

JAGANNATH VANA PRAKALPA

Plantations under Jagannath Vana Prakalpa (JVP)

Intensive Plantations have been taken up under the scheme "Jagannath Vana Prakalpa" (JVP) to raise, maintain and manage plantations of desired species to meet the requirement of car timber on a sustained basis and also to meet the immediate demand of car timber for construction of Chariots at Puri and Bhubaneswar. This programme was launched on 9.7.2000 at Delanga in Puri district by Hon'ble Chief Minister Shri Naveen Patnaik and Gajapati Maharaja of Puri.

Apart from Khordha, Nayagarh and Boudh divisions, JVP plantations have also been raised in forest divisions like Dhenkanal, Angul, Athagarh, Athamallik, Satkosia WL and City forest division over an area of 2326.34 ha. during the period from 2000-01 to 2005-06. All these divisions were selected for JVP because they are situated by the side of the River Mahanadi and Phasi trees are mostly found on river banks. District-wise and division-wise area planted is given below for appreciation. The species mostly planted are Phasi (80%), Asan, Arjuna, Dhaura, Gambhari, Kadamba, Simili, Mahalimba, and Kansa. The survival rate in most of these plantations is 65% to 90% and growth rate is satisfactory. The fast growing species like Phasi, Gambhari and Mahalimba have attained 15-20 ft height and more than 1ft girth. But they will take more than 35-40 years to attain the desired girth for use in construction of chariots. JVP plantations have been funded by respective DRDAs and now the maintenance cost of such plantations are being met from MGNREGA. In many places the local people/ Vana Samrakshana Samities (VSS) are protecting these JVP plantations. Steps are being taken to locate new areas for raising second phase JVP plantation.

List of forest divisions where JVP raised

Sl. No.	District	Forest Division	Area planted (in ha.)	Total Area (in Ha)
1	Angul	Angul	150.00	398.75
		Satkosia WL	200.00	
		Athamallik	48.75	
2	Cuttack	Athagarh	460.59	500.59
		City Forest	40.00	
3	Boudh	Boudh	363.00	363.00
4	Dhenkanal	Dhenkanal	240.00	240.00
5	Nayagarh	Nayagarh	400.00	400.00
6	Khordha	Khordha	322.00	424.00
		Puri	102.00	
TOTAL				2326.34

The working plan prescribes planting of 2500 seedlings per ha of desired species at a close spacing of 2m X 2m. This helps promote clear bole and faster growth in height. The first mechanical thinning of plantation has been prescribed between 8th and 10th year to be followed by pre-commercial thinnings between 15th and 20th year. The commercial thinnings are prescribed to be undertaken between 25th and 30th year. Thinnings help the trees to achieve the desired increment in girth. It is expected that the retained trees shall be available for final felling from 35th to 40th year onwards provided the plantation areas are free from biotic interferences and are protected from illicit felling, fire hazard and encroachment.

Quantity of car timber supplied by the Forest Department

The position of demand and supply of car timber during the last 3 years is given hereunder. As against the total requirement of 1162 logs for Puri Temple and 34 logs for Bhubaneswar Temple, Forest Department has been able to supply only 72.49% on an average during last 3 years, the detailed position is furnished below.

Division	Number of logs and poles supposed to be supplied yearly	Number of logs and poles supplied during		
		2008	2009	2010
Supply of timber to the Jagannath Temple, Puri				
Nayagarh	865	744	774	719
Khordha	274	88	100	102
Boudh	23	0	0	0
TOTAL	1162	832	874	821
Percentage		71.6%	75.21%	70.65%
Supply of timber to the Lingaraj temple, Bhubaneswar				
Nayagarh	34	39	20	38

Constraints in getting adequate car timber

1. Natural Dense Forest is degrading due to heavy illicit felling and removal by timber mafias. As a result, adequate numbers of desired species with specified girth class are not available in the forest and the supply from the forest department is gradually diminishing.
2. The trees raised under Jagannath Van Prakalpa will take a minimum of 35-40 years to provide small girth timber and about 70-80 years to attain exploitable girth class and hence are not available to meet immediate requirement.
3. Tree felling is only possible under the strength of an approved working plan for a division (approval to be accorded by the Ministry of Environment and Forest, Govt. of India (MoEF) under Forest Conservation Act, 1980) and there is a long process to obtain such approval. Even if the working plan is approved by MoEF for 10 years, as per honourable Supreme Court's order MoEF will review the progress of implementation of working plan prescription annually and allow felling yearly. The validity of existing working plans will expire in 2013 for Boudh division, in 2017 for Nayagarh, Khordha, Chilka WL and Puri WL divisions. Problem may come after expiry of working plans till revised plans are prepared and final approval obtained from MoEF.

Suggestions

It is high time to think how to get car timbers after a decade when desired trees of specified dimensions will not be available in forest and JVP plantations will not be ready to supply timbers. The people of Odisha who have unflinching faith in Lord Jagannath, must seriously ponder over the following suggestions and reach a consensus so that car festivals of Lord Jagannath at Puri and Lord Lingaraj at Bhubaneswar are organised every year with the same amount of devotion, fervour, gaiety and enthusiasm.

1. Choice of car timber species may be changed according to availability. It has already been done in case of Rukuna Rath of Lord Lingaraj (tamarind tree is used as axle, mango log is used as bearing and Kumbhi (*Carya arborea*) timber is used as rest part of the solid wheel)
2. The components of grand chariots which need large girth timbers may be preserved for re-use.
3. Car timber yielding plants can be raised in private lands with a mindset to donate the same to Sri Jagannath Temple Administration.
4. Car timber plants should be protected by everybody in forest as well as in private holdings.
5. The devotees who desire to donate car timber trees should inform the temple authority indicating the name of species with present measurement so that a 'Phasi Bank' can be established and after maturity those can be harvested for use in construction of chariots.
6. The honorarium to the carpenters may be given in shape of cash than kind (timber).