

Maa Brahmcharini — The second manifestation of Maa Durga

Maa Brahmcharini is the second manifestation of Maa Durga who is worshipped on the second day of Navratra. Here word "Brahm" refers to "Tapa". So Brahmcharini means Tapa Charini - The one who performs Tapa or penance. It is said that the "Vedas", "Tatva" and "Tapa" are synonyms of word "Brahm". The form of Brahmcharini is tremendously effulgent and extremely majestic.

Brahmcharini

She holds a rosary in her right hand and Kamandalu in her left. She personifies love and loyalty. Mata Bhramcharni is store-house of knowledge and wisdom. Rudraksha is her most adorned ornament. When she was incarnated as the daughter of Himalaya, then influenced by the instructions of Devrishī Narada, she practiced very hard penances in order to obtain Lord Shiva as her divine consort. Due to her unearthly penances she was termed as Brahmcharini. She spent one thousand years, only on fruits and beet-roots. One hundred years she spent only by eating leafy vegetables.

For a sufficient period of time observing complete fast she suffered tormenting of nature like torrential rains and scorching sun and biting cold, under the open sky. After such a difficult routine she lived only on dry Bilva Pattaras (leaves) fallen on the ground for three thousand years. She kept herself engrossed for twenty-four hours in worshipping Lord Shiva. After that she gave up eating even these dry leaves. For several thousand years she went on without any food and water. Because she gave up eating dry Bilva leaves so she was known to be Aparna as one of her epithets.

After the hardship of penance for several thousand years her body became extremely lean and thin. She was reduced to skeleton only. Her penance, sharpened as it was, caused great disturbance in all the three worlds. The whole universe was shaken. The Gods, the Rishis, the Siddhas, the Munis all eulogised her penance as an unprecedented virtuous action.

Ultimately Lord Brahma through an oracle addressed her and said to her in a very pleasant manner-O Goddess, so far nobody has ever practiced such an austere penance. Only you could have done it. This wonderful deed is being praised in all the four quarters. Your desire would be fulfilled. You will decidedly get Lord Shiva as your divine consort. Now stop your penance and go home. Your father would be shortly coming to take you back.

Legend states that in a previous birth she was Parvati Hemavati the daughter of Himvan. Once when she was busy in games with her friends,Naradaji came to see her and on reading her hand/palm-lines Narad Muni stated that, "You will get married with a naked-terrible 'Bhole Baba' who was with you in the form of Sati, the daughter of Daksh in previous birth. But now you have to perform penance for him."

There upon Parvati told her mother Menaka that she would marry none except Shambhu, otherwise she would remain unmarried. Saying this she went to observe penance. That is why her name is famous as Tapacharini - Brahmacharini. From that time her name Uma also became familiar. She is the one who practices devout austerity. Filled with bliss and happiness, she is the way to emancipation - Moksha.'Brahma' here refers to the meditative aspect of Brahmacharini and is always depicted as pious women or Sannyasin.

She is also worshipped as Goddess Tara and is associated with the pious form of Goddess Shakti. She is believed to be that aspect of Mother Goddess, which was present in Sati and Goddess Parvati, when they both did intense austerities to get Lord Shiva as husband.

During the penance Mata Parvati did in order to gain Lord Shivji as her consort for thousands of yrs. without eating even leaves she was called 'Aparna'. Seeing her body her mother uttered U-ma and so she is also called 'Uma'.

Her worship increases sacrifice,good deeds and restraint in humans. Rudraksha is her most adorned ornament.In some regions, Goddess Chamunda Swarup of Durga is worshiped on the second day of Navratra.

In this form she is believed to have killed the demons Chanda and Munda.There is a famous Chamunda Mata Temple at Jodhpur.



NAVRATRA SPECIAL RECIPE

Sabudana Pudding



Ingredients

- 1/2 cup sago
- 3/4 cup jaggery
- 3/4 cup palm sugar
- 2 1/2 cup coconut milk
- 1/2 cup pumpkin seeds
- 1/4 cup water
- For Garnishing
- dry rose petals as required

Method:

To prepare this amazing dessert, wash and soak sago or sabudana in 1 cup coconut milk for an hour to soften and bloom.

Take the soaked sago, remaining coconut milk and jaggery in a large saucepan, and put it over medium heat. Then reduce the heat and let it cook for 15 more minutes until the sabudana is cooked and it has all thickened. Keep stirring occasionally to prevent it from sticking to the bottom. If you wish to have it much thinner, add another cup of coconut milk. Pour into bowls or ramekins to the top and let cool in the refrigerator.

Toast the pumpkin seeds on a pan for 3-4 minutes and place it on a silicon mat.

Put some water and palm sugar in a saucepan and place it over medium flame, and stir slowly with a metal fork, until it gets melted and golden. Cook caramel without stirring, until it turns deep golden. Immediately spread it all over the pumpkin seeds placed on the silicon mat so it hardens. Let it cool down and set at room temperature for about 15 minutes. Then break shards of the praline and add that on the tapioca pudding. Garnish with dry rose petals and serve.

Navratra Akhand Jyoti niyam



The tradition of lighting oil lamps in temples and households in India is centuries old. Generally, people light an oil lamp twice a day- once in the morning after a bath and once in the evening (roughly during dusk).

Interestingly, a Diya or Jyoti symbolises knowledge, purity, good luck, prosperity and represents the absence of darkness/ignorance. And the lamp that remains ignited for several days is referred to as Akhand Jyoti. So, devotees light the Akhand Jyoti (eternal lamp) during Navratra to

honour Mother Goddess Durga.

The Akhand Jyot remains ignited for nine days, and that's what makes it a unique ritual. Read on to know how to light the Akhand Jyoti, the niyam (rules) and upay (solutions).

Navratra Akhand Jyoti niyam and upay

Use brass, silver or earthen lamp. If you opt for an earthen lamp, make sure you keep it soaked in water overnight to prevent it from absorbing all the oil while igniting.

Make an Ashtadal (a pattern of an eight-petalled lotus) with gulal or raw rice on the chowki/platform.

One must always install the oil lamp (Diya) on a chowki or a raised platform. You may place the Akhand Jyoti in the centre of the Ashtadal. This must be kept to the right of the Mother Goddess on the chowki or the altar.

Use a long and thick Baati (cotton wick) or the one made of Mauli to help it remain ignited until the end of the ninth day of the festival.

Use pure sesame oil, mustard oil or ghee for fuelling the Akhand Jyoti. Keep the Akhand Jyoti away from the direction of the breeze/window/door etc. Ensure that it doesn't get extinguished because of a sudden flow of breeze. You may also use a glass box open at the top or a glass cylinder with an open top to shield it from the air.

Keep a check on the quantity of oil in the lamp. Then, gently add oil to the Akhand Jyoti so that the inflamed end of the wick doesn't get immersed.

Due to constant kindling, the wick may start gathering burnt remains. Therefore, add a new wick to the Akhand Jyoti, light it, and gently remove the overburnt portion of the lighted end of the old wick with a slender stick.

Last but not least, a need may arise to follow this procedure at regular intervals to prevent the Akhand Jyoti from turning off before the vrat ends.

Mantras dedicated to each of the nine forms of Durga



Navratra, a festival dedicated to Goddess Durga is spread over nine days. The festival is celebrated four times a year but the Sharadiya (autumn – sometime in the months of September and October) and the Chaitra (spring – sometime in the months of March and April) are other most famous. The other two are

Ashadha and Magha Gupta. This year Sharadiya Navratra begins on Oct 7th and culminates on Oct 15th.

Each of the nine days is dedicated to one of the nine forms of Durga. Each avatar of the Goddess has a specific significance, form and appearance. You can worship each of the nine Goddesses by chanting these simple Mantras this festive season. Check out specific mantras for each of the nine days:

- Day 1 – Maa Shailputri**
Om Devi Shailaputryai Namah
- Day 2 – Maa Brahmacharini**
Om Devi Brahmachariyai Namah
- Day 3 – Maa Chandraghanta**
Om Devi Chandraghantayai Namah
- Day 4 – Maa Kushmanda**
Om Devi Kushmandayai Namah
- Day 5 – Maa Skandamata**
Om Devi Skandamatayai Namah
- Day 6 – Maa Katyayani**
Om Devi Katyaanyai Namah
- Day 7 – Maa Kalratri**
Om Devi Kalaratryai Namah
- Day 8 – Maa Mahagauri**
Om Devi Mahagauryai Namah
- Day 9 – Maa Siddhidatri**
Om Devi Siddhidatryai Namah

General Knowledge Question

1.Which one of the following waves are used by the common TV remote control?

- A.Radio waves
- B.Lasers
- C.Infrared waves
- D.Ultrasonic waves

2.Given bellow are the psychological manifestations of noise pollution.

- (i)Constriction of blood vessels
- (ii)Increase in the rate of heart beat
- (iii)Digestive spasms
- (iv)Dilation of pupil of the eye

Select the correct options

- A.(i) and (ii) are correct
- B.(i) and (iii) are correct
- C.(ii) and (iv) are correct
- D.(i), (ii), (iii) and (iv) are correct

3.Which gas is safe and an effective extinguisher for all confined fires?

- A.Nitrogen dioxide
- B.Carbon dioxide
- C.Sulphur dioxide
- D.Nitrous Oxide

4.Which one of the following statements is incorrect about laser?

- A.It is a technique for producing intense beams of light, ultraviolet or infrared radiation of different wavelength.
- B.Even in diamond laser beam can drill a hole.

C.A variety of lasers have been made from solids like the ruby crystal and semi conducting materials, liquids and gases.

D.All waves in laser; travel in phase.

5.Which one of the following elements the drum of a Photostat machine is made up of:

- A.Aluminium
- B.Selenium
- C.Barium
- D.Caesium

6.If we say the child has an IQ of 100, what does this means?

- A.The performance of the child is below average.
- B.The performance of the child is above average.
- C.The mental age of the child is equal to his actual age.
- D.The performance of the child cannot be better.

7.Which bacteria is responsible for the formation of curd?

- A.Lactic acid bacteria
- B.Lactobacillus Acidophilus
- C.Lactobacillus aureus
- D.Bacillus radicleola

8.Which one of the following bacteria present in the soil produces a peculiar smell if it rains on perched soil?

- A.Streptomycetes
- B.Staphymycetes
- C.Diplomycetes
- D.Micrococccus

9.In poorly ventilated buildings which one of the following inert gases can be accumulated?

- A.Helium
- B.Neon
- C.Argon
- D.Radon

10.Honey is sweeter than cane sugar or corn syrup. Which one of the following carbon sugars is responsible for this?

- A.Dextrose
- B.Levulose
- C.Sucrose
- D.Fructose

11. Which Polymer is used in making non-stick kitchen ware?

- A. Nylon
- B. Teflon
- C. Polystyrene
- D. Bakelite

12. Name the polymer used in making bullet proof glass?

- A. Melamine
- B. Bakelite
- C. Lexan
- D. Vinyl rubber

13. For pipe insulation which polymer is used?

- A. PVC
- B. Polythene
- C. Teflon
- D. None of the above

ASTRO SPEAK

ARIES



MAR 21 - APR 20

Send your attention towards your closest partnerships today. Aries. Something within you is eagerly seeking release and renewal on an emotional level, and Friday's Scorpio moon encourages you to engage with whatever's waiting to be unearthed. Later, Luna's opposition with change-bringer Uranus may highlight unexpected changes to your finances and productivity flow.

LIBRA



SEP 24 - OCT 22

The moon glides through deep-focused Scorpio, sending your attention towards the state of your finances and untapped inner resources. It's an ideal day to check in on your budgeting and get realistic about spending while also letting your forgotten talents reactivate. Luna's opposition with electric Uranus brings breakthrough conversations around intimacy that offer healing.

TAURUS



APR 21 - MAY 20

What's happening in your current relationship story, Taurus? Friday's skies push you to devote your energy towards this all-important arena as the moon floats through your opposite sign of sensual Scorpio. It's an ideal day to touch base, reach out to romantic interests, or spice things up in committed relationships. Luna's opposition with erratic Uranus can spark tensions between "me vs. us" freedoms.

SCORPIO



OCT 23 - NOV 22

As a Scorpio, it's easy for you to immerse yourself in intimate partnerships and lose your sense of identity on the way. Let yourself step back onto dry land today and reconnect with your own needs independently as the nurturing moon wades through your sign. It's an ideal day to focus on pampering and self-protection. Luna's opposition with Uranus may bring surprises or shake-ups to close relationships.

GEMINI



MAY 21 - JUN 20

Things have been heating up in your world, Gemini. In order to deal with your excess nervous energy today, it's critical that you find an outlet by getting into your body, eating right, and exercising. On top of all that, the sharp-focused Scorpio moon encourages you to get productive within your craft. Luna's opposition with Uranus can bring flashes of insight around self-defeating problems.

SAGITTARIUS



NOV 23 - DEC 22

Friday's cosmic landscape beckons you into a quiet world of your own, Sagittarius. The moon floats through solitary Scorpio, signaling a strong need to recharge, recuperate, and release. It's an ideal day to reconnect with your favorite nature spot, get lost in a good book, and turn your phone off. Luna's opposition with electric Uranus may highlight changes to be embraced on the work/life balance front.

CANCER



JUN 22 - JUL 23

Get away from your desk and reacquaint yourself with that which brings your pleasure as the moon floats through sensual Scorpio. It's an ideal day to plan a date night, immerse yourself in creative activities or simply veg out and enjoy yourself in front of the TV. Luna's opposition with erratic Uranus can bring surprise news from friend groups or your social network.

CAPRICORN



DEC 23 - JUL 20

The deep-feeling Scorpio moon calls your attention towards your sense of community, making it an ideal day to reach out and reconnect with friends or your social network. It's also an ideal day to focus on clarifying your long-term goals—think writing them down or releasing ones that no longer fit the bill. Luna's opposition with electric Uranus illuminates changes or shake ups around your romantic life.

LEO



JUL 24 - AUG 23

Let your inner lazy lion emerge today, Leo. You're hankering for a restful recharge under Friday's skies as the reflective Scorpio moon beckons you inward and away from the crowd. It's an ideal day to tend to the upkeep of your humble abode, to catch up on rest, or to reach out to family members and get nostalgic. The moon's jolting opposition with electric Uranus can bring flash in the pan insights around career matters.

AQUARIUS



JAN 21 - FEB 23

You're on top of your game right now, Aquarius. The moon's presence in laser-focused Scorpio allows you to plow ahead with your ambitions and devote tireless energy towards your craft. It's an ideal day to promote your mission at large or chip away at larger ambitions, as you're at peak visibility. Luna's opposition with erratic Uranus may bring sudden shakeups or changes to your home and family environment.

VIRGO



AUG 24 - SEP 23

As a Virgo, you're a natural-born storyteller. Let yourself reconnect with that skill today as the moon floats through sharp-tongued Scorpio. Friday's skies offer up an ideal time to immerse yourself in writing projects, educational ventures, or important conversations. All that matters is that you use your voice and speak your truth, whatever the outlet.

PISCES



FEB 20 - MAR 20

As a Pisces, it's important for you to always keep one foot in your creative dream world. Friday's skies encourage you to dip into this refreshing world of fantasy and possibility as the moon meanders through deep-feeling Scorpio. It's an ideal day to escape the mundane, immerse yourself in a movie, or plan a future trip. Luna's opposition with Uranus may bring unexpected conversations.

