

মঙ্গল্য

13 th Edition



শারদীয়া
দুর্গোৎসব

Sharodia Durga Puja 2024

মা
দুর্গা



Organised By :

Sarbojanin Baba Lokenath Association (SBLA) UK

Charity Registration No: 1148185 | www.sblauk.co.uk

Puja Venue: Southend Hall

Southend Road, East Ham, London E6 2AA



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Editorial

The natural beauty of autumn, the swaying Kash flower, the beautiful decoration of puja mondop, the sound of conch shells and Dhak, the beats of our hearts and divine feelings are all join together to welcome Ma Durga and to celebrate the biggest festival of Bengali, Durga Puja. I am thrilled to welcome you in celebrating the auspicious and glorious Durga Puja 2024 organised by **Sarbojanin Baba Lokenath Association (SBLA) UK**.

This is my huge privilege and pride to present our 13th Edition of Annual Publication Mangalya. In every part of this edition, we tried to landscape a variety of features of SBLA UK- vision and mission of the organisation, celebration, reflection and learning. Each article, photograph and message are a true statement of the passion and commitment our community possesses.

I would like to express my gratitude to all writers, sponsors and advertisers, without whose help the journey of publishing this magazine could not be accomplished. I am so thankful for your tremendous support during this time. I would also like to extend my heartfelt thanks to all the trustees, advisors, EC members, devotees and all others who have extended their help in various way.

I can't express my gratitude enough to each member of the editorial team for the dedication and commitment you showed. Your creative thought and talent is clearly visible in every part of the magazine. Excellent team work and can do attitude can overcome any obstacle- you proved that. You are the orchestra of this symphony.

Durga Puja is more than just a religious festival; it is also a cultural event which brings families and communities together for a time of fun and enjoyment. Durga Puja is a celebration of diversity. It brings people from diverse backgrounds together to celebrate a common cause. In today's world, it is more important than ever to practice our diversity. We must learn to live together in harmony and respect for each other's difference.

Durga Puja embodies the essence of unity, tradition and artistic expression, make it a unique event that continues to enhance the lives of everyone. As we embark on this 14th year of celebration of Durga Puja, let us carry forward all our unity, goodness and creativity and help build a better future for all.

Wishing you all a festive and blessed Durga Puja. May Ma Durga brings happiness, prosperity and joy to all our lives.

Joy Baba Lokenath!

Gourjit Saha

Editor, on behalf of Media & Publication team

Editorial Team

Mr. Sushanta Saha, Mr. Ranjit Saha, Mr. Debashish Banik



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ABOUT US

Who We Are:

Sarbojanin Baba Lokenath Association, UK is a religious, non-profitable, non-political, charitable, cultural and community organisation established to fulfil the religious and spiritual needs of the Bengali Hindu community living in UK. Since it was first established, the association has been involved in various activities such as monthly Baba Lokenath's Prayers & Sattya Narayan's Puja, Baba Lokenath's Abirbhab and Tirodhan Utsab, Harinam Kirtan, Durga Puja, Kali Puja, Lakshmi Puja, Dol Purnima, Shree Krishna's Janmashtami, Saraswati Puja and other social & cultural activities. These events received excellent response, participation, cooperation and appreciation from the Hindu community across London. We are registered at UK charity commission and governed by charity commission rules and regulations. We operate through a board of trustees, working committee and an advisory board. We regularly receive donations from our devotees and our membership is open to all.

Our aims and objectives:

The advancement of the Hindu religion in accordance with the spiritual teachings of Yoga Avatar Shree Shree Baba Lokenath Brahmachari, to benefit the residents of London and surrounding areas (within the United Kingdom), without distinction of sex, sexual orientation, race, political affiliation, religion, or other opinions. This will be achieved by bringing together local residents, authorities, voluntary organisations, and other groups in a collective effort to promote education and provide facilities for social welfare, recreation, and leisure activities, with the aim of improving the quality of life for residents. Additionally, it aims to celebrate Hindu cultural festivals and establish Sarbojanin Baba Lokenath Centre (SBLC).

Our activities:

- Organise Baba Lokenath Abirbhab and Tirodhan Utshab, Rakhar Upobash, Paduka Utshab, Harinam Sankirtan, Monthly Prayers and Sattya Narayan Pujas;
- Celebrate Hindu festivals such as Durga Puja, Kali Puja, Lakshmi Puja, Dol Purnima, Shree Krishna Janmashtami, Saraswati Puja, Satsangha Utshab, Durga Puja Reunion etc.
- Organise SBLA Family day trip and excursions, Religious tour, Bengali New Year celebration and Pitha Utshab etc.
- Provide education, counselling and other support services for the people of the Bengali Hindu community who are in need including language instruction, job search program, translation services and information program on British culture and life;
- Organise free English and basic ICT courses. Organise talent and skill development program for youth and adult groups.
- Organise group discussion regarding various issues among the senior citizen of Hindu community in London;
- Aid and console the Hindu senior citizens through home visits;
- Organise yoga classes for age groups; Teaching children with art and fun;
- Liaising with UK government organisations, Bangladesh government and international Humanity Rights Groups to protect the minorities right in Bangladesh;
- Arrange protest against any violence on minorities in Bangladesh;

Our appeal:

Our sincere appeal to the devotees, fellow members, Government and non-Government organisations and business persons of the community to come forward with their generous support and financial help to establish "Sarbojanin Baba Lokenath Centre (SBLC)" in London for practicing Hindu religion and Culture and provide other Community Services as stated above.

Donation information:

Sarbojanin Baba Lokenath Association UK
HSBC Bank A/C: 92345315 SC: 40-25-27

Temple Fund Bank Details:

Sarbojanin Baba Lokenath Association UK
Barclays Bank A/C: 83140458; SC: 20-72-91

Contact information:

Sarbojanin Baba Lokenath Association UK (Registered Charity No. 1148185)
27 Longbridge Road, London IG11 8TN

Website : www.sblauk.co.uk

Email : info@sblauk.co.uk, sblauk@gmail.com

Phone : 07825041598, 0747701615

SBLA UK Organisational History

2023-2025

President : Mr. Amitosh Majumdar
General Secretary : Mr. Sushanta Saha
Treasurer : Mr. Avijit Deb

2022-2023

President : Mr. Anjan Saha
General Secretary : Mr. Bishwajit Bal
Treasurer : Mr. Avijit Deb

2019-2021

President : Dr. Bishwajit Roy
General Secretary : Mr. Anupam Saha
Treasurer : Mr. Nobendu Saha

2017-2018

President : Mr. Ajit Saha
General Secretary : Mr. Amitosh Majumdar
Treasurer : Mr. Chinmoy Chowdhury

2015-2016

President : Mr. Pradip Saha
General Secretary : Mr. Bishwajit Bal
Treasurer : Mr. Anjan Saha

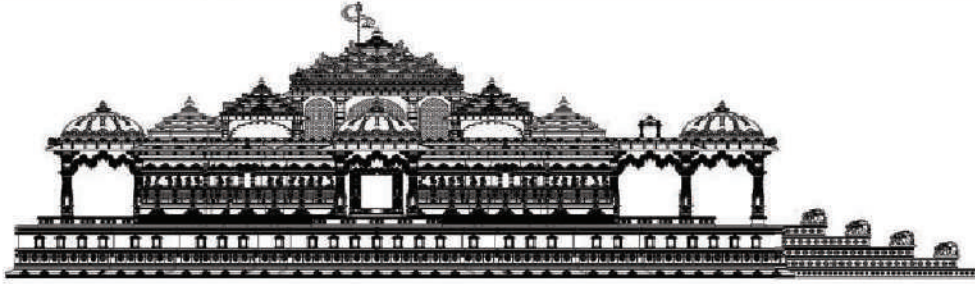
2012-2014

President : Mr. Haradhan Bhowmik
General Secretary : Mr. Ajit Saha
Treasurer : Dr. Bishwajit Roy (2014)
Mr. Amitosh Majumdar (2012-13)

Founder Members: Mr. Haradhan Bhowmik; Mr. Pradip Saha; Dr. Bishwajit Roy; Mr. Amitosh Majumdar; Mr. Ajit Saha; Mr. Bishwajit Bal

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- ধর্মীয় শিক্ষাদান কর্মসূচী পরিচালনা
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SARBOJANIN BABA LOKENATH ASSOCIATION (SBLA) UK

Registered Charity No: 1148185

info@sblauk.co.uk

sblauk@gmail.com

Follow us on :



Temple Committee 2023-2025

Coordinator: Mr. Ajit Saha, **Co-coordinator:** Mr. Dipankar Sarker, Mr. Pravangshu K Majumder

Members: Mr. Pradip Saha, Dr. Bishwajit Roy, Mr. Bishwajit Bal, Mr. Anupam Saha, Mr. Dipak Saha, Mr. Shymal Roy, Mr. Shymal Modak, Mr. Amitabh Sikder, Mr. Debobrata Saha Dipu



Message from

His Majesty The King's Office



BUCKINGHAM PALACE

The Correspondence Department, Buckingham Palace SW1A 1AA
Private and Confidential

27th September, 2024

Dear Mr. Saha,

The King has asked me to thank you for your thoughtful letter, in which you so kindly invited His Majesty to Sabrojanin Durga Puja on 8th-11th October, 2024.

Although The King is unable to accept your offer due to the volume of requests that he receives, His Majesty is most grateful to you for thinking of him, and would have me pass on his sincere hopes that the occasion will be enjoyable for all involved.

The King would have me share his sincere thanks for your truly generous invitation, and has asked me to convey to you his warmest good wishes.

Yours sincerely,

Mr. Sushanta Saha



Message from
Prime Minister's Office



10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA
www.gov.uk/number10

Head of the Direct Communications Unit

27 September 2024

Dear Mr Saha,

I am writing on behalf of the Prime Minister to thank you and Mr Sushanta Saha for your correspondences, inviting him to attend the celebration of your Sarbojanin Durga Puja celebration on 8 – 12 October.

Understanding the importance of religious practice, the Prime Minister is always humbled when hearing from organisations who open up their spaces of worship for him to share. The Bangladeshi community have always played a pivotal role in the celebrating the multi-culture of the United Kingdom and enriching British society.

As I am sure you will understand, due to the pressures in his diary, it will not be possible for the Prime Minister to attend your Puja, and will be unable to provide a message for your publishing a souvenir, Mangalya, on this occasion.

Please accept my best wishes for the success of the event, which I am sure will be enjoyed by all those who attend and thank you, once again, for writing.

Yours sincerely,

MANDY GODRIDGE

Mr Gourjit Saha



Wes Streeting MP
Member of Parliament for Ilford North



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Message from
Health Secretary, UK

Sarbojanin Baba Lokenath Association (SBLA) UK

Tel: 020 3475 7901
Email: wes@redbridgelabour.org.uk
Our Ref: SG/ZA72812

20 September 2024

Re: Durga Puja 2024

I would like to extend my best wishes to all attending the Sarbojanin Baba Lokenath Association's Durga Puja festival this year and to all of those celebrating in London and across the world.

I am incredibly grateful for the Sarbojanin Baba Lokenath Association's important community work and for organising this year's Durga Puja festival in which we celebrate the triumph of good over evil, of light over darkness.

I am proud of the multi-faith constituency I represent in our diverse city. The Government that I am part of will seek strong partnerships with faith communities. We will build a Britain where diversity is celebrated and where all faith communities are safe.

As Secretary of State for Health and Social Care I deeply value the diversity across our country and am proud that our NHS has one of the most diverse workforces in the country.

I hope that you all enjoy this year's celebrations.

Best wishes

Wes Streeting

WES STREETING
Member of Parliament for Ilford North

Constituency Office:
12a Highview Parade, Woodford Avenue, Ilford, IG4 5EP
Tel: 020 3475 7901
www.wesstreeting.org



Message from
Mayor of London

Message of Support for Sarbojanin Baba Lokenath Association (SBLA)

I wish the members of Sarbojanin Baba Lokenath Association of London and everyone celebrating Durga Puja in London and around the world a wonderful year of joy, peace and prosperity.

London is the greatest city in the world, and as your Mayor of London, I am incredibly proud of how our city's diversity strengthens our communities.

Thank you for your work in championing the Hindu community in London through your commitment to preserving and promoting the traditions of Bengali Hindu culture and for creating opportunities to share this with all Londoners. The work you do serves as an inspiration to many, and I wish you continued success.

Sadiq Khan

Mayor of London
Sept 2024



Message from
Stephen Timms



THE RT. HON. SIR STEPHEN TIMMS MP

House of Commons

London SW1A 0AA

Tel: 020 7219 4000

Fax: 020 7219 2949

Labour Member of Parliament for East Ham

Sarbojanin Baba Lokenath Association (UK)
27 Longbridge Road
Barking
IG11 8TN

Our Ref: ST92869

1 October 2024

Dear Devotees,

I would like to send my greetings to everyone taking part in the Durga Puja this year. I always look forward to taking part in the festival, though this year I am, unfortunately, unable to join.

The values of unity and solidarity that characterise the celebrations are central to the year round work of the Sarbojanin Baba Lokenath Association (SBLA UK). The kindness and generosity of its members are vital resources to our community.

I am grateful for the work of SBLA UK providing extra-curricular activities to schoolchildren, youth development, employability courses, and advocating for the rights of religious minorities in Bangladesh. SBLA UK's contribution to our local community should never be underestimated.

Under the new Government elected in July, in which I am privileged to serve as a Minister, I hope the values that SBLA UK epitomises will be celebrated and encouraged.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank all those who have been involved in the planning of the Durga Puja festival, and look forward to being able to join you again next year.

With all best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

Rt Hon Sir Stephen Timms
Member of Parliament for East Ham



Message from

High Commissioner of Bangladesh



High Commissioner

High Commission for the People's Republic of
Bangladesh London, United Kingdom

Message

On the auspicious occasion of the Sharadiya Durgotsab and Holy Durga Puja Festival 2024, I convey my warmest felicitations and Sharadiya Shuveccha to all Hindu community residing in the United Kingdom and Ireland.

I am happy to learn that Sarbojanin Baba Lokenath Association (SBLA), UK is bringing out a publication on the Occasion of Durga Puja Festival. Durga Puja, being the largest festival of the Hindu community, is not only a major Hindu religious festival but also a celebration for all communities in Bangladesh. The Durga Puja Festival enlightens us with the message of victory and triumph of good over evil and of the righteous over the vile and vicious forces.

I hope that the Sharodiya Durgotsab 2024 will further consolidate the bonds of friendship and fraternity among all diaspora communities in the United Kingdom.

I command Sarbojanin Baba Lokenath Association (SBLA), UK for organizing the Holy Durga Puja Festival 2024 and wish them all success and celebration.

(Saida Muna Tasneem)

28 Queen's Gate, London SW7 5JA

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Message from President

As we approach the festive season, I am filled with immense joy to extend my warmest greetings on behalf of **SBLA UK**.

Our dedicated team, including Trustees, Advisors, Executive Committee members, and General Members, has been working tirelessly to ensure that this year's celebrations exceed expectations. We have planned a series of events that cater to the spiritual, cultural, and social aspects of our community. From traditional rituals and prayer sessions to vibrant cultural programs and delicious prasad, there is something for everyone to enjoy and participate in.

As **President of SBLA UK**, I am delighted to announce that we are preparing for our grandest celebration of the year—**Durga Puja**. This event holds deep significance for us, offering a unique opportunity to unite as a community, strengthen our bonds, and pay homage to the divine. Devi Durga, the embodiment of strength in adversity and boundless love, is a symbol we hold dear. This year, her symbolism resonates deeply with the spirit of **SBLA UK**, an organisation that nurtures a sense of community through such celebrations. We extend a heartfelt invitation to join us, regardless of differences. Together, let us reflect on the fragility of humanity, reach out with open hearts, and, through solidarity and care, elevate ourselves as one.

SBLA UK has been a pillar of strength and unity, rooted in Hindu traditions and values. We have upheld the rich cultural heritage of our Bengali roots here in the UK, and I am privileged to serve as President as we embark on our 14th year of celebrations in 2024. **SBLA UK** remains an inclusive organisation, welcoming people from all backgrounds and beliefs. Our events are open to all, and we encourage you to invite your friends and family to share in the joy of our celebrations.

The growth of **SBLA UK** over the past 13 years has been inspiring. The foundation laid more than a decade ago has been nurtured by countless individuals, and today, **SBLA UK** stands strong with deep roots in the community. We are fortunate to have a committee of dedicated individuals who share the values of their predecessors. However, this success requires continued participation from the community—because that is what **SBLA UK** is about.

In addition to religious activities, we are also engaged in social cultural events like Bengali New Year Celebrations, Pitha Utsav, and Children's Extracurricular Activities, which reflect our commitment to our community and send a message to future generations that **SBLA** cares deeply. Furthermore, this year, **SBLA UK** has actively advocated for justice by participating in protests against the atrocities committed against Hindus in Bangladesh, standing in solidarity with our persecuted brothers and sisters. We also responded to the devastating floods in Bangladesh by organising relief efforts, providing essential supplies to those most affected.

Together, we can ensure that this year's celebrations will be spiritually enriching and memorable. I extend my deepest gratitude to our members, patrons, and sponsors for their unwavering support. Without you, none of this would have been possible.

As we embark on this festive journey, I wish you and your loved ones good health, prosperity, and happiness. **Happy Durga Puja and Shuvo Bijoya** to all!

With warm regards,

Amitosh Majumdar

President, Chair of the Board of Trustees
Founding Member, Sarbojanin Baba Lokenath Association UK



Message from General Secretary

As autumn brings its beautiful colours, our hearts are filled with excitement for the arrival of **Durga Puja**—a time when we come together to celebrate the victory of good over evil. This festival is more than just rituals; it's a celebration of our culture, unity, and devotion to Ma Durga.

As **General Secretary of Sarbojanin Baba Lokenath Association (SBLA) UK**, I am honoured to send my warmest greetings to you. **Durga Puja 2024** marks our 14th year of celebration, and I couldn't be prouder. Over the years, we have grown into a vibrant, spiritually rich community where our culture and sense of belonging truly flourish.

Over the years, **SBLA UK** has become a symbol of culture and unity. We have expanded our celebrations beyond Durga Puja to include Kali Puja, Saraswati Puja, Harinam Satkirtan, Mahashivaratri, Shree Krishna Janmashtami, Baba Lokenath Abirbhab Utsav, Baba Lokenath Tirodan Utsav, and more. These events show our commitment to our traditions and community.

One of our most exciting achievements is the progress toward building the **Sarbojanin Baba Lokenath Centre (SBLC)**. This centre will be a place for spirituality, learning, and community service, inspired by Baba Lokenath's teachings. It will welcome people of all backgrounds. The support and enthusiasm from our community have been amazing, and I encourage you all to join us on this meaningful journey to make this dream a reality.

Our theme this year, "Building Bridges and Igniting Spirits," encourages us to contribute on our talents and resources to leave a lasting legacy. In addition to our religious and cultural activities, **SBLA UK** has stood up for justice this year. We participated in protests in front of the House of Parliament and the BBC to raise awareness of the recent violence against Hindus in Bangladesh. We also supported the victims of the floods in Bangladesh, organising flood relief.

Durga Puja reflects our shared values of compassion, hard work, and dedication. Every detail of this year's celebration, from the rituals to the cultural performances and daily Prasad, has been lovingly prepared by our devoted members. Their efforts make this year's Puja truly special.

I am honoured to serve as **General Secretary of SBLA UK** and work closely with our wonderful team of Trustees, Advisors, and Executive Committee members. None of this would be possible without the dedication of our volunteers, members, and sponsors. Your support has made **SBLA UK** one of the leading Hindu organisations in the UK, and together, we will continue to grow and prosper.

On behalf of **SBLA UK**, I warmly invite you to join us for this year's Grand Durga Puja celebration. Let's come together in unity to celebrate. May Goddess Durga bless you and your families with happiness, health, and peace.

As we enter this 14th year of **Durga Puja**, let's move forward with purpose and commitment, building a bright future for generations to come.

Wishing you all a very **Happy Durga Puja! Joy Baba Lokenath!**

With warm regards,

Sushanta Saha

General Secretary
Member, Board of Trustees
Sarbojanin Baba Lokenath Association UK



Message from Treasurer

Maa Durga, also known as "Sakti," is the protective mother of the universe. Mahavidyas are a group of ten aspects of the Divine Mother Durga or Devi/ AdiParashakti in Hinduism. The feminine divinity is a powerful entity. From mother nurturers to the destroyers, from knowledge to wealth, they encompass every aspect of the physical and spiritual realm. A part of such a powerful entity is the Mahavidya. The 10 Mahavidyas are Wisdom Goddesses, who represent a spectrum of feminine divinity, from horrific goddesses at one end, to the gentle at the other. The term comes from the Sanskrit - Dasa means "ten," maha means "great" and Vidya means "knowledge." Each Mahavidya is a form of the Divine Mother. In Hindu religious scripts, the Dasa Mahavidya were created after a disagreement between Lord Shiva and Sati (a form of Shakti).

These ten forms of Divine Mother are known as the DasaMahavidyas. Each Mahavidya has her own unique name, appearance, mantras, and powers.

These DasaMahavidyas are: Kali, Tara, Tripurasundari/ Shodasi, Bhuvaneshvari, Bharavi, Chinnamasta, Dhumavati, Bagalamukhi, Matangi, Kamala. Some Hindu traditions separate the mahavidyas into the benevolent wisdom goddesses (Tara, Tripurasundari, Kamala, Bhuvaneshvari, and Matangi) and the fearsome wisdom goddesses (Kali, Dhumavati, Bhairavi, Chhinnamasta, and Bagalamukhi). So, it can be said that as a mother can nurture her children with utmost compassion, so can she take a form of a destroyer to defeat the evils. We actually bow and worship that feminine power in the form of Maa Durga.

SBLA UK has been organising "Sharodiyo Durgotshob" since 2011. SBLA UK is now focusing on gathering fund for its own temple, so that we can build a temple in order to celebrate all the religious festivals including Durga puja on a large scale where we can accommodate numerous devotees who are the actual essences of a puja. That's why we are encouraging all the devotees to donate as much as they can for helping us build a temple for people of Hindu religion. It already organized a concert with Kumar Biswajit, a popular singer of Bangladesh to fundraise for the temple, which was a great successful event. In the future, we will try to organize more events for fundraising until we will have enough fund to build a temple.

Finally, I want to thank cordially all the SBLA UK members, their families, and all the devotees who always support us through their tireless work, prasad arrangements, food distribution services, cultural activities, donation and so on which can't be listed in one day. May Maa Durga bring happiness, success and prosperity to all the families every year and keep them away from all obstacles. JOY MAA DURGA.

Avijit Deb

Treasurer
Trustee member of SBLA UK.



Message from Temple Project Coordinator

Dear all

On behalf of the Temple Committee, I would like to welcome you all to the celebration of the Durga puja arranged by **Sarbojanin Baba Lokenath Association UK** for the **14th** time in a row.

Durga Puja reminds us of the importance of unity. It is a time when family members, well-wishers and friends come together. It is a time to be with others to extend the fellowship and strengthen the bonding. **The message of Durga Puja is universal - a commitment to social justice, compassion, concern for the disadvantaged and love of family, friends and community as a whole.**

We are very pleased and proud to inform you that the dream of having Sarbojanin Baba Lokenath Centre (SBLC) is gradually becoming a reality. So far, we have over 250 members' donation commitments into the temple fund. Around 150 of them promised to donate at least £1,000 each. A total of approximately £125,000 has been raised solely for SBLC project so far. This is a remarkable steppingstone I would say but a lot more yet to do to reach the desired goal. **We could not thank you enough for your whole heartedly support.** The enthusiasm and support that we received since June 2023, is unparalleled. The courage you have shown that is truly admirable. You are our inspiration and strength. We have also received huge moral support from leading community organisations, members, and leaders towards building the awareness about the necessity of having SBLC as soon as possible.

SBLC will consolidate the strengths and unity in order to carry out most of the religious events and practice cultural activities. It will make it possible to provide community supports in case of any needs of its members and followers of Hinduism in general along with upgrading community balance, intra relationship and cohesion. It will also contribute and enhance the scope of running classes and training on extracurricular activities including Yoga and cultural classes for everyone. It will enhance the bonding between fellow members and devotees. To enable us to make SBLC a full reality, we should work together to encourage more members and devotees to donate, liaise with local councils for getting Government funds, look for big donors, look for a suitable property, increase the network and improve the relationships with distinguished donors, etc.

At present, we are actively looking for suitable property within £600k budget and within M25 and surroundings area. Our team is working hard to collect the committed donation. It is also very crucial to have the regular income proofs ready which will enable us to get finance from banks. I must thank every member of the Temple committee and the Temple Fundraising Team for their tireless efforts, you all are amazing.

May the festivities of Durga Puja bring happiness to all our lives and inspire us more to make our dream of building SBLC, a reality. Joy Baba Lokenath.

Ajit K Saha FCCA, ACA, MSc

Coordinator-Temple Committee 2023-25
Founding Member & Member, Board of Trustees, Former president



Mr. Amitosh Majumdar
President & Trustee (Chair)



Mr. Bishwajit Bal
Deputy President & Trustee



Mr. Anupam Saha
Vice- President & Trustee



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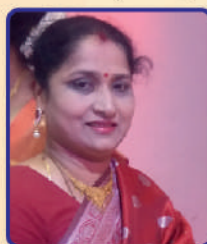
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Mrs. Shebika Saha
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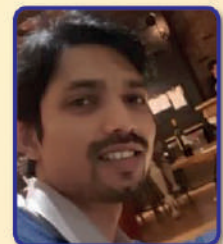
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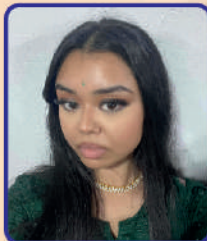
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বোধি শুদ্ধানন্দ ব্রহ্মচারীর হৃদয় থেকে আপনার হৃদয়ে

--বোধি শুদ্ধানন্দ ব্রহ্মচারী Patron - SBLA UK

✿ পাপ পূণ্য সুখ দুঃখ জয় পরাজয় সব কিছুর একটাই উদ্দেশ্য আমি কি শিখলাম? শিক্ষা যখন ঠেকে শেখা হয় তখন সেটা মানুষের জীবনের একটা প্রকৃত পরিবর্তন নিয়ে আসে উন্নততর জীবনের জন্য। ঘটনার নেগেটিভ ASPECT টাকে বড় না করে ভগবান বা গুরু কি শিক্ষা দিতে চাইছেন সেটা না বুঝলে জীবনে নেগেটিভ মানুষ ও পরিস্থিতি বাড়তেই থাকবে। সঙ্গে চেষ্টা, শিক্ষা কে কাজে লাগিয়ে জীবনের পথে এগিয়ে যাওয়া।

✿ কেবল বাইরের বস্তু জ্ঞান এবং সামাজিক প্রতিষ্ঠা, অর্থবল, খুব প্রয়োজন, কিন্তু বেশির ভাগ মানুষ এই কৃত্রিম দুনিয়ার পেছনে মরিয়া হয়ে ছুটেছে ছুটেছে একদিন রূপান্তর হয়ে, মৃত্যুমুখে পতিত হয়। কিন্তু যাকে জানলে, যাকে পেলে জন্ম মৃত্যুর চক্র থেকে চিরমুক্তি পাওয়া যায়, তার জন্য আর একটু সময় কি দৈনিক ব্যস্তময় জীবন থেকে বার করা যায় না?

✿ আনন্দে থাকার একটি উপায়, বহির্জগতের কিংবা মনোজগতের ছোট ছোট সুখে মোহগ্রস্ত না হয়ে, যিনি একমাত্র পূর্ণ আনন্দময় সেই পরমাত্মার শ্রীচরণে মন কে বার বার যুক্ত করার চেষ্টা করতে থাকা, ফলের দিকে মন না দিয়ে সাধনায় মনকে যুক্ত রাখা। এই অভ্যাস যোগ। এটাই মুক্তির উপায়।

✿ মানুষ যত মানুষের ওপর আস্থা হারাচ্ছে, ততোই, সে দিনে দিনে নিজের ওপর বিশ্বাস ও হারাচ্ছে। সমাজ পরিবার সর্বত্র কেমন যেনো একটা যান্ত্রিক জীবন মানুষ কে দিশেহারা করে তুলছে। অর্থের অভাব নেই, আছে চরিত্রের অভাব, আদর্শ জীবনের প্রয়োজন বোধের অভাব। এর থেকে মুক্তির পথ একমাত্র নিজের হৃদয়ে পরমাত্মার সঙ্গে যুক্ত হওয়ার মধ্যেই পাওয়া যেতে পারে আর কোথাও না। যুক্ত হওয়া ই যোগী হওয়ার সাধনা।

✿ প্রকৃত আধ্যাত্ম পথের পথিক কে খুব খেয়াল রাখতে হয়, যে কোনো পরিস্থিতিতে কি ভাবে শান্ত থেকে সব কিছু কে HANDLE করা যায়। অভ্যাস বসে অহংকারের প্রকাশ আর এক জনকে আঘাত করতে পারে, সে হয়তো তোমায় কিছু বলতে পারলো না কিন্তু তোমার কর্ম তোমাকে পারে অন্যের মাধ্যমে ওই কর্মের ফল আঘাত আনবেই। জানবে সুখ দুখ সব তোমার কর্মের ফল।

✿ যত বর্তমানের মুহূর্ত গুলোতে সমগ্র সৃষ্টি কে ধন্যবাদ দেবে, ততোই তুমি ধন্য হয়ে উঠবে। সবার আগে নিজের দৃষ্টিতে নিজের কাছে। অর্ধেক ভর্তি গ্লাস কে দেখে বলতে পারো আধা খালি আবার এটাও বলতে পারো আধা ভর্তি। তোমার দৃষ্টি দিয়ে অহোরাত্র তোমার জগৎ তুমিই সৃষ্টি করছো। তোমার সুখ তুমিই সৃষ্টি করো, দুঃখ ও তাই। ঈশ্বর তোমাকে তাঁর সব গুণ দিয়েই সৃষ্টি করেছেন।

✿ খুব খেয়াল রাখতে হবে কাদের বা কার সঙ্গে করছো? কারণ তাদের সংস্কার তোমাকে নিতে হচ্ছে, এটা ভুলো না। NEGATIVE মানুষের সঙ্গে থাকলেই দেখবে তোমার শরীর মনের মধ্যে তামসিক ভাব ছেয়ে যাচ্ছে। আবার ভালো মানুষের সঙ্গে দেখবে তুমি কত কিছু শিখছ, সাত্ত্বিক জীবনের পথে চলতে উদ্বুদ্ধ হচ্ছে। খুব সাবধান, নেগেটিভ মানুষ ধর্মের পথের প্রতিবন্ধক, এদের সঙ্গে এড়িয়ে চলাই বুদ্ধির কাজ।

✿ জ্ঞানে অজ্ঞানে আমরা যে কর্ম গুলো করি সেগুলোই ভাগ্য সৃষ্টি করে। অতীতের কর্ম বর্তমানে ফল দিচ্ছে, আজকের কর্ম কাল ফল দেবে। এমন কোনো কর্ম নেই যার ফল নেই। ভালোর ভালো। মন্দের মন্দ। উপায়? মনের প্রলাপ কে প্রশ্রয় না দিয়ে। ধৈর্য এবং ভগবানের নাম আশ্রয় করে এই বিষম যন্ত্রণা থেকে মুক্তির জন্যই মানব শরীর ধারণ। কাজ করতে হবে, নিষ্ঠা আর শরনাগত হয়ে থাকাই উপায়।

✿ জানবে, যে ভগবান মানুষ কে শান্তি দেন তিনি নিশ্চই মানুষের তৈরি ভগবান। সৃষ্টি তে মানুষ ই মানুষের ক্ষতি করে, অকারণে কষ্ট দেয়। ভগবান, তিনি তো তোমার মনের উচ্চতম সাত্ত্বিক ভূমি যেখানে কেবল নিঃশর্ত প্রেম আর ক্ষমা দয়া, করুণা ছাড়া কিছু নেই। সূর্য কি ভাবে জগতে অন্ধকার ছাড়া? নদী কি ভাবে তৃষ্ণার্ত কে এক অঞ্জলি জল খেতে বাধা দেবে? যারা এইরকম কথা বলে তারা তাদের নিজের মনের অবস্থা ভগবানের ওপর চাপায়।

✿ একমাত্র নিজের আত্মার সঙ্গে একাত্ম হতে পারলে তবেই শান্তি। যেই বাইরের মানুষ জন ইত্যাদির সঙ্গে তোমার মন জুড়বে, জানবে ওখান থেকেই আসবে তোমার দুঃখ কষ্ট ব্যাথা বেদনা। আসলে আত্মা ছাড়া আর সব ছলনা ছাড়া কিছু নয়। তাই যারা বুদ্ধিমান তারা সংসারের এই ছলনায় পা দেয়না, তারা সময় থাকতে ভগবানের কাছে নিঃশর্ত ভাবে আত্মসমর্পণ করে নিজের আত্মা পরিচয় লাভ করার জন্য। আত্মজ্ঞান আর আত্মার সঙ্গে একাত্মতা একই!

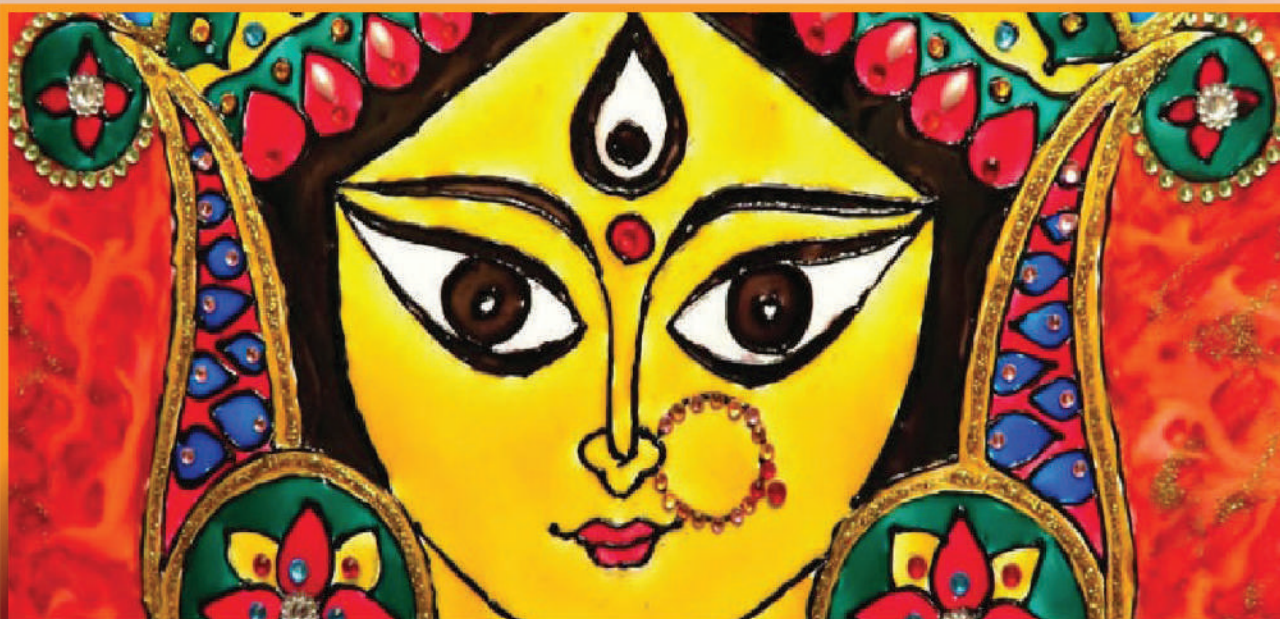
✿ তোমার মধ্যে চিৎ শক্তি কাজ করছে তাই তুমি চেতন। চেতন বা চেতনা সব কিছুর মধ্যেই আছে, তবে একমাত্র মানুষ চেতনা সম্বন্ধে সচেতন হতে পারে। তুমি জেনে শ্বাস নিতে পারো, না জেনেও শ্বাস নিতে পারো। যখন জেনে শ্বাস নেবে তখন তুমি শান্ত থাকবে, সুস্থ থাকবে। শ্বাসের খেয়াল না থাকলে, তুমি অচেতনতার ঘোড়ে সুখ দুঃখে দোলা খাবে। তোমার সুখদুঃখের চাবিকাঠি তোমার শ্বাসে এবং তোমার সচেতনাতা। বাইরের কিছু বা কারুর ওপর তা নির্ভরশীল নয়।

✿ ইচ্ছা পূরণেই সুখ এবং শান্তি লাভ করা যায়না। ইচ্ছা তো অহংকার থেকে জন্ম নেয়, তাই সাময়িক সুখ, কিন্তু অন্তে দুঃখ হবেই। তোমার চাওয়া যখন কেবল ভগবানের প্রীতি, তোমার অন্তরের জ্যোতির্ময় গুরুর প্রসন্নতা, কেবল তখনই তাঁর দান নিয়ে আসে আত্মিক শান্তি। তোমার আত্মার প্রসন্নতা। যতদিন শ্বাস ততদিন কেবল তাঁকেই সব কিছু নিবেদন করো, তাঁর জন্যই সব কিছু করো, জীবন তাঁর দানে পূর্ণ তা উপলব্ধি করবে।

✿ মনের শক্তি হারিয়ে ফেলা মানে সব কিছুই হারিয়ে ফেলা। শরীরের যে কোন অবস্থা হতে পারে, বাহ্যিক যে কোনো পরিস্থিতি হতে পারে যা তোমার কন্ট্রোলের বাইরে, কিন্তু মন তোমারই, তোমার ভিতরের শক্তি, তাকে তুমি ইষ্ট মুখী করে সঠিক পথ ঠিক দেখাতে পারো। মনের ভেতরে নারায়ণ আছেন। তুমি তাঁকে জাগাও, জপ, ধ্যান, শরনাগতি, সেবা, এই সব তার সাধনা। তোমার কর্মই তোমার সুখ শান্তির উৎস।

✿ ভক্তি অর্থাৎ এই বোধ, গুরু এবং ভগবান সর্বদাই আমার মঙ্গল করছেন। পরমাত্মা তিনিই, যিনি ভক্তের ভগবান। ভক্ত যখন ভগবানের ভক্তির সাধনা করে তখন তাকে উঠতে বসতে তার অহংকারের পরীক্ষা দিতে হয়। ভগবান দেখেন ভক্তের অহংকর্তা জ্ঞান কত গভীর? অহং কর্তৃত্ব থাকতে ভগবান ভক্ত কে দর্শন দেয়না, ভক্তের দুঃখও দূর হয়না। তাই দেখবে কত ভক্ত কতকাল থেকে কত ভগবানের পূজা করছে কিন্তু দুঃখ মুক্ত হচ্ছেনা। কর্তৃত্ব মুক্ত হলেই দুঃখ মুক্ত হয়।

✿ তোমার আত্মাই তো ভগবান। তোমার প্রাণই তো তোমার গুরু। দেখো কত কাছে, তোমা ছাড়া নয়, মুহূর্তের জন্য। তুমি ভুলে থাকলেও, তিনি কি ভোলেন? তুমি তেমন ভাবে ভালো না বাসলেও তাঁর ভালবাসায় কোনো কৃপণতা দেখেছো? আত্মা আছে তাই তুমি আছো। প্রাণ আছে তাই তোমার রূপের গুণের শরীরের এত কদর! সেই নিত্য বস্তু কে ভুলে কোন ভগবানের খোঁজ করছো? কার দাসত্ব করছো? কি পাবার আশা করছো?



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যজ্ঞ কি? যজ্ঞের প্রকারভেদ, মানব জীবনে যজ্ঞের প্রয়োজনীয়তা ও তাৎপর্য।

হারাদেন ভৌমিক লন্ডন, ২২ সেপ্টেম্বর ২০২৪।

যজ্ঞ শব্দের মূল ধাতু 'যজ' থেকে যজ্ঞের উৎপত্তি। যজ্ঞ শব্দের অর্থ পূজা, উপাসনা বা শ্রদ্ধার সাথে সমর্পণ। বৈদিক শাস্ত্রীয় বিধান অনুযায়ী দেবদেবী বা স্রষ্টার উদ্দেশ্যে শ্রদ্ধা ও ভক্তি সহকারে আচার নিষ্ঠার সহিত মন্ত্রের মাধ্যমে আহুতি দানের মাধ্যমেই যজ্ঞকার্য সম্পাদিত হয়। সৃষ্টির প্রারম্ভে বেদের প্রকাশকালে ব্রহ্মা এই যজ্ঞের সৃষ্টি করেন এবং মানবের উদ্দেশ্যে বলেন, "এই যজ্ঞের মাধ্যমে তোমরা দেবকুল তথা পরমাত্মার সম্বন্ধি অর্জনের কর্ম করবে। পক্ষান্তরে, এই প্রকৃতি তোমাদেরকে ফল, ফুল, বৃষ্টি ও শস্য দিয়ে ধন্য করবে। এই যজ্ঞের মাধ্যমেই নিক্রাম কর্ম সাধনের মাধ্যমে তোমরা পরমাত্মার সান্নিধ্য লাভে সমর্থ হবে।" তাই

বলা হয়, নিক্রামভাবে কর্মফল দৈবদেবের সমর্পণ করে যে কর্ম করা হয় তাকেই যজ্ঞ বলে। প্রকৃতপক্ষে কর্মযোগীর কর্ম মাত্রই যজ্ঞ সরূপ। কারণ, যিনি কর্তৃত্বাভিমান পরিত্যাগ করে সকল কর্মই দৈবদেবের সমর্পণ করেন তিনিই তো কর্মযোগী।

শ্রীমদ্ভাগবত গীতা অনুসারে, মানুষের নিত্য নৈমিত্তিক সকল কর্মই দৈবদেবের উদ্দেশ্যে সমর্পিত হওয়ায় সেই কর্ম অকর্মে পরিনত হয়ে যজ্ঞ রূপান্তরিত হয়।

শ্রীমদ্ভাগবত গীতায় বলা হয়েছে, গতসংস্রয় মুক্তস্য জ্ঞানাবস্থিতচেতসঃ। যজ্ঞায়াত্রতঃ কর্ম সমগ্রং প্রবিলীযতে।। (৪/২৩)

অর্থাৎ যিনি আসক্তহীন, কর্তৃত্বের অভিমানহীন, যার চিত্ত আত্মজ্ঞানে নিবিষ্ট তার যজ্ঞাচারিত(দৈবদেব প্রীতির জন্য) সকল কর্ম দোষমুক্ত হয়ে বিনষ্ট হয়ে যায় অর্থাৎ কর্মফলের ভোগ বিনষ্ট হয়ে যায়, তা বন্ধনের কারণ হয় না।

যজ্ঞের প্রকারভেদ: যজ্ঞকে দুই ভাগে ভাগ করা হয়েছে: দৈবযজ্ঞ এবং জ্ঞানযজ্ঞ। দ্রব্য সামগ্রীর মাধ্যমে সম্পাদিত যজ্ঞের নাম দ্রব্যযজ্ঞ আর পরমাত্মার সান্নিধ্য লাভে সাধকের ধ্যান, জ্ঞানের ভাঙার সম্বন্ধির জন্য কৃত যজ্ঞ জ্ঞানযজ্ঞ। দ্রব্যযজ্ঞে সাধক ফল, ফল, ঘৃত, মধু বা নৈবদ্য দিয়ে একনিষ্ঠ ভক্তি ও শ্রদ্ধাসহ মন্ত্রের মাধ্যমে সমর্পণ করেন। যেমন, ইন্দ্রাদি দেবতার পূজায় হোমের মাধ্যমে যেই আহুতি প্রদান করা হয় তা দ্রব্যযজ্ঞ। দেবতাদের উদ্দেশ্যে আহুতি প্রদান করা হয় বলে তাকে দৈবযজ্ঞ বলা হয়। শাস্ত্রের নানা রকম যজ্ঞের উল্লেখ আছে। যেমন:

দ্রব্যযজ্ঞ : স্বত্বহীন ভাবে দ্রব্য দানরূপযজ্ঞ। যেমন: নিরান্নকে অনুদান যজ্ঞ।

তপযজ্ঞ : চান্দ্রায়ণ ব্রত উপাসনার মাধ্যমে তপ করা।

যোগযজ্ঞ : যোগ অর্থ চিন্তাবৃত্তি নিরোধ। অষ্টাঙ্গযোগ (যম, নিয়ম, আসন, প্রানায়াম, প্রত্যাহার, ধারণা, ধ্যান ও সমাধি) এর মাধ্যমে যেই যজ্ঞ তাকে যোগযজ্ঞ বলে।

স্বাধ্যায়যজ্ঞ : ব্রহ্মচর্য অবলম্বন করে নিয়মিত বেদাভ্যাস করার নাম স্বাধ্যায়যজ্ঞ।

সংযম যজ্ঞ : পঞ্চ জ্ঞানইন্দ্রিয়ের সংযত করার যজ্ঞকে সংযম যজ্ঞ বলা হয়।

ইন্দ্রিয় যজ্ঞ : ইন্দ্রিয়জাতদেহ, লোভ ও ক্রোধকে নিবারণ যজ্ঞকে ইন্দ্রিয় যজ্ঞ বলা হয়।

সমাধি যজ্ঞ : পঞ্চ জ্ঞান ইন্দ্রিয়, পঞ্চ কর্ম ইন্দ্রিয়, পঞ্চপ্রানের কর্মকে সম্পূর্ণভাবে লীন করে ব্রহ্মভাবে সমাধিস্থ অবস্থার নাম সমাধিযজ্ঞ।

বেদজ্ঞান যজ্ঞ : বিচারপূর্বক বেদার্থ নির্ণয় করার নাম বেদ জ্ঞান যজ্ঞ।

“শাস্ত্রার্থ পরিজ্ঞানং যজ্ঞো যোষাং তে জ্ঞানযজ্ঞাঃ”-শঙ্করাচার্য। অর্থাৎ শাস্ত্রের অর্থ জানা যাদের কর্ম তাঁরা জ্ঞান যজ্ঞের অনুষ্ঠাতা। প্রানায়াম যজ্ঞ : যোগী যখন প্রান বায়ুতে আপান বায়ুর, আপান বায়ুতে প্রান বায়ুর আহুতি দিয়ে রেচক ও পূরক প্রানায়াম করেন বা প্রান ও আপান বায়ুর গতি রোধ করে কুন্ডল প্রানায়ামের সাধন করেন তখন তাকে প্রানায়াম যজ্ঞ বলা হয়। উল্লেখিত যজ্ঞ ছাড়াও, মহাভারতে নানাবিধ দৈব যজ্ঞের উল্লেখ আছে। যেমন : অশ্বমেধ যজ্ঞ, রাজসূয়ো যজ্ঞ ইত্যাদি।

প্রকৃতপক্ষে কর্মযোগী যখন তার কঠিন সাধনায়সত্য, জ্ঞান ও চিন্ময়ানন্দের এক পরম সিদ্ধি লাভে সক্ষম হন, তখন তাঁর অন্তর্দৃষ্টিতে সর্বত্র ব্রহ্মভাবনা আর জগতকে ব্রহ্মময় উপলব্ধি হয়। শ্রীমদ্ভাগবত গীতাভাষ্যবান বলেছেন, ব্রহ্মার্পণং ব্রহ্ম হবির্ব্রহ্মাণৌ ব্রহ্মনা হুতম। ব্রহ্মৈব তেন গন্তব্যং ব্রহ্মকর্মসমাধিনা।। (২/২৪)

অর্থাৎ জ্ঞানে অবস্থিত হলে সবই ব্রহ্মময় হয়। ক্রিয়া, ক্রিয়ার উপকরণ, ক্রিয়ার পাত্র কিছুতেই কোন ভেদ থাকে না। হবনের পাত্র, অগ্নি, হবণ ক্রিয়া, হবি- সর্বত্র ব্রহ্মদর্শন সম্ভব হয়। এইরূপ ব্রহ্মদৃষ্টি সম্পন্ন ব্যক্তি ব্রহ্মকেই লাভ করেন।

তাৎপর্য ও প্রয়োজনীয়তা: যজ্ঞের সৃষ্টি মানব সভ্যতা তথা এই সৃষ্টির কল্যাণ সাধনের জন্যে। নানা রকম যজ্ঞের মাধ্যমে সাধকগণ তাঁদের নিক্রাম কর্ম ও অন্তর্দৃষ্টির ধ্যান আর জ্ঞানের বিকাশ করে আমাদের জন্য রেখে গেছেন অমূল্য সম্পদ, যা আমরা শাস্ত্র গ্রন্থ হিসেবে পেয়েছি।

সত্য, ত্রেতা, দ্বাপরযুগে ব্রহ্মবিদগণ আপন আপন সাধনার দ্বারা, যজ্ঞ, তপস্যার দ্বারা নিজের মোক্ষ সাধনের পথটি পরিশুদ্ধির সাথে সাথে এই জগত সংসারের কল্যান সাধনে দৃঢ়ব্রত ছিলেন। যোগসিদ্ধ মহাপুরুষেরা সন্ন্যাসী হয়ে জীবনের ব্রত সাধন করলেও লোকসংগ্রহ এবং জনকল্যাণমুখী কর্মে লিপ্ত ছিলেন জীবনান্তকাল অবধি। তাঁরই প্রমান মিলে তাদের সকল কর্মযজ্ঞে। যেমন, মহর্ষী বেদব্যাস ছিলেন ভগবানের সন্তোষে অবতার। স্বীয় জীবনকালে তিনি আমাদের বেদকে চারটি খণ্ডে বিভক্ত করে সনাতন ধর্মের অর্থনীতি, চিকিৎসা ও সমাজ পরিচালনার পরিপূর্ণ নির্দেশনা দিয়ে গেছেন- ঋক, সাম, অথর্ব ও যজুর্বেদ, এই চতুর্বেদ সৃষ্টির মাধ্যমে। উপবেদ, বেদান্ত শাস্ত্র, বহু পুরাণ ও উপনিষদ তাঁরই স্বাধ্যায় এবং বেদজ্ঞানযজ্ঞেরই ফসল।

মহাভারতের মত বিশাল মহাকাব্যটিও তাঁরই ধ্যানমগ্ন সাধনার সৃষ্টি। যাকে পঞ্চম বেদ বলে অভিহিত করা হয়েছে। আজকের যুগে ঘরে ঘরে শ্রীমদ্ভাগবত গীতা নামের মহামূল্যবান যেই গ্রন্থখানা হাতের কাছে আমরা পাই, সেই গ্রন্থখানাও মহাভারতের “ভীষ্ম পর্বের পঁচিশ থেকে বিয়াল্লিশতম অধ্যায়ের সংকলন”। তেমনিভাবে, মহামুনি অগস্ত্য তাঁর নিজ দেহের অস্থিসমূহ দান করে দিয়েছিলেন দেবরাজ ইন্দ্রের বজ্রধনু, শ্রীরাম চন্দ্রের হরধনুর তনু, কুরুক্ষেত্রের যুদ্ধে ব্যবহৃত অর্জুনের গাভীবধনু তৈরীর জন্য। কথিত আছে অগস্ত্য মুনির সাধন ও তপযজ্ঞের ফলে তাঁর শরীরের অস্থি এত মজবুত ও শক্তিশালী হয়েছিল যে বজ্রাঘাতেও সেই অস্থি অক্ষত থাকতো। সেই জন্যই তাঁর নিজের ইচ্ছানুসারে তিনি দেহত্যাগ করে সেই অস্থিদান করেন, যা ব্যবহার করা হয়েছিল মহামূল্যবান সেই অস্ত্র তৈরীর কাজে। আধুনিক বিশ্বেও যজ্ঞ সাধনার এই কর্মযজ্ঞ অব্যাহত আছে। যুগের পরিবর্তনের সাথে মানুষের কর্ম পদ্ধতির পরিবর্তন সাধিত হলেও সেই কর্মযজ্ঞের যাত্রা অব্যাহত আছে নানা ভাবে। আজ মুনি ঋষিদের মতই জ্ঞানযজ্ঞের সাধনায় ব্রত হয়েছেন বড় বড় বিজ্ঞানীরা তাঁদের নয়া নয়া আবিষ্কারের মাধ্যমে। বিজ্ঞানীদের আবিষ্কার জগতের সভ্যতাকে এক নতুনতর পর্যায়ে নিয়ে মানুষের জীবনকে তথা সংসারকে সাবলীল গতিশীলতা প্রদান করেছেন। জীবজগত, উদ্ভিদজগত, নভোমন্ডল বা জলজগত সব জায়গায় রয়েছে বিজ্ঞানের জয় যাত্রা। জ্ঞানযজ্ঞ, নিক্রাম কর্মযজ্ঞ এবং স্বাধ্যায় যজ্ঞের প্রকৃষ্ট দৃষ্টান্ত পরিলক্ষিত হয়েছে বিজ্ঞানীদের গবেষণা, আবিষ্কার আর নির্মোহ বলিদানে আবিষ্কৃত নানাবিধ মঙ্গলজনক যন্ত্রাদি ও অন্যান্য বস্তু সামগ্রীর মাঝে। তাই, যজ্ঞ মানব সমাজের উদ্দেশ্যে, জগতের কল্যাণের জন্য এক অপরিহার্য অনুষঙ্গ। এক অনন্য সাধনার বিষয়, মুক্তির অন্বেষা এবং বিশ্ব ব্রহ্মাণ্ডের কল্যাণ সাধনে সবচেয়ে বেশী অত্যাাবশ্যকীয় কর্ম।

Worshipping God, the Hindu way

Jayanta Saha

Image worship (not Idol worship), in Hinduism is a profound practice which is deeply rooted in the meta-physical and philosophical understanding of divinity. In Sanskrit it is known as Pratima puja, or Murti Puja. We, Hindus believe in the concept of Brahma, the supreme, the most powerful reality that is beyond human comprehension. As the Upanishads state, Brahma is formless (Nirguna), but it can also manifest in countless forms (Swaguna) to help devotees focus their devotion. The practice of image worship arises from the belief that the divine can manifest in forms comprehensible to the human mind, making it easier for humans to approach, understand, and relate to their own experience of divinity.



We build statues or sometimes use images or photos to represent the forms of the supreme God, gods and goddesses. I have been pondering to what extent other faith followers or even Hindus themselves actually know about the meaning of statues which are primarily used in Hindu religious practices.

In Hinduism, there is no such thing as "idol worship" (murtipuja). What Hindus practice is actually the worship of "pratima" (images or representations). In Hinduism, a distinction is made between a "pratima" (image) and a "murti" (idol). When the presence of the divine is invoked into an object, and it is seen as a symbol of God Himself, it is referred to as "pratima" or "Sri Vighraha". In other words, the object in your showcase is definitely a murti (idol), but the moment life is ritually infused into it through special worship, it becomes "Sri Vighraha" (a sacred image). This is part of the religious practice and belief in Hinduism.

Swami Vivekananda said, "Hindus do not worship dolls; in the clay-made "mrinmayi" (earthly) idol, they glimpse the divine consciousness ("chinmoyi"). In response to a question about idol worship at the 1893 World's Parliament of Religions in Chicago, he said, "Hindus are not idol-worshippers. They are ideal-worshippers." This means that Hindus do not worship idols; they worship ideals. The idol is merely a symbol of that ideal.

An analogy can be made when studying geography, we use a globe to imagine that it represents the Earth. A map on the wall shows places like London, Dhaka, and Japan. But is that globe or map actually the Earth? Of course not, but by looking at them, we understand the Earth. In the same way, a statue or image is a conceptual representation, not the actual deity themselves, but merely a symbol or metaphor for them. These representations help the mind focus and provide insight into God's different qualities, teaching that God is truth. Ultimately, they guide the worshiper toward the Supreme Brahma.

According to Hindu scriptures, God is One and without a second. Hindu philosophy states that God is "Swayambhu" (self-existent), meaning God is self-born and has no creator; He is His own creator. The ancient sages have said that God has no specific form (Nirakar Brahma), making Him formless, but He can assume any form because He is the supreme power in the universe. The Rig Veda declares that God is "Ekam Evadvitiam" — God is One and without a second. It is further said that God is "Avangmanasagochar", meaning God cannot be comprehended through speech, mind, or sight—He is beyond the material world.

Deities (gods and goddesses) are not God. God is referred to as Nirguna, meaning He is the source of all qualities (virtues) in the universe. At the same time, God is also Saguna, because He is omnipotent. God can possess and express any quality He wishes. The deities (gods and goddesses) are the manifestations of these Saguna aspects of God. In other words, each god or goddess is the embodiment of a particular quality of God. God is formless (Nirakar), but He can take any form because He holds all power.

Worship of God involves offering flowers, food (Naivedya), water, incense, and light (Aarti). The Puja ritual typically includes:

- **Abhishekam:** Bathing the idol with substances like water, milk, and honey.
- **Alankara:** Dressing and adorning the idol with flowers, clothes, and jewels.
- **Naivedya:** Offering food, which is believed to be consumed spiritually by the deity and then distributed to devotees as Prasad.
- **Aarti:** Offering a lit lamp to the deity in a circular motion, symbolizing the removal of darkness and the offering of light.

The form of the pratima serves as a point of focus for meditation. Devotees often meditate on the attributes of the deity and the symbolic meanings of the various elements of the idol. During Hindu festivals like Durga Puja, Diwali, and Janmashtami, idols are worshipped with even greater fervour. Temporary idols made of clay are also used for these occasions, with the understanding that the divine temporarily inhabits these idols during the festival. After the festival, these idols are ceremonially immersed in water, symbolizing the return of the deity to the formless state. This is called bishorjan. Worshipping pratima is a sophisticated and symbolic practice in Hinduism, rooted in the philosophical understanding that the infinite can manifest in finite forms to help human beings focus their devotion.

Importance of Practicing Hinduism in Modern Society

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In today's fast-paced world, filled with technological advances, materialism, and social challenges, practicing Hinduism provides timeless wisdom and spiritual practices that help individuals lead balanced, meaningful, and ethical lives. Hinduism offers a comprehensive worldview that integrates spirituality, philosophy, and daily living, making it highly relevant to the complexities of modern society. Below are key reasons why Hinduism continues to hold importance in the present day and how its teachings can address current challenges.

1. Ethical Living Through Dharma and Karma

A core tenet of Hinduism is dharma, the moral duties each individual must follow according to their societal role, paired with karma, the principle of cause and effect. In a world dominated by unethical behaviour and short-term thinking, these concepts promote responsible living and ethical decision-making, ensuring the betterment of society.

- **Relevance in Modern Society:** Dharma and karma serve as a moral compass in personal and professional life. In workplaces, following dharma could mean practicing honesty and fairness, while karma encourages long-term thinking, knowing that actions today influence the future.

2. Inner Peace and Mental Health

Modern life brings high levels of stress, anxiety, and mental health challenges. Hinduism offers tools like meditation, yoga, and mindfulness that foster mental clarity and inner peace, helping individuals manage the pressures of daily life.

- **Relevance in Modern Society:** Practices like Dhyana (meditation) and Pranayama (breathing exercises) have proven benefits in reducing anxiety and improving well-being. The global popularity of yoga shows how Hindu practices can enhance both mental and physical health.

3. Non-Violence and Compassion (Ahimsa)

The principle of Ahimsa (non-violence) is central to Hindu philosophy. It emphasizes compassion towards all living beings and respect for nature, offering a solution to societal conflicts and environmental degradation.

- **Relevance in Modern Society:** Ahimsa encourages peaceful conflict resolution, empathy, and sustainability. The rise of vegetarianism and veganism reflects Hinduism's respect for animal welfare and the environment.

4. Inclusivity and Diversity

Hinduism is inclusive, accepting multiple spiritual paths. It allows for diverse interpretations, whether through devotion (Bhakti Yoga), knowledge (Jnana Yoga), or selfless action (Karma Yoga).

- **Relevance in Modern Society:** In a world divided by religious intolerance, Hinduism's pluralistic nature promotes peaceful coexistence and interfaith dialogue, allowing individuals the freedom to explore spiritual growth without rigid doctrines.

5. Spiritual Freedom and Self-Realization

Hinduism encourages self-realization, the understanding that the soul (Atman) is one with the universal soul (Brahman). It promotes self-awareness and detachment from material desires, focusing on spiritual growth rather than worldly success.

- **Relevance in Modern Society:** In today's materialistic world, Hinduism offers a path toward inner fulfilment and self-exploration, rather than being consumed by external achievements like wealth or status.

Conclusion

In a world marked by rapid change, uncertainty, and increasing complexity, practicing Hinduism offers individuals a way to navigate life with a sense of purpose, peace, and ethical responsibility. Its timeless teachings on dharma, karma, non-violence, and spiritual freedom provide practical solutions to the challenges of modern living. Whether through mindfulness practices like meditation, respect for nature, or the pursuit of self-realization, Hinduism's wisdom remains as relevant today as it was thousands of years ago. By embracing Hinduism, individuals can cultivate inner peace, promote ethical living, strengthen family and community bonds, and contribute to a more compassionate and sustainable world.

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A Celebration of Triumph and Devotion Upsha Dey - 15 Years

Durga Puja, one of the most significant festivals in Hindu culture, is a grand celebration dedicated to Goddess Durga, symbolising the triumph of good over evil. At the heart of Durga Puja lies the legend of the goddess's victory over the buffalo demon Mahishasura. According to Hindu mythology, Mahishasura, empowered by a boon that made him nearly invincible, wreaked havoc in heaven and on Earth. Therefore, the trimurti (Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva) combined their powers to create Goddess Durga, a divine warrior, equipped with weapons from each deity. Durga is also considered the compassionate mother of the universe, embodying nurturing power and protection. Her ten hands, each holding a different weapon, signify her ability to protect her devotees from all forms of evil.



Cultural and Religious Rituals

Durga Puja typically takes place during the last five days of Navratri; Shashti, Saptami, Ashtami, Navami and Vijaya Dashami. In the Hindu month of Ashwin (September-October). The celebration begins on Mahalaya, a day that marks Durga's descent from her heavenly abode to Earth. Bengalis begin the day with early morning prayers and the recitation of the 'Chandi Path', a set of verses that recounts the goddess's victory over Mahishasura. Durga Puja is not only a time for religious devotion but also an extravagant artistic event. Elaborate pandals (temporary structures) are built to house the idols of Durga and her children – Lakshmi, Saraswati, Ganesh, and Kartik. Vijaya Dashami, the tenth day, marks the end of Durga Puja. On this day, the goddess bid farewell with a grand procession, and her idol is immersed in water, symbolising her return to her divine realm. The immersion is accompanied by prayers, songs, and the sound of drums, as devotees wish for her swift return next year. In West Bengal, particularly in Kolkata, Durga Puja is a carnival of immense proportions. The city is decked with lights, and millions of people throng the streets to visit pandals, watch cultural performances, and participate in various competitions. The atmosphere is charged with energy, and the festival's spirit transcends age, religion, and background.

The festival is also a powerful expression of feminine energy, or shakti, with Goddess Durga serving as the ultimate symbol of womanhood. Durga Puja, therefore, becomes a celebration of female empowerment, strength, and resilience. In many rituals, women take the lead in organising and participating in ceremonies. One of the most iconic traditions is the Sindoor Khela, where married women smear each other with sindoor, a joyous act that invokes the blessings of the goddess for marital happiness and long life for their husbands.

In conclusion, Durga Puja is more than a religious festival; it is a dynamic cultural celebration that weaves together art, devotion, and community. It serves as a reminder of the eternal struggle between good and evil, and the enduring belief that good will ultimately prevail. Whether through the sacred rituals, the magnificent art of the pandals, or the social gatherings that bring people together, Durga Puja continues to resonate as a powerful symbol of faith, unity, and the timeless victory of righteousness.

"Ashbe bochor abar hobe... Bolo Durga Maa ki... Joy!!!"

Origins of Durga Puja Nagen Datta - 18 Years

Durga Puja is a major Hindu festival that celebrates the victory of Goddess Durga over the demon Mahishasura. The festival is held for 10 days in the 7th month of the Hindu calendar, also known as Ashvina. Celebrations and worship begin on Sashti, the sixth day of the festival. On Vijayadashami, the celebrations come to a conclusion, the sacred images are immersed into the rivers to symbolize the Goddess Durga coming back to her husband Shiva.



Story of Durga Puja: A long time ago, A demon king called Mahishasura acquired a powerful boon from Lord Brahma through extreme penance and devotion. The boon allowed Mahishasura not to be defeated by man or gods. As a result of this boon, Mahishasura conquered the celestial planets and exiled the gods. The gods who became desperate due to Mahishasura's conquest and ruthlessness turned to the Trimurti: Lord Brahma, Lord Shiva, and Lord Vishnu. All together they realized Mahishasura could be defeated by a woman. Lord Brahma, Lord Shiva, and Lord Vishnu created Goddess Durga. Goddess Durga brandished Lord Vishnu's Sudarshan Chakra, Lord Shiva's Trishul, and other potent weapons. Goddess Durga, riding an august lion, got ready to fight the Demon Mahishasura in a war. Goddess Durga easily defeated Mahishasura's army and now had to fight the Demon Mahishasura one on one. The glorious battle went on for 9 days in a row. On the 10th day, Goddess Durga struck her trident into Mahishasura's heart and finally annihilated the demon. The Gods celebrated Mahishasura's defeat and Goddess Durga's victory.

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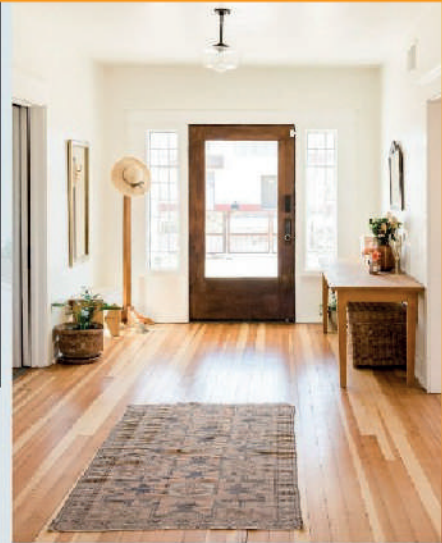
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Analyzing Vedic Scriptures: A Journey Into Ancient Wisdom

Anushri Saha (Diya) - 12 Years

Introduction to Vedic Scriptures : The Vedas are the oldest and most respected scriptures in Hinduism. These ancient texts, written in Sanskrit, contain the earliest spiritual and religious teachings of Indian culture. Passed down through generations before being written, the Vedas are made up of four main collections: the Rigveda, Yajurveda, Samaveda, and Atharvaveda. These texts provide instructions for rituals, hymns to praise gods, and deep spiritual wisdom. They are considered timeless and serve as the foundation of Hindu religion and philosophy.

Rigveda and Yajurveda: Hymns and Rituals: The Rigveda is the oldest Veda and contains more than 1,000 hymns dedicated to gods like Agni (the fire god), Indra (the warrior god), and Varuna (the god of order). These hymns were used in rituals to ask for blessings, protection, and triumph in life. The Yajurveda focuses on giving instructions for performing rituals. It is divided into two parts, Shukla (White) and Krishna (Black), and provides priests with details on how to properly carry out ceremonies, which were believed to keep the universe in balance.

Samaveda and Atharvaveda: Music and Everyday life: The Samaveda is all about music and chants. It adapts some of the hymns from the Rigveda to be sung during rituals, especially during the important soma sacrifice. Because of its focus on music, the Samaveda is seen as the source of Indian classical music. The Atharvaveda is different from the other Vedas, containing spells, prayers, and practical solutions for problems in daily life, such as healing sickness or protection from harm. It also includes early forms of medicine and reflections on everyday concerns, making it more connected to common people's lives.

The Four Parts of Each Veda: Each Veda has four parts: Samhitas (hymns), Brahmanas (instructions for rituals), Aranyakas (meditations for people who live in the forest), and Upanishads (philosophical teachings). The Upanishads are the most philosophical and discuss deep ideas about the self (Atman) and the ultimate reality (Brahman). The core teaching is that the individual soul is the same as the universal soul. Phrases like Tat Tvam Asi ("You are That") explain that the self and the universe are connected, and understanding this leads to spiritual freedom (Moksha).

Karma, Rebirth and Liberation: The Vedas also introduce important concepts like karma, the idea that every action has a consequence that affects one's future. This idea ties into samsara, the cycle of birth, death and rebirth. According to the Vedas, individuals are reborn based on their karma, and this cycle continues until they gain spiritual knowledge and freedom. Moksha is the ultimate goal, where a person escapes the cycle of rebirth and becomes one with the divine. The early parts of the Vedas focus on rituals to maintain order, while the later Upanishads emphasize gaining knowledge to reach enlightenment.

Conclusion - The Ongoing Importance of the Vedas: Even though the Vedas are very old, they are still important today. They are the foundation of Hindu religious practices and beliefs, influencing many branches of thought, such as Vedanta and Yoga. In modern times, spiritual leaders like Swami Vivekananda have reinterpreted the Vedas to make them more accessible to people around the world. Whether studying the hymns in the Rigveda, the rituals in the Yajurveda, the music in the Samaveda, or the wisdom of the Upanishads, the Vedas offer timeless guidance to both the old and the young on life, spiritually, and the path to self-realization while helping the mind develop strong moral foundations and a sense of purpose. This guidance fosters personal growth, lifelong learning, and the ability to navigate life's challenges with integrity.



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Ma Durga and Durga Puja

Mondira Das - 9 Years

Durga Puja, also known as Durgotsav is one of the most significant and grandiose festival celebrated all over the world. This festival, dedicated to Goddess Durga, symbolises the victory of good over evil. It's a time of immense joy, cultural activities and religious fervour, bringing together people from all walks of life.

The origins of Durga Puja can be traced back to ancient times. According to Hindu mythology, Goddess Durga was created by the collective energy of the gods to defeat the buffalo demon Mahishasur, who had become invincible and was wreaking havoc on the heaven and the earth. This festival commemorates this victory of divine power over demonic forces.

Preparation for Durga Puja begin months in advance. Artisans meticulously craft clay idols of Goddess Durga and her children - Ganesh, Kartik, Lakshmi, and Saraswati. These idols are then installed in elaborately decorated and adorned with lights, flowers, and artistic designs.

The festival officially begins with Mahalaya, a day when the presence of Goddess Durga is invoked. This is followed by a series of rituals over the next few days, starting from Shashthi to Bijoya Dashami. Each day has its own significance and set of rituals, including the offering of flowers (pushpanjali), the lighting of lamps(aarti), and the recitation of hymns and prayers.

Durga Puja is not just a cultural extravaganza. It's time when communities come together to celebrate with music, dance, drama and art. Cultural programs are organised in various traditional and contemporary performances. The festival also has a significant social aspect. It's a time for family reunion and gatherings. People visit each others homes, exchange gifts and share meals. The sense of community and togetherness makes Durga Puja a truly inclusive celebration.

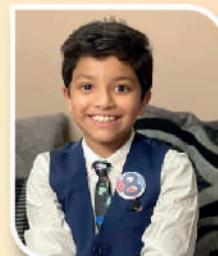
Durga Puja is a festival that embodies the rich cultural heritage and spiritual ethos of the world. It's a celebration of divine power, artistic expression, and social unity. As we celebrate Durga Puja, let us also strive to preserve it's cultural and environmental sanctity for future generations.



Joy Maa Durga

Anindo Saha - 8 Years

Durga has 10 hands. Also Maa Durga has weapons. We celebrate Durga Pooja for 5-10 days. Bengali hindus celebrate from sasti for that reason they celebrate 5 days. Durga is the goddess of energy. She defeated darkness. Durga is a form of Parvati. She rides on a lion which symbolises sense of rythm over prokriti. The demi gods provide their powers to her so that she can overcome all negativity.



Maa Durga Aditi Sikder - 12 years

Maa Durga is celebrated as a divine mother and a formidable warrior in Hinduism, symbolizing righteousness and invincibility. She eclipses all other goddesses, embodying strength and compassion. Revered by millions, she inspires devotion and reverence, particularly during the vibrant festival of Durga Puja, which honours her legendary significance and the values she represents.

The story of Maa Durga's creation is steeped in ancient Puranic tradition. Faced with terror from the demon Mahishasura, the collective energy of the delities manifested her. They bestowed their weapons upon her, hopeful for victory. Through her fierce battle against the demon, she emerged as Mahishasura Mardini, symbolizing the triumph of good over evil and the protective power of the divine. Durga Puja is a vibrant festival celebrated, where communities come together to honor Maa Durga. Elaborate decorations, traditional music, and dance performances create an immersive atmosphere, while rituals and communal meals foster unity. These activities not only celebrate the goddess's power but also reinforce social bonds, connecting participants to their cultural heritage and spirituality.

In conclusion, Maa Durga embodies supreme power, beauty, and rebirth, inspiring countless devotees. Her nine forms are honoured over nine days, highlighting different aspects of her divinity. Riding a lion, she symbolizes both ferocity and protection, serving as a guardian for her followers and instilling hope and strength in their hearts throughout the festival.





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Unveiling Mystical Tales of Durga's Nine Avatars: Dev Saha – 15 Years

At long last, the much-awaited Durga Puja has arrived—an event that holds a special place in the hearts of the Bangladeshi Hindu community. Durga Puja in Bangladesh is not merely a religious observance but a rich cultural celebration that unites people across regions, creating an atmosphere of joy and devotion. The vibrant sounds of the dhak, the joyous spirit in the air, and the tradition of wearing new clothes add to the sense of renewal and festivity, making the celebration unforgettable, with many wishing it would never end.

But beyond the festive spirit, we must ask: why do we celebrate these days with such devotion and meticulous preparation? While the immediate answer may be to honor the Goddess Durga, there is much more to her story. Durga Puja not only commemorates her victory over the demon Mahishasura, symbolizing the triumph of good over evil, but also celebrates her nine divine manifestations. However, there exist forgotten tales which I am going to disclose here.

Durga's first form, Shailaputri, embodies strength and symbolizes the grounding of divine energy into the material world. As the daughter of the Himalayas, her tale reflects the power of nature and the strength of feminine resolve. Next comes Brahmacharini, whose devotion and penance represent the virtues of self-discipline, patience, and the spiritual journey toward attaining divine wisdom. As we progress through the festival, we encounter Chandraghanta, known for her fierce warrior form. Adorned with a crescent moon on her forehead, she embodies courage and valor, warding off negative energies and protecting righteousness.

Kushmanda, the fourth manifestation, represents the creative power of the universe. With her radiant smile, she is said to have created the cosmos and is believed to reside in the core of the sun. Her creative energy brings light to the universe, symbolizing both literal and metaphorical illumination. The nurturing aspect of Durga is highlighted in the next form, Skandamata, the mother of the war god Kartikeya. Her myth underscores the goddess's protective and compassionate nature, as well as her role in guiding warriors to victory.

The fierce Katyayani emerged to destroy the demon Mahishasura, embodying strength and righteous anger. Her role in restoring balance to the world when evil threatens to overrun it makes her an important figure in the celebration of Durga Puja. Kalaratri, the seventh form, is perhaps the fiercest of Durga's manifestations. She symbolizes the destruction of darkness, ignorance, and fear, and her story speaks to the cosmic power she wields. Kalaratri's role is not only to vanquish evil but to dissolve the ego and material attachments, serving as a reminder of the transience of worldly existence.

In contrast to Kalaratri's fierceness, Mahagauri represents purity and virtue. Her story of undergoing severe penance to cleanse herself serves as a metaphor for the soul's journey toward enlightenment and the removal of impurities. This form of Durga encourages us to seek inner purity through spiritual practice. The final form, Siddhidatri, is revered as the giver of supernatural powers, or siddhis. Through her, devotees attain ultimate knowledge and divine grace, completing the spiritual cycle and symbolizing the fulfillment of life's highest aspirations.

Each form of Durga, from Shailaputri to Siddhidatri, represents a different facet of the divine feminine power. Together, they guide devotees on a spiritual journey from the material to the cosmic, from ignorance to enlightenment. As we celebrate Durga Puja in Bangladesh, we not only honor these nine powerful avatars but also reflect on their deeper meanings—strength, courage, wisdom, and the ultimate realization of the divine within us all. The tradition of wearing new clothes symbolizes this sense of renewal, marking not just an external celebration but a personal transformation, as we strive to embody the virtues and power of the goddess in our daily lives.



As I Know Baba Lokenath Aryan Bal (Ushno) – 11 Years

"In times of peril, whether amidst the depths of ocean or in war or in the wild, remember Me. I shall save you. You may not know Me. You may not realize who I am. Just pray to Me with a little touch of your heart and I shall free you from gripping sorrows and miseries." This is our lord (BABA LOKENATH BRAHMACHARI) saying his profound words spreading across people who not Hindu or are Hindu. Baba Lokenath was born on Janmashtami, the birthday of Lord Krishna, in 1730 (18th Bhadra, 1137) to a Brahmin family in the village of ChaurasiChakla, a couple of miles away from Calcutta.

His teachings were infused with a simplicity that endeared the common man. He preached love and devotion and an unwavering faith in God and in one's deeper, immutable self. For him, nothing is but Self. After attaining siddhi or enlightenment he said: I have seen only Myself."For the next three decades, Baba Lokenath underwent intense training in various schools of Yoga in several remote locations all over the Indian subcontinent. He adopted a lifestyle of extreme austerity and vowed celibacy (hence brahmachari) and undertook long periods of fasting.

I am bound by my own karma."I am eternal, I am deathless. After this body falls, do not think that everything will come to an end. I will live in the hearts of all living beings in my subtle astral form. Whoever will seek my refuge, will always receive my grace." this is something our Baba said to us which we know that he will all ways hold truth and hope in our hearts.





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HINDUISM *Devjit Saha - 12 Years*

Hinduism is one of the world's oldest religions, also known as Sanatana Dharma, meaning "eternal law". It has a rich tapestry of spiritual practices, philosophies, and tradition for Hinduism. It is a pluralistic religion, meaning it accommodates a vast array of beliefs, practices, and deities, and is rooted in the Indian subcontinent. Hinduism is not a single monolithic tradition, but rather a collection of diverse systems of thought and culture. Spirituality in Hinduism is deeply embedded in its philosophy, rituals, and practices, and focuses on personal growth, inner transformation, and connection with the divine. Hindu spirituality is not confined to religious institutions but pervades daily life, offering multiple paths to self-realisation and understanding the nature of existence.



One of the central beliefs in Hinduism is Dharma, which refers to the moral and ethical duties each individual is supposed to follow based on their social and personal responsibilities. Another key concept is Karma, the idea that one's actions directly influence their future, either in this life or in future lives. This belief ties into the concept of Reincarnation (Samsara), where the soul is reborn in different forms, and the cycle of life, death, and rebirth continues until one achieves Moksha—the ultimate liberation or union with the divine.

Hinduism is highly diverse, with a wide variety of practices, rituals, and deities. Some of the principal gods include Brahma (the creator), Vishnu (the preserver), and Shiva (the destroyer), although Hindus may worship many different deities depending on regional traditions and personal beliefs. It's a religion that emphasises flexibility and inclusivity, allowing for many different interpretations of the divine and paths toward spiritual fulfilment. It's a religion, which is based on a collection of sacred texts, with the Vedas being among the most ancient and foundational, along with other important scriptures like the Upanishads, Bhagavad Gita, Ramayana, and Mahabharata.

Hinduism teaches its followers about true peace, which comes from within. It is achieved through self-realisation, harmony with nature, and spiritual practices like meditation and yoga. It emphasises non-violence and compassion, encouraging individuals to live in balance with the universe and others, fostering a peaceful and fulfilling life.

Lord Ganesh *Avrajit Saha - 9 Years*

Ganesh is one of the most worshipped deities in the Hindu religion. He is the son of Goddess Parvati and Lord Shiva. Ganesh has many diverse attributes, he is mostly recognised for his elephant head with big ears and unique four arms. On one hand, he holds a special sweet called a modak. Another hand holds an axe to cut away problems. His third arm carries a rope to pull us towards success. His fourth hand is often raised in a blessing. He is widely celebrated amongst the world, he brings good luck and is known as the Remover of Obstacles. His sisters are Saraswati and Lakshmi and his brother is Kartik. I worship Ganesh because he always cares for his mother and so do I. He is sometimes called Ganapati. The name Ganesh means Lord of the Ganas. Ganas are the attendants of Lord Shiva. Goddess Parvati created Lord Ganesh (from the dirt and oils) to guard her in the absence of Lord Shiva. Do you want to know how Ganesh has an elephant head?



Goddess Parvati gave Ganesh the job of watching the home door while she bathed. In the meantime, Shiva returned home, and Ganesh, unaware of Shiva's identity, stopped him. His audacity angered Shiva so he started to fight with him. His rage was too much so he threw his trident at Ganesh's head. Later, Parvati came rushing out of the room and she was devastated at the sight of her son with no head. "He is our son! You just killed him!" cried Parvati. Shiva realised he had made a big mistake and demanded his followers to get the head of the first animal they saw. They saw an elephant and came back with the elephant's head. Shiva put it on and created Ganesh again however with an elephant head. This is how Lord Ganesh currently has an elephant head.

Lord Ganesh teaches us to be wise, kind, and patient. He reminds us that even when things seem difficult, we can overcome them with a little help. We worship Lord Ganesh at the start of any auspicious event to ensure his blessings, which are believed to bring prosperity, wisdom, and good fortune.

About Durga Puja *Drona Dev Roy - 10 Years*

Durga Puja is the most auspicious festival of Bengalis. It has huge religious importance as well as it is considered one of the most recognizable social events of India. The celebration takes place for complete 10 days and every individual; especially Bengalis wait for this period quite eagerly for the entire year. Internationally, Durga Puja is recognized as a 10-day Carnival festival due to big, power-packed celebrations and unbounded merry-making. The occasion carries great importance for the people situated in Kolkata, West Bengal; the entire city gets illuminated with all sorts of designer and colourful lights. Every individual would get their respective houses painted and renovated; people buy new clothes, prepare mouth-watering dishes and sweets and visit each other. From the 6th day onwards, magnificent Pandals are erected with attractive idols of Goddess Durga and other Hindu Gods and Goddesses along with the demon Mahishasur. Durga Puja reminds people of women's power in the form of 'Shakti' and inspires people to respect women in every form in the modern society too.



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The Story of Shiva and Parvati

Dayita Saha (Hiya) – 12 years

Lord Shiva, major deity of Hinduism believe to have many manifestations. His female consort is known under various manifestations as Parvati, Durga, Kali, Uma, Sati. He is both the destroyer and restorer. Lord Shiva has a third eye, the eye which turns everything into ashes when open. Lord Shiva is eternal, there is no beginning nor end.

Parvati, born the daughter of a mountain called Himalaya. Her whole life, Parvati had a special love in her heart for Shiva. At a young age she sat in the meadows, placing flowers on Shiva's feet and daydreaming about him. All her daydreaming was not doing anything but frustrating her. So she decided to act. She went to the god of love, Kama and asked him to shoot an arrow into Shiva's heart. Kama, always down for love, shot an arrow into Shiva's heart and woke Shiva out of meditation. Shiva enraged as he opened His third eye and incinerated Kama. After, he retreated inward. Parvati, in shock that her plan failed, sat down and decided what to do next. Parvati then began to meditate. With one leg in coal and one leg in white snow for thousands of years, she builds tapas, inner heat, and her own power grows so strong that Shiva, deep in his meditation, felt the presence of her and awakens from his meditation. Parvati and Shiva married each other. Parvati gained Shiva's attention with her inner light. She shows us that hard work, believe on ourselves and discipline are necessary for growth.



Mahishasura Shayonti Saha - 7 Years

Once there was a demon named Mahishasura. He did meditation for thousands of years. Lord Brahma was very pleased and asked Mahishasura - "What boon do you desire?" He replied, "No man or god can kill me." Lord Brahma raised his hand and said, "Tathastu." Then, Mahishasura made the gods run away from heaven. When Lord Shiva, Vishnu, and Brahma heard about it, they became furious. They made Ma Durga with ten hands. Then the fight began between Mahishasura and Ma Durga. It lasted for ten days, and on the last day, Ma Durga killed Mahishasura.



The Birth Story of Ganesha

Deana Saha (Nisha) - 9 Years

Ganesha is known as the remover of obstacles and the offspring of Shiva and Parvati. The hindu god Ganesha with his elephant head and human body symbolizes the union of the spiritual and the physical. Ganesha is the brother of Karthikeya, the god of war. Ganesha was created by his mother from clay to guard the door while she bathed. When his father Shiva, the god of destruction and re-creation approached, Ganesha blocked his way. Shiva was furious to see this strange little boy who dared to challenge him. Shiva told Ganesha that he was Parvati's husband and demanded that Ganesha let him go in. But Ganesha refused to listen Shiva. He lost his patience and had a ferocious battle with Ganesha. At last, Shiva beheads Ganesha with his trishul. When Parvati came out from her bath, she saw her son's lifeless body. Parvati was very angry and sad. She demanded that Shiva should renovate Ganesha's life once again otherwise she will destroy the universe. Hearing this, Brahma appeared in the scene and requested Parvati not to destroy the universe. Shiva felt bad and apologized for his bad deed. So, Shiva went out to look for Ganesha's head. Unfortunately, Shiva's trishula was so powerful that it turned Ganesha's head into a pile of ash and Shiva can't rollback his made destruction. Shiva called out his bull Nandi, and ordered to bring back the head of the first creature he found away from its mother. He terminated that only a calf that does not love his mother would be away from her. Nandi brought back the head of an elephant calf. Shiva placed the elephant head on the boy and brought him back to life. Parvati was happy to see her son alive and Shiva gave him the name Ganesha or Lord of the Elephants. Then, Shiva commanded that Ganesha would be the remover of obstacles, always worshipped in any ritual.





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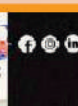
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What is Durga Puja?

Prottoy Datta - 12 Years

Durga Puja. What is Durga puja? And why do we all celebrate it? Durga Puja is a celebration where we all celebrate the day when light beats and the day when all evil is gone. thanks to, MAA DURGA!



A long time ago, a demon king called Mahishasura acquired a powerful boon. The boon was that no man or god could hurt him, and he was immortal! The gods who became desperate due to Mahishasura's conquest and ruthlessness turned to the Trimurti: Lord Brahma, Lord Shiva, and Lord Vishnu. They were all worried that Mahishasura would kill everyone as he kicked all the gods from heaven. With all their might, they fused their powers to create the most unstoppable women ever, the most powerful and smartest...MAA DURGA!

As the other gods heard about the news, they sent weapons to Durga. As she got ready for the fight, she got a lion to ride on and attack Mahishasura's army and himself. As Maa Durga killed all of Mahishasura's army, Mahishasura was mad and decided to attack her. Mahishasura and Durga got ready to fight, and they started the duel. Every time Durga cuts Mahishasura, his blood becomes one of his minions, and Maa Durga starts drinking his blood. The fight went on for 10 days no-stop, but on Day 10, Maa Durga was able to cut Mahishasura's head off, and all the evil and the darkness of the area disappeared, and Maa Durga lit the area with happiness and light as the gods and humans celebrated for Maa Durga's victory.

So now that we know what Durga Puja is, why do we all celebrate it? We all celebrate it as the victory of Maa Durga killing Mahishasura, and we celebrate for 10 days just like Durga and Mahishasura fought for that long. Now you know what Durga Puja is and why we celebrate it.

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Adrita Dey - 8 Years



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Avijit Saha - 10 years



Shayonti Saha - 7 Years

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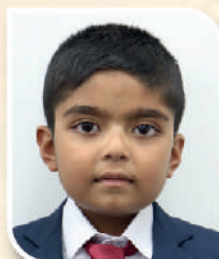
Ma Durga

Shougata Das - 15 years

Allover the world there is darkness
Everywhere you go, people seem to be heartless
Who will save humanity
And put an end to this insanity?
There is only one we can turn to
Maa Durga

Durga pooja is the triumph of good over evil
It represents that both men and woman are equal
Praise Maa durga, the mother of all
We humbly ask you to answer our call
Purge the world of greed
And let the generous succeed

For this pooja, we have waited all year
Now it is time to cheer



My Durga

Anujit Mazumdar - 7 years

Ma Durga rides on her lion so strong,
With her by my side, nothing goes wrong.
Her ten mighty arms, filled with power,
Protect me always, every single hour.
She fights the darkness, brings in the light,
Chasing away all fear and fright.
When I'm afraid or feeling low,
Ma Durga's love begins to glow.
She's fierce and kind, brave and true,
Ma Durga, I give my heart to you.
With hands in prayer, I stand so tall,
Ma Durga is with me through it all.

Pictorial

Durga Puja



Pictorial



Durga Puja

Pictorial

Kali Puja



AGM 2024



Saraswati Puja



Maha Shivratri



Tirodhan Utshob



Pictorial

Harinam Sankirtan



Spiritual Harmony



Flood Relief in Bangladesh



Pictorial



Borsho Boron & Pitha Uthsob

Pictorial

Rakhar Upobash



Protest



Monthly Prayer



Shree Krishna Janmastami



Community Engagement





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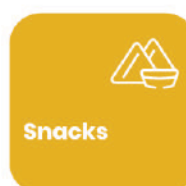
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