



Bengali Association of Greater Chicago - Community Newsletter

সমাজ সংবাদ

Volume 33 Issue 4

October 2008

A large, stylized eye drawing with a black iris and pupil, looking directly at the viewer. The eye is set against a background of dense, handwritten text in Bengali script. The text discusses the 'Durga Puja Anjali' ritual, mentioning offerings of flowers, ritual bathing, and recitation of Sanskrit couplets. A signature 'M. Bandy' is visible in the bottom right corner of the drawing.

"শোনো শিকাগো "



President's Address

Dear Members,

It is that time of the year when we are all getting ready for the next and biggest event of the year, Durga Pujo. It will be held on Oct 3-5 at Stream Wood High School. The pujo dates are the closest to the actual Pujo dates (Oct 5-9). The committee members are working hard to make our Pujo days as enjoyable as possible. As usual your participation is the key. Please keep checking our website for Pujo updates.

In the meantime we had our annual picnic on July 26th at a new venue, Deer Grove East Forest Preserve in Palatine. With Mother Nature's blessing, we had a good gathering and pretty active day. People kept talking about delicious food. Total attendance was 250 (an estimate). We also celebrated Indian Independence Day on August 16th at Devon Avenue with a float. The float was sponsored by National Republic Bank. It was a good turn out from our community. Some 50 members participated.

I am also happy to note that we have increasingly more participation from younger generations. I sincerely believe, with encouragement and guidance, we will be able to pass the baton to our younger generation.

May Ma Durga bless us all....Pujo-te dekha hobe.....

Regards,
Jyoti



Editor's Desk



সময় সত্ত্বেই যেন উড়ে চলে । দেখতে দেখতে দুর্ঘা পূজো এসে গেল । মনে হচ্ছে এই তো সেমিন আমরা বছরের প্রথম অনুষ্ঠান সরবরাতী পূজো দিয়ে বছর শুরু করলাম । শিকাগোর আকাশে সনাতনী শারদীয়ার নীল মেঘের আনাগোনা শুরু হয়েছে । বাতাসে ঠান্ডার আমেজ মিশে আছে । শীত আর বেশী দূরে নেই ।

আমাদের সবার গর্ব আমাদের এই বেঙ্গলী এ্যাসোসিয়েশন অফ ছেটার শিকাগো । ৩০ বৎসরের ওপরে আমরা সবাই মিলেমিশে একটা ব্রহ্মর পরিবারের মতো এই এ্যাসোসিয়েশনের মধ্যে আছি । মাঝে মাঝেই মতানৈক্যে , মনোমালিন্য , ভুল বোঝাবুঝি হয়েছে । সে তো সব পরিবারেই হয় । কিন্তু আমরা সব ভুলে আবার এক হয়ে সব কাজে এগিয়ে এসেছি । বিপদে-আপদে একে অন্যকে সাহায্য হাত বাড়িয়ে দিয়েছি, পাশে এসে দাঁড়িয়েছি । এখানেই শিকাগোর বিশেষত ।

এবছরের কার্যনির্বাহী সমিতির মূল সুর হল জেনেরে - আমাদের দ্বিতীয় প্রজনকে বিএজিসি-র সব কাজে, সব অনুষ্ঠানে যোগ দেবার জন্য উৎসাহ দেওয়া । আমরা সাড়াও পোয়েছি ওদের কাছ থেকে । ওদের উৎসাহ , ওদের উদ্দীপনা প্রশংসনীয় । আপনাদের সবার সহযোগিতা ছাড়া আমরা আমাদের এই প্রচ্ছেষ্ট সফল করতে পারতাম না ।

অক্টোবরের ৩, ৪ আর ৫ তারিখে বছরের সব থেকে বড় অনুষ্ঠান “মা দুর্গার” পূজোতে আসার জন্য আপনাদের সবাইকে সাদর আহ্বান জানাই । শিকাগোর ঐতিহ্য অনুযায়ী আসুন আমরা ছেট বড় সবাই মিলে মিশে মাঝের পূজো আনন্দময় করে তুলি ।

মনীষা বসু

সঞ্চিতা চৌধুরী

~ 2008 ~

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-DISCLAIMER-

Articles in *Samaj Sambad* are obtained from individual members. The editors are not responsible for the content of these articles. The opinions expressed in these articles are solely those of the contributors and are not necessarily representative of BAGC.

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Cover picture by— Molly Banerjee**2008 Graduations**

JYOTSNA BHATTACHARYA, d/o Pradeep and Anuradha Bhattacharya, received her M.D. degree with High Honors on June 6, 2008, from Ross University School of Medicine. She is doing her residency in Pediatrics at Schneider Children's Hospital/NS-LIJHS, New Hyde Park, Long Island, New York.

PRIYANKA BOSE, d/o Gokul and Deblina Bose, a graduate from Plainfield North High School with National Merit Award, met with her friends and family members on August 31 at Hot Wok Restaurant in Hoffman Estate to celebrate her graduation. She has a flair for writing and wishes to pursue Law in the future. She is going to North Western University.

**Stork News**

Soma Mukherjee and Ashok Ghose Dastidar were blessed with a son *Anand*, born September 7th, 2008.



Ambapali and Suman Pradhan were blessed with a son, *Shaunak*, born on August 29, 2008.



Nina Palit welcomed her daughter *Zaine* in to the family, born July 6th, 2008.



Shom and Rupal Kundu welcomed their daughter *Nayanah*, born June 30th, 2008.



Tanisha Chaudhuri, d/o **Sancheeta and Kanishka Chaudhuri**, became a proud sister to *Kushaan* on June 23rd, 2008.



Deepa Rawat and Surya Kamal Ghosh were blessed with their daughter *Roma*, on May 29th, 2008.



Ahiri Ghosh, d/o **Mini and Richik Ghosh** welcomed *Sohini* in to their family, born May 16th, 2008.

**সমকালীন****~Community News~****25th Wedding Anniversary**

Friends and well wishers gathered at the Eola Community Center on May 3, 2008 to celebrate 25th Wedding Anniversary (belated) of Anjan & Bhaswati Roy. Krishna Chakrabarty and Sabita Bush welcomed the couple with traditional *Barandala*. Neelakshi Joshi and Subrata De sang for the gathering. Rajashree Bose and Raj Purkayastha offered a power point presentation depicting the lives of the couple. Indrani Mondal recited a poem written by her for the occasion. Relatives of the Roy family, from Canada and Indiana, were present on this occasion. Manisha Bose was the MC.

Annaprasan:

Kiran Alok Mukherjee, son of Jayeeta and Indra Mukherjee celebrated his Annaprasan on August 23rd, 2008.



Kayden Hokanson, son of Shoma and Mark Hokanson celebrated his Annaprasan on July 26th, 2008.

2008 Wedding Bells

Sarika(M.D.), daughter of Narayan and Rina Das got engaged to **Manish Humad**, M.D of Lake Forest. The wedding is scheduled for May 2009. Currently both are Internal Medicine residents at University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. After wedding, Sarika will begin a fellowship in Oncology at Cornell University and Manish in Rheumatology at NYU.



Jayita, d/o Ranjit Kumar and Mita Chattopadhyay, tied the knot with **Arvind Nadathur** on Sept. 5th, 2008, at Chennai. Reception in Chicago is scheduled on Sept. 20th, 2008.



Sumon, s/o Subhendu and Kakali Dasgupta of Plainfield, IL, married **Koyel Mookerjee**, d/o Goutam and Dipa Mookerjee, at Harrisburg, PA on Aug 9th, 2008. Reception was held in Chicago on Aug 30th, 2008. The newlyweds have moved to Westchester, New York.



Rakhee, youngest daughter of Prodyot and Sanjukta Mitra wed **Dan Jepson** on July 19th, 2008.



Anjan, s/o Chiranjib & Manju Chatterji of Chicago got married to **Sudha Raminani** on 5th July, 2008 in Chicago. Sudha is from Philadelphia. They are now settled in Boston.

Sanjukta and Prodyot Mitra announced the engagement of their son **Deepak to Kanika Satsangi**.

Among the many days that make up a full celebration of Durga Puja, the Shashthi, Saptami, Asthami, Navami, and Dashami days are the most important. These days derive their names from being the number of the lunar days in the bright lunar fortnight that culminates in the full moon day of Kojagori Lakshmi Puja. The rituals that take place during this time make up what most people know as Durga Puja. Among these days, the most important is the eighth day, or Mahashtami day. On this day, the most auspicious time is the Sandhi, the time period just before the beginning of the ninth day, or Mahanavami. One explanation for the importance of this time period is that it is the time that Durga killed Mahesasura, earning the name Mahesuramarddini, or "She who Killed the Buffalo Demon."

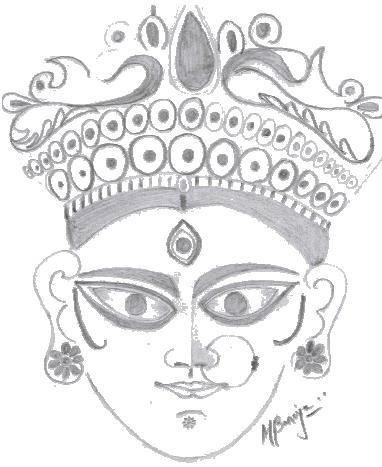
As the most important day of the most important festival for the Bengali people, so much happens that it is impossible to describe all of the ritual activity in any sort of meaningful detail within a short article. Therefore, we will focus on three rituals that are rarely seen or seen not at all, in the Durga Pujas that are performed in the Western lands on the day of Mahashtami.

But when does Mahashtami occur in the Pujas conducted by Bengali communities in the West? For organizations like the BAGC which must rent facilities to conduct a Puja on a large scale, it is difficult to coordinate the Mahashtami celebration with the actual day determined by the Panjika. So, for a typical Friday, Saturday, Sunday Puja celebration, the time set aside for Mahashtami rituals is usually Saturday morning.

Sarvatobhadra Mandala Puja

The Sarvatobhadra Mandala or "Mandala of All Auspicious" is a diagram of a lotus of eight petals surrounded by concentric squares subdivided into areas colored white, yellow, red, and black. In the center of the lotus are several concentric circles. Diagrams of this type are frequently used in Goddess worship based on one of the Tantras. Similar diagrams are used in large Pujas performed in Vaisnava temples. On the eight petals of the lotus, the priest invokes that eight shaktis of Durga referred to in Her meditation (Dhyana) mantra: Urgachanda, Pracanda, Candogra, Candanayika, Canda, Candavati, Candrarupa, and Aticandika. In the center of the lotus, the sixty-four Yoginis are worshiped. On other parts of the Mandala, the priest worships the other Mother Goddesses who led the different battle groups in the war against the Shumbha and Nishumbha as told in the Chandi. These are: Brahmani, Maheshvari, Kaumari, Vaishnavi, Varahi, Narasimhi, and Aindri. Also worshiped is Camunda, a form of Kali who was the commander-in-chief of the Goddess-led battle groups. In the very center of the Mandala, the goddess Katyayani is worshipped as the all-encompassing form of the Goddess from whom all other forms of the Goddess emerge. Other forms of Durga are invoked and worshipped on the Mandala. This diagram is an

MAHASTAMI
Robert D. Evans
Art—Molly Banerjee



important locus of worship of the many forms of Durga that are not represented in the main icons. Among our local community priests, Tapon K. Bhattacharyya performs the Sarvatobhadra Mandala Puja in a very elaborate and prominent way.

Balidan

The Sandhi is the most important time of the Ashtami celebrations, which makes it the most auspicious time of the Durga Puja. Among the rituals conducted at this time, Balidan, or sacrificial offering takes place. In Bengal, this often takes the form of an animal sacrifice. There is an unsettled debate about the role of animal sacrifice in the oldest manifestations of Hinduism. One view traces animal sacrifice back to Vedic times. The opposing view is that the Balidan was always a symbolic act, the sacrifice of the lower, animal-like self, and never involved the actual killing of animals. In Bengal, the practice is divided between those who follow the Shakta way of doing things, versus those who are Vaisnavas. Influenced by the Tantras, the Shaktas (in general) view the Balidan as an actual sacrifice of an animal, which should be done when conditions (such as affordability) permit. A male, black, unneutered goat is the preferred animal sacrifice. The unfortunate goat is consecrated and then decapitated before the image of Durga. The severed head is placed before the image, with small lamp (ghee or camphor) on top. The remains of the goat are then cooked into a type of Bhoga Prasad and distributed to the devotees. In modern times, many Shakta-oriented organizations have discontinued the sacrifice of a goat as a part of their Puja, citing the unnecessary cruelty as the reason for stopping. For example, Anandamoyi Ma, moved by the bleating of the goat before its decapitation, declared that the actual sacrifice would no longer be a part of her annual Durga Puja. The other way of doing the Balidan follows the principles of Vaisnavism, which places great value on non-violence and compassion for living beings. In the Vaisnava way of doing things, a pumpkin or a cucumber is offered as a substitute for the goat.

Kumari Puja

Kumari Puja is the worship of a young girl as a manifestation of Durga. This takes place after the Balidan and should be done during the Sandhi time. However, it often takes place outside of the Sandhi due to practical considerations or differences in family or local traditions. A preadolescent girl is chosen from the family of the Yajman (main sponsor of the Durga Puja) or from other families in the community. She is dressed up and decorated with ornaments to look like Durga. She is then worshipped by the priest as a representation of Durga as a young girl. At the conclusion, the girl is given a few gifts and returns to her family. Although Kumari Puja is an important part of Durga Puja, its practice seems to be declining in modern times.

Sarvatobhadra Mandala Puja, Balidan, and Kumari Puja are three parts of the traditional worship of Durga in Bengal that take place on the day of Mahashtami. The role that these rituals play in any particular Puja is a result of local and family traditions, the locality that the Puja is performed in, and the values and sensibilities of the organizers of the Puja.

Source:

Rodrigues, Hillary Peter. *Ritual Worship of the Great Goddess*. New York: State University of New York, 2003.



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**Hi!! We are Comming
to Celebrate Chicago Durga Puja
with all of you.**

Between the shores of Me and Thee
there is the loud ocean, my own surging self,
which I long to cross.
Blue far-away sky bridges Me and Thee
Yet your horizon merges into mine
Thine is my offering of the autumn morning.

Vessels of white patchy clouds,
full of your dreams,
float along,to us
we shall colour those dreams vibgyor.

Let thy boat be filled
with golden harvest.
The Eternal Dancer dances
in the flower in spring,
in the harvest in autumn,
in thy limits,
in thy thoughts and dreams.



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Bengali Association of Greater Chicago Nomination Form for 2009 Executive Committee (ExCom) and Board of Trustee (BOT)

To the Nomination Committee:

ExCom OR BOT

I hereby nominate _____
(Name)

Of _____
(Address)

Nominator: _____
(Name)

Of _____
(Address and Phone No.)

Acceptance of the nominee to serve, if elected:

Dated: _____

If for ExCom, please fill out the information below

For the position of:

- Slate of _____
- President
- Vice President
- Secretary
- Treasurer

Cultural <input type="checkbox"/>	Food <input type="checkbox"/>	Newsletter <input type="checkbox"/>	Puja <input type="checkbox"/>
Facility <input type="checkbox"/>	Sports <input type="checkbox"/>	Youth/GenX <input type="checkbox"/>	Email <input type="checkbox"/>
Registration <input type="checkbox"/>	Bangla Education <input type="checkbox"/>		

If the Nominee is part of a slate of nominees for the Executive Committee, please also check the box for slate and state the name of the Nominee for the President in addition to nominee's position check box. Nominees running individually shall check only the box for the position they are contesting.

For BOT, please collect 20 signatures and for ExCom, please collect 5 signatures from BAGC members in good standing. If needed, please attach additional sheet with signatures.

Please return this Nomination form duly filled in to the following address; it needs to be received by Oct 5th at the following address:

Jyoti Prakash Mondal
Nomination Committee Chairman
Bengali Association of Greater Chicago
729 W Gilbert
Palatine, IL 60067



শারদীয়ার প্রতি, শুভেচ্ছা ও অভিনন্দন স্বত্ত্ব

পরিষেবা

মাঝে মাঝে বিশেষ দিনগুলিতে ইচ্ছা হয় না একান্ত আপনজনকে কিছু পাঠানোর

আপনার এই ইচ্ছা পুরানথে - 'পরিষেবা' আপনার সাথে আছে
বিজয়া, ভাইফোঁটা, অন্নপ্রাশন, অথবা নিজস্ব পছন্দের দিনে আমরা মিষ্টি ও
উপহার সামগ্রী পাঠাই - কলকাতা এবং গ্রেটার কলকাতা

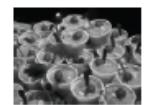
যোগাযোগ করুন



Sample Price List* (in US \$)

Sweets

	Amount	Price
Rajbhog	25 pcs	12
Sandesh	25 pcs	10
Garam Jalebi	25 pcs	7
Garam Laddoo	1 kg	10
Gulab Jamun	25 pcs	12
Chitrakuth	25 pcs	12
Mishti Dai	2 kg	12
Rabri	2 kg	25
Chanar Payesh	15 cups	15
Assorted sweets	25 pcs	12



Fish and Meat

	Amount	Price
Chingri	1 kg	26
Ilish	2 kg	30
Bhetki	2 kg	26
Rui	2 kg	20
Katla	2 kg	20
Pabda	1 kg	15
Topse	1 kg	15
Chital Peti	1 kg	20
Chicken	1 kg	10
Mutton	1 kg	15

Cakes and Pastries

	Amount	Price
Cakes (various)	2 lbs	20-30
Pastries (various)	10 pcs	13-15
Chicken Croissant	15 pcs	15

Other gifts items also available -
please call for price and availability

Combination meals (lunch or
dinner) from reputed Kolkata
restaurants also available - please
call for price and availability

Contact

রূপা রায় ২৮ ১-৬৯৩-৭৮০৫

Rupa Roy 281-693-7805

sroy@consolidated.net

*Prices subject to change without notice

August 2008

Durga Puja brings back a lot of fond memories for all of us. Bengalis of Chicago celebrate the puja with

much fanfare, trying our best to re-create the environment back home during this time. However, one experience that we probably miss a lot is the fun of travelling from *para* (neighborhood) to *para*, visiting various *pandals* (temporary shed), decorated with diverse themes and a variety of interpretations of Devi Durga. In this article we look back at some of those memories of Durga Puja *pandals* and decorations in Kolkata and look at how they have evolved over time.



Preparation for Durga Puja begins about 5-6 months prior to the puja. Planning for the Devi images and decoration begins early on and brings out the creative spirit of Bengalis in all its colors. Kumartuli, an artisan's town in north Kolkata, gets busy as many people in and around Kolkata order their idols from the artisans here. The entire process of creation of the idols from the collection of clay to the ornamentation is a holy process. The clay for the idols is collected and transported from the banks of a river, supervised by rites and rituals. After this, bamboo sticks are used to make the skeletal structure of the idol and the platform on which it stands. Then straw, jute ropes and strings are used to give the idol its shape. This is followed by application of clay to give real finish to the figurine. The idol statue is painted in three stages beginning with base white earth color, followed by pink or yellow and then finished with blood earth colors. The eyes are painted and other detailing is done by the main artist. Starting with Devi Durga, the eyes of the idols are painted on *Mahalaya* or the first day of the *Pujas*. The idols of Durga are then varnished. Her hair is made of jute, glued to the head, and then the idol is dressed and ornamented.

While the artisans work on the Durga idols, the neighborhood committees and decorators get busy planning for the *pandals*. The *pandals* are an artistic creation by themselves. These involve intricate designs, exquisite architectural and construction skills and innovative ideas reflecting the creativity of the people of Bengal. The *pandals* are built according to well made plans. Bamboo poles, planks of wood and meters of canvas are used to construct huge structures, which not only house the goddess and her children, but decorate a large part of the entrance to the *mandap* (canopy).

The Artistry Surrounding Durga Puja

Sauparna Sarkar

In recent times, artists have started using unique building materials to design *pandals*, such as fiber glass.



In today's age, theme-based *pandals* have become the norm. The puja committees explore ideas which are unique and special to attract more and more visitors. This has led to the birth of a new profession – the *pandal* designers, who are responsible for designing pandals based on themes ranging from traditional to contemporary architectures, exotic or historical places, social themes or contemporary world events. Traditionally the image of Durga used to be placed together with her offsprings under one composite frame called *ek chala*. This tradition is still continued by some of the descendants of the elite households of Kolkata of the 18th and 19th century. For example, the puja at Shovabazar Rajbari still reflects the tradition started by Raja Nabakrishna Deb in 1757. It's *ek chala*-r puja continues to be a big draw. However, over time, especially since the 1980s, the image of the mother goddess became bigger and got detached from her children. The *pandal* space also began to expand as elaborate themes were conceived to decorate the *pandals*. The motifs evolved from temples, shrines such as Sanchi Stupa, to the Louvre, and of late, the Hogwart Castle from Harry Potter.



An important element of *pandal* design is the illumination used to highlight various features of the *pandals* as well as to attract visitors. This art form was started by the electricians of Chandannagar and has now become part and parcel of the theme-based *pandal* design. Tiny light bulbs are used to create intricate designs depicting notable historical or contemporary personalities or events. Nowadays, communities vie with each other not only to draw large crowds, but to attract sponsorships and to compete for the vied Asian Paints award for the best *pujas* and *pandals*. Amidst this frenzy of competition, organizers are always on the hook to come up with new concepts and techniques to stand out.

Contd..



The choice of themes has varied from year to year. For example, in 2002, folk traditions represented in *pat* paintings and traditional Bengal villages were used in many pujas. The following year, the focus shifted to Kerala, including its villages, temples and Kathakali dance forms. Since then, there have been various themes, such as, pandals based on Gujarat's famous Bhunga houses which withstood the devastating earthquake of 2001; lighting based on the Eiffel tower; and idols based on the Inca civilization used in a theme promoting awareness of global warming.

BAGC Bangla School Update by Shanku Ghosh

Our Spring session with 31 students wrapped up last June and Fall session is currently underway with 33 students. Going forward, levels will span the full year (starting in Fall and finishing in Spring) to provide a full year lesson plan that matches up to the school year. Our sincere thanks to the parents, the volunteer teachers and to all the students for making the Bangla Choir and Bangla Language classes enjoyable for all.

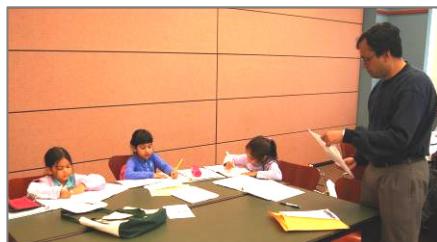


Congratulations!

Following students have successfully completed their Level 1 Test in the Spring Session.

Meghna Dasgupta, Sagnik Chakraborty, Ahiri Ghosh, Aishani Dutta, Arjun Pal, Arushi Paul, Aniket Biswas, Pratima Maiti, Anjan Ghosh, and Ushasi Naha

Above: Jaya Banerjee leads the choir students through practices. Below Left: Table 1 parents work with their children on the day's lesson. Middle: Sanjna Das, Soma Sanyal and Shuvani Sanyal (Bui) work with Table 2 students. Right: Debabrata Pal leads Table 3 students through daily lesson plan. Below: Mahuya Sengupta (left) and Samita Sarkar (standing) keeps the Table 4 students engaged in their lesson. Bottom: Debasish Mukhopadhyay (right) explains Bangla School to a visitor with Table 5 students in the foreground.



Thanks!

Following members donated generously of their time to share our cultural heritage with the next generation. Their dedication has made the Spring Session a success and we look forward to their continuing involvement in future sessions of Bangla School.

Table 1 - Sancheeta & Kanishka Chaudhuri

Table 2 - Soma Sanyal and Sanjna Das

Table 3 - Debabrata Pal, Richik Ghosh, Dhiman Chakraborty

Table 4 - Mahuya Sengupta, Samita Sarkar

Table 5 - Debasish Mukhopadhyay, Indrani Mondal

Manjusree Ghosh – Lead Language Teacher

Jaya Banerjee – Choir Teacher

Ronti Ghosh – Communications

Surya Dutta and Aninda Roy – Facilities

We would also like to thank *BKPA – Bengali Kids of Princeton Area* organization for sharing their Bangla School curriculum and teaching material.



Please direct any feedback or comments to **Shanku Ghosh** and **Surya Dutta**

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Banga Bhavan Update – September, 2008

BBC is enthusiastically continuing to work on various tasks required to make BAGC's Banga Bhavan dream a reality. There was a lot of enthusiasm from everyone who visited the open house for the prospective property in Hoffman Estates. We received a lot of very positive feedback. Once again we are reiterating the uses for the property:

- Potential for holding 3 BAGC Annual events.
- Space for storage, rehearsals, meetings, library, classes, indoor sports.
- Senior Center, Satsang Center, Literary Events.
- Members can rent the space for personal pujas and parties.

We have published the base line Operating Principles for the use of our facility. Please go to the following link to access it: http://www.bagc.net/bangabhavan/BB_Operational_Guidelines.pdf

BBC is actively involved with Hoffmann Estates officials regarding re-defining zoning laws and other legal aspects which are required to safeguard BAGC interests and pave the way for BAGC to purchase the property. Once we have an all clear from the city we need to ensure we have adequate funding before we make an offer for the property.

The funding is critical if we are to make an offer for the property.

**WE NEED ALL BAGC MEMBERS TO COME FORWARD AND SUPPORT THIS INITIATIVE
BY DONATING GENEROUSLY**

Financing

To ensure transparency regarding financing here is a short version of the financing model. Please note that the numbers will change as we get more donations and our assumptions get further refined. A more detailed model will be posted shortly on the BAGC website.

We understand the members would like a clearer idea of the financial aspects of the purchase. During Durga Puja, members of the BBC will be happy to clarify any questions BAGC members may have regarding the purchase.

FINANCING 2009		
Facility Cost (Medium Cost Scenario)	\$	825,000
Initial Renovation Outlay (Medium Cost Scenario)	\$	125,000
TOTAL INITIAL PROJECT COST	\$	950,000
Bank Loan	\$	525,000
Down Payment	\$	300,000
	\$	825,000
FUND RAISING		
Down Payment Required for property	\$	300,000
Initial Renovation- Outlay	\$	125,000
Cash to be kept in Hand	\$	150,000
TOTAL MINIMUM CASH REQUIRED AS OF ACQ. DATE	\$	575,000
Less: Pledge Collections	\$	258,000
Contribution from Special Funds	\$	75,000
Additional request from Special Funds (to be approved)	\$	50,000
MINIMUM ADDITIONAL DONATIONS REQUIRED AS OF ACQ. DATE	\$	192,000
 REFINANCING 2010		
Outstanding Bank Loan Balance as of Acq. Date	\$	525,000
Less Principal repaid	\$	43,903
LESS ADDITIONAL DONATIONS FROM MEMBERS COLLECTED BETWEEN 01/01/2009 THROUGH 12/31/2009	\$	200,000
Bank Loan after Refinancing (01/01/2010)	\$	281,097
 Cash in Hand (01/01/2010)	\$	140,000

OPERATING EXPENSES		
	FY 2009	FY 2010
Expenses		
Mortage Payment (on refianced balance)	\$ 46,718	\$ 25,014
Insurance	\$ 1,200	\$ 1,200
Utilities	\$ 4,800	\$ 4,800
Maint	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000
Repairs	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000
SUBTOTAL: Estimated Annual Minimum Operating Expenses	\$ 59,718	\$ 38,014
 Savings		
Interest Income from Cash in Hand (to be kept in CD)	\$ 5,250	\$ 4,900
Storage Rental	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500
Rental Income	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000
Hosting three BAGC events (Saraswati, Puja, Banga Dibas and Kalipuja)	\$ 12,000	\$ 12,000
SUBTOTAL: Estimated Annual Savings	\$ 22,750	\$ 22,400
 Gross Short Fall		
Payment from Cash in Hand	\$ 10,000	\$ 5,000
Net Shortfall to be met by Additional Membership Fees	\$ 26,968	\$ 10,614
 Estimated Number of Families	275	275
Additional Annual Membership Fee per family (to be collected in Jan 2009 and Jan 2010 respectively)	\$ 98	\$ 39

Durga Puja Schedule:**Friday Oct 3rd, 2008**

Registration 5:00-9:00 PM

Pujo 6:00-7:30 PM

Cultural Programs:

President's Welcome- 9:00-9:05 PM

Local Artist (Sri Mono Mazumder on Sitar) -
9:05-9:25PM

Invited Artist (Chandreyee & her group) - 9:30-11:30PM

Check website

Saturday Oct 4th, 2008Registration 9:00AM-8:00 PM

Pujo 10:00 AM-1:00PM

Anjali 1:00-2:00PM

Bhakti Geeti 3:00-4:00 PM (Near Pratima)

Movie 3:00-5:00 PM

Cultural Programs:

Welcome speech— 5:30-5:35PM

Bangla School Choir—5:35-6:00PM

Gen-X Production—Jaagaran, The Awakening—6:00-
6:45PM

Director— Manjima Bose—

Invited Artist (Suranjan Bose)— 6:45-8:30 PM;

Check website

Sunday Oct 5th, 2008Registration 10:00AM - 5:00PM

Pujo 10:30 AM - 12:30 PM

Anjali 12:30 -1:30 PM

(contd..)

**Cultural Programs:**

Childrens Drama—Sankha Bahan—4:00- 5:00 PM

Director— Kumkum Ghosh

Kids' Show (Sharadiya Utsav, Dir Monisha Datta)

5:00-5:20PM

Invited Artist (Shaoni Mitra) 5:20- 7:20PM;

Check website

Food Corner Announcement:

Durga Puja is a fun time and BAGC Food Committee hopes everyone will enjoy themselves at the Puja. Since co-ordination can be difficult at times and members are not always aware when food is served, we are publishing the schedule separately. All efforts will be made to serve children half an hour early, except for boxed snacks on Sunday October 5th.

Friday, October 3rd, 2008:

Dinner: 7:30 pm to 9:00 pm

Kitchen closes at 9:30 pm

Saturday, October 4th, 2008:

Lunch: 1:30 pm to 3:30 pm

Kitchen Closes at 4:00 pm

Dinner: 8:30 pm to 10:30pm

Kitchen closes at 11:00 pm

Sunday, October 5th, 2008:

Lunch : 1:30 pm to 3:30 pm

Kitchen closes at 4:00 pm.

Boxed Snacks—7:30 PM...

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আমরা যারা ৫০-এর শেষে কিন্তু ৬০-এর দশকে দেশে বড় হয়েছি, আমাদের অনেকের কাছেই দুর্গাপূজার অর্থ হল অনেক অনেক মধুর স্মৃতি। বারোয়ার পূজো মন্ডপে যেদিন গঙ্গার এঁটেল মাটি এনে ফেলা হ'ত, সেদিন থেকেই আমাদের মধ্যে একটা উভেজনার সংক্ষর হ'ত, যার রেশ চলতো

কালীপূজো পর্যন্ত। মন্ডপে খড়-বিচালি দিয়ে মুর্তি বাঁধার কাজ শুরু হলে আমাদের নাটকের রিহাসাল-ও আরস্ত হয়ে যেত। প্রতিদিন রঞ্চিন ক'রে আমরা মন্ডপে এসে দেখতাম যে প্রতিমা তৈরির কাজ কর্তৃত এগিয়েছে। শরতের সকালে বেশ শীত শীত করতে, শিশির ভেজা ঘাসে ছড়িয়ে থাকতো সুগন্ধী শিউলী ফুল। যেদিন ভোর রাতে রেডিওয় বেজে উঠতো অপ্রতিষ্ঠিত বীরেন্দ্রকৃষ্ণ ভদ্র গলায় মহালয়ার আগমনী গান, আমরা বিছানা ছেড়ে উঠে পড়তাম। না, মা দুর্গা সপরিবারে এলেন ব'লে! দুর্গাবাড়ির ঢাকের আওয়াজ আমার মনকে আজও আপুত ক'রে তোলে।

আমার বেশ মনে আছে, সেটি সন্তুষ্ট ১৯৭৪ সাল। আমি গিয়েছিলাম হিমাচল প্রদেশের সিমলায়। একদিন বিকাল বেলায় বিদেশী বন্ধুদের সঙ্গে ম্যাল-এ হাঁটিছি। হঠাৎ শুনি ঢাকের আওয়াজ। একজন পথচারীকে জিজাসা করে জেনেছিলাম যে এ ঢাকের আওয়াজ আসছে স্থানীয় দুর্গা বাড়ি থেকে। নীচে নেমে দুর্গা বাড়িতে পৌছে দেখি দুর্গা পূজার সন্ধ্যা আরতি হচ্ছে, একদম বাঙালি মতো। আমার মনেই ছিলনা যে সেই দিনটি ছিল মহা আঠষ্ঠী। সেই সেদিন, সেই হিমাচলী ভক্ত-পরিবেষ্টিত পূজা মন্ডপে, পুরুত মশাই-এর চট্টীপাঠ আর ঢাকের আওয়াজ যখন অনুরূপিত হচ্ছিল আমার কানে, মনে, প্রাণে, এ মাঝের মূর্তির সামনে দাঁড়িয়ে আমার হিন্দু বাঙালি সঁঠা যেন আমার মধ্যে নাড়া দিয়ে উঠেছিল। সংক্ষার বোধহয় একেই বলে!

আমেরিকায় পূজাপূর্বণ সঙ্গত কারনেই উইক-এন্ডে হয়। এদেশে আসবার আগেই আমি স্টো জনতাম। ১৯৯০ সালে আমি যেবার সেট লুইসে আসি, সেবার প্রথম আমার আমেরিকার দুর্গাপূজা দেখবার সুযোগ হয়। স্থানীয় বাঙালি সংস্থা ‘পুনশ’র উদ্যোগে আয়োজিত সেই পূজো দেখতে দিয়ে দেখেছিলাম স্থানীয় বাঙালি দের মধ্যে কী উৎসাহ-উদ্দীপনা। স্টেজ নেই, তবুও মেরের ওপর উইংস দিয়ে ধিরে তৈরি করা হয়েছিল স্টেজ। মহিলারা বাড়ি থেকে রামা করে নিয়ে এসেছিলেন রাতের ভোজ। জলসা হল, নাটক হল। সেন্ট লুইসে সাকুল্যে তখন ২৫/৩০ ঘর

আমেরিকায় দুর্গাপূজা অঞ্জন রায়

হিন্দু বাঙালি।

যতদুর জনি, নিউ ইয়র্কে প্রথম দুর্গাপূজো অনুষ্ঠিত হয়েছিল ১৯৬৯-এ, স্থানীয় ইষ্টকোস্ট দুর্গাপূজা কমিটির উদ্যোগে। এখন নিউ ইয়র্ক-নিউ জার্সি ছেট বড় মিলিয়ে অগুষ্ঠি পূজো হয়। তবে প্রধান প্রধান যে পূজাগুলি অনুষ্ঠিত হয় সেগুলি হল: জার্সি সিটি, কল্লোন, আনন্দমন্দির, গার্ডেনসিটি কালচারাল এসোসিয়েশন, সাউথ জার্সির চেরি হিলস, ভারত সেবাশ্রম সংঘ, ইত্যাদি। কয়েক বছর ধরে বাংলাদেশী হিন্দু বাঙালিরাও শুরু করেছেন তাঁদের আলাদা দুর্গাপূজা।

সেদিক দিয়ে শিকাগোর বাঙালিরা এয়াবৎ একটি মাত্র দুর্গাপূজা অনুষ্ঠিত করে আসছিলেন। কিন্তু ২০০৭ সাল থেকে শিকাগোর বিভিন্ন বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ে অধ্যয়নরত বাঙালি ছাত্র-ছাত্রীরা মিলে শুরু করেছেন ‘শিকাগোর বাঙালি’র দুর্গাপূজো। শিকাগোয় প্রথম দুর্গাপূজা অনুষ্ঠিত হয়েছিল ১৯৭০ সালে, হিস্ডেল ক্লাব হাউসে। প্রতিমা তৈরি করেছিলেন গিরিন রায়। তখনও বেঙালি এসোসিয়েশন-এর সৃষ্টি হয়নি। বাঙালিরা প্রথম বিজয়া সম্মিলনী করেছিলেন ১৯৬৯ সালে। বি-এ-জি-সি সৃষ্টি হয় ১৯৭৭ সালে। ১৯৭১ সালের দুর্গাপূজো হয়েছিল শিকাগো ইউনিভার্সিটির ইন্টারন্যাশনাল হাউসে। প্রতিমা এ গিরিন রায়ের তৈরি। এরপর প্রতিমা তৈরির দায়িত্ব গ্রহণ করেন যথাক্ষেত্রে সুরত মুখার্জি এবং ডাঃ অজয় দাস। সে সবই তো এখন ইতিহাস।

যদিও আমি শিকাগোয় এসেছি ১৯৯৮ সালে, কিন্তু পিওরিয়ায় থাকতেই ১৯৯৪ সাল থেকে আমরা এখানকার দুর্গাপূজা দেখতে সপরিবারে আসতে শুরু করেছিলাম। আমাদের এখানে আসার কারণ ছিল যে পিওরিয়ায় কোন পূজো হতনা। তাছাড়া, এখানে ছিল বাংলা সাংস্কৃতিক অনুষ্ঠান দেখার আকর্ষণ। দেশ থেকে নামী দামী শিল্পীরা, গায়ক-গায়করা আসতেন। শিকাগোয় ভালো ভালো নাটক দেখেছি। এখানেও ছেটদের নিয়ে খুব ভালো অনুষ্ঠান হতে দেখেছি। আসতে আসতে দেখলাম বাঙালির সংখ্যা কত বেড়ে যেতো। নাটকে আমার আগ্রহ ছেলেবালা থেকেই। তাই, আমি নিজেই নাটক করতে শুরু করলাম। এখানে বাঙালিদের মধ্যে অনেক উৎসাহী মানুষ আছেন। প্রয়োজন শুধু একটু উদ্যোগের। এখানে বেশির ভাগ বাঙালি বাবা-মায়েরাই চান যে তাঁদের ছেলেমেয়েরা বাংলা অনুষ্ঠানে অংশগ্রহণ করুক, বাঙালি সংস্কৃতির সঙ্গে ওরা পরিচিত হউক। সেই উৎসাহ উদ্যোগাদের পক্ষে আশাব্যঙ্গক।



BAGC Picnic— July 26th

Photo Courtesy—Krishna Chakrabarty & Arup Roy



BAGC Participation in Indian Independence Day—Aug 16th

Photo Courtesy—Krishna Chakrabarty



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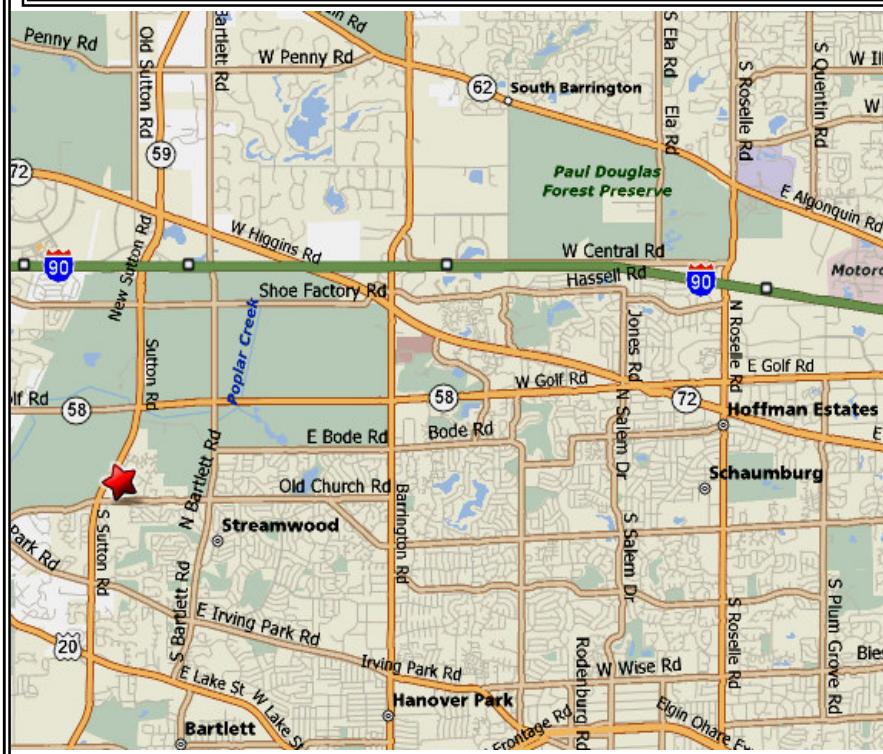
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Mark your calendar for upcoming event:

"DURGA PUJA"

3rd, 4th & 5th October, 2008



Venue:

Streamwood High School

701 W. Schaumburg Road

Streamwood, IL 60107

Phone: (630) 213-5500

Directions:

1. From I-88, take Illinois 59 north, turn right on Schaumburg Road in Streamwood. The school will be on your right.
2. From I-90, take Illinois 59 south, turn left on Schaumburg Road in Streamwood. The school will be on your right.