

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 Navratra is very important in Navaratra. 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 worshipping 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.



NAVRATRA SPECIAL RECIPE

Khatta Meetha Baingan



Ingredients

- 10-12 small brinjals
- Oil for frying
- 1 tsp cumin seeds
- 1 Tbsp ginger-finely chopped
- 1/2 cup tomato-finely chopped
- 1 cup tomato puree
- 2 tsp coriander powder
- 1/2 tsp turmeric powder
- 1/2 tsp garam masala
- 2 tsp salt
- 1 tsp chilli powder
- 1 Tbsp sugar
- 1 tsp vinegar
- 1/4 cup coriander leaves chopped
- 1 tsp green chillies

Method:

Wash and wipe the brinjals and slit them. Heat oil and fry the brinjals over high flame, till slightly soft but still retain their shape and colour. Take 1/4 cup oil in another pan. Add cumin and once it splutters, add ginger. Sauté to a very light brown colour. Add tomatoes and tomato puree, mix well. Add coriander, turmeric, garam masala. Add chilli powder, salt, sugar and vinegar. Sauté till the oil separates. Add the brinjals, green chillies and half of the coriander leaves. Cook further for about 5 minutes. Garnish with remaining coriander leaves. Serve hot.



Ridima Bajpai, daughter of Vikas Bajpai & disciple of Rangeeley Thakur Vijay Sambyal, former Station Director, AIR Jammu, is the only candidate from Jammu and Kashmir to be selected for CCRT scholarship in Hindustani Classical Vocal Music category.

People will teach lesson to BJP in coming elections: Mula Ram

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Vice-President J&K Pradesh Congress Committee Mula Ram said that Congress will not tolerate any type of discrimination with J&K, and will fight tooth and nail against it. He further asserted that J&K UT Government has failed in all sectors miserably, due to which people are facing numerous hardships and have decided to teach Saffron party a lesson in coming elections.

While speaking during a series of meetings held in Rathua, Gho Manhasan in Marh block, organised by BCC and Youth Congress Committee Marh, the former minister said that it has now become a trend to suppress and ignore J&K for the Government, but as long as Congress is there, no discrimination will be tolerated with people of J&K. Mula Ram further lambasted BJP government for unprecedented hike in prices of petrol, diesel and other essential products.

SKUAST-TAJ urges LG for rechristening of SKUAST-J as JAU

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: "SKUAST-Teaching Association Jammu (SKUAST-TAJ) has raised a demand in the year 2016 for the rechristening of SKUAST-J as Jammu Agricultural University and after that teaching association is actively pursuing this particular issue with the concerned quarters", said President SKUAST-TAJ Dr. Vikas Sharma in a press statement.

He informed that in the recent past i.e., in 2019 the teaching association met with Governors of J&K N.N Vohra and Satyapal Malik to submit a written memorandum regarding the matter and in February 2020, teaching association also discussed the issue with Lieutenant Governor of J&K GC Murmu at Rajbhawan Jammu.

President TAJ Dr Vikas said that in response to Chancellor's Letter No. LGS-1 (GR)/20/4073 dated

May 12, 2020 addressed to Vice Chancellor SKUAST-J on the subject Rechristening of SKUAST-J as Jammu Agricultural University, the issue was deliberated in University Governance meeting held under the chairmanship of Vice Chancellor SKUAST-J on May 29, 2020 and accordingly vide letter No. AU/J/Secy/20-21/09-10 dated June 3, 2020 addressed to Principal Secretary at Lieutenant Governor's Secretariat J&K, Registrar SKUAST-J has conveyed that "University has no objection for Rechristening of SKUAST-J as Jammu Agricultural University, through appropriate policy decision by the Government."

Moreover, on 17 January, 2021, TAJ office bearers met Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha and submitted a detailed draft regarding the subject and LG assured that their sole demand will

be considered soon.

Dr Vivak M Arya General Secretary of the association stressed that the demand is very genuine as agricultural Universities in our neighboring States have been established in the name of the State itself like Punjab Agricultural University (PAU) - Ludhiana, Haryana Agricultural University (HAU) - Hisar, Himachal Pradesh Krishi Vishwavidyalaya (HPKV) - Palampur and even University of Jammu has its own identity, so on the same pattern Agricultural University of Jammu should be named as Jammu Agricultural University (JAU).

So, rechristening of SKUAST-J as Jammu Agricultural University is need of the hour and it will be a good confidence measure for the people of Jammu, who have struggled a lot for this Agricultural University.

Arora highlights achievements of J&K administration

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Welcoming decision of UT administration to resume Shri Amarnath Yatra, former MLC Adv Ramesh Arora, while addressing a press conference here on Sunday, said the decision is step to restore glory of famous cave shrine of Bhagwan Shiv.

He further said that J&K it is the only Union Territory where through Ayushman Card, entire population is getting benefit of the scheme, all due to the relentless efforts of LG Manoj Sinha. He also welcomed the decision regarding recruitment of Sub Inspectors through SSB, as same would help a lot in elimination all types of malpractices. The former MLC further said that anti-encroachment drives of the UT administration, at various places, is also an appreciable step and much more is required to be done in this regard.

Other achievements of UT administration highlighted by Arora included decision to

install smart electric meters, to pay Rs 25 lakh to NoKs of martyrs, improving road infrastructure, ongoing works of All Indian Institute of Medical Science (AIIMS), digitization of all revenue records, etc. He further requested his friends and party leaders to highlight the achievements of present Government.

Congress to hold protest against Delimitation Commission today

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: J&K Congress shall hold a protest against the Delimitation Commission tomorrow, over its draft report, which is against settled norms and ground situations and containing large scale irregularities, besides its eye wash exercise to meet aggrieved people in a very short time.

JKPCC said that it shall lodge its strong peaceful protest over the highly objectionable report prepared on the behest of ruling party, which is in violation of all settled norms and ground situations besides its failure to listen to the aggrieved people especially opposition political parties over the draft report in detail.

JKPCC chief spokesperson Ravinder Sharma said that party is left with no option but to register the protest and resentment of aggrieved people, as no fair hearing is available.

The peaceful protest dharna shall be held at 10:00 AM tomorrow at Shaheedi Chowk Jammu which shall be attended by PCC president G.A Mir and senior leaders, he said.

Why must Kashmir be made Chandigarh-like UT



■ PROF HARI OM

The Home Minister Amit Shah's 2-day visited to Jammu on March 18 and 19, the report that PM Narendra Modi would visit Jammu on April 24, 'Panchayati Raj Day', during which he will interact with members of the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs), launch industrial investments and inaugurate or lay foundation stones of various development projects and the sudden spurt in the local BJP's political activities could be construed as a definite signal that the first-ever assembly elections in J&K UT are round the corner. Almost all the Kashmir-based outfits have also intensified their activities, including no-holds-barred campaign for restoration of the pre-August 5, 2019 position. This also suggests that elections could be held sooner than later. All the Kashmir-based outfits are demanding separate status, statehood for the UT and an elected government. India is a democratic country where people elect government at the centre and in the states of their own choice every five year. Some of the major issues which dominate poll campaigns include nature of polity and governance, state of economy and society, centre-state relations, "secularism Vs rightwing politics", price situation, inflation, unemployment and educational and healthcare facilities. The last few years have been witnessing highly bitter poll campaigns across the country with all or nearly all the opposition parties accusing the ruling BJP of "subverting and misusing institutions to weaken the Opposition and convert India into a Hindu Rashtra".

However, J&K perhaps is the only region in India where elections are fought on planks which have all the potential of unsettling the settled or holding J&K aloof from the mainstream politics or driving it out of the political and constitutional organisation of India and hurting the minorities. It's not that the entire leadership in the erstwhile J&K State believed in, propagated and promoted sub-nationalism and hatred between J&K and New Delhi. Bulk of the leadership in Jammu and Ladakh and the

people these two regions housed, and house, barring a few disgruntled elements here and there, were, and are, religiously committed to India. They have been fighting relentlessly against fissiparous tendencies and pervert ideologies and making supreme sacrifices for the unity, integrity and sovereignty of India since ages. It's the leadership in Kashmir, which has been doing exactly the opposite in the name of religion not since 1947, when J&K lawfully acceded to India, but since centuries leading to serious conflicts, bloodshed, exodus, internal displacement and miseries at regular intervals and causing threat to national unity and integrity. The wholesale expulsion of the minuscule minority of peace-loving Hindus, Jammu Dogras and Punjabis from Kashmir in 1990, tensions of serious nature between Jammu and the Valley and between the latter and Ladakh and demographic changes in the strategic Jammu province and the trans-Himalayan Ladakh on a massive scale were some of the immediate results of the policies the New Delhi-backed rulers in Kashmir devised and implemented ruthlessly in the state after 1947. Genuine students of J&K history and objective researchers, academics and opinion leaders with secular outlook all appreciate these hard realities. They all bemoan without mining words the weak-kneed policies the successive governments at the centre adopted towards the subversive, divisive, fundamentally communal, intolerant, backward-looking, greedy, self-centred and ungrateful Kashmiri ruling elite. It would be only appropriate to point out that what the just-released Vivek Agnihotri's "The Kashmir Files" presents is just a tip of the iceberg. Indeed, the history of Kashmir post-1339 and Jammu post-1947 is a history of heart-wrenching stories.

The Narendra Modi Government was the first-ever government at the centre which created a history of sorts in August 2019 by correcting some of the past grave wrongs and integrating J&K and Ladakh fully into India. It lawfully snatched from the irresponsible, undependable, intolerant, exclusivist, blackmailing and threatening Kashmiri rulers pernicious, divisive and discriminatory Articles 35A and 370, under which they enjoyed veto power and exer-

cised unbridled and extraordinary legislative, executive, judicial and financial powers till August 2019. But the Modi Government didn't stop just here. It took cognisance of the sufferings the Buddhists in Ladakh faced at the hands of the Kashmiri rulers and separated Ladakh from J&K and made it Union Territory (UT). Not only this, it also converted the remaining J&K into a UT and brought both the UTs under the ambit of all the central laws - 890 in number -- and institutions. All this suggested that New Delhi had diagnosed what ailed J&K and that it will continue to tread the path it charted in August 2019.

One may call it silly or preposterous but it's a fact that New Delhi is undoing (wittingly or unwittingly) what it courageously did much to the happiness of the nation in August 2019 to undo the past's grave wrongs.

For example, it appointed a delimitation commission to delimit the proposed 90 assembly and the five already existing Lok Sabha constituencies in J&K. Since the delimitation commission was mandated to delimit the constituencies based on what all in Jammu contemptuously reject as the "fudged 2011 census", the commission divided Kashmir into 47 territorial constituencies (all Muslim) and Jammu into 43 (30-32 Hindu and 11-13 Muslim). In other words, it gave more than 50% seats to Kashmir as it happened in 1950s, 1970s and 1990s. Not content with all this, the delimitation commission eroded and undermined the very unity and integrity of Jammu province. In effect, it delinked the whole border district of Poonch and parts of Rajouri district from Jammu province (seven assembly segments and all predominantly Muslim) and linked them with parts of the erstwhile Kashmir's Anantnag Loka Sabha constituency (eleven assembly segments and all 100% Muslim) and named it as Anantnag-Poonch Lok Sabha Constituency.

What the delimitation commission did was not what the people of Jammu province had been demanding since decades. They had been demanding three out of five Lok Sabha seats and over 50% representation in the asserting again and again that the population of their province was equal to Kashmir; if not more, and their region was two-

time that of Kashmir in terms of geographical area.

The Union Government has not only repeatedly said that elections will be held in J&K after the completion of the delimitation exercise but it will also grant full state status after elections and installation of an elected government. Clearly, the Union Government is playing with dangerous tools. What will be the result if elections are held to install an elected government and UT of J&K granted statehood thereafter? Some of the results will be the retransfer of the state power to those who (a) muddled the Indian waters in Kashmir, (b) widened the gulf between Kashmir and New Delhi, (c) promoted, shielded and aided separatists and terrorists, (d) questioned the very accession of J&K with India, (e) defended and promoted further the Pakistani cause in J&K, (f) wrecked the state from within and outside, (g) misused and exploited the state apparatus to promote their own vested interests and interests of the enemy nations, (h) created a narrative that Kashmiri Muslims were a race apart, (h) propagated that the non-Kashmiris were aliens, usurpers and oppressors and a threat to Kashmiri sub-nationalism and (i) destroyed Jammu and Ladakh socially, culturally, economically, politically, and even religiously. It will also help them create Pakistan/Afghanistan/Bangladesh/ Kashmir-like situation in Jammu province, which would mean further destruction of the nationalist constituency in this region. To be more precise, the elections, the reinstallation of an elected government and grant of state status to UT of J&K will mean a total negation of what the Union Government did in August 2019 to defeat the evil designs of the Valley-based ruling elite. Can the nation afford such a dangerous negation? It just can't.

What, then, is the way out? Making Kashmir a Chandigarh-type UT and grant of full state status to Jammu province is the only way out. The whole point is that the extraordinary situation in J&K needs an extraordinary solution. Let's hope and pray that the South and North Blocks in New Delhi will finish the unfinished agenda of August 2019 to break the backbone of secessionists of all varieties in this highly strategic region.