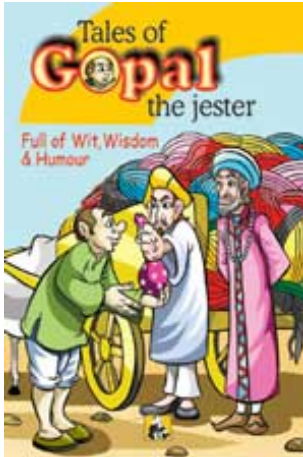




Tales Of Gopal: The Jester



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In ancient times, the jester was a very important person because he could always make people laugh and be happy. Many humorous tales are attributed to these jesters. There are stories of Birbal, patronised by Emperor Akbar, of Tenali Ramakrishna, from the court of Krishna Deva Raya of south India, and of Gopal, the chief jester in the court of Maharaja Krishna Chandra of Bengal. Maharaja Krishna Chandra ruled during the Islamic period in medieval India. His biggest rival was the governor of Murshidabad, referred to as the Nawab in all the stories. One is not sure who the Nawab actually was. He could very well have been a fictitious character created to make the stories interesting. Indeed, neither the Maharaja nor the Nawab is depicted as intelligent or witty. Many stories are told of how the Maharaja tries to outwit the Nawab and how Gopal assists in these endeavours. In every story, it is Gopal who emerges the hero.

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