

***Laakhe* Dance**

English description:

Laakhe Dance is a dance performed by the Newars¹ of the Kathmandu Valley. *Laakhe* literally means a carnivorous demon. The *laakhe* in this video is dressed in a red and gold dress and is wearing a red mask with fangs and a flowing hairdo.

According to stories passed down the generations, a *laakhe* is supposed to have fallen in love with a girl from Kathmandu. So, the demon takes the form of a human and enters the city to see his beloved. Upon knowing the fact that the person is a *laakhe*, the people capture him and present [him] to the King. The King proposes to the *laakhe* that he will grant him a place in the city if he vows to preserve the children from other demons and participate in the annual Yanyaa Punhi Jatra (also called Indra Jatra²). The *laakhe* agrees and is said to have resided in Kathmandu ever since.

¹ The Newars are one of the ethnic groups of Nepal. Their main place of residence in Nepal is Kathmandu Valley.

² Indra Jatra is a big festival celebrated by the Newars of Kathmandu. It is celebrated in the memory of the Hindu God Indra.

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