

NIRĀMAYĀ. A river, the water of which was very dear to the people of ancient India. (Bhīṣma Parva, Chapter 9, Verse 33).

NIRAMITRA I. Son of Nakula. His mother was the noble lady called Kareṇumatī. (Ādi Parva, Chapter 95, Verse 79).

NIRAMITRA II. A Trigarta prince killed in the great war by Sahadeva. (Droṇa Parva, Chapter 107, Verse 26).

NIRAVINDA. An ancient mountain. It is believed that he who bathes in the pond on this mountain will attain salvation. (Anuśāsana Parva, Chapter 137).

NIRMOGANA. The Palace of Murāsura. (Udyoga Parva, Chapter 48, Verse 83).

NIRṚTI I. A Deva. The Purāṇas contain the following information about him.

(i) He is one of the Aṣṭadīkṣpālas (guards of the eight quarters). He is in charge of the south-western corner. (See under Aṣṭadīkṣpālas).

(ii) He is one of the Ekādaśarudras. (Ādi Parva, Chapter 66, Verse 2).

(iii) Brahmā was his grand-father and Sthāṇu his father. (Ādi Parva, Chapter 66, Verse 2).

(iv) He attended the birth-day celebrations of Arjuna. (Ādi Parva, Chapter 129, Verse 63).

(v) In temples his idols are installed with sword in hand and seated on an ass. (Agni Purāṇa, Chapter 51).

NIRṚTI II. Wife of the Deva called Adharma. She had three sons called Bhaya, Mahābhaya and Antaka. These Rākṣasas are known as Nairṛtas. (Ādi Parva, Chapter 66, Verse 54).

NIŚĀ. The third wife of the Agni called Bhānu. To the couple were born seven sons called Agni, Soma, Vaiśvānara, Viśvapati, Sannihita, Kapila and Agraṇī, and a daughter called Rohiṇī. (Vana Parva, Chapter 211).

NIŚĀDA I. A forest dweller. The grand sire of the niśāda tribe living in forests was one Niśāda. Those forest-dwellers came to be known as niśādas as they were the descendants of this Niśāda. The Purāṇic story about the origin of Niśāda is as follows :—

Once upon a time there lived a King called Vena. A very immoral ruler, he was hated by the people. As dharma declined in the country due to the misrule of Vena the maharṣis killed him with darbha grass sanctified by mantras. Then the maharṣis saw dust rising up everywhere and people told them that the poor people, in the absence of king, had turned into thieves and the dust was formed by the onrush of the thieves. To remedy the problem thus created the maharṣis churned the thigh of Vena, who had died childless, for a son, and from the thigh was born a male child, dark in colour, dwarfish and with a compressed face. Sadly he asked the brahmins (maharṣis) what he should do. They asked him to sit (niśāda) and hence he became Niśāda (forest-dweller). His descendants settled down on mount Vindhya and they by their sinful lives divested Vena of his sins. Vena was absolved of his sins through the Niśādas, and thus the Niśādas became responsible for the ending of Vena's sins. (Viṣṇu Purāṇa, Part 1, Chapter 13).

NIŚĀDA II. A particular region in ancient India. (Bhīṣma Parva, Chapter 9, Verse 51).

NIŚĀDANAREŚA. A King well known in Bhārata. He was born from aspects of the daityas, Kālakeya and Krodhahantā. (Ādi Parva, Chapter 67, Verse 50).

NIŚADHA I. A King born in Śrī Rāma's dynasty. Kuśa was born as the son of Śrī Rāma, Aditi as Kuśa's son and Niśadha as Aditi's son. This Niśadha was the father of King Nabhas. (Bhāgavata, 9th Skandha).

NIŚADHA II. A King of Bharata's dynasty. Niśadha was the grandson of King Puru and the fourth son of Janamejaya. A great humanitarian, Niśadha ruled the country to the satisfaction of everybody. (Ādi Parva, Chapter 94, Verse 56).

NIŚADHA III. A mountain near mount Meru. During his triumphal tour, Arjuna defeated the people of this region.

NĪŚĀKARA I. A maharṣi. Honoured even by the Devas he lived in his āśrama on the heights of Mount Vindhya. One of those days Jaṭāyu and his elder brother Sampāti, under a bet, flew up to the Sun's sphere. In his attempt to shield Jaṭāyu, who flew with great speed and neared the Sun's sphere, from the scorching heat of the Sun, Sampāti's wings got burned and he fell down on the heights of Vindhya where he lay unconscious for six days.

Nīśākara maharṣi heard Sampāti crying and he saved the bird, which lived there for many years as the maharṣi's slave. The maharṣi, who could foresee things told Sampāti about Śrī Rāma's incarnation which was to happen in the future. He entered Samādhi after finally telling Sampāti that monkeys would go there then in search of Sītā, that Sampāti would point out to them where Sītā was and that on that day his wings would automatically reappear and his legs would become strong. Afterwards for eight thousand years Sampāti led a solitary life in the āśrama. It was during this period that monkeys, in the course of their search for Sītā got information about her from Sampāti. (Kamba Rāmāyaṇa; Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa, Kiṣkindhā Kāṇḍa, Canto 60).

NĪŚĀKARA II. A great muni, who attained Svarga after passing through many lives. His story is given below :—

There was a great ascetic and erudite scholar in all branches of knowledge called Kośakāra, son of muni Mudgala. Kośakāra's wife was Dharmiṣṭhā, daughter of Vātsyāyana. To them was born a son, an idiot and a deaf and dumb child, whom they forsook at the gates of the mother's house. At the same time an evil-minded Rākṣasa woman called Śūrpākṣī, who was in the habit of lifting children came there with a lean child. She replaced Dharmiṣṭhā's child with the lean one and returned with it to the Śālobharaparvata where her blind husband asked her what she had brought for his food. She told him about the changelling child with her when he said as follows "Return the child at once to where it was found. The child's father is a great man of knowledge and wisdom and when he hears about your action, he will curse us. So, return the child and bring the child of some one else." As soon as she heard these words of her husband she rose up in the sky in great alarm.

Hearing the cries of the Rākṣasa child left at their gates Dharmiṣṭhā and her husband came out, and the child which, in its colour and shape resembled their child exactly, Kośakāra said thus : "Oh ! Dharmiṣṭhā ! this must be some ghost. Some one is lying here in the same form as our child to hoodwink and cheat us."