

JAGANNATHI

the ultimate science



A journal
to resurrect
the ancient science

Title: JAGANNATH

Description: Subjects of the write up/ article(s) with bibliographical references.

Subject: The science behind the culture & rituals of Lord Jagannath and Lord Jagannath Temple. It also covers the all sciences behind the Vedic cultures, Lord Vishnu & plants having medicinal, cultural and ecological values related to Sanatana Dharma.

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JAGANNATH

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People, Forest and Mahaprabhu Jagannath: the eco-cultural connect

Jagannath worship dates back to the pre Vedic era when the lord was worshipped as a blue stone-Nilamadhav by the tribal chieftan Viswavasau, deep inside the forest. During the Rig Vedic times Jaggannath cult is said to have begun with a log floating in the sea without a creator, which was retrieved by the king Indradumna and made into idols. The Jaggannath culture having travelled through time and space, from the pre Vedic to Vedic to the post modern era, is centered round the common ethos that India is made of-people, forest and the deeply rooted ethno-cultural practices. The eco spiritualism reinforced through the Jaggannath culture testifies that it is not a religion but a Way of life-the Sanatan dharma which encompasses all religions- Jainism, Buddhism, Vaishnavism, Sikhism, Shaktism, Tantricism, Christianity and the Islam & Jaggannath is the ultimate science.



The Universal Lord Mahaprabhu exudes his presence in the entire world irrespective of caste, creed and religion traversing across the cultural milieus of countries and continents. Reinforcing the adage of one world, one religion -humanism and Vasudeuva Kutumbakam-The world is my family.

The Trinity made of Neem wood in its present avatar leaves the mortal body every nabakalebara, happens on 8th, 12th, & 19th year and is laid to rest in the lap of mother earth, symbolism of the ultimate truth of the cycle of life-the interplay of birth and death and the socio cultural drama in the stage of life depicted through the various festivals and rituals of Lord Jaggannath and re enforcing the fact that nothing is permanent. Even the greatest God dies. The ritual of Nabakalebara scientifically emphasizes the sustainable management of carbon stock, till it decomposes and becomes one with nature. The Neem tree of which the Trinity is made of is symbolism of the intricate relationship of trees and plants and their medicinal properties with the human body. Their ability to protect the human body against the many ailments and diseases. The ethno botany in its infancy which needs to be explored and documented. The most important festival of Lord Jaggannath-The Rath Yatra, where 1135 logs of wood are used to build the three chariots and later used in the world's largest kitchen of the Jagannath temple to feed 35000-40000 devotees daily demands huge supply of timber. This has resulted in the Jagannath Van Prakalp where 45 million trees of the thirteen species used in the car festival are planted over 2800 ha of land and sustainably harvested using silvicultural practices. Over 200 species of trees, plants and flowers are used during the Rath Yatra, and day to day rituals of Lord Jaggannath. Through this the 200 species are bound to be protected and conserved given the great emotional and spiritual connect the people have with the Jagannath culture. This reinforces the belief that eco spiritualism is the key to conservation of species-both flora and fauna, in the Indian context and worldwide.

Jagannath culture is also a testimony of the socio cultural idealism relevant in the present times. The trinity going into isolation for 14 days and being fed in a special diet full of medicinal properties is a glaring example of the advancement of medical science even during the Vedic period so relevant in the pandemic having engulfed the entire world. The three siblings Jaggannath, Balabhadra and sister Subhadra seated on an equal platform depicts gender equality. The deities of three different colours, Jagannath, black, Balabhadra white and Subhadra in yellow equally placed on



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the same podium negates racism universally. The emotional connect between the Lord and his devotees where he leaves his abode to embrace them symbolizes universal brother hood. The Lord with his siblings visiting his maternal aunt-mausima reinforces the family bonding and emotional connect so relevant in today's world. The king of Puri performing *Chera Pahara* on the Chariots of the Trinity is a symbolism of dignity of labour. Thus Jagannath culture intricately interwoven with nature, life and culture is truly the universal truth-the ultimate science, we need to resurrect and reinforce for the survival of humanity.

Padma Mahanti, IFS



Kang Chingba: The festival of procession of the Lord of the Universe

Kang Chingba or the festival of procession is originally celebrated as Rath Yatra in the sacred land of Puri, Odisha. The festival is also celebrated in Manipur in a similar but with an addition of Manipuri cultural and traditional ways. The festival is celebrated starting from (Ingen gi nini panba) the 2nd day of fourth month of the lunar calendar and completed on the (Ingen gi taranithoini panba) 12th day of the fourth month of the lunar calendar. The rituals originally start from the (Inga gi Purnima) Full moon day of the third month of lunar calendar where it is believed that Lord Jagannath performs the rituals of taking Bath on this auspicious day. This ritual is known locally as "Snana Yatra". It is believed that by the 3rd month of the lunar calendar, evil spirits are more around us and so on this day Khechri (Rice prepared with pulses) is offered to the Lord and taken as Prasadam by the people. Some Khechri are taken and sprinkle in the direction of Chingkhei (Northeast), Meiram (Southeast), Sandong (Southwest) and Koubru (Northwest) in a believe that it will remove all the evil spirits. The procession of the Lord Jagannath, Devi Subhadra and Lord Balabhadra is made on the 2nd day and the 10th day of the fourth month of the lunar calendar. The 11th day would be Ekadashi and on the 12th day, the festival would be completed known "Hari Shayani" or locally known by the name "Hari Shoyon" where it is believed that Lord Hari goes to sleep on the 12th day of (Ingen) the fourth month of the lunar calendar. In this festival, the procession is made on the 2nd day and on the 10th day of the fourth month of lunar calendar where Lord Jagannath, Devi Subhadra and Lord Balabhadra are beautifully decorated on a wooden cart pulled by his dear devotees comes out of the temple to meet and bless his devotees from all respect without any differentiation (Figure 1&2). Several rituals are performed before and after the procession. Shree Shree Govindajee Temple, Shree Shree Bijoy Govindajee Temple, ISKCON Temple organised out huge procession in this festival.



Each locality together with the locality Brahmin celebrate cooperatively. Normally, at least one or more Brahmin in the locality would have a mandap and temple where Lord Jagannath is worship. On the first procession, people would come to the mandap and offer rice, pulses, fruits, flowers, vegetables, etc. and the Bhoga would be prepared by the Brahmin. After the Bhoga is offered, Prasadam would be serve to the people. After midday, Lord Jagannath would be beautifully decorated with flowers and garland on the wooden cart pulled by the devotees. The procession would be complemented by rhythm of sounds from conch, mridanga and cymbals. The cart would stop every door where his devotees patiently wait to offer offerings to the Lord and Arti would be performed. The offerings mainly include fruits, flowers, garlands, incense sticks, tulsi leaves, barti (Cotton rolled stick dipped in Ghee), etc. Tulsi leaves, lotus flowers are dear to the Lord and so are often offered.

Garlands made out of flowers, fruits like grapes, soaked dried peas, paddy, lotus seeds are normally offered to the Lord. Arti is performed each time the cart stops with the loud rhythm of sounds and smoke of half burnt barti is waved towards the devotees.

Starting from the 1st procession day, community in the locality alternatively take turns each day to make arrangement of feast of offering Bhoga to the Lord and serve as Prasadam to the people. Daytime Bhoga normally consist of Rice or Khechri, different pulses dish, uti thongba (soaked dried pea dish), maroi thongba (dish made of Allium odorum Linn.), eromba (flavoured mashed boiled



(Picture Credit: AJIT LAISHRAM & TELISH WAREPAM)

Figure 1: Kang Chingba & Chaali Saba dance



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vegetables), singju (mixed herb and vegetable salad), pakoura thongba (dish made out of Besan), cooked black rice serve with kheer, etc.

By the evening after the procession, singing and dancing performances are made initially with the song by Jayadev Thakur praising the Lord and clapping in devotion. These performances are known as "Joydev Chongba" and "Khubbak Esei". Jayadev Thakur, was an 11th century poet and lyricist who recited the Dasavatara in a different Raaga along with the sounds of mridanga and cymbals. This continued and later known as "Joydev Chongba". After this, there is a dance performance known as "Chaali Saba" where women of different ages perform together in a same dance steps offered to the Lord out of devotion. This dance would be complemented by the sound of the local mridanga known as "Meitei Pung" in praising the Lord (Figure 1). In some mandap, specific dance form known as "Vaghi" is perform where professional dancers would perform or professional dancers would lead the dance. It is said that "Vaghi" dance form is more complicated than the "Chaali Saba" dance and not many people could easily follow the dance steps. All performances are made in praise of Lord Jagannath.



(Picture Credit: RONEL KONGKHAM)

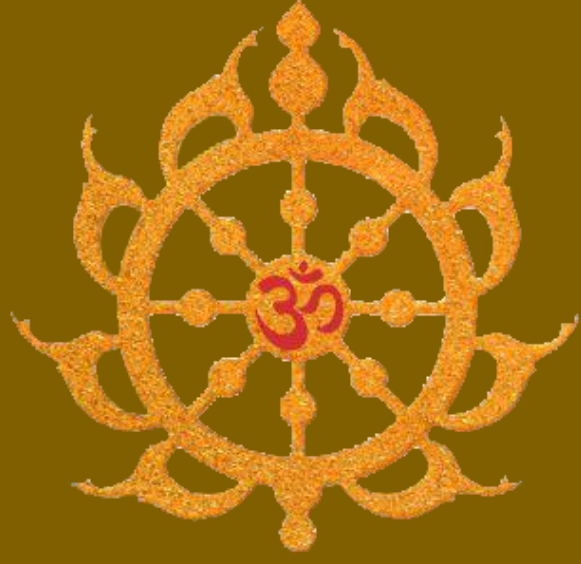
Figure 2: Kang Chingba of Manipur

Evening Bhoga would be prepared by Brahmin specifically Khechri (Rice cooked with pulses), uti, eromba, etc. and offered to the Lord and would serve as Prasadam. The offering of Bhoga and serving Prasadam continues till the last day of the festival.

On the 10th day of (Ingen) fourth month of lunar calendar, the last procession is carried out by the name "Kanglen" and the rituals related are perform with the offerings made to the Lord. 11th day of the Ingen is Ekadashi and the festival would be completed on the 12th day known by the name "Hari Shoyon". The 12th day is also known as "Ningol Palli" where women in the locality would take turn to take responsibility to organised feast and offer Bhoga to the Lord.

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Rajkumari Supriya Devi
Managing Editor, JAGANNATH



Jagannath Astaka
(4)

kripa-paravarah sajala-jalada-shreni-ruciro
rama-vani-ramah sphurad-amala-punkeruha-makhaha
surendrair aradhyah shruti-gana-shikha-gita-charito
Jagannathah svami nayana-patha-gami bhavatu me

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