## Bengali Association of Greater Portland

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# Prabashi Darpan October 2020

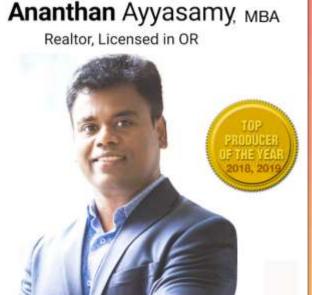
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It is that time of the year when we get together in a festive mood to celebrate our favorite annual event - the Durga Puja. We would like to thank you all for making this year's Pujo a grand success. We have been celebrating our Pujo for more than 20 years and every year we try to do something special.

This year is special in a very different way given the whole world is suffering from pandemic which has touched and affected many of us. During these tested times, Prabashi with the unflinching support of our exuberant community tried to help others not so fortunate. Thanks to the selfless benevolence from our community, Prabashi could donate to Oregon Food Bank & Meals on Wheels.

With the tireless efforts of the new and existing members of the Prabashi Council as well as excellent support from the community, we got more programs this year than usual with a slight difference. We got online versions of Rabindra Jayanti and Prabashi Bollywood night, both of which were astounding success.

Given the circumstances, we were not able to organize Pujo in a normal way this year. We are terribly missing the whole experience starting from welcoming Durga Ma, to the pujo, the beautiful dhutis and sarees, dancing to the beat of drums, 'dhunuchi naach', children's hustle and bustle. It goes without saying that experience cannot be replaced by anything else. Nevertheless, it is our humble try to do something for the pujo so that at a home away from home, we can enjoy may be a little of the pujo.

What is a Bengali Pujo without the cultural extravaganza? This year, unfortunately we are not able to host external artists and we are truly sorry. The circumstances just did not present us with an option. As our community grows and we come out of COVID-19, we hope to stage the same again next year.

The new council has worked extremely hard to bring innovative cultural experience and I am sure you would not be disappointed. We hope you will enjoy the wonderful performances from our community.

It is befitting to assume that with each passing year we will have new expectations from our patrons. We see new faces join our event and participate in various tasks. We try to implement new ideas and sometimes we fall short. But we believe that with more new faces joining hands, we will be able to fulfill our dreams and aspirations.

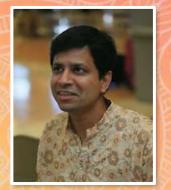
We wish you all a pleasant and enjoyable Pujo. Keep adding more fond memories to your journey in Portland. After all, this is our home away from home. Only we can make it unforgettable. Stay blessed.

Rahul Mukerjee

# Prabashi Council 2020



Rahul Mukherjee President



Rahuldeva Ghosh Treasurer



Secretary





Sudeshna Ganguly Cultural Secretary



Ayan Das Cultural Secretary





Parijat Mukherjee Debangana Mukerjee Media & Communication Volunteer Coordinator



**Samudra Sengupta** Council Member



Sanchari Banerjee Council Member



Sabyasachi Dey Council Member

## Pujo Schedule

**23<sup>rd</sup> October 2020** 4:00pm – 6:00pm : Pujo 7:00pm – 9:00pm : Cultural Program

### 24<sup>th</sup> October 2020

10:00am – 12:00pm : Pujo 2:00pm – 4:00pm : Sandhi Pujo 6:30pm – 9:30pm : Cultural Program



Parag Ghosh

# The Magazine Makers

## <mark>Debangana Mukerjee</mark>

After traveling around the world Debangana now calls Portland her home. She was raised in India and had lived in Germany and Austria before moving here with her family. She is a gastronome totally in love with the food and coffee scene in Portland.

When not traveling she either enjoys spending time with her family or experiments in the kitchen. She is also a budding photographer who enjoys learning about new cultures. So next time you are in look-out for a quick "cultures of the world" discussion do check in with her.

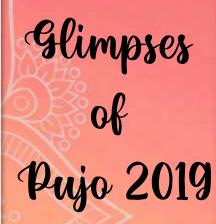


## Sapna Mukherjee

Born and raised in India, Sapna spent a decade meandering through UK and Germany before transplanting to Portland to join her husband four years ago. Once here, she instantly fell in love with the unbounded natural beauty, the people and the big city feel with a small town heart.

> Her love for arts & craft is only matched by her passion for Science. When not locked up in her lab, she likes to spend her days cooking, travelling and devouring trivia or food.























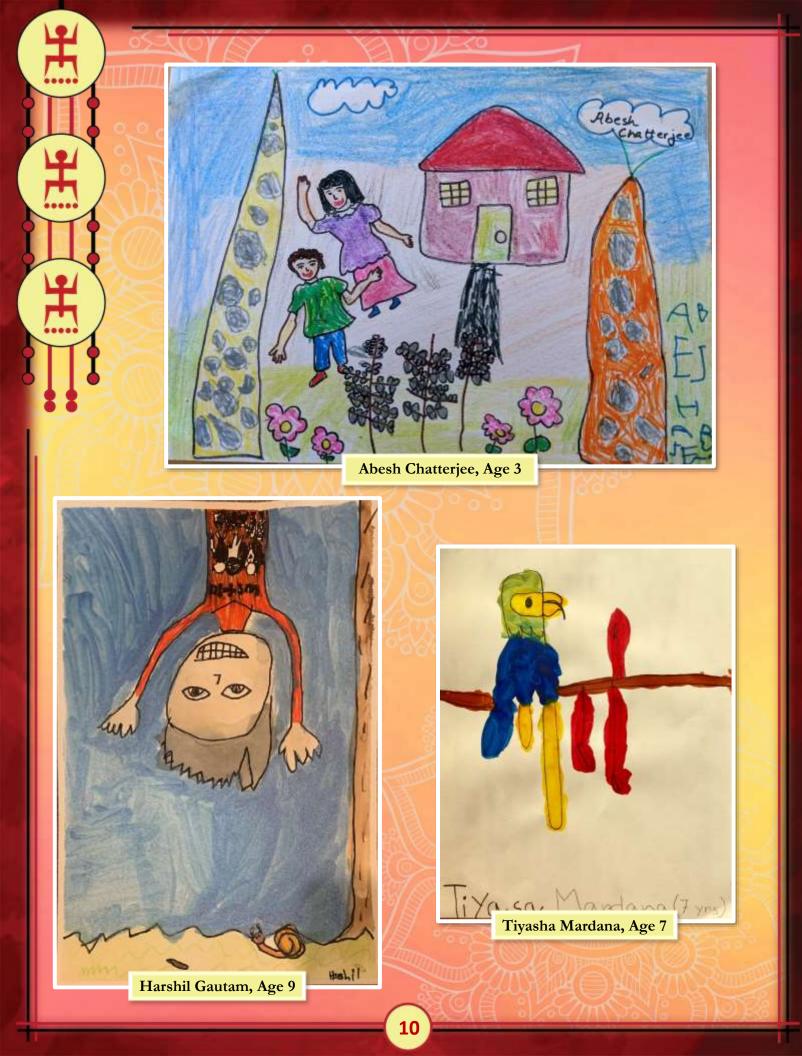


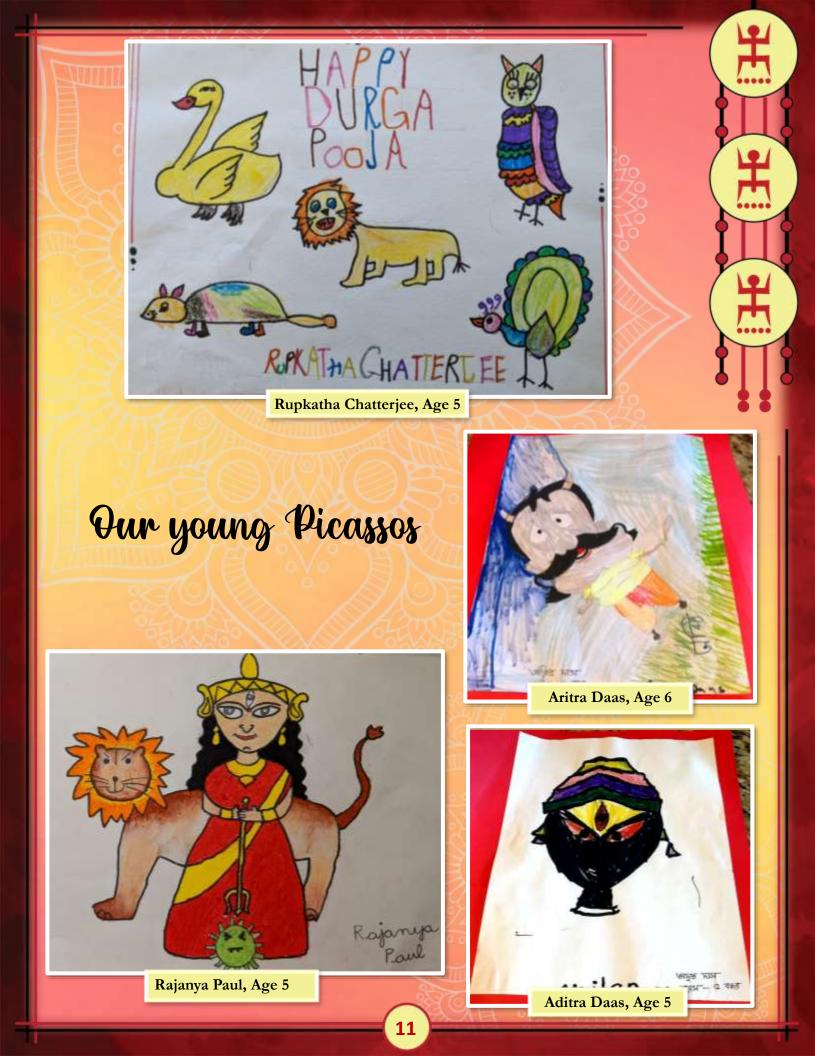


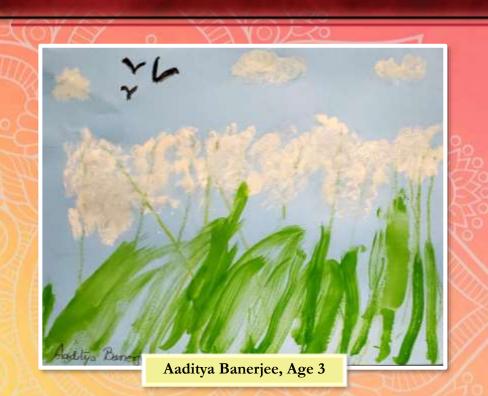


Images Courtesy: Bhaskar Ganguly & Debangana Mukherjee

TRAVANT WITH PROPERTY





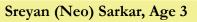




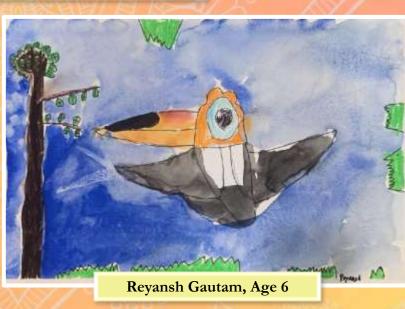
Aarika Ghosh, Age 4

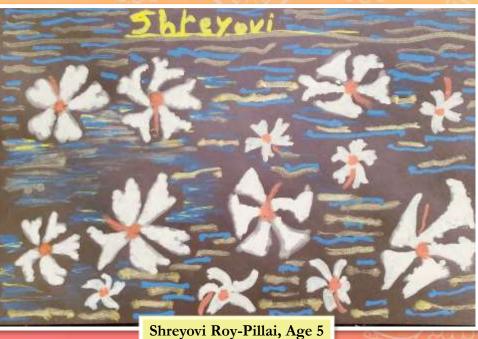
Picture shows Aarika's teacher jumping out of a plane in a red parachute to reach Chaander Paahar





## Our young Picassos





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## **Ourga Questions** Vyom Mukerjee

#### Part 3: Goddess Brahmacharini and Goddess Chanraghanta

2 years ago, I started this adventure by finding out about how Maa Durga was first born and continued this adventure last year by discovering about Maa's love for Lord Shiva in her Shailputri form. This year I will continue this journey and share with you the stories of Goddess Brahmacharini and Goddess Chandraghanta. Let's begin with Goddess Brahmacharani.

### Goddess Brahmacharani

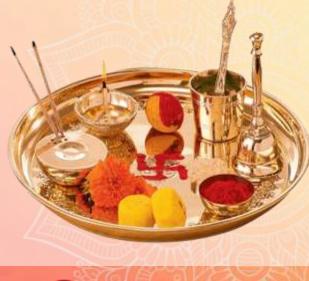
The form of Goddess Brahmacharani represents, penance, devotion, restraint and solitude, due to her eternal love for Lord Shiva Long long ago there was an Asura (demon) names Tarkasur who, after many thousands of years of prayer, gained the boon to only be killed by the child of Lord Shiva. This made the gods worry, as they feared for their lives, and as such asked Lord Kamadeva, the god of desire and love, for help. Meanwhile Maa Shailputri reborn as Maa Parvati after burning of rage, remembered her love for Lord Shiva and wished to be with him. Unluckily her parents learned of this desire and hearing stories of what happened to others who pursue, or anger Shiva discouraged her repeatedly. Yet she ignored them and followed her heart. In order to win her love, she does a strict penance for around 5000 years. Seeing her undying love for Lord Shiva, Kamadeva decides to help Maa Parvati. He shoots his arrow at Lord Shiva, but in a sudden turn of events, Shiva opens his third eye burning Kamadeva to ashes. Maa Parvati learns this but does not lose hope, instead begins to live in the mountains such as Lord Shiva, engage in activities similar to that of Lord Shiva's, one of ascetism, yogin and tapas.

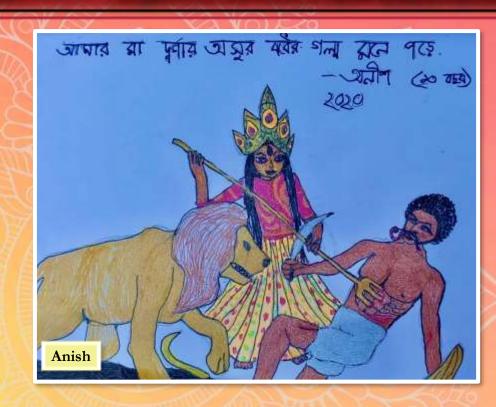
This version of Maa Parvati, the one who lives a lifestyle such as that of Lord Shiva's is what is deemed the Goddess Brahmacharani. Lord Shiva learned of Goddess Brahmacharani's ascetic lifestyle and was impressed with her. Therefore, he decided to meet her in a disguised form. When he meets her, he attempts to discourage her of marrying himself speaking of his flaws. The Goddess refuses to listen and continues on her determination to marry Lord Shiva, which gets him to accept her as his wife. Soon after they get married and she becomes Maa Parvati once again. This truly showed the power of love and how it triumphs against all odds. Next we will learn about the entire story of Maa Chandraghanta, whose name means bell shaped as the crescent moon.

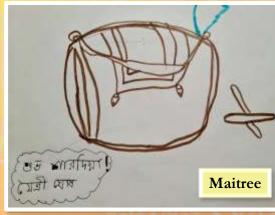
### **Goddess Chandraghanta**

Maa Chandraghanta represents how malevolent she can be to her enemies, yet how kind and caring she is to her devotees eradicating their sins, distresses, physical sufferings, mental tribulations and ghostly hurdles. After Maa Parvati's long and hard penance, Lord Shiva finally agreed to marry her. The day of the marriage had arrived. On the day of the marriage, Lord Shiva arrived at King Himavan's (Parvati's fathers) palace in a form which struck fear and terror into many hearts and came with an extremely strange marriage proposal. With ash smeared on his body, snakes around his neck, and his hair unkempt, he proposed a marriage procession consisting of ghosts, ascetics, sages, goblins, ganas, ghouls and aghoris. But seeing Lord Shiva's terrifying form, Parvati's mother and many other relatives were left in shock, while others yet fainted out of terror.

To make sure Maa Parvati's family would not be further embarrassed, she transformed into Maa Chandraghanta. Her skin was golden, and she had ten arms. In nine of the arms she wielded, a trident, a mace, an arrow, a bow, a sword, a lotus, a goad, a bell and a Kamandalu or water pot. She reserved her 10th hand to bless her devotees and rode a lion as her steed. In this form she stood in the way of Lord Shiva and convinced him to transform into a handsome prince and change the marriage procession to be more fitting. He listened and transformed into a charming prince who was fitted with many jewels and married her with the proper rituals. That was truly spectacular. What an experience this was, learning about Maa Brahmacharni, and Maa Chandraghanta, and their love for not only Lord Shiva but also their own family, going so far to betray one in order to protect the other. Maybe this Durga Pujo we can be all draw inspiration from these forms of Maa Durga and celebrate those who we love and those who are close to you. Especially now when we need to support our families and communities to stay safe and fight off the evil.









Iris

Iris is a voluntary effort to introduce children of our community to the Bengali language. We meet virtually every Sunday afternoon to chat, read and write in Bengali. The goal is to make these kids love Bengali, speak the language and develop the will and ability to explore and experience Bengali literature, films, music, and similar enrichments that this language has to offer.

Little friends of Iris have put in great effort in creating these artworks for Darpan 2020.



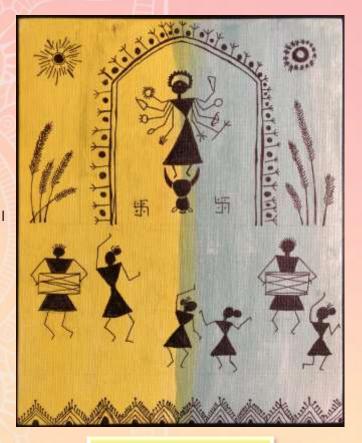




তুমি আজ কেবলই ছবি

তুমি বৃষ্টি আনলে চোখে মনটাকে ভেজালে নিদারুণ ব্যাথায়। তোমার জন্য সকালটা বড় স্লান আজ। সূর্যালোকের সব সাদাটুকু আজ কালো। তোমার স্মৃতির স্পর্শে হল না যে আজ আলো। মেঘ জমেছে ঈশান কোণে। <mark>থেকে থেকে আ</mark>জ তোমায় পড়ছে যে বড় মনে। ব্যাথায় ভেজা মনে স্মৃতি কড়া নাড়ে। বলে যায় তুমি আজও আছো মনের ভিতর ছবি হয়ে। আমার স্বপ্ন আঁকা ক্যানভাসে <mark>তুমি আছো আর থাকবেও।</mark> তুমি আজ অ্যালবামে বন্দি আছো তাই তো ইচ্ছা হলেই স্মৃতি হাতড়েছি। <mark>সযত্নে</mark> সংগ্র<mark>হ করে রেখেছি প্রতিটা ছ</mark>বি। আজ মুঠোফোনের ক্যামেরার জোড়ে রেখেছি তোমায় অনেক আপন করে। তুমি ফিরিয়ে আনতে পারো অনেক সুখ দুঃখের অনুভৃতি তাই তুমি আজ নয়কো কেবলই ছবি।।

### মধুশ্রী চৌধুরী



Sharika Kundu, Age 7

### MAHISASUR

(2<sup>nd</sup> Grade, Sunset Elementary School)

Mean, Evil, Powerful, Strong Asura-Doing all things wrong Hunting each and every God Immortalized by Bramha the Lord Set out to destroy the world Hunting each and every God Attacking, fighting, battling, for ten days full Strengthening himself by turning into a bull Undead in the beginning, dead in defeat Resting in peace under Durga's feet

### বসন্ত এসেও এলো না।

প্রকৃতির নিয়মে বসন্ত এসে গেছে বা এসে গেলো, কিন্তু সত্যি কি বসন্তকে এবার আমরা পেলাম বা বরণ করতে পারলাম? এটা আমাদের কাছে বিরাট এক প্রশ্ন। প্রকৃতি তার নিজের নিয়মে সৌন্দর্যের ডালি নিয়ে হাজির হয়েছে সমগ্র বিশ্বে তার শোভা ছড়াতে, আমরা কিন্তু এ বছর তাকে আহ্বান জানাতে পারলাম না।

সেইদিন আমি সাংসারিক প্রয়োজনীয় কাজে গাড়ি নিয়ে বেরিয়েছিলাম, পথের দুধারে সারি দিয়ে লাল, গোলাপি, সাদা, হলুদ ফুলের সমাহার। আকাশে আজ সত্যি রঙের খেলা, মনে মেঘের মেলাতে আমরা আজ আনন্দিত নই। ফুলের জলসায় কবি আজ সত্যি নীরব।

এই বসন্ত কে আহ্বান জানাতে আমাদের যে ফুল গাঁথবার কথা ছিল, পুরো পরিবেশ যে রঙিন হওয়ার কথা ছিল, কচিকাঁচারা তাদের spring break-এর আনন্দে মাতবার অধিকার ছিল কিন্তু ভয়াবহ রাক্ষসের থাবায় আজ সমগ্র বিশ্ব স্তস্তিত। সমস্ত রাস্তাঘাট শুনশান, কারো মুখে হাসি নেই, স্কুল, কলেজ , অফিস যাওয়ার তাড়া নেই, সব বাচ্ছাদের একসাথে খেলার অধিকার নেই, বড়োদের জমিয়ে বসে আড্ডা মারার অধিকার নেই, যেন একটা ভয়াবহ পরিবেশ, সারা বিশ্ব যেন ভীত সন্ত্রস্ত্র হয়ে পড়েছে। বসন্ত শুধু ফুলের সমাহার নয় , অনেক রঙের আবেদন নিয়েও আসে। রঙের উৎসব বসন্তে পরিবেশ রঙে রঙে মেতে ওঠে। পরিবেশের সাথেও মানুষের মনেও রঙের ছোঁয়া লাগে। তাই তো কবি গেয়ে ওঠেন, রঙে রঙে রঙ্গিল আকাশ , গানে গানে নিখিল ও উদাস। কিন্তু কোথায়ে? কোকিল এর কুহুতান ও মানুষের শোনার মতো সময় নেই। সময়ও থমকে গেছে। করোনা নামক মরণ ব্যাধি তার থাবায় নিজের নিজের মুঠোর করে নিয়েছে। এখন কোনো সকাল আনন্দে বার্তা, আশা, প্রত্যাশার স্বপ্ন দেখায় না।

'এ কোন সকাল রাতের চেয়েও অন্ধকার একি সূর্য না কি স্বপনের চিতা, ওকি পাখির কুজন না কি হাহাকার '

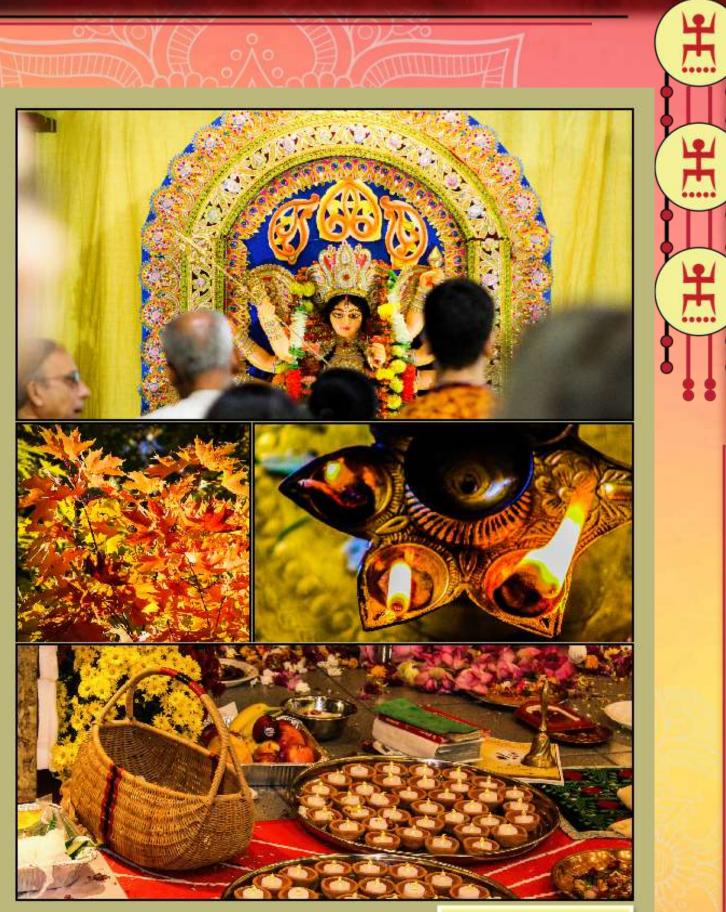
প্রত্যেক সকাল থেকে রাত, রাত থেকে সকাল শুধু মানুষের মনে আতঙ্ক। প্রচুর মানুষ আক্রান্ত হয়েছে এই ভাইরাস-এ। চীনের উহান প্রদেশে প্রথম এই ভাইরাসের আক্রমণ শুরু হয়ে, তারপর সেটি সারা পৃথিবীতে ছড়িয়ে পরে হাজার হাজার মানুষ আক্রান্ত ও নিজেদের প্রাণ বলি দেন এই অসুখে বিশেষ করে বয়স্ক মানুষরা।

কিন্তু আমরাও হাল ছাড়ার পাত্র নই, হার মানবোনা এই ব্যাধির কাছে। এবারে ফুল ফুটলো না পাখি ডাকলোনা ঠিকই কিন্তু আগামী বসন্তে ফুল ফুটবে, পাখি ডাকবে। ফুল ফুটুক না ফুটুক বসন্ত আসবে তার নিজের নিয়মে। আগামী দিনে আমরা বসন্ত কে আহ্বান জানাবোই। সব শিশুরা মনের আনন্দে খেলে বেড়াবে। কোনো বাবা মা তাদের সন্তান কে ঘরের চার দেয়ালে আটকে রাখবে না। তাই আমাদের আশা এবং, বিশ্বাস 'এক দিন ঝড থেমে যাবে, পথিবী আবার শান্ত হবে।'

সঞ্চারীব্যানার্জী



Sankha Subhra Sarkar



Riddhiman Bhattacharya



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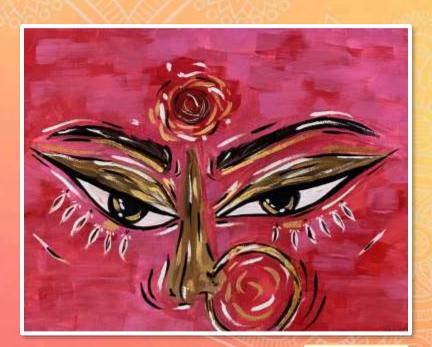
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## Participants

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