

## The Concept of Patitapabana in Jagannath Culture

*Prabhat Kumar Nanda*

Lord Jagannath is the principal deity and divine master of the state of Odisha. The importance of Lord Jagannath has been fostered in the fields of religion, faith, social rites, business, literature, art and architecture of Odisha. Hence Lord Jagannath is considered as the clan God of Odias. During religious offerings for the fore-fathers once in a year, popularly known, as 'Shraddha', it is considered that if the name of the fore-father is not known, then the offering is made in favour of Lord Jagannath as the age-old fore-father of every Odia. The importance of Odisha can not be thought of ignoring the concept of Lord Jagannath.

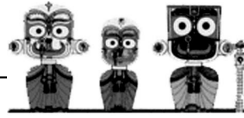


Yuga. The glory of Odisha can never be described ignoring the above three principal virtues of the culture of Odisha.

Basically the famous poet, Upendra Bhanja of eighteenth century vividly described the importance of Lord Jagannath in his epics. The festival of Glorious Bathe (Snana Purnima) and the Car Festival (Sri Gundicha) are considered as the most important functions in the cult of Lord Jagannath. Innumerable festivals and religious rites have been observed in Jagannath temple. It is popularly told that thirteen festivals are celebrated in twelve

months in the temple. In all other festivals, the representative of Lord Jagannath, popularly known as Patitapabana comes out of the temple to participate in different functions. Lord Jagannath along with His brother Balabhadra,

months in the temple. In all other festivals, the representative of Lord Jagannath, popularly known as Patitapabana comes out of the temple to participate in different functions. Lord Jagannath along with His brother Balabhadra,



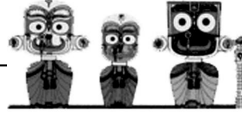
sister Subhadra and weapon Sudarshan leave the Sanctum Sanctorum (Ratna Simhasana) during Snana Yatra and Ratha Yatra. Poet Upendra Bhanja has justified the journey of Lord Jagannath idol outside the Grand Temple because of the reason to justify His name. The other name of Lord Jagannath is Patitapaban. All downtrodden people suffering from physical and mental sorrows are called as Patita i.e. human beings deprived of normal stature irrespective of their caste, creed, religion, place or geographical locations. Such pain-stricken people require definite blessings of Lord Jagannath to overcome the sorrow. For administrative reason, King of Puri ordered about the prohibition of the entry of non-Hindus inside the Jagannath temple. It was a challenge to the dignity of Lord Jagannath.

The name itself as Jagannath depicts as Lord of the Universe (Jagat (universe)+Nath (the master). Hence any creature of universe cannot be denied to avail the blessings of Lord Jagannath. Since the King of Puri for administrative reasons declared the prohibition on entry of non-Hindus to the temple, they were deprived of the scope to see Lord Jagannath in the sanctum sanctorum. In order to give the opportunity to all non-Hindus to behold and touch the idol, Lord Jagannath preferred to come out of the temple to the road, popularly known as Badadanda for direct interaction with the people of the universe. Hence poet Upendra Bhanja has rightly established the universal glory of Lord Jagannath justifying the name as Patitapabana.

It is an interesting fact that the temple of Lord Jagannath is covered by Patitapaban from the top to the bottom. Hence scholars considered the temple as the temple of Patitapabana and the holy name of the place as Patitapabana Kshetra. On minute analysis of the existence of Patitapabana in different forms in the grand

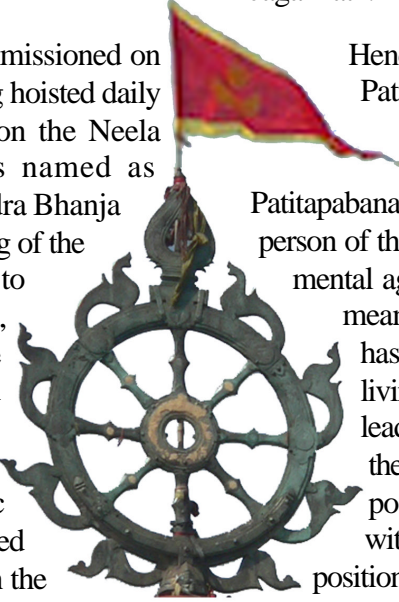
temple, one has to accept the above fact realizing the importance of it. Lord Jagannath Himself is named as Patitapabana as the saviour of the downtrodden people of the universe. He is more popularly known as Patitapabana than that of Jagannath. Hence Patitapabana is present on the sanctum sanctorum (Ratna Simhasana) along with His elder brother, sister and weapon. An idol of Patitapabana than that of Jagannath. Hence Patitapabana is present of the sanctorum (Ratna Singmhasana) along with his elder brother, sister and weapon. An idol of Patitapabana is also installed at the entrance point of the temple. While crossing main gate i.e. Singhadwara a small temple named as Mukhasala is in existence in the temple. Before approaching twenty two holy steps one will have to cross Mukhasala and the idol of Lord Jagannath is present on the right-hand side wall and is popularly known as Patitapabana. Since the King of Puri on administrative reasons prohibited entrance of non-Hindus to the temple, perhaps Lord Jagannath has no other choice than to be present at the entrance point of the temple giving the scope to all the people desirous to see Him at Puri.

History reveals that Rama Chandra Deb was the ruler of Odisha during third and fourth decades of eighteenth century. During such period Sujha Khan, a Musilm ruler invaded Odisha. King Rama Chandra Deb was defeated and was forced to accept the daughter of one of Muslim Lieutenant (Mursid Kuli Khan) as his wife in order to save Jagannath temple and to avoid torture to the people of Odisha, King Rama Chandra Deb accepted to above proposal and became Musilm. After marriage, he was not permitted to enter the temple of Jagannath. Finding no other way to have a daily darshan (vision) of Lord Jagannath he ordered for the installation of idol identical to the main idol of Lord Jagannath on the wall of the entrance portion of the temple. Such specific idol



was commissioned in the Mukhasala (Goumuta) for the privilege of the King Rama Chandra Deb. The deity is popularly called as Patitapabana i.e. saviour of downtrodden and suffering mass of the universe.

Patitapaban is also commissioned on the top of grand temple. The flag hoisted daily on the top of the temple i.e. on the Neela Chakra (i.e. blue wheel) is named as Patitapabana. Odia poet. Upendra Bhanja has narrated in his poem that, flag of the top of the grand temple visible to the devotees from great distance, welcomes them to visit the temple and to have the blessings of Lord Jagannath. Such a flag is hoisted at a height of two hundred fourteen ft. On specific ceremonies, flags of two hundred fourteen ft. length are hoisted on the top of the temple as the bottom of the flag to touch the grand road covering the total temple. Such specific lengthy flags are popularly known as Padukakhia Bana. Different sizes of flags made of red and yellow colour cloth are usually donated by devotees for materialization of their desires. At times five to twelve flags are hoisted on the top of the temple fostering



magnificent view of the temple. Old flags are also available for purchase by the devotees inside the temple. Devotees usually keep such flags in their house cherishing the divine blessing of Lord Jagannath.

Hence it is a convincing fact that Lord Patitapabana is commissioned on the top, at the bottom and in the heart of the grand temple. The name Patitapabana is not confined to any religion. Any person of the world suffering from physical and mental agony is called as Patita. The literary meaning of the Patita is, a person who has fallen below the standard of human living. To remove such shortcomings for leading normal human life, one requires the blessings of the Almighty. Hence the power to lift the downtrodden person with blessings to change his miserable position to comfortable and normal is named as Patitapabana. Thus, the concept of Patitapabana culture in the tradition of Lord Jagannath is convincing and full of justifications.

Prabhat Kumar Nanda, Atithya, MIG – 1-227, Satyasai Enclave, Kolathia, At/P.O-Khandagiri, Bhubaneswar-751030

## NOTIFICATION

The Government of Odisha vide Notification No.6324 / IPR dated 4.6.2012 have been pleased to enhance the remuneration of the writers of Odisha Review and Utkal Prasanga from Rs.100/- to Rs.250/- (without Photograph) and from Rs.150/- to Rs.300/- (with Photograph). This noble endeavour of the State Government indicates a positive gesture towards the authors / writers.