

Poorba 2024 Patrika





WISHING EVERYONE HEALTH, WEALTH &
PROSPERITY ON THE AUSPICIOUS OCCASION OF

DURGA PUJA

Presented By: **NEW INDIAN SUPERMARKET**



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President Speaks

From the President's Desk

Dear Poorba Members,

A heartfelt congratulations to all of you – our Poorba is in its 3rd year since inception. In these past three years it has had its fair share of success, growth, jubilation, struggles and challenges. Treading this uphill and downhill curves, it has successfully made its mark in the diaspora of the San Francisco Bay Area.



This is something to be celebrated and cherished by all the members. For any non-profit organization, its heart and soul are the members. A non-profit's culture is the foundation of the organization, and it is made up of with values, beliefs, exemplary behaviors and individual contribution of its members and in this regard - Poorba is no exception. Without its amazing, talented and dedicated member base, none of what it has achieved in these past three years, would have been possible. I salute each and every bit of your effort and hard work, without which this organization wouldn't have come out of the fledgling state.

Last but not the least, let me take this opportunity to congratulate all the volunteers, community service facilitators, vendors and sponsors who have supported Poorba for the last three years. Let's continue with this momentum and let us all take Poorba to a stratospheric height in the years to come.

Priyanjali Aich, President

**Poorba,
Mountain House**

Our Sponsors:

Our heartfelt thanks to all our sponsors for their generous support and unwavering commitment to our community. Your contributions have played a pivotal role in making these different social events happen throughout the year and help fulfill our philanthropic goal. Thank you from the depths of our hearts.

Sponsors





Durga Puja 2024



4 October

Maha Shasti

5 October

Maha Saptami,
Maha Astami & Kumari Puja

6 October

Sandhi Puja, Maha Nabami
& Dashami Puja

Central Park, Mountain House



Disco Dandia
4 OCT - 6:30 PM



Performance by
Debjani & Siddhartha
5 OCT - 7:15 PM



Performance by
Moonmita Ghosh
5 OCT - 8:30 PM



Performance by
Aancora Band
6 OCT - 3:30 PM



Performance by
Bong Connection
6 OCT - 7:00 PM



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November 01 (Diwali): 11 am to 5 pm
November 02, 03: 11 am to 8 pm

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About Poorba:

On a beautiful Fall evening of Friday, October 29th, 2021, community members of Mountain House residents (mostly Bengalis of Indian origin) instituted "Poorba" to establish a cultural and social base here in the United States. With a vision to thrive as a non-profit, "Poorba" has quickly established itself as the foremost organization of all Bengalis in San Joaquin County.

As an organization we are driven to promote the rich and vibrant culture of the Bengal and Northeast India here in the United States, as well as work hand in glove with local communities to serve and give back to the people from all ethnic backgrounds.

With this in mind, Poorba have been and will be organizing literary programs rich in art, music, drama and dance, support sport related activities to promote physical and mental well-being, and will be actively involved in philanthropic and fund-raising events to positively influence the life of one and all around us.

About our Family:

Gourab Basu, Treasurer Poorba is a dedicated family man, husband to Sompriya (Bubli), and proud father of two boys, Neal (11) and Arin (9). An enthusiastic extrovert, he thrives on building connections and nurturing a strong community spirit. Known for his commitment to social causes, and strong financial acumen, Gourab tirelessly unites people and brings positivity wherever he goes. As a motivator and fundraiser, he invests his time and energy wholeheartedly, always ready to lend a hand and uplift those around him. His passion for helping others and unrelenting optimism and positivity defines him.



GOURAB BASU

Treasurer



Deepak is a family-oriented individual with one child who loves traveling and exploring new places. He is passionate about fitness and enjoys playing cricket and hiking. Community focused and deeply committed to teamwork, he consistently seeks ways to contribute to collective efforts. With a grounded and practical outlook on life, he believes in taking things at face value and avoids getting stressed by others' opinions. His guiding philosophy, "If you want to get bothered, you will get bothered," reflects his calm and composed nature.

DEEPAK MANDAL

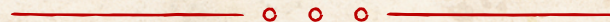
Secretary

Harry Dhillon is a dedicated community leader in Mountain House, actively involved in youth sports, cultural celebrations, and public safety. He founded the Mountain House Royal Kings Youth Sports Club and served as Public Safety Committee chair for MHCSD. Dhillon also promotes cultural inclusivity and ran for Mayor in 2024, showcasing his commitment to community development.



HARRY DHILLON

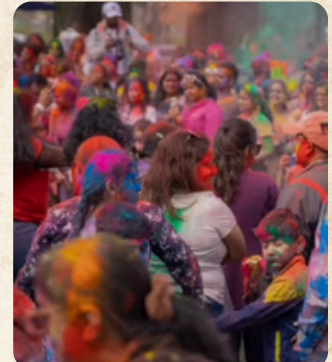
Chief Advisor



Poorba Initiatives 2024

Poorba's Baro Mash a Tero Parbon

Gourab Basu



Poorba's 2024 Community Initiatives: 13 Celebrations in 12 Months, Bringing Joy and Unity to Mountain House and San Joaquin County

In 2024, Poorba has been a cornerstone of community engagement, hosting 13 events in 12 months, echoing the beloved Bengali saying, "Baro Mash a Tero Parbon"—thirteen festivals in twelve months. These events, from cultural celebrations to charitable drives, have provided a platform for students and families alike to participate, learn, and make meaningful contributions to their community. Volunteering at many of these events has also offered high school students the chance to gain valuable experience while making a positive impact.

1. Food Sorting Drive (January 27, 2024)

Poorba kicked off the year by gathering volunteers for a food sorting drive, with students enthusiastically helping to organize essentials for families in need. This was an inspiring lesson in empathy and community service.



Food Sorting

January 2024

2. Holi Celebration (March 23, 2024):

This vibrant celebration brought families and young people together in the spirit of Holi, with students participating in performances, dance, and festive activities that captured the joy of spring.



Holi

March 2024

3. Poila Baishakh Celebration (April 14, 2024):

As families celebrated the Bengali New Year, students took center stage, performing traditional music and dance that fostered a sense of pride in their heritage and strengthened cultural connections.



Poila Boisakh

April 2024

4. Vidya Daan (School Supplies Donation Drive) (August 9, 2024):

Poorba's "Vidya Daan" initiative saw remarkable participation from students, who helped collect and organize essential school supplies, underscoring the importance of education and lending a hand to ensure their peers are well-prepared.



Vidya Daan

August 2024

5. Blood Donation Drive (September 21, 2024):

Students worked alongside adults to promote and organize the blood drive, learning firsthand the impact of health and wellness initiatives on their community.



Blood Donation Drive

September 2024

6. Disco Dandiya (October 4, 2024)

A lively, inclusive celebration, Disco Dandiya encouraged participation from all age groups, with students joining in the dancing, blending traditional and contemporary moves that made the evening unforgettable.



Disco Dandiya

October 2024

7. Durga Puja (October 4-6, 2024):

Poorba's crown jewel event, Durga Puja, featured three days of rituals, cultural programs, and festivities, with students actively participating in dance performances, musical recitals, and various programs that showcased their talents and celebrated Bengali culture.



Durga Puja

October 2024

8. Sit and Draw for Kids (October 5, 2024)

This special event brought together young artists from across Mountain House, offering students a platform to showcase their creativity, with many proudly displaying their artwork for the community to enjoy.



Sit and Draw

October 2024

9. Food Donation Drive (October-November 2024):

In the spirit of Diwali, Poorba encouraged students to take part in collecting non-perishable essentials, teaching them the values of compassion and giving as they helped gather goods for those in need.



Food Donation Drive

October-November 2024

10. Kali Puja (November 2, 2024):

This reflective celebration invited students to learn more about spiritual traditions, with many joining the rituals and gaining insight into cultural practices.



Kali Puja

November 2024

11. Toy Donation Drive (November-December 2024):

The toy drive offered students the opportunity to make a difference by helping collect toys for children in need, emphasizing the power of small acts of kindness in bringing holiday joy to others.

12. Bijoya Sonmeloni - Sponsor and Member Appreciation Day (November 17, 2024):

Students helped organize and participate in this special day of gratitude, gaining an appreciation for community bonds and the importance of recognizing those who support them.

13. Household Battery Drive (December 2024):

Poorba ended the year with a sustainability initiative, and students played an active role in promoting safe disposal practices, learning the value of environmental responsibility.

Through these 13 events in 12 months, Poorba has woven a tapestry of tradition, generosity, and community spirit, giving students invaluable opportunities to learn, lead, and contribute meaningfully. These gatherings stand as a testament to Poorba's unwavering dedication to uniting the community and creating a legacy of shared values. Embodying the spirit of "Baro Mash a Tero Parbon" thirteen celebrations, countless memories, and a brighter future built through unity Poorba is committed to learning, growing, and making each year better than the last.

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মিতালি মুখার্জি



কৈলাস এ মহাদেব দারুণ রেগে গেছেন। ডোমুরু বাজিয়ে, পর্বতের মেঝেতে ত্রিশূল ঠুকে, ঘোষণা করলেন, এটা হতে পারে না। শরৎকালের, শুক্লপক্ষে, ষষ্ঠী তিথির আগে কোনোমতেই যাওয়া চলবে না মর্ত্যে। নেহাত শ্বশুড়ী-মা, অনেক কান্নাকাটি করেন বছরে অন্তত একবার মেয়ের মুখটা দেখার জন্য, তাই বৌ-বাচ্চাদের, নিজের কাছ ছাড়া করেন মহাদেব, শুধু ওই চারটি দিনের জন্য। আর শুধু, চারটি দিন কেন, যেতে আসতেই তো আরও দু-দিন চলে যাই, এতো দিন কৈলাস কে অন্ধকারে রেখে, যাওয়ার কথা ভাবাটাই তো অন্যায়। মহাদেব কোনোকথাই যখন শুনবেন না ঠিক করেছেন, তখন মা-দুর্গা, আঁচলের গিঁট খুলে, একটা ছোট্ট চিঠি বের কোরে দেখালেন।



মহাদেব বললেন, অন্যের চিঠি আমি পড়ি না, তুমি বলো কী লেখা আছে ওই চিঠিতে? দুর্গা-মা পড়তে শুরু করলেন.... ও মা দুগগা, তুমি এবার তাড়াতাড়ি আমাদের Mountain House এ চলে এসো তো, আমার মাস্ট আর পাপা যে কলকাতা চলে যাবে। এখানকার পূজো তাহলে ওরা দেখবে কি করে? আর আমারও তোমার সিংহের সাথে খেলতে খুব ইচ্ছা করছে। তোমাদের সঙ্গে কতজনকে তোমরা নিয়ে আসো.... উফ কি মজা হয় গণেশ দাদার ইঁদুর, কার্তিক দাদার ময়ূর আর সরস্বতী দিদির হাঁস। কি ফর্সা, ঠিক আমার মতো। কেবল লক্ষ্মী দিদির পেঁচা, ওকেই আমার একটু ভয় করে। সে যাক গে যাক ওকে আমার নাচ দেখিয়ে ঠিক manage করে নেবো। তোমরা এলে সকলের কত আনন্দ হয়, জানোনা বুঝি?

ঠিক চার তারিখে চলে এসো কিন্তু! ইতি তোমার ইরা। এদিকে এক কোণে দাঁড়িয়ে কার্তিক মা-বাবার কথা-বার্তা শুনছিল, ইরার চিঠির কথা শুনে, তার রোমান্টিক মনটা উসখুস করে উঠলো, থাকতে না পেরে জিজ্ঞেসই কোরে বসলো....মা ও কত বড়? সাদাসিধে মা উত্তর দিলেন "এক্কেবারে শিশু, এখনও দু-বছরও হয়নি, তাইতো দেবাদিদেব কে বলছিলাম, শিশুর মনে দুঃখ দেওয়ার মতো পাপ আমি কিছুতেই করতে পারবো না, যেতে আমাকে হবেই"। একথা শোনার পর কার্তিকের আর বিশেষ interest থাকলো না। সে ওখান থেকে চলে গেল, ভাই-বোনদের খবর দিতে। ইরার চিঠি শোনার পর মহাদেব পড়লেন মহা বিড়ম্বনায়। ঠিক বুঝতে পারলেন, এরপর আপত্তি করলে গৌরী, কালী রূপ ধারণ করবেন। হাজার হোক গিরিরাজ হিমালয়ের কন্যা, রাজঘরানার তেজ তো উত্তরাধিকার সূত্রে পেয়ে বোসে আছে। কি আর করা, অগত্যা নন্দী-ভূঙ্গীর সঙ্গেই পরামর্শ করা যাক। নন্দী-ভূঙ্গী কিন্তু শোনা মাত্র সমস্যার সমাধান করে দিল। বলল, "তা যেতে যখন চাইছেন, তখন আর না করবেন না। বরং সবাইকে ডেকে মায়ের security টা যাতে জোরদার হয়, তার ব্যবস্থা করতে হবে। কারণ ছোট্ট ইরার সাথে দেখা করে মা কে তো আবার কলকাতায় যেতে হবে। সেখানকার যা অবস্থা! নন্দী আবার মাঝে মধ্যে ইংরিজিতে কথা বলতে পছন্দ করে।

তো ভূঙ্গী কম যাবে কেন? সে ও বলে উঠলো "yes, I can't agree more". মহাদেবের মন মেজাজে এমনিতেই ভালো নেই, তিনি গলা তুলে বললেন "খুব হয়েছে যাও নবগ্রহ আর দশদিকপাল কে খবর দাও, বলো এক্ষুনি আসতে" শিবঠাকুরের কথা শেষ হোতে যা দেরী, নবগ্রহ আর দশদিকপাল সঙ্গে সঙ্গে হাজির, "বলুন দেবাদিদেব, কেন ডেকেছেন?" মহাদেব প্রথমেই রাহু-কেতু কে বললেন "তোমাদের দু-জন কেই বলছি, আগামী কিছুদিন তোমরা নিজেদের সংযত রাখবে, বিশেষ করে রাহু, এই যে তোমার যখন তখন, যাকে তাকে গিলে ফেলার অভ্যেস, সেটা বন্ধ রাখবে আর শনি দেব, তুমি বাপু, এর-ওর ওপর বক্রী দৃষ্টিতে তাকাবে না, যতক্ষণ না আমার অনুমতি পাবে, বাকি সবাই নিজেদের অবস্থান ঠিকঠাক রাখবে, যাতে করে, তোমাদের মা-এর কোনরকম অসুবিধা না হয়। আর দশদিক পাল, তোমরা তো জানোই, তোমাদের মা এর সুরক্ষা, তোমাদের হাতেই আমি বরাবর দিয়ে থাকি, তবে এবার দেখছি কলকাতাতে বড় বাজে অবস্থা চলছে, তাই যে দু-জন দ্বার রক্ষক তোমরা সেখানে নিয়োগ করবে, তারা যেন সেই ব্যপারে খুবই পারদর্শী হয়"। অন্য দিকে মায়ের চার ছেলেমেয়ে, সময়ের আগেই মামাবাড়ি যাওয়ার খবর শুনে দারুণ খুশী। গণেশ বললো, "আমি আমার ধেরেকে বলবো ইরার সঙ্গে খেলা করতে।"

"আর আমার রাজটা তো জল ছাড়া থাকতে পারবে না, ইরার যদি জল ঘেঁটে জ্বর হয়, তখন কি হবে"? বলল সরস্বতী কার্তিক বলল "আমার ময়ূরে করে ওকে ঘুরতে নিয়ে যাবো, অবশ্য একটু বড় হলে বেশ ভালো হতো"। লক্ষ্মী সবার বড়, সে কার্তিকের দিকে তাকিয়ে বলল "আমার প্যাঁচা তোদের সবকটার থেকে বেশী বুদ্ধি রাখে, ওই দেখে রাখবে যাতে ইরার কোন অসুবিধা না হয়"। আর সিংহ মনেমনে বলছে ইরা যদি আমার কেশর ধরে টানাটানি করে তখন করবো কি? মা কিন্তু সিংহর মনের কথা ঠিক বুঝে নিলেন বললেন "চিন্তা করো না বাছা, আমার পা থাকবে তোমার পিঠে, তাই তুমি কিছুতেই ব্যাথা পাবে না। কেবল মনে রাখবে তুমি কাউকে ব্যাথা দেবে না ওরা সবাই আমার সন্তান"। শুরু হলো Mountain House এ আসার গোছগাছ।

গণেশ ইন্টারনেট search করে জেনে নিলো ওখানে মতিচূরের লাড্ডু পাওয়া যায় কি না? কার্তিক খোঁজ নিলো কতজন সুন্দরী মেয়ে আছে আর তাদের marital status কি? সরস্বতী বই পত্রের খোঁজ নিতে গিয়ে যখন Mountain House Citi লাইব্রেরির খোঁজ পেলো, তখন তার খুশী দেখে কে? পিএনজি জুয়েলার্স, আর কুমার জুয়েলার্স এর খবর পেয়ে লক্ষ্মী ও হ্যাপি। তারপর নীল আকাশে সাদা মেঘের ভেলাতে চড়ে পৃথিবীর বুকে কাশফুলের ঝাড় দেখতে দেখতে, আর শিউলীর গন্ধ নিতে নিতে আমাদের মা দুগগা চলে এলেন আক্টোবরের চার তারিখে, Mountain House এ আমাদের সবার কাছে আর ছোট্ট ইরা নাচতে নাচতে গান ধরলো "দুগগা এলো বল বল দুগগা এলো"


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A Note of Love

Sujata Sharma

It was 'Daisy's time',
The daffodils danced
The swaying lilacs resonated the valley with euphony
And then you came into this world
Preceded by the hot summer showers;
The sprinkles tingled your slushy skin
Kissing the scarlet blush on your piquant chin:
And today I kiss them with utmost delight
As I stare into your alluring eyes,
And with every passing breath a silent prayer skips,
'May the lovely Angel fill your life
With all the bliss, with all the bliss!'

Originally written for my better-half Deb, now this poetic expression of love and blessing applies to all my boys, Adit, Ibhan and Deb So glad to share this piece written more than 10 years back with my Poorba family!

Kashmir Diary

Our journey to Kashmir began with a sunrise flight from Delhi. As we soared above valleys and mountains, each of us held our own hopes and expectations for this mystical place. Our moms settled into their seats with a touch of nostalgia and excitement, while our boys, Neal and Arin were transfixed by the view from the windows. This was more than a trip; it was an adventure calling us all to the soul of Kashmir.



***Kashmir Diary: A Journey
Through Kashmir: Our
Family's Passage into
Heaven on Earth***

Gourab Basu



Srinagar: The Jewel of Dal Lake

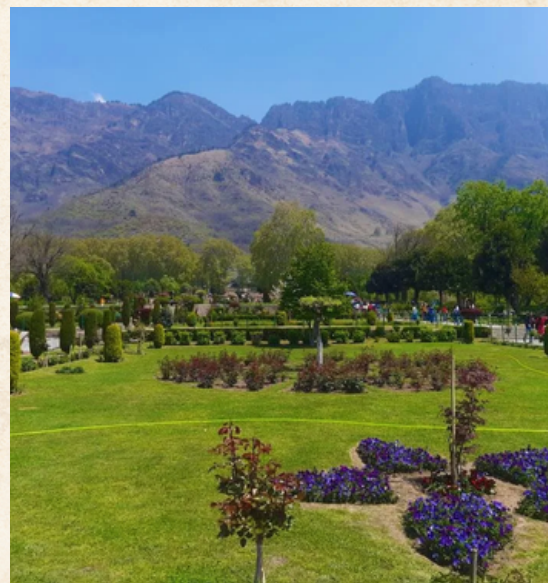
Arriving in Srinagar, we were greeted by Yousuf, our warm-hearted and gracious driver, who quickly felt like an old friend. He led us to our houseboat on Dal Lake—a royal, wooden oasis decorated with intricate carvings, plush furnishings, and large windows that framed the shimmering water. The boys eagerly explored every corner, while Bubli (my better half), my mother, and mother-in-law admired the timeless beauty of our floating home.



Early the next morning, we boarded a shikara that whisked us to the famed floating market. As vendors in colorful boats floated past, selling everything from flowers to spices, the lake hummed with life. Neal and Arin watched with wide eyes, intrigued by the hustle, while the ladies bargained with laughter and joy. As we drifted back, the sun set behind the iconic Hazratbal Mosque, casting a golden glow that turned everything around us into a dream.

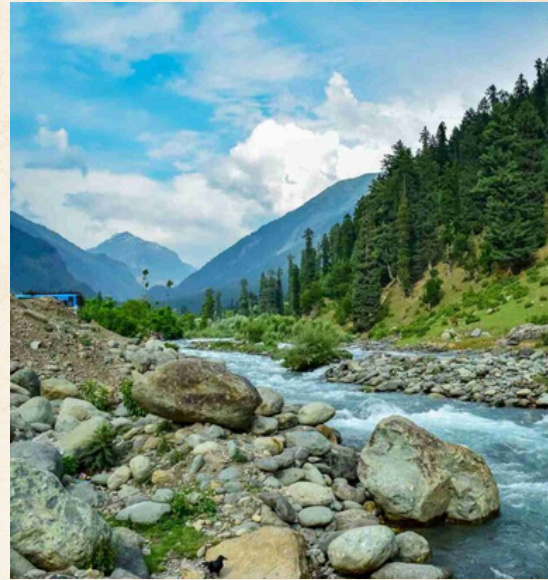
The Gardens and Bustle of Srinagar

We spent the following day wandering Srinagar's Mughal gardens—Shalimar, Nishat, and Chashme Shahi—each an elegant reminder of history, with lush greenery, fountains, and blooming flowers. The boys dashed around the fountains, while Bubli and I shared stories of the Mughals, adding depth to the beauty around us. Later, we ventured to Lal Chowk, where the heartbeat of Srinagar pulsed in every vendor's call, every crafted shawl, and every spice-laden stall. The ladies were particularly drawn to a shop selling delicate, handwoven shawls, each piece a masterpiece of craftsmanship.



Pahalgam: Nature's Majesty by the Lidder River

The road to Pahalgam followed the Lidder River, its sparkling blue waters winding alongside us under a bright, open sky. The boys ran freely as soon as we reached the resort, their laughter blending with the quiet of nature. Standing by the riverbanks, we watched them attempt to skip stones, creating ripples in the clear water. My mom and mother-in-law looked on with warm, contented smiles, reflecting the peaceful beauty of Pahalgam.



A slight mishap with a flat tire on our drive back led us to a secluded waterfall, where cascading water became the perfect backdrop to our unexpected stop. Memories of the film Roja surfaced, filling us with both wonder and a touch of trepidation. But just then, a group of Indian security forces appeared nearby, silently reminding us of the care and protection watching over these lands. It was a surreal and grounding moment that added to our connection to Kashmir.

Gulmarg: A Snowy Adventure and Gondola Thrills

Our next stop was the snowy slopes of Gulmarg. The gondola ride up the mountain was an adventure itself, surrounded by laughter, excitement, and breathtaking views. Neal and Arin held onto the windows with anticipation, their eyes alight as we rose higher. At the top, we stepped into a winter wonderland. The boys immediately plunged into the snow, crafting snowballs and trying to build a little snowman, filling the air with pure, infectious joy. Surrounded by pristine snow and majestic peaks, it was a scene we wished we could carry home.



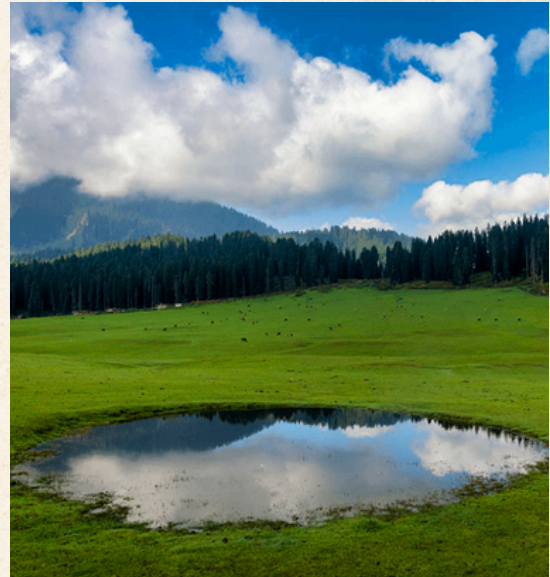
A Warm Connection with Kashmir's Heart

As we traveled through Baramulla and Badgaam, Yousuf shared stories of Kashmir's resilience and transformation. He spoke with a warmth and pride that painted a vivid picture of the land's strength and grace. Though we couldn't visit his home, his invitation touched us deeply. Through his stories, we came to see that Kashmir was more than just scenic beauty; it was a place of strength and spirit, embodied by its people.



Doodh Patri: Farewell to a Dream

Our final destination was the lush meadows of Doodh Patri, where fields of green stretched out before us like a soft, welcoming carpet. Although the boys couldn't run freely due to rain, they found joy in simply being there. Neal fell sick during the drive, so we sought the help of a kind local family who welcomed us into their home. Initially, we were hesitant, unsure of what to expect, but their warm hospitality dissolved any apprehension. They offered Neal ginger tea and a place to rest, showing a level of kindness that left a lasting impression on all of us.



As we made our way back to Srinagar, our minds filled with plans to return one day for Kargil, Ladakh, and Leh. Kashmir had woven its magic around us with memories so vivid they felt like intricate patterns in a shawl. Each breathtaking view, every story shared, and every moment spent with family made us realize that this journey wasn't simply a vacation; it was an unforgettable passage into the heart of paradise.

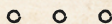
We left with a deep, quiet yearning, knowing that someday, Kashmir's embrace would welcome us once again.



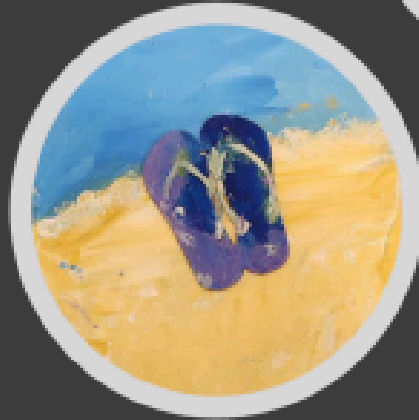
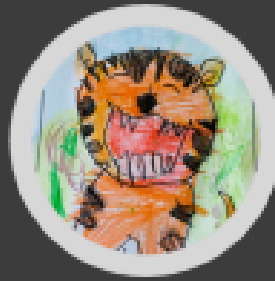
Ma Sidheswesary

Shailesh Kumar Chowdhury

Oh, almighty Sidheswesary Goddess,
I bow to you to relive from redress.
We all know that you are very kind,
Always you are present on our mind.
We are all your daughters and sons,
Are ready to sacrifice flesh and bones.
For getting your everlasting blessing,
Will do everything so that no missing.
Guide us so that we get the right way,
And so that your blessing does not fay. Bestow
your boon for the people,
We know it is not that very simple.
Having your boon and blessing,
There are hoodlums, who will be chasing.
To destroy our good works and endeavor, And
will spoil our life and future.
Terrorism and vandalism are rampant,
Evil thinking and corruption are abundant
Through your drastic weapon,
Let these bad activities are gone.
Come with your generous advice,
And build this human world nice.
Oh, goddess at last I adore you,
Make us happy having no due.



Young Artist



Relax by the beach on a hot summer day

Artist : Ibhan Lahiri Age: 5 years
Medium: Acrylic on canvas



A pet cat mesmerized by the city lights

Artist : Ibhan Lahiri Age: 5 years
Medium: Acrylic on canvas



Goddess Durga

Artist : Adrita Datta, 1st Grade

Medium: Crayon and watercolor on paper



Artist: Vihaan Maarif

4 years old. Grade: TK

Medium: Oil pastel on paper



Goddess Durga

Artist :Abhirup Datta , 7th grade

Medium: Pencil sketch on paper

Cherry Blossom and a pair of Eyeglasses

• By Sutopa Chowdhury



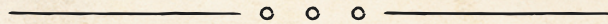
We woke up very early as we had to catch the first train to Lake Kawaguchiko from Shinjuku station. We have been in Tokyo for two days and today was the planned Mount Fuji trip. The mild spring weather around us was refreshing. Pijush, my husband planned this trip and picked the places to explore, and my role was primarily to help with the logistics and transport.

I found we could take the train directly to Lake Kawaguchiko from Shinjuku station, close to where we were staying. Tickets with reserved seats were only available up to Otsuki station, midway into the route where we will need to change the train and take another train afterwards. I bought two sets of tickets for us just to get there, for the ride back we found seats on the direct train, the total ride was about two hours long.

The train started rolling along on time, and gradually we started relaxing a bit and getting into enjoying the views from the train. The person checking tickets told this train will go to Kawaguchiko, after briefly stopping at the Otsuki station so we relaxed a bit thinking we don't need to change train. About halfway into the ride we reached Otsuki station, while the train was stopped Onkaar (our son) called, and I was telling him about our activities. Midway in my conversation, Pijush abruptly pulled onto my arm saying we needed get out of the current train car and get into a different one on the same train now, otherwise we will miss our original train. Perplexed I grabbed my purse, hung up the phone and came out of the train running following a crowd towards the end of the train. We got into a car just in time before the train doors closed. Inside we found more people like us standing everywhere who did not have a seat reservation for this part of the travel and rushed from other cars. Three cars of the train now were going to take us to Lake Kawaguchiko and rest of the train continued to a different direction. A little later we started to see vague outline of mount Fuji from the windows gradually shaping into a clear form. The train stopped briefly in the middle, and we could see a breathtaking clear view of Mount Fuji right in front of us. It reminded me of the view of Taj Mahal from a train stopped on a bridge near Agra longtime back. Everyone on the train, including me was trying to get their phone, camera out and capture the glorious view of Mount Fuji.

Later at the Lake Kawaguchiko station, we got out of the train and to our surprise Mount Fuji was standing just across the station, with no clouds or fog to cover its majestic beauty. As all these happened, I took my prescription sunglasses off to change to my regular pair of glasses to get a better view. Not able to find it anywhere I realized my glasses in a case was left on the train when we switched the cars in a hurry. I just felt the views, people and places in front of me became less clear and blurry instantly, without my eyeglasses.

Nothing left to do now, we started with our tour of Kawaguchiko lake, the Magnificent Chureito Pagoda with lush Cherry Blossom overlooking the Mount Fuji and surrounding areas. I was wearing my sunglasses, indoor and outdoor and feeling still thankful for having the prescription sunglasses with me. We finished all our planned activities and headed back to the train station for our Train back to Shinjuku station. While waiting for the train, Pijush called the Japan Rail lost and found to see if they can help finding my glasses. He was just speaking for a minute explaining the situation, and then turned towards me and exclaimed 'They have your glasses!'. I was able to get my glasses back thanks to the wonderful people at Japan Rail and the Hotel we were staying, but that's a different story.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

***Sincere thanks to all contributors
and reviewers***

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