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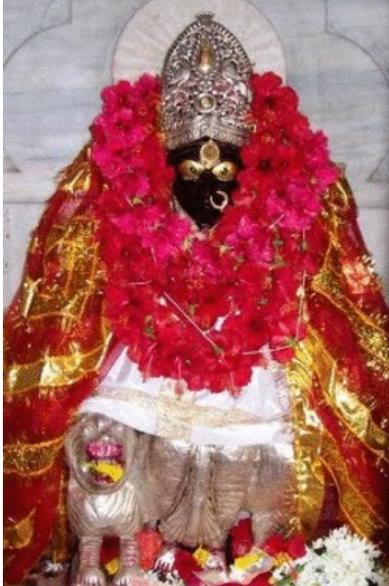
October 2010

## Glory of Bharath » Bharath Darshan

Dear Sai Brothers and Sisters,

In the holy month of Dasara festival our journey is to the sacred Kamakhya temple to offer our humble salutations to the Mother Divine.

### Kamakhya Temple



**Goddess Kamakhya**

The **Kamakhya Temple** is a shakti temple situated on the Nilachal Hill in western part of Guwahati city in Assam, India. It is the main temple in a complex of individual temples dedicated to different forms of the mother goddess as the Dasa Mahavidya, including Bhuvaneshvari, Bagalamukhi, Chinnamasta, Tripura Sundari and Tara. It is an important pilgrimage destination for general Hindu and Tantric worshippers.

There are some other temples of various goddess can be seen in the complex. They are the Sitala Temple, the Lalita Kanta Temple, The Jaya Durga Temple, the Vana Durga Temple, the Rajarajeswari Temple, the Smanakali temple, the kail temple of Abhayananda dharmashala and the Sankheswari temple. There are five temples of Lord Shiva in the Kamakhya complex. They belong to different forms of Lord Shiva like Kamesvara (Umananda), Siddhesvara, Amratokesvara (Heruka), Aghpra, and Kotilinga (Tatpura).

The complex also contains three temples of Lord Vishnu. They are as the Kedara (Kamalesvara), situated near the northern side of the main temple, as the Gadadhara, situated in the north-western direction of the Kamakhya temple, and as Pandunath, which is situated in the eastern foothills of Nilachal also known as Pandu.

### Sthala purana

Kamakhya is the most important of all Shaktipeethas. Jagannata loves this than any other place in the world. According to Kalika Purana each and every sand particle near Kamakhya is a Shaktipeeth.

*Kamakhya paramam teertham, Kamakhya paramam tapah /  
Kamakhya paramo dharmah, Kamakhya parama gathih //*

Guahati was previously called as Kama rupa, Hari kshetra, Pragjyotisha pura etc.. This was the capital of a demon named, Narakasura. Lord Vishnu killed a demon named Hiranyaksha, in the form of Swetha varaha and saved earth. But, it is Tamasik avathara and he couldn't realise his own state. He married Bhu devi (The Goddess of Earth) and spent life on earth. They begot a son who was a demon by character.

Bhu devi prayed to Lord Vishnu to confer boons on her son. Vishnu kept a name, Naraka, and made him the king of Pragjyotisha pura. He warned Bhu devi that if Naraka becomes very bad and he will be killed to save the world. Bhu devi prayed a lot and got a promise from him that Naraka shall meet death only in her hands. Vishnu left the form of Varaha and went to Vaikuntha.

Goddess Kamakhya is considered as the Maya rupa of Bhu devi. Naraka worshiped Goddess Kamakhya and he got a lot of energy. He ruled the world for many Yugas. He captured sixteen thousand princes and enjoyed them against their will. He made friend ship with Banasura. Banasura deviated him from the worship of the Goddess Kamakhya. He told that Kamakhya is also an unmarried girl and Naraka can marry her.

One day night, Naraka observed Goddess Kamakhya dancing in her temple. He approached her and sought her hand in marriage. She laughed at him and told that it will happen if Naraka constructs temple, tank, and stair case from the foot of Nilachal hill to her place, by the end of that night. Naraka had mystic powers by worshipping her. He started fast and almost completed the task. Lord Vishnu appeared in the form a cock (fowl) and crew, which is considered as the starting of the day. Naraka became frustrated, chased and killed that fowl. In the mean while the day really came. Naraka failed to reach the goal and got angry on Goddess Kamakhya. Kamakhya disappeared from that place.

The incomplete stair case is called as Mekhelauja path. The place where Naraka killed the fowl is called as Kukurakata chaki. It is situated in the district of Darrang.

Naraka stole the Ear rings of Deva matha Adithi (Mother of Lord Indra). This became a very big insult for all gods. At that time Lord Vishnu and Bhu devi incarnated as Sri Krishna and Satya bhama. Indra prayed Sri Krishna to kill Narakasura. Sri Krishna went with Satya bhama to kill Narakasura. Goddess Kamakhya came with them. Satya bhama didn't remember Narakasura as her son. Narakasura spoke to her in a very bad way. She became angry and killed Narakasura by an Astra given by Lord Sri Krishna. Bhaga datta, the son of Naraka was made as the king of Pragjyotisha pura, by Lord Sri Krishna.

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### Description

The current temple structure was constructed in 1565 by Chilarai of the Koch dynasty in the style of medieval temples. The form of the earlier structure, destroyed by the Kala Pahar, is unknown. The current structure has a beehive-like shikhara with delightful sculptured panels and images of Ganesha and other Hindu gods and goddesses on the outside. The temple consists of three major chambers. The western chamber is large and rectangular and is not used by the general pilgrims for worship. The middle chamber is a square, with a small idol of the Goddess, a later addition. The walls of this chamber contain sculpted images of Naranarayana, related inscriptions and other gods. The middle chamber leads to the sanctum sanctorum of the temple in the form of a cave, which consists of no image but a natural underground spring that flows through a yoni-shaped cleft in the bedrock.



**Kamakhya Temple**

During the Ambubachi festival each summer, the menstruation of the Goddess Kamakhya is celebrated. During this time, the water in the main shrine runs red with iron oxide resembling menstrual fluid. It is likely that this is an ancient Khasi sacrificial site, and worshipping here still includes sacrifices. Devotees come every morning with goats to offer to Shakti. The Kalika Purana, an ancient work in Sanskrit describes Kamakhya as the yielder of all desires, the young bride of Shiva, and the giver of salvation. Shakti is known as Kamakhya.

### Legends

According to the Kalika Purana, Kamakhya Temple denotes the spot where Sati used to retire in secret to satisfy her amour with Shiva, and it was also the place where her yoni fell after Shiva danced with the corpse of Sati. This is not corroborated in the Devi Bhagavata, which lists 108 places associated with Sati's body, though Kamakhya finds a mention in a supplementary list. The Yogini Tantra, a latter work, ignores the origin of Kamakhya given in Kalika Purana and associates Kamakhya with the goddess Kali and emphasizes the creative symbolism of the yoni.

### Kamakhya during Ahom era

According to a legend the Koch Bihar royal family was banned by Devi herself from offering puja at the temple. In fear of this curse, to this day no descendants of that family dares to even look upward towards the Kamakhya hill while passing by.

Without the support of the Koch royal family the temple faced lot of hardship. By the end of 1658, the Ahoms under king Jayadvaj Singha had conquered the Lower Assam and their interests in the temple grew. In the decades that followed the Ahom kings, all who were either devout Shaivite or Shakta continued to support the temple by rebuilding and renovating it.

Rudra Singha (reign 1696 to 1714) was a devout Hindu and as he grew older he decided to formally embrace the religion and become an orthodox Hindu by being initiated or taking sharan of a Guru, who would teach him the mantras and become his spiritual guide. But, he could not bear the thought of humbling himself in front a Brahmin who is his subject. He therefore sent envoys to Bengal and summoned Krishnaram Bhattacharyya, a famous mahant of Shakta sect who lived in Malipota, near Santipur in Nadia district. The mahant was unwilling to come, but consented on being promised to be given the care of the Kamakhya temple to him. Though the king did not take sharan, he satisfied the mahant by ordering his sons and the Brahmins in his entourage to accept him as their spiritual guru.

When Rudra Singha died, his eldest son Siba Singha (reign 1714 to 1744), who became the king, gave the management of the Kamakhya temple and along with it large areas of land (Debottar land) to Mahant Krishnaram Bhattacharyya. The Mahant and his successors came to be known as Parbatiya Gosains, as they resided on top of the Nilachal hill. Many Kamakhya priests and modern Saktas of Assam are either disciples or descendants of the Parbatiya Gosains, or of the Nati and Na Gosains.

### Worship

The Kamakhya Temple in Assam symbolizes the "fusion of faiths and practices" of Aryan and non-Aryan elements in Assam. The different names associated with the goddess are names of local Aryan and non-Aryan goddesses. The Yogini Tantra mentions that the religion of the Yogini Pitha is of Kirata origin. According to Banikanta Kakati, there existed a tradition among the priests established by Naranarayana that the Garos, a matrilineal people, offered worship at the Kamakhya site by sacrificing pigs. The goddess is

worshiped according to both the Vamachara (Left-Hand Path) as well as the Dakshinachara (Right-Hand Path) modes of worship. Offerings to the goddess are usually flowers, but might include animal sacrifices.

**"Ya devi sarva bhuteshu shakthi rupena samsthithah  
Namastasyai Namastasyai Namastasyai Namoh Namah"**



**Old  
Edition**

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