

HUES OF LIFE

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NAVRATRI-
A SEASON OF PRAYER
AND WORSHIP

EXERCISE WITH
EXPERT TRAINERS

**WORLD FOOD DAY -
LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND**



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HUES OF LIFE

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Editor & Publisher:	Nijith Raj
Executive Director:	Sajitha Beegum
Chief Editor:	Viswanath V.
Editorial Assistant:	Maneesh T.M.
Art Director:	Kiran Mohan
Photographer:	Abhijith B.
Correspondent:	Ferzeen Banu
Manager- Marketing:	Vishnu U.



Enquires: mail@huesoflife.online
+91 62 388 91 885

editor's Desk

Dear Readers,

The month of October is characterized by some serious reminders rather than mere celebrations. World Food Day, started with the goal of ensuring food security in times of crisis relies on the fact that it is needed to remember the starving people in this world who suffer from not getting even one meal a day and to create awareness in the society.

Hunger is a major social problem that many countries in the world are going through. Therefore, it is necessary to create a deeper awareness in the society on this issue and to take initiative for a world without hunger. World Egg Day, celebrated on the second Friday of October every year since 1996, is also a day conducted after a food item in October. Let's read this time how important a balanced, sustainable and nutritious egg is for a healthy body. Food is one of the most important factors that bind people of different countries and cultures together. Here we are remembering the immense ability of food to strengthen relationships. The relevance of Diwali sweets calls out to the brotherhood among us.

If Diwali is the victory of good over evil, the joy doubles when it is accompanied by sweets and if you want to go on a mind-filled journey with this bliss of mutual love, you can go to Munnar this time. This time we got the opportunity to return to see the Neelakurinji which blooms only once in twelve years. It is inextricably linked with Iravikulam National Park, which was established for the protection of Nilgiri Tahrs, and has become a symbol of the Munnar Hills. This time, let the beautiful journeys of the readers be through Munnar, which stands tall with the alias of Neelakurinji's heaven. Happy Diwali to all readers.

Happy reading
Nijith Raj
Editor & CEO
editor@huesoflife.online
www.huesoflife.online

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WORLD FOOD DAY - LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND

October 16 is observed as World Food Day all over the globe. This year's official theme is set as 'Leave No One Behind'.

The World Food Day was initiated by the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), a part of the United Nations and it calls for things like fighting and defeating starvation and hunger – one of the most important social problems. Seeking awareness around the world through collective actions to tackle this global threat and creating and initiating specific deeds to ensure a healthy diet for all, every World Food Day poses valuable message for us.

World Food Day is organized under the joint leadership of FAO, UNHCR, The United Nations Refugee Agency and the World Food Program (WFP). Celebrations are organized in 150 countries around the world in collaboration with local governments and various organizations. The official

theme of World Food Day 2021 was 'Safe food today for a healthy tomorrow' and in 2020 it was 'Our actions are our future'. This resolution was decided keeping in mind the sufferings of millions of people who struggle in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic.

It is to commemorate the founding of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in 1945, World Food Day is celebrated every year on 16 October. Since 1981, various resolutions calling for the importance of food security have been adopted as part of the Food Day celebrations. Food Day has since become one of the main ways to educate people about issues such as hunger, malnutrition, sustainability and food production. The big goal behind

this day is to eradicate hunger globally. Food Day focuses on honouring and felicitating the individuals and 'Food Heroes' who contribute in their own way to build a sustainable world where no one has to remain unpropitious due to hunger.

The Covid-19 has underscored the need for an urgent change in the trajectory of our lives as the pandemic made the lives of farmers who were already facing many problems related to climate change, even more miserable. Poverty is at paramount with urban





...dwellers increasingly relying on food banks and millions of people needing to deliver emergency food aid. We need sustainable agricultural and food systems that can support 10 billion people by 2050. The UN Secretary General convened the first Food Systems Summit in September last year to discuss the changes that need to be made in food production and consumption. 40 percent of the world's population does not have access to a healthy diet. About 20 lakh people are obese and gained weight due to not getting enough food or exercise. The world's food system is responsible for more than 33 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions. About 14 percent of food is wasted due to limited harvesting, handling, storage, and transportation. Of these, about 17 percent of food is

wasted at the consumer level. While the agro-food sector employs more than a billion people in the world, it is ahead of any other sector. We can all become a food hero by learning a little bit more, by learning from nature. Avoid processed foods to follow a healthy diet and maintain a healthy body and environment. Choose products that are good for health and compatible with nature. Read labels and packaging information carefully before choosing those. It is our responsibility to improve food storage and reduce food waste. Buy only what you have to use and use the whole of what you buy. Recycle items as much as possible and the best way to do this is composting. By trying to grow our own fruits and vegetables at home, we can also act responsibly without wasting food.

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NAVRATRI- A SEASON OF PRAYER AND WORSHIP

Mahanavami and Vijayadashami are the glorious days of genuine knowledge and remarkable prosperity observed in Kerala according to Hindu belief. While Mahanavami typically marks the ultimate victory of Goddess Durga by slaying Mahishasura, Ayudha Pooja (worshipping work tools) is one of the age-old characteristics of Mahanavami. Navratri subtly conveys the specific message of notable victory and protection of Dharma. On the first three days of Navratri, the goddess is worshiped as Parvati, the next three splendid days as Lakshmi and the last three days as Saraswati. Ashtami, Navami and Dashami are the important days in Navratri celebrations in Kerala. Mahanavami day is only for Devi pooja. On that day the weapons dedicated to the Goddess will be worshipped. On the day of Mahanavami, machines and weapons are not operated and all work tools, books etc. are kept for pooja to gain the favour of the Goddess, and gain the boon of excellence in work. Devotees set aside the entire day for Saraswati pooja and worship. Although pooja is traditionally performed in the morning and evening, there are people who faithfully observe a complete fast on Mahanavami day. Some will fast by skipping rice for dinner.





There is a legend as to why Ayudha Pooja is performed on Mahanavami day. During the exile, the Panchapandavas hid all their weapons in the trunk of a large Banni tree. It was this tree that protected the divine weapons of the Pandavas during their twelve-year-long exile. Pandavas used to pray to Goddess Durga daily for salvation and the Goddess blessed them. When they finished their stay in the forest, they worshiped all the weapons that were kept in the wooden box on that tree's trunk. On Dashami, the Pandavas took back their weapons after worshipping the Goddess for nine days, envisioning her as Vana Durga, the destroyer of evils and the champion of good deeds. Panchapandavas worshipped the goddess with weapons on Navratri day, so it is also known as Ayudha Pooja. Navratri is also known as Vijaya Navratri and Durga Navratri. It is believed that as a part of this, the Ayudha Pooja and Navratri celebrations are held today.

There is another legend related to these rituals. The demon king Mahishasura, who ruled the three worlds chased Indra and the other devas from heaven. Following this, as per the

specific instructions of the Trimurtis, all the splendors of the deities came together and took the form of Goddess Durga for Mahisha Nigraha. Durga killed Mahishasura's ministers one by one. When Mahishasura came face to face with Durga, she used Vishnu Chakra, which killed the chief demon in the final battle. It is considered that Vijayadashami is the time when the Goddess wins. The cultural celebration of Navratri is due to the avatars taken by goddess Durga to kill Mahishasura, Chandasura, Mundasura, Raktabija, Shumbh Nishumbh, and Dhumralochan and Durga's success in it.

Devi upasana is the heart of Navratri celebrations. Although in North India, it is a festival associated with the killing of Ravana, the basis is the idea that Lord Rama worshiped the Goddess for nine days and obtained a boon to gather the strength to kill Ravana. It is believed that after worshipping all the nine aspects of the goddess, Rama became all-powerful and gained the power to defeat Ravana. Dussehra is celebrated in northern India on this day to commemorate the story of Rama.

Navratri fast is observed for education

and prosperity. In order for the learned vidya (knowledge) to be fruitful, there must be the Kataksha or priceless boon of Saraswati, the chief Goddess of education. It is considered best to observe Navratri fast. On the day of starting the fast, take a bath and worship the Goddess with purity. The fast will end on Vijayadashami day with the start of education. It is said that temple darshan and recitation of sacred scriptures like Lalitha Sahasranama, Devimahatmya, Soundaryalahari, etc. are recommended during the fast days. On the day of Vijayadashami, pooja for taking back the work tools and books is performed after Saraswati pooja in the temples.

Vijayadashami is the fresh day of opening, from the closing pooja of Mahanavami to the glorious victory of divine wisdom and light. In Kerala, children start their education on Vijayadashami day. Vijayadashami is auspicious for introspection of instrumental and dance music arts. By writing the Saraswati mantra on the tongue with a sacred ring dipped in honey, the children triumphantly enter the world of extensive knowledge.



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OF KERALA**



THARAVATTIL
RESTAURANT & CATERING

Govt law College Junction,
Palayam, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala 695035
Contact- 098472 08691

EXERCISE WITH EXPERT TRAINERS

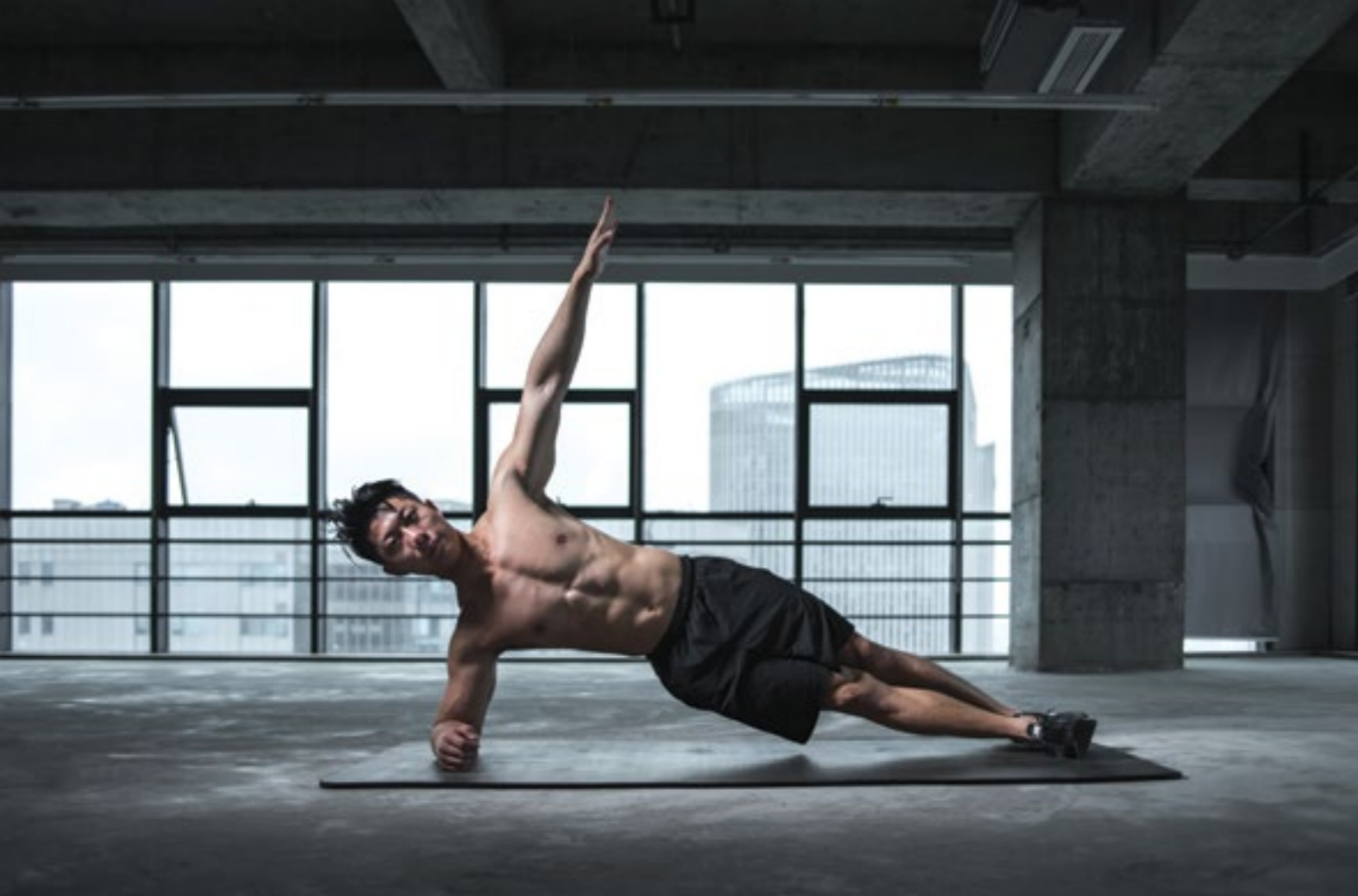


Gymnastic exercises play an important role in maintaining one's physical fitness and health when he/she accepts the fact that those workouts are not just meant for the absence of diseases. You can only say that you are completely healthy when your essential physical, mental and social health thrive equally. Mainly influenced by factors such as food, rest, mental enjoyment and exercise, health clubs in today's scenario attract everyone including common people to celebrities. Many teenage individuals can be seen in gymnasia making sure that going to the gym and working out has become a fashion trend these days as gym visit for a while in the morning or in the evening is the habit of most people. There are many people around us who do not stop going to the gym even a day. The number of people who go to the gym for the purpose of body beauty and fitness is increasing day by day. At the same time, there are many people who go to the gym to prevent lifestyle diseases and future diseases.

Some go to the gym as a form of exercise while others work hard to stay fit.

One of the first things gym-goers need to understand is that just going and doing some exercise won't get you the results you want. The benefits of exercising can only be achieved by following a proper diet. Exercise should not destroy your immune system. Before hitting the gym, the first thing to know is whether you have any nutritional deficiencies. For example, those who are deficient in vitamin D or calcium may experience weakened immune systems and fractures during a sudden workout. Magnesium deficiency can cause leg pain.

A meal rich in carbohydrates and protein should be consumed after starting the habit of workout in a gym. For example, fruits, nut butter, or a cup of yogurt and fruit, boiled potatoes and nuts are foods that gym beginners should definitely eat. It is very important to give the body the nutrients it needs when suddenly starting a day



of strenuous exercise without doing any other exercises. When this is not obtained, problems such as dizziness and fatigue occur.

It goes without saying that there is a connection between drinking water and exercise. Anything done without adequate hydration in the body will have the opposite effect. Drink plenty of water at least two hours before exercise. A person who sweats profusely should drink at least 500-600 millilitres of water this way. It is best to measure weight after drinking water and exercise. In this way you can find out how much hydration is required. Similarly, there is no need to start taking protein powders or supplemental foods when you start going to the gym. Eating nutritious foods like nuts, drinking plenty of water, and sleeping well should be the first step.

Our body goes through many changes as we age. Adolescence is a period of muscle growth. At the age of 17-18 our body structure matures and becomes strong enough to withstand the effects of hard workouts in the gym. As we grow up, there are many hormonal changes in our body. Moreover, proper nutrition is

necessary to cope with all the changes that occur in the body. Hence, stressing on going to the gym at this age may not be ideal. It will also affect our physical growth. Different sports activities like running, swimming, any kind of sports and yoga are required at this stage. 17-18-year-olds should stay away from weighted squats and dead lifts. After this age, our body structure matures enough to undergo the physical changes required for rigorous gym workouts. Also, start exercising from the basics by ensuring that you are under the supervision of a well-qualified expert trainer. After that we can move on to more technologically advanced and safer means. Also, make sure you control your diet and calorie intake in line with your gym routine. If you are going to the gym and doing all the exercises with the intention of gaining muscle quickly, it is better to avoid them. Thinking of doing all the exercises at once to get fit as fast as possible can destroy you and your health. A gym center can train a variety of exercises. It should always be remembered that all these things are not for one person to do.

When you start going to the gym, don't

just jump in and do every single exercise available. Be careful while choosing a trainer. Some gyms have a trainer for everyone and some people choose a fitness trainer just for them. However, when choosing your trainer, be sure to keep the following points in mind. Tell the trainer exactly what your needs are. Be clear from the start whether you are going to the gym to lose excess weight, lose weight around the waist, tone your abs or strengthen your legs, or as part of a healthy routine. Know exactly what your need is and practice only those exercises.

One thing that many of us misunderstand is that the more you exercise, the more results you get. Health experts say that this perception is not correct. Exercising more than your body can handle can cause serious health problems. It is more likely to lead to muscle and joint weakness and fractures. Maybe this will cause the body to get tired. Make an understanding of the above first and then start going to the gym. Your health should be as important as your physical beauty. Hence, it is better to get the necessary training from experienced trainers.

MUNNAR- A TROVE OF TOURIST SPOTS

Munnar happily welcomes her guests with the duodecennial bloom of graceful Neelakurinji flowers. Welcoming the spring of Munnar, the sky, nature, and wildlife are ready to show us the tea plantations covered with snow, the mountains stretching as far as the eye can see, and the pleasant coolness of the fragrant mists. Situated in the middle of Pallivasal, Devikulam, Marayur, Mankulam, and Kuttampuzha panchayats, Munnar got its name from the epithet that it is the place where Moonnu (three) aaru (river), namely Muthirapuzha, Nallathanni, and Kundala, meet. The Tata owned the tea plantations that shaped the landscape here, while the British built the first tourist bungalows near the town of Munnar. The foreigners who were mesmerized by the beauty of the

tea plantations of Munnar, blessed with non-stop snowfall, called this region the "Switzerland of Kerala."

There is no end to the views of Munnar, with rivers and snow-covered roads flowing like silver jewels through the black rock formations to be seen and kept in the memories. Since the rule of the Poonjar dynasty, Munnar, the prestige of the Malayalam land, was considered heaven by the Chola-Pandya kings and later by the English. The sons of the forest, the Malayars, Adiyars, Kurumbas, Malai Vedas, Karumars, Kadars, and Paniyars, were taking care of Munnar. The virtue of their innocence is the large number of people flocking to Munnar even today.

A part of Munnar's history is the 'Ranikallu', which is inscribed on

the left side of the road after the Neriya Mangalam bridge on the way from Ernakulam, announcing the opening of the road by Rani Sethu Lakshmi Bayi in 1931, and after that, the tourist exploring to Munnar started. There are very few hairpins here compared to other high ranges, as the reason for this is that this road has been paved through the paths that the wild elephants have come down for years!

On the way to Munnar, you can see Cheeyapara Falls, Chinnakanal Falls, and many other small waterfalls. Cheeyapara Falls, which can be seen from the roadside between Neriya Mangalam and Adimali, is one of the first



Filled with clear water, Devikulam Lake also attracts tourists and evokes the natural beauty of the place. From Munnar, you can reach the top station by travelling about 35 km on the Kodaikanal route.



destinations on the journey to Munnar. The Cheeyapara waterfalls, which flow down the rock in seven tiers at the Neriya Mangalam-Munnar road during the rainy season, is one of the most mind-blowing sights in Munnar.

The addictive cool climate and the wonder of the view leave an indelible impression on the eyes; adding to the flavour of the Munnar journey is the journey through the tea plantations from one location to another. Munnar's sightseeing spots are surrounded by many places, so even if we don't go anywhere in particular, we will be refreshed if we take a trip through the meadows and tea plantations.

Standing on the slope of a hill in Old Munnar is the ancient C.S.I. church, built during the British rule. The history of the church is both fascinating and harrowing, and the interesting part of this story is that the cemetery came 17 years before the church was established. At the top of this cemetery is the grave of a British woman named Eleanor Isabel May, the wife of Henry Mansfield Knight—the first general manager of the Kannan

Devan Company. Arriving in Munnar, 23-year-old Eleanor saw the beauty of the place and said that if she passed away, she should be buried on top of the hill. On the third day after saying that, she died of cholera, and then she was buried on top of that hill behind where the church stands now. Seventeen years later, the church was built on the hillside and more funerals were held in the cemetery, with foreigners and locals alike, but tourists even today like to visit Eleanor's grave more. A very old Bible and a piano were also kept inside the old-style church, and metal plates engraved with the names of many other deceased British officers were also fixed on the walls of the church.

Fifteen kilometres on the Idukki route from Munnar town, you can reach the Mattupetti Dam, which is praised as one of the bewitching tourist-boating points. It is a pastime for many to holler to the other side of the lake as they reach the echo point near the dam to capture the beauty of the valley on camera. Apart from this, the Mattupetti area is so charming that you can sit on the green lawn for as long as you want, looking

at the lake. The cow breeding station as a part of the Indo-Swiss project also invokes the importance of Mattupetti.

Filled with clear water, Devikulam Lake also attracts tourists and evokes the natural beauty of the place. From Munnar, you can reach the top station by travelling about 35 km on the Kodaikanal route. The Kundala Dam, which is the second dam to be seen during this trip, has boat rides and blossoming cherry gardens nearby. The top station is also the highest point in Munnar, where you can enjoy the views of the bordering hills and valleys.

As the hills of Munnar are considered a warehouse of spices and tea, it would be a great loss for travellers to return without visiting its spice plantations and the world's highest tea plantation, Kolukkumalai. Also, all plantations have their own trusted medical stores. It is only 15 km from Munnar town to reach Suryanelli via the Chinnakanal route and from there to Kolukkumalai. Although Kolukkumalai is located in the Bodinayakanur district of Tamil Nadu, there is no road from there to go

to Kolukkumalai. If it is only 15 km to Eravikulam National Park, you have to travel 50 km from Munnar to Anamudi Peak. Being South India's highest peak and known as the Everest of South India, Anamudi in the Western Ghats is an ideal destination for trekking enthusiasts. If you go about 40 km from Munnar, you can reach Marayur. Kanthalloor and Mannavan Sholai are undeniable tourist spots on the way to Marayur. Spread over 42 square kilometres at an altitude of 7800 feet, the paddy fields of Mannavan Sholai are a relaxing spot for elephants and leopards.

Rajamalai Peak, the mind-blowing mountain in Eravikulam National Park, is home to the stocky goat Nilgiri Tahr and is considered a paradise for the eyes where Neelakurinji flowers bloom. Because the rare flowers can be seen only once every twelve years, Munnar is crowded this time to see the bloomed beauties so as not to miss this sight, which can be seen only once every twelve years. It is a 4 km drive from the ground and a 1 km walk from there to Rajamalai, having no less than 10 hairpin

turns in between.

Travellers can also enjoy the Chinnar journey, as it is an interesting road trip through Devikulam amidst tea plantations and a boat ride at the Anayirankal Dam. The viewpoint is another important destination in Chinnakanal. Blue Mount Resort on the Chinnakanal route is one of the most pleasant accommodation options for tourists visiting Munnar. The Suryanelli route, which is only two and a half kilometres from there, has some big and good resorts like Club Mahindra, Sterling, and Fort Munnar, and many others due to the presence of Munnar Lake on the same route. The most beautiful and closest view of the lake can be captured from Blue Mount Resort, but the pleasure of travelling to Munnar during the rainy season will entirely be different. Even though Munnar is a very small city, it is not far behind in creating awe of the view. Homemade chocolates, different flavoured tea powders, and herbal products are available in Munnar, where travellers can't leave without buying natural scented tea powder and a handful of memorable moments.

A BALANCED DIET BALANCES OUR HEALTH



Keeping a balanced diet on our modern menu is difficult, yet essential for a healthy life. It is scary to see fast food undoubtedly becoming the staple eatery of most people in today's generation. If we don't want these foods to be the main villains of our diet, we need to understand that there is a way to eat healthily. What do you typically eat? When do you eat? Are we eating the right amount? The pivotal point is that we should be sure about all of them.

A balanced diet in common is a healthy diet that properly provides adequate amounts of what is required for optimal health. Health experts urge everyone to pay attention to a balanced diet as nutrients are essential for the energy, organic growth and necessary repair of our bodies. The active role of a balanced diet is very important for a healthy lifestyle. It is essential for proper growth and development and for an active life and it provides adequate proportions of essential nutrients from food groups like carbohydrates, fats, proteins, vitamins, minerals and water. The potential health benefits of a balanced diet are numerous. Healthy food progressively increases our energy, meaningfully improves body function, naturally strengthens the immune system and prevents weight gain. A healthy diet prevents the imminent risk of diseases like diabetes, cancer, heart disease and high blood pressure.

Simply saying, a balanced diet can be precisely defined as a diet full of nutrients that help your body function properly. A balanced diet consists of a variety of foods that offer the necessary carbohydrates, proteins, fats, vitamins, and minerals for healthy body function. The paramount importance of food is accurately determined by getting the right amount of calories into the body. Your body gets proper nutrition when you eat a variety of foods that are rich in calories, such as fruits and vegetables, whole grains and proteins.

A calorie is a unit of energy obtained



from food. Once you eat, calories are consumed while walking, thinking, or breathing. A person may need an average of 2000 calories a day to maintain their ideal body weight. Generally, a person's calories will depend on gender, age, and physical activity. Also, men need more calories than women. People who exercise more need more calories compared to people who don't.

Naturally eating healthy food will give you more energy as it will improve your health and energetically promote a proper mood. Good nutrition, physical activity, and healthy body weight are essential components of a person's overall health and well-being. If you do not follow a proper diet, you are prone to diseases and infections or fatigue. Unless the importance of nutritious food for children is emphasized, they

might become vulnerable to physical and mental developmental problems. Some of the most common health problems caused by a lack of a balanced diet are heart disease, cancer, stroke, and diabetes.

The human body is always in a constant process of growth and repair. New cells need nutrients in the form of protein, vitamins and minerals to form. It is a balanced diet that meets these needs. Eating a well-balanced diet can help control weight in overweight people. Such a diet includes low-calorie foods abundant in nutrients and fiber. It instantly suppresses hunger without extra calories. High-calorie foods give you the energy to stay awake and function throughout the day. However, eating more calories than you need can lead to weight gain. Eat foods rich in necessary vitamins A, C, E, selenium, and



potassium. It gives you a strong immune system to keep you healthy and fight infections.

In addition to strengthening our bodies and boosting our immunity, a balanced diet of fish, meat, whole grains, fruits and vegetables can also boost our mental health. As we know, lack of sleep affects the brain. Here, a balanced diet helps to sleep well. Also, you need eating well to avoid feeling sluggish and low on energy. Bad eating habits cause problems like acidity in the stomach and constipation. Omega-3 fatty acids are ideal for brain function. These are abundant in salmon fish, walnuts, and fruits like kiwi and avocado. These help us improve memory and learning. Make sure we incorporate a balanced diet into our lives for a clear and functional brain and immune system.

Leafy green vegetables, starchy vegetables, legumes rich in proteins like beans, pulses and peas, red- and

orange-coloured vegetables, eggplant, fruits, whole grains, quinoa, oats, brown rice, barley, lean meat, pork, chicken, fish, low-fat milk, dairy products like yogurt, cottage cheese, soya milk, etc. can be included in the list of a balanced diet. These are recommended from each of the various food groups and should be consumed in specific amounts daily. In fact, these foods from each food group provide the body with the micro and macronutrients it needs. A healthy lifestyle can be achieved by eating a balanced diet and considering all the nutrients the body needs. A proper diet helps achieve ideal body weight and reduces the risk of diseases like diabetes, heart problems and cancer.

It is clear that a balanced diet consists mainly of five components: water, fruits, vegetables, protein, starch and fat. Make it a habit to drink two to two and a half liters of pure water a day. It is good to eat any fruit daily three times and those

are best if eaten fresh. Fruits contain starch, salts, vitamins and antioxidants and these will be lost during juicing.

Organic vegetables are one of the most important components of a healthy diet. These include spinach, drumstick leaves, cucumber, onion, eggplant, etc. Protein is remarkably the main link in a balanced diet. Meat, fish, eggs and curd are good foods for everyone.

Vegetarians can prefer any nuts like soya beans and peanuts to meat products, to gain enough proteins. We also know that starch and fat are major stores of energy. Care should be promptly taken to adjust these graciously according to physical activity too. When pulses are added to grains, it becomes a complete protein. These five essential elements must reach the body in the right amount every single day. So, take your time and savor your meals in small portions. It's also advised to minimize fast-food snacks and avoid overeating.

SATISFY YOUR SWEET TOOTH THIS DIWALI

Diwali simultaneously plays a role as the festival of light that dispels darkness and the celebration of sweet that fills everyone's hearts. Having a praised legacy of wide and distinct variety of sweets, Diwali invites us to the venerated world of gratifying delicacies. Commonly called mithai, Indian sweets are an integral part of Diwali celebrations today.

The sweets and candies adorned in eye-popping colours that beckon the sugar lovers are said to be a hallmark of India's festive heritage. It is generally believed that the sweets accompanying Diwali celebrations arrived from North India. In connection with certain celebrations, the sweets and other rare dishes cooked in our homes centuries ago have later become Diwali specials. They then spread to South India and to various parts of the world.

In India, sweets are seen as a gateway to God when they become a part of rituals and celebrations. While wheat-based sweets are a staple among the North Indians, milk, flour, chickpea and cashew nuts are also filled in various delicacies. Along with Mysore Pak, the king of Diwali sweets, various types of halwa, gulab jamun, barfis, laddoo, jalebi and pedas are the traditional Diwali sweets. Every year there are new experiments in these candies. For example, made from grains and dry figs, Sev Chivda is one of the favourite Diwali dishes of Maharashtrians. Bhakarwadi made from gram flour, filled with coconut and sesame seeds, is an essential part of Maratha-Gujarati Diwali celebrations. Puran Poli which is similar in size and shape to our native Kerala boli, Shrikhand and Kalakand which is rich in protein and starch are great sources of energy. There are other Diwali sweet dishes that are mouth-watering and rich in taste. Let's get to know some of these sweet treats.



Peda



Peda, a very soft sweet dessert-based sweet is believed to have originated from Mathura in Uttar Pradesh. Today, Peda tops the list of sweet dishes and is widely available in various forms across the country. They are made using spices like cardamom, pistachio and saffron along with ingredients like khoa and sugar. Diwali Pedas come in different shapes and textures; some are thick, while others are very soft. Kesar Peda is a popular sweet in North India, with saffron as an important ingredient, while Dharwad Peda is a very popular variety in the South Indian state of Karnataka.

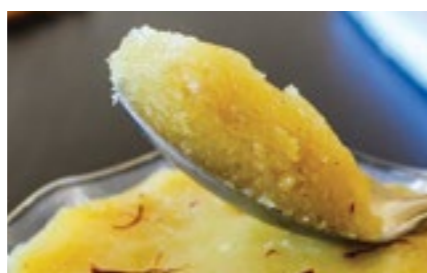
Kaju Katli aka Kaju Barfi



Diwali is incomplete without the sweet dish Kaju Barfi, also known as Kaju Katli, a diamond-shaped traditional Indian sweet made with cashew paste and sugar. Made with three ingredients namely cashew paste, ghee and sugar, this sweet dish has a handful of regional variations. Although the diamond-shaped variety is the most popular, many households make cashew rolls and mixed fruit cashew Katli. It is one of the best gifts to give to family and friends during Diwali celebrations.

Almond Halwa

Prepared from milk, almonds, khoa and poppy seeds, Badam Halwa (Almond Halwa) is a popular sweet dish made in various parts of India for almost



every celebration, undoubtedly during Diwali too. The melting soft creaminess of Badam Halwa, which can be eaten either as halwa or as a garnished barfi made with the same ingredients, is a delight for sweet lovers. A sprinkling of cardamom powder and saffron at the end enhances the taste of this sweet dish that can be made in thirty minutes.

Shahi Tukda



Shahi Tukda is a dish made with bread slices that are first fried and then soaked in milk. Garnished with nuts, pistachios and almonds, this dish is definitely a royal sweet treat. Originated in the city of Hyderabad, this dessert has been a favorite since the days of kings and queens, hence the name Shahi, which means royal in Persian. The erstwhile Nawabs popularized the taste of Shahi Tukda, the best in the country.

Mohanthal



Mohanthal, a Rajasthani sweet made with chickpeas, is a popular delicacy in Rajasthan and Gujarat. Having added nuts and pistachios for flavour, this dessert is garnished with cardamom, saffron and nuts. Cooked in ghee on low flame, this delicious sweet is basically similar to barfi with a smooth texture.

Ladoo



Ladoo needs no special introduction as not a single Diwali goes by without touching the sugared glaze of Ladoo which is famous in India and abroad. This spherical sweet dish has different variations across the country. Motichur Ladoo, Besan Ladoo, Boondi Ladoo and Coconut Til Ladoo are some of the most popular Ladoo diversifications. Coconut Ladoos are a favorite Diwali sweet of Maharashtrians while Boondi Ladoos are popular in the entire North India. This traditional dessert is so easy to make that tastes delicious with tons of other succulent flavours.

Gulab Jamun



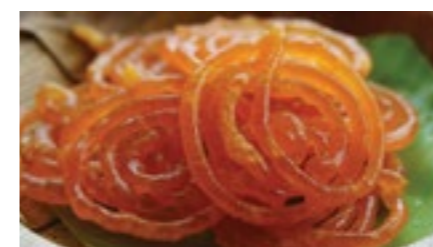
Yummy Gulab Jamuns are another indispensable dish in Indian celebrations. Traditionally made in the form of a ball with milk powder, khoa and paneer/ cottage cheese, it is usually served with caramel or sugar syrup. It is also said that no matter how much food is eaten, there will always be room left for this spellbinding sweet dish in our bellies.

Rasmalai



Rasmalai is a popular sweet that originated in West Bengal and the word is derived from two words 'ras' (juice) and 'malai' (cream). This Diwali dessert is very quick and easy to make and is prepared mainly with cardamom and corn flour. Indian cheese is one of the main ingredients in the white balls, soaked in sweet and aromatic milk to get a taste of cardamom. Garnished with saffron and pistachios, this rich dessert is a huge hit during Indian festivals.

Jalebi



Jalebi is another of the most popular sweet treats of the Indian subcontinent. Made with maida flour, ghee and sugar, Jalebi is mostly orange or yellow in colour even it can be used with various optional flavours. Flour dough, shaped in round is fried in oil and then dipped in sugar syrup. Although the traditional jalebi which tastes toothsome when served hot is most famous, Indian Jalebi also includes the Imarti and Jahangiri variants.

Gajar Ka Halwa



Gajar Ka Halwa or Carrot Halwa is a famous Punjabi sweet dessert pudding made with carrots, condensed milk, khoa and cream, possessing popularity in Central and North India. Garnished with dry fruits, this dish is also cooked in almost every home during Diwali.

Balushahi

Similar in shape to a glazed doughnut, traditional Indian sweet Balushahi is also



known as Badusha or Indian doughnut. The taste and texture is completely different from doughnuts even though those have the same ingredients. While doughnuts are soft on the outside and inside, Balushahi has a firm flaky texture on the outside and a sweet, soft core. It can be served either dipped in sugar syrup or eaten as it is.

Mysore Pak



Mysore Pak is a delicious traditional sweet that is very popular in South India. A blend of simple ingredients like ghee, sugar, chickpeas and cardamom, Mysore Pak is undeniably a concoction of flavours that melts easily on the tongue. Invented in the palace kitchens of Mysore, this sweet got its first name from the city where it was born and the name pak or pakka refers to sugar syrup as it is cooked in sugar syrup mixed with besan ghee.

Chawal Ki Kheer



Chawal Ki Kheer or Rice Kheer is an Indian version of rice pudding made with basmati rice, milk, sugar, cashews, saffron and cardamom. It is perfected

by slow cooking until it reaches a rich creamy texture. Being a classic dessert perfect for festivals and special occasions, it's hard to say no to a bowl full of fragrant Rice Kheer. Seviyan Kheer and Phirni Kheer are other popular variations of this sweet dish. Rich in nutrients that are good for the body, ghee dishes like kheer are indispensable in Diwali sweets as it is an excellent dessert.

Soan Papdi



Soan Papdi is another popular option among Diwali sweets. Made with a mixture of lentil powder, flour, ghee, sugar, almonds, milk and cardamom, this Diwali sweet is available everywhere for any occasion today and can be said that this flaky sweetness literally melts in your mouth. It usually comes in a cube shape, but for ease of serving, the traditional method of serving it as flakes in butter paper cones is adopted.

Sandesh



Sandesh, the most popular sweet in West Bengal and Odisha, can be said as a pleasant and luscious treat among the Diwali sweets. Even the simplest version of Sandesh, made with sweet cottage cheese and cardamom has a combination of quality milk and sugar. Paneer can be substituted for milk if a more elaborate preparation is desired. Molded into different shapes, this sweet dish is beautiful as well as delicious at the same time.

BACK LOBE



Can we pray in Silence? Is silence required to pray?

One can answer with an absolute 'Yes' to the former. It will be a bit difficult to reply for the latter one – not just because it depends on each individual. It's also because – in today's world – you might need to travel into vast deserted areas to find silence.

Wherever you turn in populated areas, you can hear prayers and intonations from loud speakers of various religious institutions. And it spares no ones' ears – maybe the deaf wouldn't be bothered.

Yes, the loud speakers blaring political speeches, the horns from vehicles, and a lot of other sound blasts which create noise pollution should also be brought in to the discussion.

Yet, I feel the religious institutions should be the guiding light to reduce or even stop such disruptions to human life. These institutions seem to have more sway on the public than governments.

Why is loudspeaker required for prayers? Even if it is for a crowd thronging at that place, can't it be a public address system which is loud enough to cover that area alone. Is it necessary to extend these loudspeakers down the length of the road?

How will the students complete their studies? How will the people with extensive work schedules rest? What about those ill and/or bed-ridden people at homes?

The religious institutions - where prayers are held for everyone's health, happiness and prosperity – should be showing the way.

Praying silently that it will happen, let's have a prayerful Navratri season.

Viswanath V.
almightyv@gmail.com

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