

11 Types of Dusshera Celebrations: From Mysore Dusshera to Sastra Pujan

Dussehra (Vijayadashami) in 2025 will be celebrated on **October 2, 2025**. **Dussehra**, a prominent Hindu festival symbolizing the triumph of **good over evil**, holds a significant place in Indian cultural and religious life. It marks the day when **Lord Rama defeated Ravana** and **Goddess Durga's victory over Mahishasura**.

❖ This report is divided into 2 parts :

- Part - 1: [10 Different Types of Dusshera in Bharat](#)
- Part - 2 [Sashtra Pujan of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh](#)

Part - 1: 10 Different Types of Dussehra across Bharat

This report highlights **10 distinct forms of Dussehra** celebrated in Bharat, each with its own history, meaning, and way of celebration.

Dussehra, also known as Vijayadashami, is celebrated on the **tenth day of the Ashwin month**. It marks the **victory of good over evil**, as **Shree Ram defeated Ravana** and **Goddess Durga slew Mahishasura**. This year, it will be observed on 2 October.

S.No	Type of Dussehra
1.	<div style="text-align: center; background-color: #f4a460; padding: 5px;">Mysore Dasara- Karnataka</div>  <p>Date:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✧ Celebrated every year during Navratri (nine days), ending on Vijayadashami (the 10th day). ✧ For 2025, the grand "Jamboo Savari" procession will be held on 02 October (Vijayadashami day). <p>Place/State:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✧ Mysore (Mysuru), Karnataka, Bharat ✧ The Mysore Palace and Banni Mantap Grounds are the main venues. <p>Description:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✧ Mysore Dasara is a 10-day festival marked by royal traditions, cultural programs, and grand processions. ✧ The city is illuminated with 130 km of decorative lights, costing about ₹6.5 crore by CESC. ✧ Events include classical dance, music, folk art, exhibitions, and cultural shows.

- ✧ The Mysore Palace, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, becomes the central attraction during the festivities.

History:

- ✧ Started in 1610 by Raja Wadiyar of the Wodeyar dynasty.
- ✧ Celebrated ever since as a royal festival with great grandeur.

Significance & Why Celebrated:

- ✧ Dedicated to Goddess Chamundeshwari, the presiding deity of Mysore.
- ✧ The festival marks the victory of Goddess Chamundeshwari over the demon Mahishasura, symbolizing the triumph of good over evil.

Main Events & Highlights:

- ✧ **Maha Navami Procession** - Royal sword worshipped; parade with horses, camels, elephants, and dancers.
- ✧ **Jamboo Savari (Vijayadashami Procession)** - Main attraction:
- ✧ Idol of Goddess Chamundeshwari placed on a golden howdah carried by a decorated elephant.
- ✧ Yatra includes tableaux, chariots, armed forces, and cultural displays.
- ✧ **Torchlight Parade (Panjina Kavavitha)** - Evening event at Banni Mantap Grounds, marking the grand finale.

Cultural Importance:

- ✧ Showcases Karnataka's art, dance, music, and folk traditions.
- ✧ Attracts tourists from all over the world to witness royal heritage and vibrant culture.
- ✧ Strengthens the cultural identity of Mysore and promotes tourism.

Source: [The Indian Express](#) , [Times of India](#)

2.

Mahisha Dasara- Karnataka



Date:

- ✧ Celebrated about a week before Mysore Dasara

Place/State:

- ✧ Mysuru, Karnataka, Bharat
- ✧ Celebrations focus around the Chamundi Hills, especially near the Mahishasura statue.

Description:

- ✧ Mahisha Dasara (also called Mahisha Utsava) is a political event held to honor Mahishasura, whom many Dalit groups and rationalists see as a benevolent king rather than a demon.
- ✧ The event includes gatherings, speeches, and floral tributes to the 10-foot Mahishasura statue atop Chamundi Hills.

History:

- ✧ Dalit groups say the portrayal of Mahishasura as a demon was a later distortion, calling it an upper-caste conspiracy.
- ✧ First modern Mahisha Dasara event was held in 1973 by activist Mantelingaiah.
- ✧ Formally revived in 2015 during CM Siddaramaiah's first term. It was stopped under BJP rule but resumed again in 2023 during Siddaramaiah's second term.

Significance & Why Celebrated:

- ✧ For Dalit groups and rationalists, Mahishasura is remembered as a Buddhist king sent by Emperor Ashoka, who opposed caste oppression.

Main Events & Highlights:

- ✧ Floral Tribute - Petals showered on Mahishasura's statue on Chamundi Hill.
- ✧ Processions & Gatherings - groups hold cultural programs and marches (sometimes renamed as Mahisha Utsava).
- ✧ Public Debates & Speeches - Writers, historians, and rationalists discuss Mahishasura's place in history and identity politics.

Cultural Importance:

- ✧ Sparks debate over heritage, caste, and history in Karnataka's cultural capital.

Source: [News18](#)

3.

Ashoka Vijayadashami- Across Bharat

**Date:**

- ✧ Celebrated every year on Vijayadashmi.

Place/State:

- ✧ Celebrated across Bharat, with the main focus at Deekshabhoomi, Nagpur, Maharashtra, where Dr. B. R. Ambedkar converted to Buddhism in 1956.

Description:**Ashoka Vijayadashami commemorates two historic events:**

- ✧ The conversion of Emperor Ashoka to Buddhism after the Kalinga War (3rd century BCE).
- ✧ The conversion of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar and 3,65,000 followers to Buddhism on 14 October 1956.
- ✧ It is a day of mass conversions, prayers, cultural gatherings, and Buddhist teachings.

History:

- ✧ Kalinga War (261 BCE): Ashoka, in his 8th regnal year, conquered Kalinga. According to Rock Edict 13, 100,000 were killed, 150,000 taken captive, and many more perished.
- ✧ Deeply moved by the destruction, Ashoka renounced violence and adopted the path of Dhamma (Buddha's teachings).
- ✧ 1956: On the same date, Dr. Ambedkar converted to Buddhism at Nagpur's Deekshabhoomi, linking his act to Ashoka's transformation 2,000 years earlier.

Significance & Why Celebrated:

- ✧ Marks Ashoka's rejection of war and violence and his embrace of peace, tolerance, and Buddhism.
- ✧ Celebrates Dr. Ambedkar's conversion, which gave a new identity and strength to the Dalit movement in Bharat.

Main Events & Highlights:

- ✧ Mass Conversions: Thousands of people embrace Buddhism, especially at Deekshabhoomi, Nagpur.
- ✧ Cultural & Religious Gatherings: Discourses on Buddhism, Ambedkarite thought, and social equality.
- ✧ Tributes to Ashoka & Ambedkar: Remembering their contributions to peace, justice, and equality.

Pilgrimages & Rituals:

- ✧ Visits to Buddhist sites like Bodh Gaya and Sanchi Stupa.

Cultural Importance:

- ✧ Represents the triumph of peace over violence and justice over oppression.
- ✧ Strengthens the Dalit Buddhist Movement initiated by Ambedkar.

Source: [Navbharat Times](#) , [The Mook Nayak](#) , [Latest LY](#)

4.

Bastar Dussehra - Chhattisgarh



Date:

- ✧ Begins on the new moon day of Ashwin month and lasts for 75 days, ending on Vijayadashami.
- ✧ Known as the longest Dussehra celebration in Bharat and the world.

Place/State:

- ✧ Celebrated in Bastar district, Chhattisgarh.

Description:

- ✧ Bastar Dussehra is very different from the usual Dussehra of burning Ravana's effigies.
- ✧ It is deeply rooted in the traditions of the tribal communities of Bastar.
- ✧ The festival is centered around the worship of Goddess Danteshwari, the guardian deity of Bastar and the family goddess of the royal family.

Main Rituals & Highlights:

- ✧ Pat Jatra: Bringing the first wood from the forest to build chariots for carrying local deities.
- ✧ Animal Sacrifice: Unlike other places, here animals are sacrificed as offerings to local deities.
- ✧ Grand Processions: Tribals participate with traditional instruments, dances, and colorful costumes.
- ✧ Worship of Local Deities: Many village and forest deities are honored during this time.
- ✧ Artistic Expressions: Local artists decorate walls and homes with murals and paintings.

Significance & Why Celebrated:

- ✧ Dedicated to Goddess Danteshwari, the protector of the land.
- ✧ A festival of tribal devotion, unity, and identity.
- ✧ Reflects the cultural richness of Bastar's tribal heritage.
- ✧ More than a religious celebration, it is a cultural event showcasing local traditions, music, dance, and art.

Source: [Times of India](#) , [Bastar Dussehra](#)

5.

Kulasekarapattinam Dasara - Tamil Nadu



Date:

- ✧ Celebrated for 12 days
- ✧ Culminates on Vijayadashami with the ritual of Soorasamharam at midnight.

Place/State:

- ✧ Arulmigu Mutharamman Temple, Kulasekarapattinam (Tuticorin district), Tamil Nadu.

Description:

- ✧ The temple festival is marked by lakhs of devotees gathering every year.
- ✧ Each day, the deity Mutharamman is decorated in different avatars and special rituals are performed.
- ✧ Many devotees dress up as gods and goddesses like Amman, Lakshmi, Vinayagar, and Shiva, while observing fasting and offering prayers.

Main Rituals & Highlights:

- ✧ Soorasamharam: The symbolic killing of the demon Mahishasura by Goddess Mutharamman using a trident (given by Lord Shiva). This is the grand finale, performed on the seashore at midnight.
- ✧ Lion Vahanam Procession: The deity is taken on a lion-shaped vehicle to the beach for the Soorasamharam and then to the Sri Chidambareswarar Temple before returning to Mutharamman Temple.
- ✧ Devotees in Disguise: Unique tradition where thousands of devotees dress as divine figures during the festival.
- ✧ Special Pujas: Daily rituals for Mutharamman's trident.

Significance & Why Celebrated:

- ✧ Symbolizes the victory of good over evil, as Goddess Mutharamman defeats Mahishasura.
- ✧ A major spiritual and cultural event in southern Tamil Nadu, drawing huge crowds.
- ✧ Represents devotion, community faith, and traditional rituals.

Source: [Times of India](#)

6.

Kullu Dussehra - Himachal Pradesh



Date:

- ✧ Celebrated for one week, beginning on Vijayadashami day and continuing for seven days.

Place/State:

- ✧ Kullu Valley, Himachal Pradesh - main festivities at Dhalpur Maidan, Kullu.

Description:

- ✧ One of the most famous Dussehra festivals in the world, attracting thousands of devotees and tourists.
- ✧ The highlight is the Rath Yatra (chariot procession) of Lord Raghunathji, carried out traditionally and majestically.
- ✧ Known for its breathtaking backdrop of mountains, streams, and temples, the festival is both spiritually and culturally rich.

Main Rituals & Highlights:

- ✧ Rath Yatra of Lord Raghunath: The central event where the idol is taken out in a decorated chariot procession.
- ✧ Participation of Deities: More than 200 local deities from nearby villages are brought to Dhalpur Maidan to join the festivities.
- ✧ Cultural Programs: Music, dance, and folk traditions create a vibrant atmosphere throughout the week, fostering a rich cultural experience.
- ✧ Final Day Ritual: The chariot of Lord Raghunath is brought to the banks of the Beas River, where wood and grass are burnt to symbolize the burning of Lanka.

Historical Background:

- ✧ Origin dates back to the 17th century, when King Jagat Singh of Kullu, after being cursed due to a wrongful act, installed the idol of Lord Raghunathji brought from Ayodhya.
- ✧ The king started the Kullu Dussehra to seek forgiveness and blessings, and since then, it has become a grand annual tradition.

Significance & Why Celebrated:

- ✧ Celebrated to honor Lord Raghunath and the values of good triumphing over evil.
- ✧ Symbolizes devotion, forgiveness, and prosperity.
- ✧ Today, it is a blend of religious rituals, cultural heritage, and tourism, making it one of the grandest festivals of Himachal Pradesh.

Source: [NDTV](#)

7.

Madikeri Dasara - Karnataka

**Date/Duration:**

- ✧ Celebrated for 10 days during the Navratri.

Place/State:

- ✧ Madikeri (Mercara), Kodagu (Coorg) district, Karnataka.

Description:

- ✧ A vibrant religious festival that combines devotion, culture, and community spirit.
- ✧ Preparations begin months in advance, with strong involvement and funding from the local people.
- ✧ The main theme is Goddess Durga's victory over demons, reflecting the triumph of good over evil.

Main Rituals & Highlights:

- ✧ Karagas: Traditional processional deities taken around the town during the celebrations.
- ✧ Mantapas: Ten beautifully decorated pavilions depicting scenes from Hindu mythology, especially battles between gods and demons.
- ✧ Processions: Grand parades featuring the Karagas and Mantapas, accompanied by music, dance, and lights.

- ✧ Community Involvement: Unique for being funded and organized mainly by the local community of Kodagu, unlike many other state-supported Dasara festivals.

Significance & Why Celebrated:

- ✧ Dedicated to Goddess Durga and her victory over evil forces.
- ✧ A symbol of local heritage, creativity, and cultural pride, drawing visitors to experience the distinct traditions of the region.

Source: [The Indian Express](#)

8.

Bomma Golu (Doll Festival) - South India



Date/Duration:

- ✧ Celebrated during Navratri (nine nights dedicated to goddesses Durga, Lakshmi, and Saraswati).
- ✧ Ends on Vijayadashami/Dussehra.

Place/State:

- ✧ Popular in Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, and Andhra Pradesh.

Description:

A step-like decorated display of dolls and figurines, known as:

- ✧ Bommai Golu/Kolu in Tamil (meaning "Divine Presence")
- ✧ Bommala Koluvu in Telugu (meaning "Court of Toys")
- ✧ Bombe Habba in Kannada (meaning "Doll Festival")

- ✧ The display features dolls of gods, goddesses, saints, animals, people, and current events, or daily life.

Main Rituals & Highlights:

- ✧ Steps Setup: Usually odd-numbered steps (3, 5, 7, 9, or 11), covered with decorative cloth and arranged with dolls.
- ✧ First step: Kalash (jar of water with mango leaves and a coconut) symbolizing Goddess Durga, surrounded by deities.
- ✧ Always includes idols of Maa Durga, Lakshmi, Saraswati, and wooden dolls called Marapachi Bommai.

Other Steps:

- ✧ Dolls of saints, national heroes.
- ✧ Scenes from daily life (marriages, music, temples).
- ✧ Business sets like the Chettiar dolls with shop items.
- ✧ Custom: At least one new doll is added each year, representing progress.

Community & Rituals:

- ✧ Preparations begin on Amavasya (no moon day) before Navratri.
- ✧ Families decorate with rangolis (kolams), lamps, and offer sundal (legume dish), sweets, and fruits daily.
- ✧ Married women and children, especially girls, are invited home in the evenings to view the golu, sing devotional songs, and are gifted betel leaves, coconuts, turmeric, kumkum, bangles, flowers, fruits, and prasad.

Significance & Why Celebrated:

- ✧ Symbolizes devotion to goddesses and the celebration of creativity, tradition, and progress.
- ✧ The act of arranging dolls, inviting guests, and adding new dolls each year signifies continuity, growth, and community bonding.

Source: [The Indian Express](#)

9.

Ravan Dahan - Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh



Date/Duration:

- ✧ Celebrated every year on Dussehra (Vijayadashami).
- ✧ Preparations begin weeks in advance of the festival.

Place/State:

- ✧ Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh - The birthplace of Shree Ram

Description:

- ✧ One of the grandest Ravan Dahan celebrations in Bharat, symbolising Shree Ram's victory over Ravana.
- ✧ Attracts millions of devotees and tourists from across the world.

Main Rituals & Highlights:

- ✧ Effigies of Ravana, Kumbhakarna, and Meghnad:
Towering structures, often over 100 feet tall, are created by local artisans.
Installed across Ayodhya for the burning ceremony.
- ✧ Special Pooja:
Archaka perform rituals, chanting Vedic mantras, and invoking the blessings of Shree Ram for victory over evil.
- ✧ The Burning of Ravana:
At sunset, the effigies are set ablaze.
Symbolises the victory of good over evil and marks the end of the Ramlila performances.
The crowd erupts with chants and cheers as the structures fall.
- ✧ Fireworks and Illuminations:
The night sky lights up with fireworks.
Thousands of diyas (earthen lamps) brighten the city, creating a divine atmosphere.

Cultural Events:

- ✧ Folk dances, music, and Ramlila enactments are performed.
- ✧ These highlight themes of courage, dharma, and righteousness from the Ramayana.

Spiritual & Cultural Significance:

- ✧ For Ayodhya, Ravan Dahan is not just a festival but a reaffirmation of faith in the values of the Ramayana.
- ✧ Reminds people of the eternal struggle between good and evil and the triumph of righteousness.

Tourist Attraction:

- ✧ A major attraction for domestic and international tourists.
- ✧ Showcases the cultural richness and spiritual significance of Ayodhya.

Source: [Free Press Journal](#)

10.

Kerala Dasara - Kerala



Date/Duration:

- ✧ Celebrated on Vijayadashami, the concluding day of Navratri.

Place/State:

- ✧ Various places across Kerala, with major rituals in Thunchan Parambu (Tirur, near Thrissur) and Panachikkadu Saraswati Temple (Kottayam district).

Description:

- ✧ Kerala's Dasara is unique as it focuses on Vidyarambham - the initiation of children into learning.
- ✧ Thousands of children, irrespective of caste or religion, write their first letters on this auspicious day.

✧ Main Rituals & Highlights:

Writing the First Letters:

Hindu children traditionally write "Hari Shri Ganapataye Namah",

✧ Special Custom:

In some places, teachers write the first letter on a child's tongue with a golden ring, symbolising divine blessings.

Parents then offer dakshina to the teacher.

✧ Thunchan Parambu (Tirur):

Considered the home of Malayalam literary figure Thunchaththu Ezhuthachan.

Every year, a large gathering takes place here for Vidyarambham.

Notable personalities, including Jnanpith awardees, guide children in writing their first letters.

✧ Panachikkadu Saraswati Temple (Kottayam):

Dedicated to Goddess Saraswati, also known as Dakshina Mookambika.

A record 20,000 registrations were made this year for Vidyarambham.

The ritual begins at 4 am and continues till sunset, with 56 teachers teaching children.

Significance:

- ✧ Symbolises the beginning of education and wisdom.
- ✧ Reflects Kerala's tradition of valuing knowledge.
- ✧ Parents consider it a sacred and auspicious day for their child's intellectual journey.

Source: [Aajtak](#)

Part - 2: **Sashtra Pujan of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh**

Shastra Puja is an important annual ritual performed by the **Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS)**, which is mainly performed on **Vijayadashami (Dussehra)** and symbolizes bravery and protection of Dharma. This practice has been going on since the inception of the organization in 1925.

- The **Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS)** in its **Shastra Puja** explains the symbolic meaning of weapons primarily as a symbol of self-defense, protection of Dharma and struggle against injustice and exploitation. Weapons are worshipped not as instruments of attack but as sacred tools entrusted to protect society and maintain moral and social order.

[News18 Hindi](#), [NDTV](#), [amarujala](#), [News18](#)



➤ Which RSS leaders historically started the tradition of Shastra Pooja?

- The RSS Shastra Pujan tradition was historically initiated by **RSS founder Dr. Keshav Baliram Hedgewar**, who founded the RSS on the day of **Vijayadashami (Dussehra)** in 1925. Hedgewar emphasized physical strength, valor and the revival of Hindu cultural pride, and included practices such as Shastra Pujan as a part of the organization's rituals to symbolize the protection of dharma through readiness and discipline.

[hindi.news18](#) , [Times of India](#), [indiatodayne](#)

➤ Ritual Details and Process

- ◆ On Vijayadashami, RSS members perform Shastra Puja, worshipping weapons, sprinkling water, applying tilak with kumkum and turmeric, and offering flowers, incense and sweets.
- ◆ The ceremony includes the recitation of hymns (such as the Mahakali Stotra) and a demonstration of weapon handling by senior members or pramukhs.

- ◆ RSS shakhas often display portraits of historical figures such as Shivaji and his guru Samarth Ramdas, and read out a letter written by Shivaji to the Rajput king Jai Singh stressing Hindu unity. [News18 Hindi](#) , [News18](#)

➤ **Shastra Poojan Traditions seen in various RSS branches**

❖ **Different locations:**

In larger RSS branches or regional centres like Nagpur, Varanasi or Pune, pujas are organised in large groups, sometimes attended by senior RSS leaders and followed by a public march (path sanchalan). In smaller local branches, more simple pujas may be performed in community halls or branch premises.

[Hindustan Times](#), [Times of India](#)

❖ **Weapon display:**

In larger branches, various weapons such as swords, spears, daggers and licensed firearms (pistols, guns) are worshipped, while in some smaller branches only symbolic or traditional weapons may be used. There may be variations due to the availability and licensing of weapons.

[Hindustan Times](#)

❖ **Regional cultural differences:**

In regions like West Bengal, pujas are organised on Vijayadashami (close to Vijayadashami) and sometimes local cultural practices are also followed which differ from RSS strongholds in Maharashtra or the Hindi belt. Some regions face political or cultural resistance which affects the scale or openness of the ritual.

[Hindustan Times](#)

❖ **Additional Puja Elements:**

Some shakhas may include worship of weapons along with the worship of deities such as Goddess Durga, Saraswati or Lakshmi, thereby invoking blessings of power and wisdom. This is consistent with the practices of traditional Hindu festivals included in RSS puja.

[Op India](#)

❖ **Local Adaptation:**

Given the diversity of shakhas in India and abroad (e.g., in France), puja adjusts to local customs with regard to timing and community participation, but its symbolic core remains intact—the reverence for weapons as protectors of dharma.

[Organiser](#)

❖ **Public Participation:**

Some shakhas actively engage in community awareness or public processions, while other shakhas restrict puja to volunteers, depending on the regional political or social environment.

[Hindustan Times](#)

➤ **Community and Social Impact**

- ◆ The event is marked by route marches (path sanchalan) following the puja, with members dressed in traditional RSS uniforms, displaying discipline and unity.
- ◆ Senior RSS leaders address gatherings, emphasizing social harmony, self-reliance, and collective responsibility for nation-building.
- ◆ Cities like Nagpur and Ludhiana regularly witness mass participation including public figures and dignitaries in the ceremonies.

[NDTV](#) , [Amar Ujala](#), [Indian Express](#)