

## **BRAHMOPADESAM:**

Receiving the sacred thread (*yajnopavita*). The ritual of initiation into the status of the 'Twice-born' (*dvija*) is the most important of all the Hindu rites of passage. The initiate is instructed in the recitation of *Gayatri Mantra* and the basic elements of the *samdhya* rituals, the obligatory offerings of water accompanied by *mantra* recitation that are to be performed twice or thrice daily from then on, at the junctures of *samdhya*, namely, dawn, dusk and optionally midday.

From *An Encyclopedic Survey of Hinduism*



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**S**ankara Sarma wasn't a household name in Madras; even many from the middle class families mightn't have heard his name. Still, most of the prominent citizens, invariably from all walks of life – the government officials, ministers, judges, merchants, film stars and other elites familiar to ordinary citizens – easily recognized that name.

To some, the name would bring to memory not his face but his latest invention *Tomato Badushah* – a mouthwatering dessert that was recently served in a state dinner at the governor's mansion.

Yes, it was called *Tomato Badushah*: it was a beautiful, bright reddish whole tomato, stuffed with almond, sugar, cumin, saffron and fried in pure ghee; only Sarma could describe its ingredients and the intricate process how it was prepared. Since its introduction it became mandatory in every social event. Even as its fame continued to spread far and