

SAMVAADSHAALAA

NEWSLETTER



PUBLISHER'S NOTE

BEFRIEND BOOKS FOR LIFE AND NEVER BE ALONE

Walter Winchell says:
"A real friend is one who walks in when the rest of the world walks out."

Books EMBRACE
you when you are ALONE

Books SOOTHE you when you SUFFER

Books ILLUMINATE
when you are in ALIENATED

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From the Editor's Desk

Prof (Dr) Shalini Verma 'LIFOHOLIC'

Namaskaar Friends

It is an occasion of pride and honour for us to come up with this INA-GUARAL issue of SAMVAADSHAALAA on the auspicious occasion of Shardiya NAVARATRI 2020.

The year 2020, as we have seen so far, is an uncommon year – if more for not-so-good reasons, also for at least a few good ones.

Talking of GOOD things this year, it is worth mentioning here that Humans have become more HUMANE.

- When an Air India Express flight carrying 190 people from Dubai skidded off the runway of Kerala's Kozhikode airport and fell into a 35-feet valley, scores of HUMANS from the neighbouring areas braved the rains and the fear of COVID-19 to reach the site and helped in the evacuation of the passengers in less than two hours. Several others lined up at nearby hospitals to donate blood.

- Phool Mia, a fruit vendor from North Delhi, who was robbed of mangoes worth Rs. 30,000 by a mob in May, received help in the form of donations of over Rs. 8 lakhs from across the country.

- When Ashok Singh, a shopkeeper in Mumbai's Bhandi Bazaar reopened his shop in August after four months of lockdown, the street outside his shop got flooded, forcing him to shut down the shop immediately. His picture of breaking into tears went viral. By 6 August, several people came forward and extended him a helping hand with close to Rs. 2 lakhs.

- District Magistrate Dr Adarsh Singh along with the deputy commissioner (MN-REGA - Barabanki) ND Dwivedi and Block



Development Officer Hemanth Kumar Yadav helped around 800 villagers in Uttar Pradesh get employment under the Kalyani river restoration project.

- RuKart Technologies, a Thane-based agri-tech startup founded by Vikash Jha developed a low-cost innovative machine called the Subjee Cooler to help marginalised farmers get access to cold storage facilities.

- When the 'Baba ka Dhaba' video went viral on social media, we learnt about the misery of an elderly couple who ran a small dhaba in Delhi's Malviya Nagar and were hit hard by the Covid-19 lockdown. Help poured in from people across the country and companies like Zomato stepped in to do their bit.

- The 'lockdown' of us humans ensured 'unlocking' for the Olive Ridley Turtles on the Odisha seashores.

Last but not the least, many of the 'commoners' like me got blessed with grandeur of 'generational leap...'

Yes, with Aadya's birth, I got promoted from being MAA to GRANDMAA!

Dugga...Dugga!!!

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A Glance at SamvaadShaalaa

With a firm belief in the philosophy of 'Change is the ONLY Constant' and 'Growing is Living', we at SAMVAADSHAALAA have planned our monthly bilingual newsletter (in Hindi and English) with the following 15 features:

1. नजर हमारी, नज़रिया आपका Our News, Your Views: Here, we shall publish our Readers' Message sent to us on a day-to-day basis. We shall also select 2 best messages of the month and felicitate the senders with a SURPRISE GIFT.

2. अतुल्य भरत Incredible Art & Craft of India: In this segment we will celebrate the world-class art and craft of India, Indians and Indianness.

3. Her Charisma, His Swag... Her Swag, His Charisma: This is something that you just cannot resist. These are fascinating Picture Stories with minimal text. As they rightly say, 'A picture is worth a thousand words'. Here, we shall post 2 pictures and based on these you (readers) would send us your creative stories. Our highly experienced Mentor Authors, with the help of our professionally qualified editorial team, shall select the STORY OF THE MONTH. The WINNER writer would be offered to publish his/her FIRST book completely FREE with Books33.

4. Relationship - Our World: If you are a person who invests in relationships with family, friends and foes, this collection of short stories is something that our team of promising story writers brew JUST FOR YOU!

5. Baal-Sansaar – The Kids' World: This segment caters to the 'pink-elephant' fantasy world of your kiddos. It covers valuable book reviews on some titles on children literature that are worth reading.

6. Bookaarth: The Book Planet: This is an exclusive episodic feature prepared by our editorial team after extensive research. Each episode of this series would be based on the evolution of book writing, BTS (behind the scenes) and interesting facts in the making of select featured books from different genres.

7. Lekhan Yatra: This is an exclusive interview on the featured Author's Writing Journey.

8. Wellness 'n' Health: This segment covers brief book reviews on some titles on Wellness & Mental-Physical health that are worth reading.

9. Exams 'n' Education: This segment covers valuable book reviews on some titles on Test Prep and Higher Education (HE) that are worth reading.

10. Failure is Fine: If 'failure-success-

failure-success' stories inspire you, this is the segment to quench your thirst for the Struggle Anecdotes by eminent personalities.

11. पहले पेट पूजा - Recipe of the Month: This segment covers valuable book reviews on some titles on delicious cuisines that are worth reading.

12. त्यौहार व्यवहार : To cater to your anthropological interests, we have come up with this segment with valuable book reviews on some titles on Incredible Cultures & Celebrations from Around the World that are worth reading.

13. Desh-Pardes: This segment is for wanderlusts. It covers valuable book reviews on some titles on travel & tourism from across the world that are worth reading.

14. Insta Gyan: Developed and designed exclusively by our Fashion 'n' Fab team, this segment discusses the style statements of the pics selected from Instagram.

15. Selfie Point: Pose...Write...Post...WIN: If you are deeply in love with yourself, drop in on this segment. Take a theme-based selfie, write captivating captions...post with the given hash tags and post on your social media handles to WIN Gift Hampers.

Inaugural Edition

Navaratri Special

India is the land of festivals and festivities.

After Holi, major festivals fall in the latter half of a calendar year. The celebrations that start with the monsoon festivals like Teej, Raksha Bandhan and Onam continue with Janamashtami, Vishwakarma Puja, Ganesha Chaturthi, Parkash Divas, Paryushan Parva, the 8-day festival of the Jains, are followed by Navaratri, Dussehra, Diwali and Chhath.



‘Navaratri’ in Sanskrit means ‘nine nights’. The festival is celebrated during the Hindu calendar month of Ashvin, which usually falls in the Gregorian months of September and October.

This year, the festival will be held from October 17 to 25, 2020. It is being celebrated a month after Mahalaya.

Celebrations during this festival include setting up of puja pandals, chanting of scriptures, and cultural events. Devotees of Maa Durga observe Navaratri fast four times a year. Out of the four Navaratris – Magha (winter), Chaitra (Spring), Ashadha (Monsoon) and Sharad (Autumn) – the last is considered the most important. The Sharad or Shardiya Na-

varatri is celebrated in September/October as per the Gregorian calendar. The Devi Paksha commences after the New Moon Day (Amavasya) in the Ashwin month and concludes with Navami, a day before the auspicious day of Dussehra.

Navaratri is dedicated to the Goddess Durga, who epitomises feminine



power or Shakti. The festivities begin with the Ghatasthapana or Kalash Sthapana (setting up of the sacred pot). Devotees keep a fast during the nine days, spending the day reading the Devi Mahatmyaham and other holy mantras dedicated to the Mother Goddess.



Ghatasthapana or Kalash Sthapana

Navaratri or Durga Puja is celebrated in different forms across the length and breadth of India. It is said that the dialect or languages spoken in India changes every 200 kilometres. So, it should not be surprising that a festival like Dussehra has a variety of flavours across the nation. Being one of the most celebrated festivals





Image Source: <https://scroll.in/magazine/906762/in-gujarat-garba-is-as-much-a-part-of-christmas-celebrations-as-it-is-of-navratri>

in all parts of the country, Dussehra witnesses joyous celebrations everywhere. Popularly known as Dussehra, it takes different names across the country, such as Durga Pujo, Vijayadashami, Dasara or Durgotsav.

We know about the world famous
Durga Pujo in West Bengal and As-

sam, where grand pandals are set up in different themes every year to enshrine beautiful idols of Durga, Ganesha, Kartikeya, Saraswati and Lakshmi. Priests perform rites as per scriptural injunctions for a period of four days starting from Shashthi, the sixth day. On Dashami, the tenth

day, the Goddess is bidden farewell with a similar grandeur after Sindoor Khela.

In Gujarat, devotees celebrate the Navaratri festival by observing fasts and performing the famous traditional Garbadance. The worship is concluded by feeding young girls and



Image Source: <https://www.jagran.com/punjab/amritsar-celebration-of-5th-navratri-in-various-temples-19637898.html>

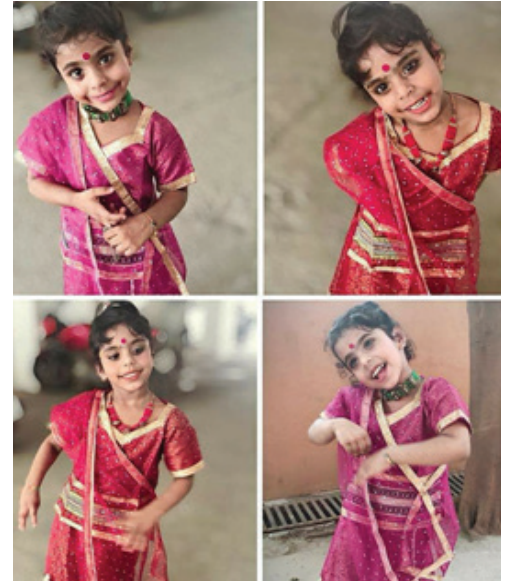


Image Source: <https://www.candere.com/blog/navratri-in-india.html>

bidding them adieu with money or gifts.

In the northern part of the country, Punjab, during the nine holy nights, daily jagrans are held in temples. On the day of Ashtami and Navami, the

devotees invite young girls in the age group of 5 to 10, and honour them with food, gifts, and money.

In the Hindi heartland, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, Durga Puja is celebrated by offering special worship to

the goddess in holy shrines and setting up a temporary altar of the deity and reciting the scripture Durga Saptahati. On the final day of worship, little girls are fed as part of Kumari Puja or Kanya Puja on the final day of worship.



Image Source: <https://www.indianeagle.com/traveldiary/7-incredible-places-to-celebrate-dussehra-and-navratri/>



In Himanchal Pradesh, we have Kullu Dussehra, which is celebrated quite differently from the other cities: effigies of Ravana are not burnthere. Rather, Goddess Hadimba is carried from her temple in Manali down to Kullu and taken to the palace to have her blessing from the royal family.

In Rajasthan, we have celebrations like Karni Mata Festival during Na-

varatri at the Karni Mata temple in Bikaner. The unique thing about this celebration is that people offer their prayers to rats, feed them and consider the remaining food as offering from God.

The rural festival of Kota Dussehra is celebrated in Kota, Rajasthan. Artisans from different places come to sell their wares. The towering effigies

of Ravana being burnt is another attraction of this festival. To top it up, there is a captivating procession from the royal palace to the ground that features decorated elephants, camels and folk dancers.

Most amazing is the way it is celebrated in Chhattisgarh. In the tribal areas of Bastar, the Navaratri festivities last 75 days and wind up on the





thirteenth day of the Shukla Paksha (waxing moon) in the month of Ashwin, with the ritual of Muria Durbar. The idols of Devi Maoli, the tribal Goddess, and her sisters are brought to the Danteshwari Temple in Jagdalpur in heavy chariots made using

traditional tools. The brightly lit procession is held between Bastar and Jagdalpur. Scores of priests engage in supervising the event. This entire fest, called Bastar Dussehra, is 500 years old!

In Andhra Pradesh, this auspicious

festival is celebrated with much devotion in various temples across the state by visiting the Ammavaaru temples or the temples of Goddesses which are beautifully decorated with flowers. The main centres of attraction are the Lord Venkateswara temple at



Image Source:<https://www.indianeagle.com/traveldiary/7-incredible-places-to-celebrate-dussehra-and-navratri/>



Image Source: <https://indianexpress.com/article/lifestyle/life-style/durga-puja-pandal-to-showcase-women-migrant-workers-in-place-of-goddess-6757447/>

Tirumala and the temple of Kanaka Durga Ammavaaru at Vijayawada.

Another important aspect of Dussehra in Andhra Pradesh is that people set up 'Bommala Koluvu' at their homes. This refers to a neat arrangement of dolls set up in a tasteful manner. The festival is concluded with the immersion of idols of Goddess Durga.

In Karnataka, we have Mysore Dasara or Nadahabba—the state-festival of the state of Karnataka.

Mysore Dussehra has been there for 400 years. The region hosts this festival as a celebration of the victory of Goddess Chamundeshwari over demon Mahishasura. The 10-day festival starts from the first day of Navaratri and culminates on the tenth day when the royal procession follows a decorated elephant carrying the idol of the worshipped goddess. The lighting of the Mysore palace and involvement of the royal family are popular attractions during Dasara in Mysore.

In Tamil Nadu, people worship three Goddesses – Durga, Saraswati and Lakshmi – during the last three days of Navaratri. There is a longstanding tradition of inviting relatives home and presenting them with appropriate gifts. The ritual of Golu is the most interesting feature of the Navaratri celebrations. Young girls and women display dolls on a small wooden pavilion that have been passed down from one generation to another.



In Kerala, right from performing Puja Veypu (offering books for worship), Puja Eduppu (taking back books after worship) to the Vidyarambham (Initiation of writing), this festival holds a lot of faith and worship in the state. Ayudha Puja is also conducted with a great fervour. Navaratri is celebrated here as Navrathri Sangeetholsavam that takes place in Trivandrum's Navrathri Mandapam.

Worth mentioning here is that in Kolkata, the city of joy, one of the grandest of all celebrations is done in honour of Goddess Durga during the Shardiya Navaratri. While the festival of Durga Pujo is without a doubt celebrated grandiosely across the world, the vigour with which it is celebrated in Kolkata is second to none.

For the 10 days, starting from the

sixth day until the ninth, the Pandals with grand idols of Goddess Durga are open for visitors.

This year, the pandal, organised by Barisha Club Durga Puja committee in Behala, Kolkata, features a migrant worker mother as the goddess. One of the major attractions of Durga puja organised by this pandal, is the empathetic selection of its theme – 'relief' – in the wake of the Covid pandemic, which saw a major migrant crisis in India earlier this year.

According to the Barisha Club Durga Puja committee, the GODDESS is the WOMAN who braved the scorching sun and hunger and penury along with her children looking for food, water and some relief for her children.

As reported in the national daily The Indian Express, more than one

crore migrant workers returned to their home states on foot during March-June 2020. The source of this humungous number is the data provided by the Ministry of Labour and Employment. Even more scaring is the number of accidents – 81,385 – that occurred on the roads during the period with 29,415 fatalities! Again, the source of this data is a written reply by the Minister of State for Road Transport and Highways V K Singh in the Lok Sabha.

Apart from the idol of Durga, those of the other gods and goddesses, including Saraswati, Laxmi and Ganesh and Kartik have also been replaced with idols of migrant workers. The female goddesses have been replaced with the migrant worker mother's daughters, carrying a swan and owl, respectively, which are considered as the deities' chosen 'vaahan'. The migrant worker mother idol also carries a shirtless child in her arms, in place of Kartik. Besides, there is a pot-bellied child with an elephant head, signifying Ganesha. There are no weapons nor the idol of demon god Asura.

And the migrant worker idols have been designed to show a small, more traditional image of the goddess with 10 hands inside a halo looking for relief.

Shubho Bijoya



Image Source:<https://indianexpress.com/article/lifestyle/life-style/durga-puja-pandal-to-showcase-women-migrant-workers-in-place-of-goddess-6757447/>