

নব দুর্গা
শারদ সংখ্যা
২০২৪

SHARAD UTSHAB
2024

Georgia Bengali Forum

জর্জিয়া বেঙ্গলী ফোরাম

Atlanta, Georgia

Georgia Bengali Forum
GBF
Culture Social Honesty Unity







Durga Puja

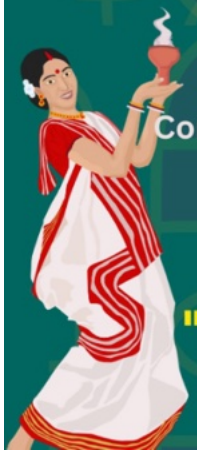
Sa-re-ga-ma-pa Winner!
Padma Palash
10pm Saturday

October 4th: 7pm-11pm Mahalaya + Dinner
October 5th
Puja Start : 10:00 am, Anjali: 12:00 pm, Prashad : 01:00 pm
Lunch: 02:00 pm, Cultural Program: 06:30 pm, Dinner: 10:00 pm
October 6th:
Bijoya Dashami, Puja Start : 10:00 am,
Anjali : 12:00 pm, Prashad & Cultural Program : 01:00 pm,
Lunch: 02:00 pm, Bisharjon: 04:00 pm,
Shidur Khela : 06:00 pm,

Best AWARD winning Singer:
Sanchita Bhattacharya
11 pm Saturday



Venue: Global Mall Impact Hall
5675 jimmy carter blvd norcross, ga 30071



Contact Uttam Dey for more information: 404 395 5268

Prasenjit Chowdhury
President,
404-492-3491

Raton Das
Secretary,
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Rinku Saha
Public Relations Sec.
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Soumyajyoti Ghosh

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২০২৪

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Georgia Bengali Forum

A Non-Profit 501 (c)(3) Organization

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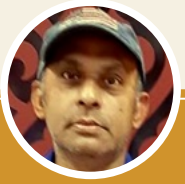
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শুভেচ্ছাবাণী

শরতের প্রাকৃতিক সৌন্দর্য, দূর্গামায়ের সাজগোজ, পূজামন্ডপের সজ্জা, শখধ্বনি, ঢাকঢোলের বাজনা এবং আমাদের মনের আনন্দ আজ যেন মিলে মিশে একাকার। যদিও দেশের মত সেই শরতের প্রাকৃতিক সৌন্দর্য, কাশফুলে ঢাকা মাঠ ও শিউলি ফুলের গন্ধ এখানে নাই। তবুও আমাদের প্রবাসের জীবনের এই পূজার আনন্দের কোনও কমতি নাই। দূর্গা পূজা বাঙালির বড় পূজা ও বড় উৎসব। আমরা সবাই মন ভরে এই পূজার মিলন মেলায় অনাবিল আনন্দ উপভোগ করি।

দূর্গাপূজা হল শক্তির অধিষ্ঠাত্রী পার্বতী দেবীর দূর্গা রূপ এর উপাসনা উৎসব। দূর্গা মূলত শক্তি দেবী। দুর্গতি বা সংকট থেকে তিনি আমাদের রক্ষা করেন। মা দূর্গার অনেক নাম। চার ছেলেমেয়েকে নিয়ে উমা কৈলাস থেকে মর্তে বাপের বাড়ি এসে দিন পাঁচেক থেকে ফিরে যান শ্বশুড় বাড়ি। এই বছর দেবী দূর্গার আগমন দোলায় করে, কৈলাস ফিরবেন গজে। দেবী দূর্গার নয়টি রূপ। তাই নবদূর্গী নামে পরিচিত। অনেকে এই সময় নবরাত্রি উদ্‌যাপন করেন। নবরাত্রিতে দূর্গার নয়টি রূপ এর এক এক রাতে এক এক রূপে নয় রাত্রি পূজা করেন।

"জর্জিয়া বেঙ্গলী ফোরামের" আবির্ভাব ১৭ ই অক্টোবর ২০২৪ সালে। মাত্র এই সংগঠন এর বয়স দুই বছর। আমরা সরস্বতী পূজা, ১লা বৈশাখ, ও পিকনিক অনুষ্ঠানাদি শেষ করেছি। এখন আমরা দূর্গা মায়ের আরাধনা করতে চলেছি। যদি কোনো ভুল ত্রুটি হয়ে থাকে তাহলে ক্ষমা সুন্দর দৃষ্টিতে দেখবেন। আর এর মধ্যে আমরা কতটুকু সফলতা অর্জন করতে পেরেছি সেটা আপনারাই দেখবেন

যদি সফলতা হয়ে থাকে তাহলে সেটা আপনাদের সহযোগিতায় হয়েছে। আমাদের উদ্দেশ্য মহৎ । আপনাদের সহযোগিতা পেলে বাকী কাজগুলো করতে আমাদের অসুবিধা হবে না। যদিও "জর্জিয়া বেঙ্গলী ফোরামের বয়স দুই বছর কিন্তু সংগঠনের অভিজ্ঞতাকে কাজে লাগিয়ে পুরুষ ও মহিলারা যেভাবে তাদের শ্রম ও মেধা দিয়ে কাজ করে যাচ্ছে তা দেখলে অবাক হতে হয়। তাদেরকে ধন্যবাদ দেওয়ার মত ভাষা আমার নাই।

"জর্জিয়া বেঙ্গলী ফোরাম" একটি অলাভজনক ও কর অব্যাহতি সংগঠন। কাজেই আপনারা এখানে দান করে আপনাদের ট্যাক্স ফাইলে দেখাতে পারেন। "জর্জিয়া বেঙ্গলী ফোরাম" একটি ধর্মীয়, শিক্ষাগত, সাংস্কৃতিক, আধ্যাত্মিক ও দাতব্য সংগঠন। এখানে রাজনীতির কোনও সুযোগ নাই। সংগঠনের নাম "জর্জিয়া বেঙ্গলী ফোরাম" হলেও এই সংগঠনের আইন অনুসারে আমেরিকার যে কোনো ষ্টেট থেকে সদস্য হতে পারবে।

যারা বিজ্ঞাপন দিয়ে এবং অন্যান্যরা বিভিন্নভাবে আর্থিক সহযোগিতা করেছেন তাদেরকে জানাই অসংখ্য ধন্যবাদ আর শারদীয় শুভেচ্ছা। আর অন্যান্য সকলকে ও আমার পক্ষ থেকে এবং "জর্জিয়া বেঙ্গলী ফোরাম" এর পক্ষ থেকে আন্তরিক শারদীয় শুভেচ্ছা জানাই। আসুন সবাই কাঁধে কাঁধ মিলিয়ে এই দুই দিন আনন্দ উপভোগ করি।

যা দেবী সর্বভূতেষু শক্তিরূপেণ সংস্থিতা।

নমস্তস্যৈ নমস্তস্যৈ নমস্তস্যৈ নমঃ নমঃ ॥

পরিশেষে আমি বলব, চণ্ডীর এই উপরের স্তোত্র উচ্চারণ করে, মনের ভিতর ধারণ করে ও শক্তি সঞ্চয় করে যাতে আমরা আরও এগিয়ে যেতে পারি এটাই আমাদের মা দূর্গার কাছে প্রার্থনা, জয় মা দূর্গা

অনিল সেন
চেয়ার অফ দি বোর্ড



A Time of Unity and Tradition

It is my great pleasure to express my heartfelt gratitude to all the members, community friends, and families of the Georgia Bengali Forum (GBF) on the auspicious occasion of Durga Puja.

Durga Puja represents the victory of truth over untruth, good over evil, light over darkness, and knowledge over ignorance. It celebrates Shakti and Bhakti and symbolizes our inner struggle to rise to higher levels of mindfulness. May Goddess Durga guide us on to the path of justice, truth, and wisdom.

As a part of the Greater Bengali Forum (GBF) team, we intend to create a homely atmosphere for everyone by preserving the traditional aspects of our celebrations. You are all our extended family members, so please celebrate the puja with joy and provide if you have any feedback on how we can improve.

As always, we are publishing a magazine this year that contains our members' articles and sponsors' advertisements. I encourage you to look at the magazine and peruse its pages to experience our contributors' literary and artistic offerings.

On behalf of the Greater Bengali Forum (GBF), Atlanta, Georgia, USA, I express my gratitude to everyone for their continuous support, tireless efforts, and dedication to the organization, which has made this year's Sharad Utsav a truly unique experience for all of us. I sincerely appreciate the overwhelming response in raising the necessary funds to ensure the success of this grand event. My heartfelt thanks go out to all patrons, members, their families, and stage performers for their tremendous support and guidance.

May the divine blessing of the goddess be with you and your family always!!!

Joy Ma Durga!!!

With Best Wishes,

Prodip Debnath



Hinduism & It's reflections on humanity

Prasenjit Chowdhury
President, Georgia Bengali Forum



Hinduism teaches the principle of "Ahimsa," which emphasizes non-violence and compassion towards all living beings. The concept of "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" in Hinduism promotes the idea that the entire world is one family, fostering a sense of unity and global humanity. Karma, a central concept in Hinduism, suggests that every action has consequences, guiding people to act morally and responsibly in life. Hinduism encourages the pursuit of Dharma, which is the ethical duty one must follow to uphold cosmic order and righteousness. Hindu teachings encourage balance in life through the pursuit of the four "Purusharthas" – Dharma (duty), Artha (prosperity), Kama (pleasure), and Moksha (liberation), teaches respect for elders, as they are seen as carriers of wisdom and experience, contributing to the well-being of society. The Hindu belief in reincarnation underscores the importance of living a virtuous life, as one's actions determine their future existences. Hindu scriptures, such as the Bhagavad Gita, emphasize the importance of selfless action for the greater good of society. The concept of "Seva" in Hinduism encourages service to humanity, reflecting the idea that serving others is akin to serving God.

The Upanishads, ancient Hindu texts, explore the unity of all beings, emphasizing that the divine resides in every soul. Hindu festivals like Diwali celebrate the victory of light over darkness, symbolizing the triumph of good over evil in human life. The practice of yoga in Hinduism is not just physical but also spiritual, aiming to unite the body, mind, and soul with the divine. Hinduism teaches that humanity should strive for "Moksha," or liberation from the cycle of birth and death, which is achieved through righteousness and self-realization. The Hindu principle of "Loka Samastha Sukhino Bhavantu" translates to "May all beings be happy and peaceful," reflecting the religion's emphasis on universal well-being.

Hinduism acknowledges the diversity of human experience and offers multiple paths to spirituality, recognizing that different people may have different ways of connecting with the divine. The concept of "Namaste," a common Hindu greeting, means "I bow to the divine in you," symbolizing respect for the divine presence in every individual.

The Mahabharata, a significant Hindu epic, teaches lessons on duty, morality, and the complexities of human life. Hindu rituals often involve offerings to deities, symbolizing the act of giving and the importance of generosity in human life. The Ramayana, another epic, portrays the ideal human virtues through the characters of Rama, Sita, and Hanuman, serving as moral guides. The Hindu practice of meditation is aimed at achieving inner peace and understanding the deeper truths of existence, benefiting both the individual and society. Hinduism's belief in the cyclical nature of time encourages the understanding that life is a continuous journey, not just a linear path. The Hindu deity Krishna teaches in the Bhagavad Gita that one should perform their duty without attachment to the results, which is a lesson in selflessness.

Hindu temples are centers of spiritual learning and community gathering, fostering a sense of belonging and shared humanity. The "Aarti" involves the offering of light to deities, symbolizing the dispelling of darkness and ignorance in human life.

Hinduism promotes the idea that all paths lead to the same truth, encouraging tolerance and acceptance of diverse religious beliefs and practices.



Happy Durga Puja

As we come together to celebrate the vibrant and joyous festival of Durga Puja, I extend my warmest wishes to each and every one of you. This sacred time of year, marked by devotion and festivity, is a powerful reminder of hope, renewal, and the beauty of diversity.

Durga Puja is not just a celebration but also a reminder of the light that guides us through our darkest moments. Maa Durga, with her divine strength and courage, embodies the triumph of good over evil and the power of resilience. Her presence inspires us to rise above challenges and to find strength in ourselves.

May Maa Durga bless you all with good health, unlimited happiness, strength, and prosperity. As we gather to honor her and celebrate our rich cultural heritage, let us remember that even in our most difficult times, there is always light and a promise of renewal. I am also incredibly grateful to the members who work effortlessly to contribute to this celebration and make it happen successfully. Sharidiya greetings to all the members and well-wishers of the Georgia Bengali Forum.

Wishing you all a joyous and happy Durga Puja!

Raton Das
Secretary
Georgia Bengali Forum



GBF Family Greetings



Anil Sen Family



Pradip Debnath Family



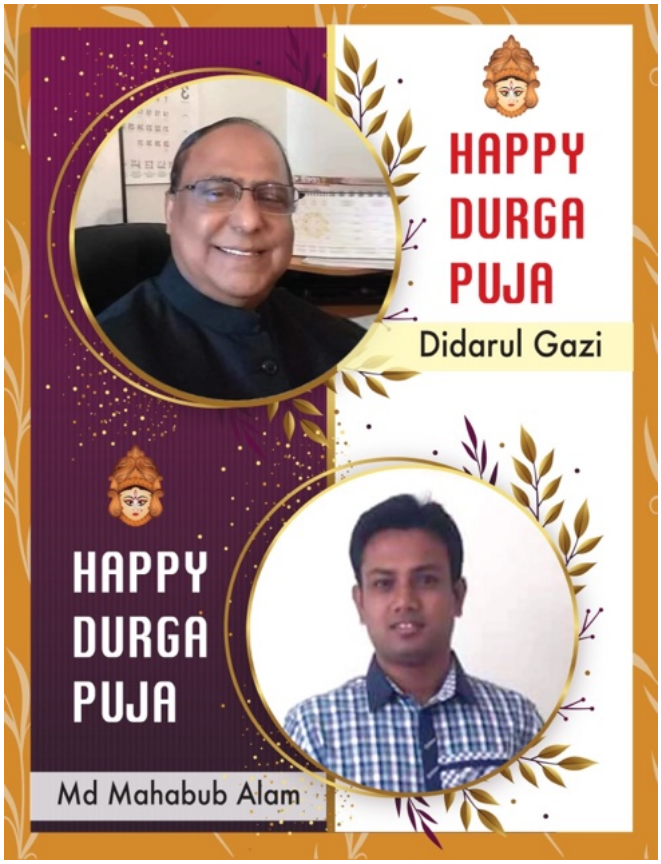
Prasenjit Chowdhury Family

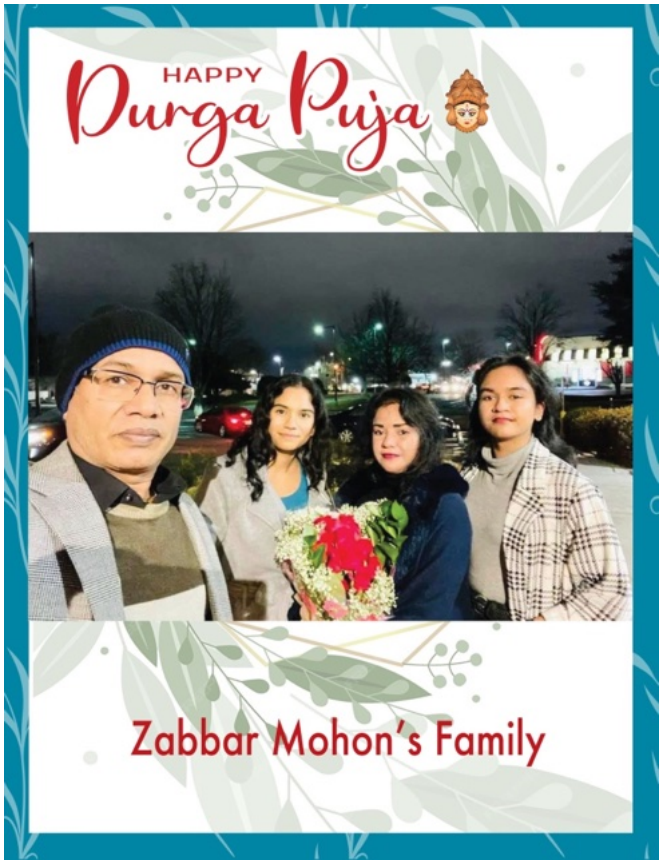


Uttam Dey Family



Aadhira Nath


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HAPPY
Durga Puja
Zabbar Mohon's Family


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Women worship in the Hindu Religion



Hinduism is the only contemporary world religion that has a living tradition and practice of goddess-worship and Durga is a solace to millions. The divine feminine ritual is traditionally monopolized by the Brahmin male priests and women play the sidekicks. Women cook, clean, prepare for the ritual but the recitation of the hymns to invoke the goddess remains in the hands of the male priests. In the diaspora, some Indian women are taking up leadership roles in the worship of Durga, but it is very much tied to the patriarchal social system they have brought with them from India. In transplanting themselves to the new world, women in the diaspora have continued to celebrate Durga puja, among other rituals. It is heartening to see that they are changing the script of worshipping the goddess by taking the place of male priests. This does not happen in the temple dominated by the male priests. In 2021, women priests Nandini Bhowmik, Ruma Roy, Seymanti Banerjee, and Poulami Chakraborty performed rituals for the first time in the history of Durga Puja in West Bengal. The women priest broke centuries-old tradition by performing on Maha Sasthi. The women priests were inspired to perform at the Durga Puja after the puja committee secretary told them that their work would give other women the courage to break barriers.

Uttam Dey
Organizing secretary, GBF



About GBF

The Georgia Bengali Forum (GBF) is a non-profit charitable organization dedicated to serving the Bengali community in Georgia. While we officially registered as an organization in October 2022, our involvement in hosting social, musical, religious, and sporting events for the Atlanta Bengali community dates back to 2004.

Each year, the GBF hosts a series of vibrant and culturally significant events that bring our community together:

- **Saraswati Puja (February)**: A celebration dedicated to Saraswati, the goddess of knowledge, music, and the arts. This event is marked by traditional rituals, cultural performances, and a sense of reverence and joy.
- **Baisakhi Mela (April)**: A lively festival that celebrates the Bengali New Year, Baisakhi Mela is a day filled with music, dance, and traditional Bengali cuisine. It's a time for the community to come together and celebrate new beginnings with vibrant cultural performances and social activities.
- **Yearly Picnic (Early June)**: Our annual picnic is a fun-filled day outdoors, where members enjoy games, sports, and a shared meal in a relaxed and friendly environment. It's a wonderful opportunity for families to bond and connect in a casual setting.
- **Durga Puja (October)**: The most significant event in the Bengali calendar, Durga Puja is a grand celebration of the goddess Durga's victory over evil. The event features elaborate rituals, cultural programs, and festive gatherings, creating a powerful sense of community as we come together to worship and celebrate.

GBF is driven by its members. While all of the events listed above are completely free to attend, becoming a GBF member unlocks even more exclusive perks. As a member, you'll gain VIP access to special family-only events, get behind-the-scenes access to program rehearsals, have a voice in decision-making, and even the chance to join the planning committee for future events. Membership opens the door to a deeper level of involvement and unique experiences within the GBF community!

We offer three types of memberships.

- Family: $250/yr
- Student Family: $150/yr
- Single Student: $100/yr

You can become a GBF member anytime by contacting us on our email address admin@georgiabengaliforum.org. We invite everyone to join the Georgia Bengali Forum (GBF). To learn more about us, please visit our website at https://www.georgiabengaliforum.org/ and follow us on Facebook at https://www.facebook.com/groups/3456224231320283.

Best wishes,

Amarjit Datta
Chief Financial Officer - GBF



Durga Puja Then and Now

Swaramita Saha



Durga Puja: From a Bangladeshi Village to the American Diaspora

Durga Puja has always been more than just a religious festival for Bangladeshis—it's a time for family and cultural bonding. Whether in a small village in Bangladesh during the early 2000s or among immigrant families in the U.S. in 2024, the essence of the celebration remains strong.

The Village Durga Puja of the 2000s

In the villages of Bangladesh, Durga Puja in the 2000s was marked by the return of family members who had moved away for work or education. The village came alive with excitement as children played around, the elderly shared stories, and families gathered around traditional meals prepared by the women of the household. The walk to the pandal, dressed in colorful traditional clothing, was always a highlight. Together, the family offered prayers, joined the community in cultural performances, and partook in the joy of being reunited during this festive time. The final immersion of the goddess's idol into the river was an emotional moment, symbolizing both an ending and the anticipation of the next year's reunion.

The Modern Durga Puja of the Diaspora in 2024

By 2024, the festival had adapted to the lives of immigrant Bangladeshis in the U.S., but the essence of togetherness persisted. Families now gathered in community halls, where elaborately crafted idols were worshipped. Traditional foods were still prepared, though with the convenience of modern kitchens. Cultural programs reflected a blend of old and new, with classical performances shared alongside Bollywood music. While technology allowed for global family connections through video calls, the shared experience of the puja still brought everyone closer.

A Festival of Timeless Values

Durga Puja, whether in a rural village or an American city, continues to be a celebration of family and tradition, evolving over time but retaining its core values of love, unity, and cultural pride.

GBF Family Greetings



Raton Das Family



Shimul K Adhikary Family



Amar Saha Family



Avijit Chowdhury Family





Abir Patowary | Age: 8



Dr. S. Sanyal, MD & PhD

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Embracing Durga Puja: A Time for Reflection, Unity, and Inner Growth

Swarup Guha



Durga Puja is the biggest religious festival for the Bengali Hindu community. This occasion brings the whole community together in a joyous celebration of Ma Durga's triumph over the evil forces of Satan (Asur). Every year, people from all walks of life join with Georgia Bengali Forum (GBF) to offer their prayers to Ma Durga and celebrate the three days of puja showcasing authentic Bengali food, cultural programs, kids' competitions, etc. This important institution and age-old tradition unites people as a community, irrespective of their background, age, gender, or color.

In addition to all the color, creed, and festivities, this should also serve as an important reminder to all that the real demon (Asur) resides within all of us. We must take active measures to enhance our good side and ensure our bad instincts are always in check. Pride, Greed, Wrath, Envy, Lust, Gluttony, and Sloth are known as the seven deadly sins. All of us constantly battle against these bad human instincts. In the present age, we are constantly occupied by our day-to-day duties; to understand the true significance of Durga Puja, one must go through some introspection. Taking a step back and asking ourselves where we can improve. Our little efforts made each day can turn into a habit over time. Therefore, to align with the true spirit of Durga Puja, I encourage everyone to do a self-assessment and acknowledge one behavioral trait of yours that you want to improve and make a conscious effort throughout the year in that journey of yours.

This year's puja, let us pray to Ma Durga to give us the strength and mental resolve to become a better version of ourselves and triumph over the inner demons within us.



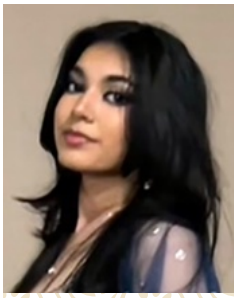
The Vibrant Festival of Durga Puja: A Cultural Extravaganza

Prince Dey



Durga Puja is one of the biggest and most important festivals celebrated in Sanatan Bengali Culture. It's a time when people come together to honor Goddess Durga, who symbolizes strength and protection. The festival lasts about ten days, with the last five being the most significant. During this time, beautifully decorated statues of Durga are worshiped in pandals (temporary structures), and the air is filled with the sounds of drums, traditional music, and chanting. It's a vibrant and colorful celebration where families and friends gather, new clothes are worn, and delicious food is shared. For many, Durga Puja is not just a religious event but a cultural one that brings joy, unity, and a sense of community. The importance of Durga Puja goes beyond its spiritual significance. It represents the victory of good over evil, as the story behind the festival is about Goddess Durga defeating the demon Mahishasura, who was causing chaos in the world. This message of triumph resonates with people of all ages, reminding them to be brave and stand up for what's right.

Additionally, Durga Puja plays a significant role in preserving traditions, as it brings together different art forms, like dance, music, and craftsmanship. The entire community gets involved in the preparations, making it a time of teamwork and creativity. Even if someone is unfamiliar with the religious aspects, the festive spirit and the cultural significance make Durga Puja an extraordinary event.



What do you love about Durga Puja?

Ramita Das



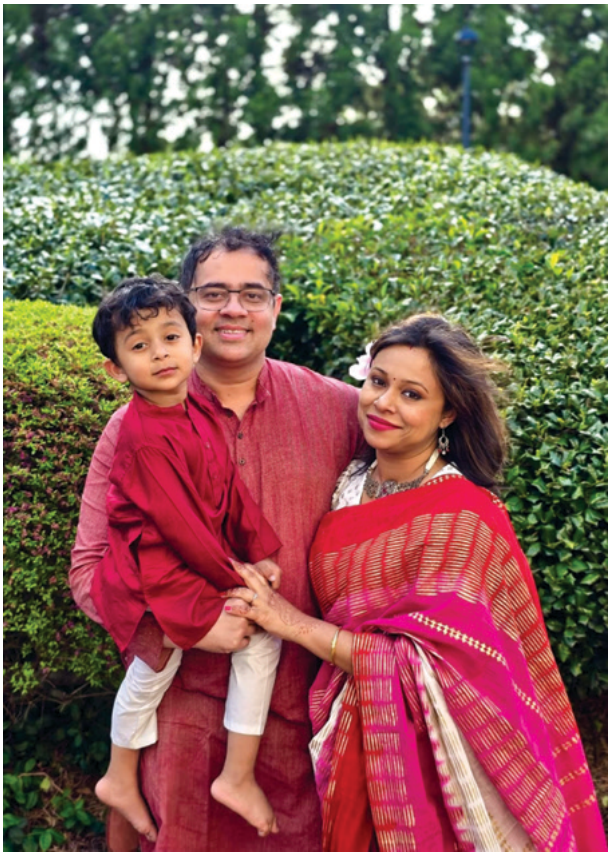
Durga Puja serves as an important Hindu festival that celebrates Goddess Durga's victory over the demon Mahishasura—the triumph of good over evil. The festival is celebrated with great enthusiasm. The ritual celebrations, the beautiful decorations, and the strong sense of culture highlights this vibrant and joyous festival. During this time, everyone comes together as communities to worship Goddess Maa Durga. The festival fills the air with the sounds of traditional music, the aroma of delicious food, and the sight of people dressed in their finest clothes.

My personal favorite about Durga Puja involves dressing up in traditional Indian attire, expressing its rich diversity of intricate designs, and also connecting with my cultural roots. Each year, I look forward to selecting my outfits, which often include sarees, lehengas, kurtas, and salwar kameez. The vibrant colors, intricate embroidery, and diverse styles of these dresses reflect the richness of my culture. As a minority living in the US, this festival not only enables me to serve my cultural identity but also fills me with immense pride and a sense of belonging.

Indian fashion presents a beautiful form of cultural expression. The numerous colors, styles, and details in their designs showcase the diversity and creativity in their skills. Wearing these dresses during Durga Puja allows me to show a visual representation of my roots and the values that have been passed down through generations. Not only that, but each outfit also accentuates its own shine, adding to the festive spirit of Durga Puja.

Durga Puja is not just a festival but also a celebration that embraces my cultural identity and roots. It is a way for me to express myself and represent my culture while living in a multicultural society. Through Durga Puja, I can honor my culture, celebrate Maa Durga's victory, and carry forward the traditions that define who I am.

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Celebrating Dance, Tradition, and Unity at Durga Puja

Prameet Chowdhury



Durga Puja is a festival of colors, music, and dancing that unites people of all ages. Decorations and performances bring the event to life. The worship, filled with excitement and energy, produces a joyful atmosphere that brings celebration and cultural pride. People can immerse themselves in rich traditions by taking part in Durga Puja. My life has always revolved around dance, and Durga Puja is a special time for it. Every year, I go out of my way to create a track and a routine for many people to watch, and every year I always go to the fullest degree, because the community is very outgoing and very supportive. I have been dancing since I was a kid, and the celebration of Durga Maa has played a major role in making me better as well. Overall, the celebration and coming together for Durga Maa is something I am very much looking forward to and can't wait to be a part of!



Embracing Tradition: Bharatanatyam at Durga Puja

Mathura Das

Every year, I take my place in Durga Puja, where I show my classical dancing called Bharatanatyam. It is a Hindu classical style of dancing that originated in Tamil Nadu, in South India. It is believed that Bharatanatyam was created by Lord Brahma, a famous sage who made this sacred dance in a Sanskrit text called the Natya Shastra.

Bharatanatyam is an art of dance that sometimes has fusion styles. Fusion styles are a type of dance that goes faster than usual and puts more hype into the dance. Bharatanatyam fusion styles are mainly a mix of Bharatanatyam and hip-hop. Although it can have a mixture of different genres of dance as well.

Bharatanatyam dancers wear heavy makeup to help the audience find the dancer's facial expression and neck movements. The dancer will most likely wear alta henna (a red dye) on his/her hands and feet to emphasize his/her gestures. The dancers' hand motions and their body movements emphasize purity, prosperity, and beauty.

The main Bharatanatyam dances are Alarippu, Jathiswaram, Shabdam, Varnam, Padam, and Tillana. Each one has its own story behind it. Alarippu stands for blooming. It is mainly used as a warm-up to the dancer's upcoming long performances. Jathiswaram is known for its highly skilled complex moves and the practiced postures the dancer has to do. Shabdam is a dance that holds elements of Krishna. Varnam is one of the most challenging pieces and it takes about 45 minutes to an hour. It stands for beauty, grandeur,



and airy sadness. Padam has more complex movements and includes more emotions and it is a slower dance than the rest. And the very last, Tillana. Tillana is composed of graceful movements and usually has fast dance movements, which catch the audience's attention.

Bharatanatyam allows dancers such as me to connect with their inner selves and also express their spirituality in tales. When I see other Bharatanatyam dancers, their movements spellbind me with the tales they are expressing while signifying their emotions. Bharatanatyam is such a wonderful, intricate form of dancing. It consists of using the dancer's major limbs and neck to tell the tales. I enjoy doing it because it allows me to showcase a story without any words. With this dance skill, I take my place in Durga Puja by presenting the tales of the goddesses, such as Durga Maa, and their honor.

Krishna and Jambavati

Aunnesha Sen



There are many stories about the beloved Krishna, one of the most commonly known avatars of the Hindu God, Vishnu. Jambavati was one of Krishna's wives, and the story of how they were married is the story of a very special Jewel.

The Syamantaka Jewel. It was gifted to a king by Surya, the sun-god, because of his great devotion. The king, Satrajit, wore the jewel around his neck and he went into Krishna's home city, Dvaraka, and the citizens all believed that Surya had come to visit the great Krishna. Hearing this spreading belief, Krishna explained how King Satrajit was *not* the sun-god, and was just wearing the Syamantaka jewel, the jewel with magical properties. Krishna spoke with the king and asked if he would like to give the jewel to another King, Ugrasena. Satrajit denied this, as he wanted the jewel in his possessions.

In the following days, Satrajit's brother went into the forest, wearing the jewel. A lion killed him and took the jewel with him.

Jambavan, the gorilla king who resided in the forest, killed the lion and took the jewel as a toy for his son. Jambavati was indeed the daughter of Jambavan, and Krishna was wed to her when he confronted Jambavan in his cave.

See, when Satrajit heard about his brother's death, he immediately accused Krishna for stealing the precious Jewel. He told everyone in Dvaraka about his beliefs, and Krishna was far from glad.

Knowing He had to prove His innocence, He traveled to the forest where He found Satrajit's dead brother. Following a path of shedded gold, He uncovered the dead lion. And even further Krishna uncovered a big tunnel leading to the cave of the gorilla king.

Krishna walked through the tunnel until He reached Jambavan's house. He saw Jambavan's son with the Syamantaka jewel.

When Jambavan saw that Krishna was in his house, he started to fight HIM, not because he wanted the beautiful jewel (he did not see its importance) but because he thought his child was disturbed.

For 28 whole days, Jambavan and Krishna fought.

Jambavan was getting even more exhausted by the day, even though he was the strongest person in the world. Suddenly he realized that the man he fought was the Supreme Personality, Krishna. He bowed down to Krishna as Krishna explained His situation and how He needed to clear theterrible rumors.

Jambavan returned the jewel and asked Krishna if He would take his daughter's hand in marriage.

Jambavati and Krishna were happily married in her father's cave, and soon Krishna returned with His beautiful wife to Dvaraka, where all the citizens celebrated the wedding. Satrajit apologized and did not take back the jewel, instead offering it to Krishna. Instead of keeping the magical jewel, Krishna wanted it to reside in the temple in Dvaraka, his home.

(This story was collected from The Stories of Krisna by Prabhupada)

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Durga-Puja: Through Our Eyes

Drisana Biswas

Durga Puja is a profound and vibrant celebration in the Bengali Hindu community, marking the triumph of the Goddess Durga over the buffalo demon Mahishasura. This festival symbolizes the victory of good over evil, and righteousness over injustice. It is not just a religious observance but a grand cultural event that fosters unity, strength, and joy among people. The rituals, ceremonial events, and festive gatherings serve as a powerful reminder of the divine strength within each individual. During Durga Puja, the community comes together to celebrate this empowerment, creating an atmosphere of collective rejoicing that uplifts spirits, strengthens social bonds, and maintains a sense of hope and resilience.

In the heart of Bangladesh, where adversity often casts long shadows, Durga Puja emerges as a beacon of light and solace. Amidst the struggles and hardships that Bangladesh faces, Durga Puja fosters a remarkable sense of togetherness. The beautiful ceremonies, along with the spirited gatherings, become a collective reaffirmation of optimism and strength. The festival's rich traditions bring people together, forging bonds and lifting spirits through shared devotion and celebration. It is during these moments of communal festivity that individuals find joy and strength, allowing the festival to transform not only the physical space but also the emotional landscape.

Being born in the United States, Aaditri (my younger sister) and I find Durga Puja to be an incredibly exhilarating and heartwarming festival. The energy that is included in every aspect of the celebration—from the puja ritual, Pushpanjali, to Ma Durga, the cultural events to the decorations—is truly captivating. The festival brings people together, unites differences, and creates a sense of harmony. The atmosphere of the event is filled with a unique blend of devotion, joy, and cultural richness that always inspires us. Each year, we look forward to the festive rhythms, the delicious feasts, and the moments of shared festivity, which make Durga Puja not just a commemoration but a genuine experience of happiness and love.

We hope people all over the world have a wonderful celebration and be hopeful, positive, courageous, and show gratitude. May Ma Durga keep us all safe, healthy, and happy; may the blessings of Ma Durga fill our lives with peace and prosperity.





Oh Ma Durga

Soham Sen

Oh Maa Durga,
your victory over Mahishasura has inspired us to
celebrate you like good over evil.
Oh Maa Durga,
as you battle
underneath the darkness, we will support you.
But the battle
Is the start of something big like a snowball
down a mountain.
Oh Maa Durga,
your almighty appearance and bravery,
still lives on
today and
in the future.
Oh Maa Durga,
you and you vahana
are stoppable together
Oh Maa Durga,
you are the best,
and we will help you
every step
of the way.

Honoring Goddess Durga

Om

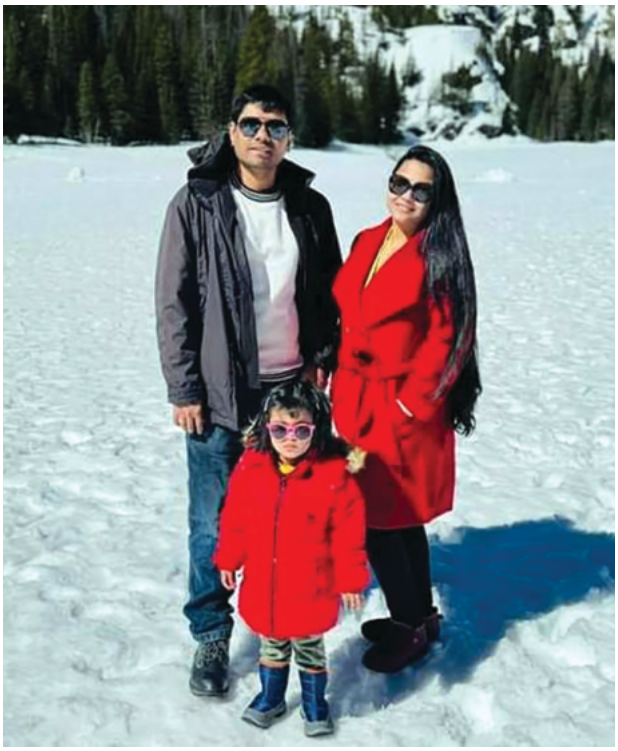


Durga Puja is a famous Hindu festival and it is the most popular and best festival of Bengalis. Where we worship Goddess Durga all over the world. Mother Durga Puja is celebrated all over the world with great pomp and happiness. We worship Goddess Durga, who killed Mahishasura, which symbolizes victory over evil. Goddess Durga is worshiped for four days, and during four days, which are Saptami, Ashtami, Navami, and lastly Dashami. The festival is marked by cultural programs, music, dance, and drama. Also celebrated with delicious food. At the end, we immerse Ma Durga in the water.

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The Different Yogas

Ratul Chowdhury

When connecting with the divine, many think of prayers and festivals. In Hinduism, there are many ways to connect to the divine. The four main ways are called Bhakti Yoga, Jnana Yoga, Karma Yoga, and Raja Yoga.

In Bhakti Yoga, you connect with the divine through devotion and love. This path includes practices such as prayer, worship, and chanting. An example of this would be our annual Durga Puja.

In Jnana Yoga, you seek to understand reality through knowledge and wisdom. This involves the study of old texts, contemplation, and self-inquiry to recognize the truth of the self and the universe. The goal is to achieve self-realization and recognize your unity with the divine while also overcoming ignorance and illusion.

In Karma Yoga, you connect with the divine through selfless action. This approach emphasizes performing responsibilities without attachment to the outcomes. By doing so, you purify your mind and align your actions with spiritual principles. An example of this would be working hard and helping others.

Finally, In Raja Yoga, you aim to connect with the divine through meditation and disciplined practice. This path involves controlling the mind and senses through techniques such as meditation, concentration, and ethical living.

Each of these paths is unique in its way, allowing individuals to pursue their spiritual goals in ways that resonate with their personal beliefs and life circumstances. Which of these paths do you think you practice the most?

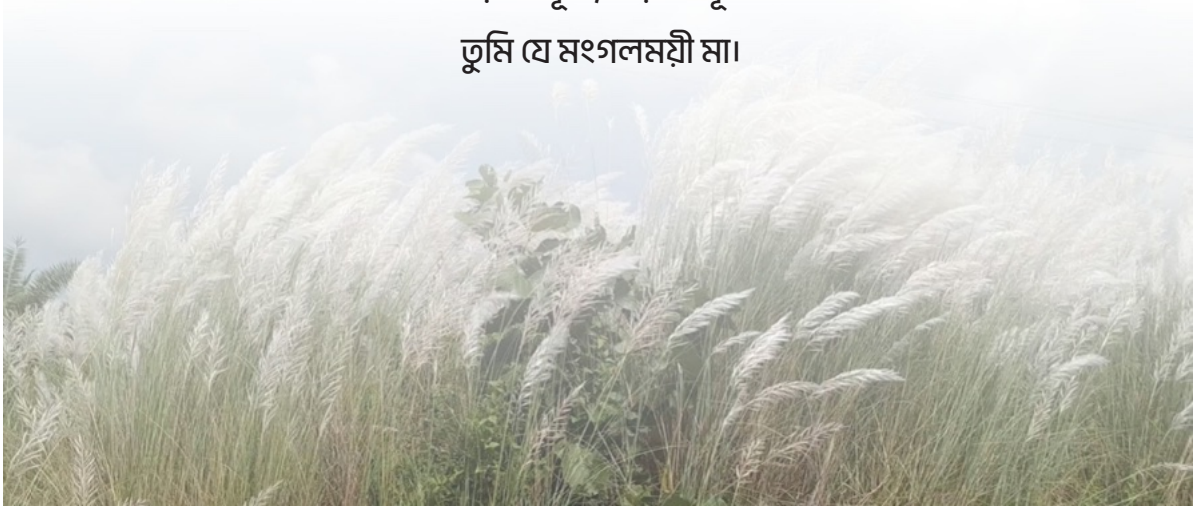




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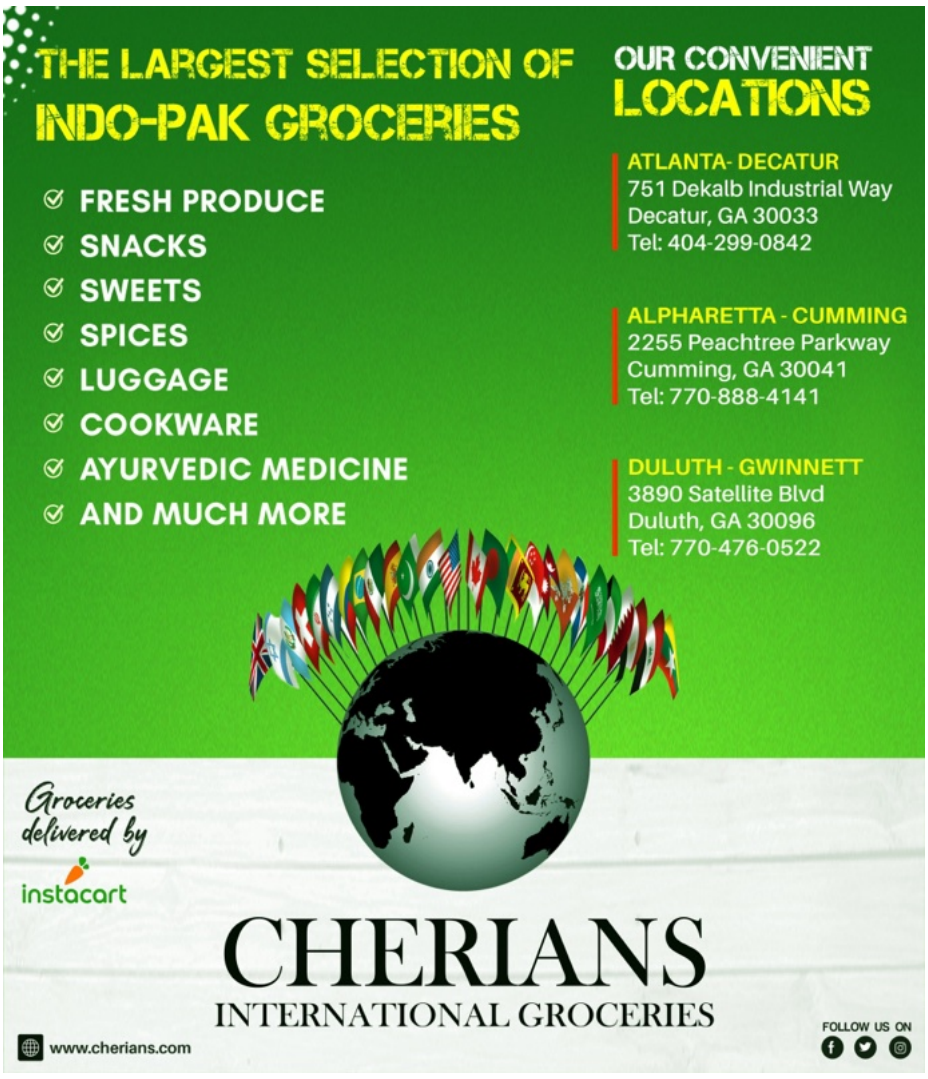
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Arup Dhar Family



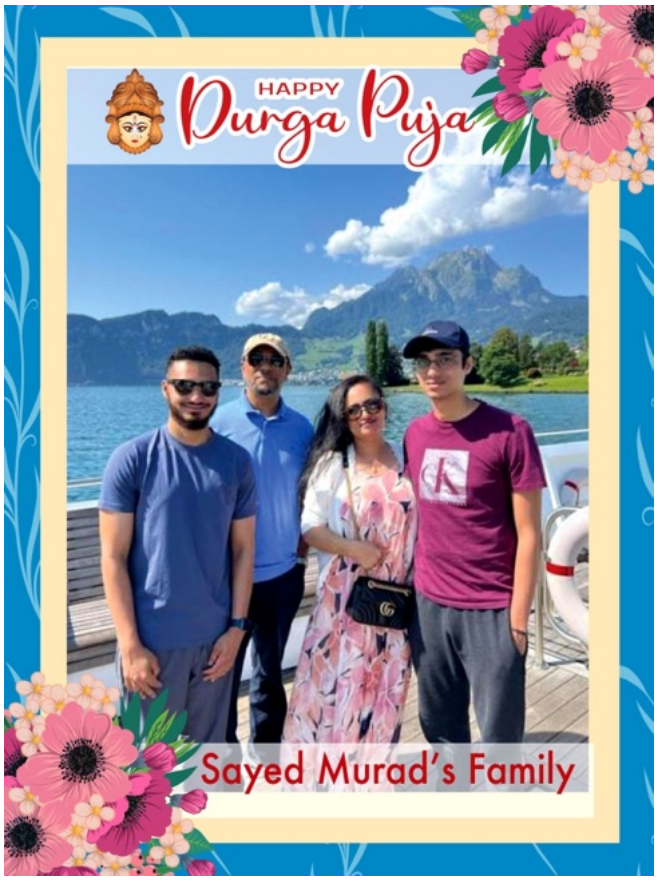
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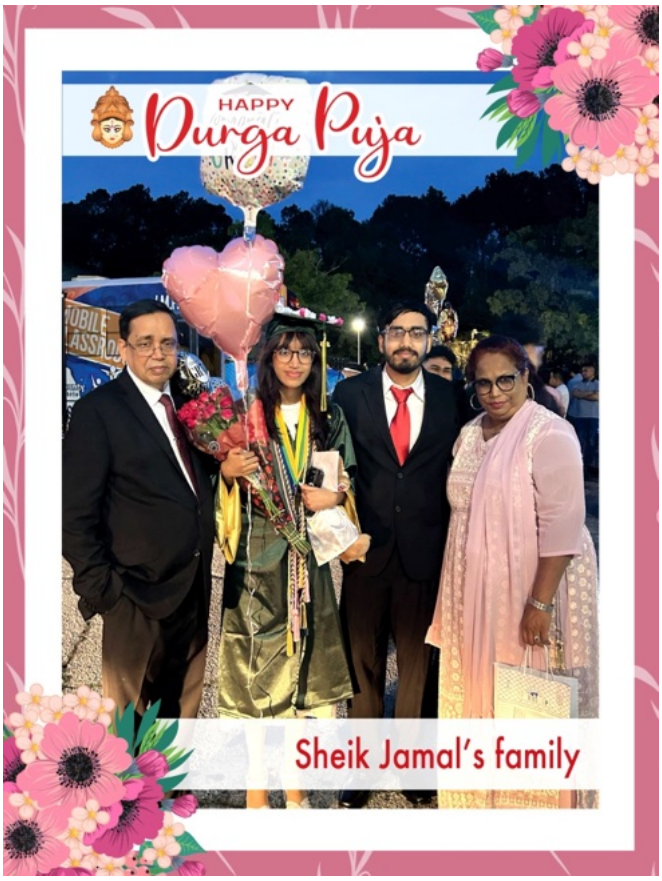


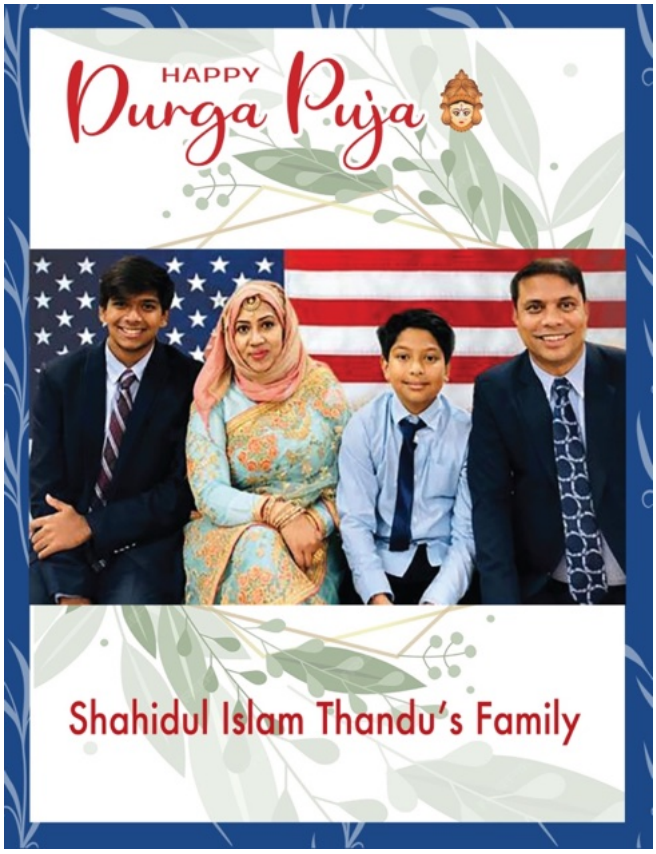




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