

NEWS ASIA

Community

Navaratri celebration at Balaji Temple

By Lakshmi V. Dasi:

SUNNYVALE, CA: Balaji Temple, Sunnyvale, California, celebrated Navaratri October 11 – 21, 2007 with a full array of pujas for Durga, Lakshmi and Saraswati. The first three days there was a beautiful Sindoor Alankara for Durga Devi. The next three days were for Lakshmi, so on Tuesday evening Narayana Swamiji performed Lalita Sahasranama puja and Shakambari Alankara, (vegetable malas). All devotees participated by chanting the thousand names of Lalita and were blessed by the beautiful sight of Lakshmi decorated in colorful vegetable malas. The final four days, were for Saraswati worship with silver Alankaram and beautiful white sari. October 20 – 21 st, devotees participated in round the clock chanting of the Akanda Ramayana by Tulsidas Goswami. Each evening during Navaratri a



Navaratri Sindur Alankar.



Navaratri Shakambari Alankar.

different family sponsored Kanyakumari Puja with gifts for the Kumaris. On the last day of Navaratri, Vijaya Dasami Day, Chandi homa and Akshara Abhaysam were performed by N. Swamiji. Children aged three to five years old participated in the worship. On the same evening, temple devotees Sumangali Puja was performed for the honoring of the married ladies. Hindus believe that during the Sumangali Puja Lakshmi herself comes to bless the married ladies. Each evening of Navaratri Narayana Swamiji spoke about the importance of this religious festival while including a small story about Devi to educate the devotees. One night he spoke about Kanyakaparameshwari (Durga) and how her faith in God made her realize her dream to marry Lord Shiva. Parvati, in this way teaches us to have true faith in God: we are to perform our part with discipline and must trust that the Lord will do His part to fulfill the desires of His devotees.

A little about Navaratri: "Nava-ratri" means "nine nights" in Sanskrit. During Navaratri, we invoke the energy aspect of

God in the form of the Universal Mother "Durga" The name Durga literally means "the remover of miseries". She is also referred to as "Devi" (goddess) or "Shakti" (energy or power). It is this energy, which God works through in creation, preservation and destruction. Divine Mother (Shakti) is the mother of all and we are Her children. In Hinduism, we believe that Divine Mother is the energy aspect of the absolute God. Navaratri is divided into sets of three days to worship different aspects of the Divine Mother. On the first three days, Divine Mother is prayed to as a powerful force named Durga in order to destroy all our impurities, vices and defects. The next three days, the Mother is adored as a giver of spiritual wealth, Lakshmi, who is considered to have the power of bestowing upon her devotees complete abundance. The final set of three days is spent in worshipping the Mother as the Goddess of Wisdom, Saraswati. During Navaratri we invoke Durga to give us bodily and spiritual strength, Lakshmi to meet our daily needs and Saraswati to give us wisdom to use our lives in the right direction.

Balaji Temple will celebrate Diwali on November 8 and 9 th , with Kubera and Dhanalakshmi puja, 6pm to 9pm. On November 22 – 24 a Guru Vanada program:

November 22nd Music and Bhajans by devotees 7 pm – 8:30 pm. November 23 rd 108 Kartika Poornima Sathyanarayana puja 6 pm to 8:30 pm. November 24 th 108 Kalesha abhishekam for Sri Balaji 6 pm to 8:30 pm. Please call 🇺🇸 (408) 203-1036 for more information or visit www.balajitemple.net.

