



**KAMARAJ IAS ACADEMY**  
Only IAS Academy by Grandson of "Perunthalsivam Kamarajar"

# Durga Puja

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**Why is in news?** Mesmerising the nine nights; Durga Puja in Kolkata

Durga Puja is an annual festival celebrated in September or October, most notably in Kolkata, West Bengal.

It is a **five-day festival** that begins on the fifth night of the nine-day Navratri festival and ends on the tenth day, which is Dashami and **worship of the Hindu mother-goddess Durga**.

The Goddess Durga, who is regarded as the feminine energy of the cosmos, also known as 'Shakti'. In the months preceding the festival, small artisanal workshops sculpt images of Durga using unfired clay pulled from the Ganga River.

The worship of the goddess then begins on the inaugural day of Mahalaya when eyes are painted onto the clay images to bring the goddess to life.

The festival has also come to **signify 'home-coming' or a seasonal return to one's roots**.

The festival is also characterized by large-scale installations of Goddess Durga in 'pandals' and pavilions where people get together.

Folk music, culinary, craft and performing arts traditions are also part of the celebration.

**Though originating in West Bengal**, which has the largest Bengali community in the country, the festival is **celebrated in many other parts of India**, and also the world.

It was included in **UNESCO's list of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH)**. This is the **1st festival in Asia** to achieve recognition as UNESCO ICH of Humanity.

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