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MAHALAYA PAKSHA

27 - 9 - 2026 to 10 - 10 - 2026

(Bhaad. Kri. Prathama to Bhaad. Ama.)

The details of Mahalaya Paksha were published in the previous issue (September 2026). Mahalaya Paksha Shraddha should be performed for the welfare and well-being of the entire family.

GOWNA KAALA (Grace Period)

Gowna Kaala means grace period. Due to some reasons, if Paksha Shraddha could not be performed during Mahalaya Paksha period, it can be done on any day from Bhadrapada Krishna Panchami till Aswija Shukla Paksha Panchami. If it could not be done even during this period, it can be done till Deepavali Amavasya, says Krishnacharya Smriti Muktavali page 36. According to Nirnaya Sindhu Vakya (page 112), Pitrus wait till the end of Thula Maasa.

Note: Paksha Shraddha is not performed in Mala Maasa. It is to be done only in Nija Maasa.

Meaning of the last 3 Tarpana Mantras

(1) आ-ब्रह्म स्तंभ-पर्यन्तं देव, ऋषि, पितृ, मानवाः ।
तृप्यन्तु पितरः सर्वे मातृ माता-महादयः ।

(2) अतीत कुल-कोटीनां सप्त-द्वीप-निवासिनाम् ।
आ-ब्रह्म-भुवना-ल्लोकात् इदमस्तु तिलोदकम् ॥

(3) ये के चास्मत् कुले जाताः अपुत्रा गोत्रजा मृताः ।
ते गृण्हन्तु मया दत्तं सूत्र निष्पीडनोदकम् ॥

1,2) Starting from Brahma Deva upto Trina Jiva, all Devatas, Rishis, all my paternal and maternal Pitrus, crores of ancestors in my Kula, wherever they are, may they be pleased with this 'Tilodaka'.

3) In my Kula/Gotra, whoever had gone with out children to offer Tarpana, I am offering this water (udaka) through Yagnyopaveeta. (Change Yagnyopaveeta in maala-kaara.)

The Wordings of Sankalpa

Now recollect the Sankalpa wordings for Mahalaya Tarpana or Shraaddha:-

Kanyaa-Gate, Savitari Aashaadyaadi, Panchama Apara Paksha, Sakrin Mahalaya....

Savitari = Soorya.

I am offering this Tarpana (or Shraaddha) on two accounts:

(1) Because Soorya enters into Kanya Rasi.

(2) And this period (Paksha) is Panchama Apara-Paksha. That is : Aa-shaad-yaadi Panchama.

It means, to count the five Pakshas as under:-

Aashada Kri. Paksha is No. 1
Sraavana Shukla Paksha is No. 2
Sraavana Krishna Paksha is No. 3
Bhaadrapada Shukla Paksha is No. 4
Bhaadrapada Krishna Paksha is No. 5

Apara Paksha means Krishna Paksha. The Panchama Apara Paksha (from Aashaada) is Mahalaya Paksha and it is meant for Pitru Karyas.

What Is The Essence Of All Shastras

अतः सर्वशास्त्राणां श्रीविष्णोः गुणोत्कर्षे एव महातात्पर्यं इति सिद्धम् ॥

Atha: Sarva-shaastraanaam, Shree Vishno:
Gunoth-karshey Eva Mahaa-taatparyam Iti Siddham

All the Shrutis proclaim with one voice the pure glory of Lord Vishnu. They unanimously declare that He is free from all defects and that He alone is Supreme.

To love God
is the foundation of a good life.

Convert Your Home Into a Mini Heaven

11th Oct. to 20th Oct.
(Ashwina Shu. Prathama to Navami)

You can convert your home into a Heaven or hell. It is all in your own hands and mind. Mind is the car. It is ready always at your disposal. It can be used to reach either of the destinations. The option is yours.

The Vratas are like the Road signals. They show the right directions at every stage in our life. These Vratas are meant to discipline our mind. Mind is the medium with which we are to gain the grace of God and Guru.

These Vratas observed or performed in good faith, cleanse our mind of its impurities. This happens without our knowing. The present day life conditions may not permit us to observe these Vratas as our grandfathers were oberserving. But that is no excuse to altogether neglect and forget everything and spend the days in a totally uncultured and irreligious manner.

Such a life is a sure way to bring ill-luck to the family. Because children in such a family, are brought up in an illcultured atmosphere of misplaced value. And this is a long term plan for the sorrowful family problems in the old age. Therefore, we are not

to totally neglect our Kula-Daiva and Kula-Dharma, protecting us every moment. In the interest of the well being of the family, we have to observe and perform the age-old religious observances within the available time, space and resources. This is what Sri Raghavendra Swamy advises us in his "PRAATAS-SANKALPA-GADYA" in these words:-

स्व-वर्णाश्रम-उचितं, देश-काल-अवस्था-उचितं, ...
त्वत्पूजात्मकं कर्म, यथाशक्ति, यथा-ज्ञप्ति, यथा-वैभवं करिष्ये ।
मद् आज्ञा-कारिभिः ..... कारयिष्ये च ।।

'In conformity with my status in society, I shall perform my Kula Dharma with an awareness that it is a Pooja to You O ! Lord. I shall perform the same to my maximum intellectual capability, with the maximum possible grandeur, within the time, space and resources available to me. I shall make my dependents also do it in the same spirit'. This is the Upadesa of Sri Raghavendra Swamy. The coming *Aasweeja* and *Kaartika* is a season, full of vaious Vratas and festivals. Now we will deal with Navarathri.

Navaratri

Navaratri is meant to make our home a Deva-Loka, a spiritual paradise. It is a boon-yielding Vrata for both men and women, boys and girls. Nava-Ratri, every year, begins on Aaswija Sukla, Prathama and concludes on Dasami. Akhanda Deepa, Maha Pooja to Saligramas, Paarayana, Santarpane, Mangalarathi

along with the auspicious Ghanta / Jhang-gate Vaadya, are the essentials on all the days of Navaratri. Colourful toys representing Sri Narayana, Lakshmi, Brahma, Vayu, Saraswati, Bhaarati, Sesha, Garuda, Rudra and others are seated in 'KOLU' for Pooja by the ladies. Having heard that Lakshmi Devi left Vaikunta and had come to Kolhapura, the lady in our house, prayerfully invites the Devi to our own house, declaring that Visesha Pooja with all the Vaibhava will be offered to Her in our house, placing Her in a high pedestal in the midst of all the Parivaara Devatas. This is "KOLU".

The dolls seated in the "Kolu" are not lifeless Bommas. They represent the animate and inanimate things created by God and located all over the Universe from Bhoo-Loka to Deva-Loka. All the God-created things can be seen in the Kolu.

The central place in Kolu is reserved for MahaLakshmi. A small Kalasa is placed at the central place and it is the sacred seat for Lakshmi Devi in Durga-Roopa. All the dolls are Her Parivaara Devatas, standing in service to Her. The lady of the house, her daughters, daughters-in-law, jointly pray Durga Devi-cum-Maha-Lakshmi to come to their house. They address Devi in the form of heart-touching devotional songs, after lighting Devara Deepa and after completing the pooja.

Devi is of Ratri-Roopa and the Lord is of Day-

Roopa. Navaratri is the effective period to make concentrated efforts to worship Lord and Devi and get all the desires fulfilled in life, say the slokas:-

रात्रि-रूपा यतो देवी दिवारूपो महेश्वरः ।
रात्रि-व्रतमिदं देवि सर्वपाप-प्रणाशनम् ।।
सर्वकाम-प्रदं नृणां सर्वशत्रु निबर्हणम् ।
रात्रि-व्रतमिदं तस्य रात्रौ कर्तव्यतेष्यते ।।

SANKALPA: On the First day morning, after Sandhya Vandana, begin the Pooja with this Sankalpa:-

आचम्य, प्राणानायम्य, देश-कालौ सङ्कीर्त्य । एवंगुण विशेषण विशिष्टायां शुभतिथौ, भारतीरमण मुख्यप्राणान्तर्गत श्रीलक्ष्मीवेङ्कटेश प्रेरणया, श्रीलक्ष्मीवेङ्कटेश प्रीत्यर्थं, श्री, भू, दुर्गा, ब्रह्म, वायु, सरस्वती, भारती, शेष, गरुडादि सहितस्य श्रीनिवासस्य, अद्य प्रात-रा-रभ्य, आगामि दशमी पर्यन्तं नवरात्रोत्सवं, प्रतिदिनं घृतदीप-संयोजनं, महापूजनं, सत्-शास्त्र पारायणं, सायाह्ने महानीराजनं च करिष्ये ।।

AKHANDA DEEPA (अखण्ड दीप)

Akhanda means without a break (non-stop)

In many houses, Akhanda Deepa (Nanda Deepa) is kept burning during the whole period. In some houses it is for the concluding three days from Saptami (without any break). This Deepa is to be kept burning all the 24 hours from the moment it is lighted (with

pure ghee or pure Tila-oil). This period of 9 days or 3 days is perhaps based on one's economic condition. The Lord has assured full benefits even for ONE day Akhanda Deepa if the devotee is helpless, says this sloka:-

नव-रात्रव्रते अशक्तः, त्रिरात्रं, एक रात्रं वा ।
व्रतं चरति यो भक्तः, तस्मै दास्यामि वाञ्छितम् ।।

By Divine Grace, you can now afford, better have this Akhanda Deepa on all days.

METHOD OF LIGHTING IT

Akhandha Deepa is a symbol of Lord Srinivasa. Hence it should be lighted with Madi, maximum practicable in the house. Mind should also be clean and fit for meditation. Physical Madi and Mental Madi both are essential. One without the other, is no Madi at all.

Deepa-Paatra is a sacred thing because it is a seat for Srinivasa. All the light-giving Devatas stand in service to Lord. With this thought, decorate the Deepa-Paatra with Pushpa, Arishina (Pasupu) and KumKuma. Fill it with ghee or oil, keep the wick (Bat-thi) in its place and keep it ready for lighting.

Now bring to your mind that at the top of the Deepa-Sthambha, Krittika and all the 27 Nakshatra Devatas are present. In the wick (Naala), Vaasuki Devata is present. At the foot of the Deepa-Sthamba, Chandra and Soorya are present. With this thought, offer Mantrakshata to them with this prayer:-

स्तंभाग्रे सप्तविंशति कृत्तिकादि नक्षत्र देवताभ्यो नमः । नाले वासुकि देवतायै नमः । पादे चन्द्र-अर्काभ्यां नमः । इति दीपस्तंभ पूजा ।।

Then, light the usual Mangalarathi-Bathi in Devara-Deepa. Using the Pooja-Ghanta chanting "Agni-naagni ....." Veda Mantra or Venkatesa stotra or any Devara-stotra. Or sing any appropriate Devara-Nama and lit the Akhanda deepa with the Mangala-arati flame. Now the Lord Srinivasa from the seven Hills, has arrived in the house to protect the entire family. Visualize Him in the sacred Jwaala (flame) of Akhanda Deepa. This is the prayer sloka:-

आनन्दतीर्थ-वरदे दानवारण्य पावके ।
ज्ञानदायिनि सर्वेशे श्रीनिवासे-ऽस्तु मे मनः ।।

Ladies also can chant the above prayer.

DO's and DONT's

The lady of the house, is the custodian of Deepas. Akhanda Deepa should burn day & night during Nava-ratri. Devara Pettige (Pooja Box) and Akhanda Deepa both are equal in sanctity. To the Akhanda Deepa, morning Pooja means Abhishekha to Saligramas. Evening Pooja means Archana, Naivedya and Mangala-harathi with stotra or songs. Two-time Pooja during the Navaratri is a MUST; be it grand or simple.

If Akhanda Deepa needs kindling and relighting, minimum Madi should be observed. It should not be touched casually with impure clothing. Change the clothing and then touch. This Deepa should not be lighted with match-sticks. Light another Dipa with match-sticks and from that lamp, take the flame for Akhanda Deepa, using Tulasi Kaashta or Bathi. To protect it from the rats, Akhanda Dipa can be kept on a stand and fixed in the wall.

PARAYANA: Sri Venkatesa Maa-haat-mya as contained in the BHAVISH-YOT-TARA Purana can be taken up for Parayana during Navaratri. At least the Vivaha-Adhyaya alone (upto Vivaha) can be completed within this period. Parayana can be done both in the morning and in the evening. Ramayana Sundara Kanda is the alternate scripture. The whole text of VAYU-STUTI can be chanted within 15 minutes. Narayana Hri-daya and Lakshmi Hridaya also very effective.

MOOLA NAKSHATRA DEEPA AND SARASWATI POOJA

Moola Nakshatra day during Navaratri is very auspicious and important. Those who keep Akhanda Deepa for three days, begin this Deepa from Moola Nakshatra Day. It is also the day for Saraswati Aavahanam.

SARASWATI AVAHANA (16th Oct. before 12.19 pm)
SARASWATI POOJA (18-10-2026)

The sacred books are to be placed in Pooja from Moola-Nakshatra-day up to Sravana Nakshatra. Aa-vaa-hana in Moola, Pooja for 2 days and Visarjana

on Sravana Nakshatra, says this sloka :

मूलेषु स्थापनं देव्याः, पूर्वाषाढासु पूजनम् ।
उत्तरासु बलिं दद्यात्, श्रवणेन विसर्जयेत् ।।

1. Avahanam : Offer Pushpa and Akshata to the sacred books with these Mantras:-

Kapilaaya Namah, Kapilam Aavaahayami. Similarly, Datta-treyam Avaa. Hayagreevam Aava. Raa,mam Ava. Krishnam Ava. Parasu Ramam Ava. Narasimham Ava. Veda-vyasam Ava., Sree, Bhoo, Durgaam Ava. Sri Mukhya Praanam, Saraswateem, Sesham, Rudram, Parvateem, Vinayakam, Sarvan Devaan Avahayami, Risheen Ava., Srimad Ananda Teertha, Sri Jaya Teertha, Sri Vyasaraja, Sri Vijayindra, Sri Raghoottama, Sri Raghavendra Teerthaan Avahayami. All the above are prayerfully invited to be present in the sacred scriputres kept in Pooja.

2. Dhyanam : Saraswati Devi's lotus feet are worshipped by Devas and Asuras. She holds in her hand the Divine Scripture. She is seated on the lotus. I pray to this Devi Brahma-Patni to dance always on my tongue and speech.

सुरासुरैः सेवित पाद पङ्कजा, करे विराजत् कमनीय पुस्तका ।
विरिञ्चि-पत्नी कमलासन स्थिता, सरस्वती नृत्यतु वाचि मे सदा ।।

3) **Aasanam** *Samarpayaami.* Offer Mantrak–shata. Then offer 3 Uddharinis of water (in the pela) for each of the following items:- 4) **Paadyam** *samar.,* 5) **Arghyam** *Samar.,* 6) **Aachamaneeyam** *Samar.,* 7) **Madhu-**

parkam *Samar.,* 8) **Panchamruta Snanam** *Samarpayami,* 9) **Abhisheka,** Water-Prokshana to the books (Gently sprinkle with a Pushpa). Mantra:- *"Aapo-hishta Mayo Bhuvah (upto) Aapo janayataa chanah".* Then, **Aachamaneeyam** Samarpayami, 3 Uddharinis of water in pela and then 10) **Vastram** 11) **Kanta-Sootram** 12) **Abharanam,** 13) **Chandanam,** 14) **Haridra, Kunkumam** *Samarpayami,* 15) **Pushpaani Poojayaami.** Archana

OM Sri Brahmaanyai Namah	(ब्रह्माण्यै)
OM Sri Jagat Poojyaa-yai Namah	(जगत्पूज्यायै)
OM Sri Narayana Priyayai Namah	(नारायण-प्रियायै)
OM Sri Loka-Maathrey Namah	(लोकमात्रे)
OM Sri Chatur-Bhujaayai Namah	(चर्तुभुजायै)
OM Sri Pustaka Dhaarinyai Namah	(पुस्तक-धारिण्यै)
OM Sri Sarva Veda Uddhaa-rinyai Namah	(सर्ववेदोद्धारिण्यै)
OM Sri Aneka Chandra Kaantyai Namah	(अनेक-चन्द्र-कान्त्यै)
OM Sri Sarva-Abheeshta Daatrey Namah	(सर्वाभीष्टदात्रे)
OM Sri Saras-watyai Namah	(श्रीसरस्वत्यै)

(16) **Dhoopam** *Aaghraa-payaami,* (17) **Deepam** *Darsha-yaami* (18) **NAIVEDYAM** ★**,** (19) **Taamboolam,** (20) **Swarna Pushpa Dakshinam** *Samarpayami* (21) **Maha Neeraajanam** *(Deepaa-raa-dha-nam) Samarpayami* (22) **Samasta Raajo-pa-charan** Samarpayaami (Akshata) (23) **Pradakshina,** (24) **Namaskara,** (25) **Prarthanaam** *Samarpayami* (26) **Brahmana Pooja and Daana with Dakshina.**

★ In addition to other items of Naivedva, **PANCHA-KHAADYA** is important. Tila or Gingelly, Gasa-khasa, Sugar, Bengalgram and dry-coconut proportionately mixed and powdered is Pancha-khadya.

DURGA-ASHTAMI

Maha Lakshmi is known by three names;- Shree, Bhoo and Durga. Vedas proclaim that the Mother Devi stands in three Roopas to serve Sri Narayana on His three sides. On His right, She stands as Shree Devi. On His left, She is Bhoo Devi and in His front, She stands serving Durga.

Well informed devotees eagerly wait for Ashtami during Navaratri. That day is highly promising. Navami also is equally boon-yielding. Puja with devotion both the days, immensely pleases Jagan Maata. The devotee will be relieved of all his worries in life, says this sloka:-

अष्टम्यां च नवम्यां च जगन्मातरं अंबिकाम् ।
पूजयित्वा आश्विने मासि, विशोको जायते नरः ।।

MANGALA-ASHTAMI

If the day is combined with Ashtami in the forenoon, Navami in the afternoon and if that day also happens to be a Tuesday (Mangala-Vaara), such a rare combination is said to be very auspicious*. Such a day is known as "MANGALAASHTAMI":-

अष्टम्यां उदिते सूर्ये, दिनान्ते नवमी भवेत् ।
कुजवारे भवेत् तत्र, पूजनीया प्रयत्नतः ।।

MAHA-ASHTAMI

Ashtami during Navaratri, as explained earlier, is the selected day for Devi Puja. It is a day of Kalyana-

kara which brings all the fortunes. If that day combines with Saptami and Moola-Nakshatra, such an Ashtami is hailed as Maha-Ashtami in the Shastras:-

महाष्टमी आश्विने मासि, शुक्ला कल्याण-कारिणी ।
सप्तम्याऽपि युता कार्या मूलेन तु विशेषतः ।।

MAHA NAVAMI / AYUDHA PUJA

If Navami day is partially Ashtami and partially Navami and if that day combines with Moola Nakshatra, during Navaratri, such a day is "Maha Navami:-

कन्यागते सवितरि शुक्लपक्षे अष्टमी युता ।
मूला-नक्षत्र संयुक्ता, सा ''महा नवमी'' स्मृता ।।

Devi grants what all we pray for, if we worship Her with true devotion on Maha Navami day during Navaratri. Shastras proclaim with all emphasis that Puja on this day is Punyakara, Pavitra, wealth-giving, and yields all the comforts in life.

नवम्यां पूजिता देवी ददाति अभिमतं फलम् ।
सा पुण्या, सा पवित्रा च, सा धन्या, सुखदायिनी ॥

The emphasis is that this Puja has to be performed all over the country, in every city, town village, and in every house. This is for the welfare of the whole nation. Everyone should perform Puja to one's own implements/tools/instruments/things used in job, invoking Devi's presence in all the items.

पूजनीया जनैर्देवी, स्थाने, स्थाने, पुरे, पुरे ।
गृहे, गृहे भक्तिपरैः, ग्रामे, ग्रामे, वने, वने ।।

The Raja who desires victory, would do well to perform this Navaratri Puja from the beginning and he should worship Durga Devi in all his weapons on Durgaashtami and Maha Navami Days.

जया-भिलाषी नृपतिः प्रतिपत् प्रभृति-क्रमात् ।
लौहाभि-सारिकं-कर्म कारयेत् यावदष्टमी ।।
(लौहाभि-सारिकं - आयुधपूजा)

PARA-YANA, JAPA, HOMA AND VISARJANA

Any sacred Grantha can be chosen for daily Parayana during Navaratri. (Bhavishyottara Purana Venkatesa Mahatmya, Aditya Purana Venkatesa Mahatmya, etc.) Similarly Japa also. Hari Vayu-Stuti / Sree-Sookta and such items are ideal for Japa; Japa as many times as possible. If Homa also is planned, all these are to be concluded on Navami day. (or on Sravana Nakshatra day) **नवम्यां जपं होमं समाप्य श्रवणेऽपि वा ।**

SARASWATI VISARJANA (20-10-2026 after 9.04 am)

Visarjana means to conclude the Vrata. That is to take back the sacred books from the Peeta, after performing the usual concluding Pooja, in the morning with Ghanta-Vadya, songs/stotras, Aarathi etc. This is on Sravana Nakshatra day, says this sloka:-

ततः प्रातः पूजयित्वा, दशम्यां विधि-पूर्वकम् ।
संप्रेषणं तु कर्तव्यं गीत-वादित्र-निःस्वनैः ॥

NO TEACHING TILL VISARJANA

As a mark of respect for Vidya Devi, teaching, reading and writing are to be avoided including self-study of **new** items during the period when Devi is in Puja-Peeta; says this Sloka:-

पुस्तके स्थापिते देवी, विद्याकामो द्विजोत्तमः ।
न अध्यापयेत्, न च लिखेत्, न अधीयीत कदाचन ॥

Daily routine items can be continued.

VIJAYA DASAMI (20-10-2026)

Vijaya Dasami is the most auspicious day in the whole year. Devout men and women, wait for Vijaya Dasami to start any Shubha-karya. Important work started on this day gets accomplished successfully. This day is very popular for Vidya-Aarambha, Vivaha etc. Everything after morning Devara Puja only.

Reading out any work of Sri Madhwa is the minimum expected of us to do as a mark of gratitude and respect to our life-saving Guru. Any sacred Grantha like Gita, Bhagavata, Ramayana, Madhwa-Vijaya, Vayu-Stuti, etc. can be read out with a pure mind to please Sri Acharya. He is very much present in us and his grace is the first and foremost requirement for our well-being in life.

Shubha Kaaryas begun on Vijaya Dasami day, grow well and conclude with success; all with God's Grace.

SHAMEE-VRIKSHA-PUJA : Darshan of Shamee tree (Vanni in tamil and Banni in Kannada) is part of Vijaya Dasami celebration.

शमी शमयते पापं शमी लोहित कण्टका ।
अर्जुनस्य धनुर्धारी रामस्य प्रियवादिनी ।।
करिष्यमाण यात्रायां यथाकालं सुखं मया ।
तत्र निर्विघ्न-कर्त्री त्वं भव श्री राम-पूजिते ।।

By the worship of Shamee Tree, one's bad luck gets diluted. Devi in this tree protects the devotee when he/she proceeds on a journey and She ensures comfortable travel and safe return.

PUJA CONCLUSION AND PRAYER

Navaratri Vrata, virtually concludes on Vijaya Dasami Day. After the Puja in the morning, stand in front of Sri Lakshmi and Narayana with folded hands; chant these two slokas or bring to your mind its meaning as explained here:-

इमां पूजां मया देवि यथाशक्ति उपपादितम् ।
रक्षार्थं त्वं समादाय, व्रज स्व-स्थान-मुत्तमम् ।।
रूपं देहि यशो देहि भगं भगवति देहि मे ।
पुत्रान् देहि धनं देहि सर्व कामांश्च देहि मे ।।

O, Devi, I undertook this auspicious Navaratri Vrata in all my earnestness. All these nine days, I continued the Puja, Parayana, Japa, Homa and other connected rituals till today. I could not do it properly due to my inherent incapacity. I am helpless. What little Puja, Parayana etc. I performed during this

period, it was all in my own imperfect way. But I did it with devotion, with full heart and full faith in You. Even that was possible only because of Your Grace, and You enabled me to perform.

O, Devi, You are the giver of shining health and personality. Please grant me Keerti and Sowbhagya. I pray for Putra-Bhagya and Dhanam and Sampath. Kindly grant me all the comforts in life. Above all, please make me a true Bhakta to my Lord Srinivasa.

Now I stand before you and take refuge in You O Devi, please take care of my entire family and ever be our Protector.

HITTINA DEEPA

Hittina Deepa to Kula Daiva is one of the important items of Kula Dharma in many families, during Navaratri. Akki-hittu, Bellada-sakkari, honey, pure ghee, Elak-kai powder are the things required. Mix them proportionately and make it a hill-like heap in a plate. Decorate it with Kumkuma, a few Tulasi/ Pushpa here and there on the 'hill'. At its summit, gently press and make it a place for Deepa with pure ghee.

This has to be lighted during Devara-Puja, at the stage just before Devara Nai-vedya (at the stage after Dhoopaarti and before Deeparthi.) Light this Hittina Deepa chanting Venkatesa Stotra, ringing the Ghanta. This Deepa-Jyoti is the Figure of Lord Srinivasa standing in front of you.

Now continue the rest of the Puja, i.e. Naivedya Mangalarthi, Namaskara and Prayer-Pushpaanjali. This is kula Dharma, meant for the welfare of the family.

MOST IMPORTANT

During Navaratri, ask children and others in the house to sing a few Devara-Namas / Stotras in chorus and you also join the chorus. Make it a point to invite worthy Dampathis during Navaratri and offer them Prasada and Taamboola-Dakshina. It certainly, may not be a very expensive burden. But just think of the amount of mental satisfaction at that moment when all the guests have left your house with Prasada and Tamboola in their hands.

Your home is now a
Mini Heaven for you.

Our children will be highly benefited if they know the significance of Navaratri. They should know this in their young age. Therefore, after your perusal of this article, please take special effort and see that your childern understand the importance of Akhanda Deepa, method of lighting it, method of making Hittina Deepa, Saraswati Puja, Vijayadasami details, etc.

THULA SANKRAMANA

Oct. 18th — Sunday

THULA SNANA

Oct. 19th to Nov. 17th

Surya takes 30 days to travel from one Raasi to next Raasi. When Surya enters into Thula Raasi, the 30 days (one month) period in Thula Raasi is called **"Thula Masa"**. (In Tamil, it is Ippasi month.) Daily Tula Snana (with Sankalpa) before Sun-rise brings bodily-health, mental peace and Atma-Tripthi. It is a thing to be experienced by yourself.

Cauveri Snana is visesha in Thula Masa.

Cauveri Mahima

The Puranic story goes on these lines: Devotees in countless number perform Punya Snana in Ganga, Yamuna and other rivers and leave their sins in these rivers. To wash off these sins, Ganga, Yamuna and other rivers come to Cauveri in Tula-Maasa, for their own purity; so goes the story in Cauveri-Maa-haat-mya.

To give strength for the above version, the popularly quoted Shastra Vachana is:-

त्रि-रात्रं जाह्नवी तीरे सद्यः पुनातु कावेरी

We become pure if we have Punya-Snana for 3-days in Ganga, whereas, one day Snana in Cauveri makes us pure. (सद्यः) *Sadya-h* means immediately.

Meaningful Cauvery Snana

Shastra suggests us to remember this Sloka when we do *Punya Snana* in Cauveri:-

नमस्ते तटितां मुख्ये, निगम, आगम-स्तुते ।
पाप-कायं पारिशुध्यं, आयु-रा-रोग्य-मेव च ।
सौभाग्यमपि, सन्तानं, ज्ञानं देहि मरुद्-वृधे ।।

Marud-Vridhe means Cauveri.

Standing in the river-water with folded hands, facing the flow, remember the meaning of the above Sloka:- "This Cauveri is an important Punya Nadhi in Bharata Desa. This river is so sacred that Vedas and Puranas glorifies the Mahima of this Cauveri (*Nigama-Aagama Stu-te*). My body is Paapa-Deha. O, Cauveri, you are so sacred. I pray, you grant me body-purity, Aayu-h, Aarogya, Sow-bhagya, Santhaana and Divine-Knowledge (*Jnana*)." With these thoughts in mind, immerse yourself in the water.

Cauveri Darshan

Concluding the day's Snana in the river, before returning home, have a grand Darshan of the Punya Nadhi. Pay your respects and gratitude to Cauveri and then leave the river bank. Stand there for a minute in an elevated spot on the river bank and look at the majesty of the great Cauveri. Admire how beautifully the flow is coming from far off Western horizon. Enjoy the pleasant sight of the tall trees on either side of the river, all along.

In the Eastern horizon, what a grand sight it presents! The huge size rising sun slowly coming up in the vast reddish expanse of the horizon. The entire atmosphere is so tempting, you would like to do Sandhya-vandana there in the river and offer Arghya to that Prat-yaksha Devata: Soorya.

Prayer to Cauvery

The Cauveri Stotra is:-

मरुद्-वृधे महादेवि, महाभागे मनोहरे ।
श्री कावेरि नमस्तुभ्यं मम पापं व्यपोहय ।।

Take leave of Cauveri and go home with this Stotra in mind. "O, Cauveri, I bow and offer my obeisance to you. Please destroy my sins."

Remember this Stotra whenever you happen to cross the river-bridge by Train, Bus or any vehicle.

Special Note:

If unable to go to Cauveri, the Shastra suggests that the devotee can still have a part of the benefits if he remembers Cauveri at the time of Snana, no matter, even if it be in bath-room in the house. Daily chant the above two Stotras mentioned above (नमस्ते तटितां मुख्ये & मरुद्-वृधे महादेवि) during Snana.

Mahalaya Paksha Gouna Kaala

19-10-2026 to 16-11-2026

If Mahalaya Paksha Shraddha could not be performed during Mahalaya Paksha this year, it can be done during the above said Thula Masa period. (When Soorya in Thula Raasi).

According to Nirnaya Sindhu Vakya (page 112), Pitrus wait till the end of Thula Maasa.

यावत् च कन्या-तुलयोः क्रमात् आस्ते दिवाकरः ।
शून्यं प्रेतपुरं तावत् वृश्चिकं यावत् आगतः ॥

If the waiting Pitrus do not get food and tila water even in the extended period, they, the heart - broken Pitrus go back in great grief of frustration and pain. It all come back as unbearable cursed life for the family members; say Dharma Shastra :-

वृश्चिके समति-क्रान्ते, पितरो देवतैः-सह ।
निःश्वास्य प्रति-गच्छन्ति शापं दत्वा सु-दारुणम् ॥
(Ni.Sindhu. P.112)

Hence, it is essential to perform Mahalaya Shraddha for the sake of family welfare.

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DWI-DALA VRATA

From Oct. 22nd to Nov. 20th

Dwi-dala-Vrata (4th month in Chaatur Maasya period) is from Ashwija Shuddha Ekadasi to Kartika Shuddha Ekadasi.

Dwi-dala items should be avoided in this period. "Krishnacharya Smriti" is an authority book on Dharma Shastra. It gives the definition for Dwi-dala items:- While breaking a grain, if you see the seed falls aside into two parts, you understand, it is Dwi-dala. Example:- Black-gram, Green gram, Bengal-gram, Dhal-gram, Horse-gram, Tamarind and so on. The Tamarind seed has two parts. Similarly any other fruit the seed of which has two parts, should also be counted as Dwi-dala.

Purudu or Sootaka, No Bar

Nirnaya Sindhu specifically says that Purudu or Sootaka periods are no bar to observe this Vrata, be it male or female. It saves them from misfortunes. By following this vrata, one gets relieved from all sorts of sins.

अशुचि-र्वा, शुचि-र्वा-पि, यदि स्त्री, यदि वा पुमान् ।
व्रतं एतत् नरः कृत्वा, मुच्यते सर्व पातकैः ॥ (नि.सिं. p.81)

Items can be taken	Items to be avoided
All items of green leaf-vegetables (Keerai, Soppu/koora can be taken for cooking as also wheat, pepper, Jeeragam, Rava, Maida, Nelli-kayi-Baalaka, Coconut, Plantains, (Banana) milk, Curd, Kari-mevu, Mango-Baalaka.	Dhal items are avoided during this month. Tamarind, Daniya, Ingu, green-chillies, green-kothamali, lemon, Ground-nut and Ground-nut oil. No Vaasana Dravya is used for Abhisheka during this month.

Dont Break Vrata During Shraddha

If you believe that the departed parents come and bless you on Shraddha day receiving your offering, you should also believe that they have their own likes and dislikes. Having invited them with Veda Mantra, if you offer them the things of their liking, they get pleased and return back with great satisfaction. This comes back as their blessings. Dharma Shastra gives enough warning that breaking the rules of Chatur-masysa Vrata during Shraddha, leads to incurring the curse of the Pitrus.

If you offer uneatable items during Shraddha, the Pitrus hate the very small of it and go back leaving the offerings untouched, leaving behind the effects of their extreme anger.

KARTHIKA SNANA

Ashwija Pournami to Karthika Pournami

Oct. 26th to Nov. 24th

One month from Ashwija Shukla Pournami till Karthika Shukla Pournami is **"Karthika Snana"** parva kala. Early morning 5 a.m. is Snana time. Body fitness during the entire year is one result. The other results: Our Pitrus are immensely pleased.

Finish the first part of the Snana, the usual soap-bath. The 2nd part is important. 12 Namas (using water), Aachamana, Pranayama and Sankalpa.

Snana - Sankalpa

(English version is given in the next pages).

..... एवं गुण विशेषण विशिष्टायां, शुभ-तिथौ, भारतीरमण मुख्यप्राणान्तर्गत श्री कार्तिक -दामोदर प्रेरणया, श्री कार्तिक - दामोदर प्रीत्यर्थं, कार्तिक - स्नानं करिष्ये ॥

After chanting the regular Snana Mantras (*Samasta Jagadaadhaara* ..... and Ganga Smarana, etc.), chant the below slokas.

Snana Mantra

कार्तिकेऽहं करिष्यामि, प्रातः स्नानं जनार्दन ।
प्रीत्यर्थं तव देवेश, दामोदर मया सह ॥

ध्यात्वाऽहं त्वां च देवेश जलेऽस्मिन् स्नातु-मुद्यता ।
तव प्रसादात् पापं मे दामोदर विनश्यतु ॥

(मया सह = Lord with Lakshmi)

After chanting the above Slokas again perform Snana. Then offer Arghya through both hands by reciting the below Arghya Mantras. (You can write these Slokas in a paper and paste it in bathroom)

Arghya Mantra

1. नमः कमल-नाभाय, नमस्ते जल-शायिने ।
नमस्तेऽस्तु हृषीकेश गृहाणार्घ्यं नमोऽस्तु ते ॥ (इदं अर्घ्यं)

2. व्रतिनः कार्तिके मासि स्नातस्य विधिवन्मम ।
गृहाणार्घ्यं मया दत्तं, दनुजेन्द्र निषूदन ॥ (इदं अर्घ्यं)

3. नित्य, नैमित्तिके कृष्ण, कार्तिके पापनाशने ।
गृहाणार्घ्यं मया दत्तं, राधया सहितो हरे ॥ (इदं अर्घ्यं)

॥ श्रीकृष्णार्पणमस्तु ॥

Sankalpa and Snana Mantras In English

After performing regular Snana, 12 Namas (using water), Aachamana, Pranayama and Sankalpa.

Snana - Sankalpa

..... Evam Guna Viseshana Vishish-taayaam, Shubha-thithou, Bharatee-ramana Mukhya-praanaan-targata, Sree Kaartika-Damodara Prera-nayaa, Sree Kaartika-Damodara Preetyartham, Kaartika-Snaanam Karishye.

The above is the Sankalpa. It brings inner awareness that the water is now a Punya Tirtha and that the Lord will be pleased if we think of Him and mention His name at the time of Snana.

After chanting the regular Snana Mantras (*Samasta Jagadaadhaara* ..... and Ganga Smarana, etc.), chant the below slokas.

Snana Mantra

1. Kaarti-keham Karishyaami
Praata: Snaanam Janaardana |
Pree-tyar-tham Thava Devesha
Damodara Mayaa Saha ||

2. Dhyaa-tvaa-ham Twaam Cha Devesha
Jalesmin Snaatu-mudya-taa |
Tava Prasaa-daath Paapam May
Damodara Vinashya-tu ||

After chanting the above Slokas again perform Snana. Then offer Arghya through both hands by reciting the below Arghya Mantras. (You can write these Slokas in a paper and paste it in bathroom)

Arghya Mantra

1. Nama-h Kamala-naabhaaya,
Namaste Jala-shaayine |
Namastestu Hrisheekesha,
Grihaa-naar-ghyam Namostu tey ||
(Idam Arghyam)

2. Vratina-h Kaartike Maasi,
Snaatasya Vidhi-van-mama |
Grihaa-naarghyam Mayaa Dattam,
Danujendra Nishoodana ||
(Idam Arghyam)

3. Nitya Naimittike Krishna,
Kaartike Paapa-naashaney |
Grihaa-naarghyam Mayaa Dattam,
Raadhayaa Sahito Hare ||
(Idam Arghyam)

|| Sri Krishnaarpanamastu ||

If unable to do Karthika Snana on all 30 days, do it atleast on last 3 days (Karthika Shukla Trayodasi, Chaturdasi, Pournami). The benefits will be proportionate.

It is more effective and fruitful to perform Karthika Snana in a Punya Teertha. Even one day Karthika Snana in a Punya Teertha before Sun-rise yields immense benefits. Those unable to go out for Snaana, can do it in well water. Those unable to do in well water, can perform Karthika Snana in bathroom water and think of Holy River Ganga and other Punya Tirthas in that water. The Lord is very much pleased with our sincerity and Bhakti.

Note:— The Arghya water should not go into the drainage. So, if you perform Snana in bath-room, then chant the Arghya Mantra alone in the bathroom. After coming out of bathroom, wear 12 Namas using water and then offer Arghya water in a vessel. This Arghya water can be disposed under plants or on compound wall, etc.

Women should also chant these Mantras during Snana and offer Arghya.

Kaartika Snana — Highly effective and immense benefit. If not able to do Kartika Snana before sun rise, atleast one can do srotra aachamana, pranayama and recite the sankalpa, snana and arghya mantras before performing regular bath. Then, at a convenient time, one can read **"Karthika Masa Mahatmyam"**, a few slokas will be published in the next issue.

Catch Hold of Karthika

A Month of Maha Punya

The fatherly Upadesa in Skanda Purana is: Karthika-month is very important and fruit-yeilding. Dont miss early morning Sankalpa-Snana in Karthika as also Deepa Dana in this month. Not only Skanda Purana; other works also speak high of Karthika Masa Snana.

Snana well before sunrise improves your Bala, Roopa, good name, Dharma-Chintana, Jnana, positive thoughts, health, feeling of well-being and longevity says Dharma Shastra:-

Balam, Roopam, Yasho, Dharmam,
Gyanam, Aa-yu-h, Sukham, Dhriti-h ।
Aa-rog-yam, Param Aapnoti
Sam-yak Snaa-nena Maana-va-h ।।

Sankalpa Snana

(Sankalpa, Snana Mantras are given in the previous pages.) This Sankala Snana is one way to get Divine Grace in life. Its effect and benefits become more sharp and powerful if the Snana is performed during Parva-kala; that is before Sunrise. Another way for Divine Grace is to offer Deepa-Dana during Karthika Masa.

Deepa Dana First To Lord With A Prayer

Place the Deepas in front of the Puja Box or in front of His picture and mentally offer it to the Lord first. (Offer Mantra–akshata, Pushpa at the Lord's feet and seek His permission.) Pray to Him for His Grace:-

स्नेहो दीपं यथा धृत्वा, सर्व-लोक-उपकारकः ।
तथा भवान् मम ज्ञानं, हृदि धारय सन्ततम् ॥

Deepa offers Upakaara to so many others. Such a Deepa, depends upon oil. "*Sneha*" here, in this Sloka, means oil. O Lord ! You are now appearing here in the form of flame. Just as the Deepa depends on the oil, I depend on You for Wisdom and Jnana. Please stay at my heart and grant me shining thoughts of Wisdom. Where there is Jnana, there is Ananda and rejoicings.

Method of Deepa Daana

Offer seat to the Brahmana. Let him sit facing East or North. Think of the Lord's presence in Brahmana and offer Mantra-Akshakshata on his head by chanting this Sloka:-

Namos-twanan-taaya Sahasra-moorthaye,
Sahasra-paadaakshi Shiroru-baahave ।
Sahasra-naamney Puru-shaaya Shaa-shwa-tey,
Sahasra-koti Yuga-dhaariney Nama-ha ।।

Place the lighted lamp in front of him. Then sit and do Aa-cha-mana and chant Sankalpa.

..... Evam Guna Viseshana Vishish-taayaam, Shubha-thithou, Bharatee-ramana Mukhya-praanaan-targata, Sree Kaartika-Damodara Prera-nayaa, Sree Kaartika-Damodara Preetyartham, Deepa-daanam Karishye.

With this Sankalpa, offer the Deepas to him with Tamabula-Dakshina+Tulasi chanting this sentence:-

इदं दीपदानं, सदक्षिणाकं, सतांबूलं, भारतीरमण मुख्यप्राणान्तर्गत श्री कार्तिक दामोदर प्रीतिं कामयमाना तुभ्यमहं संप्रददे । न मम । न मम । (Women say **कामयमाना** and Men say **कामयमानः**)

Let the Brahmana touch the lighted Deepa Paatra as a mark of accepting it and bless, uttering the words of blessings. Receive his blessings.

The Object of Deepa Dana

The Lord is to be seen in the flame of a Deepa. Deepa is the symbol of wisdom (Jnaana). Darkness represents ignorance (Ajnaana). Where there is Jnaana, there is Ananda. They both go together. Ignorance and suffering in life go together.

The object of Deepa-Daana is to make ourselves deserving for Jnana-cum-Ananda. Jnana and Ananda

are the personal properties of the Lord. Unless He chooses to give happiness to us, any amount of our own self–efforts will end in frustration. To make Lord choose us for His Grace, there are any number of methods. One method is to offer Deepa–Daana, says this Sloka in Skaanda Purana-

कार्तिके मासि - संप्राप्ते, स्नान, दानादिकं कुरु ।
दामोदरस्य प्रीत्यर्थं, दीपदानं तथा कुरु ॥

स्कान्दे (II - 7 - 17)

Snana, well before the dawn and to give Daanas are the special Vratas to be observed in the month of Karthika. Deepa Dana is to be given in Karthika to please Lord Sri Damodara, says the Sloka above.

In the same context, another Sloka says:-

कार्तिके दीपदानं तु, महापुण्य-फल-प्रदम् ।

Deepa - Dana is specially recommended in the month of Karthika. Not Deepa alone. The other items for Deepa can also be given; such as Bath-thi (wicks), Oil, Paatra for oil or Deepa–Paatra, says this Sloka:-

दीपार्थं वर्तिकां, तैलं, पात्रं वा यो ददाति हि ।
सहायं वाऽथ कुरुते, ददतां दीपं उत्तमम् ।
स तु मोक्षमवाप्नोति, नात्र कार्या विचारणा ॥

If unable to give Deepa-Dana personally, he/she can atleast help another who is doing it. Even this help will be equally rewarding, says the above Sloka.

Going still further, Dharma Shastra says that if one is unable to arrange a Devara Deepa himself / herself anywhere (either at home or in a temple etc.,) he/she can light the lamps kept by others and make it burning. This is also equally effective to bring all the benefits, says this Sloka:-

स्वस्यापि शक्ति-राहित्ये, परदीपं प्रबोधयेत् ।
सोऽपि तत्फलं आप्नोति, नात्र कार्या विचारणा ॥

Deepa – Daana saves one from the suffering of all kinds. And one will be blessed with children who will shine as Kula-deepas in the family, says this Sloka:-

कुर्याद् यो दीप-दानानि, नरकं स न गच्छति ।
तस्य वंशे प्रजायन्ते बालकाः कुल-दीपकाः ॥

Result Proportionate To The Effort

To give as Daana, the Deepa can be made of mud, or steel, copper, brass, silver or even made of gold, according to one's true status – cum – affordability. The reward comes proportionate to the effort with which it is offered.

Just as a farmer eagerly awaits the harvest season, devotees look forward to Karthika as a time to sow the seeds of devotion, prayer, and service, reaping abundant punya that uplifts both this life and the next. Truly, catching hold of Karthika is catching hold of Divine Grace.

Lord : Our Loving Mother: Says Sri Jagannatha Dasaru

The young mother, though busy in the Kitchen, was keeping a careful watch over her child. Her baby son in the hall, remained in a playful mood, kicking the air. He suddenly felt the absence of his mother. He looked around. Not finding her anywhere, started crying for mother. There were plenty of attractive things around him for play. But the baby cared non of them. Except the mother he wanted nothing. This he could express only by crying. The more intense for longing higher the pitch in crying.

The mother hiding herself for a moment in a dark corner, smiled and watched the child's cry. It was only for a moment. Unable to bear the sight any more. She jumped and picked up the crying baby in her arms and bosom. She hugged and kissed him. Cajoled and consoled him in a motherly language of love. The baby stopped crying and looked greatly relieved. He smiled at her and started kicking the air more vigorously.

This is a common house-hold occurence in most of the houses. Mahatma Sri Jagannatha Dasaru wants us to learn a great lesson from this. A true devotee never becomes satisfied with the wordly comforts around him though granted to him by Lord. He wants the Lord Himself, Not His Gifts. The Devotee's heart

aches and yearns for the Lord's presence. His longing for the Lord grows intense day by day.

Just as a loving mother, the Lord also loves the Bhakta, but hides Himself in the devotee's own heart and watches the cry of the devotee for a moment Sure He responds and certain. He comes and protects. This is happening in every devotee's life. The more intense the yearning, the quicker His response. This beautiful pen picture we see as portrayed by Mahatma Sri Jagannatha Dasaru in the Padya mentioned in the next page.

जननियु-काणदिह-बालक नेन-नेनदु हलवुतिरे,
कत्तले मनेयोळ्गिद्दवन नोडुत हरुषदली ।
तनयनं-बिगदप्पि रंबिसि कनलिकेय कळेवन्ते
मधुसूदननु तन्न-वरिद्देडिगे बन्दोदगि सलहुवनु ॥

— *Hari-Kathamruta-Saara, Karuna Sandhi-Padya-II*

HARD WORDS

जननि Mother, **हलवुतिरे** When crying, **हरुषदली=सन्तोषदलि । तनयन बिगदप्पि** = Hugging her baby son, **संबिसि** = Cajoling, consoling and loving. **कनलिकेय कळवन्ते** = Just as the mother relieves the child of his agony. **तन्नवर इद्देडिगे बन्दु** = Arriving at the devotee's own place of calling. **ओदगि** = Extending a timely help. **सलहुवनु** = He prtects (**कत्तले मनेयोळ-गिद्दु+अनव नोडुत**)

MEANING

Not finding the mother by his side, the child cries, thinking about her again and again. The loving mother, hiding herself in the house as a play for a moment, smilingly stands watching the child's longing for her. Unable to withstand the Child's agony any longer, and in great joy, she jumps and picks up the baby with exteme love and hugs him and makes him happy. Similarly the Lord Sri Madhusoodana hides Himself in the heart of the devotee's place of calling and helps him with all protections.

(Late) *Srimushnam* V. Nagarajachar, Srirangam

THE EFFECT OF DAANA

न अदातुः लभ्यते नाकः न अदातुः लभ्यते धनम् ।
न अदातुः लभ्यते सौख्यम् न अदातुः मानसं शुचिः ॥

आग्नेय पुराणे तुला कावेरी माहात्म्ये IV-33

Voluntarily offereing our mite to others with a good will is Daana. Scriptures proclaim that if a person is rich, it only indicates that he had earlier offered a good lot of Daana to others. Daana leads one to Swarga, brings wealth, it is instrumental for one's well-being and above all, it brings inner happiness. If all these things are absent in one's life, it only indicates that he had never made any Daana, says Aagneya Purana, Tula-Kaveri Mahima –IV-33 *(Naaka-h-means Swarga).*