

The Puja

A photo-essay by Zahedul I Khan



Artisans start making the image of goddess Durga before the Mahalaya which heralds the time of festival (above) and the finishing touch is given to the icon day before the Puja starts on the sixth day from Mahalaya.



Visitors light the ritualistic candle at the temple in the evening.



On the eighth day (Maha-ashtami) the ritualistic Kumari Puja is held at Ramkrishna Mission.



Devotees at puja mandap.



This year the devotees held 'ghaut puja' at the site of historic Ramna Kali Mandir demolished by Pakistan occupation army in 1971.



And after the four days of 'puja comes Vijaya Dashami, the final day of the festival when the image of the goddess is immersed.



A festival has its fun and frolics.



Young aspirants write name on floral offering specially on *Bel* leaf in the hope of a blessed future.



The married Hindu women wear *shankha* and *sindoor* for a long life of their spouse.



After the immersion, it is now time to exchange good wishes and offer sweets amongst all in the community and others marking a happy conclusion of the festive occasion.