

Rath Yatra and Bahuda Yatra Fast Becoming a Tradition at Durga Bari



HOUSTON: With much pomp and ceremony, Rath Yatra was celebrated at Durgabari on June 29. Well attended by more than 1000 people, this year marks the 3rd year in a row and it's fast becoming a tradition at Durga Bari.

People flocked to the temple early morning that day and waited patiently as Mahamahopadhyay Dr. Bishnupada Goswami of Durga Bari, Sri Srikiran Narayanam from India Cultural Center and Temple, Memphis and Dr. Amrit Achari from Durga Bari conducted the Puja. After the Puja, Pahandi Bije started, in which the deities were brought from the temple on to the Rath. This was completed with the help of several eager devotees who were delighted having the chance to hold the deities. After all the deities including Nrushingha and Lord Ganesh were situated properly on the Rath, a ceremonial King Indradyumna, Dr. Raghunath performed the Chhera Panhara (brooming) ceremony to cleanse the path of progress for the Rath. Kirtan, led by Sripad BV Tirtha Maharaj from Sri Govindji Gaudiya Matha, Chants of Maha Mantra and Jai Jagannatha filled the air as devotees started pulling the Rath. With great enthusiasm, the devotees pulled the Rath three times within the temple premises to symbolize the journey of Lord

Jagannatha, Lord Balabhadra and Devi Subhadra to their aunt's house (Gundicha Temple). Once the Rath pulling was complete, devotees made a bee line to climb onto the Rath to see their beloved Lord and have a chance to touch them and do pradakshina around the singhasana of the deities. After that it was time for the devotees to get to Kala Bhavan to get lunch Prasadam, which was prepared so lovingly by Durga Bari volunteers.

Then on July 5, Bahuda Yatra or Return Rath Yatra was celebrated. Bahuda Yatra is the return journey of Lord Jagannatha, Lord Balabhadra and Devi Subhadra from their Aunt's house to the main temple. It is significant in the sense that it completes Rath Yatra. This is the only day in the year when Rasgulla is offered to the Lord. As per the rituals in Puri, Rasgulla is offered by Lord Jagannatha to Goddess Laxmi to enter into the temple.

Char Dham Hindu temple and Houston Durga Bari Society are truly grateful to all the devotees and volunteers for participating in the festivities and making it a grand success.

For further information visit, www.greaterhoustonrathyatra.org or www.skaifoundation.org



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