



Jagannath Rath Yatra

Why in News?

The [Jagannath Rath Yatra](#) officially begins in **Puri, Odisha**. This year, the festival **commenced on June 20, 2023 and will culminate on June 28, 2023**.

What is Jagannath Rath Yatra?

- **Jagannath Rath Yatra** is an **annual Hindu festival that celebrates** the journey of Lord Jagannath, his elder brother Lord Balabhadra, and his younger sister Goddess Subhadra from **their home temple in Puri, Odisha** to their **aunt's temple in Gundicha, about three kilometres away**.
 - The legend behind the festival is that once, Goddess Subhadra expressed her desire to visit her aunt's place in Gundicha.
 - To fulfil her wish, **Lord Jagannath and Lord Balabhadra decided to accompany her on a chariot ride**. This event is commemorated every year by taking the deities on a similar journey.
- The festival dates **back to at least the 12th century CE, when the Jagannath temple was built by [King Anantavarman Chodaganga Deva](#)**. However, some sources suggest that the festival was already in practice since ancient times.
 - The festival is also known as **Festival of Chariots**, as the deities are carried on **three massive wooden chariots that are pulled by devotees with ropes**.
 - It begins on the **second day of the bright fortnight of the month of Ashadha (June-July)** and lasts for **nine days**.
- **Features of the Chariots:**
 - The **rupakar servitors** are skilled craftsmen responsible for carving intricate figures of birds, animals, flowers, and guardian deities on the chariots.

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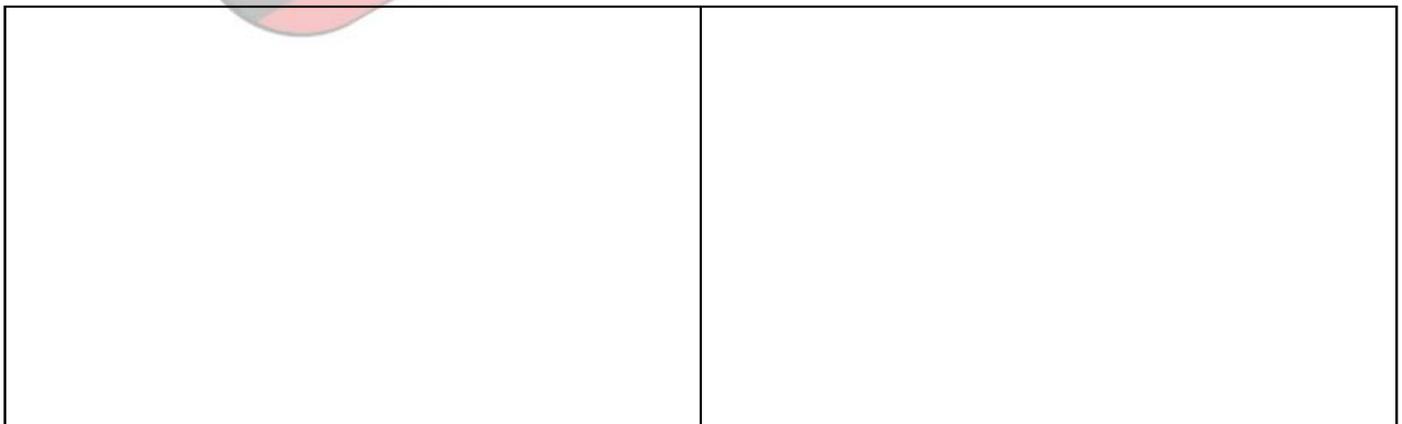
THE THREE RATHS

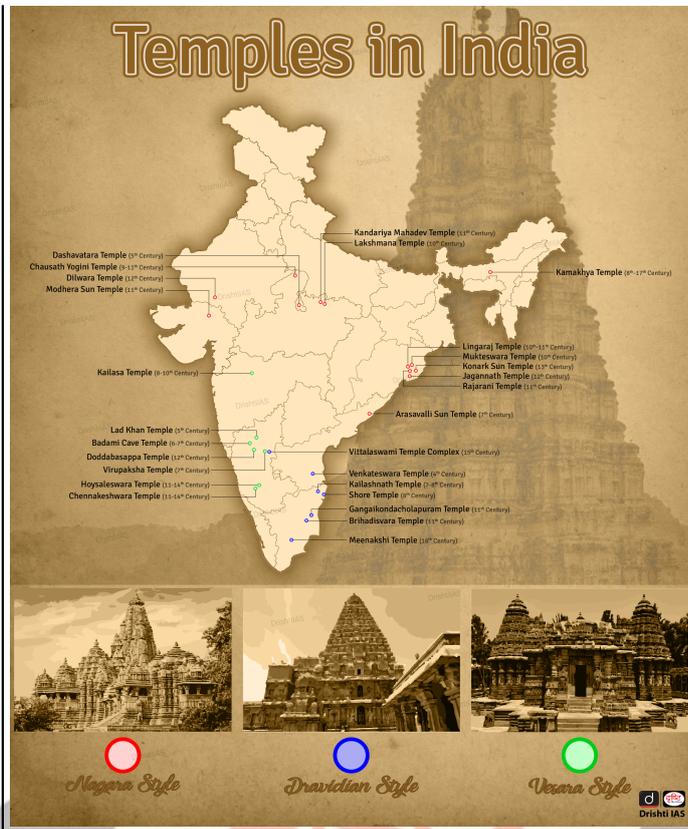
	NANDIGHOSA	DARPADALAN	TALADHWAJA
Presiding Deity	Lord Jagannath	Goddess Subhadra	Lord Balabhadra
Wheels	16	12	14
Wooden pieces used	832	593	763
Height	44.2 feet	42.3 feet	43.3 feet
Colour of cloth	Red & yellow	Red & black	Red & green



Jagannath Puri Temple

- **Jagannath Puri Temple** is one of the most impressive monuments of the **Indian State Odisha**.
 - This temple is known as the **“White Pagoda”** and is a part of **Char Dham pilgrimages (Badrinath, Dwaraka, Puri, Rameswaram)**.
- It is a **splendid example of Kalinga architecture**, which is characterised by **curvilinear towers, intricate carvings and ornate sculptures**.
 - The temple complex is surrounded by a high wall with four gates facing the four cardinal directions.
 - The main temple consists of four structures: **the vimana (sanctum), the jagamohana (assembly hall), the nata-mandira (festival hall) and the bhoga-mandapa (offering hall)**.
- 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.





Source: IE

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