

Celebration of durga puja festival

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Durga Puja Durga Puja is performed during the autumn season every year. For the Hindus, it is the greatest festival. The puja is held for the three consecutive days: the Saptami, the Austami and the Navami; and on the fourth day, the Dashami, the image is immersed in the water of a tank or a river. The image is worshipped along with those of other deities like Lakshmi, Saraswati, Ganesh and Kartikeya. The frame, on which the said images are installed, contains also the image of Asura (demon) and the lion, the vehicle of goddess Durga.

There is also a rat at the feet of Ganesh. There is a chal-chitra which is a circular canvas of mat containing paintings of heavenly scenes placed at the back of the idols. The entire frame of the gods and goddesses is placed on a raised platform or altar made of wooden planks. The mandap is decorated with beautiful illumination. Every evening, the priest performs aarati, or greets goddess by waiving lamps and incense in accompaniment of the beating of drums, while the puja (worship) is

During this great festival the Hindus buy new clothes for their near and dear ones- They want to forget their past differences with their rivals enemies- After the immersion, on the occasion of Vijaya Dashami, the Hindus embrace one another as a token of love and affection, and distribute sweets among all. Durga Puja is now-a-days more a festival than a religious rite.

Sometimes the non-Hindus are also found to participate in the festival as a social gesture. Durga Puja is more popular in Bengal.

It is performed with more pomp and grandeur here than in any other state of India. People from neighbouring states come to Calcutta during the time, in

order to witness the attractive puja pavilion. Durga Puja is also held at Delhi, Bombay, Madras and other in important cities and towns of India, and also the villages. Durga Puja was first performed in Bengal by a Zaminder (landlord). Then it came to be popular with the introduction of the sarvojanin pujas performed with the Joint effort of about twelve Zaminders; and hence it is called barwari (twelve years or friends).

Now-a-days, Durga Puja is also held at London and New York, where the Indians perform the puja every year. Mother Goddess Durga is considered as the most powerful goddess who is the bestower of strength, prosperity and all the best gifts in life. So the devotees pray to Her for various boons. She killed the demon king Mahishasura who had been troubling the gods and goddesses and occupied Indra's throne in heaven. So the Mahisasuramardini. The legend is incorporated in Sri Sri Chand', a chapter in the Markandeya Purana composed by sage Markandeya.