

Gajan: a hindu festival in India.

Gajan is a Hindu festival celebrated mostly in the Indian state of West Bengal. It is associated with such deities as Shiva, Neel and Dharmaraj. Gajan spans around a week, starting at the last week of Choitro continuing till the end of the Bengali year. It ends with Charak Puja. Participants of this festival is known as sannyasi or Bhokto. Persons of any gender can be a participant. The complete history of the festival is not known. The central theme of this festival is deriving satisfaction through non-sexual pain, devotion and sacrifice. The word *gajan* in Bengali comes from the word *garjan* or roar that sannyasis (hermits) emit during the festivities. Alternatively, the word *gajan* is considered a combination of parts of two words – *ga* is from the word *gram* meaning village and *jan* is from the word *janasadharan* meaning folk. In this sense gajan is a festival of village folk.

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