

# BALINESE NEW YEAR CELEBRATIONS!

2<sup>nd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> March 2011

## 2<sup>nd</sup> March Melasti



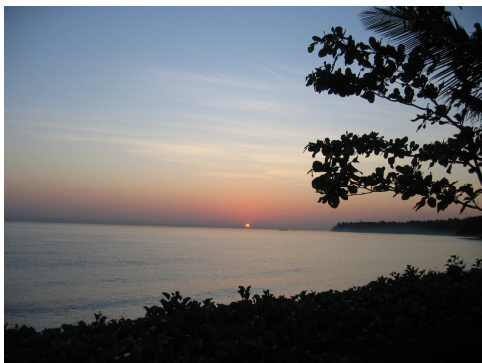
Three days before Nyepi, this event is held to cleanse the holy artifacts held in local temples, to concentrate the mind in order to come closer to God. The ceremony is aimed to clean all of Nature and its content, and to take Amerta (the source of eternal life) from the ocean or other water sources (ie lake, river, etc).

At dawn, the effigies and symbols of the Gods from all the clan temples (*merajan*) in the village are taken to the sea in long & colourful ceremonies, where they are bathed by Lord Baruna, the Sea God. Prayers and offerings are made, sacred dances are presented, and the gods are celebrated before being taken back home to their shrines around noon.

## 4<sup>th</sup> March Tawur Agung Kesanga

The dark moon (*tilem*), one day before Nyepi, is the climax of the exorcism ceremonies (*mecaru*) held at every level of society to cleanse the village before the New Year. This day is also known as *notog* or *ngerupuk*.

In the afternoon, young men & boys parade Ogoh-Ogoh (fantastic monsters or evil spirits "*Bhuta Kala*" made of bamboo and paper mâché) through the town. The Ogoh-Ogoh symbolize the evil spirits surrounding our environment which must be got rid of from our lives. Everyone makes noise and carries burning torches, and it is a carnival-like atmosphere. Before midnight, all the Ogoh-Ogohs are taken to the graveyard near the sea, where they are burnt and / or dismembered, and with them the evil spirits besetting our lives.



## 5<sup>th</sup> March Nyepi

Nyepi is derived from the word, "sepi", which means silent. It is a day of complete stillness, no fire, no light, no transport, no people on the street or the beach, no cooking, no noise or work is allowed. The airport is shut, and only emergency rooms operate in hospitals. In keeping with the philosophical principles of Balinese Hinduism, the Balinese mark the New Year with meditation, not lavish parties, to ensure the world is "clean" at the beginning of the year.

As a resort / retreat, Gaia-Oasis is permitted to serve our guests with reduced activities, without noise and with a minimum of lighting, and you can also participate in the yoga and meditation activities that we hold during this special day.

For bookings, please contact [paradise@gaia-oasis.com](mailto:paradise@gaia-oasis.com), +62 (0)81 23853350