Dasara

(NAADA HABBA)

JGI

About Dasara

Mysore Dasara is the state festival in the state of Karnataka in India. It is a 10-day festival, starting with nine nights called **Navaratri** *and the last day being* **Vijayadashami**. *The festival is observed on the tenth day in the Hindu calendar month of Ashvina, which typically falls in the Gregorian months of September and October.*

The Hindu festival of Navaratri and its occasion of Vijayadashami celebrates the victory of good over evil. According to Hindu mythology, it commemorates the day the goddess Chamundeshwari (Durga) slew the demon Mahishasura believed to be the demon whose slaying by the goddess gave the city the name of Mysuru. The Mysuru tradition celebrates the warriors & the state fighting for the good during this festival, ritually worshipping and displaying the state sword, weapons, elephants, horses, along with the goddess in her warrior form prominently as well as the avatar of Vishnu, Rama. The ceremonies and a major procession is traditionally presided by the king of Mysuru.

The city of Mysuru has a long tradition of celebrating the Dasara festival with grandeur and pomp to mark the festival. The Dasara festival in Mysuru completed 400th anniversary in the year 2019, while evidence suggests the festivities were observed in Karnataka state by the Vijayanagara Empire kings in the 15th century.

Dasara

Jamboo Savari

Navratri

In **2025**, Mysore Dasara will be celebrated for **11 days**. The Hindu / **Pachanga** calendar bases festival dates on lunar phases (tithis), not just solar dates. This year, there is a rare occurrence: the Panchami tithi (the fifth lunar day in the waxing moon phase/Navaratri) falls on two consecutive days – September 26 and 27, 2025. Because Panchami is an auspicious day and integral to the sequence of the festival, it must be observed fully. Therefore, the festival gets extended to include both days. Typically, Mysore Dasara follows the Navaratri pattern **9 nights / 10 days** ending with Vijayadashami. But changes sometimes happen based on tithi alignments and religious calendars Such extensions are uncommon; reports say that this specific kind of double-Panchami hasn't occurred in nearly 400 years in Mysore Dasara observance.

Histrory

The Dasara festivities were held in the Vijayanagar kings as early as the 14th-15th Century. The exact origin of the festival and how long back it dates is unknown. The festival played a historical role in the 14th-century Vijayanagara Empire, where it was called Mahanavami and the festivities are shown in the relief artwork of the outer wall of the Hazara Rama temple of Hampi.

The Italian traveller Niccolò de' Conti described the festival's intensity and importance as a grandeur religious and martial event with royal support. The event reverred Durga as the warrior goddess (some texts refer to her as Chamundeshwari). The celebrations hosted athletic competitions, singing and dancing, fireworks, a pageantry military parade and charitable giving to the public.

After the fall of the Vijayanagar to Deccan Sultanates, these Hindu celebrations came to an end under Muslim rulers. The Wodeyars of Mysore formed a kingdom in Southern parts of the Vijayanagara Empire and continued the Mahanavami (Dasara) festival celebration, a tradition started initially by Raja Wodeyar I (1578-1617 CE) in mid September 1610 at Srirangapatna.

History of Alamelamma

Long ago, in the early **1600s**, during the reign of **Raja Wadiyar**, lived Alamelamma, the wife of the **Vijayanagara** viceroy of **Srirangapatna**. She was a devout worshipper of Sri **Ranganayaki**, the goddess of the Srirangapatna temple, and regularly offered her jewelry to adorn the deity. When Raja Wadiyar took control of Srirangapatna, he demanded that Alamelamma hand over her jewels to continue the temple tradition. Feeling humiliated and betrayed, Alamelamma fled to the banks of the river Kaveri at Talakadu.

Before leaping into the river, she uttered a powerful curse: "May Talakadu turn into a desert of sand, may Malangi become a whirlpool, and may the Mysore royal family never be blessed with natural heirs."

Since then, history records that Talakadu indeed turned into a sandy desert, Malangi became a dangerous whirlpool, and the Wadiyar dynasty has, for generations, relied on adopted heirs.

Even today, during the grand **Mysore Dasara**, the royal family honors this legend by using **Alamelamma** preserved jewels to adorn the idol of Goddess **Chamundeshwari**. This tradition keeps alive the memory of **Alamelamma** devotion, her tragic tale, and her enduring impact on Mysore's royal heritage.

The Divine Essence of Navratri

Day 1 – Maa Shailputri

devotees worship Maa Shailputri, the daughter of the Himalayas 🏔️. She symbolizes strength and purity, riding a bull and holding a trident & lotus. 🌸 May Maa Shailputri bless us with stability and courage.

Day 2 – Maa Brahmacharini

We worship Maa Brahmacharini, the goddess of wisdom, devotion, and penance. 🙏 With her rosary and kamandal, she bestows patience, peace, and inner strength. 🌸

Day 3 – Maa Chandraghanta

dedicated to Maa Chandraghanta, who symbolizes bravery and serenity. ⚔️🌙 With a crescent moon on her forehead and a golden aura, she removes fear & fills life with courage. 💫

Day 4 – Maa Kushmanda

We honor Maa Kushmanda, the creator of the universe 🌍✨. Known as the goddess of cosmic energy, she radiates light and positivity, bringing joy and health to her devotees. 🌟

Day 5 – Maa Skandamata

Celebrate Maa Skandamata, the mother of Lord Kartikeya 🕉️. She represents motherly love, compassion, and protection. May her blessings nurture our families with peace and prosperity. 💖🕊️

Day 6 – Maa Katyayani

Devotees worship Maa Katyayani, the warrior goddess ⚔️✨. She symbolizes courage and victory over evil. Worshipping her removes obstacles & grants success in life. 🌟

Day 7 – Maa Kalaratri

Dedicated to Maa Kalaratri, the fierce form of Durga 🔥⚡. She destroys darkness and negativity, protecting devotees from evil. Her blessings bring fearlessness and spiritual growth. 🌌🕉️

Day 8 – Maa Mahagauri

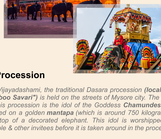
We worship Maa Mahagauri, the goddess of purity and peace 🤍. She blesses devotees serenity, compassion, and prosperity. Her calm presence removes all past sins. 🌸

Day 9 – Maa Siddhidatri

The final day of Navratri is devoted to Maa Siddhidatri, the goddess of supernatural powers ✨🔮. She grants wisdom, success, and spiritual fulfillment, completing the journey of Navratri with divine grace. 🌟

Festivities

The festivities included a special durbar (royal assembly). It was during the reign of Krishnaraja Wodeyar III in the year 1805, when the king started the tradition of having a special durbar in the Mysore Palace during Dasara, which was attended by members of the royal family, special invitees, officials and the masses. After the death of Srikanta Wadiyar in December 2013, Dasara celebration in 2014 was celebrated by placing the **"Pattada Katti"** *(royal sword) on the golden throne. But since his accession to the throne in 2015, Maharaja* **Yaduveer Krishnadatta Chamaraja Wadiyar** *have been holding the Dasara celebration and durbar. The ninth day of Dasara called as* **Mahanavami** *is also an auspicious day on which the royal sword is worshipped and is taken on a procession involving elephants, camels and horses.*



Lights in Mysore Palace

The main attraction of the ten-day Mysore Dasara festival is the Mysore Palace which is lighted daily with nearly 100,000 light bulbs from 7 pm to 10 pm on all days of the festival. Various cultural and religious programs highlighting the dance, music and culture of the State of Karnataka are performed in front of the illuminated Palace

Procession

On Vijayadashami, the traditional Dasara procession **(locally known as " Jumboo Savari")** *is held on the streets of Mysore city. The main attraction of this procession is the idol of the Goddess* **Chamundeshwari** *which is placed on a golden* **mantapa** *(which is around 750 kilograms of gold) on the top of a decorated elephant. This idol is worshipped by the royal couple & other invitees before it is taken around in the procession.*

Colourful tableaux, dance groups, music bands, decorated elephants, horses and camels form a part of the procession which starts from the **Mysore Palace** *and culminates at a place called Bannimantap where the banni tree (Prosopis spicigera) is worshipped. According to a legend of the Mahabharata, banni tree was used by the Pandavas to hide their weapons during their one-year period of Agnatavasa (living life incognito).*

Before undertaking any warfare, the kings traditionally worshipped this tree to help them emerge victorious in the war. The Dasara festivities would culminate on the night of Vijayadashami with an event held in the grounds at Bannimantap called as Panjina Kavayatthu (torch-light parade).

In Mysore, India, the **Vijayadashami** *Elephant procession during Mysore Dasara is called Jumbo Savari (from the British during their control of Mysore State). The original name to this procession is Jumbi Savari* **("going to the Shami (Banni) tree")**. *Goddess Chamundeshwari is taken in procession on an Elephant. But the "Jumbo" name is still intact.*

After the Jamboo Savari, a torchlight parade takes place in the evening at the Bannimantap Parade Grounds.

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