

## KHADIRAVANA FOREST



Krishna killed Bakasura in the Khadiravana forest. This forest is 40 km (24 miles) northwest of Vrindavan and has a parikrama of 7 km. The name is taken from the word khaira. Khaira means "to chase or pursue." There is a Radha Krishna temple. On the bank of Madhuri-Kunda (Sangama-Kunda) are the bhajana kutirs of Lokanath Gosvami and Bhugarbha Gosvami. They would occasionally stay here. Sangama means "union," and at this place Krishna and the gopis would meet together. At Sangam Kunda, Krishna and the Gopis would perform Rasa Leela and many other extraordinary pastimes. At this place Krishna and His friends played many games while they took care of the cows. The Deity of Radha-Vinod manifested Himself to Lokanatha Gosvami in the town of Umarao, which is 5 km (3 miles) from here.

Khadiravan is one of the forests where Krishna would often bring His cows for herding. Krishna, Balaramji along with all the other Gopas have performed many playful pastimes in the forest of Khadiravan.

**How to Get Here:** This forest is about 10 km northeast of Varsana. Khadiravana is a few km off the road that goes between Chata and Varsana.

### Killing of Bakasura in Khadiravan



Once while herding the cows, Krishna-Balaram and the Gopas came over to a large reservoir water in Khadiravan. They had their cows drink water first and then as they were quenching their thirst with the cool refreshing waters, they saw something very astonishing. It seemed that a huge mountain in front of them was shaking and moving. The huge creature was actually the duck demon, Bakasura sent by Kamsa. Before anyone could understand what was happening, the wicked demon leaped upon them and swallowed Krishna with his sword like huge pointed beak. Balaramji and the Gopas in anguish fell to the ground unconscious, practically breathless, out of their intense affection for Krishna.

Bakasura was trying to gulp Krishna down his throat but his throat was getting burned by the intense heat radiated by Krishna's effulgence. It was getting unbearable for Bakasura just as for a person suffering from jaundice, even the best sweet candy seems to be bitter. There is nothing sweeter than Krishna's beautiful form and His beautiful face. His smile is the very source of all sweetness in all of creation, material and spiritual. But because of the disease of envy and violence Bakasura, was finding sweet Krishna as unbearable.

Ultimately Bakasura could do nothing but vomit Krishna out of his mouth. Then Krishna was there on the ground and Bakasura unrelentingly tried to stab Krishna and pierce Krishna with his massive deadly beak. But Krishna very gracefully just dodged all of the attempts in a dancing way. Finally with one hand Krishna grabbed the bottom of Bakasura's beak and with the other hand he took the top part of the beak and then he tore them apart with such force that he literally ripped apart Bakasura's face into two halves. He bifurcated the demon just like a small child effortlessly bifurcates a piece of grass. Bakasura fell dead and the demigods started rejoicing and showering flowers upon Krishna, playing conch shells and offering prayers. The cowherd boys headed by Balarama, then regained their lives and they all approached Krishna one by one and embraced him with loving feelings. Thus, yet another glorious demon killing pastime was performed by Krishna.

Bakasura represents the demoniac anartha of deceptive behavior, duplicity and hypocrisy. It is a great demon that kills our propensity of loving service to Krishna. A devotee should be very honest, truthful and very simple at heart. Without simplicity and truthfulness, love and trust cannot develop within any society. So we must take shelter of Krishna and His holy names to kill this tendency of deceptiveness, duplicity and hypocrisy within our hearts.

## **Lokanath Goswami in Khadiravan**



Shrila Lokanath Goswami was first amongst the Goswamis to be sent to Vrindavan from Bengal by Shri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu for fulfilling His mission of excavating the lost pastime places of Vrindavan and to establish the temples of worship in Vrindavan. Lokanath Goswami would stay in a secluded place on the banks of Kishori Kunda in Khadiravan and perform his bhajans constantly.

One day Krishna personally appeared in the form of a Brahman in the secluded forest of Khadiravan and approached Lokanath Goswami. He put beautiful deities in the hands of Lokanath Goswami and then disappeared. These were the deities of Shri Shri Radha Vinoda. Then the deity Shri Shri Radha Vinoda spoke to Lokanath Goswami, "I have been living in this forest for a very very long time waiting for you. I know the desire of your heart is to worship Me in My deity form. Therefore I have personally come to you. So, now I am very hungry. Please bring me some food." When Lokanath Goswami heard this his heart just flooded in ecstasy and he wept tears uncontrollably.



### **Sri Sri Radha Vinod of Lokanath Goswami;**

He went to the nearby village and got some grains, fruits and roots by begging and cooked a big feast for the deities. Then he collected flowers and prepared a bed of flowers on the ground for the deities and put them to rest by massaging their lotus feet, with eyes filled with tears of love. He would prepare fans made of leaves or feathers and fan the Lord of his life and in this way he used to perform loving service to Shri Shri Radha Vinoda in Khadiravan saturated with his pure devotion. He sewed a cloth bag which served as the mobile temple for Shri Shri Radha Vinoda. He would carry Shri Shri Radha Vinoda with him wherever he would go. Later when Rupa and Sanatan Goswami came to Vrindavan, Lokanath Goswami on their request moved from Khadiravan to Vrindavan with Shri Shri Radha Vinoda.

Lokanath Goswami is a Manjari from the spiritual world, one of the principal Manjaris of Shri Vrindavan Dham. But he performed his leela of being such a humble sincere and dedicated Vaishnava. On hearing his past times our hearts should cry. Lokanath Goswami could have lived for years and years with Mahaprabhu in Puri and Bengal as an intimate associate. But Mahaprabhu ordered him to go and stay in Vrindavan. So he went and stayed there. It was an austerity for him to stay away from Mahaprabhu. But he took the order of his Guru and Krishna as his life and soul. Not his heart's desire. That is Lokanath Goswami.

A practicing devotee should just try to follow in the footsteps of Lokanath Goswami and then one can understand what it means to following footsteps of residents of Vrindavan. And gradually when we really please Lokanath Goswami, Rupa Goswami, Srila Prabhupad and all the acharyas by following their instructions, then they will reveal to us the eternal leela of Vraja. Let this be our prayer in the holy forest of Khadiravan.

A pranam mantra for Lokanatha Dasa Goswami has been written by Narottama Dasa Thakura. It reads:

srimad-radha-vinodaika-  
seva-sampat-samanvitam  
padmanabhatmajam srimal-  
lokanatha prabhum bhaje

"I worship the lotus feet of Srila Lokanatha Prabhu, the son of Sri Padmanabha. He is a storehouse of singleminded service to the lotus feet of Sri Sri Radha- Vinoda."

Srila Lokanatha Goswami gave mantra diksha to Sri Narottama Dasa Thakura. There is no mention in the shastras that he accepted any other disciples. Narottama Thakura served him in secret by going in the dead of night to the place where Lokanatha would pass stool and urine and cleansing the area very carefully. Seeing Narottama's humility, Lokanatha accepted him.

Srila Lokanatha Goswami, in his ripe old age, while performing his bhajan in Khadiravan in Khayara Gram, passed away and entered into the eternal unmanifest pastimes of the Lord. At that place is a kunda called Sri Yugala Kunda. On the banks of that kunda, Srila Lokanatha Goswami entered into samadhi.

It is said that when Krishnadasa Kaviraja Goswami went to Lokanatha Goswami and asked his blessings to compile the Sri Caitanya Caritamrita, Lokanatha Goswami gave his blessings, but prohibited Kaviraja Goswami from mentioning his name in the Caitanya Caritamrita. For fear of violating the order of Lokanatha, Kaviraj Goswami has only briefly mentioned him in the Caitanya Caritamrita. On the day of Krishnastami in the month of Shravana, he entered into the eternal pastimes of the Lord.



Srila Narottama Dasa Thakura Mahashaya prays as follows at the lotus feet of his gurudeva:

ha ha prabhu lokanatha, rakha padadvandve  
kripadrishthye chaha yadi haiya anande  
manovancha siddhi habe hang purna trishna

hethaya chaitanya mile setha radhakrishna  
tumi na karile daya ke kairbe ara  
manera vasana purna kara eibara  
ei tini samsare mora ara keho nai  
kripa kari nija padatale deha thai  
radhakrishna lilaguna gao ratri dine  
narottama vancha purna nahe tuwa vine

"O Lokanatha, O gurudeva! If you are pleased with me, please keep me in the shelter of your lotus feet, and cast your merciful glance upon me. By your mercy I can find the perfection of inner fulfillment. And by your mercy I can someday meet Sri Caitanya and Radha-Krishna. If you are not merciful to me, then what shall I do? Please, just once, fulfill my heart's desire. In the three worlds of birth and death no one is more in need of your mercy. Please give me your mercy and give me a place at your lotus feet. Day and night I sing the qualities and pastimes of Radha and Krishna. Still, the inner aspirations of Narottama for the service of Sri Sri Radha-Govinda and Caitanya Mahaprabhu can only be realized through your grace, o Lokanatha Goswami Prabhu."