

Science vs Myths

Why does the earth tremble?
What makes seas erupt?

Modern science explains.

Or tries to. But human beings have faced natural catastrophies for thousands of years. And always found a reason behind it all. So folklores were spun and myths created. We have put science and lores side by side. Sample these...



Tsunami

Science says:

The word 'tsunami' comes from a Japanese term that means 'harbour wave'. It's a giant wave caused by earthquakes under the sea, or landslides or volcanic eruption. Or, very rarely, by a huge meteor hitting the ocean.

Myth:

People did not call it tsunami then. But there exists a range of terrifying stories about outbursts of the ocean or 'sea surges'. When the sea rose from its bed and swallowed the earth around it.

The most mysterious and enthralling among them all is the story of the lost city of Atlantis...

Tale of Atlantis

Greek philosopher, Plato, said Atlantis was an island in the Atlantic, where a powerful dynasty, led by Poseidon, ruled. On a summer-day in 426 B.C, it was struck by earthquakes and floods of 'extraordinary violence'. And disappeared from the face of the earth...



Sea Quake

In Ancient Greece, Thales of Miletos (6th century BC) believed that earth floated on the sea. When the sea was 'agitated' by moving air beneath, quakes happened.



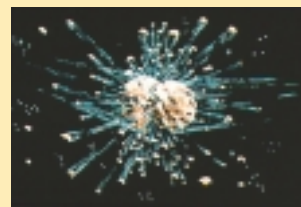
Astro account

According to the ancient Mayans, Egyptians, Chinese and Indians, when two or more planets, moon, earth, sun, come in one line, quakes take place, triggering earth tides.

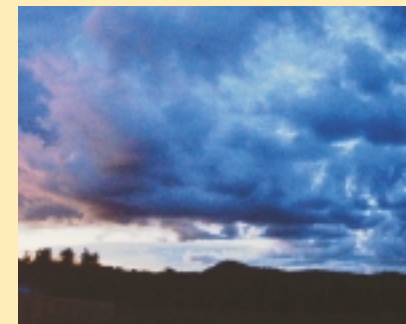


Wiped off dinos?

3.5 billion years ago, two asteroids collided and gave rise to a mega tsunami. All life on land was wiped off, including dinosaurs! So the story goes...



Tropical storms



Science says:

Rotating storm systems form in the Atlantic, Indian and Pacific oceans. They drift and gain strength as they gather moist air. Then break into violent winds and rains.

Folklore

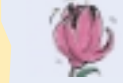
Nature has its own early warning system. People who can read the signs run for cover when...



Horses run faster than usual.



Pigs gather leaves and straw.



Crickets sing louder.



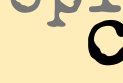
Spiders come down from their webs.



Flowers close their petals.



Flies gather in houses.



Ants are more busy than usual.

Hurricane

Tropical cyclones



Science says:

They strike the southern hemisphere, mostly the Indian Ocean. And develop with rise in sea temperature and high relative humidity in the atmosphere. Condensed air creates low pressure in the sea. This brings cyclonic winds and gushing waters hit land. Coastal disasters like floods follow.



Science says:

It erupts in the hottest months of the year as moisture evaporates from warm oceans. The rising air spins and creates an area of low pressure, known as the 'eye of the storm'. It rotates anti-clockwise in the northern hemisphere and vice-versa.

Myth

Noah's Ark

A flood that lasted 40 days and 40 nights! That was God's terrible wrath against the evil human race. But he spared the good Noah. Who was given 7 days notice to build an ark, that saved his family along with a pair of each of the world's animal species. Noah gave the earthlings a fresh start...



Some facts and some imagination.

Both science and myths are made of these. We are still in awe of the mysteries of Nature. That's the truth...