



St. Xavier's University, Kolkata

Department of Mass Communication

XPRESSION

VOLUME 2

ISSUE 1

Covid protocols for Durga Puja 2021

- Withdrawal of night curfew between 11 pm to 5 am from 10th to 20th of October
 - No visitors will be allowed inside the pandals
- Puja committees have been asked to keep their inaugurations as low-key as possible
- For people offering Pushpanjali, the Government had encouraged people to get their flowers to avoid spreading of the virus
 - No cultural programmes are to be held to avoid gathering
- Sindoor khela and immersion processions will also not be allowed

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Covid & Durga Puja

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Campus

For people living inside as well as outside the city of joy Kolkata, one thing that remains constant is the love affair for Durga Puja. The 4-day celebration, that marks its beginning from Mahalaya, is a culmination of emotions, nostalgia, spectacular art on display around the city, food, and so much more.

According to Hindu scriptures, this festival marks the day when Goddess Durga defeated Mahishasur and saved the world. In West Bengal and Odia traditions, it is considered that Goddess Durga along with her children visits her natal home for these days. There are a couple of notable things that signify the arrival of this grand festival -

The Advent of Devi Durga

Shayanki Roy Chowdhury



Illustration done by - Shayanki Roy Chowdhury

Autumnal sky (tufts of clouds that look like cotton candy on a blue sky), Kash phool, and Puja

Barshikis.

Although the celebrations were grim last year because of the

pandemic, that did not break the spirit of the people. This year the situation looks a little better as people are resorting to shopping from roadside vendors and other small scale businesses to fulfil their shopping needs to celebrate this grand festival with their friends, family, and other loved ones.

Looking past the glitz and glamour, Durga Puja is also a festival that is truly inclusive of every community and the city worshipping the feminine Goddess in itself stands for breaking the patriarchal norms.

Maayer Agomoni

Oishi Basu

The proclamation of 'Durga puja' being an innate part of the human emotions of every Bengali is indeed true. We look forward to the celebration of these four days with bated breathe and excitement.

As we get closer to the day, which will mark the start of the festival, there is a change of energy in the air around us. It makes us gear up for welcoming our Maa with warmth and love. The festive mood sets in with the arrival of Mahalaya. Getting up at dawn and listen-

ing to the famous 'Chandipath' and the song 'Bajlo tomar alor benu' serve as a precious memory for us to treasure. After the mood is set, then comes the plethora of joyous pre-planning. The need to go on a last moment shopping spree, mapping out the course for pandal hopping, salivating at the thought of getting to eat delicious food, and so on. In the duration of this preparation, the City Of Joy lives up to its name and personifies everyone's joy. Every person from every stature of society gets together to celebrate these four days of abundant warmth and fun. Durga Maa is seen as the embodiment of courage, to fight the prevailing evil and win against it. This is one of the ideologies which draws



Image Source - Google

us, people, to worship her and look forward to her arrival in our homes.

As we could not welcome her properly last year, let's make

sure we do it this time. Let's all come together and receive her with the sounds of Dhaak, with the soulful fragrance of Dhuna, and light her way with Diyas!

Impact of Covid-19 on Kumartuli idol makers

Ushana Maji



Source- pinterest

There's a Bengali phrase "Bangalir Baaro Maase Tero Parbon" – Bengalis appreciate and celebrate a variety of pujas and traditions throughout the year. The covid induced disruption in the celebration of Durga Puja has caused an adverse effect on the livelihoods of the idol makers from Kumartuli since 2020.

Kumartuli exports idols to various areas of the nation and overseas, with the craftsmen earning the most during West Bengal's major festival, Durga Puja. The first wave of coronavirus was a difficult blow. This time around, the artificers are fearful of a similar outcome. Last year due to the reduced budget, the organizers had placed orders of low cost idols due to the ongoing pandemic.

In addition, several clubs are holding Durga Pujas sans pandals, relying solely on a 'Khuti Puja.' The cost of manufacturing an idol has grown since the cost of raw materials such as wood, bamboo, color, fabric, and labor has climbed, according to the idol manufacturers. However, because of lower demand, the selling price of the idols has not increased. According to them, a set of idols that they sold for 1 lakh to 1.25 lakh in 2019 are now being sold for 70,000 owing to covid 19.

As the West Bengal government upholding Covid regulations in 2021, the idol makers are anticipating a better year than the last one. Their preparations for the celebration have been disrupted by Covid 19, but their resilience is still winning.

Hope and humanity

Manasi Das

This year will be the second Durga Puja celebration since we've been hit by the pandemic. Although the celebration has dried down several notches, the hope of a fresh start is pulling us through.

The lockdown in West Bengal has been extended till 30th October while curbing down the curfew at night. The themes this year are all very much related to Covid 19 and its overall impact on our so-

ciety. Starting from vaccination to the impact of covid on our mental health, restrictions of human communications to promoting the benefits of sanitisation, masking and maintaining overall guidelines.

The brutal second wave of covid 19 have left many children orphaned and have



Illustration by - Manasi Das

Sangha Durga Puja committee as a part of their project "Sneho" have opted to bear the educational and medical expenses of 10 orphaned children for a year. The College Square Durga Puja committee has decided to hand out books and toys to the children of the Molkhali area in Sundarbans.

This year's Durga Puja is all set to be small and beautiful as urged by our chief minister Mamata Banerjee. She also granted 50k to each puja committee to help them with the lost sponsorship during this tough scenario. All in all this year's puja is set to roll on the note of hope and humanity.

Extending support to the indigenous artists

Manasi Das

A number of rules and guidelines have been implemented by the government authorities to tackle the pandemic situation since the previous year. And along with this came a suspension order to hold any sort of cultural events. This impacted the daily earnings of many local singers, dancers, performers and artists in general.

Some commendable steps are being taken by different puja committees to extend support towards these people.

Janakalyan Sangha of Belegkata are helping the doll makers from East

Burdwan by donating a major share from their budget and allowing them to sell their goods within their premises. Also 75 Pally in Bhowanipore is helping the Chhau artists from Purulia financially and as well as making space for them to showcase their art.

In an effort to dedicate this puja to such fine artists, Subir Das who is the secretary of



Source- Google

75 Pally Durga Puja said, "We are staying away from all glitz, preferring to donate the money to performers and present their families with new clothes and also allows them to sell their goods from our premises".

Amidst all the uncertainties the sense of community is winning in Bengal.

A blend of tradition and fiesta

Trisha Nandy

North Kolkata with its old charm has never failed to garner attention of visitors either because of its lanes and by lanes or the aesthetic heritage that it bears till date. Durga puja is celebrated with great pomp every year in north Kolkata and visitor's que up for a sight of the heritage pujas. This year is also no different. Hatibagan Nabinpally is a very old puja and bears a unique essence. It was established in the year of 1933 and this time they will celebrating the glorious 88th year.

This year the theme "Torpon"



Hatibagan Nabinpally: A famous idol that depicted the theme "loss of simplicity in a mechanized world". (Source: Google)

is chosen by them. This theme reflects on the lives that we have lost in these two years of pandemic. By this theme they want to pay homage to the people who died because of the

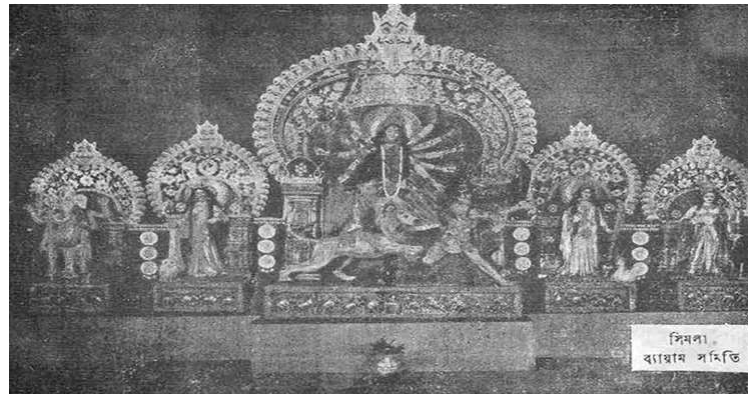
deadly virus or any kind of diseases.

Prasanta Pal is the artist of this Durga Puja committee and he has delivered some excellent themes and pandals in the previous few years. This year with the innovative theme they are all set to amaze people. Besides the Durga idol, the pandal decorations will also bear the theme. White and off-white color tone is used throughout the pandal to bring the essence and fervor. The pandal will be opening in Mahalaya because they feel that this day is most appropriate for the theme. Besides, all the innovative ideas and beautiful decorations, they have promised to keep the covid protocols in their mind and maintain safety of visitors.

Heritage pujas upholding Swadeshi sentiments

Trisha Nandy

Durga puja is celebrated with great fanfare these days but it was used as a symbol of swadeshi to promote anti British sentiments. Durga puja was very private affair during the early 20th century. It was organized mainly by the royal and wealthy landlords who used this occasion



"Swadeshi thakur" of Simla Bayam Samity. (Source: Google)

to hob nob with Britishers. Baghbazaar's puja was the first puja in the northern part of Kolkata to be organized for the public. It was started by 12 friends and it ended the age long strangle hold of puja by the landlords.

The idols used in Simla Bayam Samity were made to dress in khadi clothes in order

Subhas Chandra Bose was individually involved in both the pujas of Baghbazaar Sarbojanin and Simla Bayam Samity and these two pujas were the facades of Swadeshi activities. It also provided shelter to the freedom fighters who were forced to go ground during British rule. These heritage pujas still carry on the age-old traditions and preserves its history for the newer generation.



Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose and Sarat Chandra Bose having Ashtami Prasad at Simla Bayam Samity. (Source: Google)



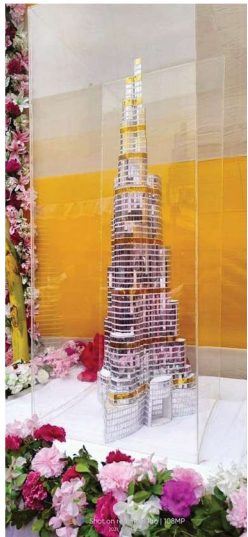
Great free- First Durga Puja in 1926 and Goddesses is dressed in khadi saree to promote Swadeshi. (Source: Google)



A trip to Dubai

Srijita Mukherjee

Sreebhumi Sporting Club established in the year 1966 will celebrate its Pre Golden Jubilee this year gifting its visitors with one the World's tallest spectacles Burj Khalifa, of Dubai. This year too amidst the catastrophe of the Corona pandemic and its third wave almost on its brink to explode, the puja organiser Mr. Sujit Bose, fire and emergency



Photograph from The "BURJ KHALIFA" Theme of Sreebhumi Sporting Club Durga Puja 2021 - (Credit Pratim, Papai Bhattacharjee)

minister, West Bengal, and his other associates are not willing to leave the opportunity of exhibiting pomp and grandeur.

This club has never failed to attract the eyeballs of countless pandalhoppers with their greatest of the great pandals like the Puri Temple, Chittor Fort or its Bahubali themed palace. The actual structure of the Burj Khalifa in Dubai is 2722ft tall but the pandal will try to imitate it with just a height of approx. 110ft. Sreebhumi Sporting is not only famous for its innovative pandals but also the idol of the Goddess Durga and her children, like every year the idol will not portray any theme but continue with its traditional form and will be clad in kilos of gold jewellery from Senco. Pradip Rudra Paul is the artist assigned for this year's idol construction. Like every year the famous lighting of Chandannagar will illuminate the puja pandal and its surroundings too. In spite of keeping all this splendour intact the committee has also promised to keep the covid protocols as have been mentioned by the High Court of the State just like it had done the previous year. The pandalhoppers will not be allowed to enter the pandal but will view it from outside and then leave the location.

A cocktail of traditional and modern

Srijita Mukherjee

If we think about the most

renowned pujas of North Kolkata or even Kolkata as a whole, a name that clicks in our mind is Ahiritola Sarbojanin Durgotsab Samity.

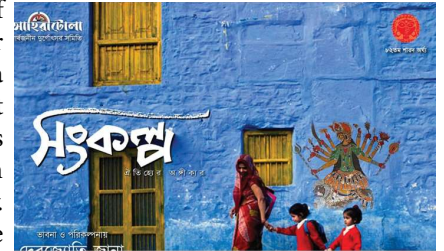
This puja committee

has always made us gush with their realistic house, mansion

and palace like structures. The pandals constructed here always present us with a theme that are sprinkled with traditionalism, modernism and a touch of culture.

This year the theme of this puja is Sankalpa- Oitijhyar Ongikar. 2021 marks this puja's 82nd year. The theme, thought and conceptualisation of this year's puja has been done by Mr. Debjoyoti Jana. The Chairman of this puja committee is Mr. Su-

shanta Kumar Saha. According to Mr. Jana the pandal this year will mark the cultural side that the puja has always been presenting along with the culture of one of the famous cities in our country.



The poster of this year's Ahiritola Sarbojanin Durgotsab Samity. (Credit their fb page)

Other than these details it is worth mentioning that keeping all the covid protocols in mind the pandal will be open from three sides so that the pandalhoppers can easily view the pandal and the idol of the Goddess and her children without going inside the pandal just like the previous year. The visitors will be provided with masks and sanitizers. This pandal will be inaugurated on Mahalaya by the Chief Minister herself- Ms. Mamata Banerjee.

Trademark of Social Responsibility

Srijita Mukherjee

A place famous for sculpting mud idols all over the world. From where all the pujas in Kolkata and elsewhere receive their Durga idols, Kumartuli houses the 91 year old Kumartuli Sarbojanin Durgotsav in its vicinity. A club which had Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose as their President in

the years 1938-39, amazes us even today by bringing up some innovations each year.

From the previous year and this year as well this puja will be held in two places one in Kumartuli which is the original location as well as in a village named Shyamnagar in Kultali, Sundarban. The puja in the second location was inaugurated last year amidst the pandemic and the great losses suffered by them due to the

storm Amphan, in order to spread joy among the villagers who do not have any Durga pujas in their locality. The idol, bhog and other Prasad will be sent to this village by the organisers of Kumartuli Sarbojanin like the previous year. New clothes and all the other necessities will also be distributed to them absolutely free of cost.

This year's theme of Kumartuli Sarbojanin is Bandi, the immense joy

felt while viewing a piece of sky from a window within the confines of a house. The pandal artist and idol artist for this year are Mr. Tuhin Ghosh and Mr. Arup Pal respectively.

Keeping the Covid protocols in mind the Pandal will be an open one, other than that like the previous year this year too there will be facilities available for digital Anjali and masks and sanitizers will be distributed to the visitors who do not have it.

South Kolkata Durga Puja 2021: Ekdalia, Tridhara, 66 Pally, 75 Pally

Ananta Banerjee



Madurai's Meenakshi Temple themed puja at Ekdalia Evergreen Club (Image Source- www.newsmen.in//Google)

Being the most eminent festival of Kolkata, Durga Puja is the soul & pride of West Bengal. The South Kolkata Durga Puja Pandals are known to some of the best in the city, as a stock of people stand in long queues

various temples from all over India. They keep it simple yet worth visiting every year. This year the committee is preparing to check a special Benarasi saree for a 25ft Durga idol to be worshipped during the four days, and will also offer Grand Bhog to Durga & her family. First time Tridhara Sammilani Puja - the puja is themed as 'May the committee focuses on creative & in-

to catch a novative pandals glance of Maa & lightings, this Durga. Let's year it will most- have a look at ly concentrate the prominent on the tradition- 4, what's there al rituals during in store for us. the four days.

Ekdalia Evergreen Club- It is known for its tradition of unveiling

Owing to the pandemic they have kept the slogan 'We believe in tradition not in grandeur'.

66 Pally - This pandal is all set to create history. This year the committee has decided to conduct the entire puja rituals by a group of four women priestesses marking a new exemplar as it is in the domain of male priests. First time in history the puja is themed as 'May the committee focuses on creative & in-

75 Pally - 75 Pally, Bhawani-pore has set a political theme this year. It was named after the CM's 'Ghorer Meye' slogan. This pandal has already created a lot of buzz.



The 4 Priestesses that would Conduct Entire Durga Puja In Kolkata's 66 Pally. (Image Source- [ED Times/](http://EDTimes.com/) Google)



A photo of Tridhara Sammillani Durga puja Pandal 2013, where the theme was Rajasthan, the adobe of Rijputs. (Image Source- flickr.com/ Google)



An idol of Goddess Durga at Bhawanipur 75 Pally, 2020 (Image Source- socialnews.xyz/ Google)

A quick glimpse at the celebration of semi urban Durga Puja

Bharti Jha

Durga puja celebrations in Kolkata, Howrah, Hooghly and many other districts of west Bengal are the grandest. The celebration lasts 9 days and is also known as Navaratri. While the festival of Durga Puja is celebrated across the world with

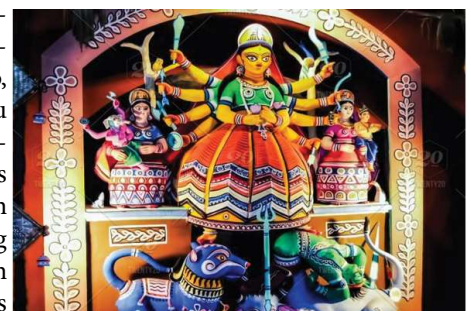
grandeur, in many districts of west Bengal, the vigor with which it is celebrated is second to none. It is celebrated for 9 days, starting from the fifth day to the ninth day, the pandals with grand idols of Goddess Durga are open for visitors. The tenth day, also known as Dashami marks the Visarjan (immersion in Ganga) of the idol. Durga Puja 2021 begins on October 6th and ends in Dusshera, 15th October.

We have all been to creative and innovative Durga Puja pandals across the city. The experience of pandal hopping in How-

rah is one of a kind as the area boasts of unique pandals that ushers creativity and grandiose of another level.

In Howrah there are many pandals like Ghasbagan Sporting Club, Howrah Saraswati Club, Salkia Durgotsav Barowari, Swamijee Sporting Club, Bally Deshbandhu Club, Subal Smriti Sangha. All this is unique in itself, but in Ghasbagan Sporting Club they are known to pick unique themes every year, this year,

their focusing on the Rajasthani temple theme, before that, they created the different planets in the universe. One of the most unique features is their display of all the nine incarnations of Maa Durga every year.



Source- Google

Glimpse of three south Kolkata pujos to get you in the festive mood

Sagnika Das

"I can't keep myself calm because I am a Bengali and Durga Puja is coming" – a post that will be found in almost every Bengali's social media profile when Durga puja is around the corner. From pandal hopping to binge eating, Durga Puja is not just a festival to Bengalis rather an emotion. During this time, the city of joy



Maddox Square Puja (Source - LBB)

its distinctive theme ideas while simultaneously maintaining the traditional decoration. For its 80th year, the theme is primarily

The discussion of south Kolkata pandals remains incomplete if we don't talk about Maddox Square. This puja is especially famous to Bengalis as their favourite 'adda'/reunion spot. Unfortunately, due to covid-19, visitors will not be allowed inside the park just like 2020. The theme for 2021 says people to save their '21's adda's for '22.

Although the Calcutta high court has ordered no entry inside the puja pandals, I have strong faith in Bengalis that they will make the most of this Pujo while



Singhi Park Durga Puja (Source - indianfestivaldiary.com)

explodes with thousands of pandals with enticing decorations and extraordinary themes. The pandals of the southern part of Kolkata are known to impress people year after year with their innovative theme ideas.

The oldest Durga Puja of South Kolkata is the famous Hindustan Park Puja. The history of this puja dates back to 1932 and this year it will mark the 91th year of puja celebration. The main idea behind this year's theme "Unmochan" (Unveiling) is unveiling ourselves with the help of Maa Durga. Another popular puja of south Kolkata is Singhi Park Sarbojonin Durgotsab. Started in 1941, this puja is famed for

focused on the environment, displaying nature-friendly elements.

keeping all the Covid-protocols in mind.



Hindustan Park Puja 2021 (Source - The Times of Bengal)

Evolution of Durga Puja in Belur Math

Anwesha Dasgupta

Belur Math a famous monastery situated on the banks of Hoogly River in a town named Belur. Swami Vivekananda founded and declared it to be the headquarters of Ramkrishna Mission and Math.

Belur Math in the earlier days used to preach sanyas and worship Ramkrishna and Saradadevi but later on Swami Vivekananda started Durga Puja. He started the new tradition to gain acceptance because people of Bengal were unhappy with his moving to the West which included disregard for caste rules. He initiated the puja to remove the misunderstandings and also got a supernatural vision where she saw Durga Puja taking place at Belur



Amantran ritual of 2020 at the Belur Math (Source - Google)

Thus from 18th October 1901 till this year on its 120th year Belur math performs Durga Puja with its swamijis and maharajas. The puja starts with Agamani songs and the main worship of Durga Maa starts with Kalparamba, Bodhan, Amantran, Kumari Puja, Sandhi Puja and Visharjan. Every year people used to gather to worship but from 2020 due to Covid 19 Belur Math remains closed on the days of festivities.

This year after the guidelines of the High Court one of the Swamiji quoted that "if Devi Durga makes things right then we will be kept open for the coming year's puja."

Theme puja at Serampore and Seoraphuli

Anwesha Dasgupta

Durga Puja, the biggest cultural festival, is around the globe. It is the festival of happiness and enthusiasm among the people.

The puja pandals of Serampore and Seoraphuli of Hooghly district have started

ed their preparations in full swing. There are a total of eighty puja pandals in the towns. The theme pandals for this year are to name a few because of the Pandemic outbreak. Pujas like Nehru Nagar Sarbojanin Durga Puja Samity will be coming up with the theme of Kashi Vishwanath Temple; Bangalaxmi Bylane Durga Puja Committee with 'Noukadubi' where idols will be placed over a boat along with pandal decorations; Bhagirathi Lane Sarbojanin Durgotsav with 'Daker Sajhe Elo Maa' where the idols will be decorated in white thermocol dresses and jewellery; Gabtala

Sarbojanin Durga Puja Committee with 'Sabeki Sajhe Barir Meye' where idols will be dressed up with glittering golden jewellery; Sater Pally Sarbojanin will be coming up with the theme that will reflect the Farmer's Protest; Lahiripara Durgapuja will come up with idols and the pandals be reflecting Rikshaw and its different parts and the last theme puja will be Prabhasnagar Durga Samity where they will be illustrating how mother saves children from all evils so they named the theme 'Mayer aanchale surakhsha'. Maintaining Covid norms and guidelines the puja committees are prepping up with the last minute changes so that people can stay safe and visit the pandals from a distance.



Idols getting prepared for the festival in a pandal at Serampore (Source - Facebook)

Central Kolkata – the heart of the city during Durga Puja

Shirsha Modi

Durga puja is not a tradition but an emotion captivating longing. And the city of joy doesn't fail to amaze us with the portrayal of the most elaborate and innovative themes to compete with each other. Starting from north to south, crossing the heart of the city, every alley, every corner tells a different story and celebrates the festivity in their utmost way.

Mostly, the crowd pulling pandals are those who work extensively on the theme and the lighting. As this year, the COVID scenario created a different circumstance for mankind, it is not acting favorable to the Bengali's heart.

Few pujas are suppressed due to the lack of funding in this crisis. So, here outlined the best Pujas of Central Kolkata and their 2021's theme in a nutshell.

Muhammad Ali Park – Md Ali Park

displays the most magnificent architecture of temples and monuments, with an ethereal look on the idol every year. The Durga Puja was shifted to the adjacent fire station after the wall of an underground reservoir collapsed in 2019, and will be back in the park this year.

College Square - The whole 'Boi-Para' is illuminated with happiness during puja. The picture-perfect lake and the reflection of the pandal and sparkling lights upon it, creates the best illusion of happiness. Established in 1948, it is undoubtedly the most happening



Picture courtesy - self

puja of Kolkata. The theme for this year is an interior of a palace. And on the outside of the pandal wall there will be the portrayal of 'Akal Bodhon' with handcrafts.

Santosh Mitra Square – One of the biggest and most spectacular pandal in Kolkata. They are famous for their exclusive Durga idols every year, with innovative and luxurious themes made of Gold. On its 86th year, they will be replicating 'Lakshmi-Narayan Mandir' of Jaipur or mostly known as the 'Birla Mandir'.

A quick puja guide of Kolkata

Anik Bose

People often wonder why Kolkata is called the city of joy. During the four days of Durga Puja, the entire state is decorated with lights that glitter and bring a joyful vibe into the minds of the people regardless of age, caste, class, or gender. This emotion of togetherness which welcomes Goddess Durga and her children with open arms is what makes the festive more unique. From Tala Barwari to Bhagbazar in North and from Naktala to Behala in South the people will witness Pandal hopping pilgrims in the best possible way.

Food: All the travelers in Kolkata search for the most authentic experiences when it comes to food, Phuchkas, Chops and Rolls, Roshogollas, and the endless list of variety of food to celebrate the most auspicious festival "Durga Puja".

For all the foodies the city will offer a vast array of cuisines. Let's check out where to find them:

Chinese: Tangra, the first place to bring Chinese restaurants in India, probably is your go-to place for Chili-Chicken, Noodles Cuptai soup. Tiretti Bazaar is lined with hawkers who sell Chinese and Hakka specialties.

Punjabi: As Bengalis love Maach and Mangsho, Kolkata has made Punjabi cuisine of its own. It will offer you your favorite Curries, Chicken Bharta with Butter Roti, and whatnot. Punjabi Dhaba at Chawringhee will be open all night for the hoppers and for their midnight cravings.

Mughlai: Bengalis are fond of Mughlai food. One thing that comes to our mind when we hear the term Mughlai is "Biryani" with

Cont. on page 8



Rezala and Chaap. This Puja Oudh 1590 is introducing Biriyani Festival with the special Jhinga Moti Biriyani. The royal Indian restaurant at Park circus will make a good stopover between Pandal hopping and your cravings.

Shopping: As shopping is a crucial part of Durga Puja and the festivities, given The pandemic as a major factor where certain restrictions are being given by the authority of the state. As the e-commerce space is picking up its speed, there comes "Phygital Shopping" Many stores encourage customers to check their online presence and shop from its sites, encouraging no physical contact.



Feeling Of Home Away From Home

Oishi Basu

As Bengalis, we are in our prime when celebrating and enjoying 'Durga Puja.' The grand decoration of pandals, variety of foods, bustling people, the sound of joyful chatter all come together and present an enigmatic scenario. Many even say this can only be felt when living in Kolkata and cannot be replicated elsewhere. While that is true, Bengalis somehow have managed to spread this feeling of joy in other states of India too. For example, being in Mumbai can make people more in tune with the cultural activities over here. The joy, glitz, glamour, and warmth of festivals celebrated in Kolkata get lost somewhere along the way for us. Especially the grand celebration of 'Durga



Immersed in the fun of dhumuchi dance (Source: Personal)

Puja,' an essential emotion in a Bengali's life. So to keep this emotion alive and thrive in it, the Bengalis of Mumbai collectively decided to recreate the celebration of this festival in their style. It's not just the commoners who chose to achieve this, but also the Bengali Bollywood personalities who decided to do so. Celebrities like Abhijeet Bhattacharya, Rani Mukherjee, and Kajol celebrate Durga Puja extravagantly, starting from pandal decorations to great hospitality to well-known celebrities; You can experience

everything there. The celebrations done by the Bengali clubs all over Mumbai are no less. Everything

is appropriate

done, from replicating the temple of 'Belur Math' to bringing in 'Shantiniketan' artisans to make the idol. All the rituals are followed through till the last day with precision.

Us probashi Bengalis might not be actively a part of the celebration happening in Kolkata. Still, we have made sure to hold onto our culture and inform everyone what importance it fits in our lives. With this, let us hope that this year's celebration can somewhat create a semblance with the previous ones.

PHOTOS AND ILLUSTRATIONS



Photo by Ushana Maji



Illustration by Bharti Jha



Photo by Jhanja Priyadarshinee



Photos by Sukriti Dey





St. Xavier's University welcomes "DAAN UTSAV 2021"

"We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give."
-Winston Churchill

Suparna Ghosh

The Honorable Father Vice Chancellor approved and embraced the idea of celebrating Daan Utsav 2021- Celebration of Giving organised by Xaverians In Actions (XIA). They came up with this splendid idea of charity only to lighten up the faces of the underprivileged children and the ones in need. The idea behind this drive was to create a difference by making faces smile.

The event took place between 4th-8th October and everyone came together and joined hands to donate even the smallest of things like books, pencils, pens etc. Packaged food items were also distributed in the nearby local villages. Drop boxes and all the necessary arrangements were made so that the local students can be physically present in order to contribute in the selected 15 locations in and around the city.



Apart from that donations from any online websites straight to the St. Xavier's University website were also gladly welcomed. Considering the ongoing pandemic situation where people need immense support from each other, this initiative worked like wonders and hence this is how the University stepped up to make the slightest of difference in these odd times.

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Akash Dey (MA Sem 3)

Covid-19 vaccination Drive at Gurap: An initiative to ensure maximum invulnerability

Suparna Ghosh

St. Xavier's University Kolkata Alumni Association (SXUKAA), organised a COVID Vaccination Camp in collaboration with Siddhartha Shankar Ray Foundation at St. Xavier's School, Gurap on Sunday, 29th August. The idea and spark behind this drive mainly concentrated on the benefit of the rural and tribal population of the area and also to aid their part of

safety during this devastating pandemic that had already shook the whole world. To give a count, a total of 240 heads had received their dose of Covishield Vaccine on the following day.

The Gurap camp was blessed and enlightened by Rev. Fr. John Felix Raj, SJ, Hon'ble Vice Chancellor, St. Xavier's University, Kolkata and President, SXUKAA. Notable dignitaries such as Fr. Vinay Kerketta, SJ, Headmaster, St. Xavier's School, Gurap, Fr. Murlin Franklin, SJ, Assistant Professor, Xavier Business School, Mr. Rajesh Chirimar, Secretary, Siddhartha Shankar Ray Foundation and Member, Board of Administrators, Bidhannagar Mu-

nicipal Corporation and Mr. Vatsal Chirimar, Hony. Secretary, SXUKAA were also present during the significant affair.

The effort to reach out to the rural areas in particular by the SXUKAA was commendable as well as laudable. Fr. Felix Raj in his speech

extended his gratitude and warmth to Siddhartha Shankar Ray Foundation for sponsoring the camp and to AMRI Hospital for making the required medical arrangements.





Ignation Year: The man, the mission, the message (2021-22)

Suparna Ghosh

Ignation year marks the celebration of St. Ignatius, the founder of the Society of Jesus.

St. Xavier's University, Kolkata on 25th September, 2021 conducted a panel discussion themed on "Today's Higher Education: Challenges and Jesuit Responses" in order to commemorate the Ignation year 2021-22.

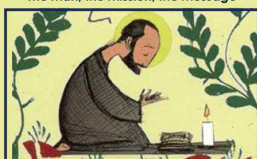
The panel discussion marked its beginning with a welcome note given by our respected Vice-Chancellor, Rev. Fr. Dr. John Felix Raj S.J. We had our panelists from various recognised institutions like Dr. Suranjan Das (Vice-Chancellor, Jadavpur University), Swami Atmapriyananda (Pro-Chancellor, RKMVERI), Mr. Clayton Michael Moses (Educationist), and also Rev. Fr. Joye James S.J. (Vice-President, Indian Social Institute)

Following are the several events that will be engineered during the celebration of Ignation year:

- E-Magazines: Inigo Sparks
- Students' Competitions (Short film contest & Creative Essay Competition)
- Panel Discussion: Inigo and the world
- International Conference on Ignation Themes
- Exhibition: The life and Mission of St. Ignatius and his companions
- Feast day and concluding ceremony celebrations.

St. Xavier's University, Kolkata
Established: February 8, 2017

IGNATION YEAR
(May 20, 2021 – July 31, 2022)
The Man, the Mission, the Message



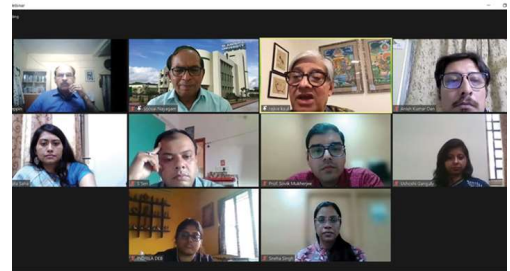
- Inauguration on May 20, 2021
- Essay / Poster / Video Competitions
- Webinars / Panel Discussions / Exhibition
- Feast Day Celebrations
- Concluding Ceremony on July 31, 2022

SXUK gets roll- ing on its 1st ever Virtual National Conference on "Progressive India: Corporates and the Pandemic"

Suparna Ghosh

The Faculty of Commerce and Management of the morning section in association with St. Xavier's University Kolkata Alumni Association (SXUKAA) recently addressed its first ever virtual Two-day National Conference that was held on 28th and 29th August 2021.

Word of welcome was delivered by respected Mr.

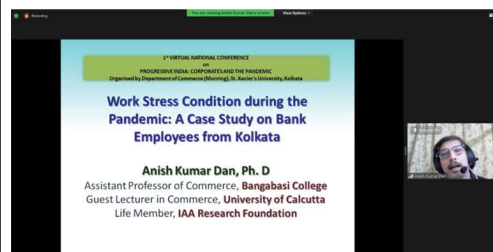


Harshavardhan Neotia, Chairman of Ambuja Neotia Group, Kolkata. The conference upheld and discussed key issues and concerns regarding the corporate sector during Covid-19 pandemic.

Among the participants industrialists, academicians, professors, researchers, students were present and had put their heads together to come up with some spawning conclusions.

The inaugural session was followed by a plenary session titled

"Peaks and valleys during the Pandemic from the lens of the Corporate". There were 23 papers presented across three tracks by faculty members, researchers and academicians pan-India. The first track was chaired by Dr. Amitava Roy, Associate Professor and Dean, Department of Commerce (Morning Section), St. Xavier's College (Autonomous), Kolkata; the second track was chaired by Dr. Manodip Ray Chaudhuri, Associate Professor and Dean, Xavier Business School, SXUK; and the third and last track of the conference had eight paper presenters, chaired by Prof. S. Peppin, Professor, School of Rural Management, Dean, School of Governance and Public Affairs, Director, Directorate of Open Learning, XIM University.



A moment of finest honor and pride

Suparna Ghosh



Sandeep Mudra, our very own Sports Officer at St. Xavier's University, Kolkata backed Gold medallion in 50 miles (80.5 km) in the East Endurance 2.0 that was organised by the Cycle Network Grow(CNG). The challenge was to ride for 55 days minimum 25km/day at a stretch to cover 2600 Km and the prize for the finisher would be a medal and a certificate.

He was a participant in the Cycling Challenge Competition 2021 presented by GC Calcutta Cycle which made its commencement on 5th September this year. The total time taken to complete the said goal was 2 hours and 50 mins. The University undoubtedly takes pride in his achievement and congratulates him.