

Gola – Spring 2022



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Gola is the observational astronomy limb of Jyotish. This spring we can observe Shani, Guru, Mangala and Shukra in the morning sky before sunrise. Budha, whose cycle around Surya is 88 days will make both an evening and morning appearance this spring. Chandra's 27.5 day cycle through the zodiac provides opportunities to witness conjunctions with each visible graha every month. Go out and locate the grahas in the night sky as they travel through rashis and pass the primary stars of nakshatras. Observe and commune with them in their heavenly positions and experience a vast level of Seeing, beyond charts on a computer screen, that deepens your understanding and practice of Jyotish.

On March 20th, the first day of spring, wake before sunrise and find Shukra, Mangala and Shani in the south-east in Makara rashi. Shukra, the brightest will be the highest of the three grahas. Mangala, currently the dimmest of the three and recognizable by his reddish hue, will be below and slightly west of Shukra. Shani will be a greater distance below and east of Shukra.

On the morning of March 27th, Shukra will pass directly above Shani. If you are up before the first light of dawn, you may notice a dim star slightly below and east of Shani. This is Deneb Algedi, the star marking Dhanistha nakshatra. Shukra will pass directly above this star on March 29th.

Chandra will join the three morning grahas at the end of March. Chandra, having great movement each day, will exhibit different dawn positions relative to the other grahas in various time zones of the world. Observers in India will find Chandra slightly west of the graha trio on March 28th, and below them on March 29th. Observers in the USA will find Chandra below the graha trio on March 28th.



Fig. 1: India, dawn, March 28, 2022



Fig. 2: USA east coast, dawn, March 28, 2022

In early April while observing Chandra with Mangala, Shani and Shukra, look along the eastern horizon for Guru to make his first morning appearance above the eastern horizon during the first light of dawn. The first morning appearance of a graha is called helical rise or phasis - the appearance that speaks. Observers in India will find Chandra west of Guru on March 30th and below Guru on March 31st. Observers in the USA will find Chandra below and west of Guru on March 30th.

In early April, Mangala will pass below Shani then pass above Deneb Algedi. On the morning of April 5th, to observers in India, Mangala will appear to touch the lower right corner of Shani and to observers in the USA, Mangala will appear to touch the lower left corner of Shani. The following morning Mangala will pass above Deneb Algedi.



Fig.3: India, dawn, April 5, 2022



Fig. 4: USA, east coast, dawn, April 5, 2022

On April 12th Shukra passes a good distance beneath Sadalmelik, the west shoulder star of Kumba rashi that marks Shatabisha nakshatra. On April 15th, Shani passes above Dhanistha's Deneb Algedi. Continue to keep an eye on Shukra moving closer to Guru each morning.

At the end of the April Chandra joins the four morning grahas that are more spread out than they were in March. Observers in India will find Chandra below Shani on the morning of April 25th. The following morning Chandra will be below Mangala. On the morning of April 27th, Chandra will be slightly below and west of Shukra and Guru. The following morning Chandra will be slightly below and east of the two benefics. Shukra will be higher and brighter than Guru. Observers in the USA will find Chandra below and between Shani and Mangala on April 25th. The following morning Chandra will be below and between Mangala and Shukra. On the morning of April 27th, Chandra will be below Shukra and Guru. The following morning Chandra will be a good distance east of the two benefics.



Fig. 5: India, dawn, April 27, 2022



Fig. 6: USA, east coast, dawn, April 27, 2022

From mid-April to mid-May there is a graha to look for in the **evening sky**. On April 14th at dusk, look for Budha to appear low to the western horizon. Budha will climb higher out of the horizon and be visible longer until its greatest elongation on April 29th. Then Budha will begin to set a bit earlier and appear a bit lower to the horizon each night until it disappears into the sunset a few days after its retrograde station on May 10th.



Fig 7: India, dusk, April 29, 2022



Fig 8: USA, east coast, dusk, April 29, 2022

When grahas share the same space in both celestial longitude and celestial latitude, an occultation occurs. This means that the graha closest to Earth appears to pass in front of the further graha and block it from view. This happens most frequently with Chandra (the closest graha to Earth making monthly yuti's with all other grahas). However, occultations can occur between any of the visible grahas – except for Surya. Occultations last for only part of the day based on the speed of the faster graha doing the occulting. The locations where an occultation can be observed are those where the grahas are above the horizon under dark skies during the time frame it takes place.

On May 1st observers in India can witness Shukra occulting Guru in Mina rashi! Observers in the USA will see a combination of these grahas where Shukra overlaps with the right half of Guru on the morning of April 30th and overlaps with the left half of Guru on May 1st. This overlap may cause Shukra and Guru to visually appear as one very bright graha.



Fig. 9: India, dawn, May 1, 2022



Fig. 10: USA, east coast, dawn, May 1, 2022

Depending on your choice of ayanamsha, this Shukra-Guru yuti will occur at the very end of Purva Bhadrapada or very beginning of Uttara Bhadrapada. The stars of Mina rashi are very dim, so the bright stars of the constellation Pegasus above are used to represent the front and back legs of the Bhadrapada nakshatras: Markab and Scheat mark Purva Bhadrapada while Algenib and Alpheratz mark Uttara Bhadrapada.

Chandra once again joins the morning grahas at the end of May. On May 22nd observers in India can locate Chandra just west of Shani. On the mornings of May 23rd and 24th Chandra will travel through Kumba rashi between Shani and Mangala. On May 25th Chandra will be below Mangala and Guru in Mina rashi. The following morning Chandra will be between Guru and Shukra. On May 27th Chandra will be slightly west of Shukra. Observers in the USA can locate Chandra below Shani on the morning of May 22nd and between Shani and Mangala on May 23rd. On May 24th Chandra will be west of Mangala and Guru. The following morning Chandra will be east of them. On

May 26th Chandra will be west of Shukra and on May 27th Chandra will be slightly below and east of Shukra.



Fig. 11: India, dawn, May 25, 2022



Fig.12: USA, east coast, dawn, May 25, 2022

At the end of May, Mangala passes just below Guru and appears to almost touch it. Observers in India can witness this on the morning of May 30th and Observers in the USA can observe this on May 29th.

In the beginning of June, observe Shukra passing below Sheratan and Hamal the stars marking the head of Mesha rashi and Ashwini nakshatra. Budha will make its helical rise at the break of dawn in early June. Observers in India and the lower latitudes of the USA can start watching for Budha to make his first appearance a few days after the retrograde station. In higher US latitudes where the ecliptic is closer to the horizon it will be mid-June before you will be able to locate Buddha through the glow of dawn. Also in mid-June, Shukra passes a good distance below Almach in the constellation Andromeda (above Mesha) which marks Bharani nakshatra and heads toward the tail star of Mesha also named Bharani.



Fig. 13: India, dawn, June 7, 2022



Fig. 14: USA east coast, dawn, June 12, 2022

As spring turns into summer, Chandra joins all five morning grahas. On June 18th observers in India can locate Chandra below and west of Shani while observers in the USA can locate Chandra below Shani that same morning. Tune in to the summer issue of The Comet for Chandra's June rendezvous with the rest of the morning grahas. In the meantime, happy stargazing and planet tracking!