NEW AGE PUROHIT DARPN
আধুনিক পুরোহিত দর্পণ

Book 1

SARASWATI PUJA

Purohit (priests)

Kanai L. Mukherjee – Bibhas Bandyopadhyay
General Editor

Aloka Chakravarty – Arunkanti Banerjee
Editor of Mantras

Sovana Roychowdhury

Publishers
Mukherjee Publishing, Kolkata, India

In collaboration with
Association of Grandparents of Indian Immigrants, USA

First Edition
Publishers

Mukherjee Publishing, Kolkata, India
8B/2, Temar Lane, Kolkata-700009
E-mail: mukherjeepublishing@yahoo.co.in

In collaboration with

Association of Grandparents of Indian Immigrants, USA
Home Page: agiivideo.com

October 4, 2013

(ISBN #)
Book 1
SARASWATI PUJA

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

• Book 1: Saraswati Puja
  Book 2: Lakshmi Puja
  Book 3: Durga Puja
  Book 4: Kali Puja
  Book 5: Satyanarayana Broto (Katha)
  Book 6: Hindu Marriage
  Book 7: Annaprasan
  Book 8: Sacred Thread
  Book 9: Grihaprabesh
  Book 10: Farewell to the Soul


**Reviewers**

Ratna De  
Sujit Das  
Henry Arthur Pallerin III  
Arabinda Misra  
Manas Roy and Sukumar Ghosh  
Rohini Chakravarthy and Monisha Chakravarthy  
Arundhati Khanwalkar  
Aurin Chakravarthy  
Tara Chattoraj and Maya Chattoraj  
Shyamali Ghosh  
Saoni Ghosh

**Technical Assistants**

Shuvajit Das  
Shubhajeet Banerjee  
Anuradha Chakravarthy  
Rohini Chakravarthy

**Global Communication**

Dilip Som  
Amitabha Chakrabarti

**Illustrator**

Monidipa Basu
DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to
The Children of Indian Immigrants –
The proud bearers of Indian heritage
Foreword

Through many thousands of years of sustained Vedic culture, Hindus focused on their spiritual approach through unique worship (puja) rituals. The priests learnt and chanted the prayers in Sanskrit, the ancient language of India, through shruti and smriti (hear and remember). When Sanskrit was replaced by other languages in course of time, the meaning of the chants got lost. Yet the hum continued to bridge the individual’s soul with its Creator. It did not bother the devotees for being ignorant of the meaning of those chants as their deep faith filled the void. Thus a single syllable “Om” could realize the presence of the Unknown, the ekakshar (একাক্ষর) within us. Today the magical effect of jap (repetitive chanting) became a part of worship for all religions. Truly enough, the finest things of life have no language – love, kindness, compassion.

With the spread of Hinduism over the globe, the world is now inquisitive to know the meaning of those Vedic chants which we hear during puja rituals. Our children should not feel shy to explain to the world the thought behind those rituals however it may look strange and repulsive. History records India’s great contribution in shaping World Civilization through ages and our coming generation has the responsibility to carry that torch.

It is so very satisfying to see that the Association of Grandparents of Indian Immigrants has taken the heavy responsibility to explain the rituals followed in Purohit Darpan. They notonly transliterated the mantras but touched on their history, significance and inner meaning of these in an understandable global language, English. It is highly commendable.

I pray to Lord Almighty for its success.

Budha Deb Bhattacharaya
Chief Priest of Kali Mandir
Washington, D.C., USA
UNTO HER FEET – GODDESS SARASWATI

There is no distinction between secular and spiritual so far as knowledge is concerned, all knowledge is sacred. Saraswati (goddess of learning) bestows both spiritual knowledge as well as worldly knowledge on us. She represents the unity of all knowledge. Saraswati is also called ‘Vani’ (speech). She is a wonderful austere goddess, so inspiring to the human mind.

The more knowledge we have, the more wealth we can create. Except through efficient work, inspired by knowledge, there is no other way to gain wealth. We cannot create wealth by magic and mystery. That lesson we have to learn. Saraswati is primary and Lakshmi is a by-product of Saraswati. Pure science is Saraswati and applied science is Lakshmi. Knowledge applied to agriculture improves the wealth of the nation, so also industry. Everywhere these two goddesses reign. Going to the university, studying various books, and contemplating on them make us the students of Saraswati. After graduation, our hard work of applying the earned knowledge on our job leads us to the worship Lakshmi. Then alone Lakshmi-kataksha or her grace will come to us. But it is also important that we should worship Saraswati once a year as earning of knowledge never stops. It also develops in us shradhha (respect for others), bhakti (sincerity) and humility (devoid of ego) so that we can be real humans what God intended us to be.

I am very happy that Cyber Grandpa is publishing this book on Saraswati Puja for the new generation where the mantras are translated into simple English and histories of many of these mantras are available. The book brings to life our glorious past when we were the leader of the world civilization.

I pray to goddess Saraswati that she may give us pure devotion to her holy feet.

Swami Nirvikarananda
Sri Ramakrishna Vivekananda Janakalyan Trust
Mumbai, India
As a child of Indian immigrants growing up in the United States, I had never considered myself to be particularly religious. I identified myself as a Hindu by default simply because of my family ties. However, I never felt comfortable expressing this openly to my friends and classmates. As one of very few non-white, non-Christian students in my school, my main goal was simply to fit in and feel as if I were the same as everyone else. While my father taught me some simple prayers to recite each morning and evening, I shied away from performing this ritual when classmates visited my home for dinner – I did not want them to see me as different, and so I would try to hide this part of myself. The experience simply made me uneasy.

Despite the fact that my late father was a Maharashtrian Brahmin – a community known for its deep faith in the Hindu religion – and my mother the daughter of a Bengali priest, my family never forced Hinduism on me in any great way. At most, I enjoyed the comics of Indian folk stories, as well as the videos produced by my grandfather that brought these stories to life. However, these stories served mainly as entertainment for me and I did not seek any deeper meaning. Indeed, while my family would attend temple functions and pujas, I was never sent to “Sunday School” nor forced to learn Indian languages. In fact, I did not receive the so-called “Sacred Thread” in the Upanayan ceremony at the age most Brahmin boys do. And so I proceeded through life without giving it much thought. While I would now celebrate the opportunity to expose others to my culture, at the time I had no such desire.

However, when I was in ninth grade, my father was suddenly and unexpectedly diagnosed with malignant lung cancer. Over time, we learned he was beyond any medical treatment. Perhaps feeling a sense of spiritual duty before his passing, he made it priority only weeks before his death to arrange and perform the sacred thread ceremony for my brother and myself. He approached my grandfather, the author of
this book, to assist with this process. Thus my brother and I received our sacred threads in a small, rushed ceremony. My father died only weeks later.

While I was then officially inducted into the Brahmin fold, I still did not feel any specific change or desire to learn more about what had just happened. If anything, I was simply angry at everything that had happened; the seemingly unfair nature of my father’s passing. I still did not wear my sacred thread, for fear of seeming different from those around me. I continued to live as a typical suburban American child among my friends – this was my culture.

However, as I grew older and reflected on my past, I became increasingly curious about the purpose of that ceremony, and why my father had wanted it done so badly even though he had never pushed for it during the traditionally practiced time of adolescence. I hoped to find peace with the difficult events that transpired – a way to come to terms with the past. At the same time, I grew increasingly interested in the religious practice of my grandfather whom so many people in the community respected. And perhaps most importantly, I began to ask him questions – many, many questions.

Spending long rides in the car with both of my grandparents, I would continually inquire about their past. These incredible individuals led multifaceted lives as both academics and as religious leaders in their community. Through these conversations, my thirst to learn more about my culture heightened exponentially. Once in college, I took a class on Indian mythology, but that still did not satisfy my desire to learn more about cultural practices, and more importantly the reasons for their existence and the origins of the ideas. I discovered a deep-seated desire to connect the philosophical underpinnings of Hinduism with the practiced rituals. Over time, I realized that when I was young I could not develop an interest in the practices because I did not understand their significance. With the benefit of some small degree of emotional, intellectual, and spiritual maturity, I then found myself to be quite fascinated with the philosophy and associated ceremonies. While I still take part in an academic and professional community where religion is
a personal choice, I am now proud to share with my friends and colleagues the cultural background I possess and explain the underpinnings as much as I am able. Unfortunately, my own knowledge is limited, as are the resources available on the Internet – and so my inquisitions of my grandfather continue. Every chance an opportunity presents itself; I spend time with him to learn as much as I can about my past, my culture, and where I come from.

Sadly, I realize these opportunities will not last forever. For that reason I am grateful for his incredible commitment to produce this work. Never before has such a tremendous volume been constructed to explore the most important rituals in Hindu (or at least Bengali) culture. The line-by-line explanations, as well as the additional historical and philosophical context, offer an incredibly rich analysis of the ceremonies. I look forward with great anticipation to reading his entire works – in particular that on the Upanayan, which planted the original seed of curiosity – and I hope that you too will share in my admiration of my grandfather for this great feat.

September 12, 2013

Ashoke Khanwalkar
Grandson of the Priest
A series of ten books are compiled for Bengali immigrants with the goal of explaining the history, significance, and meaning of the mantras used in common Hindu puja rituals. A book like this is desperately needed as both the language used in the rituals, Sanskrit, and the script in which the rituals are transcribed, Bengali, are often foreign to immigrants and their children.

Unlike Hindu children growing up in India, children of Hindu origin growing up in the West are constantly challenged by their neighbors, peers, friends, and teachers to explain the basis of Hindu faith and belief. This problem I never faced when I was growing up in India in the 1920s. Hindu rituals had always been a part of life, no questions asked. Thus, I strongly feel I should share my thoughts with my beloved grandchildren who are growing up outside India, and more widely with all Bengali immigrants facing these challenges.

Priesthood was our family trade. I learned all the rituals from my father, and started to perform puja rituals soon after receiving my sacred thread (Upanayan) at the age of twelve. But, like many other professional priests, I had no knowledge of Sanskrit, the language of Hindu puja rituals. We were trained to hear and remember (sruti and smruti) and stay away from explaining. In addition, my childhood days were spent under British rule when Sanskrit scholars remained obscure and learning Sanskrit was not considered progressive. So I studied science and technology for a better future. Yet, the spirit of my ancestors never left me, and I would perform pujas upon request from time to time. The community was satisfied to simply watch the Hindu rituals with devotion.

However, Hindus of the twenty-first century are not satisfied with this. They demand explanations of the rituals they inherited. My grandchildren are among them, and they regularly asked both me and my late wife, Dr. Bibha Mukherjee, about the details of Vedic traditions. Rather than just mindlessly performing rituals, they want to
understand the underlying meaning of their actions. I was overwhelmed by their enthusiasm. This book is the outcome of that call.

Spirituality has many facets that accept the natural diversity of the human mind. Now I am eighty-seven years old. I am not worried whether my grandchildren are believers, nonbelievers, agnostics, or atheists. But I feel immensely satisfied telling them my own story of how I came to depend on my Invisible Caretaker who was always beside me when I needed Him.

I am thankful to the world community of open-minded spiritual seekers, Hindus and non-Hindus, who promoted this humble endeavor of mutual understanding. I have no words to express my gratitude for my coauthors and reviewers whose constant support made it possible to turn my dream into reality. In my advanced age and poor state of health, I could not correct the mistakes that I see in the final product. I am sure these will be fixed eventually by future generations. My soul will rest in peace if I see that this book enlightens the mind, promotes respect and brings solace to those who seek divine blessing.

October 4, 2013
(মহালয়া, আপ্রিল ১৭, ১৪২০)

Kanai L. Mukherjee
The chief priest
CONTENTS

Preliminaries
   Dedication, v
   Foreword, vii
   Unto Her Feet – Goddess Saraswati, viii
   Voice of new generation, ix
   Preface, xiii
   Contents, xv

Part 1 Introduction: 1
   Vedic rituals, 1
   Saraswati puja, 5
   Puja arrangement, 6
   Layout, 8
   List of requirements, 10

Part 2: Basic puja procedures, 13
   (Sadharan puja paddhati)
   Preparation, 14
   Invocation prayers, 15
   Prayer of Gayatri, (Sandhya), 18
      Breath control, 21
      Obeisance to Surya (sun), 25
      Recalling the creation, 26
      Prayer to sun’s location, 27
      Welcome to Gayatri, 29
      Gayatri meditation, 29
      Gayatri chant, 31
      Conclusion of Sandhya, 32
      Prayer of self-protection, 32
      Prayer to Rudra (Shiva), 33
   Offering to sun, 34
   Worship of Guru, 36
   Worship of Narayana Sheela, 40
      (Story of Shaligram Sheela), * 41
      (Tulsi and Vishnu), * 44
Meditation of Vishnu, 45
Offerings to associates of Vishnu, 45
*Indian history in mantras and Sanskrit hymns, 46*
*Incarnations of Vishnu and evolution of Human Civilization, 47*
*Ten incarnations of Vishnu, 48*
Five offerings to Narayana, 49
Offering of tulsi, 49
Prostration, 49
Establishment of the holy pitcher, 50
Cordonning the pitcher, 53
*Prehistoric India in mantra, 55*
*Historical significance of cordonning, 56*
Removal of hurdles, 57
Offerings to invisible spirits, 57
Removal of evil spirits, 58
Tying the security knot, 59
Worship of divinities at the entrance, 60
Sanctification of environment and body,
Worship of Gods of invocation, 68
Worship of Basic Five Gods, 71
Worship of Nine planets, 79
Prayers for Guardians of direction, 80
Prayers to the ten incarnations of Vishnu, 80
Reverence to our Divine background, 81

**Part 3: Principle Saraswati puja, 84**
Auspicious beginning, 85
Seeking divine blessing, 85
Sanctification, 86
Sanctification of seat, 87
Basic oblation to the cosmos, 87
Seeking good wishes, 88
Divine witness, 90
Resolution (Solemn vow), 91
Hymn of solemn vow, 92
Breath control exercise for Saraswati, 93
Seeking support from sages, 94
Offerings to the foundation, 95
Meditation of Saraswati, 97
Welcome, 98
Infusion of life in deity, 99
Offerings to Goddess Saraswati, 101
   Mantras of vital breath, 112 *
Offerings to the iconographies, 114
Mass flower offering, 116
   Havan (Fire worship), 120
   Prostration to Saraswati, 141
Mulmantra jap (primordial sound offering), 141
   Adoration with lamp, 142
   Immersion of image, 143
   Conclusion of worship, 144
   Honorarium the priest, 149
   Conciliatory prayers, 150
Part 4: Associated puja activities, 154
Puja offerings for individual families, 155
Initiation of study, 158
Part 5: Abridged version of Saraswati Puja, 164
   Introduction, 164
   Invocation, 165
   Saraswati puja and offerings, 167
   Mass flower offering, 176
   Adoration with lamp (arati), 178
   Concluding prayer of appeal, 179
Addendum, 180
   Mudra, 187
   Puja utensils, 189
   Holy pitcher and five essential elements of life, 190
   Puja arrangement and offerings, 192
Our team of editors, 198
New Age Grandparents, 202

xvii
The word ‘ritual’ comes from the Latin *ritus*, meaning ‘a custom’ which means, “Worship reduced to a routine or habit.” The process systemizes the religious worship in a way that religion becomes an abiding feature for the social life of the people – almost, a social institution. Ritual and prayer are the two expressions in act and word of man’s sense of dependence on divine or supernatural powers and represent the practical aspect of religion, as distinguished from the theoretical one consisting of the body of beliefs held by men regarding these powers.

Man’s unceasing effort to win happiness and to keep off trouble takes the two forms - *religion* (philosophy) and *magic* (ritual), which are not always kept apart. The aim of the religious side of the Vedic ritual is to enlist the goodwill of divine powers by prayer and self-sacrifice, so that
they may fulfill the wish of the worshipper. The approach here is a reverential and propitiatory one. The magical side of the Vedic ritual is coercive; its aim is to mould the course of events on the basis of an assumed causal connection between the means (magic) employed and the effect to be produced.

In the following publications we will try to elaborate various Vedic rituals, which are currently followed by the Hindus. We have, however, primarily focused on Bengali immigrants but by and large most other Hindus follow the same pattern. These worship rituals (pujas) of various deities and “Dashakarmas” that celebrate life in its entirety – from birth until settling down in a new house. Death does not come in this list and will be dealt separately.

The origin of these Vedic rituals is from the time of Rigveda, perhaps around 1500 B.C. As interpretation of Vedas turned towards the philosophizing aspect of religion through Aranyakas and Upanishads, so did the rituals, the magical aspect of the religion. For a householder, ritual seems to be befitting while hermits, ascetics and monks principally favor the esoteric way of knowledge or pure philosophy, pursued in an atmosphere of secrecy and seclusion, in virtual opposition to the exoteric way of ritual. In this review of Vedic ritual the former will be passed over.

**Common Hindu worship rituals**

Hinduism celebrates the natural cycle of life from pregnancy to house building. This circumscribes ten different happy ceremonies called, *Dashakarma*.

1. Conception – *punsaban*;
2. Shower or prebirth – *sadh*;
3. Birth – *jatakarma*;
4. Naming – *namakaran*;
5. First rice feeding – *annaprasan*;
6. First shaving – *churakaran*;
7. Sacred thread or spiritual education – *upanayana*;
8. Home coming after education – *pratyabartan*;
9. Marriage – *bibaha*;

Out of these, we have chosen only five as they are currently observed in India and abroad:

1. Sadh,
2. *Annaprasan*,
3. *Upanayana*,
4. *Bibaha*
5. *Vastupuja* or *Grihaprbaesh* (entering new house)

Other than the aforesaid Dashakarmas, there are other rituals performed on a daily basis or occasionally. They include,

1. Daily puja,
2. Special puja (Durga puja, Saraswati puja, etc.), and
3. Funeral rites and shradhdha (offerings to the soul).

These will be dealt in the following pages.

**Looking forward**

There is a general feeling in the new generation, who believe in our ritual approach of worship, to become a part of the puja process and understand the significance of the rituals performed and the chants recited. They refuse to stay inert as an observer. It gives them a chance to appreciate the contributions of their forefathers when the human civilization was in its cradle. Hence “interactive puja” is becoming an ongoing healthy trend.

Revivalism of Sanskrit may have its academic value. The Sanskrit chant for a commoner may remind him of his glorious past but the valuable words of prayers are lost as he does not understand the
language. So the young generation is asking for a Roman script to feel the vibration and focus on the meaning behind the chant (not word to word translation) to touch their heart.

The puja process varies widely. In many states of India the priest helps the householder to perform the puja with his assistance, except initialization (placement of deity and water pitcher or ghat). In Bengal, as I witnessed in my childhood days, the householder entrusts the priest to do everything on his behalf. He only observes the puja ceremonies, if he has the time from his social activities. At the end, he sits near the priest with his wife to give away the Dakshina (priest’s reward) and receives sanctified blessed water (shantijal). In pilgrimage centers, things get worse. The priest runs his business by chanting a few mantras to earn his dakshina while the devotee makes his/her offering in his own language and gesture. The language does not interlink the three – priest, devotee and god (or soul).

The goal of this book is clear. Explain the significance of the ritual and make an attempt to convey the inner meanings of the chant. Our limitations of Sanskrit language may not be able to give the correct translation as the Vedic Sanskrit is different from modern Sanskrit that developed after the Upanishadic period.
SARASWATI PUJA
শ্রীশ্রীসরস্঵তী পূজা পদ্ধতি

Saraswati is the Hindu goddess of learning, eloquence (Bagdevi) and wisdom. In Bengal, the deity of Saraswati is depicted as a beautiful woman, with two hands, who sits on a lotus, holding veena (a musical string instrument) playing music of love and ever expanding knowledge. In some parts of India the Saraswati deity has four hands. The other two hands hold a book (representing the Vedas or knowledge) and a lotus, the icon of peace. She is dressed in a beautiful white outfit and she is accompanied by a white swan, symbolizing purity, wisdom and tranquility. Worship of Saraswati by the Hindus is symbolic of our constant search for knowledge and respect for creativity in art, music and speech. As the poet says,

शक्ति और बुद्धि के संगलने सुन्दरेर गृंटी होला सरस्वती

Goddess Saraswati represents the union of

Power and intelligence from which arise all beautiful creations

Saraswati puja is most popular among students, the seekers of knowledge. Many families bring their five-year-old children to the goddess to seek Her blessing before the child commences his or her education.

Saraswati Puja comes during the month of January-February, heralding the coming of spring season (basant). It is a colorful season of blooming flowers. Hence, on the day of Saraswati Puja, people traditionally wear clothes of basanti, a yellowish color like that of marigold.

The four components of Saraswati Puja are listed here. In the following pages we will elaborate on the process and thought that goes with it.
1. Invocation prayers and preliminaries (sadharan puja paddhati).
2. Main puja of Goddess Saraswati
3. Offerings from devotees
4. Concluding prayers (Benediction).
Daily puja arrangement
Puja arrangement

*Raised platform:* Saraswati deity, a raised platform, book, inkpot, pen.


*Lamp plate:* Lamp stand and dhup stand and dhupbati.

*Puja accessories for priest:* Water conch (*jalashankha*), kosha-kushi (pot to hold water for the priest during the puja), bell, asan (for priest to sit).

*Ghat and tekathi:* Pitcher filled with water placed on a bit of soil, five grains scattered on top of the earth (panchsashya) if not available, use rice, five colored powder sprinkled overthe earth (yantra or pattern is recommended), vermillion powder pasted in oil (put the mark on the pitcher) – the design can be the Swastika or the Vastupurush (king of earth). One small gamchha (red cloth piece) to cover the pitcher.

*Two small bowls:* (a) Yogurt with a few grains of mashkali (called Mashabhaktabali). (b) Madhuparka – honey, ghee, sugar, milk and yogurt.

*Tumblers:* Two glasses of water, sweet candy (misri), raisin, spring water, fruit on pitcher (coconut recommended), five leaves from fruit bearing tree (mamo recommened).

*Utensils to herald puja celebrations:* Sankha (conch to blow), kansar and bell.

*Naivedya:* Four naivedyas are customarily made: Naranaya (if shaligram is present), Pancha devata (Ganesh, Vishnu, Surya, Shiva and Jagadhari/Durga), and Navagraha (nine planets).

For Narayana make a small mound of sugar and sweets around. Panchadevata naivedya has five mounds of rice associated with small fruits and small sugar cubes/sandesh. Navagraha naivedya is made with nice mounds of rice (small mounds) with sugar cube on top and grape (or any small fruit) on the top of the mound.

*Arati:* Panchapradeep, a small gamcha (red piece of cloth), incence, camphor, had fan (chamar). Other things used are described below: water conch, bell, holder for burning camphor, flower etc.

*Arati sequence:* Pancha pradeep, water conch, gamcha, flower, incense, camphor and fan. Adoration of goddess with lamp (arati) is a sort of dance that symbolizes in sequence – welcome
to goddess with lamp into the house (panchapradeep), wash the feet (water from water-conch), wiping the feet (gamcha), decoration with flower (flower), purifying air (incense and camphor), and rest (fan)

Keep in stock a few drinking water bottles, a small bottle of oil to feed the lamp, few extra incense sticks and a match box.

Layout

Before starting the puja, arrange the puja materials in the puja place. Following diagram may help. Searching for the materials you need disturbs the puja process. In this distraction, the purpose of the puja gets lost. Hence, go over the entire script and check whether all materials will be available when called for.

(Note: This elaborate list is modified according to your ability. Your thought is more important than your materials. If nothing else, do the puja with a glass of water and imagine the rest of the offerings.)

1, 2, 3. The deity, inkpot, pen, and books (icons of knowledge) all rest on a raised platform.

4. Ghat: This is a pitcher filled with water placed on a bit of soil that symbolizes elements of life. Five types of grains (rice, wheat, barley, mashkalai or black lentils, black sesame) are scattered on the top of the earth (panchsashya). If five grains are not available,
use rice. Five colored powders are sprinkled over the earth (**yantra** or pattern is recommended). Vermilion powder is mixed with a little oil to create a paste that is used to create the design on the pot—the **swastika** (17) or **Vastupurush** (King of Earth, 18). Five leaves of a fruit bearing tree (mamo recommended) are inserted around the neck of the pot, and a fruit (usually a coconut) is placed on the opening of the pot (see picture on page 28). Put a garland over the pitcher. Use four sticks to mark the corners of a rectangle around the pitcher (you can use clay or Play-doh to keep the sticks upright). Wrap a red thread around the tops of the sticks to create a rectangle.

5. Lamp, lamp stand, incense (**dhupati**) and incense stand. In ancient time, the lamp was needed to see the deity. Literally, the incense provided a sweet-smelling fragrance.

6. Offerings- two small glasses of water, plus a variety of fruits, nuts, sweets, **misri** (sweet candy), raisins, etc.

7. Priest’s **asan** (seat)- a small patterned rug

8. The bell and conch heralds the puja.

9. The host’s water vessel and spoon are used for offering.

10. Host’s **asan** (seat)- a small patterned rug

11. Priest’s water vessel (**kosha-kushi**) – the water in this vessel is used for offering.

12. **Tamrapatra** – a plate to hold the offered water

14. **Mashabhaktabali** (yogurt) with a few grains of **mashkalai** (black lentil) is given as an offering to the spirits of all ancestors.

15. **Madhuparka**- (honey, ghee, sugar, milk and yogurt) a sweet offering

16. **Pushpa patra** – Plate for holding flowers. Also contains: sandalwood paste (for fragrance), **durba** (a special grass with three leaves that represents nature), **haritaki** (seed) or **supari** (betel nut) (represents the growth of success), red thread (tied around wrists after puja for protection), **mashkalai** (black lentil, offering to spirits), wet rice and **til** (oily seed) (food offerings).

List of requirements
(Phardamala)

It is important to keep in mind that all the materials needed in a traditional Saraswati Puja may not be available and may not be necessary. With the change in time and place do your very best and seek Her pardon for the shortcomings. The most important ingredient is the heart and sincerity to worship the Goddess of knowledge, Saraswati.

A picture of Goddess Saraswati helps to bring the mood and imagination. Remember the basic object of Hindu puja, “God is with us and we will try to respect Her with all our senses and heart-felt devotion.”

Picture of Saraswati,
Bottle of spring water,
Puja utensils
    Pradeep,
    kosha-kushi,
    tamrapatra – for discarding the puja offerings,
White mustard,
Mashkalai (black lentil),
Vermilion powder,
Colored powder (5 kinds),
Five whole grains (panchasashya, 5 kinds – paddy, mustard – white, black, black lentil, til, barley, wheat etc.),
Honey,
Sacred thread,
Ring and a silver coin (asan),
Bettle nut, haritaki,
Pen,
Inkpot,
Pitcher (ghat),
PART 1: Introduction

Pitcher at the door with plants and garland decoration (welcome decoration),
Lamp,
Dhoop batti and stand,
Tripod and water conch,
Leaves of some fruit tree (mamo branch with five leaves are traditional – you can choose leaves that looks like mamo but do not forget to include a branch of a fruitbearing tree),
Bhojya (raw vegetables (5), rice, dal, ghee, spice and salt),
Sweet,
Sugar,
Milk,
Yogurt,
Tirkathi,
Mirror,
Camphor,
Two small bowls (to keep yogurt for mashabhatabali and madhuparka),
A new red cloth for the pitcher,
New sari (if one can afford),
Bettle leaf and panmasala,
Arrangement for arati (panchapradeep, dhup, small cloth or gamca, camar or fan, flower, water conch).
If Havan is planned, you need sticks, ghee, havan pot and glass with rice and supari (purnapatra).

More detail list is available in the addendum
All puja rituals start with selected basic invocation prayers, usually grouped under Sadharan Puja Paddhati (সাধারণ পূজা পদ্ধতি). The text presented here is rather elaborate which can be abridged according to the convenience of the priest/devotee. The bottom line is that the Principal Puja (pradhan puja) should be preceded by self purification, purification of environment, removal of ill spirits, and oblations to other Gods and Goddesses influencing our lives in many ways. This section will be repeated in all puja rituals. The repetition is deliberately done in order to keep all procedures at one place without losing the track. We apologize for the repeat.
**Preparation of the priest**

If the priest is performing the puja, a few things need to be noted.

The process of priest’s entrance is described earlier. Follow it devotedly. The priest may start the worship after completing his own process of doing Sandhya and Narayana puja. These are his daily activities. He may choose to do his preliminary preparations in his own way. These have been described later.

After completing his rituals he will call for the host/devotee to join. The host may be joined by his wife who will attend the puja at her convenience but must be present in the beginning and at the end.

**Preparation of the Prayer**

The person doing puja (priest or host) should take bath in the morning (if not before the puja). Fasting is recommended. Otherwise, you can take milk, milk products, fruits, and sweets. Do not take regular meal. If you are planning for havan, do not take non-vegetarian food on the previous night.

Before sitting for the puja, wash your hands and feet and sit on the puja asan. An asan is a designed floor mat (about 2ft x 3ft) used only for doing puja. If you cannot sit on the floor, use a stool and cover it with the asan.

Start your puja with Ganga pranam for sanctification and Vishnu Smaran.

Sanctification with Ganges water
### INVOCATION PRAYERS

#### Sanctification with the holy water of River Ganges

Sanctification with the holy water of River Ganges

Ganga pranam

Sprinkle small amount of Ganges water from the pot over your head and chant (if Ganges water is not available, use any water):

\[
\text{ॐ सद्या पातक संह्नी च दुःखबिनाशिनी;}
\text{सुखदा मोक्षदा गंगा गंगाधरा परमा गति।}
\]

\text{Om sadya pataka samhantri sodyo duhkha binashini;}
\text{Suhkada mokshoda Ganga Gangadha parama gati.}

\text{In the name of that Almighty, Oh Holy Ganga!}
\text{Who takes away all the sin, and miseries and brings happiness.}
\text{You are the only way to attain salvation.}

#### Obeisance to Lord Vishnu

Obeisance to Lord Vishnu

Vishnu smaran

Vishnu is our preserver. Two others in the trinity are Brahma, the creator and Shiva, the destroyer. Thus, our life depends on Vishnu. This is why all Hindu prayers start with the obeisance to Lord Vishnu. The goal of this ritual is to purify the inside of the body with the sanctified water, the basic element of life, with the name of Lord Vishnu, Our Preserver. All auspicious work starts with reverence to Lord Vishnu, our preserver.

#### Sip water in the name of Vishnu

Sipping water in the name of Vishnu: Take a spoonful of water in the palm of the right hand forming a dip like a boat. The amount

\[
\text{Achman (আचমন)}
\]
of water is said to be sufficient to immerse a mustard seed. Sip the water three times and each time take the name of Vishnu and say this mantra.

ॐ बिश्नु, ॐ बिश्नु, ॐ बिश्नु

*Om Vishnu! Om Vishnu! Om Vishnu!*

*Glory to Lord Vishnu*

After the last sip, wipe your lips – right to left, with your right thumb. Wash the fingers with little water allowing the washed water to get soaked into the padded paper kept on the right for this purpose. Then offer your sensory organs in His prayers. Join the four fingers of the right hand (exclude thumb) and touch the various organs with the fingertips in the following manner. First the right nostril and then the left (smell), right eye and then left eye (sight), right ear and then left ear (hearing). Finally touch the naval button (the starting point of your physical body) and wash the fingers again in the same way as described above. Wipe your right hand with a dry paper towel. Join the fingers again and touch your heart and right shoulder and then left shoulder.

ॐ तद्विष्णोऽपि तद्विष्णोऽपि

*Om Tad-Vishnoh paramam padam Sada pasyanti surayah diviiva chakshuratatam*  
*Om Vishnu - Om Vishnu - Om Vishnu*  

As the widely open eyes can see the clear sky without any obstruction, so the wise always see the lotus feet of omniscient Lord Vishnu with their divine vision. Hail to Lord Vishnu!

Then with folded hands in front of your chest say

ॐ अपरित्रं पवित्रं वा सर्वाविष्ठं पवृत्तं वा।

*यः स्मरेৎ पुत्रीकांस क स बाह्याभ्यां सर्वत्रः पुरुषः।*
Om apabitrah pabitrav sa sarvabāsthām gatohipa | ।
jañsmaret Pundarikakshaṃ sa bahyā avantarāḥ shuchi | ।
Nāmaḥ sarva mangala mangalayaṃ | ।
varaṇyaṃ baradamaṇī shubhamaṃ ।
Narayanaṃ naṃaskṛtya sorvakarmāṇi karayet ।

He who, impure or pure, remembers ।
Pundarikaksha (lotus-eyed), Vishnu, ।
in all situations, becomes purified inside and out. ।
We bow to Lord Narayana who is all auspicious, ।
most adorable, beneficial and kind. ।
Remembering His name we should begin all our work. ।

Offerings

Gandhadir archana

Take a flower, dipped in sandalwood paste, in your right hand. Chant the mantra and then discard it in the copper plate meant for offering (tamra patra).

Bong! Etaśmaigandhadibhyo namah ।
Etat sampradanaḥ pujaniya devataganēbhyaḥ namah ।
Uttering the primordial sound of Bong, ।
I am offering the scented flower to the feet of Lord Vishnu, and also offering herewith my deep respect to all the revered Gods.
Offer a little water on the plate and chant the Gayatri prayer.

ॐ भूर्भुवंस्वах तत सतितुर्वर्यं जगदिवो जीविते सो न क्रोधो जये ॐ

_Om bhur-bhuvah swah tat sabitur varenyam_
_bhargo devashya dhimahi_
_Dhiyo yo nah prachodayat Om _

_He who is adored by all over the universe –_
_heaven, earth and underground,_
_Destroy the ignorance in me and enlighten my intellect (soul)._ 

Then offer little rice to the Sun God

ॐ एहि सुर्य सहस्रम्शो तेजोरश्ये जगत्पते।
अनुकंपया मा भक्तम ग्रीहनार्ग्धम दिवकरम।

_Om ehi surya sahasramsho tejorashhey jagatpatey._
_Anukampaya mam bhaktam grihanargham divakaram._

_Oh the Sun God! Oh the emitter of thousands of rays over the universe,_
_bless me, your devotee, and receive my offering, Oh the day maker._

By tradition, the following two rituals – Sandhya and Narayana Puja – are only done by the Brahmins. If the priest (Brahmin) is carrying a Narayana Sheela, special honor is given to the Sheela and the priest will perform his special puja as described later.

**PRAYER OF GAYATRI**

_सन्ध्या_
_Sandhya_

This is a personal prayer of the priest. For others, this can be optional.

_Sandhya_ means “at the junction (sandhi, संधि).” It focuses on the prayer for the Goddess Gayatri.

According to ancient tradition, Sandhya is done three times a day – at the junction of night/morning, high noon/afternoon, and at sunset.
Sandhya is taught at the time of sacred thread. The new Brahmin usually follows it for a year. Hence, it is desirable for the new-age Brahmin to start any puja ritual by performing the Sandhya in order to fill in his undone commitment.

**Introduction to Gayatri**

Gayatri mantra is a highly revered mantra based on a Vedic Sanskrit verse from a hymn of the Rigveda, attributed to Visvamitra. Gayatri mantra is named for its Vedic gayatri meter. The main principle of Vedic meter is measurement by the number of syllables. The metric unit of verse is the pada (foot), generally of eight, eleven, or twelve syllables. Others Vedic meters are Jagati, Tristubh, Viraj, and Anustup. Each has its specific number of padas and syllables. Gayatri has 3 padas and 8 syllables. *Chhandah* (छन्द) is the systematic study of Vedic meter.

Gayatri verse is interpreted to invoke the deva Savitr (sun). Hence it is often called Savitri. Gayatri, however, has been referred in its meditation (यान) as a goddess. Thus some believe that the radiation energy of the sun is considered as goddess Gayatri. From a more scientific point of view, the energy is the basis of all creations and thus Gayatri is held on a high position in Hindu pantheon. Gayatri Mantra is repeated and cited very widely in Vedic literature, and praised in several well-known classical Hindu texts. The mantra is an important part of the upanayana ceremony for young Hindu Brahmin males as part of their daily rituals. Modern Hindu reform movements spread the practice of the mantra to include women and all castes and its use is now very widespread.

**Recital of Gayatri**

By tradition non-Brahmins and women are not permitted to chant Gayatri. This, however, is seriously challenged in modern era and is adopted worldwide because of its deep philosophical meaning. If the worshipper is not doing Sandhya, he should at least do the minimum
chant (jap) of ten counts of Gayatri jap (গায়ত্রীজপ). Details of its meaning is given later

**General Preparation**

Wash your hands and feet before sitting on the asan (puja seat) to do the sandhya.

**Sanctification with water**

**Marjana**

Sprinkle water on the head (purification process) and chant:

```
Om Sanna apo danwanya samanah sastva-nupyah |
Sanna samudria apah, samana santu kupyah ||
Oh the waters! that comes out from the desert, from the land with plentiful water, from the sea, and from the well, shower your bliss on us.
```

```
Om Drupadadiba mamuchanah swinaha snato malatiba |
Putam pavitrenabahyam, apah sudhantu mainasha ||
Om! As a sweated person feels soothed under the tree, as he feels clean after a bath, as ghee always stays pure, so
Oh water, wash away my sins and purify me.
```

```
Om apohishta mayobhava, sta na urjhey dadhatana |
Mahe ranaya chakshashey ||
Om jobah shivatamo rasastasya bhajayatehanah ||
```
**Ushatiraba matarah**

Om tasma aramamaboh, jashya khaya jinwatha

Apojanayathah cha nah

Oh waters, you are the source of happiness; strengthen us with your divine energy so that we feel your greatness and enjoy your bounty.

Share your nourishing energy with us, Oh waters, like an affectionate mother nourishes her children with her auspicious energy.

Om ritancha satyancha abhiddhatat tapasohadhyajayata

Tato ratrya jaayata, tatah samudro arnabah

Om samudradarnabadadhi, sambatsaro ajayata

Ahoratrani bidadhad, vishwashya mishato vashil

Om Suryachandra Mashaudhata, yathapurva-makalpayat

Dibancha pritibhih cha, antariksham atho swah

From all-illuminating Supreme Lord the Divine Law and goodness generated.

Then came the darkness of night followed by vast ocean full of water. Thus came the annual rhythm, the night, the day, the sun, the moon, the earth, the sky, the Heaven and the universe, and so myself with the blessing of the Almighty as planned by the Creation.

**Breath control**

**Pranayam**

Sprinkle water around you while you imagine creating a wall to isolate yourself from the rest of the world. Repeat the following chant while sprinkling the water:
Om-karasya Brahma Rishir Gayatrichando Agnirdevata sarbakarmarambhhey biniyoga. 

Saptabyahritinam Prajapatirishi Gayatrinchiama 
Anushtupa Brihateepamti Trishtupa Jagatachandanshi 
Agni, Bayu, Surya, Baruna, Brihaspati, Indra, Biswandevatah pranayamey biniyoga. 
Gayatrya Viswamitrarishi Gayatrichandah 
Sabita devata pranayamey biniyoga. 
Gayatrishirashah Prajapatirishi Brahma, Vayur-Agni, Suryaschashro devata pranyamey biniyoga. 

Uttering the primordial sound of Om! Invoke all rituals by thinking of the great sage Brahma, sung in the beat of Gayatri, and meditating on the energy-emitting god Agni before starting anything auspicious.

The seven states (Saptabyahritanam) – Bhu, Bhubha, Swya, Maha, Janah, Tapah and Satyam (earth, universe, self, sacrifice, people, intellect and truth). The seven beats of Samaveda – Gayatri, Unchik, Anustupa, Brihate, Pamti, Tristupa, and Jagati.

My oblation to the seven gods (Pranayamey biniyoga) – Agni, Bayu, Surya, Baruna, Brihaspati, Indra, Biswadevah (Lord of the universe).
I am dedicating my breath to the names of all the above Gods and to revered Gayatri, sage Viswamitra, sung in Gayatri meter, in the name of Sabita. Prajapati, Brahma, Bayu, Agni and Surya (Sun).

**Breath control Step #1 (Inhale through left nostril)**

After sprinkling the water around you close the right nostril with your right thumb and inhale through the left nostril while chanting the *pranayam* mantras.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Nabhau – Raktabarnam chaturmukham dwibhujam} \\
\text{akhshasutra kamandalukaram Brahmanam dhyayan.} \\
\text{Om bhur, om bhubha, om swah, om maha,} \\
\text{om janah, om tapah, om satyam.} \\
\text{Om tat Sabiturbarenyam bhargo devasya} \\
\text{dhimahi dhiyo yo nah prachodayat.} \\
\text{Om apojyoti rashomritam Brahma bhurbubhaswarom.}
\end{align*}
\]

*The chanting involves upholding the image of the Lord of Creation, Brahma located on the naval region of the body – red in color, bearing four heads while looking all over the universe (four directions), and with two arms. The right arm holds the prayer beads while the left arm holds the kamandalu containing the life giving water. He is sitting on a swan (symbol of peace). Offering all the seven states of our existence – The earth, the eather (heaven), self, sacrifice, people, meditation and truth. Alternate meaning – The life, consciousness, bliss, devotion, intellect and truth). Let us meditate on that divine energy (light, consciousness), which is coming out of the sun, that will inspire us. That self illumined Brahman covers the entire universe in His divine tune.*
Breath control Step #2 (Hold breath)

Continue to press the right nostril with the right thumb and then close the left nostril with the little finger and ring finger of the right hand. Imagine the presence of Vishnu on your heart and chant the following describing the appearance of Vishnu:

Hridi – Nilotpala dala-prabham chaturbhujam
sankhachakra-gada-padma-hastam
Garura-rarurham Keshabham dhayen |
Om bhuh Om bhubah Om swah Om maha
Om janah Om tapah Om satym ||
Om tat Sabitur varenyam bhargo devashya dhimahi |
Dhiyo yo nah prachodayat ||
Om apojyoti rashomritam Brahma bhur bhubasaram ||
Meditate on Vishnu (Keshava), sitting in your heart
On a blue lotus.
In four arms He holds – conch, disc, mace and lotus.
He sits on the heavenly bird Garura for his transportation
As one meditates on Keshava.
Oh the revered Sun remove the darkness that prevails in me and illuminate my intellect and let me be inspired by your divine illumination that spreads out over the three worlds of this universe.

Breath control Step #3
(Exhale through the right nostril)

Release the thumb on the right nostril and allow the breath to exhale through the right nostril.
PART 2: Basic Puja Procedures

Lalatey – Swetam dwibhujam trishula-damaru-karam ardhachandra
bibhushitam trinetram brishabharurah Shambhum dhayen
Om bhu Om bhubah Om swah Om maha
Om janah Om tapah Om satyam
Om tat Sabitur varenyam bhargo devashya dhimahi
Dhio yo nah prachodayat

Om apojyoti rashomritam Brahma bhur bhubasaram
While exhaling, meditate on the image of Shiva, the destroyer,
resting on your forehead.
He has three eyes, with two arms –
holding trident on the right and drum on the left,
decorated with half-moon on the forehead and riding on a bull.
Oh the sun.

Obeisance to Surya (sun)

Achman

Sipping water in the name of the sun (Surya); take a little water in your
right palm chant the mantra and sip it.

Suryascha meti mantrasya Brahma Rishi prakritischhanda
apo devata achmaney biniyoga
Om Suryascha ma manyuscha manyopatayascha
Manyukritebhya papabhya rakshantam
Jadatriya papamakarisham manasa bacha
hastabhyan padmam-mudarena shishna
Ratristadbalaspatu, jat kincha duritam mayi
Edmaham mamamritashonow Surey jyotshi juhomi swaha

In the name of the Sun as described by the sage Brahma in Prakriti meter, I am sipping this water.
With the blessings from the Sun and the sages, may I be protected from incurring sin (ignorance).
Whatever sin I have already incurred in the night by my mind and words, hands, feet and other organs, may that be excused by the God of the night.
Blessed by them I may now burn all my sins into the eternal flame of bliss as my ahuti (offering) in order to acquire my immortal soul.

Recalling the Creation
Aghamarshan

Take little water in your right palm, chant the mantra and imagine that you are blowing off your sin through your breath.

As described by Aghamarshana sage in Anustupa meter, dedicated to describe God’s creation.
In the beginning of the Creation there was no light
that was watched exclusively by His Absolute Truth.

Then formed the sea, followed by the intermittent day and night leading to the annual cycle of the year.

The universe got illuminated by His grace, reflected by the sun and the moon, as He planned.

And finally merged the whole Universe and this earth extended deep into its core.

(Recalling the Creation removes the ignorance within you)

Now throw the water on to your left on the ground imagining that you are relieved of the sin and ready to do your worship as the pure soul (amritasya putra). Wash your hand and you are now ready to offer your prayer to Gayatri. Now look to the east, imagining the rising sun and chant:

ও জূর্জর্জং, তৎ সনিতরূর্তেশং, তর্পো দেবস্য ধীমহি।
বিয়া বেশ নং প্রচোদয় ও।।

Om bhur-bhuba-swah tat sabitur varenyam
bhargo devasya dhimahi
Dhiyo yo nah prachodayat Om ||

He who is adored by all over the universe – heaven, earth and underground,

Destroy the ignorance in me and enlighten my intellect (soul).

Offer a little water on the plate and meditate on the sun.

Prayer to Sun’s location

সূর্যপালন
Suryopasthan

This prayer is dedicated to the sun in his current position on the sky. Facing the sun chant:

ও উদুত্যামিত্যস্য প্রক্ষু কর্তিয়ক্ষীচ্ছাদৎ সূর্যো দেবতা সূর্যোপালনে বিনিয়োগঃ।
উদাস্ব তাতবেদস্য দেব বহুবি কেতন। লুন্সো বিবার্য সূর্যঃ।।

Udutyamityasya Prashkannya rishih Gayatri chhandah
Suryo devata Suryoposthaane biniyogah.
Om udutyam jatavedasam, deva bahanti ketawah
drishe vishvaaya Suryam

For the mantra that starts with the word “Udutyam”,
Praskanka is the seer (rishi),
Gayatri is the meter, and the sun is the God.
This mantra is applied to worship the Sun.
Om, in order to make everything visible to us,
the rays of the Sun hold the all-knowing Sun high above.

As guided by seera Kutsa, sung in Tristupa meter,
hold the image of the rising sun in your heart,
who is established by the Gods Mitra, Baruna and Agni
with the consolidated illuminating powers of all Gods and Goddesses,
that Sun, who knows the inner spirit of all fixed and moving bodies
is now coming up and illuminating the three worlds –
heaven, earth and the sky by its bright rays.

Then give water in the name of various aspects of divinity:

Om Brohmaney namah, Om Brahmanebhyo namah,
Om acharyebhyo namah, Om rishibhyo namah,
**Welcome to Gayatri**

*পায়ত্রী আবাহন*

Gayatri avahan

Call Gayatri with folded hands placed on your heart:

ও আয়াহি বরাদে দেবী, ত্রাক্ষার ব্রহ্মবালিনি।
পায়ত্রী কৃত্ষঙ্গ মাতৃ-এক্ষংবালি নামোহত্তুম।

Om aayahi baradey devi, traksharey Brahmabadini
Gayatricha chandasam matar-Brahmayoni namohastutey

Come Oh the revered goddess, Oh the imperishable,
Oh the teacher of the Vedas,
Oh the mother of Gayatri meter, who came out of the supreme Lord (Brahman), allow me to bow with deep reverence.

**Gayatri Meditation**

*পায়ত্রীধ্যান*

Gayatri dhyan

Dhyan is the process of invoking the image of the God/Goddess on the mental screen.

পায়ত্রী বিশ্বামিত্র খষি-পারশুরাজস্যাঃ সবিতা দেবতা জপপনন্দনে বিনিয়োপহ।
Gayatraya Viswamitra rishi-Gayatrichanda
Sabita devata japopanyaney biniyogah

Gayatri, initiated by sage Viswamitra in Gayatri meter and
addressed to the sun, bringing him near,  
I am offering that mantra to you  
feeling detached from the material world.

Morning

ও কুমারী-রূপ বেদনৃতাং ব্রহ্মরূপঃ বিচিন্তিতঃ ।
হংসস্থিতঃ কুশাহস্তম সূর্যমণ্ডল-সন্তিত: ॥

Om kumari-Rigvedajutan Brahmarupan bichintayet
Hamsasthetam kushahastam Suryamandala-sansthitam ॥

In the morning meditate on Gayatri as a small girl, holding the
sacred Rigveda, looking over the universe while sitting on a swan,
holding Kusha (the sanctified grass that captures sun’s rays)
in her hands; while located on the divine solar system.

High noon

ও মধ্যাহ্নে বিষ্ণুরূপঃ আকাশঃ পিতাবসাং ॥
যুবতীঃ যজুর্বেদঃ সূর্যমণ্ডল-সন্তিত: ॥

Om madhyanhye Vishnurupancha tarakshastham peetabasasam |
Yubatincha Yajur-vedam Suryamandala-sansthitam ॥

At noon, like Vishnu riding on his Gaduda, Gayatri takes the
form of a young grown up lady, holding Yayurveda in her hands,
wearing a yellow dress and located in the divine solar system.

Evening

ও সাযানে শিবরূপঃ বৃদ্ধঃ বৃষভ-বাহিনীঃ ।
সূর্যমণ্ডল-মধ্যাহ্নঃ সামবেদ সমাজিত: ॥

Om sayaneh Shibarupanchya bridam brishabha-bahining
Suryamandala-madhyastam Samaveda samajutam ॥

In the evening, like the image of Shiva, Gayatri takes the form
of an old lady riding on a bull while located in the Solar system and
holding the Samaveda in her hands.
Gayatri chant

Light is a symbol for knowledge and wisdom. Many would like to meditate on light as a formless symbol of the Supreme divine. Gayatri mantra helps in such a meditation. The following Gayatri prayer is mentioned in Rigveda and Brihadaranyaka Upanishad. It is considered as the ultimate vaidic prayer.

This is the short version of Sandhya or Gayatri prayer. The full version has been presented earlier.

Say the entire sentence by touching your right hand thumb either in the spaces between the horizontal natural markings on your finger or the tip of the finger. Repeat the same ten times.
Start the first number with your right hand thumb touching on the ring finger inner aspect mid segment then go down to the next segment and so forth as outlined in the attached figure.

Elaboration of Gayatri prayer will be done later.

**Om Bhur-Bhuh-Svah, Tat Savitur varenyam,**

**Vhargo devasva dhimahi, Dhiyo yo nah prachodayat, Om!**

*Om* (primordial sound that represents divinity)! In the three worlds – the physical (*bhur*), the mental (*bhuvah*) and the spiritual (*suvah*) – you that transcendental Paramatama, the adorable (*barenayam*) Sun (*Savitur*, creator of this world), destroy the darkness (*bhargo*, sin), with your divine effulgence (*devasya*).

We meditate upon (*dheemahi*) Thee,

*Enlighten our intellect* (*dhiyo yonah prachodayat*). *Om!*

**Conclusion of Sandhya**

**রাগ্য-বিসৃণ**

*Gayatri bisarjan*

Take a little water on your right palm, chant the following mantra and throw on the puja plate:

**ও মহেশ-বদনেৱ্যা বিকোষিয়া সত্তা।**

*Oh goddess Gayatri, you have come from the mouth of Shiva, reside in the heart of Vishnu, and hold to the conscience of Brahma, now you can go anywhere you wish.*
Prayer for self-protection
आत्म-रक्षा
Atma-raksha

Touch the backside of your right ear with your right thumb and pray to seek the blessing of Agni to protect you from all damers. After completion of the chant, circle water around you in clockwise direction.

Jatabedasha itashya Kashyapa rishi trishtupo chanda Agnirdevata,
atmarakshayam japey biniyoga.
Om jaatavedasey sunbama somam-aaratiyato ni dahati Vedah.
Sa nah parshadati Durgani bishvaa
naabeab sindhum duritayagnih ||
Let us offer Soma to Agni, the knower of all Vedas.
May He destroy our enemies.
As a boatman helps us to cross the ocean with a boat,
So may Agni protect and help us to steer over the river of our sorrows.

Prayer to Rudra, Shiva
रुद्रपास्तान
Rudrapasthan

With folded hands chant this prayer:

Ritamityasya Kalagnirudra rishi Anupstupa chhando
Rudro devata rudrapasthaney viniyogah.
In the name of the sage Kalagni Rudra, sung in Anustupa meter, and devoted to Lord Shiva sitting in His heavenly abode

Om rrhitam satyam param Brahmah purusham krishnapiingalam
Urdharretam virupaksham, visvarupam namoh namah ||
Supreme Brahman, The Absolute Reality, who has assumed the form of Umaamaheshvara, with dark blue and reddish brown in hue, absolutely chaste and possessing uncommon eyes. Salutations to Her in the form of the universe.

(This verse is taken from Mahanarayan Upanishad).

Now offer water with the spoon (kushi) in the names four divinities separately:

ॐ ब्रह्मेन नमः। ॐ विष्णुभेद नमः। ॐ रुद्रेय नमः। ॐ वरुणाय नमः।
Om Brahmaney namah, Om Vishnabey namah, Om Rudraya namah, Om Varunaya namah.
Reverence to Brahmah, Vishnu, Rudra – Shiva, and Varuna.

OFFERING TO SUN GOD

Suryargha

The Sun is one of the primary gods of Hinduism and receives offerings at the very beginning of most rituals. He enlightens our soul.

Take the kushi (the small spoon that sits inside the kosha, water holder kept in front of the priest) with little water. Put in that a touch of red sandalwood paste and a red flower. Add a bit of rice (kept in the pushpapatra) into the kushi. Hold the kushi with narrower side pointing outward. Meditate on the rising sun coming in front of you and you are looking at it. Chant:

ॐ नमः विरंते द्वार्ढेन भूतादित्वं विश्वाते । जगं सबित्रे सूक्ष्मं सबित्रं कर्मदाविने ।
इवर्मणं भजताम श्रीरूपर्यं नमः ।
एहि सूर्य सहास्रं तेजस्विने जगंयते ।
अनुरक्षपा महं भजं गृहाणां निय्यक्षभव ॥

Image of the Sun riding on seven horses. (How is this related to seven colors?)
PART 2: Basic Puja Procedures

Om namah bibaswatey Brahman bhaswatey
Vishnu tejashey jagata sabitrey suchayey sabitrey karmadainey
Idam argham bhagabatey Shri Surjaya namah
Ehi Surjyo sahasramsho tejorashey jagatpatey
Anukampaya mam bhaktam grihanargham divakaram
Esho-h-argham bhagabatey Shri Surjaya namah

Oh, the illuminator of the universe, who carries the energy of Lord Vishnu (the preserver), who inspires people to work, allow me to offer my reverence to you. Oh the Sun, the emitter of thousands of rays of light, the reservoir of energy, the lord of the Universe, I am offering my reverence to thee, please accept it,

Oh Lord, the Sun God.

Prostration

Then offer your reverence to the Sun God by joining the hollowed palms and holding them on your chest:

Om javakusuma samkasham kashyapeyam mahadyutim.
Dhwantarim sarvapapaghnam pranatoshmi divakaram.

Like the red shoe flower (जब्जा),
extremely bright like the hot copper,
the killer of darkness, the remover of all sins,
Oh the maker of the day!
I am prostrating in front of you.

Now offer a spoonful of water from your boat-shaped right palm uttering the mantras that appeal to Goddess Gayatri to excuse you from the errors you incurred during the ritual and fulfill it by her grace.

Oh, be kind-hearted to me, the Mother Gayatri.
Purify, great, the whole order of more and more.

35
If I made any error in using the proper alphabet or pronouncing these mantras, Oh the Goddess of all knowledge, complete it by your grace.

**WORSHIP OF GURU**

(Spiritual teacher)

Guru has a high position in the development of an individual. Everyone is born ignorant with the ability to learn with chance of time. This is our natural process of evolution. It starts from the parents who teach us the basic of living. But the guru is the person who gives you a second life. He introduces his disciple to the Unknown. He is the spiritual teacher, and is respected like a God.

Literal meaning of the Sanskrit word “guru”: ‘gu’ means darkness and ‘ru’ means light. Guru is a person who represents the incandescent light of supreme consciousness which eradicates the darkness of ignorance.

**Meditation**

Dashan

Dhyan

Take a flower in both hands, hold that in front of your chest and say this mantra. At the end put that flower in a bowl in front of the Holy Pot to be established later.

Dhyayechchhirasi shuklabjye dwinetram dwibhujam Gurum;
Swetambara paridhanam shayetamalyanulepanam;
Barabhayokaram shantam kurunamaya bigraham;
Bameynotapala dharinya shaktalingata bigraham;
Smeyrananam suprasannam sadhaka avistha dayakam.
Let me meditate on the glory of my spiritual teacher who represents the incandescent light of supreme consciousness, who is having two eyes and two hands, who is dressed in white outfit with a white garland in neck and sandal wood paste on forehead (signifying purity), with a calm, smiley face, forgiving attitude, holding a lotus in left hand signifying symbols of blessings to the devotee and whose feet rest on a lotus with one thousand petals.

Obeisance to Guru

Gurupranam

With folded hands, in front of your chest say these three mantras.

Akhanda-mandalakaram vyaptam jena characharam;
Tat padm darshitam yena tasmai Shree Gurave namah.
(My) Salutations to respected Guru, who showed me the stature whose form pervades the entire sphere of the universe.

Ajnaana-timirandhasya jnaananjanashalakaya;
Chaksur-urmilitam yena tasmai Shree Gurabe namah.
(My) Salutations to respected Guru, who opened the eyes of the one, who is blind due to darkness of ignorance with the flame of knowledge.

Gurur Brahma gurur Vishnuh gurur devo Maheswarah
Guruh sakshat param Brahma tasmai shree Gurave namah.
Salutations to the preceptor who is verily Brahma, Vishnu and Maheshwara and personified as the Supreme Being

Offerings to Guru

Panchaupacharey puja

Place a sandalwood dipped flower on the holy pitcher and chant:

এতে গাঙ্গে পূজ্যঃ নমঃ গুরোবে নমঃ।
Eteh gandhapushpey namah Shri gurobey namah |
I am offering this flower in reverence to my guru |

Offer a small of water on the offering plate and chant:

এতে পাদ্যঃ নমঃ গুরোবে নমঃ।
Eteh padyam namah Shri gurobey namah |
I am offering this water for washing my guru’s feet.

Offer a small of rice with doob grass on the offering plate. This symbolizes welcome to a respectable guest:

এতে অর্ঘ্যঃ নমঃ গুরোবে নমঃ।
Eteh arghyam namah Shri gurobey namah |
I am offering this arghya (rice with doob grass) in gesture of welcoming my guru

Offer a small amount of water towards the incense sticks and chant:

এতে ধূপঃ নমঃ গুরোবে নমঃ।
Eteh dhupam namah Shri gurobey namah |
I am offering this incense in the name of my revered guru |

Offer a small amount of water towards the lamp and chant:

এতে দীপঃ নমঃ গুরোবে নমঃ।
PART 2: Basic Puja Procedures

_Eteh deepam namah Shri gurobey namah |
I am offering this lamp in the name of my revered guru |

Offer a small amount of water on the food platter (naivedya) and chant:

एतह दीपम् नामः श्री गूर्बेय नामः।
_Etehnaivedyam namah Shri gurobey namah |
I am offering this food platter in the name of my revered guru |

Offer a small amount on the glass of water placed as _achmania_:

एतह पानीयजलं नामः श्री गूर्बेय नामः।
_Eteh paniya jalam namah Shri gurobey namah |
I am offering this glass of water in the name of my revered guru |

Paying reverence to Guru

_गुरुमन्त्र_
_Gurumantra_

After the prayer one repeats the name of the guru several times to express respect. The process of counting is shown in Gayatri.

जय गूरु
_Jai Guru_
_Hail my guru_

Following japa pay obeisence to the Guru by taking a small amount of water in the right palm and drop it off on the offering plate after chanting the mantra:

गुज्याति गुज्यागृप्ता तुं गुरुणा सुं कृतं जपं।

_Gujyati gujyangpta twam grihana smat kritam japam._
_Sidhir bhabatu me deva tatprasadat Sureswara._
_Take away my ignorance_

as I surrender to your name repeatedly
so that I may succeed in my endeavor by your grace,

_Oh the learned._
WORSHIP OF NARAYANA SHEELA
नारायणपूजा
Narayanpuja

The word Narayana comes from the union of two words, nara (man or in general the jiva or any living creature) and “ayana” which means path. In other words, man is the culmination path of evolution who can realize Him. It is another name of Vishnu, the preserver of life.

Narayana is the family deity for many Brahmins and is in the form of saligramsheela which is a shapeless black-colored stone.

Bath

The sheela (stone) is first given a bath before putting it on its special throne and subjected to worship. Ring the bell while giving Narayana a bath. It is a very auspicious ceremony.

Following are the mantras used during bathing chant the following mantras:

Om sahasra Shirsha Purushah sahasrakshah sahashrapat |
Sa bhumim sarvatam spastwa atyatishtha dashangulam ||1||

With thousand heads of the Lord covering the land of thousand steps
and yet leaves space for ten fingers
(story related to Vamana Avatar of Vishnu) || 1||

Alternate explanation:
The supreme Person exists enveloping the whole manifest Universe,
cognizing through every mind, seeing through every eye and
working through every limb (sahashrapat) –
nay He exists transcending the Universe.
The Story of Shaligram Sheela

To the Vaishnava (devotees of Vishnu) Shaligram sheela is an aniconic representation of Lord Vishnu. Such anthropomorphic religious images (murtis) are commonly found in Hinduism, which are abstract symbols of God. Shaligram Sheela(s) are black in color and are ammonite fossils worshipped as manifestations of Vishnu Himself. A typical Sheela has a hole inside the round black stone, which is visible from outside. Inside the hole contains fossil remains as markings of past microbial lives, perhaps algae. These markings, believed to resemble Vishnu’s paraphernalia, such as mace, conch, lotus and disc. The Sheela(s) are usually hereditary and are passed down through many generations, never being purchased or sold.

Most Shaligram Sheela(s) are obtained from Gandaki River at Muktinath Chettra in Nepal, under the foothills of Himalayas (see map). Gandaki River is one of the five tributaries of the holy River Ganges. Others are Yamuna, Gomti, Ghaghara, and Teesta. The basin of Gandaki contains three of the world’s 14 highest mountains over 8000 m (Dhalulagiri, Manaslu and Annapurna). According to Vaishnava belief, the worshipper of a Shaligram Sheela must adhere to strict rules, such as not touching the Shaligram without bathing, never placing the Shaligrama on the ground and not indulging bad practices. Shilagram deity and the tulsi plant are always worshipped together as Vishnu and Lakshmi. Shaligrams are also collected from the River Narmada, another holy river of India. They are called Narmadeshwar Shaligram. It, however, does not have the fossil mark of chakra and are of different colours.
Om agni-meeley purohitam yagyasya deva mritvijam hotaram ratna dhatamam

Om! I call upon the attributes of that Self-effulgent Divinity, who is the upholder of universe from very eternity, the most bounteous and the great possessor of wealth and prosperity.

Om! Ishey tworjey twaa baayabah stha devo, bah Sabita praarpayatu shresthatamaaya karmane

Om! We invoke you for the sake of food and energy as you are the vital breathing energy. May the Lord, the Creator, assigns you (the sacrificers) with best accomplishments.

Om! Agna aa yaahi beetaye grinano havyadaataye nihota satsi barhisi

O Agni! Come here, sit with us as Hota (the special priest) on this holy grass for food and fun. We are offering oblations with fire.

Om shanno devirabhistaya aapo bhavantu peetaye shamshorabhisrabantu nah

O Lord, may these waters be useful to us for drinking and bring happiness; may the goddesses fulfil our desires. May their blessings shower on us from all directions.

After giving bath, wipe the Naryayana with the chant of Gayatri and then put a tulsi leaf dipped in sandalwood saying (see insert):

Etat sachandana tulsipatram,
Om namastey bahurupey paramatmaney swaha |
Om namah Narayana namah ||
With my sandalwood tulsi leaf
(read the story of tulsi in the insert)
I prostrate to Thee Oh the Supreme Lord
Who appears in so many ways.

Then put the Narayana on his throne with a sandalwood-dipped tulsi placed at the bottom.

**Meditation of Vishnu**

Vishnudhyana

Take a white flower, keep on your head and establish the image of Naryaya in your heart.

Oṃ dheyah sada sabitri mandala madhyabarti
Narayana sarasijasana sannibishtha
Keyurabana kanakakundalaban kiriti hari
hiranmaya bapur dhrita shankha chakrah

I meditate on the solar orbit with Narayana in the middle, wearing armlets, golden earnings and necklace. His head is covered with a crown and he holds the conch and discuss in his hands while His body shines with a golden color
How is *Tulsi* associated with Vishnu?

Tulsi is venerated as a goddess in Hinduism and sometimes considered as beloved of Lord Vishnu (Vishnuypriya). According to Hindu mythology (*Padma Puran*) Tulsi was a woman named Vrinda (or Brinda). She was married to the demon king Jalandhar. Due to Vrinda’s piety and devotion to Vishnu, Jalandhar (her husband) became invincible. Even God Shiva, the destroyer in the Hindu trinity (Brahma – the creator, Vishnu – the preserver, and Shive or Maheshwar – the destroyer) could not defeat Jalandhar. So Shiva requested Vishnu, to find a solution. Vishnu disguised himself as Jalandhar and violated Vrinda. Her chastity destroyed, Jalandhar was killed by Shiva. Vrinda cursed Vishnu to become black in colour and he would be separated from his wife. Thus, he was transformed into the black Shaligram stone and in his Rama Avatar, his wife Sita was kidnapped by a demon-king and thus separated from him. Vrinda then burnt herself on her husband's funeral pyre or immolated herself due to the shame. The gods or Vishnu transferred her soul to a plant, henceforth which was called as Tulsi.

Apart from the mythology, tulsi is also a great medicinal plant used in Ayurvedic medicine for cure of many diseases. In India, most devoted Hindus and especially the devotees of Vishnu keep a tulsi plant in the middle of their courtyard.
Offerings to associates of Vishnu

Now place sandalwood touched flower (white preferred) on the head of Naryana Sheela, uttering the following six mantras:

Etē gandhapushpey Om vignabinashaya namah;
Etē gandhapushpey Om Shivadipanchadevatavya namah;
Etē gandhapushpey Om Adityadinavagrahevyo namah;
Etē gandhapushpey Om Indradidashadikapaleyvyo namah;
Etē gandhapushpey Matsyadidashavatarevyo namah;
Etē gandhapushpushpey Om namah Narayanaya namah.

Here I offer the (sandalwood) scented flower to the obstacle remover; to Shiva with five gods and goddesses in the group (Shiva-Ganesh-Narayana-Surya-Durga); Aditya and other nine planets (Aditya-Soma-Mamala-Budha-Brihaspti-Sukra-Sani-Ravi and Ketu)

Indra and ten directional gods,

fish and other ten incarnations of Vishnu.
Indian History in mantras and Sanskrit hymns

Rigveda refers about the “Battle of ten kings (dāśarājñā)” in some of its hymns. It is conjectured to have occurred between 1700-1000 BC after the Aryans migrated to India. It took place near Parusni River today’s Punjab (Ravi).

These kings belonged to different tribes of northwest India. Some of the notable names of these defeated tribes include Purus, Gandharis, Parsu (Persian?), Bhrigus and Dasa. The victory came to Trtsu (Indo-Aryans tribe). Three of the commanders of this battle were Vashista, Vishvamitra and King Sudas. Many of these names appear in Ramayana and Mahabharata the two epics of India.

Recent translation (1951) of the Rigveda considers the hymns as “obviously based on an historical event”, even though all details in the hymns are lost.

This shows that the history of India was though not formally written until later but these mantras become a reliable source that captured Indian history by “word of mouth”.

Continued to page 49
INCARNATIONS OF VISHNU
and Evolution of Human civilization

The ten incarnations or ‘Dasa Avatara’ of Lord Vishnu is an extraordinary recording of the evolution of human life and advance in human civilization. The sequence of appearance of Lord Vishnu on Earth is in tune with the evolutionary theory. In fact, the ten incarnations of Lord Vishnu is an amazing recording of the advancement of human civilization. All this was recorded by Hindu sages thousands of years before Christ.

The first incarnation of Lord Vishnu was in the form of a fish or ‘Matsya Avatar.’ It has now been confirmed by Science that the first life forms evolved under water. The second incarnation of Lord Vishnu was in the form of a tortoise or ‘Kurma Avatar.’ This is an amphibious creature capable of living both on land and in water. The third incarnation of Lord Vishnu is the boar or ‘Varaha Avatar’. Boar is a complete land animal, life form has now moved out of water and has adapted to land. The fourth incarnation of Lord Vishnu is the half-man half-animal form known as ‘Narasimha Avatar.’ This incarnation starts the transformation from animal to human form. The fifth incarnation of Lord Vishnu is the dwarf or pigmy sized human being or ‘Vamana avatar.’ A transition from the beastly form to human form and the development of intelligence. The sixth incarnation of Lord Vishnu is the forest dweller or ‘Parasuram.’ He has developed weapons and axe is his first weapon. Any sharp stone can be transformed into an axe and it also indicates the first settlement of humans in forests. The seventh incarnation of Lord Vishnu is Lord Ram. This us when civilized humans developed and more superior weapons like the bow and arrows. The eight incarnation of Lord Vishnu is Lord Balarama. He is portrayed with the plough – the beginning of full-fledged cultivation. Human civilization has developed agriculture and is no longer depended on meat and forest for food. The beginning of agrarian economy. The ninth incarnation of Lord Vishnu is Krishna. He represents the advancing human civilization. He is associated with cows, the beginning of domestication of animals and development of economy, which continues to the present day. The tenth incarnation of Lord Vishnu is Kalki and is yet to arrive. He is believed to ride on a swift horse Devadatha and destroy the world. A clear indication that human beings will bring an end to life on earth. The numerous natural calamities created by human beings and the numerous nuclear weapons stored illustrates this.
TEN INCARNATIONS OF VISHNU

1. Matsya or fish (First life form evolved under water; a vertebrate).
2. Kurma or turtle (An amphibious creature).
3. Varah or boar (complete land animal).
4. Narsimha (half human and half lion).
5. Vamana (pigmy-size human).
6. Parasuram (forest dweller who developed axe as his first weapon).
7. Ram (Civilized human with superior weapon like bow and arrow).
8. Balaram (Portrayed with plough the beginning of cultivation and agriculture).
10. Kalki (Yet to arrive, rides on swift horse Devadatha in a mood of destroying the earth; clearly indicating that human beings will bring an end to life on earth through natural calamities – global warming – and nuclear weapons).
After establishing the Narayana and offering reverence to the various gods and goddesses, offer the following five things to Narayana. With each offering take the name of Narayan: water, rice, incense, lamp, raisin and sugar candy (misri). As cooked rice is not available in daily puja, offering of cheera (flat dry rice) can be done instead.

**Five offerings to Narayana**

पंचपोषारे पूजा

*Panchapochareypuja*

Make offering of five things (minimum):

एतत् पाद्यम ॐ नमः नारायणाय नमः

*Etat padyam* (water) *Om Namah Narayanaya namah*

*I am offering this water to wash your feet, Oh Narayana*

Similarly repeat for *argham* (rice), *dhupam* (incense), *deepam* (lamp), *falam* (fruit, like raisin), *mistanyam* (sweet candy or misri) and *annam* (flat rice in place of cooked rice), *achmanium* (glass of drinking water) and *punarachmanium* (second glass of drinking water).

**Special offering of Tulsi**

Offer Tulsi three times and place on the top of the Saligram Sheela, uttering the following mantra

ॐ नमः वहुरुपाय विष्णुवेय परमत्मने शाहा

*Om namastey vahurupaya Vishnabey parmatmaney swaha* ||

*I bow to Lord Vishnu with many forms bearing divine personification.*

**Prostration**

Pay reverence with folded hand placed on the heart:

ॐ नमः भक्त्यं देवम गौ-ब्राह्मण-विजयं च।

*Japakdya prakrtaa goudibhava namo namah.*
Om namo Brahmanya devaya go brahmanaya hitaya cha,
Jagadhitaya Shri Krishnaya Govindaya namo namah

I offer my respectful obeisance to the Supreme Lord,
who is the well-wisher of the cows and the Brahmanas,
as well as all living entities in general.
I offer my obeisance to the Lord of the Universe,
known as Krisna and Govinda.

ও তৈলোক্যপূজিত শ্রীমন সদা বিজয়বর্ধন।
শান্তি কুরু গদাপানে নারায়ণ নমঃতু তে।।

Om trailokya-pujitah Sriman sadaa Vijaya-vardhana,
Shaanti kuru gadapaney, Narayana namahastu tey.

You are worshipped in all the three worlds –
Underworld, earth and heaven.
You always bring victory to us, You shower peace,
Oh the holder of mace, I bow to you Oh Narayana.

ESTABLISHMENT OF HOLY PITCHER

calash sthapan

Kalasha sthapan

Holy Pitcher and Five Great Elements of Life

The pancha mahabhuta, or "five great elements" are:
Tej (energy), Ap (water), kshiti (earth), Marut (air),
Vyom (cosmos). Hindus believe that all of creation,
including the human body, is made up of these five
essential elements and that upon death, the human body
dissolves into these five elements of nature, thereby
balancing the cycle of nature. Life depends on these five
great elements and in the same way that we rely on God and His blessing.

The Kalash (কলশ, holy pitcher) represents all the aforesaid five
elements where the leaves are the captured energy from the sun, water
is filled inside the pitcher, and earth is kept under the pitcher. The air
and cosmos naturally surround the pitcher. The following hymn exemplifies the Hindu concept of creation. It is chanted as the holy pitcher is established.

**Hiranyagarbha** (হিরণ্যগর্ভ) literally means the 'golden womb' or 'golden egg', poetically rendered 'universal germ'. It is the source of the creation of the Universe or the manifested cosmos in Indian philosophy. It is mentioned in Rigveda (RV 10) and known as the **'Hiranyagarbha sukta'**. It declares that God manifested Himself in the beginning as the Creator of the Universe, encompassing all things, including everything within Himself, the collective totality, as it were, of the whole of creation, animating it as the Supreme Intelligence.

**Placement**

**Kalashathapan**

Hold the neck of the pitcher with both hands and chant:

**Hiranyagarbhabh samabartatagrey bhutasya jatah patireka aseeta |
Sadachar prithibim dhyamuteymam
kashmai devaya habisha vidhema ||**

In the beginning was the Divinity in his splendor,
manifested as the sole Lord of land,
Skies, water, space and that beneath and
He upheld the earth and the heavens.  
Who is the deity we shall worship with our offerings?

**Prayer to Holy Pitcher**

**Prarthana**

Fold your hands and pray to the holy pitcher:
Kalashashya mukhey Vishnu kanthey Rudra samasrita
Muley tatra sthito Brahma madhey matriganah smrita
Kukshaitu sagarah sarbey Saptadeepa basundhara
Rigvedo atha Jajurvedah Samaveda and Atharba
Ayantu deva pujarthan durita kshayakaraka
Gameyca Yamuney chaiba Godavari Saraswati
Narmadey Sindhu Kaberi jaley asmin sannidhim kuru

At the mouth of the pitcher rests Vishnu, on the neck is the Shiva, at the bottom (root) rests Brahma (the creator), and in the middle circles various mother goddesses. The water represents the ocean at the time of creation of earth when seven islands comprised the land of India, when the learned sages wrote Rigveda, Jajurveda, Samaveda and Atharvaveda. The water of all sacred rivers - Ganges, Yamuna, Godavari, Saraswati, Narmada, Sindhu and Kaveri may merge in this holy pitcher of water and this pitcher is now dedicated to the worship of God.

May all the evil spirits clear off from here.

Establishment

Sthirikaran

Hold the pitcher with both hands and repeat the following mantra:

Om twabatah purubaso bayamindra pranetah
PART 2: Basic Puja Procedures

_Smasi shata-r-Harinam _
_Om stham sthim sthiro bhava _
_Yavat puja karomyaham _

_I bow to Thee for your abundant riches in the name of Vishnu
_I am offering my reverence to the gods to stay with me
_as long I am performing this sacred puja. Stay here firmly._

**Gesture of Reverence**

_রে সরবর্তীহোকে বারি সর্বদেব সমবিত্তম _
_ইমং ষট্টং সমারুজ্য তিণ্ড দেব পরিভ্র সঙ্গ _

_Om sarbatirtha udbhabam bari sarbadeva-samanwetam _
_Imam ghatam samarujhya tishta deva ganaih saha _

_The sacred rivers sanctify this holy water of the pitcher
_with the merger of all Gods and Goddeses into it.
Now I establish this pitcher with the appeal to the Gods and Goddesses
_I plan to worship to rest here with the wards._

**Cordoning the Pitcher**

The sacred pitcher is cordoned by planting four arrowhead sticks
_(কান্ডরোপণ, Kandatropan) on the four corners around the pitcher and
circling a red-colored thread around the sticks (সুত্রবেষ্টন, Sutrabeshtan).

**Planting the Arrow-head Sticks**

_কান্ডরোপণ
Kandaropan_

On the four corners of the sacred pitcher place four sticks (3-5 mm
diameter, 2 ft high) with an arrowhead on the top of each. This is
commonly known as _টীরকাঠি (tirkathi). The arrowhead is made from
dry palm leaves as they are inserted into the split top of the stick,
making the appearance of the three leaved \textit{durba} grass (iconic). If palm leaves are not available, use thin wood pieces or green rough leaves, inserted into the split top of the sticks, with the attempt to make the stick. The \textit{tirkathi} (tirkathi) imitate \textit{durba} grass. The sticks are inserted into the mud balls at the base (imitating earth). One can use foam cups filled with wet dirt. The mantra bears the history of the migration of Aryans into India.

The pitcher, symbolic of the basic elements of life, is encircled by four sticks called \textit{tirkathi} (tirkathi) and a continuous red thread (five rounds). The \textit{tirkathi} and thread appear to signify the interwoven relationship of the family and community with the creation of the basic elements of life.

Put four bamboo sticks on four sides of the pitcher. Hold the sticks in four balls of clay (traditional) or use four foam cups with wet dirt. The sticks are split at the top in order to hold palm leaves (traditional, or use similar stiff leaves available locally). Make a three-prone spearhead with the leaves cut into pieces. This is symbolic of \textit{durba} grass whose tip typically bears three leaves.

Touch the \textit{tirkathi} (tirkathi) and chant:

\begin{quote}
ও কাঙ্কা কাঙ্কা প্ররোহণী পরুষ পরুষস্পরি।
এধোনো দুর্বা প্রতনু সহস্রণ শতেন চ।
\end{quote}

\textit{Om! Kandat kandat prarohanti parushah parushaspari evano durvey pratanu sahasrena shatena cha ||}

\begin{quote}
I am establishing these sticks with arrow-heads (tirkathi), representing the Durba grass that spreads all directions through roots (kandat) at the nodes and stolen (parush) or runnerstalk. I pray for our family to spread out in all directions in hundreds and thousands

\textit{Oh durba (Cynodon dactylon)!}

the way your roots strikes at your nodes ("কাঙ্কা"),

connected by your stolens ("পরুষ"), the same way connect us with thousands of our children and grandchildren spreading out in all directions.
\end{quote}
Prehistoric India in mantra

Brahmanda Purana has described that the prehistoric India was comprised of seven islands which today drifted to its various current locations – Malaysia, Andaman, Lanka and others. They were named as Jambu, Plaksha, Shalmala, Kusha, Krouncha, Shaka and Pushkara. They were surrounded by seven seas. They believed that today’s India was inhabited by sages and people with high spiritual thoughts. Apart from this mythological account, anthropological evidences record that during the Continental Drift, India separated out from the Gondwana Land located in the South Pole into the present position. Geologically, the origin of the Himalayas is the impact of the Indian tectonic plate traveling northward at 15 cm per year towards the Eurasian continent, about 40-50 million years ago. The formation of the Himalayan arc resulted since the lighter rock of the sea-bed of that time was easily uplifted into mountains. An often-cited fact used to illustrate this process is that the summit of Mount Everest is made of marine limestone. In addition, the continuing rise of Himalaya is in support of this theory. The mystery still remains to be resolved as how our forefathers conjectured the things happened before even the human race appeared on this earth?

Circling of Thread
সুত্রাবেষ্টন
Shutrabeshtan

The continuous red thread, circled around the tirkathi, encircling the sanctified pitcher, is the icon of the interwoven relationship of the family and community with the essence of life. Clockwise circle the sticks (tekathi), with a red thread, five or seven times. Loop the thread on each stick. Chant while tying the thread:
**Historical significance of cordoning holy pitcher:**

The doob grass or *Cynodon dactylon* is a creeper grass highly priced in India. It practically grows anywhere under a wide variety of climates and soils. It spreads quickly with the availability of water, extending its creeping stems, called “stolons” that spread in all directions. (Note: a stolon is a shoot that bends to the ground or that grows horizontally above the ground and produces roots and shoots at the nodes). Hence it is also referred as “runners”.

When the Aryans came, they wanted to spread out in India like the doob grass. The nodes with roots and shoots they called, “কান্দা” (kanda) and the extending stem between the nodes, or stolon, they called “পরুষ” (parush). So, the arrow-head sticks, planted around the holy pitcher, are compared with the doob grass with three pointing leaves (the arrow head) that is held on mud balls (earth). The thread is the stolon or the family joined together by holding to each other and circles around the holy pitcher (emblem of God).

*Om sutramanam prithivim dyamanihasam susharmanam-aditim supraneetim, Dwaivism navam svariitra-sanagam-sravantee-maruhema svantaye*  
This auspicious security thread is long, holy, prosperous, immortal, divine and firm. It is like a boat that will lead us to the heaven.
Removal of Hurdles
বিশ্রামপ্রদ
_Bighnapasaran_

Various obstacles can interrupt Puja. So the devotee prays to God for remove those obstacles that may come during the puj a process. This is done through sound and action.

Throw a flower in the offering plate with the following sound.

çe
_Oing_

Then circle the palm of your right hand around the left palm three times and then strike the left palm with two fingers (middle and pointing fingers) of your right hand.

अख्रযण चक्त
_Astrya phat_

Offering to invisible spirits
মাষভক্তব্রতা
_Mashabdhakta bali_

Special offerings are made to all invisible spirits. It is believed that invisible spirits, previously occupied the place of worship, need to be satisfied before you intrude in their domain. Show five welcome _mudras_ as described before (see appendix).

ও ভূতাদের ইহাগচ্ছতি, ইহাগচ্ছতি, ইহ তিষ্ঠতি, ইহ তিষ্ঠতি, ইহ সন্নিদ্ধতি ইহ সন্নিদ্ধতি
অর্থনিধানৎ কৃত্তিৎ, মম পুজম গৃহন।

_Om Bhutaday a i ha gachchhata, i ha gachchhata,
Iha tishthata, Iha tishthata, Iha sanniruddha, i ha sannirudhyadhvam,
Atradhisthanam kuru, mama pujam grihna ||_

Oh the spirits come, establish here, come close and stay close to me, rest here and accept my offerings.

57
Take a flower (preferably red) and place it into the small container with a spoonful of yogurt, rice and mashkalai (black lentil). This is called mashabhakta bali (মাশভা ক্টা বলি).

রঃ এতজ্ঞ মাশভাক্তবলিতে নামঃ।
এতে গণ্ধপূষ্প ও মাশভাক্তবলিতে নামঃ।
এতে গণ্ধপূষ্প ও এতদর্পণে ও বিষয়ে নামঃ।
এম মাশভাক্তবলিতে ও কেরপালসুত্তরণেতে নামঃ।
Bam etashmai mashabhaktabalaye namah!
Etey gandhapushpey! Om mashabhaktabalaye namah!
Etey gandharpushe etadhapatayeh Om Vishnabey namah!
Esha mashabhakta balih Khetrapaladibhutaganebhio namah ||
Reverence to the mashabhaktabali (the container with yogurt, mashEntrancekalai and red flower dipped in sandalwood) as I offer the scented flower to the name of Vishnu I offer this holy lentil pot to Khetrapal and other invisible spirits.

Looking up, with folded hands, pray to the spirits and at the end of the prayer touch the mashabhakata bali container, push it forward and chant the following mantra.

ও ভূতপ্রেত পিষ্টাচো দনবা রাক্ষসচৈব যে।
শাতিং কুর্কুটু তে সর্঵ে ইহম গৃহীত মদ্বলিম।
Om bhutapreta pishachascha danava rakshasach jey |
Shantim kurbantu tey sarbey imam grihatu madbalim ||
I am making this offering to all the spirits living in this place And allow me to pray in peace.

Removal of Evil Spirits
ভূতাপসারণ
Bhuttoapasaran

Pick some white mustard seeds with your fingers and sprinkle them around the worship area while saying the following mantra.

ও অশাস্ত্রুভে ভূত যে ভূত ভূতিঃ সংগ্রহাত। যে ভূত বিভক্তভাবে নশাশু পিষ্টাচয়।
ও বিদ্যালোচ্চ পিষ্টাচো রাক্ষসচ সরীসৃপ। অশাস্ত্রুভে সর্বে চতিকায় তভিতাত।
Om apasarpantu tey bhuta je bhuta bhubi sansthitah
Jey bhuta vijnakartarastey nashyantu Shivagnaya
Om betalascha pishahascha rakshasascha sarisripah
Apasarpantu tey sarbey chandika strena taritah

All the spirits who reside below this earth
who may disturb our peace is guarded off in
the name of Shiva. All the creatures,
may they be ghosts, goblins or reptiles are hereby
driven away from this place in the name of Chandi,
the goddess of evil destruction.

At the end snap your fingers between the thumb and middle finger three
times while circling the hand around the head then hit the ground three
times with your right heel. These jestures symbolize the driving away
the evil spirits from the place of worship. After this act you are
expected to focus on the dedicated prayer that you are about to start.
This initiates granthi bandhan (next section), an act of holding all
thoughts towards divinity.

**Tying the Security Knot**

**Gṛṇṭhi-रक्षन**

Granthibandhan

The thought behind this ritual is to bring the scattered mind into the focus
of devotional thoughts. Tie a knot at the end of the cloth that you are
wearing. Hold the knot and chant:

```
ॐ मणिपर्वता बजरणी महाप्रतिसरे सक्त रक्ष रहं फटः शाहं
```

Om! Manidharibajrani mahaprisarey
raksha raksha hung phat swaha

I am tying this knot like a thunderbolt pulling my scattered mind into
the focus of divinity. I pray the Lord (Mahapratiasar) to protect me by
standing on my mental gate and
prevent the entry of all distracting thoughts.
Worship of the Divinities at Entrance

The house is considered as a temple (Vastudevata, বস্তুদেবতা) guarded by the Gods at the entrance. These gods help in removing the hurdles (Ganesha) or bring good luck and wealth to the family (Lakshmi and Kuber). Hence before the core of the puja, they are worshipped.

Take two flowers dipped them in sandalwood paste and offer it to the Gods of entrance. Ask a family member to take the flower to the entrance door and leave it on the step. The entrance is usually decorated with water pots, marked with vermillion powder and contains banana sapling or any green foliage. Some families decorate the floor as well which is symbolic to invitation of divinity.

Etey gandhapushpey om Dwardevatabhyo namah
I offer my scented flower to the guardians of the entrance.

Various Gods are called and worshipped at the entrance of the puja place with the request to sanctify the place of worship. The calling of the Gods is done through five gestures, called mudras that welcomes them and ask them to stay with the devotee during the ceremony.
Five welcome mudras

Show the five hand gestures where indicated. The mudras are like expressing the feeling with hand gestures, as it is done in case of dancing.

After the meditation take a flower, with a touch of sandalwood paste, and place it at the feet of the Goddess Saraswati, captured in your mental image and then put it on the holy pitcher.

Oh the Gods at the entrance, come, come, rest here, rest here, stay close and closer tome, establish here and accept my offerings. I offer my scented flowers to Ganesh along with his primordial sound (গান, reverence to Mahalakshmi, Saraswati, remover of obstacles, lord of the directions with their primordial sound Om (ॐ), and
to the sacred rivers Ganges with the primordial sound (ॐ) and Yamuna with the primordial sound (ॐ), and Yamuna with the primordial sound (ॐ).

Worship of the House God
বাস্তু পূজা
Vastu puja

एते गंधु पूजे ओं स्वर्ग सन्धे नमः, एते गंधु पूजे ओं वास्तुपुरुषयाः नमः
Etay gandhapushpey Om Brahma nanah,
Etay gandhapushpey Om Vastupurushaya nanah.
I offer my reverence to Brahma, the Supreme Lord,
And to the God of my home.

SANCTIFICATION OF ENVIRONMENT AND BODY

Sanctification of floor

Throw little water on the floor with the following chant.

ॐ रक्षा रक्षा हुं हुं फट स्वहाः
Om raksha raksha hum hum phat swaha
May the spirits protect me from all the hurdles

Then touch the floor in front and chant:

ॐ पवित्रबज्रभुमय हुं हुं फट स्वहाः
Om pabitra bajarabhumey hum hum phat swaha
Allow me to sit on sanctified firm floor devoid of all evils.

Sanctification of Platform

বেদি শোধন
Vedi shodhan

Put a flower on the platform and pray with folded hands.
PART 2: Basic Puja Procedures

Sanctification of Covering (canopy)
বিতান শোধন
Bitan sodhan

Look at the ceiling (or top canopy) and place a flower in the offering plate and then say with folded hands.

ও উর্দু উঘুনা উত্তে, তিঠা দেবো ন সবিতা।
उर्द्धो उशं उत्ते, तिठ्ठ देहो न सविता।
Urddho ushuna utaye, tishtha debo na Sabita
Oh the sacred canopy, like the sun in the sky,
you protect us and our food.
Let your invitation goes to the wise men
to chant mantras under your shelter.

Sanctification of Hands
করাশুধি
Karasudhi

Purify your hand by crushing a flower between the palms and throw the crushed flower on your left. Circle your right palm over the left palm and make the phat sound.

ফট
Phat
May the evil elements leave

63
**Dedicating the Body**

यास

*Nyas*

Here the devotee dedicate all his body organs to the prayer of the Lord.

**Dedication of Body Organs (अन्यास)**

I am offering my different organs – heart, head, apex of my hair (shikha), arms, eyes, and my hands to Thy prayer.

Touch the organ with the joint fingers of right arm and chant pointing the organ:

Heart: ॐ गं ह्रिदया नमः. *Om Gam hridaya namah*

Head: ॐ गं शिरसे ब्वाहाः. *Om Geem shirasey swaaha*

Hair on the tip of the head: ॐ गं शिखावेय बशात. *Om gumg shikhawai bashat*

Cross over two hands: ॐ गंग कबचाय हुः. *Om gaing kabachaya hum*

Two eyes (one at a time): ॐ गंग नेत्रत्रया बाउशाः. *Om goung netrtraya boushat*

Circle the right palm around the left palm and then strike in the middle of the left palm with the ring finger and middle finger (joined):

ॐ गंग करतल प्रिष्ठाभयम अस्त्रया फात।

*Om gah karatala prishthabhyam astraya phat*

Thus I dedicate myself to Thee.

Touch the heart (*Gam hridaya namah*), the head (*ging sirashey swaaha*), the shikha - long bunch of hair extended in the middle of the head – for Brahmins – (*gam shikhayai bashat*), two eyes (left first and then right), and finally, two arms - crossing hands - (*gaing kabachaya hum*), then touch the eyes (*goung netretraya baushat*), finally circle around the left palm with the right palm and hit the center of the left palm with two of the right fingers (joined) – middle and pointing fingers and simultaneously uttering the mantra.
Dedication the Fingers

**Karanyas**

Dedicate the thumb (अमुष्ठ) by pressing the index finger or fore finger on to the thumb:

\\
\textit{Om sam amushthabyam namah}
\textit{I am dedicating my thumb to The Divine}

Then touch the thumb with the index finger or fore finger (ठजनि) and dedicate it by chanting the following mantra:

\\
\textit{Om sim tarjanibham swaaha}
\textit{I am dedicating my fore finger (index finger) to The Divine}

Then move the thumb to the middle finger (मध्यम) and dedicate it by the mantra:

\\
\textit{Om Sung madhyamambhyam bashat}
\textit{I am dedicating my middle finger to The Divine}

Finally move the thumb to the ring finger (अनामिका) and edicate the ring finger:
Om saing anamikabhyam hung
I am dedicating my ring finger to The Divine

Finally, touch the little finger (কনিষ্ঠ) with your thumb and chant:

Om saung kanishthabhyam baushat
I am dedicating my little finger to The Divine

Finally circle the right palm around the left palm which is held straight in front of the devotee and then strikes the center of the left palm with the two fingers (joined pointing finger and middle finger) and utter the “whoosh” sound:

Om sah karatala prishthavyam ashtray phat
Allow this primordial sound Sah
to work as a weapon to remove all the evil spirits.

Sanctification of Flowers

Pushpasuddhi

The flower to be offered to the Goddess needs to be consecrated. Lovingly touch them with both hands and chant after removing the evils:

Om pushpaketu rajahartey shataya samyak sambandhaya hram
These bright beautiful flowers in plenty collected for the sacred offering
Sprinkle little water on the flowers kept for the puja and sanctify it with the following mantra

ও পুষ্পে পুষ্পে মহাপুষ্পে সুপুষ্পে পুষ্পসম্ভবে।
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
Puṣṭa-paramāṇa, puṣṭa-paramāṇa,
(On the left) Om guruvyo namah | Om parama guruvyo namah | Om parapara guruvyo namah |
(On the right) Om Ganeshaya namah |
Urdhey Brahmaney namah

(At the center) Om Saraswatwai namah (or God in presence) ||

On the left I am offering my reverence to my teacher, and the teacher of highest knowledge. On the right is the Ganesh (the obstacle remover), and at the center is goddess Saraswati.

On the left I pay my reverence to my guru, great guru and supreme guru. On the right is Shri Ganesh (the remover of all obstacles).
Above is the Almighty.
In the front is the Saraswati (the deity on the platform);
I pray for their blessing and protection.

WORSHIP OF GODS OF INVOCATION

Lord Ganesh

Shri Ganesh is always worshipped before any other puja. So, after establishing Narayana, as a daily prayer ritual, Shri Ganesh is worshiped.

Meditation

Dhyan

Om! kharbam sthula-tanum gajendra-badanam
PART 2: Basic Puja Procedures

lambodaram sundaram,
Prasyandanna mada gandhalubda madhupa-vyalola gandasthalam.
Dantaaghaata – bidaarita-ari-rudhiraih sindura-shobhaakaram,
Bandey shailasutaa-sutam Ganapatim siddhipradam kamadam.
Oh Ganesh, with a short fat-body, having the face of an elephant
with beautiful long trunk, a happy face, that emits the sweet fragrance
of honey and attracts the honey bee; whose tusks are covered with the
blood of the enemies that beautifies his complexion.
I am offering my prayers, Oh the son of Parvati
(Shailasuta, daughter of mountain king Himavat),
Oh the lord of all beings (Ganapati), bless me success in my job.

Offering

Offer any (or all) of the five following things: Padya, argha, modak,
dhup, deep, achmania, punarachmania.

Mantra: Etat padyam om shri Ganeshaya namah etc.
I am placing this water with humility to wash your feet,
Oh Lord Ganesh

Prostration

Ekadantam mahakayam lambodara gajananam |
Vignanasha karam devam herambam pranamamyaham ||
With one tusk, big in size, long trunk, and elephant face |
Remove all the hurdles, Oh the heroic Lord (Ganesh), I bow to you ||
Worship of Lakshmi (Goddess of wealth)

Lakshmi puja

Lakshmi is the sister of Saraswati and wife of Narayana (Vishnu). Hence her special worship is done along with Goddess Saraswati.

Meditation

Dhyan

As I meditate you in the image of holding a long rosary bead, a beautiful wife (bharjya), sitting on lotus, with a pleasant face like moon, the Supreme mother of the three worlds, beautifully decorated with a variety of golden jewelries, and raising your lotus-shaped right arm as a lotus, you are offering blessing to all of us.

Offerings

Pancha upacharey puja

Any five things (पंच उपचारे) as listed below, starting with water to wash the feet (पादाम)

Om! Etat padyam Shrim Lakshma namaha
Here I offer the water to wash your feet Oh Lakshmi.

Esha argham (rice)
PART 2: Basic Puja Procedures

Esha dhupam (incense),
Esha deepam (lamp)
Etad naivedyam
(decorated plates of fruits-sweets-wet rice etc)

Prostration

Pranam

Om! The wife of the Lord of the Universe (Vishnu or Narayana),
beautiful as the lotus, is dwelling in the house of lotuses of good
fortune. You are always looking after us,
Oh goddess Mahalakshmi, I am prostrating before you.

WORSHIP OF BASIC FIVE GODS

Panchadevata

All Hindu puja rituals involve the worship of other Gods and
Godesses before focusing on the principle deity. These Gods and
Godesses regulate our lives in many ways. These include the group of
five gods or Panchadevata (পঞ্চদেবতা), the Guardians of the directions
(Dashadikpal) and the nine planets (Navagraha) are revered and so
also Vishnu’s various incarnations (Dashavatara) which connect to our
process of biological evolution

The group of five Gods (one is Goddess) are: Ganesh, Vishnu, Shiva,
Surya and Jagadhatri (Parvati). They are worshipped in three steps –
dhyan, offering and pranam. You may not repeat the worship of those Gods whom you have already worshipped.

**Ganesh**

Ganesh is the God of wisdom and worshipped at the beginning. He removes all obstructions.

**Meditation**


dhyan

*Dhyan*

Take a flower on your left palm. Hold it with the mudra for meditation (kurma). Imagine Ganesh in your mental screen, chant the mantra and place the place the flower on the holy pitcher, imagining that you are putting the flower on His feet.

```
Om kharba sthula tanum gajendrabadanam lambodaram sundaram |
Prasanna ananda gandhalubda madhupa balyola gandastalam |
Danta aghata bidari arirudhirai sindur shobhakaram |
Vandey shailasuta sutam Ganapati siddhipradam kamadam |
Esha sachandana pushpanjali namah Ganeshaya namah ||
```

Oh the short structured, heavy-bodied, elephant-headed beautiful God, with long trunk and happy face emitting fragrance, who has strong cheek and whose task pierced open the enemy's body and dripping blood, making it beautifully red. May I worship him, the son of the mountain’s daughter (Parvati, daughter of Hemabat), the leader of the people, may my wish be fulfilled.
Offerings

Panchaupacarey puja

Offer water to wash the feet of the Lord on the offering plate:

এতে গঙ্গা পুঞ্জে ও নমঃ গণেশায় নমঃ।

Etey gandhapushpey Om namah Ganeshaya namah
I am offering my flower with reference to Lord Ganesh

Prostration

प्रणाम
Pranam

With folded hands seek His blessings:

একদণ্ড মহাকায় লম্বোদর গজাননঃ।

Ekadanta mahakayam lambodara gajananam

With one tusk, big in size, with long trunk, with elephant face |
Remove all the hurdles, Oh the heroic Lord, I bow to you ||

As the worships of Ganesh and Vishnu have already been done before, we present here the worships of Shiva, Surya and Jagadhatri.

Vishnu

Meditation

Dhyan

ও যেহেতু সদা সন্তিমত্তল মধববতী নারায়ণ সরসিজনার সমর্পিত কেৰুৰাদণ।

Om dhayah sada savitrimandal madhyabarti Narayana Sarasijasanah sannibishta keyurban kanka kundalavan
Kiritihari Hiranmaya bapur dhritah shankhachakrah

I am meditating on Narayana the God
who is in the center of the solar system.
Seated on a lotus, wearing armlets and alligator-shaped earrings,
whose body is golden and holding
conch and disc (chakra) in His hands.

Offerings

Puja

This is explained earlier. Use the following mantra for offering each of
the five things.

Etet gandhapushpey Om namah Vishnabey namah
I am offering my flower with obeisance to Lord Vishnu

Prostration

Pranam

Om namah Brahmanya devaya go Brahmana-hitayacha
Jagadhitaya Shri Krishnaya Govindaya namo namah
I bow to that Lord Almighty (Brahman)
the well wisher of learned (Brahman) and bestower (cow).
The keeper of the Universe,
Oh the Lord Krishna Oh the Govinda I prostrate to you repeatedly.

Shiva

Meditation

Dhyan
Om dhyayen-nityam Mahesham rajatagirinibham
Charuchandrabatamsam
Ratnakalpojvalagam parashu-mriga-bara-abheeti-
hastam prasannam |
Padmaasinam samantaat stutam-amaraganaih-
byaaghrakrittim basaanam
Viswadyam viswabejjamnikhila-bhayaharam
panchavaktram trinetram ||

Meditate constantly on the Mighty Lord Shiva,
whose body is as white as silver mountain,
who wears the beautiful crescent moon as a decoration, whose limbs
are effulgent adorned with gems, who with his four hands holding axe
and antelope and showering boons and protections, who is always
content, who is seated on a lotus,
and praised by the gods surrounding Him from,
who wears the skin of a tiger,
Who is the best in the Universe, which He created,
the destroyer of all fears, and vision with five faces and three eyes.

Offerings a flower and belpata, if available

Etey gandhapushpey Om namah Shivaya namah
I make my offering of flower to Lord Shiva

Prostration

Namah shivaya shantaya karana traya hetabey |
Nivedayami chatmanam twam gati parameshwara ||
Obeisance to Lord Shiva! He is calm, the source of the three basic qualities (guna) of life – truth/knowledge (sattva), greed/passion (raja and, dark/ignorance (tama),
I am submitting to you Oh Lord, I am having no other choice.

Surya (Sun)

Meditation

Dhyan

Sitting on red lotus with ocean of unlimited qualities, Oh the illuminating Sun God, you are the lord of the whole world.
With one hand you are holding lotus and with another, offering boons of fearlessness.
Your physical appearance is radiant like ruby and you have three eyes.
I worship you.

Offering

Puja

Offer a flower dipped in red sandalwood:

Etey gandha pushpey namah Suryaya namah
Hail to the Sun God Surya

Then offer a little rice on the holy pitcher or on the offering plate:
Om Ehi Surya sahasramsho tejaraśey jagatpatey
Anukampaya mam bhaktam grihanarγham divakaram
Esha argham namah Suryaya namah
Oh Sun, whose millions of rays enlightens this earth
Accept the offering from this humble devotee of yours
Oh the day maker, Oh the Sun, here is my offering to you with humility.

**Prostration**
Pranam
Pray with folded hands, imagining the rising sun in front of you:

Om jaba kushma sankasham kashyapeyam mahadyutim
Dhyantarim sarbapapagna pranatoshmi divakaram
Like the jaba flower (red colored Shoe flower), the son of Kashyap,
with brilliant illumination, destroyer of darkness, remover of all sins
(ignorance), I bow to you the day-maker.

**Durga**
Dhyan

Om Kala-abhrabham katakshair-arikula-bhayadaam
mauli-baddheyndurekham shankham chakram kripanam
trishikhamapi karaih-rudwahantim trinetram

**Meditation**
Dhyan
Sinhaskandha-adoruddham
Tribhuban-makhilam tejasapurayantim
dhyaayed Durgam Jayakhyam tridasha-paribritam
sebitam siddhikamaih

One should meditate on Mother Durga whose another name is Jaya, who has the complexion of deep dark cloud, whose mere glance can arouse fears to the enemies, tightly fastened in her crown is the shining crescent moon, who has three eyes, who is holding conch, disc, sword, and three-pointed weapon (trident) in her hands, Who is riding on a lion, who is energizing all three worlds with her brilliant light, who is always surrounded by gods, she is served by those who want success.

Offerings

Puja

Etay gandhapushpey Hring Om Durgawai namah
In the spirit of divinity (Hring, the primordial sound for Durga)
I am offering this scented flower to you Oh Goddess Durga.

Prostration

Pranam

Om sarvamangala mangalye Shivey sarbartha sadhikey
Smaraney trambhakey Gouri Narayani Namastutey
Oh the wife of Shiva, you are the benevolent peace giver of us, fulfills of our wishes, I am seeking your protection Oh the three-eyed fair Goddess of wealth (Narayani). I offer my obeisance to you.
WORSHIP OF NINE PLANETS

Nabagraha

Naba is nine and graha is cosmic influencer of the living being on this earth (Bhumidevi). These include five planets – Mamala (Mars), Budha (Mercury), Brahaspati (Jupiter), Sukra (Venus), Sani (Saturn); Sun (Aditya, Rabi), Moon (som), as well as Moon’s orbital positions in the sky – Rahu (north or ascending lunar node) and Ketu (south or descending lunar node).

Note: Lunar nodes are the orbital nodes of the moon, that is, the points where the orbit of the moon crosses the ecliptic. The ascending node is where the moon crosses to the north of the ecliptic. The descending node is where it crosses to the south. Eclipses occur only near the lunar nodes.

The mantra “Adityadi (Aditya or sun and others) Navagrahe ybhya namah” takes care of all the nine planets. Worship of individual members of Nabagraha is done during Havan, described later.

Make five offerings in the name of the nine planets:

Esha Gandhah Om Adityadi Nabagraheybhya namah

Etat pushpam Om Adityadi Nabagraheybhya namah

Esha dhup Om Adityadi Nabagraheybhya namah

Esha dwipah Om Adityadi Nabagraheybhya namah
Etat naivedyam Om Adityadi Nabagraheybhyo namah

(Nota: separate naivedya with five mounds of rice and a small fruit on each mound makes the nabagraha-naivedya).

Prayer for the Guardians of Directions

Dasdikpal

Das means ten, dik is direction and pal is protection. Hence Dasdikpal means the protector of ten directions. The deities connected to the protection of the ten directions of this earth are: Indra (east), Agni (south-east), Yama (south), Nairiti (south-west), Varun west), Vayu (north-west), Kuber (north), Isha (north-east), Brahma (upward), Anant (downward). Show your respect by offering a little water or flower or rice in the name of each deity.

Etay gandhapushpey Om Dashadikapalebhyo namah

Reverence to the ten directional gods

Ten Incarnations of Vishnu

Dashavatar

Ten incarnations (avatar) of Vishnu, which relate to the evolution of human, are listed here: Matsavatar, Kurmavatar, Barahavatar, Narsinghavatar, Vamanavatar, Parashuram, Rama, Krishna, Buddha, Kalki. Pay your obeisance by offering a sandalwood-dipped flower to the ten incarnations of Lord Vishnu.

Etay gandhapushpey Om Dashavatarebhyo namah

Reverence to the ten incarnations of Vishnu
Reverence To Our Divine Background

Pay obeisance to the Gods that hold the base of our lives (peetha). With reverence offer flowers, dipped in sandalwood, in the name of different Gods listed here:

एते गंध पुष्पे।
Etay gandhapushpey
I am offering this scented flower in the name of:

ओ पीठसनाय नमः।
Om pithasanaya namah
The gods of the background.

ओ आधारशक्तये नमः।
Om adharashaktaye namah
The holderof the universe.

ओ प्रकृत्या नमः।
Om prakritwai namah
The nature.

ओ अनंतये नमः।
Om anantaya namah
The endless universe.

ओ पृथिब्ये नमः।
Om prithibai namah
The earth.

ओ कीरसमुद्रये नमः।
Om kirasamudraya namah
Ocean of milk.

ओ वदेशीपाय नमः।
Om swetadwipaya namah | White island.

ॐ मनिमंडपयाय नमः।
Om manimandapaya namah | Hall on crystals.

ॐ कल्पब्रिक्षयाय नमः।
Om kalpabrikshaya namah | The dream.

ॐ मनिवेदिकायाय नमः।
Om manivedikayai namah | Platform with jewels.

ॐ रत्नसिंहसनाय नमः।
Om ratnasinhasanaya namah | Seat with gems.

ॐ अग्न्यादिकोनस्त्वष्ठयाय नमः।
Om agnyadikonachatushtaye namah | Agni and other Gods of four directions.

ॐ धर्मयाय नमः।
Om dharmaya namah | The truth.

ॐ गृहसानाय नमः।
Om kamalasanaya namah | The goddess of wealth (Lakshmi), our provider.

I am offering my reverence to the Gods in the background
in order to receive their blessing:
The base of our existence, the infinite, the nature, the cosmos, the earth,
the ocean, the island from where we evolved,
the crystal hall of the universe, the wishing tree (aspirations),
the jeweled stage of our activities, the honored throne of precious stones, the directional gods, righteous thoughts, and the auspicious seat.
PART 3

PRINCIPLE SARASWATI WORSHIP

Pradhan Saraswati puja
**Auspicious beginning**  
**Sakhyamantra**

With Folded hand in front of your chest chant:

> Ṣaṁyuktam  
>  
>  
>  
>  
>  
> Om Sarjuo somo Yahmah kalah sandhaye bhutanyaha kshapa|  
Pabano dikpatir-bhumi-akasham khachara mara.  
Bhramam shasanomasthaya kalpadhwamiha sannidhim.  
Om tatsot.  
Om ayamarambha shubhaya bhawatu.  

*The spirits in all the planets, all the visible and invisible  
Gods and Goddesses, wherever they are,  
no matter what time it is now  
I pray everybody’s presence here.  
Let the holy occasion begin.*

**Seeking Divine Blessing**  
**Swastisukha**

Take rice in your hand and offer it to the names of various Gods controlling the environment, appealing to them to bring success in the completion of your puja offering. While chanting the matra throw the rice three times in the offering plate, coinciding with the last mantra *(Om swasti)*.
In the following rituals you consecrate the water that you are going to offer and the seat and earth on which you are sitting.

**Calling for sacred rivers**

\textit{\text{রীতিবাহন}}

\textit{Tirtha-bahan}

Dip your right hand index finger into the water of the sanctified water vessel (\textit{kosha}) and chant the following mantras for its sanctification.

\textit{ও পাঙ্কে চ যমুনে চেং, গোদাবরি সরবতি, নর্মদে নিষু কাবেরি, জলে অস্পু সমিদিন কুরু।}

\textit{Om Gamey cha Yamunaye chaiba Godabori Sarawati, Narmadaye, Sindnu, Kabaeri jalaye asmin sannidhim kuru.}

Let all the holy rivers (seven) – Ganga, Jamuna, Godavari, Saraswati, Narmada, Sindhu, and Kaberi, merge into this water to sanctify.
Sanctification of seat

Holding a flower with your right hand thumb, index and middle finger and touch your seat (asan) with the flower and chant this mantra.

এতে গঙ্গপুট্টে হ্রদং আরাণশত্রু কমালসানায় নমঃ।
আসনমংস্যা মেশ্রুপুট দুর্কলম বসঃ কুর্মো দেবতা, আসনোপবেশন বিনিযোগঃ।

Eteye gandhapushpey hring adharshaktaye
kamalasanaya namaha |
Asana-mantrasya Merupristha rishi suthalam chhandah
kurmo devata, ashana upabayshaney viniyogaha ||

With this flower I pay my reverence
to the Universe that holds this seat of mine.
This mantra of sanctification of seat was sung in sutalam chanda
by sage Merupriytha and dedicated to the Kurma Devata who is
holding this earth. May this seat be sanctified.

Now touch the ground and chant:

ও পৃথিবীরা পৃথিবী লোকো, দেবি ভুঃ বিশ্বুমু ভুঃ ।
ফুঙ্ঙ ধরায় মায় লিঙ্গায় ফুঙ্ঙ চাসনম ॥

Om! Prithwitaya dhrita loka, debi twam Vishuna drittha |
tancha dharaya mam nityam pabiram kuru chasanam ||

Oh Goddess Earth, you are holding this world of ours.
You are held by Vishnu.

Hold me securely and sanctify my seat for my worship.

Basic Oblation to the Cosmos

On the floor, in front of you, make a watermark with your middle finger after dipping it in the water-vessel (kosha) kept in front of you. First
draw a circle. Then within the circle draw a triamle. Place the kosha on the water mark. Then place a sandalwood-dipped flower, little durba or kush (dry grass) and a little rice on the edge of the kosha while chanting these mantras.

_Etey gandhapushpey_

_Om adharashaktaye_ (foundation of universe) _namaha_,

_Om Kurmaya_ (turtle, holder of the earth) _namaha_,

_Om Anantaya_ (universe) _namaha_, _Om Prithivyai namaha_,

_Etey gandhapushpey_

_Om arksamandalaya_ (disc of the sun)

dwadasha kalatmaney namah |

_Om mam banhi_ (Vishnu) _mandalaya dasha kalatmaney namah |

_Om um Soma_ (moon) _mandalaya shorasha kalatmaney namah ||

_I pay my reverence by offering this flower to the foundation of this Universe, to the divine turtle holding this earth, to the infinite cosmos, to the earth, to the sun in all its twenty folds, to Lord Vishnu in His ten-folds avatars. to the moon in all its sixteen phases._

 Seeking Good wishes

Swastivachan

Seeking the blessings of various Gods for the successful completion of the prayers.

Take the kushi and put in that – little water, haritaki, flower, touch of sandalwood paste, durba (or kush) and little rice. Hold it between two palms and chant the mantra:

_ও কর্তৃবোধস্মিন গণেশাদি-নানানেবতাপুত্রন, লেন্দনী-মস্তাঙ্গার সহিত_
PART 3: Principle Saraswati Puja

With the blessing of the Almighty,
I have resolved to perform pujas for Lord Ganesh
and other gods, and to Goddess Saraswati,
with her inkpot and pen, and in doing so,
I seek the blessing from the assembly to make this day be auspicious.

Response of the Assembly

Priest and others will throw rice towards the holy pitcher in response to
the wish of the devotee:

We pray God to bless you. May it all be auspicious.

As part of my solemn duty I would perform the puja of Ganesh and
other Gods and Goddess Saraswati, with her pen and ink, Oh the
assemblage, allow me to seek your blessing

Response

We bless you, we bless you, we bless you.
Om kartebeysmin Ganeshadi nanadevata puja purbaka
Lekhani mashyadhar sahita Sri Saraswati pujana karmani
Om rhidhim bhabanto broobantu, Om rhidhim bhabanto brubantu,
As part of my solemn duty I would perform the puja of Ganesh and other
Goddess Saraswati, with her pen and ink, Oh the assemblage, allow me to
seek your blessing.
Shower you love and good wishes.

Response

Om rhidyatam, Om rhidhyatam, Om rhidhyatam
You have our good wishes.

Divine witness

Before starting we pray for the blessing of the weather gods and spirits
that surrounds us:

Om suriya somo yamah kalah, sandhey bhuta naha khyapa
Pavano dikpatirbhumikha ashram kararamah
Brahmam shasanamasthaya kalpadwamih sañnidhim
Oh the Sun, Moon, Yama,
Time (kal), morning, evening, living entities of the world,
Day, night, wind, Lords of the ten directions, earth, sky,
the flying living creatures, the Gods, by the order of the
Supreme Lord, (Brahma) assemble here to witness my undertakings
Resolution (Solemn vow)

Sankalpa

The mantra declares the goal of the puja after identifying the time, place and the name of the devotee. If the priest is doing the puja, take your name and then the name of the host and at the end say “করিষ্যামি” (which means I am doing for someone else). If the devotee is making the offering himself, take your own name and at the end say, “করিষ্যা” (which means I am doing it)

Take the kushi (spoon) on the left palm. Put a yellow flower (marigold), with a touch of sandalwood paste. Place a little rice inside the spoon and (if available) a haritaki or supari or beetle nut (a dry fruit), symbolizing the fruitfulness of the goal. Then cover the spoon with your right palm and chant:

ॐ नमः सरस्वती नमः
Om namah Saraswatvai namah

Hail to Goddess Saraswati!

Vishnurom tatsat adya Maaghey mashi, makara rashistey, bhaskarey, Shuklapakshey, Panchamam tithou amuka gotra Shri amuka devsharma ______ (name of the host) Shri Saraswati preetikamah Ganeshadi nana devata puja purbaka lekhani masyadhara sahita (* see note)

Shri Saraswati puja karma aham karishey
(or karishyami when done for someone else).

In the name of Lord Vishnu, on this auspicious month of Maagh, at the planetary synchrony of Makara (Capricorn), glowing fortnight of waxing moon (shukla), on the lunar calendar day of
Panchami (fifth day after Amabasya, new moon), I of ____ Gotra (Gotra is the family identity: In Hindu society, the gotra broadly refers to people who are descendants in an unbroken male line from a common male ancestor, which is usually the name of a sage Kashyap, Bharadwaj, Agastha etc.), name ____ born by the grace of God (devasharmana) personally doing this Saraswati puja.

Alternatively, if the priest is called, he says, “I ___ gotra ____ name (priest) doing for the person mentioned before”.

* Note: Add the following when performing public puja, not for an individual:

“সমবেত জনগণস্যা জ্ঞান, বিদ্যা, বুদ্ধি, সত্য, নৃত, শিল্পকলাদি, 
প্রভূত বিদ্যালাভ কামে —”

Samabetah janaganasya gyan, bidya, buddhi, sameet, nritya, 
shilpakaladi prabhuta bidyalabha kamey ----- (continue)

For the general public I am seeking Her blessing for knowledge, education, intelligence, music, dance, arts, with a goal of earning plenty of these creative arts ----

After the completion of the chant, turn over the spoon (kushi) on the offering plate (tamrapatra) and sprinkle some water on the spoon. Use your right hand forefingers to pick up water from the pot container (kosha). Then chant the following mantra seeking His blessing to complete.

**Hymn of Solemn Vow**

Sankalpasukta

This is the prayer, seeking His grace for the successful completion of the worship.

ॐ দেবো দেবেশ্যত পূর্ণম বিভর্য্যাচিম ||
उष্ণ निःकाः युग व वृद्ध मानिषो देवं धर्म ||

*Om devobo dravinodah purnam vivastyasicham*
PART 3: Principle Saraswati Puja

_Udwa sinchadhwa mupa ba prinadhwa madidwo deva ohatey ||
In the spirit of divinity may my goal be successful.
Thus, herewith I am starting with His good wishes._

ও অস্য সঞ্চিতেতার্থসা সিদ্ধিরস্য ।
ও অয়মরম্ভত তভায় তত্তৎ ॥

_Om asya sankalpitarthasya sidhirastu._
_Om ayamarambha shubhaya bhabatu ||
In the spirit of divinity may my goal be successful.
Thus, herewith, I am starting with His good wishes._

**Breath control exercise for Saraswati**

_Breath control excercise for Saraswati_  
Pranayan

_Pranayam_ is described earlier under “daily prayer of the Brahmin (priest) – _Sandhya_.” For those who do not Sandhya (non-Brahmin) should do pranayama at this point.

The meaning of pranayama in Sanskrit is “extension (ayama) of the life or breath (prana). Breath provides the vital energy for all living creatures. In humans, as we can feel, it has three components – inhale, restrain and exhale. We inhale oxygen that enters into complex metabolic processes inside the body and finally the harmful product (carbon dioxide) is thrown out, or exhaled. Control of the breathing process, the subtle invisible force, connects the body with the mind. Meditators believe that body and mind are separate entities and the breath connects them. Thus pranayam can be called as “extension of life force to control one’s mind”. It is heavily recommended before performing the puja.

The breath count is either done by using Om (ॐ) or use the mulmantra like (Owing, ওं) in case of Saraswati and repeat this mantra to keep the count for inhaling, holding and exhaling.
Process

Take the right right thumb and close your right nostril. Inhale air while counting mulmantra (Owing, এং) on your left hand fingers (see Gayatri for the counting process). Make 16 counts for the inhale (পূরক), repeating the japa mulmantra (Owing, এং). In the next step, take the middle finger and the ring finger together to close the left nostril and hold the breath (কূক). Make 64 counts, repeating the japa mulmantra (Owing, এং) while holding your breath. Finally, open your right nostril by lifting the right thumb while continuing to close the left nostril and let the air blow out or exhale (এক্রফ). This time you will count 32 times with japa of mulmantra (Owing, এং). If you are unable to hold the breath for long time, reduce the counts to half (4-16-8).

Seeking support from the sages
ঋষ্যাদিন্যাস
Rishyadinyash

The mantra seeks the blessing from the wise. Take a flower in your hand, chant the mantra and discard it in the offering plate. Then move the collected right hand fingers to the locations mentioned in the mantra for the following chant.

ঋষ্যাদিন্যাস মন্ত্র কৃতস্ত গায়ত্রীয়স্ত গৃহীতঃ গৃহীত সিদ্ধিঃ সিদ্ধিঃ সিদ্ধিঃ সিদ্ধিঃ

Om asya Sri Saraswatimantrasya Kanwarishih Gayatrichanda
Sri Bagiswaridevata mama sarbabhishtha siddhaye
Sri Saraswati pujaney viniyogah.
(On head) Om Kanwaya rishaye namah.
(On mouth) Om! Gayatrai chandashey namah.
(On heart) Om Bagishwarjai devatawi namah.
I herewith whole-heartedly resolve to worship the mother Goddess Saraswati, in the Gayatri meter as formulated by Rishi Kanya, written for the Goddess of speech (Bageshwari).

May Rishi Kanya rest on my intellect (touch top of the head); Gayatri meter in my mouth (touch lips); and the goddess of speech in my heart (touch heart).

Offerings to the Foundation

Pithapuja

Pitha puja refers to the offerings to those Gods that govern our actions by staying on the background.

Show five welcome mudras while looking at Saraswati.

Om Pithadevata ihagchchata ihagachchata, ehatishtha ehatishthata, Iha sannidehi, Iha sannirudhwashwa, iha sannirudhyadhwam atradhishthanam kurutah mampusa grinhita

Oh pithadevata (Gods of the background) come and stay close to me and let your presence help me to perform the puja.

Now put bits of flowers in the name of each God or offer a bit of water (or rice) in the name of each. Discard the water into the offering plate.

Note: You may find it difficult to correspond to the direction. Hence focus on the thought and offer small amount of water after uttering the name of the God.
Om Adharashaktaye namah, Prakritai namah, Anantaya namah, 
Prithibai namah, Khirasamudraya namah, 
Swetadwipaya namah, Manimandapaya namah, 
Kalpabrikshaya namah, Manibedikai namah, 
Ratnaśinahasanaya namah, 
Dharmaya namah, Gyanaya namah, Bairagaya namah, 
Ausharjaya namah, Adharmaya namah, Agyanaya namah, 
Abairagya namah, Anaisharjaya namah, Anantaya namah, Padmaya namah, 
Arkamandalya dwadasha kalatmaney namah, 
Somamandalalya shorashakalatmaney namah, 
Banhimandalalya dashakalatmaney namah, 
Om Sam Sattaya namaha, Om Rom Rajashey namah, 
Om Tam Tamashey namah, 
Om Aam Atmaney namah, Om Am Antaratmaney namah, 
Om Pam Paramatmaney namah, Om Hrim gyanatmaney namah, 
Om Medhawai namah, Om Pragyai namah, 
Om Prabhawai namah, Om Shriwai namah, 
Om Dhritai namah, Om Smritai namah, 
Om Budhai namah, Om Vidya-aishairjai namah, 
Om Barna kamalashanaya namah ||

I offer these scented flowers to the names of my holder, the nature, 
the universe, the earth, and in all the various aspects of Gods and 
Goddesses inherent in them. 
To Nature, Cosmos, Earth, Imaginary heaven, 
The Islands if the Moon (dreamland), Wealth, Tree of Wishes and all 
associated with it. 
I offer my obalations to the names of intellect, knowledge, memory, 
beauty, education, and the lotus (the emblem of purity) seat where 
Goddess Saraswati is sitting.
Meditation of Saraswati

Take the flower in left palm with the Kurma mudra (কুর্মমুদ্রা) position and meditate on the image of Saraswati. When the image is established in your heart discard the flower on the plate in front of you while chanting the mantra:

```
Om taruna-shakalamindoh bibhrati shubhra-kaantih |
   kuca-bhara-namitangi sannishanna sitaabjey ||
   nija-kara-kamalodya-lekhani pustaka shrih |
Sakala-bibhaya-siddhyai patu baag-devata nah ||
```

We bow to the Goddess of learning who is radiating soothing moonlight of white complexion, bend slightly because of her heavy breasts, and She sits on a white lotus; Her lotus-shaped hands are holding book and pen. May the Goddess of Learning help us to acquire all the glories and fames.

After the meditation take a flower, with a touch of sandalwood paste, and place it at the feet of the Goddess Sarawati, captured in your mental image and then put it on the holy pitcher.

```
Etey gandhapushpey Om Owing Saraswatwai namah |
   Swagata Om bhurbhuba swarbhagavati |
   Saraswati devi swagatam kushalam tey ||
```

Here I am offering this scented flower, Oh Goddess Saraswati. You welcome Oh the Goddess of the Universe Saraswati Devi,
You are cordially welcome. ay it be all well with you.

Welcome to Goddess Saraswati

Welcome Saraswati by chanting the mantra and creating the five hand gestures (welcome mudras, see appendix) where indicated. The mudras are like expressing the feeling with hand gestures, as it is done in case of dancing.

Oh Saraswati, you are welcome, you are welcome, sit here, settle down, come close, and get established and receive my worship. Stay settled here with me as long as I do the worship.

Then say with folded hands:

आगच्छा मदग्रीहे देवी अष्टक्षिरी शक्तिभिः सहः
पूजा पुजन बिध्यं सर्व चल्यान कारिनि

Agchchha madgrihhey Devi ashtabhi shaktibhi saha
Pujam grihaha vidhibat sarva kalyana karini
PART 3: Principle Saraswati Puja

Come to my house with your companions and your eight divine powers.
Receive my offerings in the rightful way and bless me
Oh our well-wishers.

Welcome! Oh the Goddess of the three worlds (earth, heaven and the underworld), Saraswati, welcome, cordially welcome.
Are you doing well?
I am so very obliged and my life is blessed because Oh Goddess of speech, you have come to my house.
I bow to you Oh Saraswati with utmost reverence.

INFUSION OF LIFE

A virtual life is installed in the life-less deity in order to make the prayers more realistic. Mantras are chanted that focus on the installation of vision and life in the following steps.

Giving Vision

Chakhurdan

Take the stalk of a bel pata (bel leaf, favorite of Shiva), touch it with the black soot paste and draw on the left eye of the deity with this mantra

Om a-pyayasya sametu tey biswatah soma brishnam
bhava bajashya samathey
Oh Lord Soma let all the energies of the Universe merge in you so that you can nourish us all

Then draw the same on the right eye with this mantra:

Om chitram devanamudagadaneekam, chakshurmitrasya Varunasyagney
Aapra dyaba prithibi antariksham
surya atma jagatasta sthusaschyaa
Oh the rays of the setting sun merge in thee eyes which with the vision of Varuna and Agni illuminate the heaven and earth unto its core and become the soul of the living.

Installing Life

Pranpratishtha

Take kush (or durba grass) in your right hand, repeat the mulmantra ten times (Owing, ॐ). Then touch the heart of the deity in Lelihana mudra (see figure) and pray for bringing life with the following mantra:

Om aswai prana pratisthantu, aswai prana ksharantu cha
Aswai devatwa sankhawai swaha
Let life come into this deity. Let this deity come into life.
May that holds true (swaha) by the divinity

Om Trayambakam jajamahe sugandhim pushthibardhanam
Urbarukami bandhana mrityormukhshiya mamritat swaha
Let us meditate (jajamahey) on the Three-eyed reality (Trayambakam – three-eyed Shiva, or all pervasive Almighty) which permeates like a fragrance (sugandhim) and nourishes us all. May we be liberated from death for the sake of immortality, like the ripe cucumber (urbaruka) is severed from its bondage of the vine.

Alternate translation

We worship the three-eyed One (Lord Shiva) Who is fragrant and Who nourishes all beings, may He liberate me from death, for the sake of immortality, even as the cucumber is severed from its bondage of the vine.

Note: This mantra is known as Mahamritunjay mantra (winning over death). Trayambakam could be interpreted as Shiva with three eyes or the all pervasive Almighty with vision all around.

OFFERINGS TO GODDESS SARASWATI

Hindu offerings to God are very personal. As we are a part of Him, we offer the things that we need for our own sustenance. Just imagine your mother has arrived at your home to spend some time with your family, here she is Goddess Saraswati. Earn her love and blessing with your sincere yarning and sharing your life with her during her stay with you. A minimum of ten things are needed but may give nothing (manasapuja), just thinking about her, or a minimum of five things (paapchare), ten things (deshapchare) or sixteen things (maapchare). We will offer ten things here which are common, but one can add more, if desired.
Water for washing feet

Padhyā

Take a little water with the spoon (kushi) from the water container (kosha) and offer it on the puja plate in front of the pitcher (tamrapatra).

ও পাদ্যং গৃহে মহাদেবী সর্বদুঃখাপহরক্ষ।
ভাস্রব বর্দতে দেবী নমো সর্বোচ্চে নাম।

Om padhyam grihana mahadevi sarbadukhapaharakam
Trayashwa baradey Devi namastey Vishnu ballabhey
Etat padyam namah Saraswatai namah

Allow me to pour this water to thy feet,
Oh Goddess, who takes away all our sorrows.
I welcome you, Oh my protector, beloved of Vishnu, allow me to wash your feet; I offer my reverence to you goddess Saraswati.

Seat

Asan

The seat is a silver square available in puja stores for this purpose. In its absence, take a silver coin or a flower to offer seat to the goddess.

Etashmai rajatashanaya namah
Etey gandha pushpey etad atadhipataye Shri Vishnabey namah
Etat sampradanai Om Oing Saraswatai namah

Reverence to the silver seat. In the name of Vishnu (the preserver), I am sanctifying it in preparation of its offering to the Goddess Saraswati with respect.
**PART 3: Principle Saraswati Puja**

Oh Goddess! Please accept this decorated seat that I beutified for you. Oh the goddess of speech, May you bless me with success in fulfilling my wishes. I offer this seat to your name, with the utterance of your primordial sounds, Om and Owing.

**Special Reception**

*Bisheshargha*

This special ritual, called Bisheyshargha (বিশেষার্গা), uses the water-conch (*jala sankha*, জলা সঞ্চা), to make the special offering or *argha* to the principle deity. The water-conch sits on a tripod on the left side of the priest. Wash it out and throw the water with the sound, *Phat*

Get out all evil spirits

that sanctifies the conch and its contents – sandalwood-dipped flower, rice and durba grass. It is symbolic of the greatest gift of God – the green leaves, the flowers and the food (rice).

**Om durbakshata samajuktam billapatram tathaparam ||
Shobhanam shankhapatrastham grihanargam devisaradey ||
Esha argham namah Saraswatwai namah ||**

*Om (in the name of divinity)! I am hereby offering the perfect durba grass along with bail leaves (offered to Lord Shiva) decorated on the water-conch. Please accept this,*
Oh the queen of Spring.
Herewith I am offering the argha (rice) to your name,
Oh revered Goddess Saraswati

Now touch the flower and durba and chant dedicated to the solar energy and the solar system:

एते गन्ध पुष्पेय ओं अंकर्मगण्यम द्वादश कलात्मने नमः।
Etey gandhapushpey Om arkamandalaya dwadasha kalatmaney namah |
My reverence to the twelve fold solar system |

ॐ मं बहिमंडलयम दशकलात्मने नमः।
Om Mam Banhimandalaya dashakalatmaney namah |
My reverence to the ten fold energy ring of the solar system |

Continue your offering (for the moon):

ॐ उं दोममंडलयम बोधकलात्मने नमः।
Om Um Somamandalaya shorashakalatmaney namah ||
My reverence to the sixteen folds lunar system ||

Now remeditate on the goddess Saraswati (see mantra given earlier) and cover the water-conch by Abagunthana mudra with the sound of ः and then show the Galini mudra to the conch uttering ोशृष्टि. Then say with folded hands, holding a flower:

एते गन्ध पुष्पेय ओं सरस्वतैं नमः।
Etey gandha pushpey Om Oing Saraswatai namah |
Offering this reception specially to Goddess Saraswati |

Now jap eight times with the primordial sound of Saraswati (ॐ) on the water conch as you do for Gayatri.

Then sprinkle the water from the conch over all the articles kept for puja.
Honey-bowl

Madhuparka

The honey pot is a combination of five things – honey, sugar, ghee, yogurt and milk. Offer the honey pot, called, madhuparka (মধুপর্ক) by putting a flower on it or simply offer a drop of honey in the offering plate.

Namah madhuparkam mahadevi Brahmadwai parikalpitam |
Maya niveditam bhaktya grihana Parameshwari ||
Etad madhuparkam Saraswatwai namah |
Oh the greatest goddess of all
allow me to consecrate this honey bowl,
as Brahma and others designed this sweetness,
I am offering it to you with great devotion,
Accept this honey-bowl, Oh the Goddess Saraswati.

Water for bathing

Snania jal

Take a little water in your kushi (spoon), look at the goddess and offer it with the following mantra:

Om jalancha shitalam swacham nityam suddham manoharam |
Snanartham tey prajachami Bageshwari grihanna mey |
Edam snaniya jalam Om Owing Saraswatwai namah ||
Please accept my offering of this cold, clean, sanctified, heart-warming water for your bathing.
Here is your water Oh Goddess Saraswati.

Cloth

Vastra

Take the sari (placed for offering) in your hand, put a flower on it, complete the chant, and touch the sari on to the holy pitcher and then place it next to the feet of the goddess. If you are using a picture, place it next to the picture.

Namah, bahutanu samayuktam patta sutradi nirmitam |
Baso devo susuklancha grihana parameshwari |
Om bahusantana sammridham ranjitam ragabastuna |
Bagdevi bhajapritim basantey paridhiatam |
Etad bastram namah Saraswatwai namah ||

Made out of many threads, this white cloth of yours, accept it Oh the supreme Goddess.

Be pleased by wearing this long and rich cloth with many colors.
Allow me to offer this clot to you with reverence.
I bow to you Oh Goddess Saraswati.

Sandalwood paste

Chandana (gandha)

Touch the sandalwood paste with your middle finger and mark the paste on the holy pitcher while chanting the following:

ঐ শরীরে রে ন জানাই চোখাং নৈব চ নৈব চ ।
ময়া নিদ্যিত্ত গম্ভীর্বাচ্চ বিশ্বমিতাদ ।
এহ গচ্ছ ও সরস্বতী নমঃ ॥

106
PART 3: Principle Saraswati Puja

_Om shariram tey na janami cheshtam naiba cha naiba cha_
Maya nibeditan gandhan pratigriya bilipyatam
_Esha gandham Om Saraswatwai namah _
_Oh Goddess I do not know your body or your whereabouts. I am offering this sandalwood paste with fragrance, please accept it and spread on your body._

**Flower**

Pushpa

Place a white flower at the feet of the Goddess followed by this mantra:

_ও পূর্ণ মনোহরঃ নিবাং সুগন্ধি দেব নির্মিতম।
কুদ্মঃ অভূতম আদিযঃ দেবি দত্তঃ প্রগৃহতাম।
এতস্মি পুপানি ও এতঃ সরস্বতী নমঃ।_

_Om pushpammanoharam divyam sugandha deva nirmitam_
_Hridyam adbhutam aghreyam devi dattam pragrijyatam _
_Etani pushpani Om Owing Saraswatwai namah _
_This beautiful divine flower with fragrance is created by God._
_I am offering it to you whose smell captures the heart._
_Here are the flowers, O Goddess Saraswati._

**Incense**

Dhup

Light a new incense stick, burn it, do arati while chanting the following mantra and then place it on its stand.

_ও বনস্পতিঃ রশো দিবো গন্ধচ্ছঃ সুমনোহরঃ।
ময়া নিরেরিতো ভজঃ ধুপোহঃ প্রতিগৃহতাম।
এত ধুপঃ ও এতঃ সরস্বতী নমঃ।_

_Om banaspati rasho divyo gandhadyah sumanoharah _
_Maya nivedito bhaktya dhupaham pratigrijhatam _
_Esha dhupah Om Owing Saraswatwai namah _
_Here is the divine extract from plants with heartwarming smell._
Please accept my offering of this incense, with great reverence,
Oh Goddess Saraswati.

Lamp

Pradeep

Look at the burning lamp with a flower in your right hand and chant the following mantra. After chanting throw the flower towards the lamp.

ॐ अग्निज्योति राबीज्योति चन्द्रज्योति तथैव ।
दीपं ओ एवं सरस्वती नमः ॥

Om agniyoti rabijyoti chandrajyoti tathaivacha

Jyotsamutamo devi dipoham pratigrijhyatam

Esha dwipah Om Owing Saraswatwai namah

In this flame is like that of the illuminations of the sun and the moon.
In that illumination, Oh Goddess, take the divine light as I offer to you with reverence.

Garland

Pushpamalya

Look at the garland that the deity is wearing or touch the garland placed on the holy pitcher (ghat) and chant the following mantra:

ॐ सुत्रेन ग्रथितम मलयम नाना पुष्प समानवितम ।
स्रीजुक्तम लम्बामानां ग्रीहाना परमेश्वरी ।
दीपं पुष्पमालाम ओ एवं सरस्वती नमः ॥

Om sutren grathitam malyam nana pushpa samanwitam
Srijuktam lambamananca grihana parameshwari

Esha pushpamalyam Om Owing Saraswatwai namah

Take this garland, made of many kinds of flowers, stuck together on a long thread, Oh the great Goddess. Herewith I offer the garland to you Oh, Goddess Saraswati.
Food platter (sweets and fruits)

Locate the food platter with wet rice, sweet and fruits. Put a flower on the platter and chant:

```
Om naivedyam ghritasamjuktam nana drabyam samanwitam |
Maya niveditam bhaktya grihana twam Bageshwari ||
Idam sopakaranamanna naivedyam Om Owing Saraswatai namah ||
```

I am offering the platter to you with great reverence. Please accept it. Here is the food platter together with the implements and I offer this to you Oh Goddess Saraswati with humility.

Fruits

Put flowers or sprinkle water, as mark of offering, on the plates with cut or whole fruits.

```
Om! Phalamulani sarbani gramya aranyani yani cha |
Nanabidha sugandhini grinha Devi yathasukham |
Etani phalamulani Om Saraswatwai namah ||
```

All these fruits, collected from village and forest, with good taste and smell, accept it from me immediately Oh the Goddess Saraswati.
Sweets

Modak (a round-shaped sweet preparation)

Place flowers or sprinkle little water on all the displays of sweets while chanting the following mantras:

Om modakam swadasamjuktam sarkaradi binirmitam
Suramyam madhuram bhoyojam Devi dattam pratigrijyatam
Esha modakam Om Saraswatwai namah

These tasteful round-shaped sweets (মোদক), made out of sugar, good-looking sweet edibles I am giving you Oh Goddess, please accept them.

Here are the round-shaped sweets for you Oh Goddess Saraswati.

Payas (Paramanna)

Paramanna

Paramanna is a dessert made from milk. Its offering is done in a special way. It is offered involves where the food is considered as consecrated ghee (হাবির). In the mantra the food is given to the flame of hunger that maintains our vital function.

Offering to Vital breath

Pranahuti

First offer the dessert to the Goddess with folded hands:
Oh Goddess, I am offering this great rice preparation (paramanna) made with ghee (concentrated butter), milk and many tasty sweets. Please accept it from me, your devotee.

Then chant the panchgras mantra to make the offerings to the five vital breaths of the body (see background information).

**Offering process**

**Panchagrass mantra**

(Dedicated to the five vital breaths of the body)

The offering is done with special gesture called, *पंचग्रास मुद्रा* (*Panchagras mudra*) which is described in the following section. It is important that you set up in your mental picture that the deity is taking the food from your hand as you show the moving gesture.

Take a small amount of water on your left palm. Move the fingers of your right palm from the consecrated food towards the Goddess. The five mantras refer to five kinds of air in our body to sustain our lives.

The panchagras mudra (*पंचग्रास मुद्रा*) is the same as the offering to the *pranabaya*, explained elsewhere.

1. Get your left palm into the grassmudra (eating posture). In other words, depress the central section of the left palm. Put small amount of water on it.

2. Then join the thumb to the little finger and offer with the following mantra while moving your hand towards the deity, imagining your dream to feed her:

   ऋ प्रानायं स्वाहा

   *Om pranaya swaha*

   *Dedicated to the principle breath that I am inhaling*
3. Then join the thumb with the ring finger and say, again move your right hand towards the deity, imagining your effort to feed her:

createElement("div", {
  "text": "ঔ অপানায় বাহ্য
  
  Om apanaya swaha |
  Dedicated to my excretory system of the body

ঔ সমানায় বাহ্য

Om samanaya swaha |
Dedicated to the digestive system of the body

4. Then join the thumb with the pointing finger and say,

ঔ উদানায় বাহ্য,

Om udanaya swaha |
Dedicated to the respiratory activity of the body

5. Finally, join all fingers and say,

ঔ বানায় বাহ্য ||

Om vanaya swaha ||

6. Then join the thumb with the middle finger and say,

Dedicated to the circulatory system of the body.
**Mantras of vital breath**

These verses are normally chanted before eating and have great philosophical significance. According to Vedic tradition, every act eventually becomes an act of worship. Food is essential for our sustenance. The prayer offered before eating is dedicated to the all pervasive Supreme Brahman so that the energy derived from the food be used to serve Him.

It is universally accepted that breath (*ana*) is the vital force behind life. Five vital breaths (*ana*) control the inner function of the body. Thus it manifests the power of the Supreme in the bodily plane. These vital breaths are responsible for different activities – *prana* (principle breath that we inhale to supply oxygen to every cell of our body), *apana* (excretory activity), *samana* (digestive activity), *udana* (respiratory activity that we exhale), and *vyana* (circulatory activity).

---

**Offering water to drink**

আচমনীয়া  
*Achmaniya*

Take a little water in the *kushi* (copper spoon) and drop it in the first glass of water after completing the following mantra.

```
Om mandakinyastu jadbari sarbapapa haram shubham |
Grihana achmaniam twam maya bhaktya niveditam ||
Idam achmanium Om Owing Saraswatwi namah ||
```

*Herewith I am offering to you the holy Ganga water that takes away all sin and brings happiness. As I offer that water with devotion, please oblige me by sipping that water.*
The Second Offering of Water

Take a little water in the kushi and drop it in the second glass after completing the following mantra:

"ॐ ॐ ॐ ॐ
Om uchistho upya suchirbyapi yashya smaranamatratah |
Sudhimapnoti tasai tey punarachmanis 
Idam punaracmanium Om Owing Saraswati namah |
The contaminated water (uchistha) and impure becomes pure by taking your name.
That purified water I am offering herewith as the second serving.
Please oblige me by accepting the second glass of water.

Offerings to the Iconographies of Saraswati

Put a flower on each of the following with reverence and utter the corresponding mantra:

To Book

"ॐ ॐ ॐ ॐ
Om pushkebhyo namah
Reverence to the book, the emblem of knowledge.

To Inkpot

"ॐ ॐ ॐ ॐ
Om masyadharaya namah |
Reverence to the inkpot as an emblem of writing knowledge.

To Pen

"ॐ ॐ ॐ ॐ
Om lekhanai namah |
Reverence to the pen, as the emblem of writing knowledge.
To Musical instruments

ॐ बाद्यजन्त्र आदिभ्यो नमः।
Om badyajantra adibhyo namah
Reverence to the musical instruments.

To Swan

ॐ हंसाय नमः।
Om Hamsaya namah
Reverence to the swan, Saraswati’s pet and emblem of purity.
Flower offering

Pushpanjali
(Flower offering)

Pushpanjali is the offering of flowers to Goddess Saraswati. It has four parts – Vishnu smaran, flower offering (anjali), prostration (Pronam, प्रणाम) and Vandana (vandana, बन्दना).

Everyone stand, focus on offering, take a flower and pray with folded hands holding the flower in between.

Om tadvishnoh paramam padam sada pashyanti suraya dibiba chakshuratatam

Om Vishnuh - Om Vishnuh - Om Vishnuh
Om Vishnuh - Om Vishnuh - Om Vishnuh

116
Hail Lord Vishnu (our preserver). With the divine vision of the learned, the presence of the Omniscient God Vishnu is everywhere. I bow to Thee, Oh Lord Vishnu.

ॐ सरस्वती नमः बिंदां, तद्रक्षालय नमः।
वेद वेदंता बेदं बिद्याम्बायनो एवं।
एवं पुश्पान्जलि ओ एवं सरस्वती नमः॥१॥

Om Saraswatai namo nityam, bhadrakalyai namo namah।
Veda Vedanta Vedama vidhyasthaneybhya eba cha॥

Esha pushpanjali Om Owing Saraswatai namah॥॥

I bow to the beautiful goddess
who removes our darkness (kali), Saraswati,
who gives us the knowledge of the Vedas.
I am offering this flower to her name with reverence.

ॐ सा मे कस्तू जिहायं वीणा पुष्करधारिनी।
मुद्रायं ब्रह्मतं देवी सर्वसुरा सरस्वती।॥
एवं पुष्पान्जलि ओ एवं सरस्वती नमः॥॥

Om Sa mey basatu jibhayam veena pustakadharini।
Murari ballavam devi sarbashukla Saraswati॥॥

Rest on my tongue Oh the holder of veena (string instrument) and books (Saraswati, the icon of knowledge). Oh the favorite of Vishnu, pure and shining white,

सरस्वती महाभागे विंये कमल लोचने।
बिंदां विपशालक बिंदां देहि नमोहजुः॥
एवं पुष्पान्जलि ओ एवं सरस्वती नमः॥॥

Saraswati mahabhagey vidyey kamala lochaney।
Vidyarupey bishalakshi vidyang dehi namastutey॥

Esha pushpanjali Om Owing Saraswatai namah॥॥

Goddess Saraswati. Saraswati, whose eminence is to the highest degree (mahabhagey) of knowledge, who is emitting knowledge to the universe through her divine look, enlighten me; I bow to you with reference, to give me that knowledge.

Here is the offering of the sandalwood-dipped flower to your name Oh glorious Saraswati.
Prostrations

Promun Mantra

Sweta padmasana devi swetapushpo sushovita,
swetambaradhara nitya sweta gandhanu lepana
Sweta akhasutra hasta cha sweta Chandana charchita,
Sweta veenadhara shuvra sweta alankar bibhusita
Oh the Goddess! You are wearing white dress, sitting on a white beautiful flower, fair body covered with white sandalwood, wearing white rosary bracelet that is covered with sandalwood, as you are holding your hand and you are adorned with white ornaments

Saraswati prayer in Bengali

Saraswati vandana

Edited by Dilip Bhaumik (Lyric writer of Kolkata Radio Station)

Eshogo janani esho binapani devo danaba mandita
Sweta basana sweta bhusana sweta Chandana charchita.
Esho satadaley nayanerojaley Pujibo ratul charano
Tomari karuna ashisho paiye safalo haibey janam.
Eshogo janani esho binapani devo danaba mandita
Sweta basana sweta bhusana sweta chandana charchita.
Mochao bharati moderi kalmia jalia dao ma gyanero deep,
Deepto karama lupto garima thakigo janoma toma sameep
Eshogo janani esho binapani devo danaba mandita
Sweta basana sweta bhusana sweta chandana charchita.

Come Oh mother Saraswati (holding the veena), surrounded by numerous Gods.
You are wearing white clothes and ornaments marked with white sandalwood come sitting on lotus with thousand petals.
I will wash your bare feet with my tears by your compassion and blessing my life will be worthwhile.
Wipe out the darkness from our hearts.
Oh Goddess of the land, light the candle of knowledge in our heart, brightens the hidden glory and keep me close to you.

Saraswati prayer in Sanskrit

Prarthana

Ya Kundendu tusharhar dhavala ya shubhra bastrabrita
Ya Veena baradandamandita kara ya swetya padamasana
Ya Brahma Achuta Shankara prabhitibhi deva sada banditah
Sa mam patu Saraswati bhagavati nishesha jadayapaha

Om Saraswati mahabhagey Vedanam jananipara
Pujan grihana bidhibat Kalyanam Kurume sada

She, Saraswati, Bhagavati (goddess of knowledge), who is adorned with a garland of lilies (kundendu) as white as snow, who is clad in white clothes, holding a veena, whose hand is raised to protect
the seeker, who is seated on a white lotus, who is worshipped by Brahma, Vishnu and Sankara (Shiva),
May She the Mother Goddess Saraswati dispel my ignorance completely!
Oh the great Goddess Saraswati, the mother of the Vedas, I have done my best in accordance with the custom; please bless me always with happiness.

FIRE WORSHIP (HAVAN)
হোম (কুশটিকা, Kushandika)

Fire worship in Saraswati Puja is optional in Bengalis. This is done in public pujas only.

Introduction and preparation

Fire worship is perhaps as old as human civilization. Since fire was put into use during Early Stone Age, 70000 years ago, humans dominated over other animals in many ways. Its ferocious face when uncontrolled and the friendly use in our daily lives, made the fire or Agni as the leading God of Hindu pantheon. Offerings to the fire found a direct link with the Lord Almighty. Thus fire worship becomes an essential component of many Puja rituals.

Havan in public places in USA is restricted due to fire hazard. It is the law. Hence, with considerable thoughts, it is modified in order to accommodate legal parameters. Thus the open fire is replaced by using canned fuel (Sterno). The fuel-gel is taken out with a spoon and placed on the sand layer spread on the havan kunda. Decorative sticks are used to offer ghee (quick dip in ghee, or concentrated butter) and then put into the fire along with the mantra. The thin stick does not allow soaking of excess ghee and thus the fire is fully under control. All procedures of traditional Havan is followed except the fire does not
have a flame until the ghee-dipped stick is offered. No Havan Samagri is offered in the flame. It may start the smoke alarm.

**Preparatory Arrangement**

- If available, use havan (or hom) kunda and spread on it a layer of sand.
- Keep ghee (concentrated butter) in a metal pot and pack of sticks for the offering.
- Keep one glass overflowing with rice on a plate with a supari and a coin at the top. This is called पूर्णपत्र (purnapatra).
- Put a cover on head and tilak mark on the forehead.
- The devotee/priest must take simple vegetarian food on the previous night.

**Havan arrangement**
Dedication

Vishnu smaran

Pray with folded hands:

ॐ बिष्णुः ॐ बिष्णुः ॐ बिष्णुः ॐ बिष्णुः ॐ तद्विष्णुः ॐ रामायण ॐ बलराम ॐ बलराम ॐ बलराम ॐ बलराम

ॐ परमम परिवर्ता बलरामा वहना ॐ बलरामा वहना ॐ बलरामा वहना ॐ बलरामा वहना

यं स्मरनु प्रुत्रीकामं स बहाड़ात्तरं यं

नमः सर्वमहत सर्ववस्तुं वर्ष्यं वर्ष्यं अवमहत्त नारायणं नमः सर्वसंकर्षां कार्यहृ

ॐ बिष्णुः ॐ बिष्णुः ॐ बिष्णुः अयमार्त्ता भजः भजः

Om Vishn - Om Vishn - Om Vishnu
Om Tad-Vishnoh paramam padam
Sada pashyanti soorayah dibi-iba chakshur-aatatam|
Om apabitra pabitroba sarbabashan gatopiba
jahsmaret pundarikaksha sa bajya avyantarah suchih
Namaha sarva mangala mangalyam
varayenam baradam shubham|
Narayanam namaskriya sorvakarmani kaarayet|
Om Vishnu, Om Vishnu, Om Vishnu
Ayamarambha shuvaya babatu ||

In the name of Lord Vishnu!

As the widely open eyes can see the sky clearly without any obstruction, so the wise always see Lord Vishnu with their divine vision. He who, impure or pure, remembers lotus-eyed lord Pundarikaksha, Vishnu, in all situations, becomes purified inside and out. We bow to Lord Narayana who is all auspicious, most adorable, beneficial and kind. Remembering His name we should begin all our work.

Hail to Lord Vishnu! Here I start with His blessing ||
Resolution (solemn vow)

Sankalpa

Take the kushi with water, flower, durba, little rice, a flower and haritaki on left hand. Cover the kushi with your right hand and declare the goal of the fire worship. After completion of the resolution, turn over the kushi in the offering plate (tamrapatra), ring the bell that declares the beginning of the fire worship ritual.

In the name of Vishnu, on this auspicious day of Magh, fortnight of the Waxing side of the moon, on the day of Panchami (fifth)

In the dedication of pleasing Goddess Saraswati along with the pen and the inkpot
Performing the fire worship (havan) dedicated to Goddess Saraswati And a part of the havan will be offering 28 sticks with ghee with the mantra of Swaha

(if doing for your own puja say “karishey” and “karisheyami” when you do for others and before ending mention the name – gotra and name – of the person for whom you are performing the havan)
Marking the Fire Place

Traditionally the Havan kunda is prepared, filled with sand and its borders are marked with the ring finger while the thumb touching the ring finger. These markings describe the color of the fire. Make four marking on the four sides of the havan kunda, on the sand, and one in the center (see ankusha mudra).

Om rekheyam prithvidevataka peetabarna
In the name of divine (Om)! This line is for the earth-God yellow in color.

Om rekheyam Agnirdevataka lohitabarna
Om! This line I am drawing in the name of Lord Agni, the God of red in color.

Om! Rekheyam Prajapatir devataka krishnabarna
This line I am drawing in the name of Prajapati, the Lord of the Universe, who is of dark-blue color.

Om! Rekheyam Indradevataka neelabarna
This line is for Lord Indra of pale blue color.

Om! Rekheyam Somadevataka shuklabarna
This line I am drawing in the name of the moon with white color.

Now take out a pinch of the sand and throw out side the havan kunda with a kush while chanting the following mantra:

Om! Prajapati-devata utkara nirnaya vibhrohah.
Om! Nirjan para-basu.
**Establishing the Fire**

*Agnisanskar*

Then light three sticks from the burning lamp:

```plaintext
प्रजापति श्री अग्नि देवता उत्कर निरसानेय विनियोगः
Prajapati rishi Agnir devata Utkar nirasaney viniyoga
```

```plaintext
ओ! निरस्त भवः
Om! Nirastah parabasu
```

In the name of sage Prajapati and the Fire God Agni,
In my attempt to remove all the bad spirits
from this place of worship

In the name of sage Prajapati and the Fire God Agni,
I am throwing off this sand with the kush grass

In my attempt to remove all the bad spirits
from this place of worship

As chanted by sage Prajapati in Anustupa meter,
May the ill-fire (kramdagni) that bring destruction,
go to Yamaraj (death) and leave this land pure and happy

Circle the sticks counterclockwise (anticlockwise) while chanting the following:

```plaintext
प्रजापति श्री अग्नि देवता उत्कर निरसानेय विनियोगः
Prajapati rishi Agnir devata Utkar nirasaney viniyoga
```

```plaintext
ओ! क्रमदग्निः चरितः
Om! Kramdagni charitr
```

As chanted by sage Prajapati in Anustupa meter,
May the ill-fire (kramdagni) that bring destruction,
go to Yamaraj (death) and leave this land pure and happy

In the words of Rishi Prajapati, in the Brihatichanda, I am dedicating this fire to Lord Prajapati while establishing this fire and dedicating it to the Universe.

```plaintext
प्रजापति श्री ब्रह्मचारी चंद्रशेषः
Prajapati rishi Brihati chchandah
```

In the words of Rishi Prajapati, in the Brihatichanda, I am dedicating this fire to Lord Prajapati while establishing this fire and dedicating it to the Universe.
Then pray to the burning fire with folded hands:

ॐ ईहैबयामितरो जताबेदो देवेय भवतु प्रजाननः।
ॐ सर्वत्र पापिदानत वर्गेताहैक शिशृमयुः। विक्रुक्तेऽपि महान अग्नि प्रतित सर्वकर्मसु॥

_Om! Ehaibayamitaro jatabeda dehevahabhyam bahuta prajanana_
_Om! Sarbatah panipadantah sarbatohkhishiromukha_
_Vishwarup mahan agni pranetah sarbakarmasu_

_Oh our well wisher knowledgeable fire_
(different from ill-spirited Agni),
_who carries our oblations to Gods._
_His hands, legs, head and mouth are spread everywhere,
That universally spread out Agni, accept our oblations in all occasions._

**Naming the fire**

अग्नि नामाकरण
_Agni namakaran_

At this time the fire is given a specific name to correspond to the occasion.

**Note**: In early days fire was kept burning in the house and was available for any occasion. This avoided creating the fire each time when needed. But for each occasion different names are given. For example, in marriage the name “Yoyaka” is given signifying union. Similarly in Annaprasan it is Suchi, in any happy occasion it is “Shobhanah,” for peace _havan_ it is ‘Baradah” and for pujas (like Satyanarayana) “Balada.”

Give the name of Balada to the burning fire by throwing a stick into the fire:

ॐ अग्नि त्वम बलद नामानि।
_Om! Agne twam Baladanamasi_
_Oh the new Fire by the name of Baladagni,_
_accept my humble reverence._

126
Pay reverence by meditation on the fire with folded hands:

\[\text{Om pingabhrushma keshakshah peenanga jatha aroharunah} \]
\[\text{Chchagasthah sakhsha sutrohagnih saptarchih shaktidhrakah} \]

Whose brows are like the bow, who has scattered hairs hungry stomach
With great humility (lamb) I am bowing the fire
which has such great power

Then, welcome the new fire by showing the five welcome mudras (see illustration appendix):

\[\text{Om! Baladagne ihagachcha ihagachcha, iha tishtha iha tishtha,} \]
\[\text{iha sannidhehi, iha sannirudhascha atradhistanam kuru, mam} \]
\[\text{pujam grihana} \]

Oh Baladagni, come here come here, stay here stay here, come near, after coming close settle here and receive my oblations.

Offer five things (minimum) to the fire by sprinkling a little water on each item:

\(\text{Esha gandha Om Baladagnaye namah,}\)
\(\text{Etat pushpam (dhuam, deepam, naivedyam, pania jalam)}\)
\(\text{Baladanamagney namah}\)

Here is the sandalwood offered in the name of Baladagney, here is the flower in the name of Baladagney, here is the incense (dhoop) in the
name of Baladagney, here is the food platter in the name of
Baladagney, in the name of the divinity
I am offering ghee (swaha) to Baladagney fire.

Creating water boundary
坞鍗闇嵩鐔髲

Sit on your knees and create a water-marked boundary around the
havan kunda (fire place) with the help of kamandalu (water vessel with
spout). Chant the mantra while making the mark. The four mantras are
for the four sides of the fire place. The idea (in sense of early days) is to
prevent the fire from spreading out.

ও প্রজাপতি খনি অনুঘৃষ্ণ ছন্দযো সন্তু দেবতা অগ্নি গৌরবে বিনিয়োগঃ।
প্রজাপতি খনি অধিতির দেবতা উদিকাংলি দেয়া বিনিয়োগঃ। ও অধিতে অনুমাতঃ।
প্রজাপতি খনি অনুষ্ঠান দেবতা উদিকাংলি দেয়া বিনিয়োগঃ। ও অনুমাতে অনুমাতঃ।
প্রজাপতি খনি বন্ধন দেবতা উদিকাংলি দেয়া বিনিয়োগঃ। ও সরস্তা অনুমাতঃ।

Om prajapati rishi anushtupa chandyo Sabita devata Agni
paryukshaney biniyogah |
Prajapati rishi Aditi devata udikanchanjali sakey biniyogah |
Om Aditye anumanyaswa |
Prajapati rishi Anumati devata udikanchanjali sakey biniyogah |
Om anumatey anumanyaswa |
Prajapati rishi Saraswati devata udikanchanjali sakey biniyogah |
Om Saraswatye anumanyaswa |

In the name of sage Prajapati, in Anustupa meter,
In the name of the Sungod I am circling the water around the fire
In the name of Aditi (boundless happiness),
I am circling the water for His blessing
In the name of God Anumati (God of acclaim),
I am circling the water for His permission
In the name of Sarastwa (God of freshness),
I am circling the water for His permission
Sanctification of Ghee

Gritasamskar

Take the pot of sacrificial ghee. Put in that a kush in it. Move the kush in the center, chanting:

Prajapati rishir-gayatri-chand
ajyam devata ajyopabaney biniyogah |
In the name of sage Prajapati, singing in Gayatri meter,
this God of melted (or clarified) Ghee,
I am placing here for its offer.

Then, throw a little ghee with the kush into the fire, chanting.

Om devastwa sabitotpunatwachchidrena pabitrena |
Baso surjyasya rashmibhih swaha ||
By the grace of God, this sanctified butter,
Made out of sun’s grace,
is sprinkled over the fire with the kush,
may this be as pure as the rays of the sun.

Brahma Sthapan

Brahmasthapan

Place few kush grasses on the floor beside the Havan kundu:

Prajapati rishir agnirdevata trinanirashaney biniyogah |
Om! Nirastwah parabasuh ||
In the name of sage Prajapati and the Fire God Agni,
I am laying this kush grass
Requesting all the bad spirits to leave this place of worship ||
Then place a kamandalu with a flower in it on the grass you spread out.
(alternatively, put a glass of water with a kush grass and a flower in it).
The Kamandalu represents Brahma who is looking over the Havan ceremony.

Prajapati rishi agnirdevata Brahma upabeshaney viniyogah
Om abaso sadaney seeda
Following the directions of sage Prajapati, in reverence to the Fire God (Agni devata), I have the task of establishing Brahma here.

Offerings to Nine Planets

Make your fire offerings (ghee-dipped sticks) to the nine planets:

(রবি, Sun) ও তূনানি পশান স্বাহা ।
Om Bhutanani pashyan swaha |
Arrive before us with your divine brightness

(সোম, চন্দ্র, Moon, Soma) ও ত্রিদ্বারে সজ্জিত স্বাহা ।
Om bhaha bajashya samathey swaha |
Bring (rain) more yield to our crops

(মঙ্গল, Mars) ও অপাং রেহানি তজরতি স্বাহা ।
Om apam retamshi jinwati swaha |
Your emitted energy brings life to the seeds on this earth

(হুস্ত, Mercury) ও দেবাং উরবকৎ স্বাহা ।
Om debam Usharbudham swaha |
Oh Budha you bring the inspired Gods of the morning
PART 3: Principle Saraswati Puja

(বৃহস্পতি, Jupitor) ও জ্যোতিষ্মাণ মেধাবিভা রথানাং রাহ।
Om jayanasmak mdhyabeta rathanam swaha |
Bring victory over our enemies and joy to us.

(অক্ষ, Venus) ও প্রলেপিত রাতি রক্ত রাহ।
Om pushannihra rati rastu swaha |
Shower your divine blessing on the earth.

(পশু, Saturn) ও শঃ বোরাতি সপক্ত নঃ বাহ।
Om san syorabhi srabantu nah swaha |
Make us free from illness by your blessing.

(কাউ, Ascending/North lunar node) ও কা শচিত্রা বৃত রাহ।
Om kaya sachistaya brita swaha |
What good deeds could we do to receive your favor.

(কেক্তু, Descending/South lunar node) ও সমুস্থির জায়থা বাহ।
Om samusharvir jayatha swaha |
You enlighten the ignorance.

Offerings to Directional Gods
দিকপাল হোম
Dikpal Hom

Offer ghee-dipped stick in the name of ten directional gods.

ও ইদ্রয়া রাহ, ও অগ্নিক রাহ, ে যমরায় রাহ, ে নৈরত্যাঙ্ক রাহ,
ে বরুনায় রাহ, ে যামের রাহ, ে কুরুনের রাহ, ে ঈশানায় রাহ, ে ব্রহ্মায় রাহ, ে অনন্তায় রাহ।

Om Indraya swaha (and continue in the same way):
Agnaye, Yamaya, Nairitaya, Barunaya, Bayabey,
Kuberaya, Ishanaya, Brahmanye, Anantaya

In the name of all directional Gods, Indra, Agni, Yama etc.
I am offering the habir (oblation of ghee to fire ||
PRINCIPLE HAVAN (HOM) FOR SARASWATI

This part of Havan varies with different occasions. Here is the example with Saraswati Puja. Offer twenty eight (28) sticks, dipped in ghee, into the fire while chanting each time the mantra:

ॐ एं सरस्वती याहा ।

*Om owing Saraswatwai namah*

*This fire offering is to the divine name of Saraswati*

Obeisance to All Deities in View

Now offer ghee (dipped in stick) for all the deities displayed, pet and the icons.

ॐ श्री गणेशाय नारायणाय लक्ष्मीयाय दुर्गायाय वासुदेवाय शिवाय गंगायाय स्वाहा ॥

*Om Shri Ganeshaya – Narayanaya – Lakshmayi – Durgaiya – Vastudevaya – Shivayai – Gangawai – swaha* ||

I am offering my fire oblations to all other deities in front of me – Ganesh, Narayana, Shri Ganesh, Shri Lakshmi and others.

(Say “namah” in the beginning and “swaha” at the end while making the ghee offering to each individual deity).

Include: Swan (হংসবাহন), pen (লেখনী), inkpot (মস্যাখার), book (পুস্তক) and Veena (বীণা) in this ghee offering (swaha).

Singing The Glory Of Goddess Saraswati

Fold your hands and offer your prayers:
With the blessing of Brahma, the Lord of the people, you left the heavenly abode to master the knowledge of Vedas and all scriptures, including dance and songs.

Oh beautiful Goddess! Glory to thee, Bless this world with your knowledge and Enlighen us with your divine power.

**CONCLUSION OF HAVAN**

**Prayer to the Lord Almighty**

বিরুপাক্ষ জপ

Birupaksha jap

Parameshti ধ্যান ক্ষের্পোপায়নিষ্ঠিত্বা বিরুপাক্ষঃ বিনয়াদঃ।

ও ভূতকৃত্যে প্রেম মহামায়ানাং প্রথমঃ]

বিরুপন্তাহি দেহকিবা তে শর্যা পূর্ণ দৃষ্টিকে বিষ্ণুঃ।

হিরণ্যঃ অদৈবনাং হায়নায়স্মা কৃত্তস্ত সমাহীনাঃ।

তান কল্যাণ্ডি কল্যাণ্ডি রক্ষতাহপ্রামাণী অনিন্দিতঃ।

সমুদ্রা মা বিশ্বায ব্যাঘ্রনীজাতু তুখা মা বিশ্বেতে ব্যাঘ্রা পুরোহিতানাতু, খুলো মা প্রত্যে মহাবল্যাণোজ্জাতু অভ্যি বিষ্ণুক্তার সত্যতায় সমুদ্রার বিশ্বাচারে তুখার বিশ্বলের শারার প্রত্যেকে সহায়তায় ব্যাঘ্রার প্রত্যেকে শারার প্রত্যেকে ।

*Parameshti rishi Rudrapoagnirdevata Birupaksha japey viniyogah*
Om bhur bhuvah savarnam mahatmanam prapadye
Birupakshoshi dantanjitashya tey saya parney
grihantarakshshey bimitam
Hiranyam taddevanam hridayayayasmaye kuntey hantah sannihitani
Tani balabhrichya balasachya rakshatohapramani animishatah

I am taking refuge to that Almighty
who is beyond this earth, the sky, the heaven or
the Omkar sound, That limitless Super Soul.
Oh the fearless fire of the thunder,
you are the provider of divine vision,
You are the teeth of time and you reveal Him to us.
The Universe is your bed, the bright sky is your home,
You are the heart of the Gods with their hallow and strong as the iron
Covering the entire Universe with your bliss
And protecting it from all harms.
Brhma, limitless like the ocean,
who spreads out over the entire Universe
Allow me to complete my offering
Fast moving all knowing son of the Brahma, the Super Soul Sun,
Permit me to make my offerings to Agni (part of the sun.)
I bow to all the Gods with thousand eyes,
covering the entire Universe (Birupaksha).

Offerings to Great Utterances
mahabharati hom

Prajapati rishi Gayatri chanda Agnirdevata
Mahavyahrti home viniyogah

As sung by the sage Prajapati in Gayatri metre, dedicated to
The fire God Agni, the great utterance in praise of His glory,
This offering of mine is dedicated to Him.

Om bhuh swaha

The earth, the gross, the physical plane of existence
The mantra of Mahavyahrti (great utterance) involves the highly revered mantra of Gayatri, a hymn of the Rigveda, chanted in Gayatri metre. The verse can be interpreted to invoke the deva Savitr, often called Savitri. The formula bhur, bhuvah and svah, are known as the mahavyatri.

**BENEDICTION PRAYER**

_Üdichya karma_

Sprinkle water around the havan kunda with the following chant:

```
प्रजापतिकाव्यि अनित्यवक्ता उपकाजसीर बिनियोगङ्गः ||
३० अदितिहै अनुक्षेतः ||
Prajapati rishi Aditi devata udikanjali sekey viniyogah ||
Om Aditeha nwamam stah ||
In the name of sage Prajapati, Oh the mother of all Gods (Aditi)
I am offering this water to you. As I sought your favor to start thus fire
worship, you will grant me its success.
```

**Fire Gets a New Name Before Extinction**

_मृरिगणि_

Mriragni

The fire is given a new name (Mriragni, मृरिगणि) before it is turned off. Mrirah means ocean that gave birth to this earth that came out of ocean.
Welcome the new fire along with the five mudras for the welcome:

Om Mriranamagney
Eha gachcha eha gachcha, eha tishtha, eha tishtha, eha sannidehi,
Eha sannirudhyaswa, atradhishtanam kuru, mam pujam grihana ||
Oh the fire with the name of Mrirah (ocean) you are cordially welcome, come close to me, stay close to me and after establishing, accept my oblations.

Then put flower on the base of the Havan Kunda with each offering (or sprinkle water or rice):

Esha gandhah Om Mriragnaey namah|
etat pushpam Om Mriragnaey namah|
esha dhupah Om Mriranamagnaey namah |
esha deepah Om Mriranamagnaey namah ||
Oh the fire with the name of Mrirah (ocean) you are cordially welcome,
come close to me, stay close to me and after establishing,
accept my oblations, Oh the Mrirah-named fire!
I am offering with great reverence, the flower, the incense, the lamp, the fire offering (habir) and the food-platter (naivedya), please accept my offering.

Then put a little ghee with the spoon or on the stick chanting:

Etat habir naivedyam Om Mriranamagnaey swaha ||
I am putting the ghee as the naivedya to your honor, Oh Mriragney.
Final Offering

The jajaman (host) and his wife, along with the priest, stand up and give their last offering to the fire. This is called पूर्णहूँ (purnahuti). While standing, pour a spoonful of ghee on the fire while chanting the following:

प्रजापति शरिरं गाटी सुप्नो इष्टदेवता यमकामस्य यज्ञशीय प्रशोभे विनियोगः।
३ पूर्णहूँमय महसुसे सुधोमि कोईसमु ज्वूहोमि बरमवङ्गे ददाति, बरं बुवे, बसासा तामि लोके स्वाहा।

Prajapati rishi Birarah Gayatri chanda Indro devata jashakamashya
jajaneya prayogey viniyogah |
Om Purnahomah jashashey juhomi,
johashmai juhoti baramashmai dadati,
Baram briney, jashasha bhami lokey swaha ||

As written by Prajapati rishi in the meter of Brirah-Gayatri,
in the name of Lord Indra,
I am offering this oblation to the fire for my fame \
In this final oblation to the fire I seek your blessing,
I seek your boon to grant me good name and fame
in this terrestrial world.

Offering Full vessel (Overflowing Tumbler)

पूर्णपात्र दान
Purnapatradan dan

After offering the purnahuti, sit down and take the purnapatra (Purnapatra: A tumbler placed on a plate and is overfilled with rice. On the top holds a coin and a supari at the top; a ripe banana on the side) on your left hand and put a flower on it and sprinkle a little water while chanting.

एते गत पुष्पे एतिह्या पूर्णपात्र अनुकरण भोजयाय नमः।
एते गत पुष्पे एतमिदपतये श्रीविनाय नमः।
Etey gandhapushpey etashmai purnapatra
anukalpa bhojyaya namah ||
Etey gandhapushpey etadhipataye Shri Vishnabey namah ||
Etey gandha pushpey etad sampradanaya Brahmaney namah||

With the scented flower (dipped in sandalwood)
I sanctify this raw food for the dinner.
I am offering this, with the scented flower,
to my Lord Shri Vishnu with humility,
I am offering this, with this scented flower,
to the Brahmin with humility.

Vishnurom tatsaddaya amuke masi amuke pakshey
Amukam tithou amuk gotra amuka devasharmana
(name and identification of host)

Amuk gotra amuka devasharma
(name and identification of the priest/Brahmin)

Etat sampradanaya Om Brahmaney namah ||

Vishnurom tatsat adya ___ (identification of day) ___ (identification of the person offering) to ____ (identification of the Brahmin)
Offering this bhojya (raw food for dinner)
in the name of Lord Almighty.

The Brahmin, together with the devotee, will empty the purnapatra on the fire (that also helps in its extinguishing), along with the coin, banana and supari.

Honorarium to priest

Dakshina

Give the purana patra (over flowing rice glass) to the priest with the coin.
Kritaitat Shri shri Saraswait puja homakarmanah
sangatartam dakshinamidam
purnapatra anukalpa bhayojam Shri Vishnuur daivatam
amuk gotra amuka Brahmaney
( Name and gotra of the priest)
aham sampradadey.
After completing the fire worship (homakarma,) I herewith offering
the reward (dakshina) along with the raw food for dinner (bhojya)
to the Brahmin, in the name of Lord Vishnu.

Extinguishing the Fire
अग्निबस्यन
Agni bisarjan

Pick up the kamandalu (Brahma), sprinkle some water around the fire
and beg apology for any mistake incurred.

โอ प्राणसि मम
Om Brahmana khamashya
Pardon me Oh Brahman (Lord of the Universe)

Then beg apology to the mother earth that endured the heat of the fire
during its worship:

โอ यज्याभरा दाहमाताह अग्निदारिताम
Om yagyabhara dahamatah agnidapiritah |
Tatsamasta dharey devi prithwi twam shitala bhava ||
Oh the earth you have endured the weight of the fire place
And tolerated the pain of heat,
May you rest in peace and cool down after the entire fire ceremony.

Finally pour the rice of the purnapatra. Along with supari, banana,
flower and coin, on the fire which helps in turning it off without smoke
and fire splatter. Note: Before the rice is poured on the fire, take out a
little ash for tilak in a small aluminum bowl that contains small amount of ghee so that the ash sticks to the forehead. After pouring the rice sprinkle a little water (careful, do not splatter the fire which is caused by its sudden outburst). This is followed by pouring yogurt on the fire and make sure that the fire is totally put off.

ॐ अग्ने तं समुद्रां गच्छ।
Agney twam samudram gachcha ||
Oh Agni may you now go to the ocean ||

Finally extinguish the fire by pouring yogurt over it (repeat three times)

ॐ पृथ्वी तं शीतला भव॥
Om prithwi twam shitala bhaba ||
Oh earth! May you cool down.

**Putting the Ashes**

Bhasma tilak

**Please note:** During the process of havan use few pieces of wood to produce ash in order to give bhasma tilak.

Say the following mantras while putting the ashes (bhasma tilak).

On the forehead:

ॐ कश्यपश्या त्रांशम।
Om Kashyapashya trausham ||
Like rishi Kashyap wish you have a long life ||

On the neck:

ॐ जमादग्नेय त्रांशम॥
Om Jamadagney trausham ||
Wish you attain the power of Jamadagni (one of the great sages of ancient India, father of Parashuram, who was one of the incarnations of Vishnu) ||
PART 3: Principle Saraswati Puja

On the shoulders:

ॐ यज्ञवान्त् यजुर्वे ॥
\textit{Om jadevanam trayusham} ॥
Wish you for divine characters ॥

On the heart:

ॐ अतेर्हृत् यजुर्वे ॥
\textit{Om tateyhasu trayusham} ॥
Wish you for youthfulness with long life ॥

Prostration

\textit{Prostratation}

Salutation

Prostrate with folded hands (repeat of mantra):

ॐ सरस्वती नमः नित्यां, भद्रकाली नमः नमः ॥
\textit{Om Saraswatai namo nityam, bhadrakalai namo namah} ॥
\textit{Veda Vedanta Vedama vidhya sthaneybhya eba cha} ॥
\textit{I bow to you everyday Oh Saraswati, the beautiful lady of all times, please accept my reverence. You are the knowledge of Vedas and knowledge beyond the Vedas.}

Primordial Sound Offering to Saraswati

\textit{Primordial Sound Offering to Saraswati}

Repeat of primordial sound (\textit{Japa})

The mantra or name may be spoken softly, or mentally without any sound. Here we will repeatedly mutter the primordial sound associated with Goddess Saraswati – Owing.

ॐ
\textit{Owing}

141
Beg excuse after the completion of jap:

ও গুহাতিওলা গোপী তু গৃহাসম্ব কৃতঃ জপম ।
সিরিন্তবহ মে দেবী তত্রসাদাং সুরেস্বরী ॥

\textit{Om gujhati gujha goptri twam grihanasmat kritam japam}
\textit{Siddhir-bhabatu mey devi tatprasadat sureswari}

Staying in my utter ignorance, I am offering you your name with reverence so that I can be successful by your grace.

\textbf{Adoration with Lamp}

আরতী

\textit{Aarati}

Aarati (adoration with lamp) is a special Hindu ritual of worship in which light from wicks soaked in ghee and several other items are offered to the deity in sequence. The priest/devotee circles the items in front of the deity. Each God gets a minimum of three circles starting with the main deity. The holy pitcher should also be adored and so also swan, pen and inkpot. If Naryayana and Ganesh are established, they should also received the arati.

The general sequence of the arati ritual is as follows:

1. Lamp (\textit{panchapradeep} or lamp with five wicks)
2. Water from water-conch (\textit{jalashankha})
3. Cloth (\textit{bastra})
4. Flower (\textit{pushpa})
5. Incense (\textit{dhoop})
6. Camphor (\textit{karpur})
7. Fan (\textit{chamar})

Above said sequence is explained in the following way. Goddess (the deity) has arrived in your house and need to be led through the dark by showing the light (pradeep) with honor. Her feet will be washed (water), wiped (cloth), honored with the gift of flower, air of the
environment refreshed (incense and camphor) and finally the deity rests comfortably (fan).

**IMMERSION OF THE IMAGE**

*Bisharjan bidhi*

**Reverence to Remains**

*Nirmalya*

Take a flower and put it on the platform where the deity was placed. The mantra offers respect to the remains of the puja.

```
ও নির্মালয়া বসিনাই নামহ।
Namah nirmalya basinai namah |
I herewith pay my reverence to the remains of the puja.
```

**Offering Farewell Sweet**

*Dadhikaramba/Dadhikarma*

Offer the special sweet, called dadhikaramba, to Goddess Saraswati before she departs. It is made up of gur (molasses), yogurt (dadhi), flat rice (chipitak), murki (sweet puffed rice), sweet (sandesh) and banana (kadali) – ওড়, দধি, চিপিতক, মুর্কী, মিটীশ ও কাদালি। Offer chanting the following mantra three times and each time sprinkle water on the dadhikarma preparation.

```
ং এতস্তম্ভ সোপাকরণ মিষ্টান্ন দাহিকর্ম নাইভয়া নমঃ।
Bong, etasmai sopakarana mishtanya dadhikaramba naivedaya namah |
Allow me to consecrate the farewell sweet for your consumption.
```

Place a flower on the special sweet preparation (naivedya)
Etey gandhapushpey etadhipataye Shri Vishnbey namah ||
Samradanyai etat sopkarana mishtanna
dadhikaramba naivedyam
Om Owing Saraswatai nivedayami swaha ||
I am sanctifying this with flower offered in the name Lord Vishnu. I am offering the special sweet preparation, the dadhikaramba naiveday, to Goddess Saraswati.

Show the panchagras mudra as described in the offering of Paramanna

Offering drinking water

पानीय जल
Paniajal

Then take a little water with the kushi and discard it in the first glass of water (achmania) offering plate with the following mantra:

Etat panarthodakam Om Owing Saraswatai nivedayami ||
Here I am offering the glass of water for your drinking

Repeat the above, offering the second glass of water.

Etat prakshaniyodakam Om Owing Saraswatwai namah ||
Here is your second glass of water or you to consume |

CONCLUSION OF WORSHIP

Moving the Holy Pitcher

Now hold the sacred pitcher with both hands and gently move while chanting the following mantra. This symbolizes the end of the puja ceremony.;
PART 3: Principle Saraswati Puja

Om gachcha gachcha param sthanam swasthanam parameshwari
Pujadharana kaley cha punaragmanaya cha ||
Go, go to your heavenly abode, Oh Lord but
when I do your puja again, please come back.

Peace Chant

Kaya naschitra iti rikrayasya Mahabama devya rishir birar Gayatri
chhanda Indro devata Shanti karmani japey viniyoga |
This peace chant is written by sage Mahabamadeva
in Gayatri meter and addressed to Indra, the King of the Devas.
Always victorious in numerous ways and friendly to us all, and
whose (Lord Indra) protection surrounds us all.

Om kaya naschitra ah bhubaduti sada bridhah sakha |
Kaya sachisthaya brita |
Om kasta satyo madanam mamhistho matsadhandasah |
Drirha chidarujey basu |
Im abhishunah sakhinambita jaritrinam |
Shatam bhabah swutaye ||
(Oh Indra)
How were you inspired to protect your friends and followers and help them prosper?

How did you get the strength to destroy your enemies and defend the righteous people.

Come in hundreds of forms to protect us, your appreciators.

Om swasti nah Indro bridhdhashravah,
swasti nah Pusha Viswavedah

Swasti narstrakshyo arishtanemi swastino Brihaspatirdadhatu

Om Swasti, Om Swasti, Om Swasti

May Indra, inscribed in the scriptures do well to us,
May Pusha who is knower of world do good to us and
May Trakshya who devastates enemies do good to us!
May Brihaspati do well to us!
OM Peace, Peace, Peace".

Om dauh shantih antariksham shantih prithibi shantirapah shanthi
Roshadhayah shantih banaspataye shanti
Vishwadeva shanti Brahmashanti sarbam shantih
Shantireba shanti sa ma shantiredhi

(Rigveda)

There is peace in the sky, there is peace on earth, and there is peace in the heavens.
There is peace in the world. There is peace in the water, there is peace on land.
There is peace in nature (plant, animals, flowers, insects, and herbs)
There is peace in the Universe.
There is peace with Brahma, the Creator.
May this all–pervading peace enter into us and permeate us to the very core of our being.

Om shakti shakti vibhakti vibashchanda
PART 3: Principle Saraswati Puja

Om shantirastu Shivanchastu binasyata shubhancha jat
Yata ebagatam papa tatraiba pratigachchatu swaha
By the grace of Lord Shiva, peace will prevail.
May He destroy all the evil to establish peace.
May all the sins (ignorance) be removed and permanently stay away from us.

ও পূর্বমদঃ পূর্বপুর্বা পূর্বাং পূর্ব যুদ্ধচতুঃ।
পূর্বস্য পুর্বমাদার পূর্বমেবা অবিশিষ্টাঃ।
ও শাচিঃ ও শাচিঃ ও শাচিঃ।

Om purna madah purnamidam purnat purna mudachyate
Purnasya purnamadaya purnameba abishishyate

You are infinite (perfect, absolute) here, you are infinite (perfect, absolute) there, and When we take out the infinite (perfect, absolute) from the infinite (perfect, absolute), The infinite (perfect, absolute) still remains infinite (perfect, absolute).

In other words:
You are Infinite, Absolute and Perfect in every possible way.

Appeal for Forgiveness
Kshamabhiksha

Human mistakes are inevitable. Hence before closing the puja one includes the prayer of forgiveness in the benedictory prayers.

Prostration

With folded hands held on your chest pray:

ও নমো ব্রহ্মাদেবয় গোস্বামী হিতায় চ।
জগতিভেত শ্রীকৃষ্ণে শোভিষ্যায় নমো নম।
হে ৰূক্ত করোনা সিদ্ধি দিবেয় জগতে।
Om namo Brahmanya devaya go brahmanaya hitaya ca.
Jagaddhitaya Shri Krishnaya Govindaya namo namah
Hey Krishna karuna sindhudeenabandhujagatpatey
Gopeshagopikakanta radhakantanamastutey
I offer my respectful obeisance to the Supreme Lord,
who is the well-wisher of the cows and the Brahmanas,
as well as all living entities in general.
I offer my obeisance to the Lord of the Universe,
known as Krisna and Govinda.

Oh Krishna the ocean of mercy, friend of the destitutes, Lord of the
Universe, protector of the cow (provider) and sweet heart of the milk
maids, and beloved of Radha, I bow to you.

Pray with folded hands

Om agyanad jadi ba mohat prachyabeta dwreshu jat
Smaranadev tad Vishno sampurnam syadriti shruti
All the faults that I incurred while performing the puja
Will be complete as I remember Lord Vishnu for His forgiveness.

Pray with folded hands:

Asato ma sad gangaya
Tamaso ma jytir gangaya
Mrityorma amritam gamaya
Oh Lord Almighty:
Lead us from unreal (ignorance) to the truth (knowledge)
Lead us from darkness to light
Lead us from death to immortality
(Bhradaranyaka Upanishad — I.iii.28)
Honorarium to the Priest

When the priest does the worship on behalf of the host, he is paid for the job he did. This is called Dakshina (দক্ষিণা).

To thy name, Oh Visnu, today in the month of Magha (January-February), during the auspicious waxing moon or bright lunar fortnight (shukla) period, on the fifth day after new moon (Panchami tithi), I of Gotra ____ Mr. ____ (the host) did the puja of Saraswati with her associates (pen and inkpot, that symbolizes knowledge) and related puja functions. I am giving this metal coin as honorarium to the Brahmin of ____ gotra and ____ name

In the name of Lord Vishnu.

If the priest is offering on behalf of the host, replace “sampradadey” by “dadani”.
Conciliatory Prayer

बैगुण्य समाधान

We pray to Lord Vishnu to protect us when we make mistakes. Like our heavenly father, He always gives us the necessary shelter, knowingly that we will make mistakes. We can only do our best and leave the rest to Him.

Take a little water in your right palm and after chanting the following mantra in the name of Lord Vishnu, our preserver, pour the water into the puja plate. Then repeat the name of Vishnu ten times.

बिफुरोम जनन अन्य माधेस्थ्य बस्पके पञ्चमां तिंबी

--- अमुक शोत्र --- अमुक देवशोत्र कृतार्पिन बैगुण्य मन्याहार सहित

श्रीमा धर्म ज्ञान ज्ञानश्रमनार श्रीविष्णु मार्गशिरोऽधिः कृत्ये ।

Vishnur Om tatsad adya Magheymasi sukleypakshey

panchamam tithou

Amuka gotra Shri amuka devasharma (the devotee) kriteysmin

Lekhani masyadhara sahita Shri Shri Saraswati puja tat angibhuta

Jadbaigunyam jatam taddosha prashamanaya

Shri Vishnur nama smarana aham karishey |

To thy name, Oh Visnu, today in the month of

Magha (January-February), during the auspicious waxing moon or bright lunar fortnight (shukla) period, on the fifth day after new moon (Panchami tithi), I Mr. ---- (the devotee) did the puja of Saraswati with her pen and inkpot (that symbolize knowledge) and, in doing so, the mistakes that I incurred may be foregiven as I repeatedly take the name of Vishnu.
Chant (japa) in Vishnu’s name  
मन्त्र जप

*Mantra jap*

We pray to Vishnu to protect us when we make mistakes. Like the mother, He always gives us the necessary shelter, knowingly that we will make mistakes. We can only do our best and leave the rest to Him.

ॐ विष्णु
*Om Vishnu*

Oh my Lord Vishnu

Take the name of Vishnu ten times

Prostration  
प्रणाम

This is the benedictory prayer for Vishnu.

ॐ नमः ब्राह्मण्यदेव्ये गो-ब्राह्मणहित्याय च । 
जगाभिष्ट्याय कृष्णया गोविन्दया नमो नमः ।

*Om namo Brahmanya-devaya go-Brahmana hitaya ca । 
Jaga-dhitaya Krsnaya Govindaya namo namah ॥*

I offer my respectful obeisances to the Supreme (Brahman), who is the well wisher of the cows and the Brahmans (the keeper of our religious thoughts), who is the Lord of all living entities and known as Krishna (who removes darkness or ignorance) and Govinda (the reservoir of pleasure for all senses).

Accepting the Faults in Saraswati puja  
अच्छिद्राबधारण

Achidrabadharan

ॐ दृष्टेत्ततले देही मन्यादहर सहित श्रीश्रीभृगुवर्धितीयेव पुजार्क अच्छिद्र अशु । 

*Om kritaitat lekhanii mayadhar sahita । 
Shri Shri Saraswati devipuja achidram astu ॥*

151
In the name of the divine (Om), I have performed this puja of Goddess Saraswati along with the inkpot and pen (as symbols of knowledge) and in doing so I made many mistakes for which I am seeking apology.

Response of priest

The priest in return, on behalf of the Goddess, accepts the apology by saying,

ও অস্তু  
Om astu  
Be it so

Then take a little water in our right palm, chant the mantra and discard in the offering plate with devotion:

Concluding offer

Then pray to Lord Vishnu with folded hands.

ও মদ্যাকারাং পরিহ্রস্তম মাত্রাহীনঃ বদ্ধবৎ ।
পূর্ণঃ অব্ধুত তত্ত্বার্থম তত্ত্বার্থসৃষ্ট্যতে ।
ক্লাসিনঃ ক্লাসিনঃ ক্লাসিনঃ ক্লাসিনঃ
ওৎ প্রজিতঃ ময়া সেবি পরিপূর্ণঃ তত্ত্বমে ।
ওৎ কারেন মনসা বচা কেমনায় ওৎ কৃতঃ ময়া ।
তথ সর্বং পরিপূর্ণঃ তত্ত্ব প্রসাদ সুরেশব্রী ।

Om jadaksharam paribhrashtam matrahinancha jadbhabet ।
Purnam bhabatu tatsarbam tatprasadat sureshwara ।
Mantraheenam kriyaheenam bhaktiheenam Sureshvari ।
Jat pujitam maya Deva paripurnam tadastumey ॥
Om kayena manasa bacha karmana jat kritam maya ।
Tat sarbam paripurnam tad prasad Sureshwari ॥
All the mistakes I incurred in reading the script,
Oh Lord make them perfect by your grace. I do not know the mantras. The rituals or even I do not have the devotion to perform them right. Yet what I did, Oh Lord, make them right. Whatever I have performed to worship you by dedicating my body, mind, speech and words, please make them all perfect with your blessings Oh Goddess Saraswati.

Etad sarbam karmaphalam
Shri Saraswati charaney samarpayami
I am dedicating all the results of all what I have done (puja ceremony) to the feet of the Goddess.
Part 4

ASSOCIATED PUJA ACTIVITIES

- Puja offerings for individual families
  লোক পুজ া
  Loka puja

- Initiation of studies
  হাতে খড়ি
  Hatey khari
During the Saraswati puja (and other pujas) individual families offer personalized puja materials (fruits, sweets, money as dakshina etc.) to seek the favor of the Goddess for the family. This is handled by the priest and the names of the family members and the names of the gotras are written on a piece of paper and left on the basket of offering. The priest after the initial invocation takes the names of individuals while offering the puja and finally concludes with flower offerings, prayers and arati. The goal is to seek blessing from the Goddess for the family as a special service.

**PUJA OFFERINGS FOR INDIVIDUAL FAMILIES**

**Invocation prayer**

With folded hands in front of your chest say

```
Om apabitra pabitroba sarbabashan gatopiba
Jah smaret pundarikaksha sa baiya abhyantara suchi.
Namaha sarbamangala mongallyam bareynyam baradam shubham
Narayanam namahaskrita sarba karmani karayet.
He who, impure or pure, remembers
the lotus-eyed Lord Pundarikaksha Vishnu
in all situations become purified inside and out.
We bow to Lord Narayana Who is all auspicious,
most adorable beneficial and kind.
Remembering His name we should begin all our work.
```

Hold the *kushi* on your left palm and put little water, rice, a flower and a supari in the spoon (*kushi*). Then chant the *sankalpa* (resolution), announcing the auspicious day and the identification of the family. At the end the priest will take his name as the person who is offering on behalf of the family. For each sankalpa, chane the water and flower but
keep the supari. If there are too many offerings, complete all the sankalpas and then make the offerings at one time putting flower on each offering.

**Resolution**

**Sankalpa**

বিষ্ণুরোম তৎসং অদ্যা মাত্রা মনি মকর রাশিঃ ভাষার ভর্পাকে পঞ্চমাং তিথী অমুকগোষ্ঠী অমুক দেবর্য্যি প্রীতিকাম গণপাতি নানাদেবতা পৃজপুর্ভক দেবর্যি সম্বাদের সহিত প্রীতিকাম পূজন কর্মচার করিষু

(পূজারে-প্রীতিকাম অমুক দেবর্য্যি বা দাস করিষু)

Vishnurom tatsad adya Magheymasi Makra rashishhey Bhaskarey sukleypakshye panchamam tithou amuka gotra Shri amuka devasharma (name of the devotee)

Shri Saraswati preetekamah Ganeshadi nana devata puja purbaka

Lekhani-masyadhah sahita Shri Saraswati pujan karmaham karishey

(Name of priest and his gotra, karishyami)

Unto the glory of Visnu in the month of Magha (January-February), during the auspicious waxing moon or bright lunar fortnight (shukla paksha) period, on the fifth day after new moon (Panchami tithi), Mr. _____ (the name of the devotee and his Gotra) has resolved to perform the puja of Goddess Saraswati, with the pen and the inkpot (symbols of knowledge), and along with Lord Ganesh and other Gods.

I of _____ gotra, ______ devasharma (name of the priest) will perform the puja in behalf of the devotee.

**Prostration**

প্রানম

Praanam

Sprinkle little water on the offering and chant the manatra:

อาศ ภิষี ปกิริ นี নমঃ

Owing Shri Shri Saraswatai namah

My reverence to the Mother Goddess Saraswati
Made the flower offering পূজ্যং পৌঃ (pushpanjali – flower offering)

ও অজ্ঞাতঃ নাম নিত্যং সরবর্ত্ত্যঃ নামো নমঃ। বেদ-বেদাঙ্ক-বিদ্যাঙ্ক-বিন্যাসং বিন্যাস এবচ।
এশ ভট্রনঃ পূজ্যং পৌঃ ও এং প্রীতিসরবর্ত্ত্যঃ নমঃ।

Om bhadra kakali namonityam Saraswatai namo namah |Veda Vedanta
Vedama vidhyansthanyabhya eba ca |Esha sachandana pushpanjali
Om Owing Shri Shri Saraswatai namah ||
I bow to the beautiful goddess
who removes our darkness (kali), Saraswati,
who gives us the knowledge of the Vedas.
I am offering this flower, dipped in sandalwood,
to her name with reverence.

Adoration With Lamp
আরতি
Arati

Take an incense and do arati for the family, circling the dhup (incense)
on the offerings placed before the goddess. At the end do pranam:

সরস্বতী মহাভজ্যং বিদ্যে কমললোচনে।
বিদ্যাঙ্ক বিশালক্ষি বিদ্যাং দেহি নমস্তে।
এশ ভট্রনঃ পূজ্যং পৌঃ ও এং প্রীতিসরবর্ত্ত্যঃ নমঃ।

Saraswati mahabhagey vidye kamala lochaney |
Vidyarupey beeshalakshi vidyam dehe namastutey ||
Esha sachandana pushpanjali Om Owing Saraswatai namah ||

Note: In public gatherings with many offerings, it is customary to
identify all families first and then complete the puja offerings.
INITIATION OF STUDY

Vidyarambha

Traditionally, the education of a child starts at the age of five. Many families prefer to start to perform the ritual on the day of Saraswati puja. Hence it is described here. It can, however, be done on any other auspicious day.

Invocation hymn

Swastisukta

Take rice in your hand and after completing the mantra throw the rice three times in the offering plate, coinciding with the last mantra, which is repeated three times.

Om somam rajanam Varuna Agnim ambara bhamah, Adityam Vishnum Surjyam Brahmananca Brihaspatim ||
Om swasti nah Indro Bridhashrava swasti nah Pusha Viswavedah ||
Swasti nan-Tarkshyo arishtanemih swasti no Brihaspatirdadhatu ||
Om swasti, Om swasti, Om swasti ||

With praises to the glory of Soma, Moon, Varuna, Agni, Sun, Vishnu, Brahma and Brihaspati; with my prayers to mighty Indra, learned Pusha, undefeated Taksha, and the care taker of Gods, Brihaspati, seeking their blessings on us.
Divine witness

Sakhyo mantra

Before starting we pray for the blessing of the weather gods and spirits that surrounds us:

ॐ सुर्या सोमा यमः कालः सत्या तूतानाहक्षणा ।
पवनो विन्दुपटिभुजारकां धरामवरः ।
ब्रह्मां शासनमानस्य कप्पलमिह साक्षिफः ॥

Om surjya somo yamah kalah, sandhey bhuta naha khyapa ।
Pavano dikpatirbhumili akasham khacaramarah ।
Brahmam shasanamasthaya kalpadwa miha sannidhim ॥

Oh the Sun, Moon, Yama, kalpa, morning, evening, living entities of the world, day, night, wind, Lords of the ten directions, earth, sky, the flying living creatures, the Gods, by the order of the Supreme Lord, (Brahma) please assemble here to witness my undertakings.

Resolution (Solemn vow)

Saṅkalpa

Father/mother or the priest does the resolution (sankalpa), facing north.

Take the kushi on left palm with little water and rice. Put a flower, little sandalwood and a hartaki (or supari). Cover the kushi with right palm and chant the mantra:

ॐ विष्णुरोम तत्सं अद्य अमुक्के मासि अमुक रंके अमुकतिरी ।
अमुकोग्रास प्री करमे, अमुको देष्यर्मा, (priest)
अमुकोग्रास प्री करमे, अमुक देष्यर्मा, (parent)
अमुकोग्रास प्री करमे, अमुक देष्यर्मा, (child)

विश्वासिक्यालक्यामा विश्वासिक्यालक्यामा पूजनमं रसिक्यामि ।

Om Vishnurom tatsat adya amukey _____ masi (month),
In the name of Lord Vishnu, on today’s auspicious day (fill in month, day and lunar position), I the priest of this gotra and name is offering oblation to Vishnu and other Gods, on behalf of ____ (name and gotra of the devotee or jajamana) with the goal of initiating the learning in his life.

Invocation Prayers

Offer flower as expressing your reverence to Ganesh, Vishnu, and offer flower three times to Lord Vishnu with the following mantra:

ఓ బిష్ణు - ఓ బిష్ణు - ఓ బిష్ణు
ఓ తాడి- బిష్ణు పరమం పదమే సదాపాండి సూరాం దివి ద్రిపురాతము.

Om Vishnu - Om Vishnu - Om Vishnu
Om Tad-Vishnu paramam padam
Sada pashyanti soorayah dibi-iba chakshuratatam

Om Vishnu - Om Vishnu - Om Vishnu
In the name of Lord Vishnu!

As the widely open eyes can see the sky clearly without any obstruction, so the wise always see Lord Vishnu with their divine vision.

Hail to Lord Vishnu.

Perform five offerings (incense or dhup, lamp or deep, flower or pushpa, food platter or naivedya, water or achmania) to Vishnu, ending with “Namah Vishnabey namah”.

ఓ బిష్ణు నమమ్

Om Vishnabey namah
I bow to Lord Vishnu

Finally offer a tulsi to Vishnu:

오 나마 빛나는 비신바에 파람아만두 스바하

*Om namastey bahurupaya Vishnabey paramatmaney swaaha*

*I bow to the numerous forms of Lord Vishnu the Super soul and unto your name*

### Obeisance to Goddess Saraswati

At the end make five offerings to Saraswati (as described above), ending with “*Om namah Saraswatai namah*”

এ ও গ্রীষ্মকালী নাম

*Owing Shri Shri Saraswatai namah*

*My reverence to the Mother Goddess Saraswati*

Then the child joins the father/mother to offer *পুষ্পাঞ্জলি* (pushpanjali – flower offering) three times together with his/her parents:

ও অকালী নাম নিয়া সরবতী নামা নাম

বেদ-বেদান্ত-বিদ্যাস্থানে এবচ।

এই সাংস্কৃতিক পুষ্পাঞ্জলিতে ও এই গ্রীষ্মকালী নামা ||11||

*Om bhadrakalai namonityam Saraswatai namo namah* |

*Veda Vedanta Vedama vidhyasthaneybhya eba cha* |

*Esha sachandana pushpanjalih* |

*Om Owing Shri Shri Saraswatai namah* ||II||

*I bow to the beautiful goddess who removes our darkness (kali), Saraswati, who gives us the knowledge of the Vedas. I am offering this flower to her name with reverence.*

161
Prostration

Pranam

At the end do pranam:

Saraswati mahabhagey vidyey kamala lochaney |
Vidyarupey beeshalakshi vidyam dehee namastutey ||
Oh Goddess Saraswati with lotus eyes holding all the knowledge of the world
You are the emblem of knowledge, Oh Great Goddess, bless me with more knowledge

The First Writing

Hatekhdi

Hateykhori

Holding the hand of the child (priest or father) write both Bengali and English alphabets:

“অ” “আ” “ক” “ঝ”
A, B, C, D

Rewarding the priest

Dakshina

Vishnur Om tatsad adya Magheymasi sukleypakshye
panchamam tithou ---- gotra Shri ---- devasharma (the host)
kriteysminVidyarambha samatartham amuk gotra Shri amuka
devasharma (priest)
dakshina midam kancham tanmulam tubhyamaham sampradade ||
To thy name, Oh Visnu, today in the month of Magha (January-February), during the auspicious waxing moon or bright lunar fortnight (shukla) period, on the fifth day after new moon (Panchami tithi), I of Gotra ___ Mr. ____ (the host) upon the completion of Vidyarambha, I am rewarding the priest _____ gotra and name with humility and reverence.

Prayer Of Forgiveness

अच्छ्राब्द्धरन
Achidrabdharan

ॐ यदक्षरं परिभ्रस्तं मत्राहीनं बधवेৎ।
पूर्णं जलं तदस्वं तुंगस्वं सुरेश्वरी।

Om yadakharam paribharshtam matrahinancha jadbhabet |
Purnam bhabatu tatsarbam tatprasadat sureshwari |

All the mistakes I incurred in reading the script, Oh Lord makes them perfect by your grace.
Introduction

Saraswati puja is a popular puja and performed almost in every home of a Bengali family in one or other. It is especially done in families where the children are studying. All educated parents encourage the children to decorate and do the puja that also allows them to learn our spiritual approach to God. They believe by worshipping Mother Saraswati they will earn more knowledge in their student life which is essential for their future.

Hence, we are presenting here the abridged version of Saraswati puja that will take about 30 minutes or less if all arrangements are done
PART 5: Abridged Version of Saraswati Puja

ahead of time. For puja arrangements and things required, see the introductory pages.

All the mantras are available in the enlarged version but repeated here for convenience so that the worshipper does not have to turn pages. Enlarged version is needed for public puja where the puja must be stretched for few hours in order to encourage public participation.

INVOCATION PRAYER

**Obeisance to Lord Vishnu**

*bikushnaron*

*Vishnu smaran*

**Sip water in the name of Vishnu**

*achman*

*Achman*

Sipping water in the name of Vishnu: Take a spoonful of water in the palm of the right hand forming a dip like a boat. The amount of water is said to be sufficient to immerse a mustard seed. Sip the water three times and each time take the name of Vishnu and say this mantra.

![Image of a person sipping water](image)

\[\text{O Vishnu!, O Vishnu!, O Vishnu!, O Vishnu!, O Vishnu!, O Vishnu!}\]

Glory to Lord Vishnu

Then with folded hands in front of your chest say

\[\text{O Tad-Vishnoh paramam padam}
Sada pashyanti soorayah dibiba chakshuratatam
Om Vishnu – Om Vishnu – Om Vishnu}\]

As the widely open eyes can see the sky clearly without any obstruction, so the wise always see Lord Vishnu with their divine vision.

Hail to Lord Vishnu.
Om apabitra pabitra ba sarabashan gatopibaa
jahsmaret pundarikaksha sa bajya antarasuchi.

Namaha sarva mamala mamalyam varayenam baradam shubham

Narayanam namaskritya sorvakarmani kaarayet.

He who, impure or pure, remembers
lotus-eyed lord Pundarikaksha, Vishnu,
in all situations, becomes purified inside and out.
We bow to Lord Narayana who is all auspicious,
most adorable, beneficial and kind.
Remembering His name we should begin all our work.

Offerings to Vishnu

Gandhadir archana

Take a flower, dipped in sandalwood paste, in your right hand. Chant the
mantra and then discard it in the copper plate meant for offering (tamra
patra).

Om Vishnabey namah ||
My reverence to you Oh Vishnu

Bong! Etasmai gandhadibhyo namah |
Etet gandhapushpey etadhipataye Sri Vishnabey namah |
Etat sampadanaaya pujaniya devataganebhyo namah ||

Uttering the primordial sound of Bong,
I am offering the scented flower to the feet of
Lord Vishnu, and also offering herewith my deep respect
to all the revered Gods.
PART 5: Abridged Version of Saraswati Puja

Gayatri prayer

ॐ भूर्भुवाभुवः, तत सवितुरेवनि, भर्गो देवस्य धीमहि। ब्रह्मा रो मा प्रहोमयात ऋ॥
Om bhur-bhunya-svaha tat sabitur varenya
bhargo devashya dhamahi
Dhiyo yo nah prachodayat Om \|
He who is adored by all over the universe –
heaven, earth and underground,
Destroy the ignorance in me and enlighten my intellect (soul).

Offering to the sun

ॐ एहि सुर्य सहस्राण्षो तेजोराशि जगतपते॥
Anukampa mam bhaktam grihanargham divakaram.
Oh the Sun God! Oh the emitter of thousands of rays over the universe,
bless me, your devotee, and receive my offering, Oh the day maker.

SARASWATI PUJA
Auspicious beginning

Sakhyamantra

With Folded hand in front of your chest chant:

ॐ सूर्या हौमा ययाः कालः सत्यो बुद्धायं कप्पा॥
Pabano dikpatir-bhumih-aksharam kharah mara.
Bhramam shasanomasthayaha kalpadhwamiha sannidhim.
Om tatsot.
Om ayamarambha shubhaya bhawatu.
The spirits in all the planets, all the visible and invisible
Gods and Goddesses, wherever they are,  
no matter what time it is now  
I pray everybody’s presence here.  
Let the holy occasion begin.

Seeking Divine Blessing

Take rice in your hand and offer it to the names of various Gods controlling the environment, appealing to them to bring success in the completion of your puja offering. While chanting the mantra throw the rice three times in the offering plate, coinciding with the last mantra (Om swasti).

Om somam rajanam Varuna-m-Agni-m-ambara bhamaha,  
Adityam Vishnum Surjyam Brahmanancha Brihaspatim ||
Om swasti nah Indro Bridhahrrava swasti nah Pusha Viswavedah |
Swasti nastarkshyo arishtanemih |
Swasti no Brihaspati-r-dadhatu |
Om swasti, Om swasti, Om swasti ||

I offer my praises to the glory of Moon (Som), Varuna, Agni, Sun, Vishnu, Brahma and Brihaspati; with my prayers to mighty Indra, learned Pusha, undefeated Taksha, and the caretaker of Gods, Brihaspati, seeking their blessings on us.
SANCTIFICATION

In the following rituals you consecrate the water that you are going to offer and the seat and earth on which you are sitting.

Calling for sacred rivers

Dip your right hand index finger into the water of the sanctified water vessel (kosha) and chant the following mantras for its sanctification.

Om Gamey cha Yamunaye chaiba Godabori SarawatI, Narmadaye, Sindnu, Kabaeri jalaye asmin sannidhim kuru.

Let all the holy rivers (seven) – Ganga, Jamuna, Godavari, Saraswati, Narmada, Sindhu, and Kaberi, merge into this water to sanctify.

Invocation prayer

Before starting the actual puja which is dedicated to the deity on the dias (Saraswati) a few of the invocation prayers are repeated.

Etey gandhapushpay Om Ganeshaya namah 
Etey gandhapushpey Om Narayanaya namah 
Etey gandhapushpey Om shri gurubey namah 
Etey gandhapushpey Om Brahmanebhyo namah 
My humble prayers to various Gods
I am offering these scented flowers to Lord Ganesh, Lord Narayana (Vishnu), to my teacher (Guru) and to the learned Brahmin, the spiritual inspiration.

**Meditation of Saraswati**

*dhyan*
*Dhyan*

Take the flower in left palm with the Kurma mudra (কুর্মমুদ্রা) position and meditate on the image of Saraswati. When the image is established in your heart discard the flower on the plate in front of you while chanting the mantra:

```
Om taruna-shakalam-indor-bibhrati shubhra-kaantih 
kuca-bhara-namitaami sannisanna sitaabje 
nija-kara-kamala-udyat-lekhani pustaka shrih 
Sakala-bibhava-siddhyai paatu baag-devataa namah ||
```

We bow to the Goddess of learning who is radiating soothing moonlight of white complexion, bend slightly because of her heavy breasts, and sits on a white lotus; her lotus-shaped hands are holding book and pen. May the Goddess of learning help us to acquire all the glories and names.

**OFFERINGS**

(Any five things)

**Flower**

*puopa*
*Pushpa*

Place a white flower at the feet of the Goddess followed by this mantra:
Om pushpammanoharam divyam sugandha deva nirmitam |
Hridyam adbhutam aghreyam devi dattam pragrijyatam ||
Etad pushpani Om Owing Saraswatwai namah ||
This beautiful divine flower with fragrance is created by God.
I am offering it to you whose smell captures the heart.
Here is the flower O Goddess Saraswati.

Incense

Dhup

Light a new incense stick, burn it, do arati while chanting the following mantra and then place it on its stand.

Om banaspati rasho divyo gandhadyah sumanoharah |
Maya nivedito bhaktya dhupoham pratigrijhatam |
Esha dhupah Om Owing Saraswatwai namah ||
Here is the divine extract from plants with heartwarming smell.
Please accept my offering of this incense, with great reverence,
Oh Goddess Saraswati.

Lamp

Pradeep

Look at the burning lamp with a flower in your right hand and chant the following mantra. After chanting throw the flower towards the lamp.

Om parjñāpati raviṣṭāḥ caḥaṃkṛtiḥ o vajraṃ tadbhojaḥ.
In this flame is like that of the illuminations of the sun and the moon. In that illumination, Oh Goddess, take the divine light as I offer to you with reverence.

Garland

Look at the garland that the deity is wearing or touch the garland placed on the holy pitcher (ghat) and chant the following mantra:

Om sutren grathitam malyam nana pushpa samanwitam
Srijuktam lambamananca grahana parameshwari
Esha pushpamalyam Om Owing Saraswatwai namah

Take this garland, made of many kinds of flowers, stuck together on a long thread, Oh the great Goddess. Herewith I offer the garland to you Oh, Goddess Saraswati.

Mound of rice with sweet and fruits

Locate the food platter with wet rice, sweet and fruits. Put a flower on the platter and chant:

Om naivedyam ghritasamjuktam nana drabyam samanwitam
Maya niveditam bhaktya grihana twam Bageshwari
Idam sopakaranamanna naivedyam Om Owing Saraswatai namah

Here the platter of food made with consecrated butter (ghee) and combination of many things.

I am offering the platter to you with great reverence.

Please accept it. Here is the food platter together with the implements and I offer this to you

Oh Goddess Saraswati with humility.

Fruits

Phalamulani

Put flowers or sprinkle water, as mark of offering, on the plates with cut or whole fruits.

Om! Phalamulani sarbani gramya aranyani yani cha
Nanabidha sugandhini grinha Devi yathasukham
Etani phalamulani Om Saraswatwai namah

All these fruits, collected from village and forest, with good taste and smell, accept it from me immediately

Oh the Goddess Saraswati.

Sweets

Modak (a round-shaped sweet preparation)

Place flowers or sprinkle little water on all the displays of sweets while chanting the following mantras:

Om modakam swadasamjuktam sarkaradi binirimitam
Suramyam madhuram bhoyoja devi dattam pratigrijyatam
Esha modakam Om Saraswatwai namah

These tasteful round-shaped sweets (মোলক), made out of sugar, good-looking
sweet edibles I am giving you Oh Goddess, please accept them.
Here are the round-shaped sweets for you Oh Goddess Saraswati.

Offering water to drink

Achmaniya

Take a little water in the kushi (spoon) and drop it in the first glass of water after completing the following mantra:

ॐ মন্দাকিন্যায় যজ্ঞারি সর্বপাপহর্ষ শুভম।
ং মায়া ভক্তার নিৰ্বিকল্প ম।
ইষ্টদক্ষিণায় ও এং সর্বজৈৰ্য নমঃ।

Om mandakinyastu jadbari sarbapapa haram shubham 
Grihana achmaniam twam maya bhaktya niveditam ||
Idam achmanium Om Owing Saraswatwi namah ||

Herewith I am offering to you the holy Ganga water that takes away all sin and brings happiness. As I offer that water with devotion, please oblige me by sipping that water.

The Second Offering of Water

Punarachmania

Take a little water in the kushi and drop it in the second glass after completing the following mantra:

ॐ উচিস্থো উপয়া সুচির্যাপি যাশ্যা স্মরনামত্রাত।
হস্তিমাপন্তি অষ্টম তে পুনরাচমনীয়ম।
ইসম পুনরাচমনীয়ম ও এং সর্বজৈৰ্য নমঃ।

Om ucistho upya sucirbyapi yashya smaranamatratah 
Sudhimapnoti tasai tey punarachmaniakam ||
Idam punaracmanium Om Owing Saraswatai namah |  
The contaminated water (ucistha) and impure becomes pure by taking your name. That purified water I am offering herewith as the second serving. Please oblige me by accepting the second glass of water.

OBEISANCE TO THE ICONOGRAPHIES

Put a flower on each of the following with reverence and utter the corresponding mantra:

To Book

ॐ पुस्केभ्यो नमः

Oṃ pushkebhīyo namah
Reverence to the book, the emblem of knowledge.

To Inkpot

ॐ मन्याधराय नमः

Oṃ masyadharaya namah
Reverence to the inkpot as an emblem of writing knowledge.

To Pen

ॐ लेखनै नमः

Oṃ lekhanai namah
Reverence to the pen, as the emblem of writing knowledge.

To Musical instruments

ॐ बाद्यायन्त्र आदिभ्यो नमः

Oṃ badyajantra adibhyo namah
Reverence to the musical instruments.

To Swan

ॐ हंसाय नमः

Oṃ Hamsaya namah
Reverence to the swan, Saraswati’s pet and emblem of purity.
Mass flower offering

Pushpanjali
(Flowr offering)

Pushpanjali is the offering of flowers to Goddess Saraswati. It has four parts – Vishnu smaran, flower offering (anjali), prostration (Pronam, pranam) and Vandana (vandana, bandana).

Everyone stand, focus on offering, take a flower and pray with folded hands holding the flower in between.

OM TAD-VISHNOH PARAMAM PADAM
SADA PASYANTI SURAYAH DIVIIVA CHAKSHURATATAM
OM VISHNUH - OM VISHNUH - OM VISHNUH
Hail Lord Vishnu (our preserver).
As the widely open eyes can see the clear sky without any obstruction, so the wise always see the lotus feet of omniscient Lord Vishnu with their divine vision.
Hail to Lord Vishnu!

OM SARASWATAI NAMO NITYAM, BHADRAKALYAI NAMOH
VEDA VEDANTA VEDAMA VIDHYASTHANEYBHAYA EBA CHA
ESHAT PUSHPANJALI OM OWING SARASWATAI NAMAH
I bow to the beautiful goddess who removes our darkness (kali), Saraswati, who gives us the knowledge of the Vedas.
I am offering this flower to her name with reverence.
Om Sa mey basatu jibhayam veena pustakadharini
Murari ballavam devi sarbashukla Saraswati

Rest on my tongue Oh the holder of veena (string instrument) and books (Saraswati, the icon of knowledge). Oh the favorite of Vishnu, pure and shining white.

Saraswati mahabhagey vidyey kamala lochaney
Vidyarupey bishalakshi vidyang dehi namastutey

Here is the offering of the sandalwood-dipped flower to your name Oh glorious Saraswati.

Saraswati prayer in Bengali

Eshogo janani esho binapani devo danaba mandita
Sweta basana sweta bhusana sweta chandana charchita.

Edited by Dilip Bhaumik (Lyric writer of Kolkata Radio Station)
Eshogo janani esho binapani devo danaba mandita
Sweta basana sweta bhusana sweta chandana charchita.
Mochao bharati modero kalmia jalia dao ma gyanero deep,
Deepto karama lupto garima thakigo janoma toma sameep
Eshogo janani esho binapani devo danaba mandita
Sweta basana sweta bhusana sweta chandana charchita.

Come Oh mother Saraswati (holding the veena),
surrounded by numerous Gods.
You are wearing white clothes and ornaments marked with
white sandalwood come sitting on lotus with thousand petals.
I will wash your bare feet with my tears
by your compassion and blessing my life will be worthwhile.
Wipe out the darkness from our hearts.
Oh Goddess of the land, light the candle of knowledge in our
heart, brightens the hidden glory and keep me close to you.

Adoration with lamp (Arati)

Sequence

Panchapradeep
Jalasankha (conch)
Cloth
Flower
Dhup
Camphor
Fan (chamar)

The sequence of adoration symbolizes the honorable reception
of the Goddes by leading with the lamp, washing her feet with water
from jalasankha, cloth to wipe her feet, flower to honor the reception,
dhup ir incense to fragrant the air for her presence, camphor to purify
the air and fan to let her rest.
Concluding prayer of appeal

Prarthana

She, Saraswati, Bhagavati (goddess of knowledge), who is adorned with a garland of lilies (kundendu) as white as snow, who is clad in white clothes, holding a veena, whose hand is raised to protect the seeker, who is seated on a white lotus, who is worshipped by Brahma, Vishnu and Sankara (Shiva),

May She the Mother Goddess Saraswati dispel my ignorance completely!

Oh the great Goddess Saraswati, the mother of the Vedas, I have done my best in accordance with the custom; please bless me always with happiness.
QUESTIONS, SYMBOLS AND TERMINOLOGIES

What is Om?

Om or Aum is the basis of all sounds, the universal symbolic word for divinity. Hence every mantra begins with Om, connecting our thoughts with divinity.

Aum became the sacred word in Vedas, Hum of the Tibetans, Amin of the muslems, and Amen of the Egyptians, Greeks, Romans, Jews and Christians. Amen in Hebrew means “Sure” and “Faithful”. Aum is the all-pervading sound emanating from the Invisible Cosmic Vibration (Holy Ghost of Christians), God in His aspect of Creator; the “Word” of the Bible, the voice of the creation, testifying the divine presence in every atom. Aum can be heard within you (Anahata) as you plug your ears and close your eyes focusing on the sound that is vibrating within your body. In biological terms, it is the sound of the inner function of the body that includes the heartbeat.

In the imagination of the prehistoric sages, Om originated as the primordial sound, the sound that took place at the time of the Creation of the Universe, which the scientists of the modern era call “Big Bam” in the theory of creation by Sir James Jeans.

To which direction the devotee/priest should face, while performing the puja?

By tradition, the priest faces east for all deities. In case of Goddess, facing north is recommended. The author, however, believes that the above tradition may be not be emphasized on a global scale in the new age. A convenient location is all that is needed with a sincere heart to serve the Lord.
CULTURAL SYMBOLS OF HINDUS

Havan

Havan is a ritual of fire worship in Hindus. Fire was discovered (or, more precisely, the controlled use of fire) probably about 70,000 years ago (Early Stone Age); although its opportunistic use can be traced to 400,000 years back. Discovery of the controlled use of fire marked the dominance of humans over other animals. Because of its numerous use and use in our daily lives, fire or Agni, became one of the most important Gods of the Hindus.

Deep (lamp)

A lamp is an earthen saucer like container, filled with ghee or butter with a twisted cotton tape immersed in it. It is lighted in every Hindu household and temple in India. The cotton tape keeps sucking the ghee to yield a cool bright light, a flame. In nature the flame is considered to be the source of infinite energy of positive currents. In early days lamp was the only source of light to see in darkness. Great emphasis is also placed on performing “Aarati” in India during worship of any deity. The aarti flame is moved around the idol for the devotees to have a good look of the deity, and then the devotees put out their palms to receive the aarti aura for their good health and prosperity.

Betel Leaf (paan)

During worship or rituals, leaves from some select trees (mamo, betel leaf, banana) are used as essential accessories, but among them Betel Leaf enjoys a place of pride in India. During marriage, the bride appears with covered eyes, using betel leaves before she takes her first look at the groom. The use of betel leaf is considered as a noble trait and on all auspicious celebrations; betel leaf has become a symbolic item denoting freshness and prosperity. The Skanda Purana says that
the Betel Leaf was obtained during the ocean churning (Samudramanthan) by the Gods and demons. It has many rich herbal properties.

While performing Satyanarayana puja the Bengalis place five betel leaves on the platform or on the side with betel nut (supari), sweet and coin. This is called mokama. At the end of the puja this is given to five married women to receive their blessing for the host family. Most common use of betel leaf is as after-dinner treat for chewing Areca nut (Areca catechu) or betel nut (supari) wrapped in it. The betel nut is a mild stimulant which can be further promoted by the use of tobacco products that contributes nicotine.

**Tilak, Dot and Bindi**

It is the display of the position of the wearer. Vermillion powder is put on the forehead of women in order to display their marital status of the woman. Wearing of the vermillion powder or *sindur* is considered as auspicious for married women. It can also be used as a beauty spot (*bindi*). Ancient Indian had an indomitable urge to communicate his thoughts and so symbols were developed to communicate the religious denomination, sect or ideology. The commonly used materials for putting the mark are sandalwood paste, vermillion (*sindur*), lime, turmeric, saffron, musk, agar, sandal and ash (*bibhuti*) for men and women.

**Swastik Mark**

The word swastika comes from the Sanskrit word *suastika* (*su* means good and *asti* means well-being), meaning any lucky or auspicious object. Its origin probably dates back to the Indus Valley Civilization. It is a sacred symbol of good luck and eternity in many other ancient civilizations. The Aryans adopted the Swastik as a symbol for the good of humanity. Then the Hindus added some more arms to the Swastik to
denote happiness in married life and worldly successes. The holy pitcher carries the mark of swastik.

Sacred Thread

Sacred thread is a bunch of cotton threads, with nine cords in three bunches of three, all of same length. The sacred thread is worn by conservative Brahmins and some other castes. It normally hams from the left shoulder down under the right shoulder (see picture). This position of the sacred thread is called Upaviti. At the performance of some inauspicious ceremonies (like death or tarpan) one should be Prachnaviti when the sacred thread should ham from the right shoulder. At times the sacred thread is chamed to Niviti position when the sacred thread is worn round the neck like a garland.

Wearing of the sacred thread signifies that the Brahmin is initiated to the spiritual knowledge through the ceremony of Upanayana. The thought behind the Upanayana is followed by other religions also. Short background information may not be inappropriate.

A Brahmin takes birth twice – dwija (twice-born). The first birth is from the natural mother and father like any other animal. The second birth is from Savitri (Goddess of Knowledge) and the teacher or guru is his father in his natural age of eight. In early days, at the age of eight the Brahmin boy was sent to the
teacher (guru). He stayed in the ashram or hermitage for four years. There he was initiated to Brahminhood (Savitri or Gayatri initiation) and received the spiritual knowledge from the guru. His life was simple (Brahmachari), abstained from all pleasures of life, shaved his head, wore only two sets of dresses, lived on begging and supported by the community. He cooked for the teacher and did all his household chores. During his stay with the teacher he wore three girdles – three strands of cotton thread, munja grass and deer skin. When he left the ashram, at the age of twelve, the girdles of Munja grass and deer skin were replaced by two sets of cotton girdles like the one he was already wearing. Thus he carries home nine threads of cotton, tied in three bunches, which is called यज्ञोपवीत, Yajnopavita.

**Calls for prayers**

*Ringing bells:*

In all religions there are ways to herald calls for the prayers. Thus ringing of church bell and Azan in Muslims are comparable to ringing of bells in temples or during Hindu puja rituals. The metallic sound within a circular body in contained environment produces a resounding echo, which spreads in all directions. Hindu believers feel that the sound of bell invokes the deity’s blessings and purify the environment. There are other instruments to create similar sound like manjira that is played with devotional songs.

*Blowing of conch*

This is another way to draw attention towards spiritual activities. It heralds important events and auspicious celebrations and calls all the faithful for the worship of the deity. Conch is a type of shell through which wind is blown and it makes a typical sound. As the conch is a natural product, two conches rarely make exactly same sound. On the mythological picture, conch shell or Shankh was obtained as a gift from the ocean - churning by the Gods. The spiral formation inside the conch shell is symbolic of infinite space. All naturally occurring conch shells yield cosmic sounds, which can be heard by holding the shell close to
one’s ears. On the battlefield of Kurushetra in the Mahabharatha, every morning the blowing of the shankh, symbolized the starting of the war.

Uloo

In Bengalis uloo sound is created by rapidly moving the tongue while the wind is blown out with corresponding sound. It is the sound of auspicious occasions like marriage or during doing aarati.

Some Common Terminologies

Dhyan: Meditation on the image or deity in focus.
Pranam: Prostration. It can be done by touching the feet or by laying on the ground with folded hands stretched ahead towards the deity. One should always do pranam to elder people respecting their age-old wisdom.
Prarthana and Pronam
“Prarthana” is appeal and “pranam” is obeisance or bowing with humility
Namaskar: Casual form of offering respect. Put the palms together and hold them on the chest.
Stuti: Adoration of the deity.
Stob: Singing the glory
Prarthana: Appeal and request.
Stotra (सौत्र), Stab (स्तब) and Stuti (स्तुति)
Stotra, Stab and Stuti are Sanskrit words, essentially a hymn addressed to the Divinity. It is a way of elaborate praise for the divinity. It can be a prayer, a description, or a conversation. These expressions of divine appreciation comes from the same verb, stu (to praise), and basically all of these mean "praise". Stotras, stabs and stutis are part of popular devotional literature which are not bound by the strict rules as some other ancient Indian scriptures, such as found in Vedas and Upanishads.
Puja: Puja is the Hindu way of worshipping which includes all the above and offerings of various things in the name of the divinity.
Three basic Gods of the Hindus
Brahma, Vishnu and Maheshwar (Shiva) are the three basic Gods of Hindus associated with Creation, Preservation and Destruction of the
Universe. As the preservation of human race (and other living creatures) are in the hands of Vishnu, He is the foremost God of Invocation.

**Vedas and Chandas**

Vedas means knowledge. These are the core Hindu scriptures and perhaps written before 1700 BC. These are hymns and verses dedicated to various Gods. There are four Vedas: The Rigveda (the oldest), Yajurveda, Samaveda and Atharvaveda. The Vedas, in accordance with Hindu tradition, are apuruseya or in other words were not of human origin. They were supposed to have been directly revealed by God which the sages heard and remembered (*sruti* and *smriti*). The rituals described in this book are from Samaveda. In the traditional way the verses were written and sung in certain pattern, or meter, called *Chanda*. Chanda is the science of prosody in which the composition of the text has a specific quantity of alphabets. One has to learn it under strict guidance from traditional teachers in order to keep the sanctity. Thus the puja rituals were only limited to the Brahmins. This tradition is now chamed and all verses are now pronounced as mantras without the tune.

The main chandas are: *Gayatri*, *Ushnik*, *Anushtubh*, *Bruhati*, *Pankti*, *Trishtubh* and *Jagati*. These will be mentioned during the chanting of the mantras and hence its origin has been described here. In many verses you will also find the name of the creator which is attached with the chanda.
MUDRA

Mudra is the hand expression to communicate with God (deity, His icon). It can be compared with dancing. In the text throughout this book many mudras will be referred. We are quoting a few here.

Special offering

Bisheshargha

These mudras are shown while establishing the water-conch on a tripod (জলশঙ্ক, jalashankha). Divine spirits are called to settle in the water covered with a red flower and durba grass. The water is then sprinkled around for sanctification. All the mudras are shown over the water conch. Galini Mudra is used in some occasions during meditation. Uses of other mudras are referred in the text.
Five welcome mudras

Five welcome mudras are used to welcome God or deity. They indicate the gestures of welcome, sit, settle down, come close and face me.

Meditation Mudra

During meditation, flower is held between the palms in different positions the image of the deity is focused in the mental screen.
Addendum

PUJA UTENSILS

- **Diya**
- **Kosha and kushi**
- **Shankha (conch)**
- **Pancha p radeep**
- **Bell (ghanta)**
- **Karpura dani** (for burning camphor)
- **Dhunuchi** (for burning dhuna)
- **Plate to offer (tamrapatra)**
- **Arati plate**
- **Water conch (Jala sankha)**
- **Seats for worship**
- **Asan**
- **Lamp stand with 5 wicks**

189
# List of Puja Requirements

**Phardha mala**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bengali name</th>
<th>Close English Equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>নিপুৰ</td>
<td>Vermillion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>তিল</td>
<td>Sesame seed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>হরিতকী</td>
<td>Haritaki (a kind of nut)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>শূতেরিষা</td>
<td>White mustard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>মাষকলাই</td>
<td>Black lentil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>পঞ্চশ্যা</td>
<td>Five grains</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>পঞ্চরজ্জ</td>
<td>Five jewels (metals)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>পঞ্চগুড়ি</td>
<td>Five colored powders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>মধু</td>
<td>Honey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>পৈতা</td>
<td>Sacred thread</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>মধুপুর্ক</td>
<td>A bowl of five things (honey, ghee, yogurt, sugar and milk)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>কপূৰর</td>
<td>Camphrer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>জীরকাটি</td>
<td>Sticks with three arrow-heads for Holy pitcher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>তেকৈঠা</td>
<td>A triangle made of sticks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>দর্পণ</td>
<td>Mirror</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item</td>
<td>Translation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>আলতা</td>
<td>Red liquid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>চুবড়ি</td>
<td>Basket</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>চাদমালা</td>
<td>Decorative garland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>আর্সনালুরী</td>
<td>Seat and ring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>দায়াত</td>
<td>Inkpot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>কলম</td>
<td>Pen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ধূপ</td>
<td>Incense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>প্রস্পীপ</td>
<td>Lamp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ঘাটা ঘাট</td>
<td>Pitcher at the door</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>পুপ</td>
<td>Flower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>তুলসী</td>
<td>Tulasi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>দুর্বা</td>
<td>Durba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>নিচুপত্ত</td>
<td>Bel leaf (wood apple)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>পুপ মালা (বড়)</td>
<td>Garland (big)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>পুপ মালা (ছোট)</td>
<td>Garland (small)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>আম্বা পাতা</td>
<td>Mango leaves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ডাব বা নারকোল</td>
<td>Coconut (ripe or unripe)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>মিষ্টায়াম</td>
<td>Sweets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>মুড়কী</td>
<td>Sweet rice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>নৈবদ্ধ খালা ৪</td>
<td>Naivedya (food platter) 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>--------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>পঞ্চদেবতা</td>
<td>Five gods (five mounds)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>নবগ্রহ</td>
<td>Nine planets (nine mounds)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>প্রধান (লক্ষ্মী)</td>
<td>Principle deity (Lakshmi), one single mound</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>নারায়ণ</td>
<td>Narayana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>অন্যান্য নৈবদ্ধ</td>
<td>Other platter:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ফল</td>
<td>Fruit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>মিষ্টি</td>
<td>Sweet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>কুচা নৈবদ্ধ</td>
<td>Platter of small mounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>গ্লাস, ২</td>
<td>Tumblers 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ভাজ্য</td>
<td>Bhojya (uncooked food materials)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>চাল</td>
<td>Rice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>রামার মশলা</td>
<td>Spice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>গী (বা তল)</td>
<td>Ghee (or oil)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ডাল</td>
<td>Dal (pulse)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>সাত পাচ রকম</td>
<td>Vegetable (five kinds)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>পঞ্চমূৃত</td>
<td>Mixture of five sweets: Yogurt, milk, ghee, honey and sugar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>দেবীর শালী</td>
<td>Sari for Goddess</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ঘটর গামছা</td>
<td>Kitchen towel (red) for holy pitcher</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### ADDITIONAL ITEMS FOR SARASWATI PUJA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>বই</td>
<td>Book</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>পোষাত</td>
<td>Inkpot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>কলম</td>
<td>Pen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>বালকব্যস্থা</td>
<td>Musical instrument</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
FIVE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF LIFE
As represented by the Holy pitcher

- Earth (1)
- Water (2)
- Air (3)
- Energy (solar energy in leaves, 4)
- Cosmos (5)

- Flowers
- Leaves (Energy, Element 4)
- Red mark (Om or swastika)
- Ghat (Holy pitcher)
- Cloth on top (missing)
- Fruit (coconut)
- Pitcher with water (Element 2)
- Achmania (Water to drink)
- Punarachmania (second glass of water)
- Earth (Element 1)
- Air (Element 3)
- Cosmos (Element 5)
Holy pitcher and five great elements of life

According to Hindu believe (1700 B.C.) life consists of pancha mahabhuta, or "five great elements". They are:
- Tej (energy), Ap (water), kshiti (earth),
- Marut (air), Vyom (cosmos).

Human body is made of these five elements and after death the body dissolves into these elements of nature, may that be as ashes or by decay. Thus balancing cycle of nature. Because life depends on these five great elements Hindus relate them as God’s blessing.

Now you can evaluate the incorrect claim of the west as quoted below.

“In the fifth century B.C. Greek philosopher Empedocles originated the concept of four elements of nature: Fire, Water, Air, and Earth. These represent the realms of the cosmos within which, and of which, all things consist. These four elements were discussed in the writings of Plato, and the early Greek physicians Hippocrates and Galen used them to describe the four humors of the body. A century later, Aristotle and the Pythagoreans added the fifth element, which they called Ether. This element represents the substance of the heavenly bodies, which is latent in all things. This element is also called Quintessence or Space. These same five elements are also found in Hinduism, which influenced the philosophy of Yoga”.

The time has come to awaken our new generation to appreciate the contribution of our ancestors and feel proud about them by understanding the significance of puja rituals.

Authors
PUJA ARRANGEMENTS AND OFFERINGS

Continued to next page
Arrangement of offerings (naivedya) and raw food for priest (bhojya)
Bibhas C. Bandyopadhyay

Bibhas C. Bandyopadhyay, M.D. (Dr. Bandy) was born in Calcutta, India in 1941 in a middle class family with limited income. His parents were highly devoted and he grew in an atmosphere of Hindu faiths and believes.

After receiving his high school diploma Bibhas went to Ramkrishna Mission in Belgharia, near Kolkata for his undergraduate education. While in college he became a disciple of Swami Shankarananda Maharaj in Belur Math and started doing daily worship service in Ramkrishna Mission. This gave the foundation of his later interest of becoming a Hindu Priest.

Bibhas received his Medical Degree from Calcutta University in 1964 with a gold medal in pathology and honors in Medicine and Surgery. He came to United States in 1967 and joined Johns Hopkins University with specialization in ENT (Ear-Throat-Nose) and then became an Associate Professor in same institution serving until 1977. Dr. Bandy finally settled down in Hagerstown, Maryland, in 1977 and started his private practice in his specialty.

Working closely with Dr. Kanai L. Mukherjee for more than twenty five years, Dr. Bandy became a recognized priest of Washington, D.C. and Baltimore area, including his association with the Washington Kali Temple. His experience of performing puja rituals in the capital of the USA makes him a forerunner on the subject. He has generously volunteered in writing the Bengali script, selection of the mantras, and general collaboration with the author at every step. He is highly motivated in performing all Hindu Puja rituals in an organized manner and presenting their significance to the younger generation with great enthusiasm.
Aloka Chakravarty

Dr. Aloka Chakravarty is the Director of Biometrics at US Food and Drug Administration. She holds a Master of Statistics from Indian Statistical Institute and a Ph.D. in Mathematical Statistics from Temple University. During her 20 year tenure at the Agency, she has been instrumental in bringing many well-known drugs to market. She has published and presented extensively and is recognized as an international thought leader in the area of surrogate marker methodology. This method is used to accelerate drug approval in areas of unmet medical need such as HIV and Oncology. In 2010 she was awarded the FDA Award of Merit, the highest scientific achievement recognition at the Agency.

What sets Aloka apart from her academic and scientific accomplishments is her deep respect and understanding of Sanskrit language, Hindu religion and Puja rituals. She grew up in a progressive yet religious environment, learning the significance of the rituals from her grandmother and later from Dr. Mrs. Mukherjee. She continues to be committed to this massive undertaking despite her heavy work-life commitments.

Arunkanti Banerjee

Dr. Arunkanti Banerjee was a Principal Research Scientist in the Precision Pointing and Controls Group at the Lockheed Marin Advanced Technology Center at Palo Alto, before his retirement in 2010. He was born in 1942 and educated at the Bengal Engineering College (BE, 1962), Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur (PhD, 1969), and the University of Florida (PhD, 1972). Except for teaching from 1964-1969 at the IIT, he had spent his entire career working in
industry. This included work on the dynamics of shuttle booster recovery for Northrop, shuttle tethered satellite dynamics for Martin-Marietta, and INSAT solar panel deployment for Ford Aerospace. From 1982 to 2010, he worked at Lockheed, where he created a flexible multi-body dynamics code that became a workhorse tool for the company. He received the Engineer of the Year award from AIAA, San Francisco Chapter, in 1990, and in recognition of his numerous publications was invited by the European Space Agency to deliver a lecture on the State of the Art in Multi-body Dynamics in 1992, at the ESA headquarters at Amsterdam. He was an Associate Editor of the AIAA Journal of Guidance, Control, and Dynamics, and an Associate Fellow of the AIAA.

Dr. Banerjee joined the team of editors at the right time when we were desperately looking for some one to go through the voluminous work of Purohit Darpan. His knowledge of Sanskrit and Bengali proved to be an asset.

**Sovana Roychowdhuri**

Sovana Roychowdhuri edited the Sanskrit mantras quoted from Purohit Darpan., a valuable contribution. She started learning Sanskrit at her seventh grade. Her passion for learning more about India, its ancient language and philosophy, earned her two Master’s degrees. She teaches Sanskrit in a local colleges and runs a school at home to teach Sanskrit.
Dr. Bibha Mukherjee (1926-2007)

The pioneer of this project, Dr. Bibha Mukherjee (1926-2007) was a graduate of Calcutta University (1946) and received her Ph.D. in Geography from University of Iowa in 1964. She was married to Dr. Kanai Mukherjee in 1954. She served as professor at Banaras Hindu University (1947-1970) and later at Morgan State University, in Baltimore (MD, USA, 1972-2000). She retired as Professor Emeritus in 2000 after teaching for over 50 years.

She achieved success professionally while maintaining a strong commitment to her friends and family. In her quiet, unassuming way, she helped countless people through all manners of difficulty. She is most remembered for her selfless generosity, strong personality, love of knowledge and dedication to the Hindu culture. Loved and respected by all who knew her, she touched their lives in a special way.

These pages are reproduced from the diary of Dr. Bibha Mukherjee in her memory.
NEW AGE GRANDPARENTS

Kanai L. Mukherjee, Ph.D. Fulbright Professor,
Professor Emeritus in Medical Technology
and
Bibha Mukherjee, Ph.D.
Professor Emeritus in Geography

Professor Kanai Lal Mukherjee, was born in a priest family in Varanasi (July 4, 1926). As he was the eighth child, he was named after Krishna (Kanai). He learned his priesthood from his father Pandit Haribrahmo Bhattacharjee alias Mukherjee, and from his maternal uncle Professor Brajomadhab Bhattacharjee. (Note: Bhattacharjee is a title given to dedicated priests).

Dr. Mukherjee’s father became blind when he was five years old. So he became his father’s “blind man’s dog” and learnt the puja rituals by sitting next to his father until he took his sacred thread at the age of ten. After reaching his puberty he started doing the Hindu rituals to assist the family. When he reached his adulthood he was frustrated with the poor return of his family trade. Out of frustration he moved into science and married a non-Brahmin, Dr. Bibha Mukherjee (1954). His wife motivated him to relearn the priesthood as an academician. This book is the outcome of this unique combination. Dr. Mukherjee often refers his wife, with respect, as his “guru” who came into his life as God’s blessing.

Dr. Mukherjee came to the west alone in 1959 and was later joined by his wife and three small children. Dr. Mrs. Mukherjee received her doctorate in Geography from the University of Iowa (1964). Both of them were teachers of long standing. After his immigration to USA, Dr. Mukherjee promoted the Bengali tradition of Hindu puja rituals in the Baltimore-Washington DC area and became deeply involved in explaining the significance of the rituals to local people. His weekend priesthood did not mask his professional career of medical technology. He was considered as an authority in his field and published many books with such renowned publishers as Mosby, McGraw Hill and American Medical Association. His three children and six grandchildren are his life beats. All of them are highly accomplished. He received his recognition as Cyber Grandpa from the International Community (India Abroad and India Today, 1986). The World Indian Community knows him as a great story teller. His homepage (agivvideo.com) contains 300 videos of Indian stories and now this book on Hindu Puja rituals. After his wife’s death (2007) Dr. Mukherjee moved to Nashville, TN and lives with his eldest daughter, professor Vanderbilt University.

203