

PHOTO ESSAY

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Having grown up immersed in certain traditions and festivals, culture becomes an integral part of our lives and identity. They are more than just an occasion to express community spirit, our festivals and traditions are representatives of our heritage and cultural identities.

The Ashadi 'palkhi' procession, also known as Wari Procession, is a crucial part of Marathi culture. Under this 800-year old tradition, thousands of devotees undertake a pilgrimage on foot carrying Palkhis containing the footprints (padukas) of Saints Dnyaneshwar and Saint Tukaram.

Due to COVID-19, the procession was disrupted and cancelled. As per state orders, the footprints will be be transported by air or road without the procession.

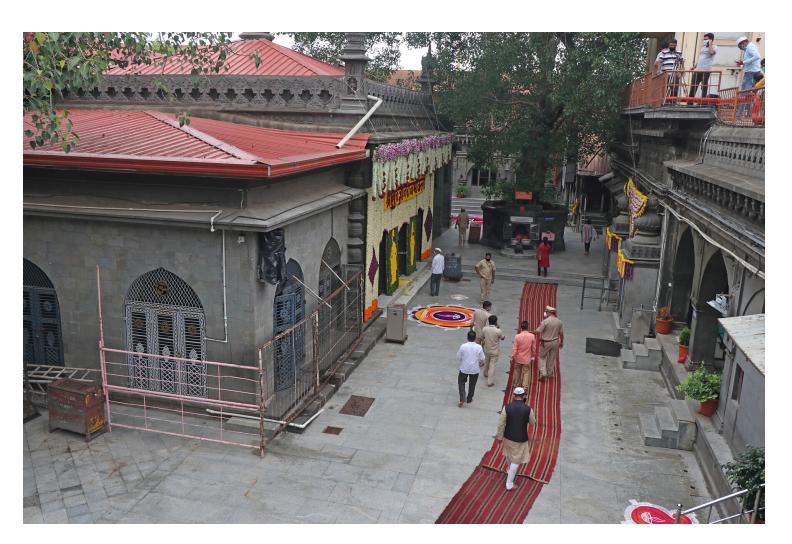
Sacred Steps



Pune, India- Devotees dance in between physical distance markings during procession at Saint Tukaram Temple at Dehu village near Pune city on Friday, June 12, 2020.



Alandi, India- Warkaris gather at Saint
Dyaneshwar temple at
Alandi, Maharashtra,
India on June 25,
2019. Around 3 lakh
people from
Maharashtra and
other states arrived at
Alandi temple to
participate in
Pandharpur Wari
(Pilgrimage).



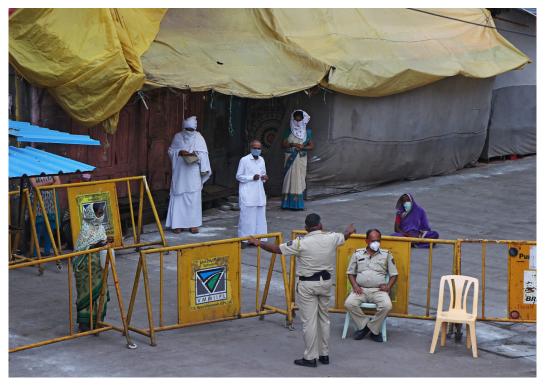
Alandi, India- Officials and Police at Saint Dyaneshwar Temple at Alandi amid Lockdown restrictions near Pune city on Saturday, June 13, 2020. The 800-year-old tradition of Ashadhi Wari remains cancelled and the Footprints will be carried by road or Air in Solapur district on June 30 amid rising cases of Corona Virus.



Pune, India- Minimum Devotees at Saint Tukaram Temple at Dehu village amid Lockdown restrictions near Pune city on Friday, June 12, 2020. The annual pilgrimage made by foot by lakhs of *warkaris* (devotees) to the temple town Pandharpur carrying Palkhi (Palanquins) bearing padukas (foot prints) of Saint Tukaram and Saint Dyaneshwar begins on Friday.



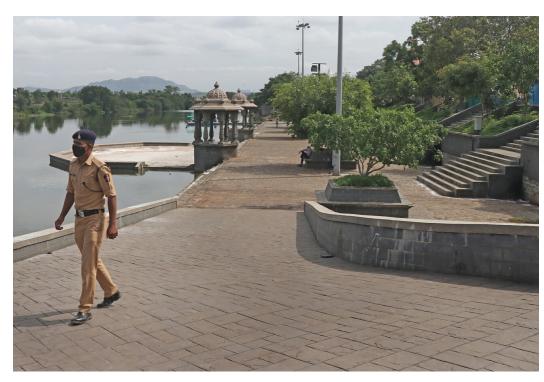
Dehugaon, India-Warkaris carry
Palkhi (Palanquin)of
Saint Tukaram at
Dehu village temple
on annual
pilgrimage to
Pandharpur on June
24, 2019. Around 2
lakh people from
Maharashtra arrived
at Dehugaon temple
to participate in
Pandharpur Wari or
Annual Pilgrimage. Alandi, India- Warkaris (Devotees) outside Saint Dyaneshwar Temple at Alandi amid Lockdown restrictions near Pune city on Saturday, June 13, 2020.





Alandi, India- A Police constable walks next to closed shops outside Saint Dyaneshwar Temple at Alandi amid Lockdown restrictions near Pune city on Saturday, June 13, 2020.

Pune, India- Police security at Indrayani river in premises of Saint Tukaram Temple at Dehu village near Pune city on Friday, June 12, 2020.





Pune, India- Police security at premises of Saint Tukaram Temple at Dehu village near Pune city on Friday, June 12, 2020.



Pune, India- Police security at premises of Saint Tukaram Temple at Dehu village near Pune city on Friday, June 12, 2020.



Alandi, India- A
Devotee stands
next to flower
decoration at
Saint Dyaneshwar
Temple at Alandi
amid Lockdown
restrictions near
Pune city on
Saturday, June 13,
2020.



Pune, India- Devotees during procession at Saint Tukaram Temple at Dehu village near Pune city on Friday, June 12, 2020.



Pune, India- A Police officer touches Footprints at Saint Tukaram Temple at Dehu village near Pune city on Friday, June 12, 2020.



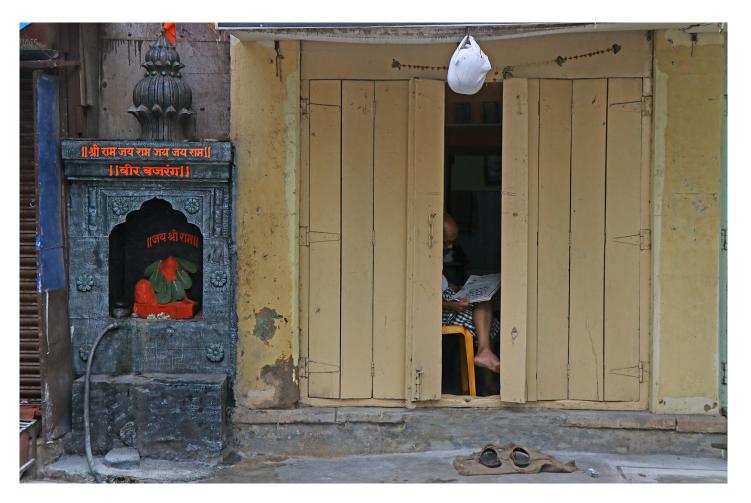
Alandi, India- A Police constable at Saint Dyaneshwar Temple at Alandi amid Lockdown restrictions near Pune city on Saturday, June 13, 2020.



Alandi, India- Warkaris (devotees) carry Foot Prints of Saint Dyaneshwar during the wari procession at Saint Dyaneshwar Temple at Alandi amid Lockdown restrictions near Pune city on Saturday, June 13, 2020.



Pune, India- A devotee Live streaming warkaris through mobile at Saint Tukaram Temple at Dehu village amid Lockdown restrictions near Pune city on Friday, June 12, 2020.



Alandi, India- A closed shop outside Saint Dyaneshwar Temple at Alandi amid Lockdown restrictions near Pune city on Saturday, June 13, 2020.

Traditions are associated with the idea of permanence; with the notion of standing through the trials of time. However, in reality, traditions evolve and adapt with time. The pandemic has caused us and our traditions to adapt to new circumstances. Even though the situation is nowhere near ideal, there are smiling faces behind those masks.

To learn, to grow, to face adversities has perhaps been as much of a legacy as these traditions and festivals. Keeping that tradition alive as well, the residents of Maharashtra followed their ancestors' sacred steps.

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