

Shree Shree Sharodio

Durga Puja



28th September - 2nd October



**NORTH LONDON
PRABHATI SANGHA**

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Message from Our Chairman

Nomoshkar and a very warm welcome,

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you all to our annual North London Prabhati Sangha (NLPS) Durga Puja. As Chairman, I feel truly blessed to have received the company, affection, and support of so many members and well-wishers throughout my tenure.

NLPS was founded by a dedicated group of individuals who had a clear vision: to celebrate the rich heritage and traditions of the Bengali Hindu community in North London. Our goal has always been to share the joy of our festivals, honour our Gods and Goddesses, and ensure that our culture continues to thrive for generations to come.

A key focus for NLPS has been the younger, British-born generation. We believe it is vital to nurture their awareness of our cultural heritage and inspire them to carry forward our traditions. Through activities such as Bengali language classes, classical music and dance lessons, and devotional Kirtan, we strive to keep our cultural roots alive and relevant.

In recent years, NLPS has also played a role beyond celebration, standing up for justice and human dignity. We have raised awareness of the atrocities and genocide taking place in our motherland and have organised peaceful protests to express solidarity with the victims of racial violence in Bangladesh.

As we gather for Durga Puja, let us remember that this five-day festival is more than a celebration, it is a reminder of Ma Durga's triumph over evil. I invite you all to join us in experiencing the joy of music, dance, drama, and of course, delicious prasad. None of this would be possible without the tireless efforts of our members, who gave their time, energy, and devotion. I extend my heartfelt thanks to each one of them.

To every member of the Bengali Hindu community, and to all our friends and guests, I wish you joy in celebrating Ma Durga and our culture. I look forward to welcoming you.

Kind regards,

Niranta Chandra Deb

- Chairman



Durga Puja Celebration 2025

Dear Devotees

North London Prabhati Sangha (NLPS) cordially invites you to join us with your family and friends in celebrating Durga Puja.

Sunday 28th September 2025

Adhibas & Shashti Puja

MAHA SHASHTI

4 pm – 10 pm

Monday 29th September 2025

Saptami Puja / Gita Paat

Anjali

Sandhya Aroti

Aroti Kirton

Matri Sangeet

MAHA SAPTAMI

10 am

1 pm

6 pm

7 pm - 8 pm

8 pm - 10 pm

Tuesday 30th September 2025

Ashtami Puja / Chandi Paat

Anjali

Sandhi Puja

Sandhya Aroti

Cultural programmes

MAHA ASHTAMI

10 am

1 pm

4 pm

6 pm

7 pm – 10 pm

Wednesday 1st October 2025

Nabami Puja

Anjali

Sandhya Aroti

Cultural Programmes

MAHA NABAMI

9:30 am

1 pm

6 pm

7 pm – 10 pm

Thursday 2nd October 2025

Dashami Puja

Sindur Pradan & Shanti

Sindur Khela

Dhamail

MAHA DASHAMI

12 pm

2 pm

3 pm - 4 pm

4 pm - 6 pm

Durga Puja will be performed by our priest Sri Tanay K Mukherjee

There will be cultural programmes and activities throughout the week

Programme schedule is subject to change

Prasadam will be distributed and served after Bhog Aroti and during the evening, after Sandhya Aroti



Account Name: **NLPS Durga Puja**

Account Number: **24706221**

Sort Code: **50-30-09**

For further information:

Sri Niranta Deb 07789 705 661

Sri Jahar Shil 07760 391 987

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Message from Our General Secretary

Dear devotees, friends and members of our community,

On behalf of North London Prabhati Sangha (NLPS), I would like to give you all my warmest greetings on the occasion of Durga Puja 2025. This festival is a time when we come together not only to worship but also to share joy, culture and fellowship. It is a time when families and friends unite and when we remember the strength that comes from being part of something greater than ourselves.

For me this celebration always carries a very personal meaning. I have been with this Sangha (NLPS) since the very beginning in 1991. More than thirty years have passed and in that time I have seen so much change but also so much continuity in the devotion of our members. I began as an ordinary member, then became Cultural Secretary, and now I have the honour of serving as your General Secretary. Each role has taught me something new. Each role has given me experience, responsibility and, above all, the sense of belonging to a family.

Through this Sangha I have not only gained skills in leadership and organisation but also a deeper knowledge of our culture, traditions and religion. It has been a guide and a teacher to me. I believe many of you may feel the same if you are a regular associate of NLPS.

When I reflect on what our Sangha represents I feel truly proud. In a society as diverse and multicultural as the one we live in, our Sangha shines brightly and holds its place with dignity. It stands as an example of harmony and positivity. We are able to preserve the beauty of Hinduism while also sharing it openly with the wider community around us.

Looking ahead I would like to see our Sangha continue to grow in its activities and extend its work with other organisations across the United Kingdom. By doing so we will build new friendships and show how the values of our faith can enrich not only us but society as a whole.

One of the greatest responsibilities we carry is to our younger generation. They are the future and the ones who must carry our heritage forward. If we do not guide them and pass on our traditions then our efforts risk being forgotten. Every programme we arrange, every celebration we hold, is not just an event for today but a lesson and a gift for tomorrow. We want our children and grandchildren to know their roots, to be proud of their culture and to carry these values into the future with confidence.

The main purpose of our Sangha is simple but very meaningful. It is to preserve and promote our culture in a way that is true, joyful and respectful. We must ensure that our faith and our traditions are never lost or misunderstood. Hinduism teaches peace, respect, tolerance and spiritual strength. These teachings are as important today as they have ever been and it is our duty to keep them alive within this society.

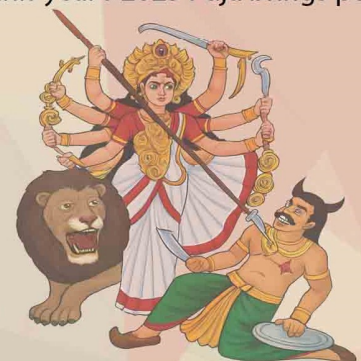
As your General Secretary I see this not just as an obligation but as a privilege. I am here to serve you, to work alongside our members, our volunteers, our elders and our youth. With your support and with your encouragement I believe our Sangha will continue to flourish and achieve even more in the years ahead.

Finally let us remember that Durga Puja is not only a time of devotion but also a time of community. It is about standing together, supporting each other and sharing joy. I pray that this year's 2025 Puja brings peace, happiness and prosperity to you and to your families. May Maa Durga bless us all with strength and wisdom.

Thank you. Kind regards

Johar Shil

- General Secretary



Kali Puja

Thursday 20th October 2025

Saraswati Puja

Friday 23rd February 2026

Dol Purnima

TBC - Visit Website for more details

Janmashtami

TBC - Visit Website for more details

For more details please
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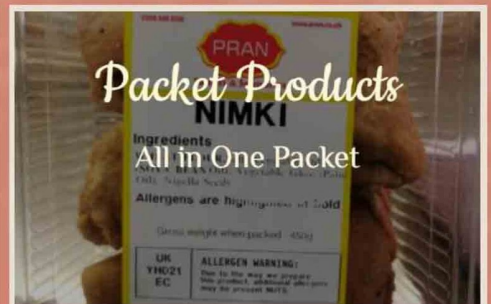
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Why do I love Durga Puja?

Madhav Deb



Durga Puja comes once a year, and I enjoy that it lasts for five whole days. During those days, we do aarti every day. I love watching and joining in the aarti because I like the sounds of the drums which feels like it matches the rhythm of my heart. I love eating the sweet and tasty prasad. There is always a variety of different dishes including my favourite poppadoms.

I love seeing the mesmerising murthis and the intricate details. I am also excited to see the brand new murthis this year. I love the tall banners of Lord Shiva and Lord Vishnu placed on either side of the murthis. The size of them makes me realise how powerful and immortal they are. I love meeting with my family and friends and celebrating the occasion together. I love that I have the opportunity to perform dances and even got to play Lord Brahma during our drama performance of the story of Maa Durga. I enjoyed being on the stage and showing off my months of practice. It made me feel happy because everybody adored it. Once Durga Puja is over, I feel sad that it has finished but I also cherish the fun memories I made. I look forward to the celebration every single year.



NORTH LONDON PRABHATI SANGHA

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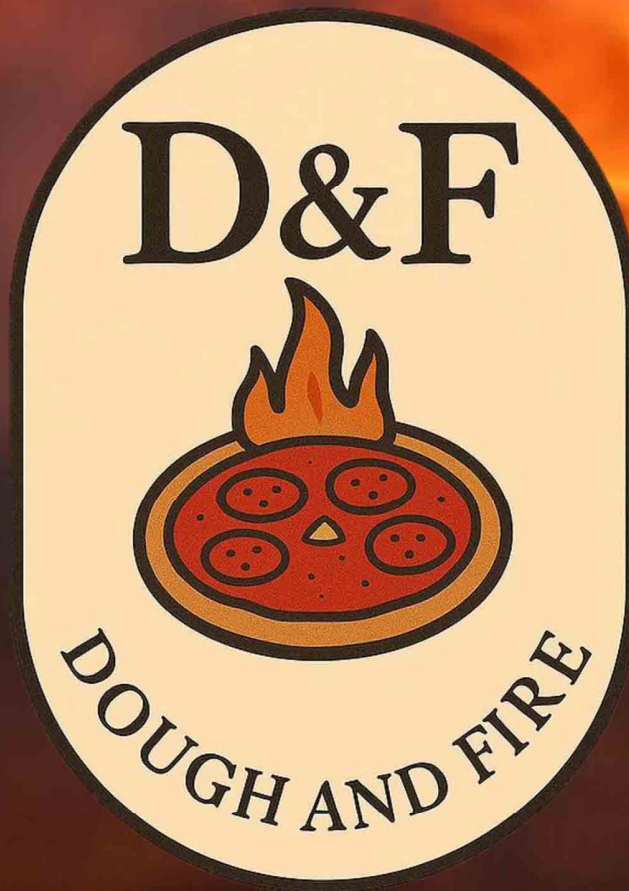
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Misconceptions of Hinduism: Caste-System

Nitesh Deb

For years, I have been asked, “Why follow Hinduism when it enforces a hierarchical caste system ranking people by job?” While hierarchy has created divisions in India for centuries, the original Hindu idea of caste (varna) was not about oppression. In ancient times, people usually inherited their parents’ trade, which led to rigid social groupings. Movement between castes was rare—mainly downward if someone committed taboo acts.

The system was originally symbolic, describing society as a single body: Brahmins (head) were priests and teachers, guiding knowledge and innovation. Kshatriyas (arms) were rulers and soldiers, protecting society. Vaishyas (stomach) were farmers and merchants, providing necessities. Shudras (legs) were laborers, building infrastructure and doing essential work. Each role was vital; without all four, society could not function.

The Bhagavad Gita often depicts Brahmins as beggars surviving on the kindness of others, reminding us that their role was about spiritual duty, not wealth or privilege. The modern idea of Brahmins being “at the top” is a distortion.

Many also ask about Dalits, or “untouchables.” Despite popular belief, they are not part of Hindu scripture. This label emerged around 400 CE, created by rulers to control overpopulated Shudra communities and to counter Buddhism. History shows this kind of manipulation is not unique. In the UK during the 2000s, the media demonized “benefit abusers,” making the public believe 27% of welfare spending was fraudulent, when the actual figure was just 0.7%. The tactic was effective, this misinformation allowed public consensus to cut their own benefits and safety net.

Hinduism itself has always endured distortions, but its core teachings remain. Misconceptions often come not from scripture but from ruling powers or media shaping narratives for control.

One of my favourite stories from the Bhagavad Gita is of Narad, the demi-god, and a humble farmer, who both show devotion in different ways. The story is called, ‘Who is the greatest devotee?’ I have attached a short story version at the end of this blog. To summarize, devotion through difficult situations shows true devotion.





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Why the Youth Should Be Proud of Sanatana Dharma



As young people we are filled with energy, questions and dreams. We are the generation that will have to face challenges, shape tomorrow and carry forward our heritage. In the middle of studies, careers and so many distractions, we often wonder what can truly guide us. For me that guide is Sanātana Dharma. It is not only a religion but a way of life that brings both knowledge and wisdom. It teaches balance, gives strength to overcome difficulties, and shows a clear purpose for living. This is why I believe every youth should feel proud to be linked with Sanātana Dharma.

One of the most powerful teachings is karma. It tells us that every action has a result, whether good or bad. Even science agrees in Newton's third law, where every action has an equal and opposite reaction. For students this is very real because it reminds us that every choice matters. The effort we give to studies, the way we treat others and the habits we develop all come back to us. Nothing is ever wasted. Keeping this in mind makes us more careful, more responsible, and gives us a healthier outlook on life.

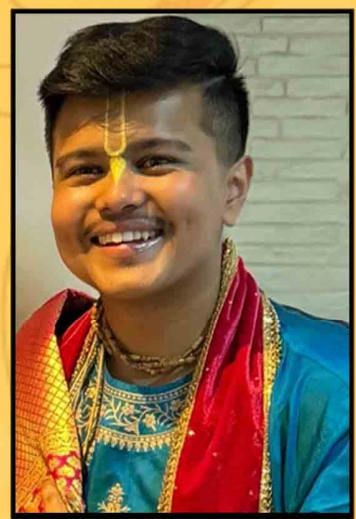
Sanātana Dharma also speaks about the ātmā, the eternal soul, which is beyond the body. Science still cannot fully explain consciousness, yet our scriptures already tell us that this awareness comes from the soul. We may not see it with eyes, but we can feel it within as the energy that keeps us alive. This gives confidence to young people because it reminds us that we are more than our grades, our looks or our status in society. It teaches us to value the deeper self that never changes.

Even the idea of time is beautifully explained in a way that connects Sanātana Dharma with modern science. Einstein's theory of relativity shows that time is not fixed. Our scriptures also describe time as relative, with one day of the gods being far longer than a day for humans. This helps us view life differently. Instead of being crushed by deadlines and stress, we learn to use time wisely and to keep a peaceful mind.

All these teachings show that Sanātana Dharma is not only spiritual but also practical and evidence based. They connect with what science is slowly discovering and they guide us towards a balanced and healthy life. For the youth this means strength in studies, focus in work and discipline in daily routines. The wisdom of karma helps us make good choices, the truth of the soul gives us inner strength, and the knowledge of time helps us stay calm under pressure. When these are combined it becomes clear that the goal of the scriptures is our well being, and by following them we can live with peace, clarity and success.

I also wish to thank North London Prabhati Sangha (NLPS) for giving me chances to deepen my understanding of Sanātana Dharma by letting me help and volunteer in their festivals, pujas and sevas. Even though I am not an official member, I truly admire their work and will always support it. They ensure that young people like me remain connected to our roots and understand our traditions. I pray that NLPS continues to grow stronger and that more youth take part in this mission.

In the end I feel grateful and proud of Sanātana Dharma because it is ancient yet modern, spiritual yet scientific, deep in thought yet simple in practice. It guides me to act responsibly, remain calm in struggles and realise my true self. For today's youth it is not only tradition but also a light that shows how to live wisely. That is why I proudly say that I belong to Sanātana Dharma. Open your heart and you will feel the sanatani within you.



Krishna Shil

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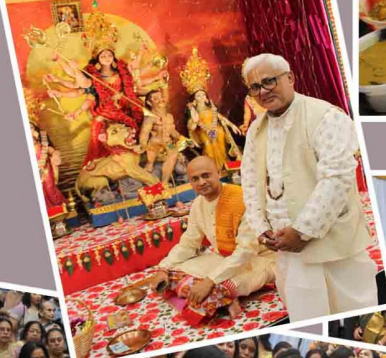
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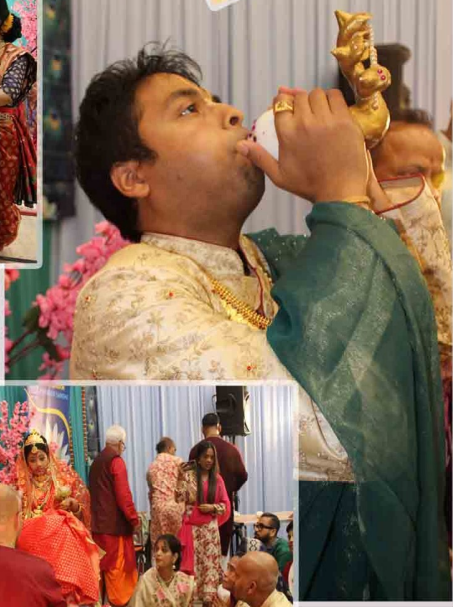
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Glimpse of Durga



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Puja 2024



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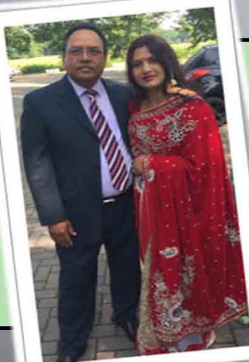


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Maa Durga's Triumph over Mahishasura

Shiv Dev



Maa Durga is one of the most powerful and beloved deities in Hinduism and she is the Goddess of strength, protection, motherhood and destruction. She is a form of the Great Goddess: Mahadevi, and sometimes Maa Parvati.

The most famous story of Maa Durga is her battle with Mahishasura, a powerful demon. He was born from both a demon and buffalo, meaning that he could change form between the two.

In pictures, she is often depicted riding a tiger or lion, symbolising courage and strength. She has eight or ten arms, each holding a different weapon such as a trident and sword. She has a calm face and often wears bright red or gold garments. There is also normally a halo around her head.

After years of penance, he received a boon from Lord Brahma that no man or God could kill him. With so much power and a sinful ego, he decided to throw a war against the Gods. One by one, each of the devas (Gods) fell at his strength. He even defeated Lord Indra, the King of Swarga (Heaven), and declared himself the ruler of the world.

Each God gave her weapons: Shiva gave her a trishul (trident) and snake, Vishnu gave his chakra (discus), Indra gave his vajra (thunderbolt), Yama gave his staff, Varuna gave his shankh (conch), Agni gave his bharji (spear), Vayu gave his bow and arrow, Ganesha gave his sword, Brahma gave his lotus, Vishwakarma gave his khitaka (parashu). Each of the 10 weapons was held in each of her 10 hands.

All the Gods went to the Trimurti – Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva – for help and realised that since the boon stated that Mahishasura cannot be killed by man nor God, they needed a woman to defeat the demon. So, they put all their power together and created one radiant form: Durga was born.

Maa Durga declared war on Mahishasura and she fought against him for 9 nights (10 days). Mahishasura kept changing his form between a human and buffalo to avoid defeat but finally, on the tenth day, as Mahishasura changed into the form of a massive buffalo, Durga jumped onto him, pinned him under her lion and slashed the trident into his neck, killing him.

We celebrate Maa Durga for her victory over Mahishasura, which symbolises the triumph of good over evil.

During Durga Puja, people visit temples, sing devotional songs (bhajans) and perform aarti with lamps and flowers. People also offer prasadam including flowers, fruits and mishti like laddus and barfi to Maa Durga. Bright colours like red, yellow and gold are worn and we sing, dance and chant Maa Durga's name.



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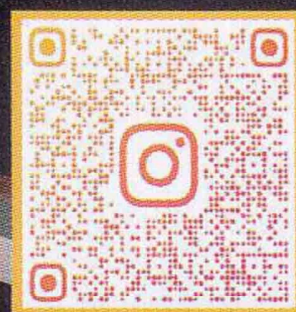
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Durga Art

Durga Maa, the fierce warrior and protective mother to all, was given 10 weapons for her battle against Mahishasura.

- Shiva gave the Trident and snake.
- Vishnu gave a chakra.
- Varuna gave a Conch.
- Vayu gave the bow and arrows.
- Indra gave the Thunderbolt.
- Kubera gave the Gada.
- Yama gave the Sword.
- Brahma gave the Lotus.



By: Keshav Deb



Durga Maa is also known as Devi and shakti. She is a fierce warrior and protective Goddess who combats evil. She is often presented with her children Ganesha and Kartikeya and Goddesses Lakshmi and Saraswati.



By Deepika Deb

The Meaning of the Days of Durga Puja

Day 1 Maha Shashti

Significance - On this day, the idol of Goddess Durga is traditionally unveiled and placed in the pandal (a temporary structure or decorated altar).

Rituals - The rituals include "Bodhan," the awakening of Goddess Durga, and inviting her to bless the devotees. A "Kalparambha" ritual may be performed, which involves the symbolic planting of a banana tree and offering prayers.

Day 2 Maha Saptami

Significance - On this day, the main rituals and prayers dedicated to Goddess Durga commence.

Rituals - Devotees offer anjali (ritualistic offerings) to the goddess and seek her blessings. Many rituals are performed, including "Kola Bou Snan" (bathing a banana tree symbolizing Goddess Durga), "Saptami Puja" (ritual worship of the goddess), and "Navapatrika Puja" (worship of nine different plants representing the nine forms of the goddess).

Day 3 Maha Ashtami

Significance - This day is considered one of the most significant days of Durga Puja, signifying the battle between Goddess Durga and the demon Mahishasura.

Rituals - The day begins with "Sandhi Puja," which is performed during the transition from Ashtami to Navami. Devotees offer 108 lotus flowers to the goddess. Kumari Puja, where a young girl is worshipped as a representation of the goddess, is also a significant part of Maha Ashtami.

Day 4 Maha Nabami

Significance - On this day, the worship of Goddess Durga intensifies, and special offerings are made.

Rituals - Devotees perform the "Nabami Puja" with great devotion and offer bhog (food offerings) to the goddess. In some traditions, a "Siddha Kubera Puja" is conducted to seek prosperity.

Day 5 Maha Dashami

Significance - This day marks the farewell to Goddess Durga, as she departs for her heavenly abode.

Rituals - Devotees perform "Dashami Puja" to bid farewell to the goddess. The idol of Goddess Durga is taken in grand processions for immersion (Visarjan) in rivers or water bodies, symbolizing her return to Mount Kailash.

Message of gratitude to our donors

NLPS would like to cordially thank all our donors within and outside of our community for selflessly donating a substantial amount to our monetary fund which in turn has allowed us to support our spiritual cause - Durga Puja - but also indirectly helping to promote our culture and religion. We really appreciate the generosity of all the donors. We will forever be in debt to their kind gestures and continued paramount support and are extremely grateful for it. May Maa Durga bless them to be blissful in all their activities.

Thank you once again.

Kind regards, NLPS.



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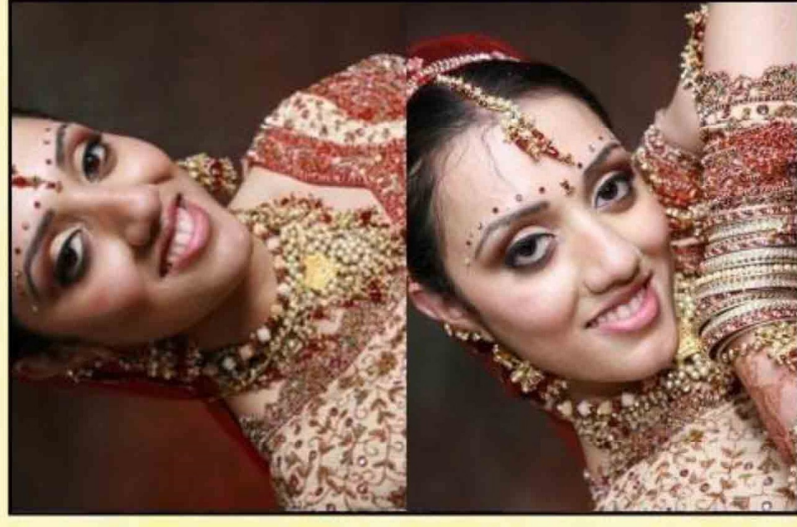
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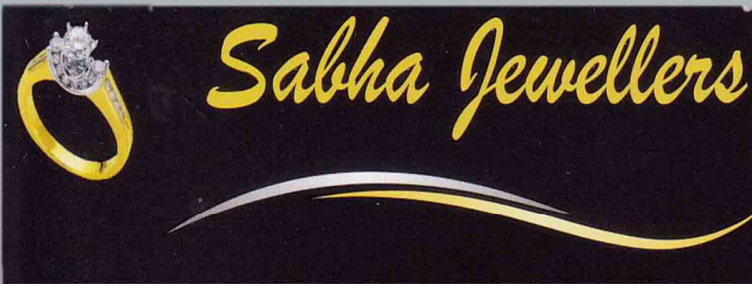
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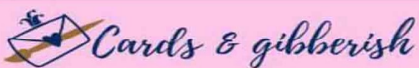
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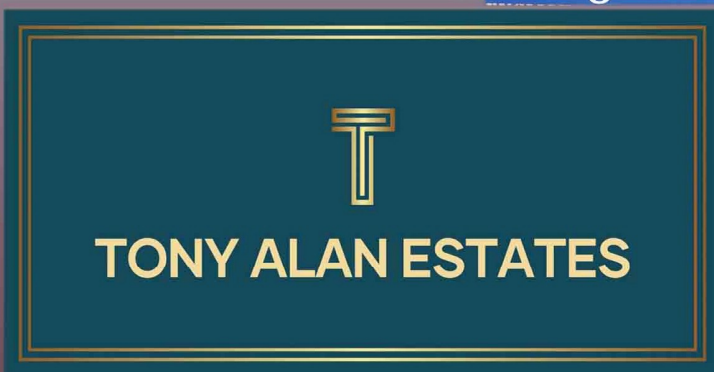
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