

On the Charting of the Firmament and Making of an Almanac

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Abstract: *Tempus Fugit* and the sacred endeavor of Indian *Rishis* are to catch the Time. Sky gazing is the oldest scientific tradition of human civilization and thus the charting of heavens is materialized by mankind. Second, Minute, Hour, Day, Month and Year makes a calendar and thus our ancestors codified time in a systematic and scientific way. Almanac is like a calendar but not a calendar in a true sense and it is something more than a calendar. Indian almanac is known as *Panchanga* or *Panji* and it is the most scientific charting of the firmament in this world and people still believe that it described the other world also. Indian almanac or *Panchanga* has five limbs, as the name suggests. These five aspects are *Vara*, *Tithi*, *Nakshyatra*, *Yoga* and *Karana*. The first three are associated with the time measurement using astronomical references and last two are related with social-cultural practice of ancient *Hindu*. Making of the *Vara* is related with the motion of astronomical objects in the solar system and is synonymous with the Solar day. Making of the *Tithi* is related with the motion of the Moon and is synonymous with the Lunar day. Making of the *Nakshyatra* is associated with relative position of specific stars in the sky, when they are observed from Earth. How the heavens set in order and ancient Indian reckoning of Sun, the Planets, and Stars Indian almanac or *Panchanga* is done is important historical research for an astronomer. The making of *Vara*, *Tithi*, *Nakshyatra* and charting of firmament is reported in this communication.