

## Kokilavan / कोकिलावन

Kokilavan lies three miles north of Nand Gaon and one mile west of Javat. Even today, the sweet sounds of many birds – such as peacocks, peahens, male parrots, female parrots, swans and cranes – can be heard in this protected and enchanting forest, and animals like deer and blue cows, or nil gay, can be seen wandering about. The Brajvasis bring their vast herds of cows here for grazing. The sweet kuhu-kuhu of hundreds of cuckoo birds (kokilas) resounds in this forest. Although most forests of Braj have been destroyed, this one, with a circumference of three-and-a-half miles, remains somewhat protected. According to Braj-bhakti-vilas, Ratnakar-Sarovar and a Ras-mandal are situated in Kokilavan.



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### Story

Once, the very playful Shri Krishna eagerly desired to meet Radhika, but because of the obstacles created by Her mother-in-law Jatila, sister-in-law Kutila and husband Abhimanyu, Radhika could not get to Their appointed meeting place. After waiting for a long time, Krishna climbed a tall tree and sweetly began to imitate the sound of a cuckoo. Hearing the loud and delightful call of this astonishing cuckoo bird, Radhika and the sakhis understood

that it was a signal from Krishna and became eager and restless to meet with Him. At that time, Jatila addressed Vishakha, saying, "Vishakha, I have heard cuckoo birds make so many beautiful sounds, but I have never heard anything like the wonderful and lengthy melody this bird sings today." Vishakha replied, "Dadiji, we also have never heard anything like it. This is certainly an amazing cuckoo bird. With your permission, we would like to go out and see it for ourselves." The old woman gladly gave permission for the sakhis to go. They very happily entered the forest, and thus Krishna was able to meet with Radha. This is how this place became known as Kokilavan.

## **Ratnakar Sarovar**



The sakhis brought milk from their homes to make this kund. Many varieties of jewels (ratna) appeared from the pond that the sakhis used to decorate Radhika.<sup>1</sup> This pond, which destroys all sins and bestows an abundance of wealth and affluence, can give devotees the greatest jewel of all – causeless devotion for the Divine Couple, Shri Radha-Krishna.

## **Ras-Mandal**

Shri Krishna performed ras-lila with the gopis here, after which they played in the water of Ratnakar-sarovar.

Shani temple in Kokilavan -

As mentioned in Garga Samhita, When Lord Krishna appeared, all demigods visited Nanda Maharaj's house in Gokul. Lord Shani dev was also one of them. Everyone was allowed to take Darshan of Lord Krishna but not Shanidev. When Shani dev was going to take darshan of Krishna ,Yashoda stopped him at the door and said," You can't see my baby because your name is fearful. If my baby sees you, he will be frightened."

Hearing this Word of Yashoda, Shani Dev felt disappointed and went to do penance to get mercy of Lord. After a short time, Lord Krishna appeared before him and asked him, "What is the problem. Why you are in forest?" Shani dev replied, "O God! Please tell me one thing, when I am doing my duty to punish people according to their work (Karma). Then why people think about me that I am malignant and cruel. Why people think that Shani dev creates trouble only. Why do they avoid even my shadow? Today also when all could enjoy the bliss of your Darshan, I was denied that right and benediction."

Lord Krishna advised Shanidev to stay at this place in Vrajabhumi. He also granted him the boon that whoever came to his temple to pray would immediately be freed from all worries and afflictions. Thus Lord Krishna gave Shanideva his darshan and also made him famous. Though Kokilvan is the place where Krishna sang in Cuckoos note to call radharani, today Kokilavan is more famous for the temple of Shanideva.

That place of the forest where Krishna appeared before Shanidev, has since been called "Kokilavan". Now it is famous for "Kokilavan Shanidham". Especially on every Saturday thousands of devotees visit this place to take the blessings of Shani Dev





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