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COOPERATE AND SPARE ME DISTURBANCE

His Divine Grace

A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

We have so much work to do, we cannot lose our solidarity. Do not cause a crack there with any fighting spirit or competition. Whenever I hear complaints or disturbances in our centers my mind becomes too much disturbed and I cannot properly translate my books. So please spare me from such disturbance by cooperating all together godbrothers and godsisters. 🍀

— From a letter to Malati. 7 January 1974.

FESTIVAL OF THE SANDALWOOD JOURNEY

Candana-yātrā, literally “the sandalwood journey”, takes place at the height of the hot season. Beginning on the day of *Akṣaya Tṛtīyā*, deities of Krishna and his expansions are daily smeared with large amounts of sandalwood paste that completely cover their bodies. The festival is also known as *Gandha-lepana-yātrā*, or the festival of smearing fragrant substances on the Lord’s body.

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta’s Description

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur Prabhupada gives a brief description of the *Candana-yātrā* festival in his purport to *Caitanya-bhāgavata antya* 8.102:

Sri Purushottam Dev [Lord Jagannath] ordered his servant, the exalted *vaiṣṇava* Sri Indradyumna Dev, to smear fragrant sandalwood paste on his body on the day of *Akṣaya-tṛtīyā*, which occurs during the waxing moon in the month of *Vaiśākha*. Following this, even today, Lord Jagannath’s *vijaya-vigraha*, Sri Madana Mohana, is brought on a palanquin from the temple to Sri Narendra Sarovar every day from *Akṣaya-tṛtīyā* in *Vaiśākha* up to the eighth day of the waning moon in *Jyaiṣṭha*. Sri Madana Mohana Dev enjoys these boat pastimes in the lake along with his ministers headed by Lokanath and Mahadev. Since the *Candana-yātrā* festival of Sri Madana Mohana is held in Sri Narendra Sarovar, the lake is also called *Candana-pukura*.

In the Puranas

According to chapter twenty-nine of the *Utkala-khaṇḍa* of the *Skanda Purāṇa*, the origin of this festival



Unknown photographer

*Damodara, the deity of Srila Jiva Goswami
in Vrindavan, in sandalwood paste*



Unknown photographer

Sri Sri Radha Shyamasundar in Vrindavan in sandalwood paste

lies in an instruction that Lord Jagannath gave to his dear devotee Indradyumna Maharaja:

*vaiśākhasya site pakṣe ṛṭiyākṣaya-samjñakā
tatra mām lepayed gandha-lepanair atisobhanam*

“On Akṣaya Ṛṭiyā, the third day of the waxing moon in the month of Vaiśākha, you should smear my body with scented pastes and unguents.”

The *Nārada Purāṇa* describes:

*yathā viṣṇoḥ sadābhiṣṭam naivedyam śāli-sambhavam
śukenoktam purāṇe ca tathā tulasī-candanam*

In the *Purāṇas*, Shukadev Goswami confirms that just as the Lord is particularly fond of offerings that include fine rice, he similarly loves sandalwood paste mixed with *tulasī*.

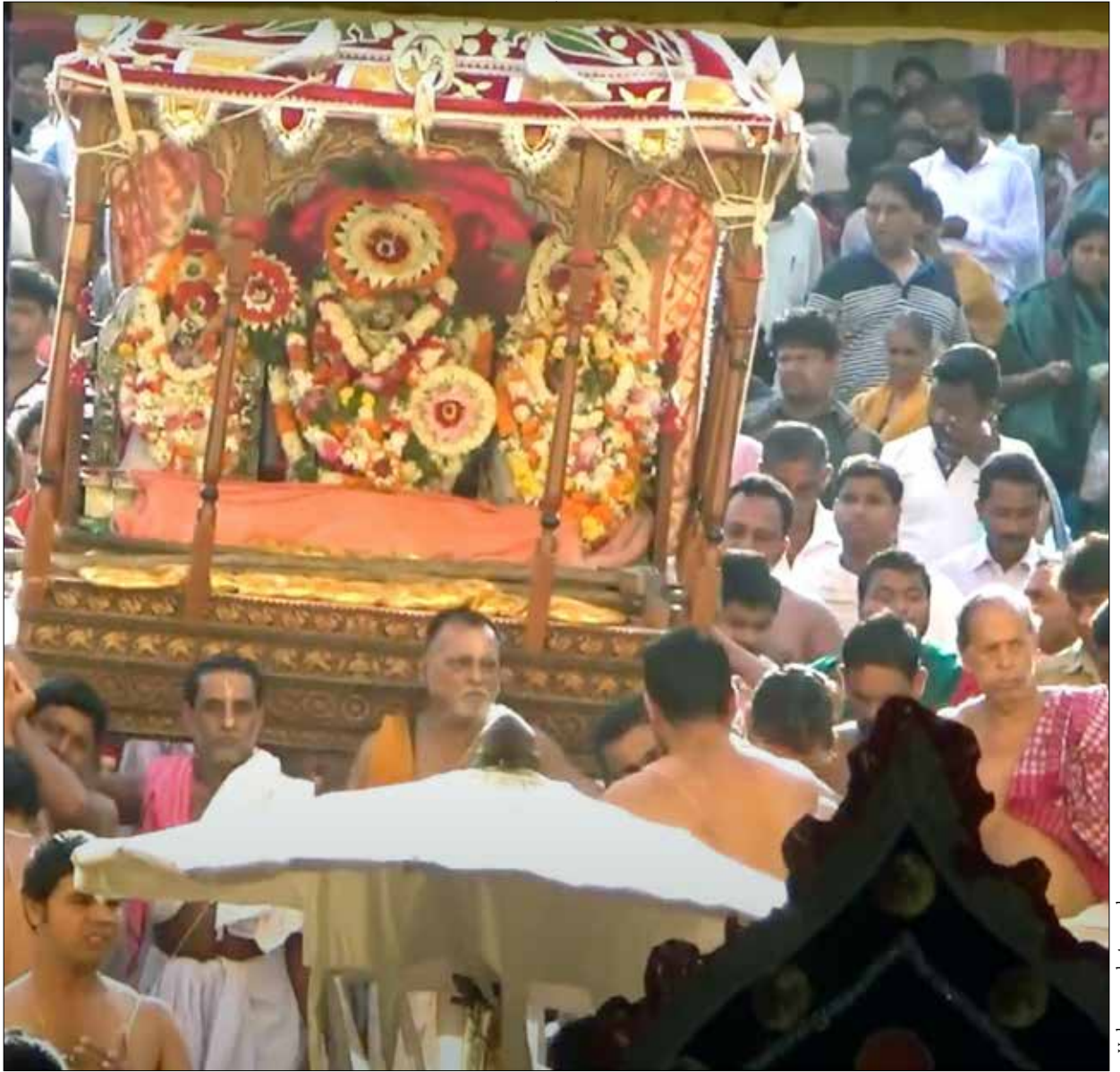
Ceremonies

The *ādhivāsa*, preliminary ceremonies, are done on the day before *Akṣaya Ṛṭiyā*. At this time the approximately thirty pounds of sandalwood paste that is traditionally provided by the Raghava Das



Photo by Nature Love Pratyush

*Madan Mohan coming out of the temple for his
Candana-yātrā procession to Narendra Sarovar*



Unknown photographer

Procession with Madan Mohan from the temple to Narendra Sarovar

Math in Puri is ritually purified. This paste will be used for the Lord for the next forty-two days.

On the following day, sandalwood paste is offered to Jagannath, Baladev, and Subhadra. Then the smaller deities of Madan Mohan, Krishna Balaram, Lakshmi, and Saraswati are brought to the main altar. Subsequently, the King of Puri begs permission from Lord Jagannath to take the deities to the Narendra Sarovar lake. While at the main altar, on behalf of Lord Jagannath, the pandas offer garlands known as *ājña-mālās* to the king and the servitors who will carry and serve the small deities who are known as the *vijaya-vigrahas*, festival deities. These small deities who are also known as *calantī-pratimā*, “moving

deities”, then mount their palanquins and are taken out in regal procession. First, they stop at the *Rāja Nahar*, the palace of the king of Puri. Outside of the palace is the wood that has been collected for the construction of the *Ratha-yātrā* carts. Madan Mohan gives an order to the king to begin the work on the chariots. A fire *yajña* is then performed and the logs are ritually sanctified.

Festival at Narendra Sarovar

Although in Vrindavan and other places the *Candana-yātrā* festival generally lasts for twenty-one consecutive days, in Puri it goes for forty-two days and is divided into two parts of twenty-one days each. The two divisions are



Phtoo by Debasish John

The nauka-bihāra, "boat outing" for Madan Mohan and the calanti-pratimā, "moving deities". Candana-yātrā procession in 2021.



Phtoo by Odisha State Tourism

Various vaiṣṇavas do kīrtana during the procession



Unknown photographer

The vijaya-vigrahas of Krishna and Balaram during the Candana-yātrā in Puri

known as the *bāhara-candana* and the *bhitara-candana*. *Bāhara* means “outside” and *bhitara* means “inside”.

The *bāhara-candana* festival takes place at the lake known as Narendra Sarovar. Situated near to the Market Square in Puri, Narendra Sarovar is on the north-east side of the temple.

Narendra means, “king”. There are two versions about the origin of the lake. Some say that it was constructed in the 1200’s by a minister of King Kavi Narasimha named Narendra Mahapatra. Another local story is that the tank was dug by Indradyumna Maharaja, the original king of Puri, for the purpose of the *Candana-yātrā* festival. The pond was paved with stones, with steps made for bathing, in the 18th century by a Marathi *sādhu* named Baba Brahmachari.

The lake was a favorite place of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and his associates. Aside from the beautiful descriptions given in *Śrī Caitanya-*

caritāmṛta and *Śrī Caitanya-bhāgavata*, it is considered that Gadadhar Pandit was frequently giving recitations of the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* on the bank of Narendra Sarovar to Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and associates such as Nityananda Prabhu, Adwaita Prabhu, Rupa Goswami, Haridas Thakur, Sarvabhauma Bhattacharya, Swarup Damodar, and Maharaja Prataparudra.

The Procession

During the *bahara-candana*, Madan Mohan comes out of the temple every night along with his consorts Lakshmi and Saraswati, and goes in procession from the Jagannath Mandir to Narendra Sarovar. His entourage consists of three main groups. The first in the procession are the deities of Rama Krishna who are considered to be the representatives of Jagannath and Baladev. Their palanquin, called *pālinki* in Odia, resembles a boat with a curved pole on each end which the *pandas* use to carry him. The *pālinki*



Unknown photographer

The vijay-vigrahas of the five main deities of Lord Shiva in Puri, known as the "Pañca-pāṇḍava".

They are considered to be the five ministers of Lord Jagannath.

is only a few feet off the ground, making it easy to see Rama and Krishna, who lie on their sides in the *pāliṅki*. Following Rama Krishna comes Madan Mohan covered in sandalwood paste and accompanied by his two wives. Madan Mohan's palanquin is higher than Rama Krishna's and is known as a *ca-uḍhala* in Odia. Following Madan Mohan are five deities of Lord Shiva, who are known in Puri as the *Pañca-pāṇḍava* and are considered to be the five ministers of Lord Jagannath. These are the festival deities of the five main forms of Lord Shiva in Puri, Nilakanteshwar,

Markandeshwar, Kapala Mochan, Yameshwar, and Lokanath. They also ride on *ca-uḍhala* palanquins similar to that used by Madan Mohan. All of the palanquins have umbrellas covering them and are bedecked with many ornaments.

For all twenty-one days of the *bāhara-candana*, the road and all the houses from the Jagannath Mandir to Narendra Sarovar are highly garnished with flowers, flags, mango leaves, arches, and various decorations. During the procession,

Vaishnavas from many *maṭhas* in Puri do *kīrtana* of Gaudiya Vaishnava songs, as well as verses from Jayadev Goswami's *Gītā-govinda* and various traditional Odia songs. In the *yatra* from the Jagannath Mandir are also dancers and various persons in costumes as Hanuman, Garuda, etc. One of Jagannaths' *sevaks* dresses up like Nanda Maharaja, while various children dress as *gopīs* and cowherd boys. Along the way there are a number of places called *chāmuṇḍiās* set up with bamboo poles and thatched roofs where the deities stop to take offerings of food and drinks, along with entertainment of dance and music, which is usually organized by the mahants of the various *maṭhas* of Puri.

During the twenty-one days of the *bahara-candana*, Madan Mohan is dressed almost every day in a different special costume. This dress is offered to him before he leaves the temple. Although they don't come out of the temple to take part in the festival, during the time of the *candana-yātrā*, Jagannath, Baladev, and Subhadra are daily dressed in special attire known as *candana-veśa*, which consists of a large single piece of white silken cloth.

A Local Story

According to a local tradition in Puri, there is another story about the origins of the *Candana-yātrā* festival. The *Virāṭa-parva*, the fourth section of the *Mahābhārata*, describes the *ājñānta-vāsa*, "residence spent in hiding", a period of time when the Pandavas lived incognito with Maharaja Virat in his palace. Each one of the five Pandava brothers had adopted disguises and new identities during their stay, and Maharaja Virat didn't know who they were. When he finally found out their true identities, Maharaja Virat, who was a great devotee of Krishna, took the opportunity to ask Yudhisthir Maharaja to help him to get *darśana* of Krishna. It was in the middle of the hot summer, so Yudhisthir instructed him that he should organise a boat festival for Krishna. Krishna and his older brother Balaram came there and blessed the king. It is said that at that time Maharaja Virat smeared sandalwood paste on their bodies to help



Lithograph by Ravi Varma Press, 1920

Yudhisthir, in disguise as the Brahmin
Kanka, meets Maharaja Virata

cool them off. In Puri it is said that the *candana-yātrā* festival commemorates the devotion of Maharaja Virat for the Lord.

The Boat Rides

A large, excited crowd of thousands of devotees greets the deities when they arrive at Narendra Sarovar. The lake is illuminated with huge stadium-style lights on all sides of the pond. In the center of the lake is an island with a bridge to it. There are three temples on the island, the biggest of which is used for Madan Mohan and his consorts.

When the deities arrive at Narendra Sarovar, they sit on boats which look like giant swans and their servants move them around the lake. They go around once and then have an *abhiṣeka* bath with water from a special well on the island. Then they get dressed, have an offering of food, and then go back on the boats for a few more rounds of the lake.



Photo by Shishir Kumar Mishra

Fountains in Narendra Sarovar help to keep the heat down



Photo by Nature Lover Pratyush

Narendra Sarovar with the Jagannath Mandir in the background



Photo by Kirit Daitapati

Pandas attend the deities on the boat. The small temple in the water is a shrine to Lord Shiva



Photo by Debasish John

The boat ride begins from the bridge connecting the land to the island temple at Narendra Sarovar



Unknown photographer



Unknown photographer

Top and bottom: On the last evening of Candana-yātrā, the boats go around the lake 21 times



Photo by Amrutesh Gaura Das

Candana-yātrā festival at ISKCON Bhubaneswar

The last day of the *bahara-candana* is called *bhaurī*. On this day, the boats go around the lake and touch the corners twenty-one times.

The Inner Festival

The *bhitara-candana-yātrā* — the inner *candana* festival — goes for twenty-one days after the *bahara-candana*. It takes place inside the Jagannath Mandir. During this time the deities remain in the temple and are not taken to Narendra Sarovar. They stay inside near the Mukti Mandap at a place called the Jala Krida Mandap ("the place of water pastimes"). The *vijaya-vigrahas* are placed in large brass pots that contain scented water, sandalwood paste, and *tulasī*. The Jala Krida Mandap was said to have been built by Gajapati Maharaja Mukunda Dev during his rule from 1559 to 1568 A.D. It is the same place where the wedding of Rukmini and Krishna is performed with the deity of Madan Mohan during the second week of the *bahara-candana* festival.

The Benedictions

The *Skanda Purāṇa* (2.2.46.21-44) describes that in a previous *Kali-yuga*, *prajāpati* Daksha, out of concern

for the welfare of the suffering living entities in *Kali-yuga*, first established the *Candana-yātrā* festival for Lord Jagannath. Daksha prayed for the benefit of all the suffering souls in the iron age. In response to his prayers and observance of *Candana-yātrā*, Lord Jagannath gave the following benedictions:

*imām akṣaya yātrām ye bhaktyā paśyanti harṣitāḥ
tasmin kāle yadicchanti manasā tad avāpnuyuḥ*

“Those who devoutly and joyously witness this celebration of everlasting benefit shall obtain whatever they mentally wish for at that time.”

*yathā santāpa haraṇāṁ candanenānulepanam
tathā havo 'yaṁ me dakṣa santāpa traya-nāśanaḥ*

“Just as the application of sandal paste removes bodily heat, so this festival of mine, O Daksha, is destructive of the three types of distress.”

Family

Although Jagannath and his *vijaya-vigrahas* are worshiped with great opulence, simultaneously there is also great sweetness in the exchanges between him and his devotees. In Puri, Jagannath is considered to be like a family member, and when he comes out for his festivals such as *Ratha-yātrā* and *Candana-yātrā*,



Photos by Amritesh Gaura Das

Top: Krishna Balam at ISKCON Bhubaneswar covered in sandalwood paste for the Candana-yātrā festival.

Bottom: Jagannath, Baladev, Subhadra at the ISKCON Bhubaneswar Candana-yātrā festival

all of the local people take part with great joy. Thus, the Candana-yātrā festival is both an opportunity to please the Lord by offering cooling sandalwood paste and boat rides, as well as an opportunity for him to lovingly interact with his dear devotees. — MD 🍃

Notes

¹ Discussing the pastimes of Mahaprabhu at Candana-yātrā, would make this article much longer. They can be found in *Caitanya-caritāmṛta antya* 10.41-49, and in *Caitanya-bhāgavata antya* 8.101-166.

² See a list of those dresses in the article in this issue titled, “The Dresses”.

³ The three types of distress are: *ādhyātmika*, bodily or mental pains; *ādhibhautika*, pains from other living creatures; and *ādhidāivika*, distress from natural disturbances

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Photo courtesy of the Puri Jagannath Mandir Archives

Madan Mohan, the ancient vijaya-vigraha of Lord Jagannath, dressed in his blue-colored cloth called, adharam-vesa. This is what he wears for his bath at the Candana-yātrā observance at Narendra Sarovar.



Photo by Shri Jagannatha

Madan Mohan and his consorts Sri (Laksmi) and Bhu Devis on the Ṛtīyā, the first day of Candana-yātrā in his Naṭavara-veśa

THE DRESSES FOR CANDANA-YATRA

Beginning on Akṣaya Ṛtīyā, Madan Mohan wears a different *veśa*, costume, for each of the twenty-one days of the *bahara candana-yātra*.

Ṛtīyā: *Naṭavara-veśa* (“the great dancer”)

Caturthī: *Śrī Kṛṣṇa-janma-veśa* (“Krishna’s birthday”)

Pañcamī: *Rājādhirāja-veśa* (“the king of kings”)

Ṣaṣṭhī: *Śrī Vanavihārī-veśa* (“walking in the forest”)

Saptamī: *Vascāharaṇa-veśa* (“when Brahma stole the calves”)

Aṣṭamī: *Gomatī-kṛṣṇa-veśa* (“Krishna and cows”)

Navamī: *Khaṭadoli-veśa* (“riding on the swing”)

Daśamī: *Cakra-nārāyaṇa-veśa* (Lord Narayan with the Sudarshan Chakra)

Ekādaśī: *Nau-keli-veśa* (“boat pastime”)

Dvādaśī: *Nṛsimha-veśa* (“the man lion”)

Trayodaśī: *Rāsa-maṇḍala-veśa* (“the circle dance”)

Caturdaśī: *Kandarpa-ratha-veśa* (“Cupid’s chariot”)

Pūrṇimā: *Aghāsura-vadha-veśa* (“killing the Agha demon”)

Kṛṣṇa Pratipada: *Raghunātha-veśa* (“Lord Rama”)

Dvītiyā: *Śrī Caitanya-veśa*, also known as *Ṣaḍ-bhūja-veśa* (“six-armed Chaitanya Mahaprabhu”)

Ṛtīyā: *Giri Govardhana-veśa*, or *Giri-pūjā-veśa* (“worship of Govardhan Hill”)

Caturthī: *Giridhārī-veśa* (“holding up Govardhan Hill”)

Pañcamī: *Vastra-haraṇa-veśa* (“stealing the *gopīs*’ clothes”)

Ṣaṣṭhī: *Cintāmaṇi-kṛṣṇa-veśa* (“Touchstone Krishna”)

Saptamī: *Gaja Uddhāraṇa-veśa* (“saving the elephant king”)

Aṣṭamī: There is no special dress on the festival’s last day. 🍌



Photo courtesy of the Puri Jagannath Mandir Archives

*Madan Mohan in his Śrī Kṛṣṇa-janma-veśa on the Caturthi day.
Vasudev is seeing carrying Krishna across the Yamuna river to Vraja.*



Photo courtesy of the Puri Jagannath Mandir Archives

On the Śaṣṭhi day of Candana-yātrā is Vanavihārī-veśa.



Photo courtesy of the Puri Jagannath Mandir Archives



Photo courtesy of the Puri Jagannath Mandir Archives



Photo courtesy of the Puri Jagannath Mandir Archives

Top: Cakra Nārāyaṇa-veśa is won on the Daśamī. Bottom left: Close-up of Rāsa-maṇḍala-veśa. Bottom right: Close-up of Cakra Nārāyaṇa-veśa.



Photo courtesy of the Puri Jagannath Mandir Archives

Rāsa-mañḍala-veśa, Krishna's circular dance with the gopīs of Vraja is worn on the Trayodaśī



Photo courtesy of the Puri Jagannath Mandir Archives

Aghāsura-vadha-veśa, Madan Mohan's dress of killing the demon Aghasura is worn on the full moon day



Photo courtesy of the Puri Jagannath Mandir Archives

Madan Mohan getting dressed in his Śaḍ-bhūja-veśa also known as Caitanya-veśa. This dress is in honor of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu



Photo courtesy of the Puri Jagannath Mandir Archives

Śaḍ-bhūja-veśa is worn on the Dvitiyā



Photo courtesy of the Puri Jagannath Mandir Archives

Painting of Śaḍ-bhūja-veśa at Madan Mohan's temple at Narendra Sarovar



Unknown photographer

Śaḍ-bhūja-veśa for Jagannath in ISKCON Mayapur at Candana-yātrā



Photo courtesy of the Puri Jagannath Mandir Archives

Giri-pūjā-veśa commemorating the worship of Govardhan Hill is worn on the dark Tṛtīyā



Photo courtesy of the Puri Jagannath Mandir Archives

Giridhārī-veśa commemorating the lifting of Govardhan Hill is worn on the dark Caturthī

Photo courtesy of the Puri Jagannath Mandir Archives



Photo by Shri Jagannatha



Photo by Shri Jagannatha

Top left: *Vastra-harāṇa-veśa*, stealing the gopīs clothes, is offered on the dark *Pañcamī*. Top right and bottom: *Cintāmaṇi-kṛṣṇa-veśa*. It's said that when wearing this dress on the day of dark *Śaṣṭhi*, Madan Mohan grants the desires of whoever has darśana of him.

Photo courtesy of the Puri Jagannath Mandir Archives



Photo by Shri Jagannatha



Photo courtesy of the Puri Jagannath Mandir Archives

Top left: On the Ekādaśī, Madan Mohan wears Nau-keli-veśā, Krishna dresses as a boatman for the gopīs.
Top right: On the Saptamī is Gaja Uddhāraṇa-veśā, riding on Garuda, Krishna saves Gajendra the elephant.
Bottom: On the Dvādaśī, is Nṛsimha-veśā, the dress of the man-lion.



Photo by Shri Jagannatha

Kuñja-doli-veśa. This dress is not on all of the traditional lists. This is the dress offered to Madan Mohan on the last day of Candana-yātrā. The ornate arches that adorn the three deities are considered to be kuñjas



Unknown photographer

Naṭavara-veśa for Jagannath in ISKCON Mayapur at Candana-yātrā



Photo courtesy of the Puri Jagannath Mandir Archives

On the Caturdaśī, Madan Mohan wears the Kandarpa Ratha-veśā

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Unknown artist

Traditional Odia paṭa citra painting of the Kandarpa Ratha with Krishna and the gopīs