

MAA KUSHMANA The Fourth Aspect of Navdurgas

Maa Kushmada 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 Kushmada.

The word Kushmada is made of three other words that are "Ku + Ushma + Amnda= Kushmada". 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 "Kushmada". 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 Kushmada smiled. So Maa Kushmada is known as the creator the whole universe. Maa Kushmada is also named as "Adi Shakti". The core of Surayamanda (Sun) is the residence of Devi Maa. She is the only one who has the power and strength to live in the core of Suryaloka (Sun). Her body shines like the glowing Sun. All directions get light from Her Divine smile including the Sun God itself. Maa Kushmada 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 worshipping Her ailments and sorrows are eliminated and life span, name, strength and health improved.

The Pooja of Devi Kushmada 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. Kushmada represents Anahata Chakra in spiritual practice. Kushmada Pooja during Navratri increases one's health and strength. On the fourth day Mata Durga is worshipped in her Ma Kushmada 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 "Kushmada" has become famous. She is also known as Krishmada and is believed to have created the universe, so she is called as Adi Swarup. She is also called 'Astabhuja'. Worship of Ma Kushmada brings light into darkness and ignorance, gives true knowledge, destroys ego, disease, sorrow, depression, ignorance. "Kumbh Bhand" means to see cosmic vivacity in Pindu shape or knowledge of cosmic intricacies in human race. The abode of Mata Kushmada is in Bhimaparvat.

Om Dukha Hantraya Namah

Kushmada 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 Kushmada is in Bhimaparvat. 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.



Shakti-Peeths & their significance

The feminine divinity in Hinduism, Shakti, is considered to be the greatest creative force in the universe. Indians and Hindus across the world celebrate the power of Shakti through a number of festivals. Navratri, Durga Puja, Kali Puja are all such festivals.

As the nation celebrates Navratri and Durga Puja this year, we take a look at the most famous Shakti peeths or pilgrim spots in the Indian subcontinent.

If you're in the mood for some Devi darshan, or plan to go on a pilgrimage, these are the places you must visit. In Hindu mythology, the son of Brahma, King Prajapati Daksha had a daughter named Sati.

Princess Sati grew up adoring the legends and tales of Shiva, and when finally her age of getting married came, she knew it was only the ascetic Lord Shiva of Kailash where her heart and soul resided.

Soon enough, Daksha's daughter left her father's luxuries and palace and began her meditation to win Shiva's heart. She performed intense penance in dense forests and renounced food completely. When she finally pleased Shiva through her austerities, the lord of Kailash appeared in front of her and agreed to marry her.

The legend goes that Sati and Shiva were happy in their marital bliss, but their marriage had not gone down too well with King Daksha, who considered ascetic Shiva nothing short of an uncouth lad who lives a hermit's life not worthy of his daughter.

So when Daksha organized a great yajna, he invited all the deities, gods and sages—but consciously excluded his son-in-law Shiva to insult him. Hurt by her father's decision, Sati decided to visit her father and demand the reason for not inviting them. When she entered Daksha's palace, she was bombarded with insults directed towards the Shiva.

Haughty and proud King Prajapati Daksha called him all sorts of names right from a dishevelled god who hung out in graveyard to the supposed 'lord of the beasts'. Unable to bear anything against her husband, a devastated Goddess Sati threw herself in the glowing sacred fire of yajna.

When Shiva's attendants informed him about the demise of his wife, he grew enraged and created Veerabhadra from a lock of his hair. Veerabhadra created havoc in Daksha's palace

and killed him.

Meanwhile, mourning his beloved soulmate's death, Shiva tenderly held Sati's body and started his dance of destruction (taandav). To save the universe and bring back Shiva's sanctity, Lord Vishnu cut Sati's lifeless body using Sudharshan Chakra into 51 pieces.

These pieces fell on earth at various places and came to be known as Shakti Peeths. All 51 places are considered to be holy lands and pilgrimages.

1. Amarnath: Shakti Mayamaya, Body part- Throat

One of the most famous temples of India, the Amarnath Shakti Peeth is located in India's Jammu & Kashmir. Situated near Pahalgam in Anantnag district, this temple opens for pilgrimages during July/August when the Shivaling is available for darshan. The throat of Goddess Sati is said to have fallen here. The devi resides here in the form of Shakti Mayamaya with Trisandhyeshwar as Vairabh.

2. Atthabasa : Shakti Phullara, Body part- Lips

This Peeth is located in Atthabasa Village of Labhpur in Birbhum district of West Bengal. The goddess appears as Shakti Phullara and her lower lip is said to have fallen here. It is compulsory to offer sour eatables whenever bhog is offered to the Shakti.

3. Bahula: Shakti Bahula, Body part- Left Arm

Located on the banks of Ajay River, this holy land is situated in Ketugram, roughly eight kms from Katwa of Bardhaman district in West Bengal. The goddess resides here in the form of Devi Bahula and is accompanied by Bhiruk as the Bhairava. The left hand of Sati fell on this land.

4. Bakreshwar : Shakti Mahishmardini, Body part- Centre portion between eyebrows

This Peeth is located on the banks of Paapura River, approximately 24 kms south west of Siuri town. The centre portion of Goddess Sati had fallen here and she is worshipped in the form of Shakti Mahishmardini. The temple is renowned for its eight natural hot springs which are enriched with healing powers.

5. Bhairavparvat: Shakti Avanti, Body part- Elbow

Maa Sati resides here in the form of Goddess Avanti. This peeth is located near Ujjain in Madhya Pradesh at the Bhairav hills on the banks of Shipra River. In this temple, god-

dess's upper lip had fallen.

6. Bhavanipur: Shakti Aparna, Body part- Left anklet

Goddess Sati appears as Devi Aparna with Vamam as Lord Shiva in the Bhavani Pur peeth, located in the Sherpur Village of Bangladesh. Here, the left anklet (ornament) of Sati had fallen.

7. Gandaki: Shakti: Gandaki Chandi, Body part- Forehead

Near the bank of Gandaki river, lays the Muktinath, Datalagiri Peeth in Nepal. Maa Sati resides here in the Gandaki Chandi form with Chakrapani as the Bhairav. Here, her forehead had fallen and hence, the importance of this holy land can also be found in Vishnu Purana which is an ancient text of Hinduism.

8. Janasthaan: Shakti Bhramari, Body part- Chin

In the Godavari river valley in the Nasik city fell both parts of the chin of Goddess Sati. Devi is said as Shakti Bhramari or Chibuka (meaning Chin) here.

9. Hinglaj: Shakti Kottari, Body part- Top of the head

Sati's Bhrahmarandhra (top of the head) fell in Hinglaj, around 125 kms away from north-east of Karachi. The goddess here is in the form of Shakti Kottari.

10. Jayanti: Shakti Jayanti, Body part- Left Thigh

Locally known as Nartiang Durga Temple, the Jayanti Shakti Peeth is where the left thigh of Sati fell. Located in Kalajore, Bourbhag village in Bangladesh, Devi resides here in the form of Jayanti Shakti.

11. Yogeshwari: Shakti Yogeshwari, Body part- Palms of Hand & Soles of Feet

Dedicated to Maa Kali, this Shakti Peeth is located in Iswaripur village, in the Khulna District in Bangladesh. The goddess resides here in the form of Devi Jashoreshwari and Lord Shiva appears as Chanda.

12. Jwala: Shakti Ambika/Siddhida, Body part- Tongue

Situated 30 km south to the Kangra Valley in Himachal Pradesh is the Jwala Shakti Peeth. Discovered by the Pandavas, here the Goddess Sati resides in form of Devi Ambika or Siddhida. Tongue of Sati is said to have fallen here. She sits in the form of a flame, which miraculously keep burning, even under the layer of rocks.

DYSS felicitates Mohd Tariq



Principal Secretary YSS, Alok Kumar felicitating Volleyball coach and official, Mohd Tariq.

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Department of Youth Services and Sports (DYSS) today felicitated its senior most Volleyball coach and official, Mohd

Tariq at the valedictory of YSS Volleyball Cup tournament at Khel Gaon in Nagrota, near here.

Mohd Tariq was patted by Principal Secretary

(Sports) to Government, Alok Kumar for his contributions for the development of the game in J&K, especially as staffer of the (DYSS).

Hailing from remote district of Poonch, Tariq, Physical Education Master (PEM), is due to retire from services on April 30. The Principal Secretary was all praise for Mohd Tariq for his tireless efforts to uplift the game of Volleyball. Director DYSS, Gaganer Ali and CEO of Volleyball Association of J&K, Kuldeep Magotra also lavished praise on Mohd Tariq for producing J&K's first Volleyball international from district Poonch.

ANTF J&K arrests drug peddler, recovers contraband substances

STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Continuing its efforts to eradicate the menace of drugs from the society, the Anti Narcotic Task Force (ANTF) of J&K Police, a specialized unit to check rising menace of drugs, foiled a bid to smuggle Heroin worth lakhs in Srinagar.

Acting on specific information regarding smuggling of drugs by a drug peddler namely Ab. Qyoom resident of Sultan Daki Uri Baramulla in a Vehicle (EON) bearing registration number JK01S-1701, a team of

has been registered in Police Station CBK and investigation has been initiated and more arrests are expected. Community members are requested to come forward with any information regarding drug peddlers in their neighbourhood. Persons found indulging in drug peddling will be dealt as per law. "Our consistent actions against drug peddlers should reassure the community members that we are making efforts to keep our society free from the scourge of drug menace," Vinay said.

Accordingly, a case vide FIR No. 17/2022 under relevant sections of law

SPF, other organisations express resentment over unconstitutional restrictions imposed on Sikh students

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Enraged over restrictions imposed by Heritage School Jammu, Police and civil administrations of Rajouri, Bhadarwah on five Kakkars of Sikh community, the Sikh Progressive Front (SPF) has urged the administration for allowing the members of Sikh community to follow their religious practices, which is their constitutional right. While speaking during a press conference, Balvinder Singh, President SPF along with Manjot Singh, Rajinder Singh, Surinder Singh Wazir, Sharangjit Singh along with members of other Sikh organisations, Gurdwara Management Committee Sainik Colony, said that recent acts of Rajouri Police and Civil administration for not allowing Amritdari Sikhs aspirants (both male and female) to wear Kirpan and Sikh Dress code



including five Kakkars at Delhi Public Schools Rajouri, are really unconstitutional. "Similar incident occurred at Bhadarwah where Sikh brother and sister from Doda were kept waiting outside Higher Secondary School Siringtal for more than 15 minutes on same issue. It is pre-planned attack on religious freedom of Sikh community enshrined in

Article 25 of Constitution," he alleged.

He further said, "In another incident, Heritage Public School, compelled parents of an Amritdari Sikh girl either to accept unreasonable restrictions imposed by School administration on wearing Kirpan & Kada and didn't allow girl to cover her uncut hair with Dupatta, or to

get TC for admitting her in some other School. These restrictions are unreasonable and arbitrary as wearing Five Kakkars is essential practice in Sikhism and is also guaranteed by the Constitution," he added.

SPF and all other Sikh organizations urged LT Governor Manoj Sinha, DGP Dilbag Singh, Chief Secretary and Principal Secretary to take cognizance of all the incidents and initiate proper inquiry for taking action against Heritage Public School and other responsible officers at the earliest. SPF further requested that circular should be issued to all Schools and Colleges asking them that Sikh students be allowed to wear Five Kakkars, failing which the community will be compelled to launch a massive agitation against such unconstitutional acts.

Kashmiri Pandit Sabha celebrates Zangtrai with zeal

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Zangtrai festival was celebrated by Kashmiri Pandit Sabha, here on Monday with zeal and vigour at Sabha premises. Zangtrai, the Tritiyam Tithi of Navratras, dedicated to Maa Chanderghanta, is observed since ancient times as a mark of respect for womenhood, the Jagat Janni Jagat Amba. The day is now celebrated as women-empowerment day by community. He has been arrested and shifted to police station where he remains in custody. Vehicle used in the commission of crime has also been seized.

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pants. Various religious hymns were recited by acclaimed and renowned Kashmiri vocalist Dr Deepali Wattal and her team, which enthralled the audience. Dr Sujata spoke about the importance of the day and urged others to rise against evils in society, especially orthodoxy and superfluous rituals.

Khosha said, "We are celebrating the function after a

gap of three years because of COVID 19 restrictions."

He stressed about preservation of culture and mother tongue especially by enhancing its use at home to apprise our younger generation which is paying little attention towards our social and cultural heritage. Santosh Nadan gave an elucidated description of Navratra especially the significance of Navreh and Zangtrai.

Others present on the occasion included Ashwani Koul (Vice-President), L Baeati, G J Kampasi, Ashok Khar, Subash Dhar, Dr Usha Tieko, Vijay Mukhi, Sarish Khoda, V K Bakshi, T N Bhat, Anil Wakhloo and Dr Sujata Sathoo.

Meanwhile, the festival was also celebrated at Bhagawan Gopinathji Ashram, Udaivala, Bohri, Jammu. Sushma Bhat was the Chief Guest on the occasion, who was introduced by Dr Openra Krishen Bhat.

A number of artists including Ravi Bhat, Shanti Lal Sid, Pranav Pandita, Himanshu Pandita, Lavanya Koul, Shivani Bhat, Aarti Razdan and R K Sapro presented devotional songs. The day was also celebrated at other Ashrams / Centres of Trust including Pamposh Enclave, New Delhi; Vikaspuri, West Delhi, Kharyar Srinagar; Pune and Bangalore.