



Sri Madhavapur 2013















History of Veshas offered during Chandan Yatra

In 2010 the devotees kindly requested Jananivasa Prabhu, the head pujari in Sridham Mayapur, to explain a little about how Veshas started being offered to Radha Madhava during Chandana Yatra. This is what they shared.

Jananivasa Prabhu: "I heard about this festival of offering Lord Jagannatha twenty different dresses (veshas) during Chandana Yatra and I wanted to perform them. Then, in 2007, Narottama das, who serves in Srila Prabhupada's Pushpa Samadhi, showed me another list of dresses that he had found in a Gaudiya Math book, and inspired me to offer them to small Radha Madhava. That year, Keshavi Mataji, who designs the Deities' dresses, volunteered to make four or five dresses, of which the Gajendra Moksha dress was remarkable.

Shortly after that, I was approached by the Girl's Gurukula (Sri Anasuya Vidyamandala) who requested the service of making all of the twenty dresses by the next year. It would be incorporated in their art class, and all the girls would be able to assist in making all the dresses that are offered to Sri Sri Radha Madhava. It was a grand success with many astonishing dresses, such as the twenty-foot long snake Aghasura with a gaping mouth, and Cupid's Chariot with galloping horses. This year, the girls have promised even better, so Chandana Yatra will be a real treat. Hare Krishna!"

Pankajanghri Prabhu: "The Gurukul girls' hard work and enthusiasm is very much appreciated by all the devotees, eagerly awaiting at darshan time to see what pastime dress Krishna will be wearing today. The students not only get to make the dresses, but naturally want to know about the pastimes, so they become absorbed in hearing and chanting the pastimes of the supreme Lord. You can see their devotion reflected in the dresses and the pastime paraphernalia that they have created. May they receive more and more creativity to inspire the devotees by the grace of Lord Jagannatha."

The dresses offered to the Lord are:

Natabara Krishna (The Best Dancer)
Krishna Janma (Birth of Lord Krishna)
Rajadhiraja (King of Kings),
Vana Vihari (Frolicking in the Forest)
Vastra Haran (Stealing of Gopis Clothes)
Gomati Krishna Vesha (Mother Cow)
Chakra Narayana (Creator of the Universe)
Rasamandali Vesha (Circular Arena of the Rasa Dance)
Nauka Keli (Boat Pastimes)
Raghnunatha Vesha (Lord Ramachandra)
Nrsimhadeva Caturdasi,
Khat Doli (Swing Festival)
Sadbhuja Gauranga (Six-armed form)
Kandarpa Ratha (Cupid's Chariot)
Gajendra Moksha (The Deliverance of Gajendra)
Aghasura Vada (Deliverance of Aghasura)
Chintamani Krishna
Giridhari (Lifting of Govardhana Hill)
Rasamandala Vesha (Rasa Dance)
Giri Govardhana (Govardhana Puja)
Bumble Bee Vesha.

"Chandana yatra" starts on the third lunar day of the waxing moon of Vaisakha month, and continues for twenty-one days. Lord Jagannatha gave direct instructions to King Indradyumna to perform this festival at this time.

Smearing the body of the Lord with ointments is an act of devotion, and the best of ointments is sandalwood paste. Since the month of Vaisakha is very hot in India, the cooling effect of the sandalwood is very pleasing to the body of the Lord. Sandalwood paste is applied all over the body of Jagannatha leaving only his two eyes visible. The utsava murtis (functional Deities - Vijay utsav) are taken on procession and are placed in a boat in the temple pond. To commemorate this festival, Lord Caitanya also carried out water sports with his devotees.

