Citrakuta and Dandakaranya bow in hand, together with Sita and Laksmana. I killed cruel and tyrannical demons there. Thereafter, I wandered from forest to forest in separation of Sita, destroyed Ravana and Lankapuri with the help of the monkeys, and then returned to Ayodhya. Now I carry a vamsi, roam from forest to forest tending and grazing the cows, and perform pastimes with My beloved Sri Radhika in the company of you gopis. Previously, in My form as Rama, My bow and arrow made the three worlds tremble. Now, however, all living beings, both moving and non-moving, are becoming maddened by the sweet sound of My venu."

Smilingly, Lalitaji said, "We do not believe mere words. If You can show some valor like that of Sri Rama, then we may believe You. Sri Ramacandraji arranged for a bridge to be constructed by bears and monkeys so that He could cross an ocean one hundred yojanas wide with His entire army. If You can get these monkeys to construct a bridge over this small sarovara, then we may believe You."

Hearing Lalita words, Sri Krsna assembled all the monkeys in a moment by sounding His venu. He ordered them to construct a bridge over the sarovara using flat stones. On the order of Sri Krsna, thousands of monkeys immediately and eagerly started to help build the bridge, bringing stones from distant places. This occurred right before the gopis' eyes. Sri Krsna then constructed the bridge with His own hands with the stones brought by the monkeys. He installed Ramesvara Mahadeva at the start of the bridge, on the northern side of the sarovara. These places can still be seen to this day. This kunda is also called Lanka Kunda.

LUK-LUKI KUNDA

Luk-luki Kunda is a place of Sri Krsna's water-sports (jala-krida), and is therefore also known as Jala-krida Kunda. While grazing the cows, Krsna would sometimes leave His play with the sakhas for a while to meet with the gopis in this secluded and attractive place. Krsna played hide-and-seek here with the Vraja-ramanis. The gopis closed their eyes, and Krsna hid in a cave in a nearby hill. The sakhis searched for Him everywhere, but were unable to find Him. They became very worried. "Where could Krsna have gone leaving us behind?" they thought. They began to meditate on Him. That place where they

performed dhyana (meditation) on Krsna is called Dhyana Kunda, and the cave (kandara) in which Krsna was hiding is called Luka-luka Kandara.

CARANA PAHADI

After Sri Krsna entered the cave known as Luka-luka Kandara, He appeared on top of the hill in which the cave is buried and played on His sweet flute. The sound of the flute broke the sakhis' meditation on Him. They looked up to see their beloved playing His flute on the hill, and eagerly ran there to meet Him. The sound of the flute somewhat melted the hill, and Sri Krsna's footprints manifested there. Even today, one can see these footprints very clearly. The stones on the nearby hill where the sakhas were playing and the calves were grazing also melted, creating imprints of their feet and hooves. These imprints are still clearly visible today, even after 5,000 years.