

SUCHONA

Indian Association on Iowa & Illinois

Suchona, established in 1998, is a registered Non-Profit Organization in IA. It was formed to bring together the Bengali community of Indian Americans settled in Iowa and promote Indian, Bengali & South Asian cultural heritage, art, community welfare etc . Suchona has played a significant role in supporting the Corridor communities (Cedar Rapids and Iowa City) by promoting and sustaining various cultural and social activities.

The community also help charities and volunteers for community service activities in USA, India and Bangladesh. Some of our major activities include donating money for Thanksgiving dinner for the homeless, care for elderly cancer patients, donations for Tsunami and earthquake victims in India.

The organization aims at promoting unity and community engagement activities and events through cultural events, art, music and more.



The community comprises largely of the Indian Americans settled in Iowa who traditionally belong to Bengal the Eastern state in India – known far and wide for its rich culture and heritage. The members of *Suchona* are continuously contributing to the overall development of the state with their professional, cultural and community engagements.

Suchona Sharodiya

Down the Memory Lane

Written by Sukumar Ghosh



Immigrants, all over the world, start looking for their own identity. Towards the end of the 20th century, it was pretty much the same story with the Bengalis who migrated to Iowa and started looking for their own identity. Those were the pre-9-11 days, life was easier, the world was less polluted, people were more trusting, and the environment was conducive to the growth of religious and cultural activities. What the Bengali immigrants were looking for was a platform. It all started in 1985 with the celebration of the first Saraswati Puja in Latika Bhatnagar's Iowa City house, followed by almost yearly such Puja celebrations at the International Center lounge of the University of Iowa, and Spring or Fall (Bijoya) cultural events either at the basement of Wesley Hall (120 N. Dubuque St) or McBride Hall auditorium of the University of Iowa. Jishnu and Jayeeta Sen were involved in cultural activities from the very early days, and their hard work and sincerity indeed paid off. Sumita Ghosh was the anchor of religious activities. Every year we waited for the new arrivals and looked for what talents they have brought with them to showcase to all of us. Indeed, many of them had talents in dance, music, and acting. We started putting together small performances in and around the campus of the University of Iowa. Resources were scarce, but there was no shortage of enthusiasm.

Every year we waited for the new arrivals and looked for what talents they have brought with them to showcase to all of us.

Following the Y2K scare (some may not be familiar with this now) near the turn of the millennium, there was an influx of software professionals in the Cedar Rapids area, which boosted the Bengali population. Although many of them were here for a very short period, some took interest in these activities, and the question of forming an official platform came up. In one summer afternoon of 1997, there was a meeting of the Bengalis, where the name Suchona was chosen for the new organization. Satyapriya Roy (then a Rockwell employee) was instrumental in drafting the first constitution and the first governing body consisted of Latika Bhatnagar, Kalpataru Barman (he later started Calcuttaweb.com), Diptesh Das, Sukumar Ghosh (President), Malay Kar, Runa Musib, Malasri Das-Roy (Treasurer), Jishnu Sen (Secretary). Since then, sadly, three members, Latika Bhatnagar, Satyapriya Roy, and Malay Kar passed away. Starting Durga puja was, however, another story. During the late 80s most of us used to go to Chicago for the Puja celebration. During the 90's some of us started attending Durga Puja at the Hindu Temple of Minneapolis. In 1997, we found out that the Minneapolis Hindu Temple was planning to bring a new image of Durga from Kolkata. So we inquired what will be done to the current idol and learned that they would perhaps give it away to some organization. Immediately, negotiations started, and after some time, Minneapolis Hindu Temple authorities informed that they were willing to give it to us for a donation of \$101, on condition that we have to perform Durga puja regularly. So, one morning in 1998, Dr. Chirantan Ghosh and I drove to Minneapolis, and carried the idol back to Iowa City in a minivan. It was placed in the puja room of our house in Iowa City. This idol, made of dense Styrofoam, was indeed a piece of art, and very easy to transport – however, it was also very fragile. Therefore, after a few years, Suchona members decided to raise money and get a new idol from Kumartuli (artisan: Amar Nath Ghosh). This is the idol that we had worshipped till 2018 for our Durga puja. The old idol was moved to the Hindu temple of Eastern Iowa in Cedar Rapids, and from there it was shifted to the Vedanta Society of Iowa, housed at the residence of Tirthankar and Nandini Banerjee in Cedar Rapids.



SARASWATI PUJO 2022

Organized by

On the occasion of Basant Panchami, we extend our greetings and invitation to all to celebrate Saraswati pujo.

Best wishes

Suchona GB 2021-22

**SATURDAY,
FEBRUARY 5TH**

**OLD BRICK,
26 E. MARKET
STREET
IOWA CITY,
IOWA 52245.**

In the year 2019, Governor Kim Reynolds recognized August 15th as India Day to commemorate the contribution of Indians for the overall social, economic, and cultural development of the state.

The Bengali community in Iowa consists of professionals who are doctors, engineers, academicians, IT professionals, business owners, engineers, research associates and professors, entrepreneurs and much more – all contributing towards the economic, cultural and overall welfare and development of Iowa and Illinois.



We were fortunate to have Mr. Krishna Sastry, a resident of Cedar Falls, IA as our priest for Durga puja – he continued with this for several years. We appreciate his sincerity and dedication. Never did he accept any money in exchange for his services – instead, he donated to various charities whatever money Suchona offered him. Unfortunately, a few years ago, he suddenly passed away. Since then Viraj Anavkar of Cedar Rapids has taken over as the priest of our Durga Puja. His sincerity, humility and dedication are really admirable. The main driving force behind Suchona's onward march was a vibrant cultural base. For more than decade, every year, Suchona members would regularly meet and rehearse for the cultural events to be staged during Durga Puja. There were no social media or Google hangout at that time – during the summer months, enthusiastic members would assemble at the University of Iowa Field House for drama and dance rehearsals under the able guidance of Jishnu and Jayeeta Sen, often accompanied by Subhasis Mukherjee, then a resident of Moline. Subhasis himself was an accomplished Tabla player, and served as a resource person for contacting well-known musicians from India. During Durga Puja, there was such a strong participation of the Bengalis from Iowa City, Cedar Rapids, Ames, Bettendorf and Moline that we would often forget that we were living outside India. I did not try to name the numerous other people who actively participated and contributed to the activities of Suchona, since any omission will offend people whose names may have been inadvertently left out. Also, my summary is heavily biased towards the first 10-12 years of Suchona, since during the subsequent years, my contact with mainstream activities of Suchona faded quite a bit. Nevertheless, this article will give the readers an idea about the history of Suchona, and I hope that the younger generation will build on this foundation to take Suchona to new heights.





NRI WELFARE SOCIETY OF INDIA

TO PROMOTE UNITY, PROGRESS, FRIENDSHIP & CO-OPERATION
Registered under Society Registration Act XXI of 1860

Central Office: D-253, DEFENCE COLONY, NEW DELHI-110 024 (INDIA)
 Ph: 011-43536330, 23326000, 23312329, Fax: 011-23229006
 Site: www.nriwelfare.org, Email: nriwelfare@nriwelfare.org, nriwelfare@nriwelfare.org

1st August, 2022

Dear Dr. Chirantan Ghosh,
USA

Dear Dr. Chirantan Ghosh,

NRI Welfare Society of India, a registered organization is holding "AZADI KA AMRIT MAHOTSAV" to be held on 30th September, 2022 at House of Commons, British Parliament.

This is an initiative of the Government of India to celebrate and commemorate 75 years of Independence and the glorious history of its people, culture and their achievements.

This Mahotsav is dedicated to the people of India who have been instrumental in bringing India this far in its evolutionary journey.


We are glad to inform you that you will be conferred with the coveted "PLAQUE OF HONOUR" for your distinguished & exemplary services in the field of Medicine on the occasion.

Congratulations!

Please confirm your participation for us to do the needful.

With regards,
Yours sincerely,


Secretary General:
 Gaurav Singh
 Member Press Council of India
Country Presidents:
 • Dr. Arun Mahapatra Ghosh (U.S.A.)
 • South East Asia, U.K.
 • Rajan Menon, Malaysia
 • Mrs. Veda Agar, Germany
 • Shaikh S.A. Khatibkhan, Kuwait
 • Dr. S.K. Khatibkhan, United Arab
 • Dr. Jag Narain Singh, Australia
 • Vikram Sharma, Canada
 • Dinesh Bhattacharyya, New Zealand
 • Dr. Anand S. Kapoor, Canada
 • Bagicha Singh Dharam, Denmark
 • H.C. Phulekar, China
 • Mr. Thava Govindaraj, South Africa
 • Gangula Mangaraj, Thailand & Sri Lanka
 • Shaikh Mahmood UAE
 • Dr. R.S. Sureshbabu, Guyana
 • Girish Krishna Madan, Myanmar
 • Prof. Narendran N. Sharma, I.P.
 • Gopesh Mendel, Bahrain
 • Dr. Pradeep S. Sanyal, Russia
 • M.R. Rajaguruban, Substrate of Oman
 • Narayan Prasad, Thailand
 • Rajgopal Bhatnagar, Turkmenistan
 • Anil Prabhakar Chit, Mozambique



BARACK OBAMA

Dear Sharabonee:

Thank you for your email. I know that this has been a time of great concern for many people across our country, and I'm glad you reached out.

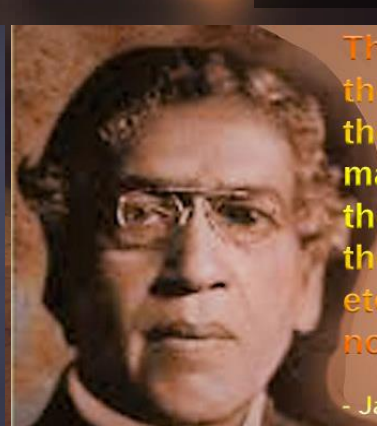
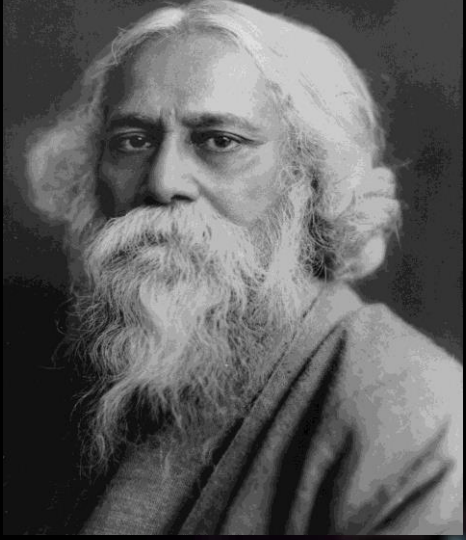
As Americans, we are defined not by the color of our skin or the faith we practice or the country our family is from, but by our shared commitment to the idea that all people should be able to make of their lives what they will. When any part of our American family feels separate or targeted, it tears at the very fabric of who we are as a people. And I want you to know, if you're ever wondering, that you fit in here—you are right where you belong.

Although it may sometimes seem like our national discourse is overwhelmingly negative, I firmly believe in the power of our kindest and most thoughtful voices to build a more welcoming and inclusive future. As long as people like you stay engaged and continue defending the right of all our people to live safely and with dignity, I'm confident our rich, blended heritage will continue to serve as one of America's greatest strengths.

Sincerely,
Barack Obama

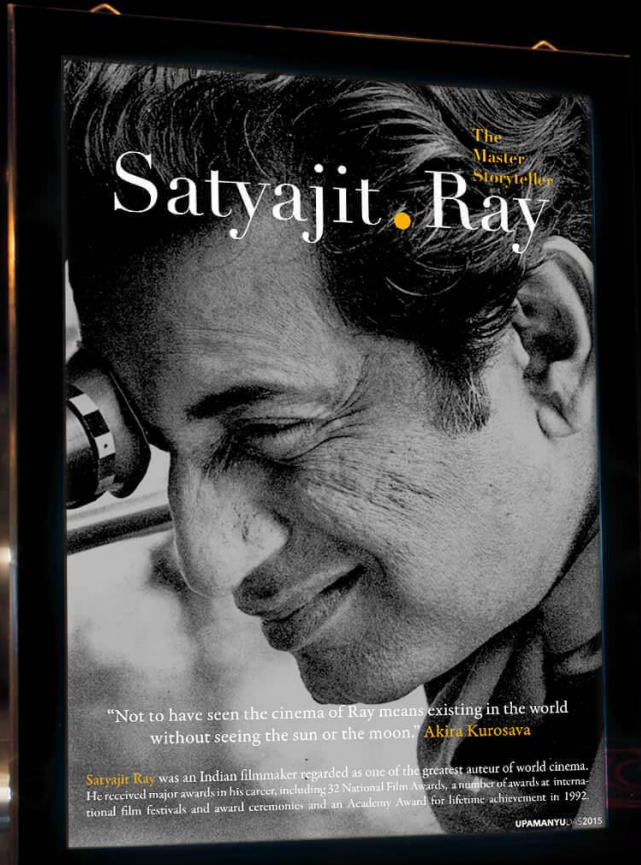
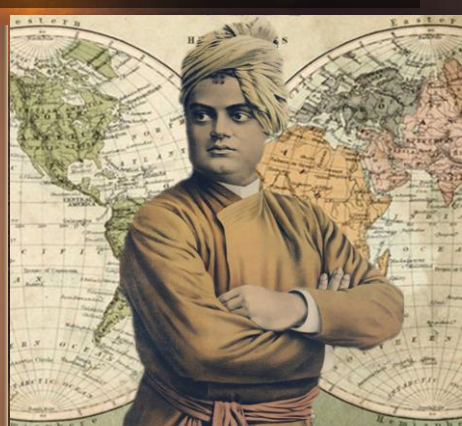
THE OFFICE OF BARACK OBAMA | WASHINGTON, D.C. | WWW.BARACKOBAMA.COM





They who behold
the One, in all
the changing
manifoldness of
the universe, unto
them belongs the
eternal truth, unto
none else.

- Jagadish Chandra Bose



Nobel Prize winners in Literature and Economics, Physicists, Motivational speakers, saints who chose Bengal as their home, world leaders, academicians, musicians, artists, writers, authors, Oscar winning film makers and much more.

Bengalis have brought honor and pride to the community and also contributed immensely for the development of the world through their respective fields, and continue to do so.

Inviting prominent local businesses & corporations, to join us as Sponsor Partners and join our splendid organization's upcoming activities through diversity and inclusion and share the joy of the festive season.

Become a Sponsor Partner & join us in spreading the light!

To learn more about us, write to :
suchonagovbody@gmail.com

Visit us at : www.suchona.org



Suchona
Unitarian Universalist Society,
Coralville, IA

OCTOBER 1ST, SATURDAY
Unitarian Universalist Society,
Coralville, IA

CELEBRATE
SUCHONA
25TH YEAR
DURGA PUJA
CULTURAL
PROGRAM
WITH MUSIC
AND
MELODIES

Singer- Modern & Classical
1st Runner up- SaReGaMaPa
2007 - 08

**DEBARPAN
DHAR**



Suchona
Unitarian Universalist Society,
Coralville, IA

Shanai Maig Umaplo ghor
Durga puja 2021

VENUE: OLD BRICK,
26 E. MARKET STREET, DOWNTOWN
IOWA CITY,
IA 52245.

DATE: OCTOBER 16TH
TIME: 9 AM ONWARDS

