

Puja guide for the visually challenged

Subhojyoti J Kanjilal



Director Haranath Chakraborty and singer Anik Dhar at the launch of the Puja guide on Thursday

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Kolkata: For Mampi Dey, four days of Durga Puja was like any other days — dark and isolated from the rest of the world. The visually challenged student of Jaipuria College never had the opportunity to hop around pandals like most of the girls of her age because her parents had the fear that she'll get lost. But this year will be different for her. She will have the opportunity to move around in some of the pandals where the organizers have made special arrangements for differently abled people.

Mampi is not alone. There are more than 150 such persons who will get the opportunity to hop around pandals on Panchami and Sasthi to get the feel of pujas. NIP — an NGO — in association with the social welfare department, Forum for Durgotsab and Rotary International arranged a barrier-free access to differently abled persons and senior citizens. "I have not been to pandals and I don't know how it feels but this year I will get the opportunity," Mampi said.

"This year, 181 organisers have consented to making separate arrangements for the differently abled. They will be given access to pandals through the VIP gate. There will be ramps so that people on wheel chairs and there will be arrangements of guides," NIP secretary Debjyoti Roy said.

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