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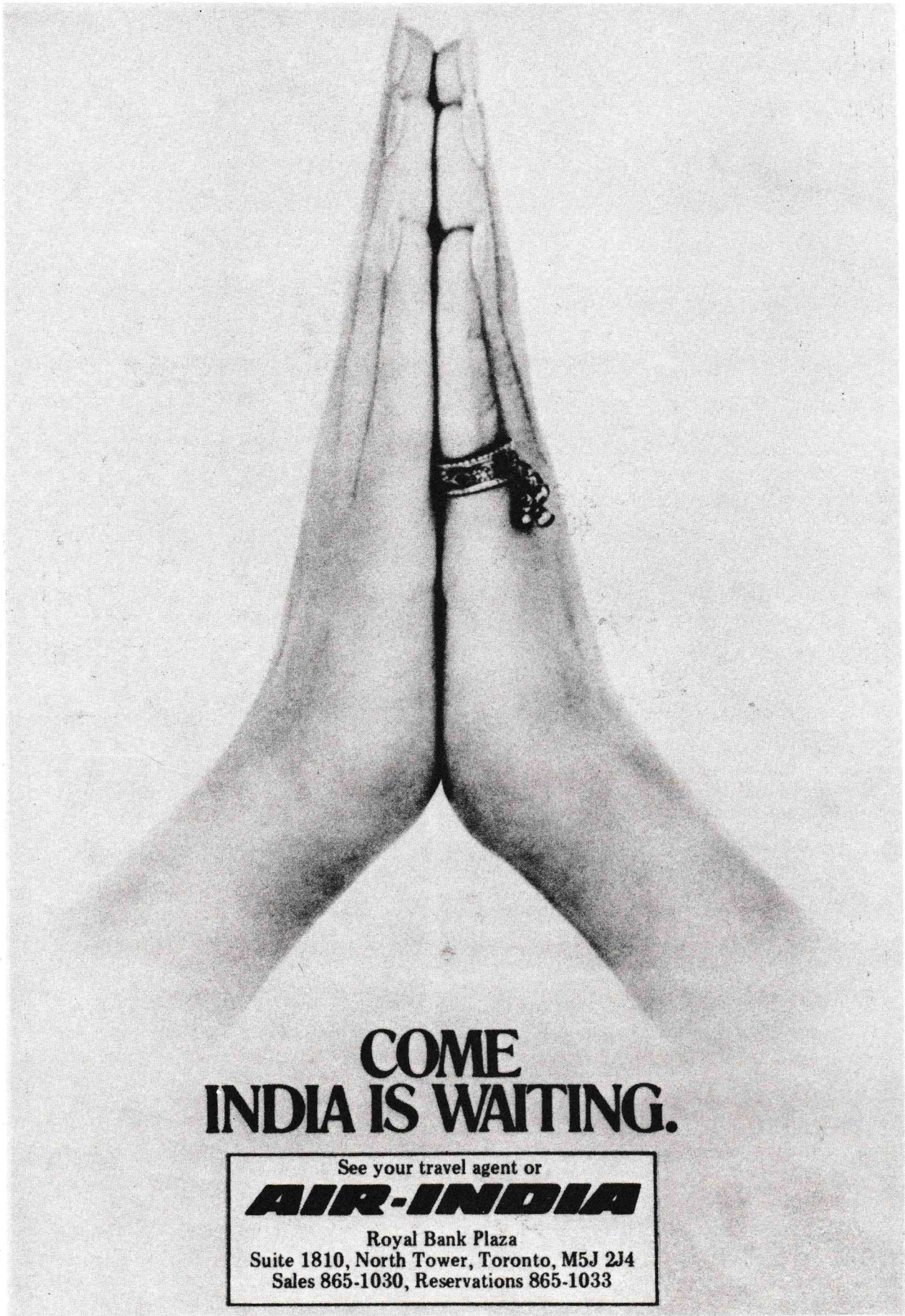


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Winnipeg's Mayor Bill Norrie, visiting our Puja, 1980



PROGRAMME

MAHASASTI: SUNDAY 4th OCTOBER	AMANTRAN CULTURAL PROGRAMME	6:00 P.M. 7:00 P.M.
MAHASAPTAMI: MONDAY 5th OCTOBER	MAHASAPTAMI PUJA PUS HPANJALI SANDHYA-ARATI PRASAD BITARAN	9:30 A.M. 12:30 P.M. 8:00 P.M. 8:30 P.M.
MAHASTAMI: TUESDAY 6th OCTOBER	MAHASTAMI PUJA PUS HPANJALI YOGYARAMBHA SANDHI PUJA CULTURAL PROGRAM SANDHYA-ARATI	9:30 A.M. 12:30 P.M. 2:00 P.M. 3:00 P.M. 7:00 P.M. 8:00 P.M.
MAHANABAMI: WEDNESDAY 7th OCTOBER	MAHANABAMI PUJA PUS HPANJALI YOGYARAMBHA SANDHYA-ARATH BHOG BITARAN	9:30 A.M. 12:30 P.M. 1:00 P.M. 8:00 P.M. 9:00 P.M.
BIJOYA DASHAMI: THURSDAY 8th OCTOBER	PUJA DARPAN BISARJAN DADHIKARMA PRASAD BITARAN SINDUR UTSAV	10:00 A.M. 11:30 A.M. 11:30 A.M. 12: Noon 7:00 P.M.
BIJAYA SANMELLANI: SATURDAY 10th OCTOBER	CULTURAL PROGRAMME JALA-JOG	7:00 P.M. 9:00 P.M.
KOJAGARI LAKSHMI PUJA: TUESDAY 13th OCTOBER	PUJA SANDHYA-ARATI PRASAD BITARAN	7:00 P.M. 8:00 P.M. 9:00 P.M.



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DURGA PUJA COMMITTEE, 1981

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Treasurer	Shoma Ray
Executive Members	Monoranjana Ray Jayanta Banerji Chitta Ranjan Ghosh Radha Madhab Das
Bhog & Refreshments	Ashok Sarkar (in-charge) Pratul Biswas Baljit Malakar Archana Ghosh
Cultural Programme	Tun Tun Sarkar Mun Mun Ray Chondhuri
Donation Collection	Asim Roy Deepak Bose Jayanta Banerji Bijay Ray Chondhuri
Reception & Management	Monoranjana Ray Chitta Ranjan Ghosh Pranab Roy Prabir Deb
Puja Magazine (AGAMANI)	
Design & Arts	Prabir Mitra
Advertisements	Bijay Ray Chondhuri
Editor	Radha Madhab Das
Purohit (Priest)	Jayanta Banerji
Puja Arrangement	Maitreyi Banerji
'Pratima' Decoration	Ratna Bose
'Pratima' Sculptor	Jawahar Rakshit (Montreal)

Greetings to all on
Durga Puja Festival
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From the Editor.....

Wherever the Hindus go they take with them their hundreds of gods and goddesses. Why then there is such a splash about Durga Puja being held here? Winnipeg is not Calcutta, Manitoba is not West-Bengal or for that matter, Canada is not India. Is it because we are free here to practice our own religious faith? That we are a link to the unique multi-cultural chain of Canada? No. Because until it did take place last year, for the first time, the Bengali community of Winnipeg was missing something closest and dearest to their hearts. That is, this annual festival and celebration of Durga Puja. It is like the relation of the moon with the tide. It is the inherent desire of our humble 'self' that gravitates towards this singular joyful event of the year. Hence this occasion would not die as long as we live. However, Durga Puja will be reduced to a hollow external pomp if we do not understand the meaning of it. It is auspicious. It symbolizes triumph of goodness over the evil. It gives strength to the weak and grants salvation to the pious. While worshipping, the wish and the anguish of the rich and the poor all merge into solemn prayers and are conveyed to Durga, the Divine Mother. In cosmic terms, Durga is the center of infinite energy, the source of eternal light and the brilliance of blissful radiation. Socially, Durga Puja brings us closer to one another and enhances our fellow feelings. More importantly, it reminds us to share with others. On this auspicious occasion of Puja, let us kindle the hearts of our children with that awareness. Then Durga Puja will be truly meaningful to our future generation otherwise they will remember it only as an ancient tradition of the Hindu religion.

My special thanks are due to Mr. Prabir Mitra for his excellent art works, to Mr. Rabin Ojha for transcribing the Bengali articles and to Mr. Bijay Ray Chondhuri for knocking on the doors of the advertisers. Credits for the success of the magazine belong to them and to its contributors who have spared their valuable time willingly or reluctantly. I apologize for any error or omission. Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to extend to you all my sincere PUJA GREETINGS!

DURGA PUJA: the Great Hindu Festival of the Bengali People

Dr. Ranen Sinha

Durga Puja is the worship of the goddess Durga as the Divine Mother. It is the most important Hindu religious festival of the Bengali people who live in West Bengal state in the eastern part of India and in Bangladesh. By celebrating Durga Puja, Bengalis acquire a conception of a personal god (Iswara) who, besides having cosmic powers, is near enough to be approached through devotion (Bhakti) and worship (Puja). This is a practice of popular Hinduism through rituals, symbols and images. Regardless of how many names are used to describe it and how many ways with which to worship it, all Hindus believe in one truth that is one God (Brahman). Some 5000 years ago the ancient Hindu scripture, Rigveda, speaks about this truth,

"Truth is one; its expressions many
One fire burns in many forms
One sun lights up the whole world
One dawn reveals all this
One real has become all that exists."

All existence - earth, heavens, planets, gods, living and non-living objects - is conceived here as part of the Great One, who is everywhere in the world, but also remains beyond it. In Him all that is, has been and will be are united.

Every human being should gain more knowledge and become wiser. The human soul (Jivatma) is a part of God (Brahman) and one's soul does not die when one's body dies. A soul is born again and again in the world until it has done enough good and acquired enough merit. Only then does the soul become free from birth, self-realized, and attains true freedom (Moksha). One can attain this freedom through Dharma or performing one's duty, or Tapas or meditation. The ideal



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Hindu way would be to take pain and pleasure with calmness, control anger and greed, and follow the truth always. The most important truth is to know the answer to the question "Who am I?"

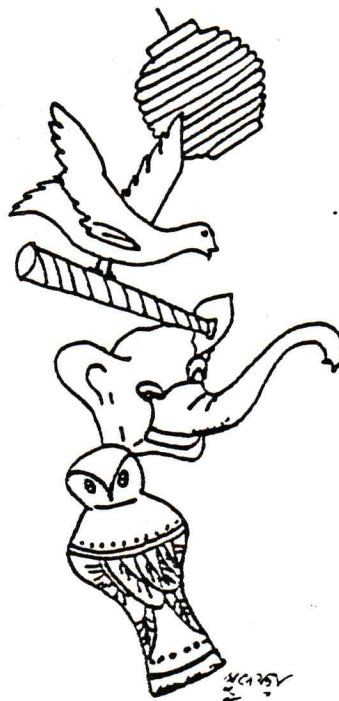
To attain freedom Hindu scriptures prescribe two major paths to follow: (1) the path of renunciation (Nivriti Marga), and (2) the path of desire (Pravriti Marga). The first path requires one to give up worldly pleasures and meditate exclusively on God (Brahman). The second path is followed by people who are involved in worldly affairs. Its followers approach the truth by worshipping one or more of numerous gods and goddesses (deities) through many complex rituals. These worshippers make their minds purer through gradual self control, sacrifice, service and devotion to God. They frequently use Yajna, or oblations in fire, as part of elaborate ceremonial worship to personal gods with many names. Each name, or image symbolically represents the Great One, Brahman, in one aspect or another.

During 200-700 A.D. when the Hindu Indian culture entered a golden age under the Gupta emperors, people in the eastern part of India adopted the practice of worshipping God in the form of the Divine Mother or Shakti (Divine energy). Shakti is represented in the form of one or other goddesses like Durga (Inaccessible), Annapurna (Giver of abundant food), Gauri (the White one), Parvati (Daughter of the mountain), Chandi (the Fierce). This Divine Mother, Durga, is conceived through any of the divine forms. She is really the Creator, Sustainer, and Destroyer of this universe. She is eternal, infinite and all pervading. Creation is her sport so also destruction. She expresses herself through all the everchanging names and forms that we call the world.

The goddess Durga is the wife of the Lord Shiva who lives at the top of the mountain, Himalayas and remains in constant meditation.

She comes to the earth once a year during autumn with her two sons (Kartika and Ganesh) and two daughters (Lakshmi and Swaraswati) to destroy the evil (Mahishasur) and uphold the good. Durga and her family members are worshipped by the Bengali people for five days with the aid of beautifully decorated clay images. The worshipper (Purohit) first has to evoke the Divine Presence from his own heart and transfer that Presence to the image. On the evening of the fifth day (Vijaya Dasami) the Divine Presence is withdrawn from the image and reinstalled within the worshipper's heart and then the lifeless images are immersed in the nearest river, lake or sea.

The Puja festival is also the Bengali's best social function. It is a great celebration of life, performed during gorgeous autumn days with blue sky and golden sunshine. It is a time of homecoming, exchanging gifts and friendly greetings, loving one another and helping the poor. It is a time of feasts, songs, and music wherever the Bengalis live.



সিমানা

প্রথম খণ্ড

এসেছে শরৎ, জ্যোতিষে উজ্জ্বল
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সাঁচটি দিনের- তরে,
সিরীষাজ ও মেঘের
আনন্দে ঘর ভরে।

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একবারে ছুড়মাড়,
জা জন্মী- ফিরলে তবুই-
জান- জাঙের উড়।

THE BIRTH OF DEVI DURGA

Mili Roy

Devi Durga is worshipped widely throughout India today. She was created long ago by some of the most powerful gods in heaven to fight the evil demon, Mahisha, who was threatening heaven at the time.

Mahisha-Asura was the king of demons. Evil as he was however, Mahisha once performed penances severe enough to please even the great Lord Brahma. Brahma decided to grant the demon king a boon. Mahisha asked for the boon of immortality but Lord Brahma refused. The demon paused to think for a moment and then asked that he find his death at the hands of a woman. Brahma agreed to this. Mahisha went off feeling very pleased with himself for he felt that the boon he had just received was almost as good as immortality itself.

Back in his own world, Mahisha formed a huge army of demons and marched confidently into Amaravati, Lord Indra's capital. There he defeated Indra in battle, and chasing all the devas out of Amaravati, Mahisha took over Indra's throne and began to rule.

The wicked demon forbade the worship of devas and ordered that all men worship him instead. This enraged all the citizens of heaven who went and complained to Shiva. The devas called a meeting at Shiva's home in Kailas and decided to join forces to fight Mahisha.

Shiva, Brahma and Vishnu sat down to meditate. Suddenly their eyes grew dark and red, glowing furiously. Piercing rays of white light shone from their faces. The rays combined to become one, forming a single pillar of dazzling white light. The figure of a beautiful woman began to rise slowly out of the light. It was Devi Durga.

The devas knelt to offer their prayers to the mighty goddess and each presented her with a weapon or power that made her mightier still: Himachal gave her the savage lion which became her mount; Vishnu gave her his whirling discus; Shiva gave his trident and Indra gave his great thunderbolt. The Sun presented Durga with bows and arrows while Brahma gave her a pot filled with his magical life-giving water. There stood the completed goddess; beautiful, powerful and trembling with energy. Durga rode off at once to find and kill Mahisha, a soft white light encircling her entire body.

Mahisha sent his army to surround Durga and kill her but Durga breathed very hard once and was immediately surrounded by an army of her own. A great battle between the devas and the demons followed.

Finally, Mahisha could stand it no longer and assuming the form of a huge bull he rushed onto the battlefield to kill Durga himself. Durga flung her noose around the bull's neck and Mahisha could not get free. Changing himself into a lion the demon pounced on Durga who quickly chopped off his head. Backing off, Mahisha transformed himself into a huge elephant and charged at Durga's lion but again the goddess left him helpless by cutting off his trunk.

Mahisha paused for a moment and suddenly realized that Durga was a mightier warrior than he. The evil demon king decided to trick Durga into sparing his life. Assuming the form of a very handsome young man he approached Durga and pleaded for his life but she would not even listen to him.

This enraged Mahisha. Blind with fury he turned himself once more into a bull and charged madly at Durga. Durga quickly jumped onto Mahisha's back and raising her sword high in the air, she chopped off his head for the last time.

The devas watched in joy as Mahisha rolled dead at Durga's feet and peace returned to heaven.

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"Durga Puja & Diwali Greetings"

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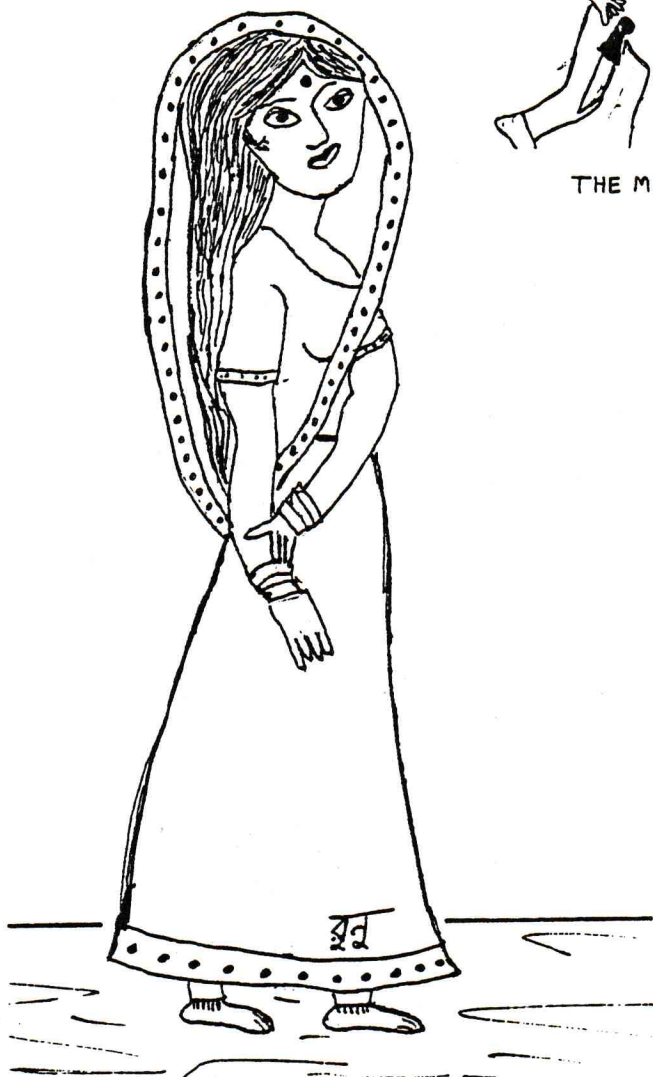
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Village Woman



Picking Flowers

" JAI MA "

Maitreyi & Jayanta Banerji

Oh Mother, Sublime presence,
Abyss of ineffable light where all colours shine,
with poison cure my poisoned Karma, in darkness let me dwell,
in not knowing, in the silence of the void, in love.

Root of all desire. Mystery of mysteries.
Thrill of joy that passes, scar of pain that fades.
Memory of endless births, memory of the earth
where we are fed by your timeless hand
and we don't know it, unconscious that we are you,
quintessence of Eternity.

Kill me Mother.
Kill the demons that feed within me.
Kill the delusion that poisons desire and fills with anguish
the sacred receptacle of your self-shining light.
Subdue my pride with your sweetness,
dance upon my fears as upon a corpse.
Silence with an overflow of purity
the snakes that terrify my heart.

You come like a ray of pure being unfathomably essential,
filling the dark spaces of fear with glowing heat,
inundation of your grace.
Mysterious awareness in dwelling in deepest peace
self-luminous incarnation of truth.

CHILDREN IN AUTUMN

Reeni Bose

Happily a child walks,
Through the fallen leaves,
Gazing upwards at the boughs,
Of splendidly colored trees.

* * * *

Another watches silently,
The actions of a squirrel,
Gathering acorns diligently,
By oak trees with a whirl.

* * * *

A third runs off to school,
Eager to make a friend,
Somebody to confide in,
And with whom to share and lend.

* * * *

Another child stringing garlands,
Plans for the coming week,
Of Durga Puja festivities,
Where joy is at its peak!

* * * *

With all children young and old,
Autumn time is treasured,
But each child has special things,
That give him extra pleasure.

[illegible]

ଓହଲେ ମିଶ୍ରେ ଅଧାଧେଉଁ ଚନ୍ଦ୍ରଙ୍କ ଚୋର ବଢ଼ିଲା ଅତିରି
 ସୁରାସର ଧନଧାନ୍ୟ ଚକଟି କାଟି "cowboy" ଝୁଲି, ଧର ଓହର ଚୋର
 ଧର ଅଧାଧେଉଁ ଚକଟି "ସୁନ୍ଦରୀ ଚୋର" ଓହ । ଚନ୍ଦ୍ରଙ୍କର ଅତି ଓହର
 ଚୋରର ହାତରେ ଥିଲା - "ଢିଲି ଓହ ଢିଲି ଚୋର ଓହ ମିଲିଲିଲି",

[illegible]

THIS IS TRUE.....

Ratna Das

On Friday September 25 was 'Shinerama' for Cystic Fibrosis research. My school participated in this event. I was paired off with my friend Meagen, and we were stationed at the Health Sciences Centre. We met quite a few people but there was one man who I will probably remember for a long time. He was quite old and he had a white beard. He was wearing a cap with a pom-pom on it. He looked quite friendly, so we asked him our regular routine sentence, "Hello! Would you like to donate some money for Cystic Fibrosis?" The reply was, "If you're broke get a job instead of begging for money." I tried to explain to him it was for Cystic Fibrosis. "I know you are Cystic and your friend is Fibrosis, but how many times do I have to tell you get a job!" he exclaimed in a rather harsh voice, and then angrily walked into the clinic we were at as he saw it begging in front of. We giggled and went on with our work. About half-an-hour later, he came out with his wife. "Let's ask him again," I whispered to Meagen. "Okay," she agreed. So again we asked him pretending that never saw him before. "There they go again," he said to his wife. Once again we explained that it was for Cystic Fibrosis. "What's that?" he asked. "It's a disease that is present among children," we said. "What will you do with the money?" he questioned. "It will go to research," we replied. "Oh! That's not good at all. You know what research does? It kills babies!" he angrily said. When he walked away Meagen and I laughed so hard that we went almost purple. As he turned the corner we heard him say, "Kids..... these days!!"

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Quotable Quotes

Tun Tun Sarkar

"There is no pillow so soft as a clear conscience."

- French Proverb

"When a man points a finger at someone else, he should remember that three of his fingers are pointing at himself."

- Anonymous

"We look before and after,
and pine for what is not;
Our sweetest songs are those
that tale of saddest thoughts."

- Shelly

"All great truths begin as blasphemies."

- G.B.S.

"Be the wisest pearl in the ocean of wisdom."

- From: The Pearls of Wisdom

"Trust no future however pleasant,
Let the past bury its dead.
Act, act on the living present
And think that God is overhead."

- Longfellow

"Arise! Awake! And stop not till your goal is reached."

- Swami Vivekananda

DURGA PUJA COMMITTEE OF MANITOBA

Statement of Revenue and Expenses for the Year 1980

Revenue

Revenue from donation - See Schedule 1	\$ 1,047
Revenue from advertisements	650
Grant from Govt. of Manitoba	1,050
Thali collections during Puja	38
	<hr/>
Total revenue	\$ 2,785

Expenses

Pratima token price paid to	
Montreal Bengali Association	\$ 25
Freight - See Schedule 2	175
Food	465
Rent - See Schedule 3	100
Decoration & Photography	125
Puja Supplies	358
Printing, Stationary & Postage	301
Telephone & Transportation	222
Movie (Simabaddha)	178
Bank charges	12
Miscellaneous Expenses	58
	<hr/>
- See Schedule 4	\$ 2,016

Excess of revenue over expenses	<u>\$ 769</u>
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DURGA PUJA COMMITTEE OF MANITOBA


Balance Sheet as at December 31, 1980

Assets

Cash at Bank \$769
(Bank of Montreal, Campus Branch)

Liabilities & Equity

Surplus from 1980 \$769

Sd./  Vice-Chairman (Finance)

Schedule 1

Revenue from donation

Mr. Ganesh Adhikari
Dr. Prasanta Adhikari
Mr. Ram Agarwal
Dr. Tuhin Bakshi
Mr. Makhan Bal
Mr. Jayanta Banerji
Mrs. Aruna Bharti
Dr. Om Bhatnagar
Dr. Samir Bhattacharya
Dr. Shibdas Biswas
Dr. Deepak Bose
Dr. Ranjan Bose
Dr. Radha Madhab Das
Mr. Mrinal Dutta
Dr. Abu'l Ekramoddoullah

Dr. Kamal Malakar
Dr. Aruna Mathur
Mr. Prabir Mitra
Mr. Kajal Mukherjee
Mr. Rajat Mukherjee
Dr. Padmanavan
Mr. Bijay Ray
Dr. Monoranjan Ray
Mr. Asim Roy
Mr. Pranab Roy
Dr. Mrityunjay Samanta
Mr. Ashok Sarkar
Dr. Ranen Sinha
Dr. Swapan Sinha
Dr. Vedanand
Dr. Venkataramana

Total: \$1,047

Schedule 2

Freight Cost

Cost of delivery of Pratima from Montreal to Winnipeg (Associated Packers Ltd.)	\$175
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* * * * *

Schedule 3

Rent

Paid to Hindu Society of Manitoba	\$100
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Schedule 4

Miscellaneous Expenses

Purchase of board from Hindu Society	\$ 40
Purchase of Puja Supplies from Calcutta by Mrs. Archana Ghosh	\$ 18

Addendum

Please read the following along with other names mentioned in Schedule 1:

Mr. Pratul Biswas

Dr. Prabir Deb

Mr. Chitta Ranjan Ghosh

Mr. Gouri Sankar Roy

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Durga Puja Committee of BICHITRA is grateful to:

The advertisers for their generous support;
the Hindu Society of Manitoba for the use
of their facilities;

The workers and volunteers for their self-
less co-operation, and
the members and donors for their active
participation and encouragement.

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ਵਿਸ਼ਾਸ਼ (ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ) ਪ੍ਰਿਥਿਵੀ-ਪ੍ਰਿਥਿਵੀ
ਕਲਿਯਾਨ ਆਸ਼ਿ।



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