



Ontario Konkani Association

e-Samachar (June 2023)

www.ontariokonkanis.com

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President's Message

Dear OKA Family,

Happy June! It is the first month of summer - a time to enjoy the wonderful outdoors with hikes, picnics, barbeques and summer road trips in our beautiful home province of Ontario. June gets its name from the Roman goddess Juno – the god of marriage and childbirth, and the wife of Jupiter, king of the gods. Did you know that June also has a day called the Summer Solstice, that usually falls on one of June 20th, 21st or 22nd and is the longest day of the year? On that day, the Earth's axis tilts 23 degrees at the same time as the Sun reaches its highest point of altitude. Due to this, with the exception of the Polar Regions, the Northern Hemisphere experiences the longest period of daylight hours of the year.

In this month's e-Samachar, Priya Prabhu is back contributing, writing about a different passion of hers as compared to her travel series (which will continue in the future), food! Niranjan Kamath is also back contributing an article on the Puri Jagannath Temple, first of a two-part series. In this month's Senior's corner, Sadanand Mankikar has provided more details of the Seniors' Day to be held on June 25, 2023, as well as information on other useful events and relevant information for seniors.

We do hope you enjoy this edition of e-Samachar. Please consider contributing to the e-Samachar on a regular or one-time basis. We look forward to hearing from you at OKApresidents@gmail.com.

Anjana and Pravin Pai



Amazing Facts about Jagannath Puri Temple

By Niranjan Kamath

Everybody in India knows about Jagannath Puri Temple in Orissa as one of the Char Dhams in India. I am also assuming most of us know this because of the annual Rath Yatra that attracts millions of devout Hindus & Tourists nationally and globally.

It is by far the most watched ritual. And why not! 3 massive chariots of Lord Krishna, Lord Balarama and Goddess Subhadra are pulled by massive ropes along the equally massive Temple corridors. It is said the Gods assemble over Puri to watch this amazing spectacle.



History of Jagannath Temple:

Though the original temple was built by King Indradyumna, the present-day temple complex was built by King Anantavarman of Chodaganga dynasty in the 10th century. The Vighrahas or Idols of the Lord Jagannath temple are believed to be much older than the temple. It was gradually restored by King Ramchandra Deva I.

The Jagannath temple is a highly revered Vaishnavite temple, and it is one of the 108 Divya Deshams of Vaishnav people. The temple has been revered by many saints such as Adi Shankaracharya, Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, Shri Ramanujacharya. This

temple has also served as a center for the Bhakti movement of Shri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and ISKCON of Srila Bhaktivedanta Prabhupada.

But all this is known to us. Let me now relate to you some of the unknown but astonishing facts about this temple.

Fascinating facts About Jagannath Temple:

- In Jagannath temple, the flag, which is placed at the top, always flows in the opposite direction of wind.
- The Sudarshan Chakra which is placed at the pinnacle of the temple is made up of heavy metal and it weighs over 1000 kilograms.
- Nobody knows how an object which is so heavy is placed over that height in the era when there was no electricity or technology.
- This Temple is designed in such a way that you will never have a shadow at any time of the day.
- There is one more fact about the Sudarshan Chakra. When you see the Chakra from front, back, sideways or any angle; the Chakra will look the same.
- The flag of the temple is changed daily. The main priest of the temple climbs the temple atop and replaces the old flag with a new flag. It is believed that if the flag ritual is missed for even a single day, the temple will be shut for 18 years.
- Kanapata Hanuman is located on the western gate of Jagannath Temple (Vyaghra dvara). After marrying Devi Laxmi who is the daughter of the ocean, the Lord became the son-in-law of the ocean. During the night the waves of the ocean make a loud sound that is heard all over Puri. One time this sound entered Jagannatha's temple, thus disturbing the Lord's sleep. Lord Jagannatha ordered Samudra not to make any sound which might disturb Him. Since then, the sound of Samudra crashing on the beach never again entered Jagannatha's Temple. Lord Jagannatha engaged His devotee Hanuman to stand at the south gate and listen attentively and ensure the sound never entered the mandira. "Kanapata" means to engage the ears (kana) for hearing. Here Hanuman is known as Kanapata Hanuman.

- The city of Puri still hosts a king who is called as Gajapati Maharaj. He is said to be the first servant of Jagannath Prabhu. He is involved in many rituals related to the temple such as Rath Yatra, Janmashtami, Ram Navami
- There is a ritual in Jagannath temple which involves the Idol of Jagannath. Once in every 8, 12 or 19 years, the Idols of Lord Jagannath, Goddess Subhadra and Lord Balabhadra are changed. During this time, a blackout is announced in the city.
- The priest takes the mysterious object "Neel Madhava" from the Idol of Lord Jagannath, and places it in the new Idol of Lord Jagannath. While doing this, he ties a black cloth around his eyes and prevents himself from seeing it as part of the ritual.

Nabakalebra:

The ongoing Jagannath Rath Yatra is preceded by Nabakalebara, a ritual that holds a significant place in the existence of Jagannath Temple in Odisha. It is a ritual which involves replacing the existing wooden idols of Lord Jagannath, Balabhadra, their sister Subhadra, and the image of Lord's *Sudarshan Chakra* with newly carved ones. The idols can be replaced only after the 8th, 12th, or 19th year of the last replacement ceremony, because anything made of wood or spiritually speaking, anything made on this earth is prone to change and decay.

And to do so, only the year that has *adhikmasa* or an extra month in the Hindu lunar calendar is chosen. No other neem tree but a *daru brahma* tree is chosen to sculpt the images of the idols. The head priests refer to the ancient *Agamas* records to determine the whole procedure to be followed in this ritual. It starts in the month of Chaitra (March-April) and ends a few weeks before the Rath Yatra. To accomplish the task of looking for the right tree for the new wooden idols, the temple workers including Daiytas set out for the Mangala temple in Kakatpur village to implore the presiding goddess for her help. The goddess appears in the vision or dream of the head priest and guides him to the site where the right tree is located. Interestingly, the prophecy of the goddess turns out to be foolproof. The tree meant for the idols of *Sudarshan* should have three branches and its skin of the neem tree should be reddish. The tree of Balabhadra should have seven branches and its bark should be light-brown or white. This tree should be at a

heritage site or a graveyard. The tree meant for the idol of Subhadra should have five branches with a yellowish bark. And finally, the tree of Jagannath should have four main branches, but of dark colour. The tree should be in a cremation ground, with an anthill close to it, and a snake hole at its base. Among other interesting features, the tree should be near a temple of Lord Shiva.

Once the trees are found, a special homa (offering to fire) is performed and the tree is cut. At Koili Baikuntha, the artisans known as Visvakarma sculpt the wooden images. During those days, a sacrifice to propitiate Lord Narsimha is performed. These days, the devadasis and musicians do their best to maintain a devotional atmosphere. Priests perform sacred rites to purify the pervading air. The energies of the old deities are carefully transferred to the new ones, and finally the old wooden deities are buried in Koili Baikuntha. It is with full glory and fervour that the newly made idols of Jagannath, Balabhadra, Subhadra, and Sudarshan chakra are brought inside the sanctum sanctorum of Shri Mandir. Millions of devotees gather in Puri to witness the sight of welcoming their new Lord and his siblings.

India stands on a firm bedrock of Sanatana Dharma. Its values, rituals, traditions are all based on sound knowledge and facts. What is unknown may appear to be a miracle but really are facts that are not yet proven because we do not know how to prove them yet. Be that as it may, The Jagannath Temple is by far the most important Dham of the Char Dhams in Bharat. The last time the ancient ritual of Nabakalebra was started in March 2015 and installed in the temple for the Rath Yatra which was on 15th June.

This year the Jagannath Puri Rath Yatra is Tuesday June 20th.

Here is the live presentation on Rath Yatra.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0k5VnzddxxQ>

In my next e-Samachar article I will write on the last 2 astonishing facts of this amazing temple.

Seniors Forum

By Sadanand Mankikar

UPCOMING EVENTS

SVBF/OKA Senior's Day 2023 organized by SVBF and Oka is fast approaching. The event is cosponsored by Jeevan Niwas Retirement Village and Lotus Funeral and Cremation Centre. For details, please see the attached flyer.

Displays/Booths, by the following service providers and caregivers:

- Crime & Fraud Prevention, Officer Sardana
- Diabetes Canada
- Estate/Will Info Raghunath Kamath
- Eyestyle Optical
- Indus Community Services
- Jeevan Nivas South Asian Seniors Village
- Lotus Funeral and Cremation Centre
- Opticals On The Go **
- Punjabi Community Health Centre
- Van Rehab Physiotherapy **

**** Please note that Opticals On The Go and Van Rehab bring their services to your home.**

Entertainment will include

- Invocation – Students of Gaanvasrshini
- Devotional Songs - Sangeet Bharati Seniors
- Fashion Show by Seniors
- Laughter Yoga – Carlos Gongora, Risalegria
- Stretch Break with Rashmi Jayaram
- Percussion Ensemble led by Kishore Kulkarni
- Culture Criminals – Bollywood Orchestra
- Karaoke, BINGO, Raffles, Welcome Tea, Lunch etc.



SRINGERI VIDYA BHARATI FOUNDATION (SVBF),
ONTARIO KONKANI ASSOCIATION (OKA)



present

SENIORS' DAY 2023

COME AND CELEBRATE WITH US

on Sunday, June 25, 2023 from 10 AM to 3 PM (EST)
at SVBF Community Centre, 80 Brydon Drive, Etobicoke



HIGHLIGHTS

Displays



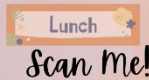
- Crime & Fraud Prevention – Officer Sardana
- Diabetes Canada
- Estate/Will Information
- Eyestyle Optical
- Homeohealing Holistic Clinic
- Indus Community Services
- Jeevan Niwas Retirement Village
- Lotus Funeral and Cremation Centre
- Opticals On The Go
- Punjabi Community Health Centre (PCHC)
- Van Rehab Massage Therapist/Physiotherapy

Entertainment

- Invocation – Students of Gaanavarshini
- Devotional Songs - Sangeet Bharati Seniors
- Laughter Yoga – Carlos Gongora
- Percussion Ensemble – Led by Kishore Kulkarni
- Stretch Break with Rashmi Jayaram
- Fashion Show by Seniors
- Culture Criminals – Live Bollywood Orchestra



ALSO KARAOKE, BINGO, RAFFLES, WELCOME TEA, LUNCH ETC....



ADMISSION IS FREE, TO REGISTER USE THE FOLLOWING LINK

(Limited capacity, registration may close without prior notice)

tinyurl.com/seniorsday2023

Register Now

PROUDLY COSPONSORED BY



A few points to remember:

- The event is free and already over 70% of the capacity is filled. The registration may close without prior notice. Please register as soon as possible using the following link: <https://tinyurl.com/seniorsday2023>
- If you want to participate in Karaoke, please forward your name and information about the song you are going to sing to ganesan.sreeram@gmail.com as soon as possible. Spots are limited and served on a first come first served basis.

For additional information, one may contact Sadanand Mankikar.

USEFUL INFORMATION

OKA EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PROGRAM: Estate, Will and Power of Attorney and End of Life Planning are two major elements of this OKA Seniors Forum Program.

For **preparing Wills and Powers of Attorney** you may contact Marvin Talksby (905) 405-0199 ext. 257 or Mary Bojkovski (905) 405-0199 ext. 276 of Nanda & Associate Lawyers. For additional information or assistance, you may also contact Raghunath Kamath or Ashok Bhatt.

For **End of Life Planning** one may contact Harjinder Bilku of Chapel Ridge Funeral Home at (905) 305-8128 or (647) 966-0093.

OKA AADHAR CHAT: This interactive web-based chat was established in 2017 as a part of the OKA Seniors Forum to facilitate communication amongst seniors and soon to be seniors. Since then, we have started posting upcoming events and relevant information on this chat. Members can post any questions and we will attempt to get answers. We invite everyone, young and old, seniors or not, to join this chat and share information including their experiences and expertise. To join this chat group, please send an email to shraddhapai.home@gmail.com

Additional information about OKA Seniors' Forum is posted on www.ontariokonkanis.com

OTHER USEFUL INFORMATION

INDUS COMMUNITY SERVICES: This organization provides very helpful service to South Asian seniors.

- Boost wellness for South Asian youth (Ages 16-18) virtual and in-person sessions in Mississauga and Brampton.
- Toy library and Parenting. Every Tuesday and Thursday 1:00 to 3:00 PM.

For the presentations, please visit <https://www.induscs.ca/seniorstownhall/> If you want to stay connected with Indus, you may sign up for their newsletter.

C.A.R.P. Are you a member of C.A.R.P. – previously known as Canadian Association of Retired Persons? If you are over 45, you may want to consider becoming a member of C.A.R.P. It is a national organization with chapters all over the country. Its mission is to “Promote and protect the interests, rights and quality of life of Canadians as we age”

C.A.R.P. is an advocacy group and from time to time they arrange interesting and informative seminars and workshops. Their monthly magazine Zoomer consists of useful articles and provide information on topics related to insurance, travel, health, entertainment and lifestyle.

For additional information, you may contact them by email: support@carp.ca
Phone: 1-833-211-2277 Website: www.carp.ca

ONTARIO GUIDE TO PROGRAMS AND SERVICES FOR SENIORS: Please click on the following link for the latest upgraded guide. [A guide to programs and services for seniors.](#)

SENIORS HOUSING AND HOME CARE DIRECTORY: Help for Mom has developed this very helpful publication which is about 130 pages, softcover and

Readers Digest size. To get a copy send an email to helpformom.com or call Mary (647) 967-9821.

The following organizations disseminate very useful information either through regular news release and/or seminars, webinars and workshops:

Canada India Foundation www.canadaindiafoundation.com

C.A.R.P. Canadian Association of Retired People) www.carp.ca

Diabetes Canada www.diabetes.ca

Indus Community Services www.induscs.ca

UHNF (University Network Foundation) www.uhnfoundatiom.ca

(ARTICLES BY AND FOR SENIORS FOR THIS SECTION ARE ALWAYS WELCOME)

Breaking Bread

By Priya Prabhu

Rise like your bread. Age like your wine.

Baking is a magical process. It's a bit of hard work and toil in the making. But the end results are pure magic. Like my husband says - Don't mess with a recipe's measurements or temperatures. Baking is an exact science. Some people probably think baking does not let them be creative and is quite restrictive. Somehow, I found my creative streak in terms of shaping dough, infusing natural flavours from my kitchen or slathering home-made butters.

My earliest memories of bakeries were the local bakeries in Bombay. We have the quintessential Portuguese word 'pao' better known today as 'pav' or joined buns. This humble pav is teamed with absolutely anything to make a quick meal. Think of the aroma of freshly baked bread outside a bakery. Definitely tempts us to go in and get some bread.

One of my absolute favourites is the Italian focaccia. I love baking it firstly because I can play with the 'toppings' among sundried tomatoes, olives and herbs. And secondly for the heavenly aromas of olive oil and herbs particularly rosemary. I may write more articles on special breads or cakes or other baked desserts!

While we have ancient references to bread and the making of bread, some of us might be cautious with the consumption of modern day bread. I look at it mostly as a weekend treat. Or a one off with a specific meal. I believe anything consumed in moderation is okay.

While there are so many varieties of breads in the world, the classic bun or pav remains a constant favourite of many. While we usually get the classic burger buns easily in North America and Canada, I decided to create my own buns with a mix of recipes I found online. There are many variants of course with whole wheat or ones

without yeast to name a few. This one is a basic bun/pav. The fun part about this dough is that it can be used to shape up any bread and also be used to infuse garlic butters or spreads to make flavourful breads. Who's ready to get, set, bake!

Soft buns/pav

Ingredients:

3 cups all purpose flour (You can use whole wheat all purpose as long as you sift it through a sieve)
2 tsb sugar
1 tsb salt
1 cup milk
1 tsp sugar
1 tsp Instant yeast
2 eggs (At room temperature)
2 tsp Butter
2 tsp black or white sesame seeds. (optional)

Method:

Part 1: -

Sift flour through a sieve, salt and sugar in a large bowl and mix well. In another small bowl warm the milk, add 1 tsp sugar and instant yeast to it. (Please note the milk has to be just warm and not hot) Mix well. Cover and rest for 5 mins. In another bowl whisk one egg and keep aside. Add the yeast mixture to flour along with whisked egg and mix all well. Melt the butter in a bowl and add it to the flour mixture. Knead well to make it a smooth dough. Cover with a damp cloth and set aside for 1 hour.



Part 2: -

Remove the raised dough and lay on a large chopping board. Cut into 8 or 16 equal pieces. Brush your flat baking tray with oil or place parchment paper and make 8 small rounds and place all rounds on the tray keeping some space. Let this rest on the tray for 1 hour.

Part 3: -

In a bowl whisk the 2nd egg. Brush the top of each dough ball with egg wash. Sprinkle sesame seeds. This is optional.

Bake at 390 F or 200 C for 10-12 mins until surface browned

Alternatively, after Part 1 of the above, you could shape the dough as you desire and place them on your flat tray to rest.

Alternatively, after Part 1 you could take the dough ball and roll it into a flat circle using a rolling pin. Place 2 spoons of filling on it, pinch and place the pinched part below and smooth surface on top. Rest this for 1 hour and repeat Part 3 steps of brushing with egg wash and sprinkling sesame. Stuffing can be chicken kheema or cheese with some herbs or potato mashed in spices or just some garlic infused butter.

Alternatively, after Part 1 you can roll each dough ball into 3 strips and braid them to make a braided bread.

Happy Baking!



