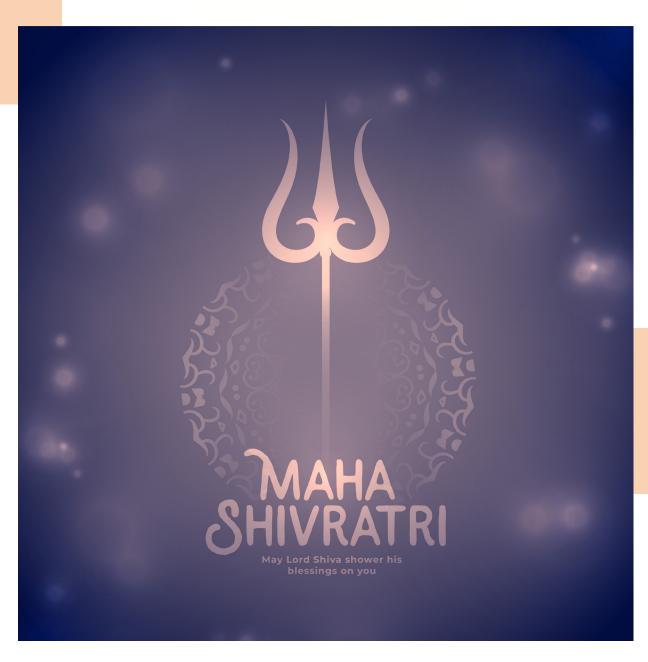


SANATAN SANDESH DHARA



MSDTF E-NEWSLETTER 7th EDITION MAHA SHIVRATRI 2023



MSDTF Mauritius Sanatan Dharma Temples Federation Newsletter, Sanatan Vatika Reduit

MAURITIUS SANATAN DHARMA TEMPLES FEDERATION SANATAN SANDESH DHARA

Editor's Column

Maha Shivratri will be celebrated with great pomp, devotion and faith, after two years tainted by the spectre of Covid-19 pandemic.

The Mauritius Sanatan Dharma Temples Federation has left no stone unturned and strived hard to make this most awaited important festival of the Hindu calendar fruitful for one and all. This year we have centered our actions and calls for a more disciplined and spiritual Maha Shivratri. Starting with the confection of kanwars, fasting, the pilgrimage, preparation and distribution of satwik food by volunteers, safety and security on roads, religious activities at Ganga Talao and in all our temples around the island, and finally culminating with the great night of Shiva, Mauritius Sanatan Dharma Temples Federation is in favour of a revisit of our Eternal Sanatan Dharma. Our aim is to bring all activities related to Maha Shivratri 2023, in line with our religious and spiritual values enshrined in our scriptures and life at large. We are therefore humbly requesting all the devotees, pilgrims, volunteers, priests, responsible of temples, among others, to converge our efforts to make this Maha Shivratri most spititual for the benefit of everyone.

May Shiv Ji shower His blessings of happiness and harmony, peace and prosperity, health and wealth and of fruitful and successful life on individual as well as collective spheres.



Aum Namah Shivaye Har Har Mahadev

Brotherly yours, SEWPOOJUHN LALLBEEHARRY (Gawtum) General Secretary

IMPORTANT NOTICE

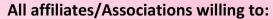
MAURITIUS SANATAN DHARMA TEMPLES



FEDERATION MAHA SHIVRATRI 2023 FREE FOOD DISTRIBUTION



AT GANGA TALAO IN THE STALL OF MSDTF



- Donate food items (Sweets, Water, Juice, Yoghurt, Fruits, Cooked Food, etc)
- Serve/Cook food at Ganga Talao



Your valuable Donation/Contribution will be most welcomed.

Contact MSDTF on: 59441482/52515627/57574683.



MAURITIUS SANATAN DHARMA TEMPLES FEDERATION

1st EDITION - YOUTH CONCERT RELIGIOUS / DEVOTIONAL

(Song / Dance / Instrumental items)

Date : Sunday 12th February 2023

Time : 17.00 hrs

Venue : Divine Museum, Ganga Talao

Please give your presence to encourage our youth.

Managing Committee

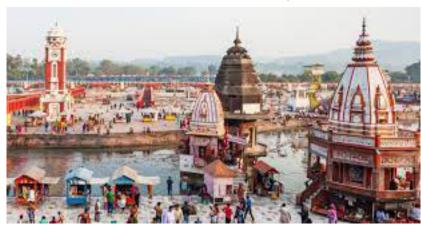
<u>Tirth Yatra to certain Shiv Jyotirlingum – India</u>

The Mauritius Sanatan Dharma Temples Federation headed a delegation for the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas held in Madhya Pradesh, Indore, India.

We seized this opportunity to organize a North India Tirthyatra.

We visited among other places of pilgrimage, Rishikesh and Haridwar where the delegation had the occasion of having a holy dip in the sacred Ganges and to participate in the evening Maha Aarti. All our brothers and sisters who were there experienced the cèlestial spiritual vibration and ora of these two holy places.

During our stay in Indore for the conference, the whole Mauritian Delegation headed for Ujjain to visit the Mahakaleswar Corridor and were all blessed for having been able to have darshan of the Jyotirlinga found in the Garbhasthan of the ancient temple. Some devotees







also participated in the early morning Artees. It is worthy to mention the strict discipline that prevails in Mahakaleshwar. We should certainly follow this example to implement same in Ganga Talao to give it a spiritual environment.

Some people of the delegation also visited Omkaleshwar Jyotir Linga found not far from Indore.





A very small group proceeded for Gujarat. There, along with visit to subarmati Ashram and Mahavir Jain Temple in Ahmedabad, divine opportunity was at bestowed also to have the darshan of Shiv Ji in Somnath Mandir, another important pilgrimage of Lord Shiva. The group also had darshan in Dwarikapur.

As a prelude to the celebration of Maha Shivratri 2023, the whole Mauritian delegation has firstly been blessed while visiting so many abodes and holy temples of Lord Shiva. Secondly everyone has been fortunate to bring Ganga Jal from Haridwar that will be offered to Shiv Ji for Maha Shivratri festival.

Mauritius Sanatan Dharma Temples Federation feels proud for having been the facilitator for the success of the trip to India. Never before in its history, Mauritius Sanatan Dharma Temples Federation had shouldered the responsibility to accompany such a big delegation of 135 persons to India while facing all kinds of challenges.

Mauritius Sanatan Dharma Temples Federation kickstarted the celebration of Maha Shivratri 2023 on Sunday 5th February 2023 at 9.30 hrs at Ganga Talao while performing the Rudra Maha Yajna and the Ganga Pooja.



WHY DO WE CELEBRATE MAHASHIVRATRI?

There is an unknown and mysterious energy that is driving all of us. Scientists have not been able to give it a name, yet. However, saints of yore have called this unknown energy Shiva.

Shiva is the energy believed to make every living being alive. We are able to breathe, eat, walk and carry out our day-to-day activities because of Shiva. Not only does this energy drive living beings, but it also resides in non-living things - as their energy. Shiva, thus, drives existence.

WHY DO WE CELEBRATE MAHASHIVRATRI?

In the daily hustle and bustle of life, we forget our source of energy that which is running us. Mahashivratri is a festival to remember and to take our awareness to the basis of our existence: Shiva.



But, why is Shivratri celebrated? There is more than one Mahashivaratri story surrounding this occasion. Here are a few:

One is that Lord Shiva married Parvati on this day. So, it is a celebration of this sacred union.

Another is that when the Gods and demons churned the ocean together to obtain ambrosia that lay in its depths, a pot of poison emerged. Lord Shiva consumed this poison, saving both the Gods and mankind. The poison lodged in the Lord's throat, turning him blue. To honor the savior of the world, Shivratri is celebrated.

One more legend is that as Goddess Ganga descended from heaven in full force, Lord Shiva caught her in his matted locks, and released her on to Earth as several streams. This prevented destruction on Earth. As a tribute to Him, the Shivalinga is bathed on this auspicious night.

Also, it is believed that the formless God Sadashiv appeared in the form of a Lingodhbhav Moorthi at midnight. Hence, people stay awake all night,



offering prayers to the God.

These are some of the stories that can possibly answer why we celebrate Shivratri. But, what do we do during Shivratri? Mahashivratri is the day to honor and celebrate Lord Shiva—honor life and celebrate existence. Most people spend the day of Mahashivratri in prayer, meditation and celebration. Here is a list of what to do on Mahashivratri:

- 1. Observe Fasting
- 2. Meditate
- 3. Chant Om Namah Shivaya
- 4. Attend Mahashivratri Puja or Rudra Puja
- 5. Worship the Shivalinga

(1) Observe fasting on the day of Mahashivratri

Fasting detoxifies the body and curtails the restlessness of the mind. A mind that is not restless slips into meditation easily. Therefore, fasting on Mahashivratri serves to detoxify the body and aid meditation. It is recommended to fast with fruits or foods that are easily digestible. Learn more about Mahashivratri fasting guidelines.



(2) Meditate on Mahashivratri

The position of the constellations on the night of Mahashivratri is considered very auspicious for meditation. So, it is advisable for people to keep awake and meditate on Shivaratri.

In ancient times, people used to say, 'If you cannot meditate every day, do so for at least one day in a year - on Shivratri day - keep awake and do meditation'.

(3) Chant Om Namah Shivaya

'Om Namah Shivaya' is the perfect mantra to chant on Mahashivratri, as it immediately elevates your energy. 'Om', in the mantra, refers to the sound of the universe. It means peace and love. The five letters, 'Na', 'Ma', 'Shi', 'Va', 'Ya' in 'Namah Shivaya' indicate the five elements - Earth, Water, Fire, Air, and Ether.

Chanting 'Om Namah Shivaya' harmonizes the five elements of the universe. When there is peace, love and harmony in all the five elements, then there is bliss and joy.

Along with OM Namah Shivay Chanting you can chant - Shiv Tandav Stotram and Kaal Bhairay Ashtakam

(4) Attend Mahashivratri Puja or Rudra Puja

Rudra Puja or Mahashivratri Puja is a special ceremony performed to honor Lord Shiva. It involves singing special Vedic mantras accompanied by certain rituals. Rudra Puja brings positivity and purity to the environment and transforms negative emotions. Participating in the Puja and listening to the chants helps the mind slip into meditation effortlessly. Meditate to the chants of the auspicious Mahashivratri Puja at The Art of Living International Center, Bengaluru.

(5) Worship the Shivalinga

The Shivalinga is a symbolic representation of the formless Shiva. Worshipping the Shivalinga includes offering 'Bel Patra' (leaves of the bel tree) to it. Offering 'Bel Patra' represents offering three aspects of your being - rajas (the aspect of you that is responsible for activity), tamas (the aspect of you that brings inertia) and sattva (the aspect of you that brings positivity, peace, and creativity). These three aspects affect your mind and actions. Surrendering the three to the Divine brings peace and freedom.





The Mauritius Sanatan Dharma Temples Federation held the Rudra Maha Yaj on the 5th February 2023 at the Ganga Talao.

Here are some excerpt.



















Essence of Pilgrimage

Many worshippers will begin their trip to the lake of Grand Bassin dressed in white a few days before the festival of Maha Shivaratri. Devotees hike over steep hills to reach the sacred lake, often in poor weather.

Kanwars are made for the event, and many people will carry them on their shoulders throughout the march to Grand Bassin. Along the walk, you will frequently come across tents, which are normally set up by donors and provide devotees with beverages and food.

When the devotees get at Ganga Talao, they worship on the lake's shores and gather water to carry back to their communities. The sacred water will be poured on the Shivalingam (sacred stone depicting the deity Shiva) at the Mandir, which is regularly visited by devotees.

Pilgrimage, as it is known in other religions, is the practice of traveling to locations where religious powers, knowledge, or experience are thought to be especially accessible. The origins of Hindu pilgrimage can be found in ancient writings. According to textual scholars, the earliest reference to Hindu pilgrimage is in the Rigveda (c. 1500 BCE).

Pilgrimage has been increasingly popular since the 20th century, facilitated by ever-improving transportation. Movement over actual distance is critical to pil-

grimage, for what is important is not just visiting a sacred space but leaving home. Most pilgrimage centres hold periodic religious fairs called melas to mark auspicious astrological moments or important anniversaries. In 2001, for example, the Kumbh Mela in Allahabad was attended during a six-week period by tens of millions of pilgrims.

Pilgrimages, in a broader sense, serve as a reminder of our core essence and noblest purpose on Earth. As pilgrims



trapped in the web of existence, they represent mortal creatures' lives. We are all on a spiritual quest for liberty. Our ultimate goal is the everlasting paradise, from which no one returns. Pilgrimages in Hinduism serve to remind us of this solitary fact. We may undertake them for a variety of reasons, but the scriptures state that the finest ones are those committed to demonstrate love and devotion to God rather than for selfish reasons.

Pilgrimages benefit not just the pilgrims but also the sacred locations and divinities who live there. Our beliefs hold that the pictures we adore in temples and sacred sites are not lifeless. They embody the deity's might. As a result, they are seen as living incarnations (arcas), whose power grows in direct proportion to the amount of attention and offerings they get. If a significant number of devotees continue to visit the sacred sites and worship them with ceremonial gifts, it indicates our gods increase in strength and might and contribute to the wellbeing of the world.

Pilgrimages serve an important purpose in our lives, by helping us practice Dharma and keep our gods happy and nourished through offerings and sacrifices. By that, they contribute to the preservation and continuation of our Dharma.



MAURITIUS SANATAN DHARMA TEMPLES FEDERATION

MAHA SHIVRATRI 2023

REQUESTS TO PILGRIMS & KANWARTHIS

- 1. Abide by all security & safety measures during pilgrimage.
- 2. Beware of electric wires of CEB.
- 3. Beware of High Voltage Electric lines of Metro Express Ltd.
- 4. Display high sense of disciplines & respect on roads. Wishing you all very
- 5. Do not cause any obstruction on roads.
- 6. Build smaller kanwars as far as possible.
- 7. Wear white fluorescent dress.
- 8. Walk in Indian files during procession.
- 9. Care for environment & people.
- 10.Follow guidelines given by authorities.
- 11.Let us all make Ganga Talao a spiritual sanctuary.



Aum Namah Shivaya

Har Har Mahadev

Maha Shivaratri Puja Vidhi

Simple Shivaratri Puja Procedure:

- 1. First, before starting puja, chant Sankalpam for Shiva puja. In Sankalpam, the place, gothra, nama, tithi, vara, nakshatra, and some other details are chanted in mantra form. You can also just say your name and gothra if you not much aware of Sankalpa mantra.
- 2. Start puja with Ganesh Puja. Chant some simple mantras of Lord Ganesh and pray for destruction of obstacles during Shiva Puja.
- 3. The third step is Gauri Puja. Take approximately 5 gms of turmeric (haldi) powder and make it like a cone shaped structure and consider it as Goddess Gauri and chant simple prayer to Gauri or Parvati. (Some devotees skip Gauri Puja).
- 4. Nandishwara Puja, Veerabhadra Puja, Kartikeya Pooja, Kubera Pooja, Keerthimukha puja, and Sarpa Puja are optional.
- 5. Now, the main Shivapuja begins with Dhyanam. Imagine Lord Shiva and pray to him with akshata.
- 6. As the first step, Lord Shiva is offered Shuddodaka Snanam (bath with gangajal or sanctified water).
- 7. Panchamrita snan is performed as the next step. (bath with milk, ghee, curd, honey and coconut water).
- 8. Shuddodaka Snanam is performed again.
- 9. Jalabhishekam (pour water on linga drop by drop) is observed.
- 10. Yagnopaveetham is worn (a cotton garland is worn)(especially in South Indian puja procedure).
- 11. Offer Bhasma (vibhooti), Gandha (sandalwood paste), and Kumkum to Shivalinga. Sprinkle akshata on the Lord.
- 12. Flower garland is offered to the deity.
- 13. Bilva Puja is performed while chanting Bilvashtakam.
- 14. Dhoop or agarbatti or incense sticks are lit and dhoopam is given to Shivalinga.
- 15. Light a lamp or deepa.
- 16. Shiva Aarti is chanted.
- 17. Aatma Pradakshina (self circumambulation) is performed as the last step. This marks the end of simple Shivaratri Puja.

Shiva Puja begins

Chant the slokam at the beginning of Shiva Puja...
Om Vande Shambhu Umaapatim Surgurum Vande Jagad Kaaranaam |
Vande Pannag Bhushanaam Mrigadharam Vande Pashunaam Patim |
Vande Surya Shashaak Vahninayanam Vande Mukundapriyam |
Vande Bhakta Janaashrayan Chavardham Vande Shivam Shankaram |

Deeparadhana

Chanting the below slokas, light deepa and offer it to Lord Shiva Sajyam cha varthi samyuktam vahnina yojitham mayaa Deepam gruhaana devesha trilokya thimirapaham Pari the dhanvano hethirasmaan vrunakthu vishvathah Atho ya ishudisthavaare asmanni dehi tham Sri sambashivaya namah deepam darshayami..

Sankalpam

Chant this Sankalpa mantra. Sankalpam signifies the name, gothra and the place of the performer.

Shivaratri Puja Sankalpa (Shivaratri Vratha Sankalpam)
"Shivaratri Vratham hyethath karishyeham mahaphalam
nirvighnam kuru devatra twatprasadath jagatpathe
chaturdashyam nirahaaro bhuthwa shambho pare hani
bhokshye ham bhukti mukthyartham saranam mebhaveshwara"
Mama Sreeman (your gothra)..... Gothrodhbhavasya, (your name) namadeyasya,
darmapathni samethasya saha kutumbaanaam dharmartha kaama moksha chaturvidha phala purushartha sidhyartham shatru jayaartham Shri samba sadashiva
preethyartham bhagavatah sri sambasada shivasya pujaana maham karishye..
Ganapati Puja and Guru Puja are the most important aspects in any puja and thus
perform Ganapathi Puja and Guru Puja.

Gandham (Sandalwood paste)

Offer Gandha (sandalwood paste) to Lord Shiva by chanting this mantra: 'Lam' Pruthvi tatwatmane Sri Sri Samba sadashiva Swamiye namah – Gandham Parikalpayami

Pushpam (Flowers)

Worship Lord with flowers and akshatas by chanting the mantras: 'Ham' akasha tatwatmane Sri Sri Samba sadashiva Swamiye namah – pushpam parikalpayami Shiva Astottara Shatanamali, Chant 108 names of Lord Shiva

Offer akshatas and flowers to Lord Shiva by chanting this mantra:

Sri Sambasadashiva swamiye namah - Naanavidha pushpakshatan samarpayami

Dhupam (Incense sticks)

Light incense sticks and show them to Lord by chanting the mantra:

'Yam' Vayu tatwatmane Sri Samba sadashiva Swamiye namah – Dhupam parikalpayami

Deepam

Light diya and show it to Shiva by chanting the sloka:

'Ram' tejastatwatmane Sri Samba sadashiva Swamiye namah – Deepam darshayami

Naivedyam

Offer food (fruits and other food material) to Shiva by chanting the slokam 'Vam' amrutha tatwatmane namah – amrutha naivedyam parikalpayami

Tambulam (supari)

Offer betel leaves, betel nuts, etc to Shiva. Chant this mantra:

'Sam' sarvatatwatmane Sri Samba sadashiva Swamiye namah – Tambulam samarpayami

Neerajanam

Light camphor and show it to Shiva by chanting the mantra

Sri sambasada shiva swamiye namah – Ananda mangala karpura neerajana deepam darshayami

Perform Aarti to Shiva by singing Shiva Aarti

Chant the mantra:

Mantraheenam kriyaheenam bhakti heenam Sri samba sadashiva swamiye yatpujitham mayaadeva paripurnam thadasthume

Anayaa dhyanaa vahanadi shodashopachara pujaaya cha bhagavathi sarvatmaka sri samba sadashiva swamiye suprasanno varado bhavathu

(Leave akshatas and water through your palms)



MSDTF E-NEWSLETTER 7TH EDITION MAHA SHIVRATRI 2022

MAURITIUS SANATAN DHARMA TEMPLES FEDERATION

Le Maha Shivratri - Entamons le pèlerinage pour l'éveil

Le Maha Shvratri sera célèbré le samedi 18 février 2023 avec plus de faste, de ferveur et en grande pompe après deux années entachées par le spectre de Covid-19.

Le Maha Shivratri vient à la quatorzième nuit de la lune pendant le mois de Megh ou de Phalgun (février-mars) quand celle-ci devient intensément obscure. C'est en cette nuit qu'on fait le "Char Pahar Ki Pooja"; 12 heures de prière ininterrompue, pour l'éveil en sor de la spiritualité. C'est une nuit où les prières, les rituels, les chants pieux, les récitations des mantras, la méditation, les danses, les homélies, les messages, le Yoga entre autres, dédiés au Dieu Shiva nous poussent vers le sommet spirituel.

Pourquoi célébrer le Maha Shivratri?

Le Maha Shivratri est l'évènement le plus important du calendrier hindou. Il y a plusieurs raisons pour célébrer le Maha Shivratri.

- 1. D'après les textes sacrés, le Dieu Shiva considéré comme le Dieu Suprême (Mahadev) avait ingurgité le Halahal (le poison) sortit après le barratage de l'océan (Sagar Mathan). Tout le monde avait préféré avoir l'Amrit (l'élixir). Alors, voyant que le poison allait être nefaste pour toute l'humanité, Shiva a bu cette potion empoisonnée pour sauver le monde. Avec cet acte généreux, Shiv Ji fut donné le nom de Neelkanth (Dieu à la gorge bleue). En guise d'extrême reconnaissance, les dévots offrent l'eau sacrée au Dieu Shiva. A Maurice on recueille l'eau sacrée du Ganga Talao pour en deverser sur le Shiv linga.
- 2. Selon le Shivaisme, Dieu Shiva incarne la trinité. C'est á dire, Shiva est le créateur, le Préservateur et le Destructeur. Il a execute, est la danse cosmique pour la création de l'univers. Comme Mangal Mahadev, Bholenath, Shiv Shankar, Ashutosh, il incarne le rôle de conservateur. En dernier lieu, comme Rudra, il danse le Tandava pour donner l'image destructrice du monde. Ses danses, nous rappelent la victoire du bien sur les ténèbres. Et, surtout la nuit la plus ténébreuse du Maha Shivratri, l'Amavasya, nous inspire de vaincre l'obscurité dans toute sa forme. Que ce soit l'ignorance, l'injustice, le Kama (désirs extrêmes), le krodh (la colère), le lobh (la gourmandise), le mada (l'illusion), l'Ahamkar (l'égo), sont les tenebres qui rongent le bon fonctionnement de la vie et qui'il faut

éliminer. En même temps cela permet d'être illuminé par la lumière divine pour le bien être de soi et d'autrui.

- 3. Le Maha Shivratri représente aussi la convergence de Shiva avec Shakti, les deux symbolisent par le lingam. En ce jour, on célèbre l'anniversaire du mariage entre Shiva et Parvati. Sans le Shiv tatva et Shakti, il n'y a pas de création. Donc, les gens qui vivent dans le Grihastha (la famille) voient Maha Shivratri comme l'union de Shiva et Parvati pour la procréation continue pour que la vie dure sur terre.
- 4. Sur un plan purement spirituel, le Maha Shivratri est l'occasion de devenir uni avec le Dieu Shiva comme le Mont Kailasha est indissociable de Shiva. Le mouvement vers le "Shivoham" est l'essence même de l'union de l'âme (Atmam) avec le Dieu suprême (Paramatman). Donc le Char Pahar Ki Pooja, (la grande nuit de Shiva) nous donne amplement le temps d'être en communion à travers plusieurs rites, la récitation du 'Aum Namah Shivaye et d'autres moyens religieux et spirituels.

L'importance du pèlerinage

Le pèelerinage au Ganga Talao s'insère dans la logique des Shiv Bhaktas (les dévots de Shiva) de faire le voyage vers le lac sacré afin de recueillir le Jal (l'eau sacrée) pour ensuite l'offrir sur le Shiv Linga, la forme cylindrique et iconographique du Dieu Shiva.

Pour le pèlrinage, les dévots se mettent au travail avant la grande nuit de Shiva. L'ésprit et les efforts collectifs mis en œûvre dans le confectionnement des kanwars donne le coup d'envoi de la fête. Les jeunes s'adonnent pleinement à développer leur savoir-faire et innovent chaque année dans la construction et la décoration des kanwars.

Quelques jours avant le Maha Shivratri, vétus souvent de blanc, les pèlerins entament la grande marche vers le Ganga Talao. Les kanwars sur les épaulettes, comme jadis Shravan Kumar avaient fait, ils sortent de leurs villages et villes pour se converger vers Ganga Talao.

En route, tous chantent les louanges de Shiva, au rythme du dholak, des cymbales et d'autres types de percussions, ce qui donne une allure paradisiaque, une atmosphère de piété et une vibration divine à cet évènement.

C'est une image céleste de l'ile Maurice arc-en-ciel qu'apporte ce pèlerinage.

En somme, le pèlerinage est l'occasion pour les dévots de se purifier non seulement par le voyage externe mais par l'introspection, le sacrifice et la prière par la grâce de Shiva.

Le Char Pahar Ki Pooja

L'étape culminante du Maha Shivratri c'est le "Char Pahar Ki Pooja" qui se déroule pendant la grande nuit de Shiva pendant 12 heures, divisée en quatre tranches de 3 heures chacune.

L'occasion est donnée aux dévots de se ressourcer, d'expérimenter la spiritualité, d'exprimer leur dévotion, leur gratitude au Dieu Shiva. Ils prennent avantage de cet nuit si inspiratrice, pour l'éveil, pour l'épanouissement de corps et de l'âme.

Le Maha Shivratri revêt une très grande importance pour tous ceux qui aspirent à l'Ultime.

Le Mauritius Sanatan Dharma Temples Federation souhaite une pieuse fête de Maha Shivratri à tout le monde.

Que la grande nuit de Shiva soit un éveil exubérant pour nous tous.





MAURITIUS SANATAN DHARMA TEMPLES FEDERATION

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E-NEWSLETTER - 7th EDITION MAHA SHIVRATRI 2023