

# SARASWATI PUJA 2024

या देवी सर्वभूतेषु विद्यारूपेण संस्थिता  
नमस्तस्यै नमस्तस्यै नमस्तस्यै नमो नमः ॥

This year, the vibrant festival of Saraswati Puja was celebrated on February 14th, 2024, at the Gouri Devi Institute of Medical Sciences and Hospital. In a heartwarming display of unity and reverence, students and faculty members from GIMSH gathered to seek the blessings of Goddess Saraswati, the divine embodiment of knowledge, music, and arts. The celebration was a testament to the institution's dedication to cultural and spiritual enrichment, as well as academic excellence.



From the early hours of the day, students, adorned in their finest ethnic attire, convened with enthusiasm to begin the meticulous preparations for the puja. The entire batch of MBBS students took on the sacred duties typically performed by priests, a gesture that underscored their devotion and collective spirit. The preparations began two days prior, with students cleaning and sanctifying the puja room, ensuring it was a pristine and sacred space for the

rituals. They decorated the venue with an array of lights and flowers, creating a vibrant and festive atmosphere. Intricate rangolis adorned the floors, while beautiful artistic depictions of Maa Saraswati graced the walls, all crafted by the students themselves.



On the morning of the puja, the amphitheatre within the academic building was transformed into a serene and divine sanctuary, bathed in the gentle glow of morning light. The space, typically reserved for lectures and seminars, now exuded an air of sacredness and peace. The students and faculty, united in reverence, gathered around a resplendent idol of Goddess Saraswati, the embodiment of wisdom, music, and art.

The idol was exquisitely adorned, draped in vibrant fabrics and embellished with intricate jewellery, capturing the goddess's ethereal beauty. The fragrance of incense wafted through the air, mingling with the soft strains of devotional songs that resonated throughout the amphitheatre. The melodies, performed by a group of talented students, created a backdrop of spiritual harmony, elevating the collective mood of the gathering.

As the ceremony commenced, the students approached the idol with grace and reverence, performing the pushpanjali, a traditional ritual of offering flowers to the goddess. Each delicate bloom was a token of respect and devotion, laid gently at the feet of the idol. The sight of the colorful petals accumulating around the goddess's feet was a visual testament to the heartfelt prayers and aspirations of the students.





A profound sense of tranquillity and devotion enveloped the amphitheatre, creating a cocoon of spiritual serenity. The ceremony was further enriched by the participation of esteemed guests from the administration and academic departments, alongside members of the nursing and paramedical departments. Their presence underscored the inclusive and community-driven spirit of the event, highlighting the collective reverence for Goddess Saraswati.

In a touching gesture of seeking divine guidance and blessings, students placed their hefty academic books near the idol. The act of placing books at the goddess's feet was symbolic of their quest for wisdom and success in their studies. It was a moment of reflection and hope, as each student silently prayed for the goddess's benevolence in their academic journey.

Following the rituals, the distribution of prasad—the blessed offerings—was conducted with grace. The prasad, prepared with care and devotion, was shared among all attendees, embodying the goddess's blessings and fostering a sense of communal joy and gratitude. The sharing of prasad was not merely a ritual but a celebration of the collective spirit of learning and devotion.

By afternoon, the atmosphere of the academic building continued to resonate with a sense of community and togetherness as everyone gathered for the Annabhog, a communal meal that had become a cherished tradition of the celebration. The transformation of the space was remarkable, as the amphitheatre, which had earlier echoed with the sounds of devotional songs and prayers, now buzzed with the lively chatter and laughter of students and guests.

The Annabhog was a splendid feast, prepared with great care and devotion by the college. The spread included an array of traditional dishes, lovingly cooked to reflect the essence of the festival. The meal was served on large, beautifully decorated platters, showcasing a variety of flavors and textures—from fragrant rice and lentil curries to delectable sweets. The aroma of the food mingled with the lingering incense, creating an olfactory symphony that tantalized the senses.

The communal aspect of the Annabhog underscored the festival's theme of collective reverence and joy. As everyone partook of the meal, there was a palpable sense of gratitude and fulfilment, enhanced by the communal spirit that permeated the gathering. The shared experience of savouring the food together was a celebration of not only the occasion but also of the connections and relationships within the academic community.

As the afternoon waned and the golden hues of dusk began to settle, the day's festivities transitioned seamlessly into the Sandhya Arati, an evening prayer that brought a serene close to the celebrations. The amphitheatre, now dimly lit by the soft glow of lamps and candles, was adorned with flickering lights that cast a gentle radiance across the space.



The Sandhya Arati began with a solemn procession of devotees carrying the sacred lamps, their faces illuminated by the soft light. The air was filled with the rhythmic chanting of hymns and the melodious ringing of bells, creating a sacred ambiance that resonated with spiritual reverence. The Arati, a traditional evening ritual, involved the offering of light to the deity, symbolizing the dispelling of darkness and the invocation of divine blessings.

The following day was dedicated to cultural programs, showcasing the talents and creativity of the MBBS students and faculty. The amphitheatre resonated with classical dances, melodious songs, and powerful recitations. One of the highlights was a live painting of Goddess Saraswati by a talented student, capturing the divine essence with each stroke. Faculty members also joined in, performing songs and adding to the joyous spirit of the celebration. The day ended with a lively DJ dance night, where students celebrated with energy and enthusiasm.



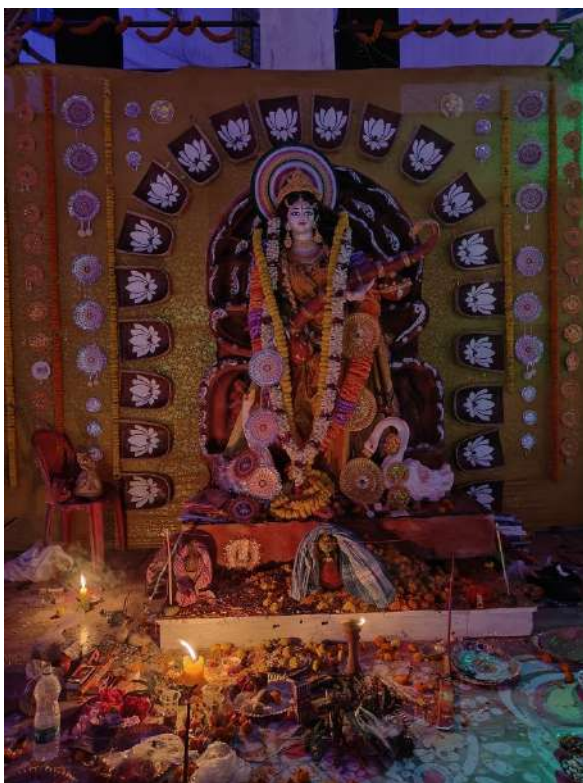


The next morning, the campus awoke to the serene sounds of devotion as the ritual of Dadhikarama began. This ancient tradition, imbued with spiritual significance, was performed with meticulous care and reverence by the students, who had embraced their roles with enthusiasm and dedication. The early hours were marked by a palpable sense of anticipation and sacred energy, as preparations for the day's events were underway.



The ritual of Dadhikarama, an offering of yogurt and other sacred items, was conducted with precision. The students, dressed in traditional attire, gathered around a specially decorated altar where the ritual was to take place. The altar was adorned with flowers, incense, and sacred symbols, creating a visually stunning and spiritually uplifting setting. As the ritual unfolded, the students offered yogurt and other ceremonial items with heartfelt devotion, invoking divine blessings for prosperity and well-being. The crackling flames and the rising smoke, combined with the rhythmic chanting, created an atmosphere of sanctity and reverence. Each mantra was pronounced with precision, adding to the spiritual gravitas of the ceremony.

The sacred chants and the sound of conch shells created an auspicious atmosphere, as blessings were imparted to each department in the academic block. The ceremony concluded with the playing of melodious devotional songs, enhancing the spiritual ambiance.



As the day came to a close, students bid farewell to the goddess with a vibrant idol immersion procession. They played with gulaal, the colorful powder adding to the festive spirit, as they carried the idol to a pond within the campus for immersion. The sight of the vivid powders—reds, yellows, greens, and blues—creating a rainbow of hues against the backdrop of the setting sun added to the joyous atmosphere. Laughter and cheer filled the air as students smeared gulaal on each other, reveling in the playful spirit of the celebration. The colorful clouds of gulaal danced in the breeze, creating an enchanting spectacle of color and light.





Upon reaching the pond, a sense of reverent anticipation enveloped the crowd. The idol, now gently carried by the students, was lowered into the water with great care. As the idol touched the surface of the pond, a collective murmur of prayers and well-wishes rose from the gathering. The immersion was a poignant moment, symbolizing the return of the goddess to her divine abode and the end of the celebration. Students and faculty stood in silent reflection, seeking the blessings of Goddess Saraswati for wisdom, success, and prosperity in their future endeavors.

The golden hues of the setting sun cast a warm glow over the scene, adding to the ethereal beauty of the immersion. The rippling water mirrored the vibrant colors of the gulaal and the soft light of the evening, creating a serene and picturesque backdrop. As the idol slowly sank into the water, there was a sense of completion and fulfilment, marking the end of a day filled with spiritual devotion and joyous celebration.