



Most Gigantic Planetary Festival : The Rath Yatra

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Puri, one of the most splendiferous places in Odisha attracts thousands of tourists daily for its famous temple courtyard and sea beach. However, it is obvious to conceive that how come millions of tourists get attracted towards a merely temple. One must realize that it is not an ordinary temple but an extraordinary synagogue with the exceptional powers, beliefs, rituals, stories and miracles hidden behind it. There are a legion of tales about the formation and miracles of Lord Jagannath in Puri. Many great men also commented that the temple is simply a Nirvana or paradise on earth.



Since times, there had been argues between scientific theories and religious beliefs. But for each time, scientific theories remained unexplained about the miracles of Lord Jagannath. Many people also call Jagannath as the hero of the 'Modern Era' or the 'Kali Yuga'.

The Jagannath Temple, extending from Lion's Gate or East Gate or the Main Gate covers about 10 acres of land. The height of the superlative temple is 214 feet and 8 inches. The monumental Temple is covered with carvings of Gods and Goddesses in the archaic Kalinga style.

The Car Festival or the Ratha Yatra is a consecrated celebrating festival of the Lord Balabhadra, Subhadra and Jagannath. It by and large falls on the calendar month of Ashar. On the holy day of Ratha Yatra, the three Gods are carried to the Gundicha temple.



The three colourful green-red, black-red and yellow-red chariots of Lord Balabhadra, Subhadra and Jagannath respectively prettify the path of 'Badadanda'. (The road between Jagannath and Gundicha Temple) The chariot has wheels fixed in it. The chariots also have Black, Brown and White coloured wooden horses tied. A flag is also present at the topmost end of the chariot called the Copi Ketan. It really embellishes the chariots from far apart. A rope is tied to the Rath or Chariot. A crowd of people draw them to the Gundicha temple. It is also called the 'Sri Gundicha Yatra'. Genuinely what a gratifying sight it is !

The deities stay in Gundicha Temple for nine days and go back in the same way on the tenth day. The cars are then drawn back to the same places from where it began its journey. This Journey is also called as Bahura Yatra. They remain in the chariots on that night and the next day is observed as 'Suna Vasha'. The Gods are graced with precious gold ornaments. They are taken back to the temple on the next day. (Twelfth day)

The Car festival is world famous for the radically distinctive ceremony and huge

assembling of Brobdingnagian crowd of different caste, colour, religion, creed, race and gender. The festival is also said to have much social and economic importance. Live commentary of the festival is transmitted in television and radio during the festival.

There are uncountable tales and facts regarding Lord Jagannath. All of them can never be explained or known. He is said to be one of the Avatars or incarnations of Hindu God, Lord Vishnu. His origin is a miraculous story according to what our forefathers say. Many people also say that Lord Jagannath will take another Avatar as 'Kalki' on the day of the beginning of a new era or the doomsday or the great Judgment Day. But nobody knows the truth. We are to celebrate and teach our coming generations to preserve the immortal rituals after us. Therefore lastly,

*"Jagannath Swami Nayana
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