



*Dakshini*



*Bengali Association of California*



**DURGA PUJA 2014**

**El Segundo High School, El Segundo, CA**

**October 3rd - 5th, 2014**



  
*Highglow*

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kreaté-27112010

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Tel.: (562) 402-0112

ATLANTA  
1709 Churuch Street, Unit C.,  
Decatur, GA 30033  
Tel.: (404) 296-2714

DETROIT  
28231 Ford Road  
Garden City, MI 48135  
Tel.: (734) 422-6810

Dear Friends,



Welcome to Durga Puja 2014. It is a time of festivities, divinity, and reaffirmation of our sense of community that we constantly weave with our beads of nostalgia and memories. As an organization, Dakshini is organically growing with a groundswell of enthusiastic volunteers who have worked extremely hard over the past year to increase our collective thrust and momentum. My heartfelt thanks to them for being such great sports in sacrificing personal time amidst crushing pressures of balancing work and family which is getting harder and harder as I can see. Frankly, I sometimes find it hard to fathom where they get the inspiration to squeeze that extra ounce of energy from, but I am humbled and glad that they do. Our core membership has also gone up by over 20% judging by the increase of our annual members and sponsor. This is heading in the right direction although there is a long way to go. Financial health continues to be challenging, and growing the core thru involvement and participation is the only way a social and cultural organization like ours can sustain and thrive. The headwinds of retirements, relocations, businesses moving out, global mobility are upon us and will get worse over time. But, magically with God's grace, thru the global geopolitical turmoil, high uncertainty, elevated perceptible risks, Dakshini has survived for almost 30 years, and will survive thru perpetuity! Such is the power of grace, love, common bonding and purpose, a sense of service, and a longing for a common identity.

দক্ষিণীৰ সকল বন্ধুকে জানাই শারদ শুভেচ্ছা ও আন্তরিক অভিনন্দন। আশ্বিনেৰ শারদপ্ৰাতে জ্যোতিৰ্ময়ী জগন্নাথৰ আগমনবাৰ্তা অসীম ছন্দে বেজে উঠুক আমাদেৰ প্ৰাণে। আনন্দময়ী মহামায়াৰ পদধ্বনি আনুক আমাদেৰ সকলেৰ মনে নব ভাবমাধুৰীৰ সঞ্জীবন এই কামনা কৰি।

I hope everyone has a friendly, welcoming, engaging, fun, and memorable experience at Durga Puja this year.

নমস্কাৰান্তে,  
অৰ্ণব চ্যাটৰ্জি  
(Arnab Chatterjee)



# Grand, Platinum, Gold, and Annual Sponsors

(As of September 28<sup>th</sup>, 2014)

## Grand Sponsor : Sunanda & Kali Pradip Choudhuri

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Ram Ganguly  
Biswarupa & Ajoy Dube  
Sampurna Dube  
Suchismita & Soumen Ghosh  
Puspita & Swagata Ghosh  
Prateeti & Siddhartha Ghosh  
Suchandra & Subha Sankar Ghosh  
Piyali & Charubrata Goswami  
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Bhaswati & Sanjoy Moulik  
Abira & Mithun Mukherjee  
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Indrani Paul & Daipayan Sen  
Shehla & Rajan Singh  
Sujit Singh



# City of El Segundo

## Office of the Mayor

August 19, 2014

**Elected Officials:**

*Suzanne Fuentes,*  
Mayor  
*Carl Jacobson,*  
Mayor Pro Tem  
*Dave Atkinson,*  
Council Member  
*Marie Fellhauer,*  
Council Member  
*Michael Dugan,*  
Council Member  
*Tracy Weaver,*  
City Clerk  
*Crista Binder,*  
City Treasurer

**Appointed Officials:**

*Greg Carpenter,*  
City Manager  
*Mark D. Hensley,*  
City Attorney

**Department Directors:**

*Deborah Cullen,*  
Finance  
*Kevin Smith,*  
Fire Chief  
*Martha Dijkstra,*  
Human Resources  
*Debra Brighton,*  
Library Services  
*Sam Lee,*  
Planning &  
Building Safety  
*Mitch Tavera,*  
Police Chief  
*Stephanie Katsouleas,*  
Public Works  
*Robert Cummings,*  
Recreation & Parks

[www.elsegundo.org](http://www.elsegundo.org)

Mr. Arnab Chatterjee  
President  
Dakshini Bengali Association of California (EIN 33-0313523)  
P.O. Box 14385  
Torrance, CA 90503

Dear Friends,

On behalf of the City Council, I am pleased to extend my congratulations and greetings on the auspicious occasion of the Dakshini Durga Puja Festival on October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> to be celebrated at El Segundo High School.

I commend you for hosting this event to bring together the culture and tradition of your homeland together with that of the United States. Through events such as the festival, we can all learn about different cultures, and thereby, enrich our cultural awareness, and celebrate diversity in a global and connected world.

El Segundo is a thriving and great city – a safe place to live and to work for family and friends. I believe you will find, as have many others in El Segundo, people make the difference.

I am confident that the festival will be a great success and wish all the attendees a fun-filled weekend. All the best for your program.

Sincerely,

Suzanne Fuentes  
Mayor

350 Main Street, El Segundo, California 90245-3813  
Phone (310) 524-2302 FAX (310) 322-7137



CONSUL GENERAL OF INDIA

September 24, 2014

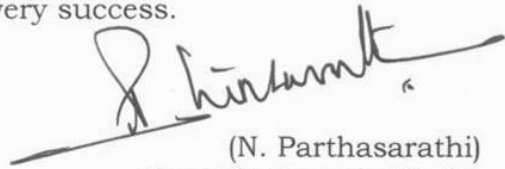
**MESSAGE**

I am happy to learn that Dakshini Bengali Association of California, is organizing "Durga Puja Celebration" in El Segundo in October 2014. It is an important event for the Indian Diaspora in general and Bengali community in particular. It is a pleasure to convey my greetings on this happy occasion to all the members of DAKSHINI.

The Durga Punja celebration brings the Indian community together. It symbolizes the victory of Good over Evil and helps the younger generation to understand, absorb and enjoy our rich cultural heritage. It also provides an opportunity for the community to sustain and promote our meaningful traditions.

The DAKSHINI has been promoting cultural and social activities and communal harmony among the Indian Diaspora, including a major fund-raising activity for a community hospital in Kolkata.

I congratulate the Dakshini Bengali Association of California for organizing "Durga Puja" and wish the event every success.



(N. Parthasarathi)  
Consul General of India



## Dakshini Executive Committee 2013-2015

<b>President</b>	Arnab Chatterjee	<b>Member</b>	Kaushik Biswas
<b>Vice President</b>	Siddhartha Dattagupta	<b>Member</b>	Sampurna Dube
<b>Secretary</b>	Sharmila Dasgupta	<b>Member</b>	Nibedita Laha
<b>Treasurer</b>	Bidhan Ray	<b>Member</b>	Sourav Roy

**Welcome to  
Durga Puja**

**October 3, 4, 5, 2014  
Dakshini Bengali Association of Southern California  
El Segundo, California**

## Durga Puja 2014 Sub-Committees

<b>Priest</b>	Kamalendu Ganguly
<b>Puja</b>	Ranjit Das, Rupa Das, Kamalendu Ganguly, Pratima Ganguly, Mila Dasgupta, Rini Ghosh, Ajoy Dube, Biswarupa Dube, Jayanti Nayak, Karabi Dube, Arin Ghosh, Pratishruti Bhunia, Apala Bhunia, Ahana Bhunia, Sharmila Dasgupta, Rita Dutta, Dulal Goswami, Indrani Chatterjee, Sourav Roy, Moyna Banerjee, Jayanti Nayak, Kisholoy Goswami, Anup Goswami
<b>Pratima Hosting</b>	Arati & Malay Das, Sudeshna & Kalachand Seal
<b>Fundraising</b>	Arnab Chatterjee, Ajoy Dube, Bidhan Ray, Alok Das
<b>Advertisement/ Booth/ Fliers</b>	Sampurna Dube, Shubharoop Ghosh, Ajoy Dube
<b>Registration/ Reception</b>	Bidhan Ray, Mohua (Piu) Roy, Dipankar Basu, Kamalesh Saha, Swapna Ray, Sweta Bhattacharya, Sharmistha Saha, Samprakash Majumdar, Sharmila Dasgupta
<b>Entertainment</b>	Siddhartha Dattagupta, Ananya Dattagupta, Mohua Roy, Soma Howladar, Chameli Biswas, Reshmi Ghosh Chowdhury, Shawli Roy, Piyali Chattopadhyay, Bhaswati Moulik, Daipayan Sen, Dulal Gowami, Sweta Bhattacharya, Rajashri Chakraborti, Mohuya Mukherjee, Joydeep Mukherjee
<b>Banquet Sub Committee</b>	Kaushik Biswas, Sajal Debnath, Anupam Sukul, Pranjit Saha, Siddhartha Biswas, Riddhi Chakraborty, Biswarupa Dube, Avijit Bhunia
<b>Puja &amp; Facility Decoration Sub- Committee</b>	Nibedita Laha, Sujata Dube, Subhendu Roy, Mohua (Piu) Roy, Rishita Roy, Riyana Roy, Soumitra Banerjee, Dhruva Bhattacharyay, Pushkar Ghoshchowdhury, Dipankar Basu, Atis Das, Bidhan Ray, Rajashree Chakraborty, Subharoop Ghosh, Sampurna Dube, Abir Chakraborty, Sweta Bhattacharya
<b>Stage/ Hall Management</b>	Sourav Roy, Nibedita Laha, Sampurna Dube, Saradindu Dolui, Kaushik Sarkar, Madhumita Basu, Reshmi Ghosh Chowdhury, Popy Banerjee, Rajashree Chakraborty
<b>Sound/Light</b>	Avijit Bhattacharya, Dhruva Bhattacharya
<b>Brochure</b>	Soumitra Banerjee, Arnab Chatterjee, Sarnath Chattaraj, Sampurna Dube, Ajoy Dube & members who submitted write-ups for brochure
<b>Cover Page</b>	<i>Cover page was designed and developed by Abir Chakraborty</i>

*Note: This committee is comprised of members that have worked in different phases of the planning and execution phase of Puja 2014. We apologize for any inadvertent omission. An updated list is posted at [www.dakshini.org](http://www.dakshini.org).*



# Durga Puja 2014 Schedule

## Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> October:

6:30pm to 7:00pm Shashti Puja, Bhog, Arati  
6:30pm to 8:30pm Dinner  
8:00pm to 10:30pm **DOHAR FOLK BAND**

## Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> October:

10:30am to 12:00pm Saptami Puja, Bhog, Arati  
12:00pm to 1:00pm Pushpanjali  
12:30pm to 2:30pm Lunch  
1:00pm to 3:00pm Ashtami Puja, Bhog, Arati  
4:00pm to 4:45pm **“JOLCHOBI”**  
*A musical depicting a slice of life wrapped up w/ aesthetics of Navras*  
5:30pm to 7:00pm **“PADUKA PURAN”**  
*A children’s drama based on Tagore’s “Juta Abishkar”*  
6:30pm to 7:30pm Sandhi Puja, Bhog, Arati  
7:00pm to 8:30pm Dinner  
8:00pm to 10:30pm **BAPPI LAHIRI**

## Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> October:

9:30am to 12:00pm Navami Puja, Bhog, Arati  
12:00pm to 1:00pm Pushpanjali  
12:30pm to 2:00pm Lunch  
2:00pm to 3:00pm **“PASHOBIK MONOSHTATTVA”**  
*A hilarious comedy on Canine Psycho Dependency Syndrome*  
3:30pm to 5:00pm **SOUGATA BANERJEE**  
5:00pm to 6:30pm Sindoor Utsav/Bisarjan (Dashami Puja)  
5:30pm to 6:30pm Mishtimukh ☺

## 2014 Program Highlights



**DOHAR** is a musical troop of regional repute – a platform for cultural activists, who consider this world as a musical bonanza and intends to energize its inhabitants with the melodious power of folk tunes, especially of greater Bengal as well as the North Eastern States of the Country.

DOHAR started its dream journey, in the world of music in 1999. Within six years of its initiation, the group was able to add a number of feathers on its cap and every endeavor of DOHAR was blessed with the appreciation of people.

In brief, DOHAR is an endless journey of music having strong connections with the root, on one hand and going beyond all boundaries, on the other

DOHAR already collected more than 6,000 (six thousand) folk songs from the different part of India and Bangladesh.

### Jolchhobi



Conceived and Directed  
By  
**Shawli Roy**

Human life is a rich tapestry woven with threads of myriad emotions of different shades, colors and hues. The NatyaShastra, also known as the Fifth Veda, describes nine rasas or NavaRasas that are the basis of all human emotion. Our musical is an attempt to portray a slice of life wrapped up with the aesthetics of Natyashastra. And what would be the best time to share this than Durgotsob which essentially is a time to rejuvenate our souls. Hope even our saddest thought will resonate as our sweetest song and we would live it together.

<b>Dancers</b>	Piyali, Bhaswati, Chumki, Madhumita, Arpita, Lali, Mili, Paramita, Suparna
<b>Singers</b>	Puspita, Poulomi, Soumen, Shawli.
<b>Keyboard</b>	Rani
<b>Narration</b>	Suchismita, Indrani, Sanjoy
<b>Light &amp; Stage</b>	Avijit, Daipayan
<b>Choreography</b>	Bhaswati, Piyal

### Paduka Puran



Directed By

**Siddhartha  
Dattagupta**

A satirical and dramatic adaptation of Joota Abishkar by Rabindranath Tagore. The story unfolds when Payel finds a book at her doorstep left by Pied Piper. As she opens the book, she finds a pair of shoes inside and she is immediately taken into the land of Hobupur where King Hobu, utterly disturbed by the touch of dust on his feet, has asked everyone to find a solution immediately. Minister Gobu invites all the intellectuals from all over the world. While all of them is struggling to come up with big ideas and finally decides to cover the whole earth with leather; a common man shows up in the court and tells the king the easiest ever solution – ‘cover your own feet and you will not need to cover the whole earth’.

Paduka Puran, a classic satire enacted by AACE kids of Dakshini. They take you to the magical journey over time to an old kingdom Hobupur, make you laugh at all the moments of gestures of so called knowledgeable people in the name of problem solving while ignoring simple facts. Finally. King Hobu gets his gift back from Payel – ‘The Paduka’ and the story ‘Paduka Puran’ gets written, henceforth to be told to all kids and adults of all generations.

**Actors**  
Abhiraj Ghosh, Aisheek Ghosh, Aishik Chakraborty, Arib Howladar, Arjun Ghosh, Arushi

Banerjee, Arya Moulik, Ayushi Banerjee, Ayushi Dattagupta, Daivik Chakraborty, Kona Sanyal, Monolina Shil, Noel Shil, Pourobee Saha, Priyanka Ghosh Choudhury, Rajarshi Chatterjee, Riyana Roy, Rohan Ghosh Choudhury, Ronjini Chatterjee, Rupsa Chatterjee, Sagnik Chakraborty, Samprita Chakraborty, Sattwik Banerjee, Sauviri Roy, Sayan Roy, Shekhar Bhattacharya, Shreyashmi Dolui, Soham Sarkar, Surya Laha, Titas Biswas

## Bappi Lahiri



Bappi Lahiri was born in Calcutta, West Bengal into a family with a rich tradition in classical music. His father, Aparesh Lahiri was a famous Bengali singer and his mother, Bansari Lahiri was a musician and a singer who was well-versed in classical music and Shyama Sangeet. His parents trained him in every aspect of music. He was their only child. He began to play the tabla at the tender age of three. Even at that tender age, Bappi showed signs of greatness as he played the tabla with the proficiency of an experienced professional. Bappi Lahiri is married and has two children. Bappi Lahiri has shared his love for music with his entire family. His wife is Chitrani comes from a family of singers, his daughter Rema is also an excellent singer, and son Bappa Lahiri has inherited his father's keen sense of music and joined the Hindi film industry as a music director.

## Pashobik Monoshtattva



In the backdrop of contemporary Kolkata, two souls met and they fell for each other. Things were fine until the guy tried to disclose the relationship before to be Father in Law, to get a final nod for the very next step, marriage – well you might already have figured out the story and it does not make you think outside the box, because it's too OBVIOUS!

Wait, not in this drama “পাশবিক মনস্তত্ত্ব” – it follows the sinusoidal curve of Happiness, Emotion, Obsession and lot other human instincts though-out. This drama takes you through a roller coaster ride packed with guessing game. You will gasp for a breath in laughter; you will try to find sense out of few characters; you will also try to fabricate the ending in your mind and most of all, you will long for more.

Directed By  
**Dullal Goswami**

Hold your breath till 2:30 pm, Sunday, October 5th, 2014. Team “পাশবিক মনস্তত্ত্ব” will surely etch a line in you, during this Durga Puja at Dakshini

## Sougata Bannerjee



Sri.Sougata Banerjee comes of a family that overflows with talented performers of Hindustani Sangeet. The doyen of Vishnupur Gharana Sangeetaacharya Satya Kinkar Bandyopadhyay being his grandfather, Sougata's father Prof.Sri Nihar Ranjan Bandyopadhyay is a well-known Hindustani Musician. Sougata's family has kept alive the rich Vishnupur style of Hindustani Sangeet; his father's elder brother being the well-known musician Pt.Amiya Ranjan Bandyopadhyay.

In 1993 Sougata came in contact with his present guru Padma Vibhushan Pandit Jasrajji found in Sougata a disciple already well-groomed in Hindustani music from his experience received in his family. Sougata was also fortunate to perform in front of Pt.Ravi Shankarji in U.S. Pt. Ravi Sankarji sat with Sougata performing more than an hour & Panditji was visibly delighted to hear that Sougata is the grandson of Sangeetacharya Satya Kinkar Bandyopadhyay the doyen of Vishnupur Gharana. At the end of the concert Pt. Ravi Shankarji had exclaimed in delight "Aaj ka Shaam (Evening) Ban Gaya".

## FEATURED ARTIST AT DAKSHINI

YEAR	ARTIST
1987	Sutapa Datta Gupta (Dance), Tarun Roy, Debraj Roy, Dipannita Roy (Drama)
1988	Pandit Chitresh Das (Dance), Biswajit Chatterjee (Actor/Drama)
1989	Nanda Banerjee (Vocal), Pandit V.G. Jog (Violin)
1990	Utpalendu & Uttara Choudhury (Bengal Folk Songs), "Chetana Group" (Drama), Nandita Behra (Dance), Gopal Marathe (Vocal)
1991	Late Salil Choudhury (Music Composer & Vocal), Sabita Choudhury & Antara Choudhury (Vocal) Ustad Imrat Khan (Sitar)
1992	Anuradha Nag (Dance), Pramit Sen (Rabindra Sangeet), Pandit Debu Choudhury (Sitar)
1993	Arundhuti Home Choudhury (Bengali Adhunik), Shibaji Chatterjee (Vocal), Apsara (Cambodian Dance)
1994	Banasree Sengupta (Bengali Adhunik), Alok Das Gupta (Guitar), Dhiren Bose (Nazrul Sangeet), Pandit Swapan Choudhuri (Tabla)
1995	Babu Parameswaram (Vocal), Mrinal Chakrabarti (Bengali Adhunik, Rabindra Sangeet, Folk Songs), Sandhya Mukherjee (Vocal), Sabitri Chatterjee (Actress/Drama), Lolita Chatterjee (Actress/Drama), Laboni Sarkar (Actress/Drama)
1996	Tarun Bhattacharya (Santur), Bikram Ghosh (Tabla), Banani Ghosh (Rabindra Sangeet), Anup Kumar (Drama)
1997	Sipra Bose (Vocal), Gobinda Bose (Tabla), Debashish Ghosh (Bengali Folk Songs), Soumitra Chatterjee (Actor), Anup Ghosal (Bengali Folk Songs)
1998	Aparna Sen (Actress/Drama), Biplob Chatterjee (Actor/Drama), Nadikar Group (Drama), Supriya Choudhury (Actress/Drama)
1999	Dwijen Mukherjee (Vocal), Partha & Gauri Ghosh (Dramatic Actor), Pramita Mallick (Vocal), Rezwana Choudhury – Banya (Vocal, Rabindra Sangeet)
2000	Lopa Mudra Mitra (Vocal), Pramita Mallick (Vocal), Anup Ghosal (Nazrul Sangeet)
2001	Usha Uthup (Pop Songs), Arati Mukherjee (Vocal)
2002	Bappi Lahiri & Group (Pop), Dulal Bhowmick (Bengali Adhunik), Jagannath & Urmimala Bose (Dramatic Orator)
2003	BHOOMI The Band (Kolkata) – Surojit Chatterjee, Soumitra Roy, Sanjoy Mukherjee, Abhijit Ghosh, Abhijit Bose, Wingloong Robin, Hemanto Goswami; Tarun Chakraborty (Songs/Shruti Natok/Recitation); Baul Samrat PURNA DAS/Chottan Das (Baul Songs)
2004	Somdatta Basu (Modern Songs), Sanjay De (Modern Songs), Alok Roychoudhury (Puratani Gaan), Ruprekha Chatterjee (Modern Songs)
2005	ABHIJEET (Bollywood's Playback Singer with Live Band), Pandit Santanu Bandhyopadhyay and Neel Adhikari – kolkata (Classical & Western Fusion)
2006	Babul Supriyo (Bollywood's Playback Singer) and Debojit (Sa Re Ga Ma Pa Challenge Winner & Playback singer)
2007	Amit Kumar & Sumit Kumar (Bollywood Playback Singers) Chandreyee & Samit Tyagi (Young rising playback singers)
2008	Usha Uthup (Bollywood Playback Singer), Aneek Dhar & Keka Ghoshal (Young rising playback singers)
2009	Amit Paul (Bollywood Playback Singer), Nirmalya Adhikary

YEAR	ARTIST
2010	Anwasha, Trijoy, Bandita (rising stars), Swagatalakshmi Dasgupta, Haimanti Sukla
2011	Aneek Dhar, Dipanwita Choudhury, Abhijit Ghosal (Rising stars) Jayati Chakraborty Sivaji Chattopadhyay Arundhuti Holme Choudhury, Pramita Mallick
2012	Lopamudra Mitra, Sahaj Ma, Utpal Fakir, Pt. Kushal Das, Torsha Sarkar
2013	Jasraj Joshi, Sounak Chattopadhyay, Robi O Nobin, Parnava Banerjee

**Past and Present President(s)  
Dakshini Bengali Association of California**

Year	Name
1985 - 1987	Dr. SAMAR SIRKAR
1988 - 1990	Dr. MALAY DAS
1990 - 1992	Mr. AJIT RAKSHIT
1992 - 1994	Mrs. MAITRAYI MAZUMDAR
1994 - 1996	Mr. AJOY DUBE
1996 - 1998	Dr. KAMALESH SOM
1998 - 2000	Mr. MOHIT CHATTERJEE
2000 - 2002	Mrs. JAYASHREE DAS
2002 - 2004	Mr. RANJIT DAS
2004 - 2006	Mrs. PRATIMA DATTA
2006 - 2008	Mr. SAJAL K. DEBNATH
2008 - 2010	Mr. ANUPAM SUKUL
2010 - 2012	Dr. SARNATH CHATTARAJ
2013-2015	Mr. ARNAB CHATTERJEE*

\* Current President

# देवी वन्दना

@ MAHALAYA 2014

*Music directed by Suman Laha in a classical ensemble performed by a group consisting of people inside and outside of the Bengali community.*

## V O C A L I S T S

Madhumita Basu, Suprabha Biswas, Titash Biswas, Chameli Biswas, Sagnik Chakraborty, Samprita Chakraborty, Rajasri Chakraborty, Padmaparna Chatterjee, Ronjini Chatterjee, Roopsha Chatterjee, Tiya De Sarkar, Sampurna Dube, Mitali Dutta, Abiral Ganguly, Smriti Ghosh, Dhruva Kesavarapu, Apurba Mondol, Joita Bose Mondol, Noel Shil, Monolina Shil, Dr. Soma Shil, Dr. Purnima Thakran

## I N S T R U M E N T A L I S T S

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## T A B L A

Harnadar Anand, Rashid Binnur, Nasim Binnur, Utsav Dasgupta



## True facts behind Puja

Sukrit Mukherjee

In today's culture, Durga Puja is perceived as nothing more than mirth, merriments and entertainment; it is less religious and more luxurious with carousel. But have we ever tried to understand the actual significance of the Durga Puja or any Puja we perform?

Let us try to dig deeper into the scientific reasons behind Vedic rituals and beliefs. We try to practice certain rituals without ever knowing how it is connected with our life, its utility and significance as seen by the authors of the 'Vedas' thousands of years before us. One of the reasons of our ignorance probably stems from our detachment from the ancient literature such as 'Vedas'. And obviously we are inclined to consider these rituals being old-fashioned, unscientific and unnecessary. Modern scientific and sociological researches regarding Hindu rituals have attempted to shed light on the actual reasons and justifications lying behind such practices as seen by the 'Vedic Scholars' discarding the myths surrounding the rituals.

*Why should we chant the mantra 'Om':* As per a study in Indian Journal of Physiology and Pharmacology, the chanting of the mantra 'OM' mentally, achieved a significant reduction in heart rate, which led to a deep form of relaxation, with increased alertness [1]. It was also reported that chanting a meaningful syllable such as 'OM', caused a decrease in heart and breath rate, compared to a neutral syllable such as 'ONE', which did not produce a similar effect [2]. These findings re-establish the facts that mantras are not just empty syllables or meaningless phrases but they are latent with mystical power as stipulated by the 'Vedic Scholars' creating some form of vibration in the body and mind, resulting in beneficial health effects. One interesting fact is that our Gāyatrī Mantra produces 110,000 sound waves per second according to an American Scientist, Dr. Howard Steingeril. This was the highest amongst any Hymns from world over with a potential healing power and is being broadcast daily for 15 minutes from 7 P.M. onwards over Radio Paramaribo, Surinam in South America.

*Why should we use "Tulsi" in our rituals:* Holy Basil (i.e. Tulsi) is the most sacred plant in Hindu religion. We regard it as an earthly manifestation of the goddess Tulsi, a consort of the god Vishnu. The offering of its leaves is mandatory in ritualistic worship of Vishnu and his forms like Krishna. It represents purity, serenity, harmony, luck and good health. But why? Have we ever looked into what caused our 'Vedic Scholars' to consider "Tulsi" as part of our religious life and into our rituals? The answer lies with the science behind Tulsi. Tulsi is a culinary herb (its scientific name is *Ocimum basilicum*). Our Ayurveda literature states that Tulsi (basil) is an effective treatment for snake bites. Probably that was one of the reasons stipulated by religious scholars in ancient India to grow Tulsi plants in the center of the courtyard of every home so that the plant remains handy. It was also used to treat coughs and bronchitis. As per the modern research, Tulsi leaves have been proven to decrease the occurrence of platelet aggregation and experimental thrombus in mice [3]. In India, Tulsi is used for supplementary treatment of stress,

asthma and diabetes [4]. Tulsi contains estragole, a known carcinogen and teratogen in rats and mice. While human effects are currently unstudied, extrapolation using body weight from the rodent experiments indicates that 100–1000 times the normal anticipated exposure still probably produces a minimal cancer risk [5]. Modern scientific research offers impressive evidence that essential oils found in Tulsi have potent antioxidant, antiviral, and antimicrobial properties. It can also reduce stress, enhances stamina, relieves inflammation, lowers cholesterol, and prevents gastric ulcers. Therefore, we see that it is more than justified by our "Vedic Scholars" to use Tulsi leaves in our rituals including 'Noivedya' and 'Charanamruta'.

*Why should we make "Shankhnaad":* As it is an auspicious instrument, conch (shankh) is played in any puja at temple or at home. It possesses great power of controlling the ecological balances in the environment. The 'Shankh Dhvani' creates the sound waves by which many harmful germs, insects are destroyed since they cannot tolerate the frequency of resonance produced by the conch (shankh). The mosquito breeding is also affected by 'conch blowing' thus decreasing the spread of malaria.

There are hundreds of more rituals left out there to re-explore with reference to the justifications behind their practices as seen by the 'Vedic Scholars' thousands of years before us.

May be next time, we will have a journey together dispelling some more myths shrouding the rituals.

I hope after these discussions you will feel more enlightened and motivated to practice all these rituals with more determination, desire and inclination.

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**About the Author:** Being an engineer-turned-scientist by profession, the author is currently involved with research in bio-medical informatics under federally funded institution. Apart from his profession, the author has vast training and experience with Hindu rituals with a number of publications in international journals. The author's long association with his father, who was a priest of the President of India has yielded enough exposure for the author to take the Hindu Vedic rituals to a new level.

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## ওঁ মহালয়া

স্বামী শ্রী পূর্ণানন্দজী, ভারত সাবাস্রম

ওঁ পিতা স্বর্গঃ পিতা ধর্মঃ পিতা হি পরমং তপঃ পিতরি প্রীতিমাপন্থে প্রীয়ন্তে সর্বদেবতাঃ ॥  
ওঁ শান্তি ॥

ওঁ মহালয়ার মহাতিথি সনাতনধর্মী আর্য হিন্দুগণের ব্যক্তিগত, পারিবারিক, সামাজিক, ও জাতীয় জীবনের পক্ষে এই তিথির মাহাত্ম্য গৌরব অত্যন্ত বৈশিষ্ট্যপূর্ণ। পিতৃপক্ষের বা শ্রাদ্ধপক্ষের সর্বোত্তম অন্তিম তিথি। চিরন্তন বিশ্বাস এই তিথিতে তর্পণ করলে মৃত পিতামাতা অ স্বজনবর্গের আত্মা লাভ করবেন পরম সঙ্গতি।

স্মরণাতীত কাল হতে ওঁ গয়াধাম পিন্ডদানের সর্বশ্রেষ্ঠ তীর্থস্থল রূপে নির্দিষ্ট হয়েছে হিন্দুশাস্ত্রে। সর্বাগ্রে স্মরণ করিয়ে দিতে চাই মহালয়ার পূর্ণ্য তিথিতে আশীর্বাদের গঙ্গত্রীধারা বর্ষিত হয় পিতৃলয় হতে। পূর্বপুরুষগণের স্বর্গত আত্মা - যারা তাঁদের জন্মান্তরীন সুকৃতির বশে উর্ধ্বগতি প্রাপ্ত হয়েছেন তাঁদের অশরীরি আত্মা আমাদের শিরে আশীষধারা বর্ষণের জন্য একান্ত উৎকর্ষিত অ আকুল ব্যাকুল। তাই আমাদের পরম কর্তব্য তাঁদের সেই অভয় আশ্বাস ও আশীর্বাদ লাভের জন্য উন্মুখ ও আগ্রহান্বিত হওয়া। তাঁদের স্মরণ করে শ্রাদ্ধ, অর্থাৎ মূলকথা হচ্ছে করে স্রদ্ধাভক্তির অনুশীল হৃদয় মনে যারা বায় উপচারে অর্পিত তাদের শ্রাদ্ধ তর্পণ হয় ব্যর্থ ও নিষ্ফল। নিরন্তর অন্তর্মুখী হয়ে আমাদের পিতৃপুরুষের রাতুল চরনে প্রার্থনা করুন তাঁদের অপার আশীর্বাদ যেন আমাদের জন্মজন্মান্তরের পাপ তাপ দূরীভূত করে।

তর্পনানুষ্ঠানটির অন্তর্নিহিত অর্থ ও তাৎপর্য ভালভাবে অবধারণ করা প্রয়োজন। পিতামাতা যতদিন সশরীরে বিদ্যমান, ততদিন সন্তান-সন্তদির কর্তব্য যথাযোগ্য ভাবে তাঁদের সেবা করে প্রসন্নতা বিধান করা এবং তাঁদের দেহত্যাগের পরে তাঁদের উদ্দেশ্যে শ্রাদ্ধতর্পনের কালে তাদের গুণ ও মহত্বের ধারক বাহক হবার জন্য সঙ্কল্পবদ্ধ হওয়া। সত্যকারের পুত্র হচ্ছে সে যে পুত্র নামক নরক হতে পিতা-মাতার উদ্ধার করবার যোগ্যতা অর্জন করে। আর একটা কথা স্মরণ রাখা প্রয়োজন - শুধু জন্মদাতা পিতামাতাই আমাদের পিতৃপুরুষ, মাতৃপুরুষ নন। ব্যাস, বসিষ্ঠ, বাল্মিকী, মনু, গৌতম, সাংখ্য পরাশর, ভরদ্বাজ প্রমুখ ঋষি মহর্ষিগণও আমাদের সত্যকারের পিতৃপুরুষ বা গোত্রপুরুষ। শ্রাদ্ধ বা তর্পণকালে আমরা স্মরণ

ও মনন করব - তাঁদের অতুল কীর্তি ও আমাদের অবদানের কথা এবং সঙ্গে সঙ্গে বন্ধকটি হব তাদের সেই গুণ, জ্ঞান ও মহত্বের অধিকার অর্জনের জন্য।

সম্প্রগুরু আচার্য্য প্রনবানন্দজী বলতেন “আত্মস্মৃতিই প্রকৃত জীবন ও আত্মবিস্মৃতিই মহামৃত্যু।” আজিকার এই দুর্দিনে আমাদের স্মরণ ও মনন করা উচিত আমরা কে বা কারা - আমাদের, জাতি ও সংস্কৃতির সত্যকারের ঐতিহ্য ও বৈশিষ্ট্য কি। আমাদের পূর্বপুরুষগণ কত উন্নত ও মহান ছিলেন আর আজ আমরা কোথায় ও কোন স্তরে অবনত হয়েছি। ওঁ মহালয়ার এই পবিত্র তিথিতে আমাদের হৃদয় মনে জাগ্রত ও প্রজ্বল হয়ে উঠুক এই আত্মস্মৃতি।

মহালয়া শব্দটির অর্থ এই প্রসঙ্গে অনুধাবনযোগ্য - মহান আলায় বা আধার তাই মহালয়া। এইদিক দিয়ে বিচার করলে আমাদের স্মরণ রাখা উচিত, আমাদের প্রকৃত বাস্তু বা নিবাসনস্থল হচ্ছে সেই ঋষিলোক বা দিব্যধাম সুরলোক - যেখানে পাপ তাপ নাই, জ্বালা নাই, ব্যাথা বেদনা নাই। যেখানে আছে শুধু অক্ষয় শান্তি অ অনাবিল আনন্দ। এই পরম ধামের নির্দেশ দিয়েই শ্রীমদ্ভগবতগীতায় শ্রী ভগবান বলেছেন - গতির্ভগতা প্রভুঃ সাক্ষী নিবাসঃ স্মরণ সুহৃৎ। প্রভবঃ প্রলয় স্থানং নিধানং বীজমব্যয়ম্।।

‘আমি গতি, আমি ভগতা, আমি প্রভু, আমি দ্রষ্টা, আমি বাসস্থান, আমি সুহৃদ, আমি স্রষ্টা, আমি সংহার কর্তা, আমি আধার, আমি লয়স্থান এবং আমি অবিনাশী বীজস্বরূপ।

আর্য্য হিন্দুর অন্তিম গন্তব্যস্থান - সেই পরম পুরুষ শ্রীভগবান। পিতৃপক্ষের তিনিই সত্যকারের অধিদেবতা। এবার আরম্ভ হবে দেবীপক্ষ। মাতৃশক্তির উদ্বোধনের প্রাংমুহূর্তে নবরাত্রি। মাতৃসাধনার মহা মাহেন্দ্রক্ষণ। “ওঁ সহনাববতু সহ নৌ ভূগক্তু সহবীর্যং করবাবহে।” আমরাগকে সমবেত ভাবে পালন কর, সম্ভবদ্ব ও বীর্য্যবান করো।

## THE WORSHIP OF MOTHER DURGA

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*(This article is Re-produced from the Brochure at Dakshini's 1<sup>st</sup> Durga Pujo, 1985)*

NAVARATRI is an important festival in India observed with fast, feast, and festivals. Sri Rama's performance of the worship of Mother Durga described in the Bengali Ramayana is not mentioned by Valmiki. It is described in Devi Bhagavata, Kalika Purana, Brihan-dharma Purana, and Mahabhadgavata. The Puranas describe the various aspects of the Goddess. The sage Narada advised Rama to obtain the grace of Durga to kill Ravana and to rescue Sita. So Ram worshipped the Goddess in autumn, and thenceforward Durga Puja has been celebrated in this season.

Durga has been described as the Divine Mother possessing the most beautiful figure, bedecked with jewels and dresses. She is very tender, gentle and sweet to those who approach Her with childlike simplicity and surrender. She is terrible and indomitable to those who tyrannize over others. She comes from Kailasa every autumn accompanied by Lakshmi and Saraswati, the goddess of wealth and learning. They are very beautiful and possess all the virtues men aspire after. When pleased, they confer on devotees the blessings of beauty, harmony, riches, learning and all artistic abilities. Mother brings Her son Ganesa also, who confers intelligence, wisdom and success. Durga comes to the earth to Her mother Menaka and father Himalaya. The season is Sarat, autumn when fields are full of bumper crops, rivers are full of crystal water and the sky free from clouds becomes bright in day with sunshine and smiles at night with milk-white moon. To devotees She is the real Mother; to them these incidents are spiritual facts not fictions. Their forms are not idols but ideals.

The Goddess Durga has been worshipped by notable Devas and incarnations. The Brahmavaivarta Purana says that Sri Krishna once worshipped Durga in Goloka, Siva also did so when confronted by the demon Tripura, and Brahma worshipped Her when attacked by Madhu and Kaitabha, and Indra when cursed by Durvasa. The Bhagavata says that Rukmini and the Gopis worshipped the Great Goddess for getting Krishna as their husband. The Tulsi Ramayana says that Sita worshipped Her for getting Rama. In the Mahabharata Sri Krishna exhorts Arjuna to sing the Hymn of Durga before the Kurukshetra war.

In the Rigveda, Taittiriya Aranyaka, Devi Upanishad and Devi Purana, the significance of the name Durga has been explained as the One who rescues her Devotees in times of danger, despondency and difficulties. The Mahanarayana Upanishad (2.2) prays to her saying:

I take refuge in Her, the Goddess Durga, who is fiery in luster and radiant with ardency, who is the Power belonging to the Supreme who manifests Himself manifoldly, who is the Power residing in actions and their fruits, rendering them efficacious (or the Power that is supplicated to by the devotees for the fruition of their work). O Thou Goddess skilled in saving, Thou takest us across difficulties excellently well. Our salutations to thee.

Shri Ramakrishna looked upon the highest Reality as the Divine Mother. She is Its Sakti, Power which is not different from the substance. He says: One must propitiate the Divine Mother, the Primal Energy in order to obtain God's grace. God Himself is Mahamaya. It is His will that we should run about a little, then it is great fun. God has created the world in play as it were. This is called Mahamaya, the great illusion. Therefore one must take refuge in the Divine Mother, the Cosmic Power Itself. It is she who has bound us with the shackles of illusion. The realization of God is possible only when those shackles are severed.

The Shakti worshippers have produced an independent philosophy of their own, Abhinava Gupta of Kashmir and Panchanan Tarkaratna of recent days in Bengal have written Sakti bhashyas, commentaries on the Brahmasutras to establish their claim in scriptural authority. We worship Sakti with age old Gayatri or Savitri mantra, recited by every-twice born from Kanyakumari to Kashmir.

Every king and the kingdom has their presiding Deity as aspect of Sakti. Many of the villages and towns of Bharat have such presiding Deities. The Buddhists and Jains too worshipped the different aspect of Sakti. The Navaratri festival is observed throughout India. In North India Devi is worshipped often in Vasanta or spring. But during Navaratri in Autumn, Ramlila is a very important function which stands for the traditional worship of Sakti through the enacting of Rama's victory over Ravana, of Goodness over Evil. In south India the Navaratri festival is dedicated to the Goddess. The festival of victory observed by princely families has the worship of weapons as an important function. Kumari puja or worship of the virgins who are considered to have a special manifestation of the Goddess is common throughout India during Navaratri. The worship of a woman having a husband and children (Sumangali) is also in vogue in some areas. The Vaishnavs celebrate the Navaratri with dramatic presentation of the lives of Rama and Krishna through Ramlila and Raslila.

The worship of the world-cause as Mother has developed into looking Her as a daughter. These attitudes have been expressed with great feeling in the literatures and folk songs of India in different languages. Even Acharya Sankara, the great Advaita philosopher, wrote two well-known hymns called Ananda-Lahari and Sundarya-Lahari. Various images and festivals of Mother have popularized the Sakti-vada through the length and breadth of the land. The Saptasati or Chandi is recited throughout the country for propitiating Mother and attaining success in any endeavor. The Lalita-sahasra-nama, a hymn giving the thousand names of the Divine Mother, is incomparable in its composition and the mood it creates.

References of earliest Sakti worship are available in Tamil Literature. Gradually it spread to other parts of India too. The Mohenjodaro people worshipped the images of Pasupati and the mother Goddess who were known in later days to the Aryans as Isana or Lord Siva and Mother Uma or Parvati. The earliest Mahisaha-mardini form of the 4<sup>th</sup> century has been discovered in Udayagiri. Scholars have tried to find out a blending in Her of various deities of old. She has been identified with Mother Earth or the Vegetation Diety, and that is why so many plants are used in Her worship. Nowadays Navapatrika made of nine plants is worshipped as representing the Goddess. She is identified with Haridra because she is Yellow, Jayanti for giving victory (Jaya), Mana for conferring fame (Mana), Vilva for being equally liked by Siva, Ashoka for being free from grief (Shoka), Dhanya for giving of life like corn (Dhanya), Dadimba for her teeth were red like it was with the war with the Asuras. Durga Devi is first mentioned in Yajnika Upanishad of Taittiriya Aranyaka. Durga has originated from sacrificial fire, according to some; also by the blending of various deities viz. Aditi, Ambika, Parvati (Mountain Goddess), Uma, Sati, Chandika and the like. The Rigvedic Devi – sukta and Ratri-sukta are the earliest references to Her exalted position. Uma Haimavati of the kena Upanishad represents Her as Brahma-vidya. Ten Mahavidyas and fifty one holy places related to Her show the tremendous harmonizing power of Hinduism. Devi thus has acquired three types of status: 1) She is looked upon as dependent on Shiva, 2) She is equally powerful as Shiva, and 3) She is the Supreme

## Why I Serve – By Ayan Debnath

I have been serving in the US Army for seven years. It was a decision that I have not regretted and is one of the proudest achievements in my life. I first enlisted in the US Army in 2004. At the time I had been attending California State University Northridge for three years and felt a little burnt out at school. I also felt that I wanted to accomplish something important in my life other than what I was currently doing. In 2003 I spoke with a US Army Recruiter and began the process of becoming a soldier in addition to convincing my parents of my decision.



I spent the whole year researching all of the different jobs there were in the US Army narrowed my choice down to the reserves because I felt that it would give me the chance to serve my country and finish college. After a year of convincing my parents of my decision and determining what I wanted to do in the US Army I signed my enlistment papers.

In January 2004 I left for basic training. I went to Fort Leonardwood for basic training. It was one of the most difficult and rewarding experiences in my life. My days would start at 4.30 in the morning and would end at 9.00 at night. We would conduct extensive physical training in addition to all the basic tasks and military discipline that every soldier is required to learn. After graduating from basic training I attended my job school at Goodfellow Air Force Base. Once I graduated I came back home and served in the US Army Reserves while I was finishing college. I felt that being in the US Army Reserves while I was in college was very beneficial for me. It allowed me to apply a sense of purpose and discipline with my life and my education. Once I graduated from college in 2006 I wanted to continue serving in the military and truly serve my country and that is why I transferred to the active duty component of the US Army.



Transferring to the active duty side of the US Army was a big change in my life. Up until that point in my life I had concentrated purely on my education and had only worked part time. While I was in the reserves all we did in our unit was some minor training and we would only support real world missions on our two week annual training. I was stationed at Fort Hood in Texas and it was there where I saw that the active duty was an entirely different machine. Every day was filled with some type of training or some sort of mission supporting the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. At the end of the day I would feel exhausted but at the same time have an incredible sense of accomplishment. One of the big events that occurred during this period of my life was my deployments to Iraq.

My first deployment to Iraq in 2007 was one of the most nerve racking experiences in my life. I had no idea what to expect and was always wondering what was going to happen next. The funny thing is that after a few weeks of uncertainty and stress about my environment it all became routine and it felt very normal. After I came back from our first deployment to Iraq I had developed a new perspective on life. I was no longer stressed out by the small things in life and learned how to prioritize the important things. In 2008 I deployed again to Iraq. This time I had been promoted to sergeant and was in a leadership

position. My second deployment was different because this time around not only was I responsible for ensuring that the soldiers under my command were properly trained but I was also tasked with their welfare. It was a different experience being in that position because I was suddenly the person who had to know what to do and guide junior soldiers. I felt that additional responsibility really allowed me to grow as a person.

In 2010 I finally was honorably discharged from the US Army. I came back home and began my life as a civilian. However after about two years away from the military I found myself missing it and the sense of pride and purpose that it gave me. In spring of 2013 I re-enlisted in the Army National Guard where I could fulfill my desire to continue defending my country but also assist the state of California in any state emergency. In addition to continuing to serve my country I am able to ensure that future soldiers of the US Army are properly trained and learn the necessary skills to ensure that they can not only successfully complete their mission but also come home to their loved ones. I hope my story about my life in the military gives you an insight as to why I made this commitment and why I continue to serve.

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## **Indranil Sinha, MD.**

### **Operation Smile and Cents of Relief-Burn Surgery Mission to Mumbai, India.**

Dr. Indranil Sinha was born in Chandannagar, West Bengal, India. He came to United States at the age of four with his parents. He attended college at the University of California, Berkeley and completed a major in Biology and became a member of Phi Beta Kappa. He next attended the University of Michigan Medical School. Following medical school, he completed his residency training in Plastic Surgery at the Brigham and Women's Hospital, Harvard Medical School in Boston, MA. Dr. Sinha also completed an independent post-doctoral fellowship from National Institutes of Health at Harvard Stem Cell Institute. He has always maintained a strong clinical interest in the care of burn patients.

Burn injuries can be devastating and affect patients' appearance, ability to care for themselves, and self-esteem. India has made great strides in recent years, and ostensibly, Mumbai is already a vibrant city now growing exponentially. However, India still has one of the highest rates of burn injury in the world and many of these patients aren't able to receive prompt surgical treatment.

One of the core reasons for which Dr. Sinha entered into Plastic Surgery Program at Harvard Medical School was to be able to aid patients internationally, India in particular. Thankfully, due to tremendous generosity of both Operation Smile and Cents of Relief in sponsoring his burn surgery mission to Mumbai, India. As a resident, Dr. Sinha partnered with Operation Smile to establish an annual burn mission to Mumbai, India, in partnership with the National Burns Centre. These missions are designed to provide surgical interventions for secondary burn deformities for underprivileged patients, both adult and pediatric, without access to medical care otherwise. Within a three year period, approximately 147 patients with significant deformities after burn injuries have received a total of 180 operations to improve their function. With the aid of the Rotary Club of Mumbai, patients are provided transportation, housing for their operation, and ongoing medical care such as splints and dressings.

Surgical intervention can only help so many people. To address the burn prevention, Dr. Sinha partnered with a non-profit organization, Cents of Relief, to create a comic book depicting common scenarios in which burn injuries occur and methods of prevention.



The book targets school-age children. For his mission work, he has been awarded multiple Regan Scholarships from Operation Smile. Still there is so much to do. Currently, Dr. Sinha is a Burn Surgery Fellow at Brigham and Women's Hospital and an Instructor at Harvard Medical School.

He requests volunteers to join these programs to help burn victims in India.

**Dr. Sinha is seen with one of his patient in Mumbai "Courtesy of Operation Restore".**



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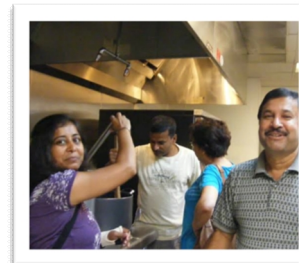
## Service Day – By Niravroh Laha

For the past few years, I've been volunteering with the Vedanta Society and several members of the Dakshini community at the First Congregational Church of Long Beach to help feed the homeless and financially disabled in the area through the Urban Community Outreach program.

Between 300-400 homeless and needy people are fed every Sunday afternoon at the church so all of the volunteers have to meet early in the morning to get the work started. Once there, we form an assembly line of workers doing various tasks at a big table in the kitchen. We are usually working in groups of three or four doing the same task. Some common tasks that come to mind are chopping and peeling vegetables and cutting meat. We sanitize each and every knife/cutting board that is used before each ingredient is chopped, peeled, or cut. After the prepping, we usually have the adults cook huge pots of rice, vegetables and often chicken curry. After the cooking is done, we move out of the hot kitchen for a short break. We take several sacks of bread outside into the mess hall and start cutting the bread into slices. We stack the slices onto trays so we can easily hand them out. After the bread cutting is done, we clean up the place, get tea and juice ready, and then we wait for the serving of food to begin. There is a long line of tables starting at the door where we lay out the food. We have one volunteer per food item, and we serve each person an ample portion of food. The people walk in the door, get their food, and sit down at the table to eat. Often we have to help the aged or a disabled guest carry their plate of food to the table. After about an hour or so, we allow people who have already gotten food to get up and get seconds. It is a demanding task, where the entire experience leaves me tired but satisfied at the end of the day. On other days, we get together with the supplies, and we spend a few hours assembling sandwiches. We usually also have fruits, vegetables, and soup that we donate. We take the materials to a park and hand them out there with a line of tables similar to the one in the church. The volunteering days are extremely fun yet at the same time it is a humble experience.

I cannot speak for other people, who may have different reasons for volunteering, but I help at homeless feedings simply to help others. I recognize that I am extremely lucky to be in the position in life that I am in, and I am happy to offer a helping hand to those who may not be so lucky. I help simply for the sake of helping another human being. The way I see it, I can make a difference in someone else's life by only waking up a little bit earlier than usual and doing a bit of work instead of sitting and playing video games all weekend. I therefore feel like I have a responsibility to do all I can to help out. I am sure all the volunteers feel the same.

As Swami Vivekananda said: "The more we come out and do good to others, the more our hearts will be purified, and God will be in them."



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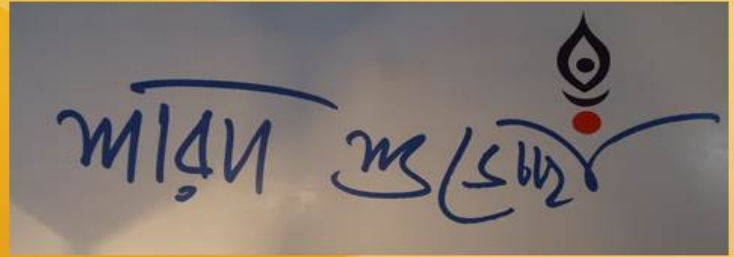
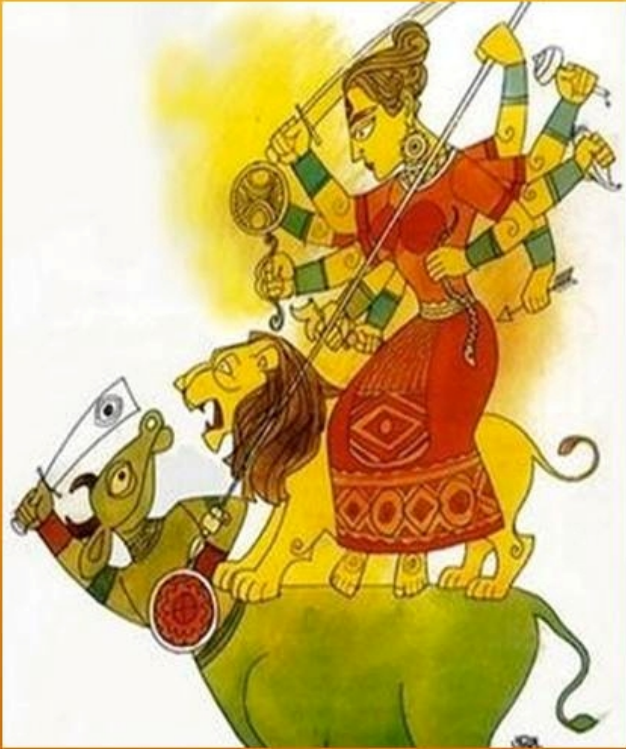
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## KALI P. CHAUDHURI, M.D.

Dr. Kali Pradip Chaudhuri, the Chairman and Founder of the KPC Group of Companies, has reached an unprecedented level of success through extraordinary vision, acute entrepreneurial spirit and relentless hard work. The KPC Group is engaged in numerous businesses around the world serving diverse industries such as healthcare, real estate, pharmaceutical and biotechnology, education, infrastructure development, agriculture, architecture and engineering, alternative energy, and information technology.

Dr. Chaudhuri obtained his MBBS degree in Kolkata from National Medical College and was also educated in Malaysia, England, Canada and the United States. He has practiced orthopedic surgery since 1982. He is certified by the American Board of Orthopedic Surgeons and is a Fellow of the American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons, and a Fellow of the American College of Surgeons.

Dr. Chaudhuri has been involved in the Southern California healthcare industry for more than 35 years and was one of the pioneers in Southern California in creating an integrated healthcare provider network in the early days of managed care.

Affiliates of the KPC Group include seven acute care hospitals:

- Hemet Valley Medical Center in Hemet, CA
- Menifee Valley Medical Center in Menifee, CA
- Western Medical Center –Santa Ana in Santa Ana, CA
- Western Medical Center –Anaheim in Anaheim, CA
- Coastal Communities Hospital in Santa Ana, CA
- Chapman Medical Center in Orange, CA
- Victor Valley Global Medical Center in Victorville, CA

Additionally, other affiliates include (1) independent physicians associations (“IPAs”), including Hemet Community Medical Group, Menifee Valley Community Medical Group and Temecula Valley Physicians Medical Group which constitute one of the largest IPA networks in southwest Riverside County, (2) several medical groups which provide services in the areas of radiology, anesthesiology, orthopedics, nephrology, surgery, obstetrics and gynecology, family medicine and emergency medicine, (3) a home health agency, (4) an ambulatory surgery center, (5) urgent care centers, and (6) imaging and diagnostic facilities in southwest Riverside County.

Dr. Chaudhuri has enjoyed significant success as a real estate entrepreneur with widely diversified property acquisitions worldwide. Dr. Chaudhuri and his group are currently engaged in the development and construction of more than 3.3 million sq. ft. of real estate expected to include a multitude of uses such as various healthcare facilities, hotels, residential units, and agriculture.

In 2003, Dr. Chaudhuri successfully established the first private medical school in West Bengal, India in conjunction with constructing a full service hospital. On a sprawling 25 acre campus with more than 1.8 million sq. ft. of construction, the KPC Medical College & Hospital, Shova Rani Nursing College and Paramedical College provide health and educational services to millions of Indians residing in the city of Kolkata.

Dr. Chaudhuri is a driven leader who has derived his inspiration to build his dream from South Asian traditional culture, heritage and values. He has two children, Kali Priyo and Sumanta, a daughter-in-law, Priyandana, and a son-in-law, Dr. Arvind Saini. He resides in Hemet, California with his wife, Sunanda.





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Kisholoy and Latika Goswami co-founded InnoSense LLC in 2002 in the Los Angeles area to advance the field of applied science for improving life on earth. Upon receiving his doctoral degree in Physical Organic Chemistry from Boston University, Dr. Goswami moved to Berkeley, CA, with his family (wife Latika and two sons - Suvro and Shanto) as a postdoctoral scientist at the Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory and the Department of Chemistry at the University of California, Berkeley. Working with a Nobel Laureate Scientist, Professor Melvin Calvin, Kisholoy pursued the theme of artificial photosynthesis by photocatalytically reducing carbon dioxide (a greenhouse gas). In 1987, Kisholoy joined the arena of industrial research in a small business setting that led to the founding of InnoSense.

Latika (MS, Physics) decided to raise two sons (twin) putting her career growth on hold. When the Goswami family moved to Las Vegas in 1989, Latika joined Lockheed Martin and later she pursued her MS in chemistry at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Later, she assumed a teaching position in a community college in Las Vegas. In 1997, the Goswami family moved to the Los Angeles area when Suvro and Shanto entered into their undergraduate program. Latika took a position with Neutrogena Corporation (a subsidiary of Johnson and Johnson) as a Senior Scientist in the Quality Assurance/Quality Control department, and in 2006 she took the position of COO with the company she co-founded.

InnoSense LLC concentrates its research in the areas of nanotechnology-based coatings and sensors for healthcare, defense, aerospace, energy and environmental applications. With 20 technical staff and well-equipped laboratories in a recently expanded facility, InnoSense is well poised for growth.

The couple now faces a scenario that is all too familiar to the first generation Americans (grown up children living far away from their parents) from the Indian subcontinent. Suvro Goswami, MBA, is Director of Global Marketing at Motorola-Google and he is living in Chicago. Shanto Goswami, MBA, is developing his own firm in New York with investment banking experience as a guide.



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