

## Mahalaya Ushers Durga Puja Festivities

Saturday, 19 September 2009

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Cultural functions are being held at different temples in line with Chandigranth.

At Dakeshwari Temple, idols were sacrificed into the temple pond by beating drum and Kasha, and new idols were being made.

The Maharaj of Ramkrishna Mission, Swami Sthiratmananda, told bdnews24.com, "Durga puja consists of three festivals-- Mohalaya, Bodhon (Awakening) and Sandhi Puja."

"Durga Puja has begun on Friday morning through Mohalaya," Swami said.

Referring to Puran, he said, the Fortnight of the Goddess (Devi Pakkha) begins through Mahalaya which follows Pritripakkha.

During the preceding fortnight (Pakkhah), devotees offer rice&ndash;water (Anna Jal) for the salvation of their forefathers, which is known as Tarpan in scripture, he said

Mahalaya marks the end of Tarpan fortnight and beginning of the Fortnight of Goddess (Devi Pakkha). In this fortnight, the devotees remember Abahan and Lila through Chandrigranth reading.

Sthiratmananda also said Goddess Durga is born as the daughter of Katayani Muni in the previous evening of Mahalaya (Prak Sandha) to annihilate demon king Mahishashura.

"Puja will take place in 172 pavilions in the capital, nine more from the previous year," Dhaka Metropolitan Sarbajanin Puja Committee president Kazal Devnath said to bdnews24.com.

He said upcoming Durga Puja would be observed in over 23,000 Puja altars compared to 22,800 stalls last year.

Devnath said, "The culture of vandalising idols before Puja, which developed over the past few years, seems to have ended."

"Apart from some isolated incidents, no major untoward incident is yet to be reported," he said

Source: bdnews24.com