



KAMARAJ IAS ACADEMY
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Puri Rath Yatra

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Why is in news? Puri Rath Yatra begins, lakhs of people throng the streets

Amid sweltering heat, a sea of devotees surged in the coastal town of Puri to witness the grand spectacle of the Rath Yatra — an **annual event** at the Shree Jagannath Temple.

In which three deities, **Lord Balabhadra, Lord Jagannath and Devi Subhadra**, are taken out in their respective chariots from the 12th century Shree Jagannath Temple

Lakhs of people had travelled to the town and occupied every conceivable position to have a glimpse of the deities on their chariots.

Ratha Jatra, also called as **Chariot Festival**, is a Hindu festival associated with Lord Jagannath held at Puri, Odisha.

The festival is celebrated on the 2nd day of Shukla Paksha of Ashadh, the third month, according to the traditional Oriya calendar.

It is a **9 day-long event** and marks the return of Lord Krishna to Vrindavan with his brother Balabhadra and sister Subhadra to Gundicha Temple via Mausī Maa Temple (maternal aunt's home) near Saradha Bali, Puri.

During the festival, the **three holy chariots** carrying idols of Lord Jagannath, his brother Balaram (Balabhadra) and sister Subhadra are pulled by thousands of devotees from India and abroad.

The three chariots are newly constructed every year with **wood of specified trees like phassi, dhausa, etc.** customarily brought from the ex-princely state of Dasapalla, by a specialist team of carpenters.

Lord Jagannath's Chariot is called **Nandighosa**; that of Lord Balabhadra is **Taladhwaja**; and the Chariot of Subhadra is known as **Darpadalana**.

Jagannath Temple:

The Jagannath temple is built in the **Nagara style**

It is one of the **best surviving specimens of Kalinga architecture**, namely Odisha art and architecture.

The temple is believed to have been constructed in the 12th century by **King Anatavarman Chodaganga Deva** of the **Eastern Ganga Dynasty**.

Jagannath Puri temple is called '**Yamanika Tirtha**' where, according to the Hindu beliefs, the power of 'Yama', the god of death has been nullified in Puri due to the presence of Lord Jagannath.

This temple was called the "**White Pagoda**" and is a **part of Char Dham pilgrimages** (Badrinath, Dwaraka, Puri, Rameswaram).

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There are four gates to the temple- Eastern ‘Singhdwara’ which is the main gate with two crouching lions, Southern ‘Ashwadwara’, Western 'Vyaghra Dwara' and Northern ‘Hastidwara’.

There is a carving of each form at each gate.

In front of the entrance stands the Aruna stambha or sun pillar, which was originally at the Sun Temple in Konark.

Other Important Monuments of Odisha:

Konark Sun Temple (UNESCO World Heritage Site)

Lingaraj Temple

Tara Tarini Temple

Udaygiri and Khandagiri Caves