

| SHUTTERSTORIES |

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PHOTO: HASAN MAHMUD PROTTOY

FINDING GOD IN A KALEIDOSCOPE

PHOTOS: HASAN MAHMUD PROTTOY AND MD MOAZZEM MOSTAKIM

TEXT: AMIYA HALDER



PHOTO: MD MOAZZEM MOSTAKIM



PHOTO: HASAN MAHMUD PROTTOY

Milk-white wicks swim in little pools of ghee. They sit atop a shiny green banana leaf—each a prayer for a loved one, a prayer to ward off evil spirits or a prayer to grant your wildest wishes. One by one the lamps are lit and soon the thousand little fires illuminate the thousand solemn faces—eyes shut tight, lips incanting, as if in a séance. They have kept their fast and come with offerings of fruit, sweetmeat, milk and green coconut to Baba Lokenath's ashram to tell

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PHOTOS: MD MOAZZEM MOSTAKIM



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him their troubles and their dreams. The ranks come alive in the dimming November evening, singing frenzied songs of devotion, singing till the last prodip fades into the night. Maybe tonight, Baba will listen.

Rakher Upobash is a Hindu festival of fasting held in the Bengali month of Kartik. This year, on November 13, devotees came to Shri Shri Lokenath Brahmachari Ashram at Barodi, Naryanganj, to seek his blessings at the end of a long fast.

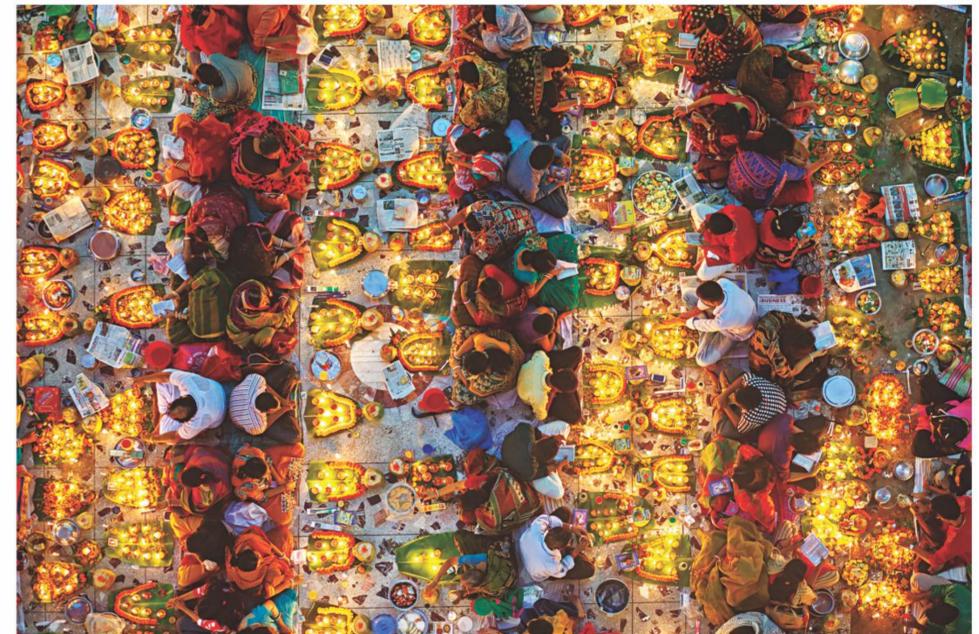


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