



Lord Jagannath in Mayapur

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There is a beautiful temple at Mayapur in the Nadia district of Bengal where the images of Lord Jagannath, Balabhadra and Subhadra are enshrined. The temple complex was under the private ownership of one Sphatik Chatterjee who died in 1987.

Mr Chatterjee had seven daughters. The youngest one was Gauri. She was once playing under a big banyan tree near her house. Just beneath the tree there was a big ant-hill. Gauri, hardly five-year-old, while playing there used to hear a voice which was asking her for food and water. The little lass was baffled. When it continued repeatedly, she had to tell it to her father. Her father, Sphatik Chatterjee in consultation with some old inhabitants of the Srimant Dwip came to know about Lord Jagannath's secret sojourn in a hide-out somewhere there during the attack of Raktavahu. The sabaras brought Lord Jagannath to Nadia-Navadwip and had probably deposed him there which is then hidden under an ant-hill.

Mr Chatterjee also heard another anecdote about an old devotee, Jagadish

Ganguly of Rajapur in Mayapur. Sri Ganguly was contemporaneous to Sri Chaitanya. He used to visit Puri during the Car Festival every year and feel happy in the company of Sri Chaitanya there. It may be mentioned here that

Sri Chaitanya had spent almost eighteen years in Puri between 1509 and 1533 A.D.

Sri Ganguly became old and infirm. He became blind and "because of that he was deprived of having the good fortune to take part in the Lord's Chariot

Festival in Sri Jagannath-Puri to have the association of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu who was living there at that time. Blaming his own misfortune he cried very ardently and decided to give up his life."

An ardent devotee's sincere prayer never goes unheard. Sri Jagannath in Puri became concerned. "That night he appeared in the dream of Jagadish Ganguly to console him. He assured him that he would manifest his deity to accept his service. He told him - Tomorrow early in the morning while you will be taking bath in the Ganges, a big log will come floating and touch your body. Then you should take that





deity considering him non-different from the master of the Nilachal Dham."

Lo ! next morning when Jagadish was taking bath in the Ganges, he could feel something was touching him frequently in the water. He was blind, but remembering the previous night's dream, he managed to have a grip over the floating piece of wood. It was *daru*, the sacred Log. He felt terribly excited.

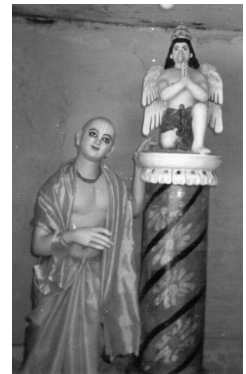
Then Sri Ganguly made a serious search for a carpenter infested with leprosy in the near-by village. Fortunately, in the present Baun Pukur Bazar at Mayapur he could trace a middle-aged carpenter, who was seriously afflicted with leprosy.

At the strange request of Ganguly the carpenter hesitated in the beginning. His hands were crippled. Besides, he felt that a leper should refrain himself from carving a divine image. Ganguly persuaded him to fulfil the divine ordeal. The leper finally agreed and painfully started his work. It was causing him excruciating pain. The blind devotee was giving him company while the carving was in progress. He used to guide the carpenter from his own reminiscences as to how the trinity would look like !

With the gradual progress of the work, Jagadish Ganguly and the leper-carpenter were slowly recovering from loss of vision and

leprosy respectively. Finally the images took shape and were installed. It is said Sphatik Chatterjee could retrieve these images from underneath the banyan tree of his garden. He used to worship them and around eight years before his death, he transferred the deities to the care of ISKCON in 1979.

There is a long pavilion before the Jagannath Temple of Mayapuri. It contains a number of small chambers. In the seven adjacent chambers the entire story of Jagadish Ganguly, the leper-carpenter, the carving of images, the appearance of the deities, the six-armed manifestation of Sri Chaitanya are carved with English sub-titles. The Jagannath - consciousness was not confined to the populace of any particular geographical region. It has equal bearing on all sorts of people irrespective of caste, creed or community. The above-mentioned story is one of the illuminations of an ardent soul that craves for an unisive experience with the Divine.



The story of a floating *Daru* in the Ganges reminds us of a Telugu chronicle which narrates the floating of a four-branched tree which came floating from the Dwaraka sea-shore across the Arabian Sea to the Bay of Bengal which was retrieved by Indradyumna. A dream episode was also interspersed in the narrative.

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