

Maa Chandraghanta – Third form of Maa Durga

Maa Chandraghanta is one who establishes justice and wears crescent moon on Her head. Because of this bell shaped mark of moon which is present on the fore head of Maa Chandraghanta, Maa is known as Chandraghanta. The colour of her body is golden; she rides on lion who describes "Dharma", possesses ten hands and three eyes, eight of Her hands display weapons while the remaining two are respectively in the Mudras of gestures of boon giving and stopping harm. Devi Maa is posed as to be ready for war. "Chandra Ghanta" meaning supreme bliss and knowledge, showering peace and serenity, like cool breeze in a moonlit night. By her blessings all the hindrances coming in way of a person are removed. Her pleasant looks clears all sorrows and sadness of her devotees. Her roaring voice alerts and makes the demons to tremble.

In Durga Pooja the third day of Navratri is very important in Navaratri. This day the mind of the Sadhak enters Manipura lakra. At this stage by the grace of Maa Chandraghanta he becomes capable of seeing unearthly and divine things. He smells the divine fragrance and many types of divine sound become audible to him. On this day and in this stage of discipline the Sadhak is required to be most careful.

By the grace of Mother Chandraghanta all sins of the Sadhak (striver) are burnt up and obstacles removed. Her worship is instantly fruitful. She is always in a gesture as if ready to proceed for the battlefield and thus she removes the difficulties of devotees very promptly. Her vehicle is lion and so her worshiper becomes valorous and fearless like a lion. The sound of her bell always protects her devotees from evil spirits. As soon as the Sadhak invokes her, her bell immediately becomes active and starts ringing to protect the devotee under her shelter.

Even though she keeps her always busy in killing and suppressing the wicked, yet to her devotees and worshipers she looks most serene,

gentle and peaceful. A very good quality that is developed in her devotees who worship her, is the striver cultivates bravery and fearlessness accompanied by serenity and humility. His face, eyes and the entire body gets effulgent. His voice becomes divinely sweet.

Wherever the devotee worshiper of mother Chandraghanta go, they disperse peace and blessings among the people. From the body of such a striver there always takes place an invisible radiation of divinely lighted atoms.

This divine action is beyond the perceiving capacity of physical eyes but the striver himself and his associates go on experiencing this fact every now and then. By purifying his mind, words, deeds and body through prescribed manner we should worship the mother Chandraghanta and take shelter under her feet. Through worshiping her we can get rid of all worldly sorrows, and attain the supreme goal spontaneously. We should always try to advance on the path of spiritual discipline by contemplating on the sacred image of the mother. Contemplating on her, we can attain the mundane perfection and ultimate good in the other world.

Devi Chandraghanta Maa is known and named Chandraghanta or Chandra-Khanda for the semi-circular moon (Chandra) which appears like a bell (Ghanta) on her forehead. Durga is also worshipped as Ashtamukhi and Shorashi in different parts of India on this day. She is depicted as having three eyes and ten hands holding with ten types of swords - weapons and arrows etc. and is seated on a lion (in some photos on a tiger) and shown as ready for going to war. She is the image of bravery.

The frightful sound of her bell terrifies all villains and demonic incarnations. She is also the giver of supreme knowledge and bliss and is depicted as having golden skin with the half circular moon on her forehead, glowing. Her ten hands hold..... She is worshipped in this form in Kanchipuram (Tamil Nadu) India.



Maa Kushmunda – The Fourth Aspect of Navdurgas

Maa Kushmunda is the fourth aspect of Navadurga Goddesses. Devi Maa is worshipped on fourth day during Durga Pooja in Navratri. Mother Goddess created the whole universe in shape of an egg called "Anda" with her little and light divine smile, so that Maa Durga is named Kushmunda.

The word Kushmunda is made of three other words that are "Ku + Ushma + Amnda= Kushmunda". Here "Ku" is "Little", "Ushma" is "Warmth or Energy" and "Anda" is "Egg", means the one who creates the universe as "Little Cosmic Egg" with the energy of Her divine smile is called "Kushmunda". Goddess Durga is very happy in this incarnation and it is believed that when there was no existence of any creation or universe and there was the eternal darkness, which ended when Maa Kushmunda smiled. So Maa Kushmunda is known as the creator the whole universe. Maa Kushmunda is also named as "Adi Shakti". The core of Suraymandala (Sun) is the residence of Devi Maa. She is the only one who has the power and strength to live in the core of Surayloka (Sun). Her body shines like the glowing Sun. All directions get light from Her Divine smile including the Sun God itself. Maa Kushmunda also known as "Ashtabhuja" as she is often depicted as having eight arms. In her seven hands she holds Kamandalu, Bow, Arrow, Lotus, a Jar of Nectar, Discus and Mace. In her eighth hand she holds a rosary capable of giving eight Siddhis and nine Niddhis. She rides a lion who represents "Dharma". On worshiping Her ailments and sorrows are eliminated and life span, name, strength and health improved.

The Pooja of Devi Kushmunda on the fourth day of Navratri in Durga Pooja is having very importance. On this day, Yogis and Sadhaks or other dedicated

devotees keep their mind in Anahata Chakra. Kushmunda represents Anahata Chakra in spiritual practice. Kushmunda Pooja during Navratri increases one's health and strength.

On the fourth day Mata Durga is worshipped in her Ma Kushmunda Swarup. She is depicted as seated on a lion, and possesses eight arms. She resides in solar systems and represents all knowledge. Seven types of weapons are shown in seven hands and prayer beads in her right hand. She likes the offerings of "Kumhde." Therefore her name "Kushmunda" has become famous. She is also known as 'Krishnamunda' and is believed to have created the universe, so she is called as Adi Swarup. She is also called 'Astabhuja'. Worship of Ma Kushmunda brings light into darkness and ignorance, gives true knowledge, destroys ego, disease, sorrow, depression, ignorance. "Kumbh Bhand" means to give cosmic vivacity in Pindi shape or knowledge of cosmic intricacies in human race. The abode of Mata Kushmunda is in Bhimparvat.

Om Dukha Hantraya Namah

Kushmunda Devi manifests eight arms, holding weapons and a rosary (Mala), she is seated on a tiger and her aura is like the sun. Special benediction: This aspect of Devi destroys sorrows of the mind and ego by harmonising the macro-universe with the inner micro-universe of the individual. This makes available all realms of the external universe to the individual internally through meditation. She is the birthing mother presiding over birth and rebirth. The abode of Kushmunda is in Bhimparvat. We see streams of dark orange and golden light and golden drops that end in little drops of golden light entering the spinal column. These act like a spiritual surgical knife, destroying negatives and false ego positions.



India to be Global Bio-manufacturing Hub by 2025: Dr Jitendra



Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh addressing the faculty and students at the National Institute of Plant Genome Research (NIPGR), New Delhi on Friday.

STATE TIMES NEWS
NEW DELHI: Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science & Technology, Earth Sciences, and MoS PMO, Dr Jitendra Singh on Friday said that India under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be among the world's top five countries and be recognized as a Global Bio-manufacturing Hub by 2025.

Speaking after releasing the Genetic Version of Indian rice and chickpea (DNA panArray) developed by National Institute of Plant Genome Research (NIPGR), Dr Jitendra said, India's Bio-Economy is on way to achieve 150-billion-dollar target from the current 70 billion-dollar to contribute effectively to Prime Minister's vision of a 5 trillion-dollar economy by 2024-25. This will be possible through a very well-articulated vision, mission and goals, driven through a set of well-defined strategies and a clearly laid out implementation Action plan put forth by the Government, he added. The Minister referred to the various Missions to achieve the Bio-Hub Goal by 2025 like

Mission mode programme in "Germplasm characterization in major crop species, Developing high yielding, Climate-resilient, Disease resistant and Nutrient-rich crops towards the second green revolution. Applying gene editing technology for improving crop varieties, One Health Mission on AMR for livestock and zoonotic Diseases, National Nutrition Mission on Fortified and Functional Foods, Phytopharma Mission for development of affordable phyto-pharmaceutical drugs and Mission on Waste to Value Technologies.

He said, Indian Rice panArray (IndRA) and Indian Chickpea panArray (IndiCA) will tap the huge potential of Indian plant biodiversity and genomic

diversity towards food and nutritional security of the Nation. He said, these arrays include more than 80,000 genomic variants, identified using thousands of diverse global rice and chickpea accessions and will provide new technologies and improved genomic tools for crop improvement, helping breeders for fast tracking varietal development. The Minister also inaugurated "NIPGR First Translational Facility Network for Speed Breeding and High Throughput (HTP) Field Phenotyping". The Minister said that NIPGR is an autonomous institute of the Department of Biotechnology (DBT) is now recognized as an international centre of excellence in plant science. He said, the institute's scientists and students have

developed value added crops for better human nutrition and adaptation to changing climate for higher productivity using various tools of biotechnology, such as, gene editing, genetic engineering and molecular assisted breeding. He also noted with satisfaction that very recently, institute has developed a device for enhancing shelf life of fruits and vegetables and established its first Start up "Fruvetech".

Referring to NIPGR's First Translational Facility Network for Speed Breeding and High Throughput (HTP) Field Phenotyping at the campus of Bharat Immunological and Biologicals Corporation Limited (BIBCOL), Bulandshahr, UP, Dr Jitendra Singh said,

Genomics-assisted breeding is a rapidly emerging strategy for ensuring global food and nutrition security as well as for achieving future sustainable agriculture. He said, speed breeding technique shortens the breeding cycle by promoting quick growth and development and rapid generation advancement (even up to 4-6 generations per year) of crop plants. Speed breeding has been demonstrated in wheat, barley, chickpea, pea, canola and peanut in fully enclosed, controlled-environment growth chambers with supplementary environment, he added. Dr Jitendra Singh said that Biotech Missions have been launched to align with the national and global priorities and give a fillip to the National Development Plans (NDP) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). He said, Biotech missions thus ensure that the efforts made in the field of biotechnology converge with other socio-economic efforts being made towards the end goal of achieving sustainable development under the 'Atal Jai Anusandhan Biotech (UNATI) Mission' including 'POSHAN Abhiyan' and Mission on 'Combating Pests and Pathogens'.

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Shiv Sharma flags off Prabhat Pheri at Katra



President of J&K ISWA, Shiv Kumar Sharma inaugurating Prabhat Pheri at Katra.

STATE TIMES NEWS

KATRA: Jammu and Kashmir Association of Prabhat Pheri on Friday took out first Prabhat Pheri in its fifth year on 2nd Navratri which is a part of Navratri Festival Katra being organized jointly by J&K Tourism Department and Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board Katra in association with district administration.

The Prabhat Pheri was flagged off by Shiv Kumar Sharma, President of J&K Indian Style Wrestling Association in presence of Manik Singh Rathore Under Secretary J&K Transport Department and Ranjeet Kaur, J&K Taxation Officer. Prabhat Pheri started from Bus Stand Katra passing through Ban Ganga Road reached at Darshani Deodi and then came back via main bazaar to Bus Stand Katra

NAVRATRA SPECIAL RECIPE

Palak Makhana



Ingredients

300 grams Spinach Leaves (Palak)
2 Tomatoes, diced
1 cup Lotus Seeds
1 teaspoon Cumin seeds
1 teaspoon Garam masala powder
1/2 teaspoon Red chilli powder
1/2 teaspoon Turmeric powder (Haldi)
1 Cinnamon Stick
2 tablespoon Milk
1 tablespoon Ghee
Salt, to taste

Method:

We begin the Palak Makhana by washing the spinach thoroughly under running water. Drain the spinach and cook it in a pressure cooker with little bit of turmeric powder, cumin seeds and green chillies for 2 whistle.

Once the whistle is done let it cool down till the pressure comes out naturally. Blend it into paste and keep it aside.

Roast the makhana with ghee on a flat bottomed non-stick pan. Remove the makhana and in the same pan add little bit of oil and temper the cumin seeds and add the tomatoes. Cook until they loose all the liquids and add all the spice powders.

Add little water and simmer it for 2 minutes. Add the blended spinach mixture along with milk and simmer it for 3 minutes again.

Finally, add the makhana and bring it to a boil.

You can serve your creamy Palak makhana with Ajwain puri or Jeera pulao to make a complete wholesome meal.

Rajgira Fruit Tart

Ingredients

2 cup amaranth
8 slices orange
12 black grapes
1/2 teaspoon orange zest
4 pieces strawberry
8 slices kiwi
1/2 medium muskmelon
2 cup hung curd
1 1/2 cup jaggery syrup
4 teaspoon white butter

Method:

To prepare this enticing fusion dish, heat a pan on medium flame. Only when the pan is heated, add in the amaranth. Make sure the pan is well heated before adding the seeds otherwise the amaranth seeds will burn. Once you add amaranth seeds in the pan, they will start popping like popcorn. Stir cook the seeds to avoid them from burning.

Cook for 5 minutes then remove from heat and keep aside for further use.

Now, transfer the roasted amaranth seeds in a bowl and add in jaggery syrup. Mix well.

Now grease a pie tin with melted butter. Add the amaranth-jaggery mix in the tin. Then mix hung curd and orange zest in a bowl. Spread a spoonful of the hung curd mixture over the pie tin.

Next, arrange kiwi slices, orange slices and melon slices, top with strawberry pieces and black grapes. Keep the prepared tarts in the fridge to chill for at least 1-2 hours. Once done, remove from fridge and serve the chilled dessert.

