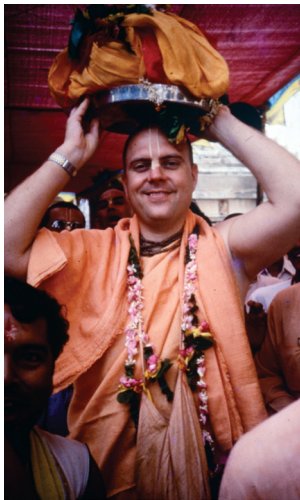
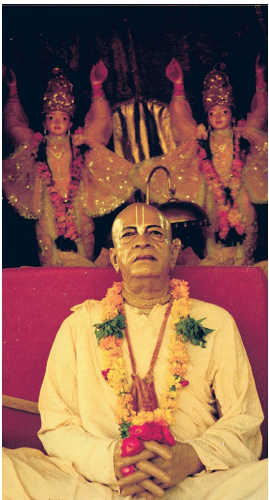


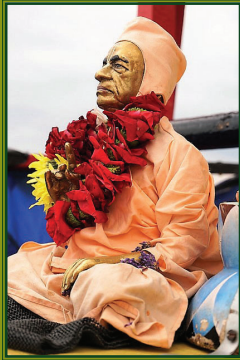
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(Founder Acharya His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada)

padayatra

WORLDWIDE

2019 Newsletter
PLEASE POST IN YOUR TEMPLE





Murti of Srila Prabhupada on UK Padayatra

This newsletter is dedicated to ISKCON
Founder-Acarya, His Divine Grace
A.C.Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.

"Naturally, the sankirtana men traveling with the bullock carts are blissful. It is Lord Caitanya's engagement. Lord Caitanya personally traveled all over India for six years. His program was simply kirtana and prasada distribution. Lord Caitanya never spoke philosophy in public. When He met big scholars like Sarvabhauma Bhattacharya he spoke philosophy; otherwise for the mass of people, kirtana and prasada distribution. So continue this program. It is very pleasing to Lord Caitanya."

(Prabhupada's December 17th, 1975, reply to Mahamsa Swami about the 1500 km bullock cart padayatra organised from the Hyderabad farm to Mayapur-dhama)

Editor in Chief
Lokanath Swami

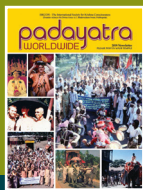
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Front cover photo: Photos of the 1984-1986 international padayatra from Dvaraka to Mayapur via South India to celebrate Lord Caitanya's 500th anniversary appearance.



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EDITORIAL

by Lokanath Swami

Dear Readers,

The good news this year is that we finally printed the first volume of the Padayatra trilogy, entitled Padayatra Worldwide. This elegant and well-illustrated book covers two very long walks in India: the Vrindavana to Mayapur (and then to Puri) Bullock Cart Padayatra from September 1976 to March 1977, and the 7000km phenomenal padayatra from Dvaraka to Mayapur via South India from September 1984 to March 1986 to celebrate the 500th anniversary of Lord Caitanya's advent. The other two volumes are on the way. Volume Two, Padayatra Explosion, will describe the more than 100 padayatras completed after July 1986, heading the massive celebration of the Śrīla Prabhupada Centennial in 1996, with Padayatra India as the leader and mother of all padayatras. Volume Three, Padayatra Forever, will cover all the walks from 1996 to date.

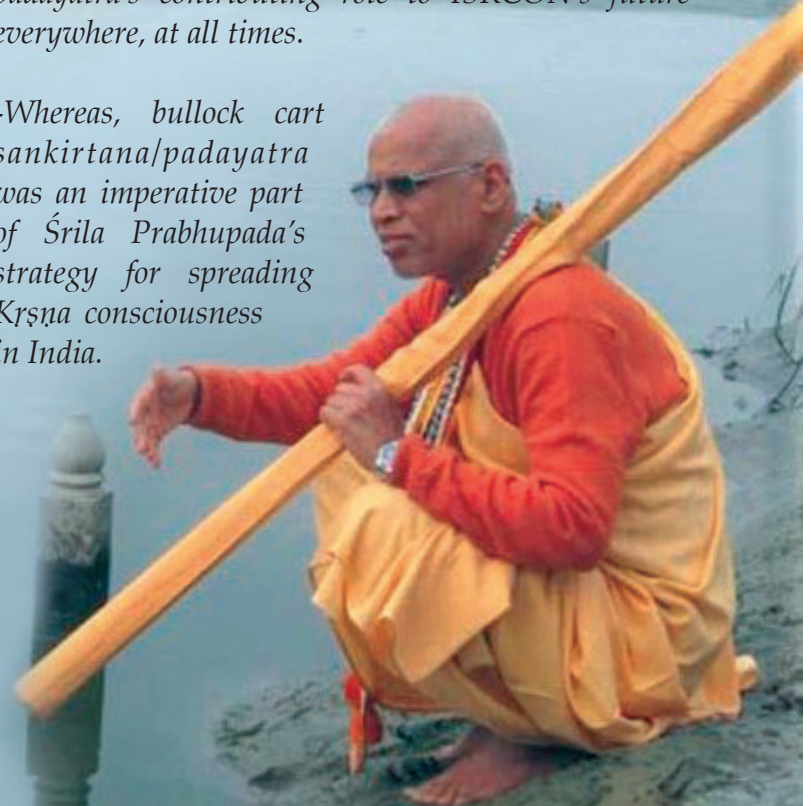
I'm also glad to inform you that the current newsletter is now produced and printed by a new team of devotees working for the Padayatra Press in Noida, India. Even though most ISKCON ministries abandoned the printed format for the internet option – our Padayatra Ministry has two websites which are regularly updated – we think that devotees still enjoy reading a paper magazine and taking a healthy break from their computers, laptops, cell phones and other electronic gadgets. During the 2018 GBC meetings in Mayapur I was heartened to see one of our GBCs fully absorbed in perusing the latest Padayatra Newsletter. This annual newsletter is available at the beginning of the Gaura-purnīma festival and is initially distributed to all the assembled GBCs in their own conference room. If our ISKCON leaders get inspired by this Bullock Cart Sankirtana Padayatra, there is a chance that they will enthuse devotees in their respective zones or countries. With 1000 newsletters being circulated there is also the hope that some devotees will be inspired to adopt this successful preaching formula in their own area, country, in several countries or even

continents. This has already been done by two different teams from North America to South America. Lord Caitanya's padayatra is here to stay and travel around the world for another 9500 years, at least. When the petrol supply starts to seriously dwindle grass will still feed the oxen pulling the padayatra cart. So, better train our oxen right now! Time is fast running out and we are now on the countdown to a global crisis.

In 2018 we had a total of fifteen padayatras: five in Europe, one in Africa, one in Canada, and at least seven in India alone including the ongoing All-India Padayatra, on the road non-stop since 1984. I hope and pray that more temples and preaching centres in India will seriously implement the April proposal of the IIAC (ISKCON India Advisory Committee):

-Whereas, Śrīla Prabhupada is the inspiration behind padayatra. There exists substantial communication, instructions and vision statements that Śrīla Prabhupada made in respect of padayatra. One being - "We can introduce millions of such carts all over the world." Padayatra was very important to Śrīla Prabhupada, and close to his heart. He envisioned padayatra's contributing role to ISKCON's future everywhere, at all times.

-Whereas, bullock cart sankirtana/padayatra was an imperative part of Śrīla Prabhupada's strategy for spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness in India.



-Whereas, the GBC statement of 1991 states: "To bring congregational chanting of the holy name to every town and village of the world through organised padayatra festivals."

-Whereas, whenever and wherever padayatras are organised (in and outside of India) it is proving to be an effective, self-sufficient and engaging activity, especially as it promotes huge distribution of Śrīla Prabhupada's books in the remotest parts of India.

Therefore, it is resolved that all divisional councils, individual temples and farm communities with gosals in India are encouraged to include padayatras (walking festivals) as one of their key outreach programmes. Temples are recommended to organise padayatras, at least as an annual event. If this is not possible, then they could elect to organise padayatras as frequently as is possible with manageable and varied distance and duration.

Of course, this invitation is open to all temples, preaching centres and adventurous devotees worldwide. Padayatra can, and should, be adapted to local situations, climates, circumstances, times and places. In countries where it's not feasible to have an oxcart, you can use a horse and cart or a small man-pulled cart, but we encourage you to engage the oxen lying idle on our ISKCON farms.

From the padayatras in the West we have witnessed again and again that the presence of oxen automatically draws interest from onlookers and the media, thus creating a golden opportunity for the padayatris to talk about the value of cows and oxen. As you all know, there is an urgent need to stop the torture and massacre of more than 150 billion (150,000,000,000) farm animals each year throughout the world. In the United States alone thirty-nine million cattle and calves are slaughtered every year. "And oxen can be used for driving carts and preaching village to village. What is the question of killing them?" (Śrīla Prabhupada's letter to Nityananda dasa, March 16, 1977) How long will Govinda, the lover of cows, tolerate this situation and suspend the very heavy karmic reactions due to our world?

During the two minutes or so it took you to read these last few paragraphs, 1130 cattle have been killed around the world. People must see and touch these noble animals before they can seriously decide to no longer eat them. Padayatra has a very important role to play to purify the contaminated ether with the vibration of the holy names, to educate people on the spiritual science, and to present practical spiritual solutions to all the world's problems.

Padayatra Worldwide ki jaya!



Hare Krisna Balatonfüred



In front: Caitanya dasa, the devotee who started the Hungarian padayatras, leading harinama in Balatonfüred.



Vallabi Kantha dasi with Yadu kumar das on mridanga, and Hari Kirtana das

HUNGARIAN LAKESIDE TOWNS RESOND WITH THE HOLY NAMES

by Prabhupada-jivana Dasa

From July 25 to August 8 devotees from Budapest's Dayal Nitai-Vijaya Gauranga temple arranged for a padayatra festival to visit the tourist towns and beaches around Lake Balaton, the largest freshwater lake in central Europe.

Padayatra began with thirty full-time participants: ten book distributors as well as ten devotees dedicated to preaching, while the remainder were bhaktas. Later the party was joined by ten grhasta devotees including two small children from ISKCON's Hungarian self-sufficient ecological farming community, Nava Vraja-dhama, two families from Eger in northern Hungary including four children, and one couple from London and one couple from Slovakia. With congregational members joining intermittently, the size of the party often doubled.



Vraja loka dasi

The padayatris travelled by motor vehicles south-west from Budapest to Szekesfehervar, the first of three central camp sites (sleeping mainly in school classrooms) from which they drove to full-day harinama in the surrounding towns. From Szekesfehervar the party then made its way to the beach resort of Balatonfured on the north coast of Lake Balaton.

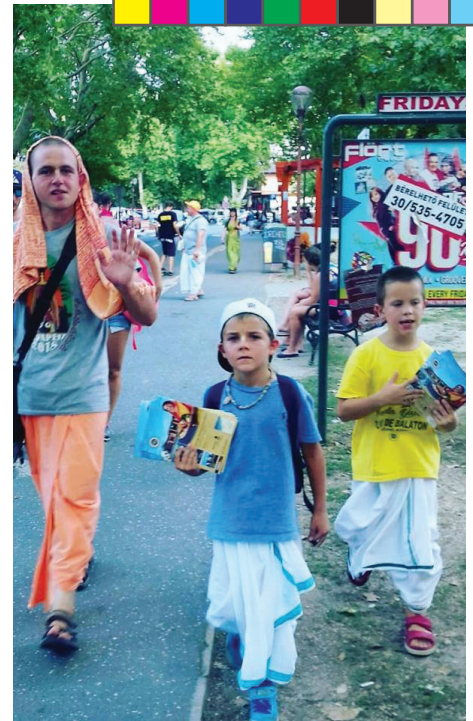
For a few days at the end of the first week, the padayatris received Giriraja Maharaja's special mercy: Asit Krishna Swami from ISKCON Govardhana. This was Maharaja's second year with the Hungarian padayatra, but it seems he is going to become a regular participant. He is very sweet, and everyone gained much from his association. Maharaja gave some inspirational morning lectures and led ecstatic kirtans in the townships.

Except for only two days, the padayatris were blessed with hot summer weather for harinama in the lakeside resorts. Upon hearing the holy names through the party's loudspeakers, locals and holiday-makers alike greeted the procession with love and joy. The devotees were very enthusiastic as they relished the opportunity to obtain Caitanya Mahaprabhu's mercy by becoming immersed in the preaching mood. From the lake's north coast padayatra moved on to Siofok (one of Hungary's wealthiest municipalities and most



popular holiday destinations) on the south coast and from there to do harinama in the villages of Somogy county. The padayatris also paid a one-day visit to ISKCON's eco-farm, known colloquially as Krishna Valley, where they were greeted with a huge kirtana for the pleasure of the presiding deities, Sri Sri Radha-Syamasundara. Established by Srila Sivarama Swami and the Hungarian devotees twenty-five years ago, the property is home to 140 devotees and forty cows, with another eighty devotees residing in nearby Somogyvamos. Nava Vraja-dhama is renown as the largest eco-farming project in Europe. Padayatra's last few days were centred around Keszthely on the western shore of Lake Balaton, where to show the padayatris his appreciation the mayor offered to accommodate them free of charge in a freshly renovated house, a welcome respite from school classrooms.

During the daily harinama the padayatris were not accompanied by any deities, but in the evenings the devotees had the pleasure of worshipping padayatra leader Triyuga dasa's personal deities, Sri Sri Gaura-Nitai. On the last day of the festival, however, Their Lordships Jagannatha, Baladev and Subhadra arrived from the Budapest temple to grace padayatra's final evening at Varvolgy. That night everyone was busy, either preparing a special feast for the



Brajaraja das doing books in Siofok with Gaura vani (in blue) and Abhisake.

deities, decorating Their opulent altar, or participating in the kirtana and bhajana offered to Them. The event was complete with wonderful Jagannatha katha by Ananda Caitanya dasa from Bhaktivedanta Manor in the UK.

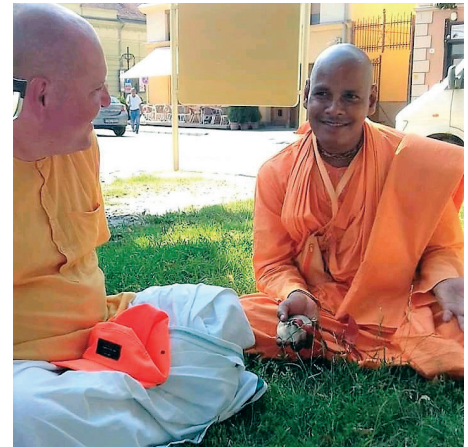
On Kamikā ekādasi the 2018 Hungarian padayatra ended with a sanga at which devotees shared their realizations and experiences with each other.

Prabhupada-jivana dasa: The morning classes by Caitanya prabhu (who started the Hungarian padayatras in the 1990s) had been about community, and these past two weeks certainly had a community-forming effect. The padayatris distributed 2785 books during the walk, and I felt that my service as a book distributor was made easier by having up to sixty enthusiastic devotees alongside me. When devotees distribute the holy name, Srila Prabhupada's books and Krishna prasadam together, it has a very powerful impact.

Sanātani devi dasi; This was my third padayatra. In my service of book distribution, I like the mood of engaging with people who are attracted to the harinama. One of my best experiences was when I sang on harinama and watched people's faces changing while hearing Krishna's names. It's visible that harinama touches their



Budapest temple for only a year as part of the preaching team, this was my fourth padayatra. The best thing was the effect of the harinama. There was an ordinary town with ordinary people, and by the maha mantra it immediately became a theatre of transcendental dreams. A moving experience was when we visited Csurgo, my hometown. I had asked my mother to cook pancakes for the padayatris. She had been waiting impatiently for us in a park but shortly after we arrived, she relaxed and became friendly. Then I understood the power of the bhava of devotees. In terms of self-improvement, padayatra is a serious ego test. Living and sleeping communally in hot weather, we must be tolerant. From the lectures I heard and the time spent with the devotees on padayatra, I learned how to value and respect others. I recognized that if I serve the devotees with patience and love my problems will disappear.



Asit Krishna Swami with Triyuga das, head of the padayatris.

heart. Another great experience was distributing books with the children of bhakta families. They are such special souls. It's not a question of if they are Krishna conscious – it's natural for them. And to do book distribution with children who are clever and happy by nature is very appealing.

Bhaktin Anna: This was my first padayatra. I thought it would be like an ordinary camp with some nice Krishna people. But it was much more than a camp: padayatra is a pilgrimage. As hard as I felt it was

physically, mercifully it was spiritual. When I wasn't helping in the kitchen, I went out with the harinama. It was an amazing experience how touching the holy name is for people – and sometimes even dogs had overheated emotions. And as for the sankirtana devotees, they were full of power, running all day in 40degC! I couldn't imagine I would go for two weeks singing and dancing in the streets, and now I cannot imagine my life without Krishna consciousness.

Bhakta Attila: Although living in the

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THIRD OXCART PADAYATRA,

The Highlight Of The England Festival Preaching Season

by Dayal Mora Dasa



Arrival at the gates of the Canterbury Cathedral

For the third successive year Padayatra UK has been one of, if not the, highlight of the festival preaching season. But this year was special in many ways to the extent that I'm receiving a multitude of requests to make the event much longer next year because nobody wanted it to end.

This year we organised a 6 day walk starting at Ramsgate. We passed through the towns of Broadstairs, Margate, Herne Bay, Whitstable and finished in Canterbury. The total distance covered was just under 40 miles. As last year, we were walking alongside our two favourite Padayatra bullocks from the Bhaktivedanta Goshalla, namely Balaram and Govardhana. The main party consisted of 40 devotees including men, women and children. The party included

one sanyasi (Mahavishnu Swami) and two other Prabhupada disciples as well as Padayatra legend, Parasuram Prabhu. This year we were also blessed by the association of four of the Harinam Ruci party, which certainly added a punch to the kirtana.

This year we also made some improvements in the organisation including a much more effective interaction with the press and local media. We met dignitaries as we passed through the various towns and gave gifts. We also had a program for follow up on the interest generated by the event.

The walk began at Ramsgate bandstand at 2pm on Monday August 20th. We were joined by the Mayor of Ramsgate who enjoyed being with



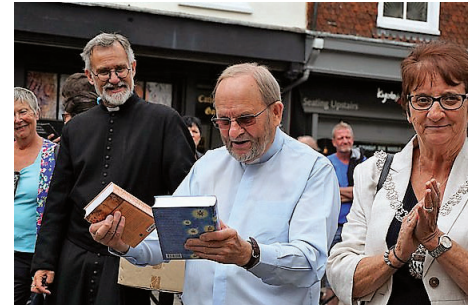
Parasurama Dasa cooking for and serving devotees

us, even walking with us a significant distance and directing traffic for us. On this first day we also passed through Broadstairs where

we performed an ecstatic kirtana to a large crowd on the seafront. This was followed by a very positive and appreciative speech by the Chairman of the local district Council. From there it was another hours walk to our campsite for the evening, a beautiful



Opening ceremony of Padayatra in Ramsgate with Mahavishnu Swami and Mayor Trevor Shonk



Leader of the Canterbury interfaith group with Prabhupada's books



David Saunders, chairman of the local district council receiving a garland from Dayal Moradas

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progressed along the route it became apparent that the British public is more charitable people than we expected as we were not charged for any of the campsites we stayed at. Nights 3 and 4 were spent at Hampton Bay Park Campsite just outside of Herne Bay. We travelled out from here to Whitstable and back where we made a big impression on the peaceful cobbled high street. The local church gave us shelter when the heavens opened at around lunch time. The Maharaja led a nice kirtana inside the church before we headed back for the night. Night 5 was spent just 5 miles outside of Canterbury in an old Scout campsite and was particularly auspicious as there was a spontaneous initiation ceremony with fire sacrifice and all. The atmosphere was electric as the next day would be our final walk to the gates of Canterbury Cathedral. The kirtana went until 1:30 in the morning.

We finished the six day Padayatra in style by walking with the bullock cart right up the busy Canterbury high street on the bank holiday Saturday. A bunch of 40 devotees plus representatives from the Cathedral and the local interfaith group joined

SAFETY EMPHASIZED ON TWENTY-FIFTH CZECH WALK

by Nrsimha Caitanya dasa



Celebrating our 25th padayatra

The twenty-fifth anniversary of the Czech Padayatra lasted twenty days covering approximately 120km. Daily there was an average of twenty-five to thirty devotees on the road and we held fifteen evening programmes, distributed 1957 books, gave out many plates of prasadam during the programmes and threw lots of maha bananas from the cart.

After last year's accident when Loka Saranga prabhu was seriously injured, it was clear that we would have to take safety during harinama more seriously. I meditated on it a lot and from the beginning I knew there had to be two flag bearers, one at each end of the procession, and that one of them had to be me – who else would be more afraid than me that something bad would happen? I was concerned about who would be my partner, however Kamala Manjari dasi, along

with young Bhakta Adam and Jahnvi Candrika, were more than adequate. They alternated holding the flag at the back of the cart, while I was in front of the parade. Even though it may appear that a flag bearer has not much to do and can eventually chant his rounds at the same time, I gave that up very quickly because I had to focus on the cars. With the enhanced safety of two flag bearers, Kamala Manjari and I

noticed that drivers would gesture and nod at us gratefully, appreciating our efforts to ensure the smooth flow of traffic, which was a big contrast to the reactions encountered on the roads in previous years.

On padayatra since I was 10 years old

My first time on padayatra was when I was not even 10 years old. As a child I recall the family atmosphere promoted by Rajaram prabhu, the founder of the Czech Padayatra. I was fourteen before I participated in almost the whole padayatra with my parents. I didn't want to be on harinama, and in order to make me useful Rajaram handed me a flag and sent me to the back of the cart to caution and slow down the coming cars. Flag in hand, I felt I could meaningfully contribute to the padayatra and that the devotees didn't see me as a burden but as a member



Kids' paradise From left to right Candravali, Yamuna, Govinda and Ramanuja



Sarasvati and Sanatan

of the team. My identity as a devotee was fixed. Rajaram gradually gave me more services and responsibilities, and twelve years later I was again walking with a flag in my hand by the padayatra cart, but this time as the organizer of the whole project.

This padayatra belonged to the children

This year's anniversary padayatra certainly belonged to the children. If someone had told me before padayatra that we would organize a school trip, I would have laughed and told that person to go pick raspberries. Nevertheless, that was exactly what happened – more than half of the devotees on padayatra at any one time were kids! Children are nothing new for us: devotees who serve on padayatra take their kids with them and sometimes even bring along kids whose parents can't come on padayatra. But this year there was an avalanche.

Kamala Manjari dasi's children, 13-year-old Sarasvati and 10-year-old Sanatana, have their own impressions of this year's walk.

Bhaktin Sarasvati: This year's padayatra was special because there were often more kids than adults. All the kids were taken very seriously and our commander, Adi Purusa, divided services so that each child would feel needed and important, which helped them to engage in their duties with even more enthusiasm.

Service on padayatra is unlimited - from difficult managing to sweeping floors. My primary service on padayatra is performing Bharatanatyam classical dancing for visitors as part of the evening programme. I have been involved in the dance for seven years.

Our two young oxen, Janmastami and Pavana, are from Nava Vraja-dhama in Hungary and are now being taken care of at the Farma Krisnuv dvur near Benesov where they are doing well. Every year they are driven to the place where we start to walk and then driven back to the farm at the end.

Daily prasadam was wonderful. The cooks were alternating so the food was variegated. Every year prasadam was mostly on time, but this year was exceptionally busy – sometimes prasadam was so delayed that I hardly managed to get myself ready for the evening performance, but it was worth it!

My respect and thanks go to all those who were managing or helping with the whole padayatra. But my biggest thanks go to my parents who have been taking my brother and I to padayatra since our childhood. Thanks to them I have built a strong and loving relationship with padayatra. I also want to thank all the devotees who prayed for my father who had a serious accident during last year's padayatra.

Padayatra is real life!

When padayatra physically ends I start getting ready for the following year. That's why I'm telling everybody, "You must go on padayatra, it is great! Padayatra is real life!"

Bhakta Sanatana: This year's padayatra was the best for me, because all the children were taken very seriously. We had a wonderful commander, Adi Purusa, who is only 18 years old, so he understands the needs of us children. I loved it especially because of our leader, Nrsimha Caitanya prabhu, who personally took care of me and the well-being of all the other devotees.



Pavana and Janmastami

Our oxen for this year came from the Czech farm that I live nearby. Sometimes I go to pick apples with them and during padayatra I try to serve them. I even drove the deity oxcart and often hurried them. It's also for this reason that I like padayatra very much. For this I thank Roman, the coach driver.

My heroes are padayatra veterans like Rajaram prabhu, Alalanath prabhu, my father Munipriya prabhu and Loga Saranga prabhu. I also want to become one of these veterans.

From a small seed to a beautiful tree

How will padayatra be in 100 years? How many members will padayatra have then? What will the padayatra cart look like? Which oxen will we have and how rich will the cultural programme be? We can ask all these questions. But seeing this year's progress, we can only imagine it will be the best. Padayatra began as a simple seed, and now we can see it is a beautiful small tree. We can only imagine what a big tree it will be after 100 years.



Sarasvati dancing



This material world is like hugging a thistle plant

THE BRUCE TRAIL IN CANADA

by Bhaktimarga Swami

I believe in the saying that I once saw on the back of someone's t-shirt that reads "to know the land you have to walk it." When trekking you see everything close up- the plants, the terrain, all that moves and all that does not. You detect the temperature, textures, and tastes that the outdoors provide. You greet and meet people and in doing so it is inevitable that you may acquaint yourself with some local history.

It's important to indulge in some history. It is events of the past that play a significant role in shaping the future

or at least what we have now. Even as we live through a nasty Kali-yuga we can rejoice at the fact that many negative elements have morphed into a Vaishnava culture, a culture that immerses in sacred song, dance, and drum.

After completing a pilgrimage across the U.S. from Boston to San Francisco via New York, I made a decision to mark territory by footsteps with assistant brahmachari-extraordinaire, Karuna-Sindhu. In June of 2018 we began to blaze a trail on Canada's oldest footpath, the Bruce

Trail. Just 205 years before, during the War of 1812, a daring woman by the name of Laura Secord (yes, the famous chocolate is named after her) took a strenuous walk for 20 miles /33 kilometres through mean forest of swamp, creeks, sometimes rocky and sometimes low and high ground. She made history when she heard of a planned attack on British territory (now Canada). Through her, the British were informed of the impending American attack, and along with local Mohawk allies, were prepared for an attempted siege. Had she not made that venture Canada would likely not be.

Few people know that the U.S. and Canada, best buddies forever, were once at war.

It was at General Isaac Brock's monument (a casualty of the war) that Karuna and I began this rather challenging trail, through some beautiful Carolinian forest, of mostly deciduous trees, near popular Niagara-on-the-lake. The trek is really more of a hike and takes a semblance of escarpment-climbing rather than being just a stroll in the park. I am not stretching the truth when I say that the first leg of this "hike" was a fun challenge wherein you watch every step taken. The trail which is just under 900 kilometres in length, is something we are trekking in sections.

The austerity is welcome though, because we are saffron-clad and that represents a certain level of strength and determination. After a fresh rainfall you find yourself trudging over slippery rocks and in some areas over broken rock matter that totters, forcing a smart balance of movement. Our chanting at such times is a genuine call for care from the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He's on our minds, actually more so than Mrs. Secord

Yes, Krishna is the ultimate master of help.

On Day # One we met Dracon, a young Chinese man, a server at a Chinese restaurant, who quit his job for this



Chanting with members of KCS (Krsna Conscious Society)

one month adventure of “peace of mind” as he put it. He was fully equipped for camping and roughing-it-up. Once he completed the trek the joyful chap emailed me to report that he reached the finish line in town, Tobermory. Then he asked, “Now that I’m finished, do you know where I can get a job at a restaurant?”

On one of the many segments a group of thirty young men, fairly new to the country, from India, took to the adventure of a lifetime with us, never having done anything like this before, including a dip in the Lake Ontario, prasadam, a kirtan, and a reading about the pastimes of our guru, Srila Prabhupada. This outing was a real treat for them, recreation and association. A Bhakti booster.

On another day, a senior trekker from Britain stumbled upon us, after winding through the hardwood trees. He hadn’t seen Krishna monks since the early 70’s at Rolling Stones concerts.

“Why did you become a monk?” he asked Karuna.

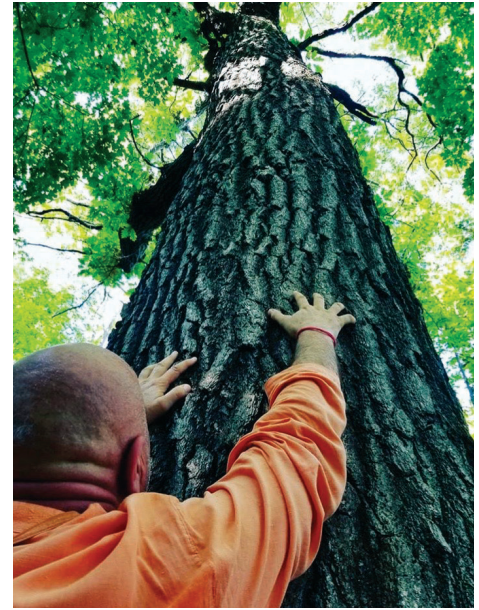
“I like the simple life.”

And I added, “We live the life of rolling stones. A rolling stone collects no moss.” That was a chuckle for him.

Also on the light side, one day we began our trek at a popular winery called “Meglamaniac” which is quite the nomenclature. Long time friend, Dr. Rakesh Bandhari, an official member and supporter of the Bruce Trail, came with us. The grapes grown locally were not as much interest to us as the wild grapes that are suspended from their vines along the way. Wild grapes, blackberries, and raspberries patches on the trail. We saw them as Krishna in the form of quenchy vitamin C fluids.

For me, breaking into a serious sweat became a natural occurrence but for someone like Alex, 28, who came one day, he could fly through the bush like a swinging Tarzan. It has been hot but it didn’t phase him. To address the climbs I invested in a pair of walking poles. They help immensely. I observed other walkers using these useful tools.

The sometimes slippery slopes, humidity, mosquitoes have all contributed to the discipline program but this is all squarely compensated by the good air and natural aesthetics of the escarpment, a well-preserved conservation. When I see how well such a place is maintained I feel that the spirit of the environment protection should be duplicated in our precious sacred space of Vrndavana, Mayapura,



At the point the trail seemed to merge with a tree so I just kept going

the Ganges, Yamuna and so on.

By the end of a usual four hour trek it became time to “call it quits” for the day when we go for a home visit to some nearby devotees for some wholesome prasadam. Janaki and Vaishnava from South Africa, now in Niagara Falls, have been great hosts.

When I trek through a place like the Bruce Trail replete with its green giants of walnut, oak, maple, elm, hemlock, ash, beech, hickory, pine and spruce, I think “This is therapy, and more.” I’m working leg muscles I didn’t even know existed. I have peers, God-brothers, who intelligently spend time in South Indian clinics. God help them, but currently, for me, the Bruce Trail is my retreat clinic. Beyond that! It is a paradise, a green Vrndavan, in some places, a jungly Jarikhhand Forest, the likes of the green backdrops for Krishna and Chaitanya.

Oh, and while we are talking about green stuff, one home owner whose driveway is a piece of the Bruce Trail, noticed us, offered water and cannabis, the healing herb. We politely declined and let him know that chanting “Hare Krishna” along the path gets us high. In fact it is this, the pilgrim’s call, the mantras, that are allowing us to shape a little history apart from getting to know the land.

17TH ANNUAL ECO-CARAVAN PADAYATRA IN SLOVENIA: *FROM PURE CONSCIOUSNESS TO A PURE HEART*



Giving an old man a chance

Padayatra Slovenia is a caravan of song and dance, a festival of Vedic and Vaishnava culture. Its motto: from pure consciousness to a pure heart and a clean environment and fulfilling relationships. The 2018 slovenian Padayatra was thus a renewed opportunity to sincerely serve the devotees and Krishna. This year we toured the central part of the country and Ljubljana, the capital, from July 3rd to 20th. We also went to Bled and Portoroz for one day.

For the third year in a row, devotees' accommodations were arranged at the Ljubljana Sri Panca Tatva temple, at Žibertova 27. We walked in the afternoon, from 4 pm to 8 pm, starting from the temple.

This year's summer marked our 17th padayatra - a wonderful pilgrimage with beautiful Sri Sri Nitai, Gaura-Nataraj, Srila Prabhupada, Tulasi devi and the Lord's devotees. The walk was accompanied by loud singing of Lord Krishna's names and stunning dancing.

Padayatra is the mission of Caitanya Mahaprabhu and the path of self-realisation for this age, for all people and all living beings. It is also a wonderful opportunity for devotees to associate among themselves everyday through spiritual programs and entertainment. All kinds of devotees get the chance to experience the constant chanting of the holy names, distribution of prasadam and of Srila Prabhupada's books to people in general.

Slovenian devotees and devotees from other countries had been warmly invited to join this unselfish form of preaching of love of God. The response was amazing, especially because many young devotees from 10 to 18 years old participated in the walk. Lalita Govinda prabhu, the padayatra organizer, is very happy to see this program is so well accepted among youngsters. They could associate among themselves in a spiritual atmosphere and experience first hand the mission of Caitanya Mahaprabhu. They also found it interesting because they could meet their peers from Spain.

This year's special guests were Bir Krishna Goswami, Prahladananda Swami, Devadharma Prabhu and Bhagavat-purana Prabhu. The devotee who participate on padayatra remain friends forever, every devotee is convinced of that.

BOOK DISTRIBUTION SCORES

Total: 1261 books

289	Science of Self-Realization
3	Sri Isopanisad
90	Teachings of Lord Caitanya
251	Krishna's Kitchen
209	Chant and be happy
191	BhaktiYoga -
	The Art Of Eternal Love
100	Easyjourney To OtherPlanets
119	Beyond Birth and Death
2 600	brochures/pamphlets

PRASADAM SCORE

14 000 pieces of prasadam



Lalita Govinda Dasa, leader of Padayatra

JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA: ISKCON LENASIA PARTICIPATES IN THE 26th SHIVARATRI WALK ORGANISED BY THE HINDU CO-ORDINATING COUNCIL

by Padmanabha Dasa



Invitation

Kishore Badal, chairman of the Hindu Coordinating Council (HCC) of Gauteng, South Africa, forwarded an invitation to ISKCON to participate in their 26th Shivratri Walk. Various temples in Johannesburg were also invited to participate in the walk with various floats to honor Lord Shiva, the topmost Vaishnava. The organizers had also asked the ISKCON devotees to provide the lunch for the public and all the walkers. Caitanya Dasa, temple president of ISKCON Lenasia, welcomed the invitation and immediately gave approval and funding.

Preparations

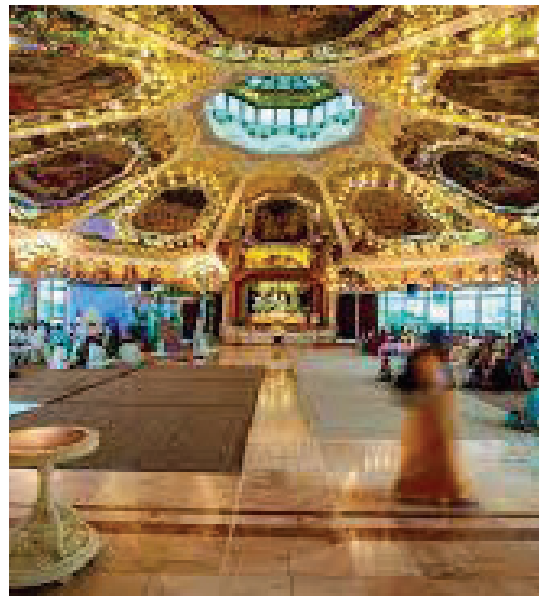
Right away devotees in the ISKCON camp engaged in frantic preparations to make this event successful. Syama Rupa Dasa and Padmavati Dasi provided over 300 packets of prasadam caramel nuts, all packed by Bhaktin Narishka. Nareshwar Prabhu volunteered to cook 3 containers of biryani and 1 of dahl. Adhar Mataji collected BTGs and books to be distributed free of charge to the public, and Manoj Prabhu coordinated the Kirtan team.

The event

On Sunday February 11th 2018 25 devotees assembled at the Jayas temple in Falcon street, in the South of Lenasia to join the HCC and 8 other temples with their floats honoring Lord Shiva. Ratheem Krishna Prabhu started Kirtan with the pranam mantras and continued the whole time with the maha mantra. Our sankirtana party danced and chanted enthusiastically along the way. Many people came out of their homes to take an audio darsana of the holy name; most of them had never heard it before. On either side of the road teams of devotees were distributing prasadam and Srila Prabhupada's books. The Johannesburg Police Department and some volunteer marshals escorted the walkers during the procession. We stopped at nine different temples where arati was performed to the Lord Shiva Deities on the floats.

It took us 5 hrs to complete the walk. It was awesome to distribute the holy names, prasadam and books to people. I am sure Srila Prabhupada and Lord Caitanya were pleased with the efforts put by their grand disciples – especially because it was

the auspicious day of Vijaya Ekadashi. The procession stopped at the Sai temple in Kingfisher Street where devotees sang the Nrsimhadeva prayers to conclude the walk. Nareshwar Prabhu and his team were very busy distributing biryani and dhal to the public. We then danced and walked another 500 meters to Syama Govinda's house, where we honored a delicious Ekadashi prasadam.



NOIDA TEMPLE COMPLETES THIRD RADHASTAMI PADAYATRA

by Radhakunda dasa



Vamsidhara das, co-TP of ISKCON Noida, driving the cart



Lokanath Maharaja leading kirtana

In September the ISKCON Noida devotees embarked on the third 150km Radhastami Padayatra from Noida, Indraprastha, to Sri Vrindavana, scheduled to conclude at the holy dham on October 1.

The padayatra was comprised of four vehicles, thirty full-time devotees, and two pujaris aiming to distribute 5000 books and perform a minimum of five hours of harinama daily. The books and musical instruments were kept in the harinama cart, while another cart (similar to the All-India Padayatra cart) carried the Sri Sri Gaura-Nitai deities. Behind that came the advance-party vehicle and at the back of the procession was a truck carrying the luggage.

At 4pm on September 17, Radhastami day, and as part of the World Holy Name Week, Lokanath Maharaja inaugurated the event with kirtana, stating, "I am giving the instruction to start padayatra from Noida to Vrindavana," thus beckoning all in the vicinity to participate. By 9pm the padayataris arrived at their first destination, a devotee farmhouse, CRPF camp, Noida, where the party settled down for the night having distributed 450 books, collected Rs 15,000, and completed five hours of harinama sankirtana.

On September 18 we began our programme at 4.30am with darsana of Gaura-Nitai, which all thirty padayataris attended. Lokanath

Maharaja joined us as we chanted our rounds, and the book distribution score was announced during mangal-arati. About 7am we set off for that day's destination, Greater Noida. On the way we stopped for breakfast prasadam at V. P. Agarwal's biscuit factory. Mr Agarwal, a renowned entrepreneur in the biscuit and juice manufacturing industry, donated the Noida property on which the Radha-Govind Deva temple is located, and through the years he has continued to support our yatra, including serving us breakfast on all three Radhastami padayatras. The Agarwal family warmly welcomed us, performed arati of Their Lordships, and for the third consecutive year Mr Agarwal donated Rs one lakh (Rs 100,000) to padayatra.

Big harinama in Greater Noida

Padayatra reached the Greater Noida centre that afternoon to be greeted by centre leader Rasaraja Krishna dasa. Having rested until about 4pm, we left to give a brief lecture and take prasadam at the home of one of our congregational devotees. At 7pm we went out for harinama sankirtana in the busiest area of Greater Noida, returning to the centre by 9.30pm having distributed 300 books and collected Rs 8000.

On September 19 the padayatris began the 15km trek to Azampur Garhi, stopping briefly at the house of Mahamuni dasa, one of the eldest Noida devotees, where his family and the local congregational development group, Bhakti-vriksha, performed arati of Gaura-Nitai and offered garlands to all the padayatris. By 1.30pm we had reached our overnight destination, a school in Azampur Garhi where



Fired up to give out the mercy



Sri Sri Gaura Nitai

we were greeted by the principal. That evening we took prasadam at the house of our god-brother, Dayal Nitai dasa, and then did harinama in the village square, where many of the residents joined in dancing with us.

For the remaining ten days of the walk, we opted to take in the rural aspect of the Vraja environment. Just as Caitanya Mahaprabhu had left the main path and went through villages performing sankirtana, we left the main road and selected a route through the countryside. The devotees were now enjoying virtually non-stop kirtana as our schedule allowed us to increasingly engage with the mood of entering Vrindavana.

Greeted by hundreds of devotees at the Krishna Balaram temple in Vrindavana

Having been on the road for fourteen days, the padayatris arrived at ISKCON Vrindavana on the morning of September 30. When we entered the temple, we were greeted by hundreds of devotees along with the beautiful rangoli they had drawn for the pleasure of Sri Sri Gaura-Nitai. Vrindavana temple president Pancagauda dasa welcomed the padayatra, performed arati for our deities, and gave an inspiring talk. On October 1, padayatra's final day, we did a parikrama of Vrindavana dham.

At padayatra's completion devotees were happy to share their realizations. Vamshidhar dasa, co-president of ISKCON Noida: Srila Prabhupada wanted many padayatras to be started. Accordingly, he instructed Lokanatha Maharaja, our spiritual master and Padayatra Minister, to fulfill his desire. We are making a small attempt to fulfill the desire of our spiritual master.

Bajarangi dasa: The bliss of padayatra is amazing. Prasadam on padayatra was very special. Every day we honour prasadam in the temple, but it was a wonderful experience on padayatra. Walking on the roads and then finding a place under the trees and honouring prasadam gave all of us great joy.

Ratulhari dasa: This was my first padayatra and I had no idea what a padayatra is. It's a very natural life – "simple living and high thinking."

Rohinidulal dasa: On padayatra I experienced the simple life of a brahmachari, depending totally on the Lord, sleeping under the trees, staying in ashramas. I realized the life of a sadhu is perfect on padayatra.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank all the devotees on the Radhastami Padayatra for their assistance in making the walk a success in book distribution and bringing the holy names to the public. It certainly exceeded our expectations regarding book distribution: our target was 5000 books, but by the mercy of Guru and Gauranga we were able to distribute 5200 books. Such a successful outcome would not have been possible without the input of all participants. I have been honoured and blessed to serve as padayatra commander of such a dedicated team. All glories to Guru and Gauranga !



Arrival in the Krishna Balaram Mandir

ISKCON BANGALORE ORGANIZES A ONE DAY PADAYATRA

by Muralimohan Dasa



Undaunted in the rain

On July 8th devotees inaugurated a One Day Padayatra in Bangalore. Following in the footsteps of Ahmedabad, they will also conduct one every month.

On Sunday 8th morning after the Bhagavatam class, I briefed the Bangalore devotees on the importance of padayatra and how very easily everybody can take part in a One day Padayatra. All the devotees in the class confirmed they would join the walk by raising their hands. Afterwards we had a small meeting with the Bangalore leaders and made practical plans.

At 4.45 pm we started with an arati of Gaura-Nitai at Venkataprabhu's house. All of a sudden it started raining very heavily at the end of arati. We thought that hardly any devotees would want to participate in the padayatra; others, in a more positive frame of mind, said that Indradev was blessing all of us for the inauguration of Padayatra in

Bangalore. So we started our walk in the rain with about twenty devotees and put an umbrella over Gaura-Nitai to protect them from the rain. Later on, when it stopped raining, little by little more devotees started joining the party.

We walked from Betal Nagar to Saibaba, Gangadhar, Gayatri, Puram road, Venkataramana Swami temple (KR. puram). There was a total of about 90 devotees who participated and 110 who honored the feast at the end of the day, around 9.30 pm. There was a variety of rice preparations, such as lemon rice, pulao, pulogre (tamarind rice), etc. We sold more than 200 small books and 14 big books within four hours. It was rather easy since most of our route was crowded and had many market places.

Among the groups who attended the padayatra and made it successful were twelve Bhakti-vrksha groups, led by Venu-Madhava Prabhu under



Muralimohan Dasa on the mike

the guidance of Venudhari Prabhu, disciple of Jayapataka Swami, who is connected with the Gandharvika Giridhari temple. Many devotees led kirtana along the way, with both Vaisnavas and Vaisnavis dancing and distributing books.

After reaching the destination Venudhari prabhu arranged for devotees to speak some realizations on their one day padayatra experience. Venu-Madhava prabhu said that devotees were very happy and they felt that padayatra was something



Hari! Hari!

different from the normal harinama sankirtana. We felt blessed that so many devotees came together and distributed many books of Srila Prabhupada.

2018: TRANSCENDENTAL ADVENTURES OF THE ALL-INDIA PADAYATRA IN KARNATAKA AND MAHARASHTRA

by Acarya dasa, All-India Padayatra leader

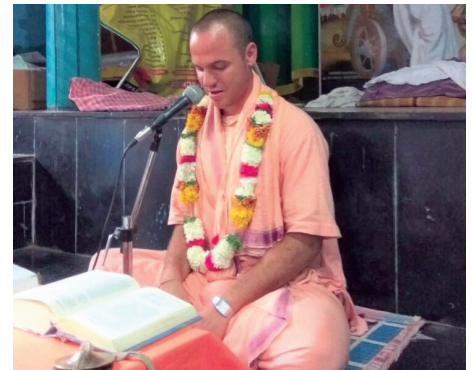


Welcomed by Nityananda Swami's followers in Chilkunda

**Always protected by Nitai
Gaurasundara, who are
orchestrating everything**

At the beginning of 2018, while on our way to Hunsur near Mysore in Karnataka, a man came towards us screaming, "Stop this! Speak in Kannada! Why are you speaking Hindi?" I tried to explain that we don't promote any sectarian religion,

but then he called several young boys who started yelling at us, "Go away!" We quickly moved towards the hotel where we were staying but the boys followed us, prompting the owner to fear a riot and asking us to leave. Back on the road, with no place to stay, we felt helpless until we came across a dairy shed where only five or six of us could be accommodated. We were praying to Sri Sri Nitai-



Abhay Charan Nitai Das giving Bhagavatam Class



Sri Sri Nitai Gaurasundara

Gaurasundara to help us, and by Their mercy the boys didn't return. Moving on to Chilkunda we headed for the Nityananda Swami matha, where we had stayed before. But this time accommodation was refused. Then, from nowhere a man approached us and offered us a place to stay. He cleared the ground near his house and arranged a large pandal programme for us. Hearing that we were still in the village, Nityananda Swami asked us for forgiveness and welcomed us to his math. As we entered, the residents came for darsana of the Deities. One of them said, "We worship Nityananda and you also worship Nityananda." I explained that our Nityananda is none other than the Supreme Lord. They performed arati of Their Lordships and donated one lakh rupees. These were mayavadis, but the all-merciful Lord accepted their seva. In Hunsur our lives had seemed in danger, but by contrast in Chilkunda, we were accepted and well-received. Such is the life on padayatra where everything is orchestrated by Their Lordships Sri Sri Nitai-Gaurasundara.

Teenager from Mayapur curious to experience "the real nectar" of padayatra

One day Abhay Charan Nimai from Mayapur met Akhiladhara Prabhu, a veteran padayatri, who told him boldly, "If you want to experience the real nectar, then go on padayatra!" So, on



Prasadam distribution

March 13 he decided to see for himself and joined our party in Bangalore. His first service was to help feed and give water to the five magnificent Kankrej oxen and later bathe them. The next day I convinced him to give the Srimad-bhagavatam class, his first ever. He participated in many harinamas, walked many kilometers and one day got the opportunity to ride the second cart behind the Deity one. He was impressed by the padayatra program: "As we were walking through the center of the city everybody was impressed to see the oxen, and of course the murtis of Sri Sri Nitai Gaurasundara and Srila Prabhupada. We did cause a traffic jam though, but for the Padayatra it was OK. Some nice people gave me some bananas to give to the oxen.



Gaura-purnima bhoga offering

Then more and more people started to do the same, so I decided to get off the cart and, equipped with a bag, I approached all the fruit and vegetable vendors stores that we passed by and begged for some of their fruits and vegetables, saying, "Go seva! Go seva!" (Service to the cows -and oxen). Practically everybody contributed something. We got carrots, melons, tomatoes, oranges and bananas -so many that we had to start eating them ourselves."

One-and-a-half months of intense harinama in the Bangalore area



Anadi Jagannath Dasa

While in Bangalore, the capital of Karnataka, we were debating where to observe the Gaura-purnima festival when the devotees at the nearby ISKCON Koramangala preaching centre invited us to join their celebrations. Expecting a huge gathering, the devotees had booked a playground in the Laksmi Devi Stadium for the March 2 event. Normally on big temple occasions we do not get any seva -we are mainly guests-, so this time we were delighted to get the opportunity to serve.

From Bangalore we visited some of the more obscure places the holy names had not yet reached. At Sahakar Nagar there was a devotee named Anadi Jagannath dasa who for two years had tried to arrange a programme.



Receiving a Caitanya Caritamrita set

One day when the padayatris were late for arati at a Ganesh temple they held arati in the road. Suddenly, many residents rushed to join the arati, and later invited the padayatris for a home programme – the very same people Anadi Jagannath had been trying to cultivate. When he heard of the incident he commented, “What I could not do in two years, Nitai-Gaurasundara did in only twenty minutes.”



Blessed family hosting Padayatra Deities

Early on March 15 we reached Ulsoor, one of the most ancient villages around Bangalore. After being welcomed by the local devotees, we decided to go on harinama with the padayatra cart. Unfortunately, it was a cloudy day and the local devotees were congregational devotees and held a programme at Bala Krishna dasa's house. His family was happy to receive the deities and the devotees and served us opulent prasadam.



Padayatra leading Rathayatra

Padayatris leading the parade for the Bangalore Rathayatra

March 19 was the day of the Rathayatra in Bangalore, organized by the Sri Sri Gandharvika-Giridhari temple. The temple president knew that the



Tumkur gurukula boys joining the parade

padayatra party was in Bangalore, so he invited us to join the procession. We were honoured to lead the parade with our Deities, followed by the ratha of Jagannath, Baladeva and Subhadra. Our padayatra became the talk of the town and our oxen



111-year-old Shivakumara Swami head of the Tumkur matha

were also a great attraction for the public. Shyamasundara dasa, a Srila Prabhupada disciple, was the chief guest and spoke about the glories of Rathayatra. Giridhari Shyama also addressed the gathering and then decided to walk with the party till Karnataka. As a local devotee familiar with the language, his help proved invaluable.

Welcomed by 111-year-old Shivakumara Swami, head of the Tumkur matha

We then visited Sri Siddaganga Matha, a Virashaiva matha in Tumkur, 70km from Bangalore. More than

half a century ago the matha opened a free boarding school for the poor that now houses more than 10,000 children from five to fifteen years of age, irrespective of caste or religion. The head of the matha, 111-year-old Shivakumara Swami, who became a Lingayat monk in 1930, has respect for our movement and appreciates ISKCON devotees working hard to spread the holy names. After darsana of Their Lordships, Swamiji's followers washed the hooves of our oxen, performed arati and fed them bananas and jiggery prasadam. As we were leaving Swamiji said, “Keep visiting our matha. The presence of Their Lordships has brought auspiciousness.”



Hanuman temple in Anjyanidhi Hill



Temple of Vijaya Vitthala

Hampi: birthplace of Hanuman and home of a 6.7 meter high Ugra Nrsimha

On May 2 we were in the town of Hospet, 12 km from Hampi, birthplace of Lord Hanuman. The famous Anjeyanadri Hill where he took birth has 572 steps to reach the top. It offers a lovely view of the valley surrounded by lovely plantain and paddy fields and of the Tungabhadra River. The Hanuman temple at the summit - a sacred pilgrimage center for Hindus - is a white-washed structure with a pyramidal roof and a small red dome at the top. A red flag flutters in the air and is visible from a far-off distance. This simple temple has an image of Hanuman carved from a rock. Inside there is a small shrine for Lord Rama and His wife Sita. As elections were going on, there were checkpoints of military soldiers all over the city. They did not cause any hindrance to our padayatra, but turned out to be very helpful. A group of soldiers accompanied us as we went

to Anjeyanadri hill for darsana. As we started kirtana, all of them joined us and danced with all their hearts. In fact when we stopped, they said, "Please continue your chanting for some more time. The holy names have so much power!" They all danced joyfully, forgetting their temporary designations. They had come to ask strength from Hanuman and, by his grace, they received something much more precious.

In Hampi we were impressed by the exceptional architecture of the Vitthala temple. It is said that this temple was built as an abode for Lord Vishnu in His Vitthala form. However, the Lord had found the temple to be too grand for His use and had returned to live in His own humble home. In the courtyard of that temple is a richly sculpted stone chariot, one of the three famous stone chariots in India. Hampi is also the home of a 6.7 meter high monolithic statue of Ugra Nrsimha.

We also visited Pampa Sarovar, the place where Shabari, a pious devotee of Rama, prayed faithfully every day to see Rama. She lived in the ashram of her guru Matanga Rishi in the place now known as Matanga Parvat, in Hampi. Her guru told her that one day she would certainly see Rama. After his death, Shabari continued to live in his ashram, waiting for Rama to come. Many years passed by and Shabari became an old woman. One day Lord Rama stopped at the ashram on his journey to Lanka and gave her darsana, thus fulfilling her long cherished hope.



Ugra Narsingh in Ajyanidhi Hill



All day harinama



PDC boys offering arati



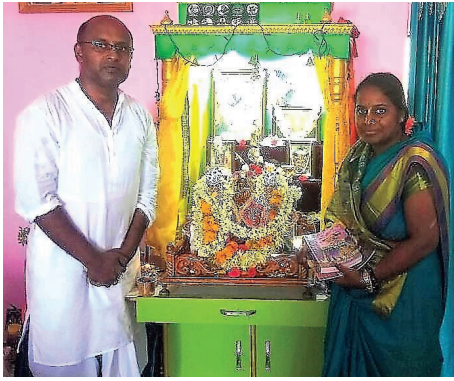
Bhakta Jitendra



Rain will not stop them

Eight Noida PDC boys learned the meaning and value of surrender

In the month of May a group of eight devotees of the Noida PDC (Personality Development Course) group joined padayatra for 15 days. This course helps ISKCON newcomers to venture into the world of inner discovery; it brings them peace and fulfillment by teaching them how to balance



Gopipran Govind Dasa and Gaurangi Gopinathpriya Dasi hosting Nitai-Gaurasundara

work and devotional life through a regulated lifestyle. As a part of this course, different skills and techniques are taught to help them tackle stress, bad habits and conflicts. As instructed by Lokanath Maharaja, a devotee should spend time on padayatra and have different book distribution experiences. Everyday was an adventure for these new padayatris, as they had to totally depend on the Lord for everything. The boys immediately became part of our padayatra family. Not only did they attend all the programs with us but they also lead some harinamas and other programs and sang the prayers of various aratis prayers with great enthusiasm. They walked all day, tolerating the scorching sun. Sometimes we did not have much water to drink, but they never complained. Almost all of them caught a common cold due to the weather change, but they happily accepted it as part of their padayatra experience. They were all very fervent to distribute Srila Prabhupada's books. One of them exclaimed, "We have never seen such book distribution anywhere! Even Muslims are taking books and participating in sankirtana. It's a miracle they do it, it's all mercy. Their hearts are getting transformed by the darsana of Sri Sri Nitai Gaurasundara." Bhakta Jitendra shared some fond memories "The padayatris are very affectionate and they take great care of us. I could say I lost my heart on Padayatra. I would like to come again and join padayatra. I was very happy to attend the pre-bhakti satri classes given by Dharmaraja Dasa during the walk. I was much impressed by the

way the padayatris distribute books, they are so zealous that even the blazing heat can't distract them. I felt like they were really meditating on book distribution, so much engrossed they were in that activity."

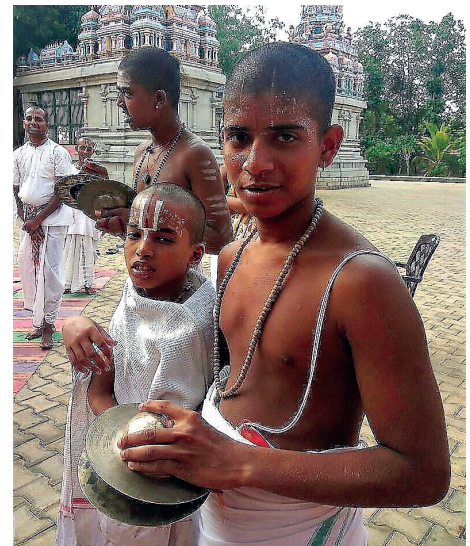
Warmly welcomed by devotees and villagers

couple confessed, "Today our desire is finally fulfilled, and our lives are successful. We are obliged to all of you for bringing the Lord to our house." We also went to Hulkoti, one of the most well-developed towns in India with many educational institutions. We held a grand kirtan at the Sri Rajeshwari Vidyaniketan school where boys are taught Bhagavad-Gita

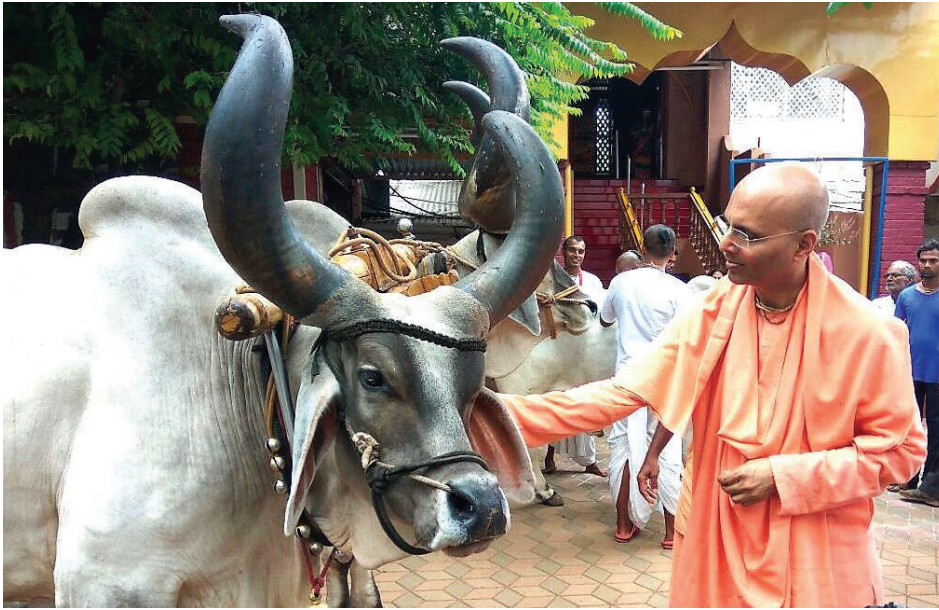


Happy to be near Their Lordships

On May 9 we were at Gadag, a district of Karnataka where devotees Gopipran Govind dasa and his wife Gaurangi Gopinathpriya dasi reside. Since they had darsana of Nitai-Gaurasundara in 1996 they had a strong desire that Their Lordships would visit their house. The seed of desire to preach was then sown in their heart, but they lacked association. By the Lord's grace, in 2002, they shifted to Muscat in Oman where they were blessed with the association of devotees and got initiated by Jayapataka Maharaja. Since their return to India they have been preaching and serving devotees. They invited the padayatris and Nitai-Gaurasundara to their home. The



Enjoying kirtana



Bhakti Rasamrita Swami



Muslims also appreciate Bhagavad-gita

and how to recite slokas. The boys were all very cheerful and looked charming in their Vaisnava dress and tilaka as they joined us in chanting and dancing. The ashrama authorities requested us to give a class to the boys and I spoke about the importance of accepting spirituality at an early age and glorified them for taking up the path.

We had not planned to go to Belhofis, a small village 10km from Gadag, but Panduranga dasa, a disciple of Bhakti Vikas Maharaja, invited us. He

was excited to take us to his village, even though the route was narrow and uneven. To our amazement the villagers had arranged a nice welcome for us. They performed arati of Their Lordships and washed the hooves of our oxen, after which we all engaged in harinama sankirtan. We then walked to Hubli, Dharwad and Belgaum on our way to Maharashtra.

Last days in Karnataka in the company of Yadavas, Muslims and old friends



Sadalga Important personalities welcoming padayatra



Villagers pulling the cart



On June 1st we were fortunate to have the visit of Bhakti Rasamrita Maharaja in Belgaum. He delivered a lecture especially for us padayatris, glorifying padayatra. We organized many house programs in nearby Khanapur, a town with a large congregation of devotees. The residents of Sadalga, mostly inhabited by Yadavas, who built a Krishna temple there, were delighted to receive the padayatra party. All the important personalities gathered at the entrance of the town to welcome us, the local devotees arranged for our accommodations and made a



donation of Rs 5000. One Muslim man, initially irritated with the presence of the Vaisnavas, invited us in his home to take our own meal and he even bought some books, saying, "I am sorry for the offence I committed. Please forgive me. I was very rude to you. I am very fortunate that in this month of Eid (a big Muslim festival) and roza (fasting in Islam) the Lord has come to my house, and His cart is standing right outside my house. I am very obliged to all of you." On June 14, in Raybag, kirtana soothed the heart of a family whose son had recently died; they were so happy to have the visit of padayatra in their house again after 9 years.



Khanapur devotees



Kirtana at the Mahalaksmi temple

Travelling in Maharashtra, a state filled with devotion and devotees

On June 20, the first place we came across in Maharashtra was the village of Rendal. Following custom, we broke a coconut at the border between the two states for the pleasure of Mother Earth and the kshetrapal, the demigod who protects that area. We asked for their blessings for the success of our preaching mission in Maharashtra.

On June 23 we reached the city of Kolhapur, well-known for its Sri Mahalaksmi temple, one of the 108 Shakti peethas (places associated with Shakti, the goddess of power).



Mahalaksmi at Kolhapur





Ichalkaranji: welcoming banner



Abhiram Thakur Dasa leading kirtana



Varkari carrying Sri Sri Rukmini-Pandurang Deities



Grand welcome banner in Shirdhon



Varkari ladies carrying tulasi for Lord Panduranga

Local devotees welcomed us, and we all performed harinama at the temple. We also visited Ichalkaranji, a historic city located on the banks of the Panchganga River. A congregational devotee, Sahasranam dasa, arranged for a pandal programme there and glorified padayatra in his speech. On July 1 we were in Sangli on the banks of the Krishna River. The river and its tributaries provide irrigation for the local agriculture, the driving force of the economy in the area. Abhiram Thakur dasa, the president of nearby ISKCON Aravade, came to Sangli to welcome us. Before every programme he gave a talk and explained how padayatris are working hard to spread the message of Godhead. The Sangli devotees booked a hall for the programme, which ended with opulent prasadam for all. We had not expected such a huge festival.



India Padayatra meeting the Dindi yatra



Dindi yatra



Lokanath Swami's powerful kirtana

We then visited Shirdhon, a small village 35km east of Sangli. The villagers and local devotees came together to serve Their Lordships and decorated the road with rangoli designs and flowers. As we reached the village the women arrived with water pots, washed the hoofs of our oxen and performed arati of the Lord. In the evening as we gathered for sankirtan, the villagers joined in enthusiastically, exploding firecrackers after Gaura-arati. Prasadam was then distributed to all. Mahalaksmi dasi, the daughter of Lokanath Maharaja's elder brother, resides in Shirdhon and is always ready to help padayatra and give donations. She assisted with eight home programmes, invited the padayatris for prasadam, and organized a puspa-abhiseka of Nitai-Gaurasundara. The local people were announcing padayatra's arrival in traditional style and coming for darsana of Their Lordships. Every day we distributed about 200 full plates of prasadam. We were very happy to be in Maharashtra, a place filled with devotion and devotees.

Triple blissful darsana in Pandharpur

On July 20 we arrived at Pandharpur, one of the major holy places in Maharashtra. It is well-known for the temple of Lord Vitthala on the banks of the Bhima River, also known as Chandrabhaga as it flows in the shape of a crescent moon. The Chandrabhaga is like an elder sister to all the pilgrims and varkaris (devotees of the



Sri Sri Radha Pandharinatha of ISKCON Pandharpur



Lokanath Maharaja gifting bags to padayatris



Vithala and Panduranga the new Padayatra oxen

varkari sampradaya), as she carries her younger brothers and sisters to take the Lord's darsana. Before having darsana of Lord Vitthala everyone first takes her blessings. Under the direction of Lokanath Maharaja, ISKCON has built the Sri Sri Radha-Pandharinath temple on the east bank of the Chandrabhaga. Maharaja's birthday would fall on Ashadhi ekadasi, when disciples from all over the world visit Pandharpur dhama. Everyone would receive triple benefit: attending Maharaja's vyasa-puja, having darsana of Lord Panduranga, and taking a holy dip in the Chandrabhaga.

To our surprise two ISKCON dindis (devotees walking from their village to Pandharpur) arrived in Pandharpur at the same time, one from Dehu (the birthplace of Tukaram Maharaja) and the other from Alandi. A powerful kirtana welcomed all of us. As the carts were being parked Lokanath Maharaja took the microphone and started singing; all the devotees spontaneously began dancing and singing with great joy. Maharaja



Boat festival on the Chandrabhaga River in Pandharpur

offered arati to Their Lordships and welcomed the padayatris. Every day there were two mangala-aratis, one of Sri Sri Radha-Pandharinath and one of Sri Sri Nitai-Gaurasundara. Many varkaris also attended these aratis. Maharaja commented, "There are three carts, three Gaura-Nitai deities and three groups of people. It is quite a conference." After Maharaja's vyasa-puja on July 23 the padayatris remained in the Pandharpur region for another week doing harinama in the nearby villages and distributing more than 3000 books.

One female dog mysteriously followed the padayatra cart for 100 kilometers

From Pandharpur one female dog kept following the padayatra party. On the first day we thought that she would give up after some time because we had seen many such followers in the past. But she kept following us with great determination, sometimes running and gasping. As soon as the ratha stopped, she would take rest



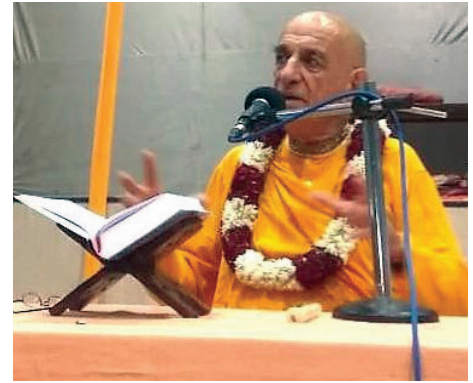
Padayatra and Ratha-yatra



Vitthalanand Dasa honoring the guests



Acarya Dasa and VIPs for the arati



Rupa Raghunath Maharaja giving class

under it. We observed that she was more attached to the cart and the deities than to the devotees who could give her something to eat. In fact, she ate very little and mostly spent time near the cart, accompanying it every evening during nagar sankirtana. The padayatris started taking care of her, and gave her names like Bhakti, Champa and Mohini. Like us she walked a distance of exactly 100 km to the city of Solapur, travelling 15 to 18 kilometers on some days. She got lost in Solapur and this time we could not find her. Who knows who was this dog in her past life? We can only speculate and imagine.

Up to 1000 devotees in a series of Ratha-yatras

On August 11 the Solapur devotees warmly welcomed us in their temple. Rupa Raghunath Maharaja, originally from Argentina and also a padayatra organiser and lover, delivered a lecture in the evening. The next day Padayatra India participated in the Solapur Ratha-yatra. The day after we walked through the village of Tamalwadi we decided to perform Gaura-arati in the nearby temple, due to the rain. But, to our surprise, people joined us, ignoring the rain. In the city of Tuljapur there is an ancient Durga temple called Tuljabhavani. It is said that when Shivaji Maharaja had gone for her darsana before the war against Aurangzeb, she personally appeared and gifted him a sword for the victory. We also sought the blessings of Goddess Bhavani so that we could spread the holy name and please Guru

and Gauranga. About 1000 devotees joined the Ratha-yatra in Tuljapur.

Next stop was Osmanabad in the Marathwada region, where Lokanath Maharaja disciple Vitthalananda dasa is a leading preacher. The Osmanabad devotees also arranged a Ratha-yatra, after which we organized an evening programme in a hall and sold the owner a Srimad-Bhagavatam set. Lokanath Maharaja says, "Each devotee should take inspiration from the All-India Padayatra and start padayatra and Ratha-yatra together in his or her respective town." I could see his words coming true: since we left Pandharpur dhama this was the third Ratha-yatra we were attending. We then walked on to Bhoom on the banks of the Banaganga River where we stayed and celebrated Balarama Jayanti at the Gurudev Datta School.

On September 1 our party reached Beed in central Maharashtra. The ISKCON Beed devotees had been anticipating our arrival – we could hear their kirtana while still 5km from the city centre. In their eagerness to receive Sri Sri Nitai-Gaurasundara, they adorned us with garlands on the outskirts of town and the two sankirtan parties then walked united into the city, loudly chanting the holy names. Next day was Janmastami, which included a harinama by the padayatris from morning until just after noon and again at 5pm. On Srila Prabhupada's appearance day, we got to worship two of his murtis, the one from Beed and the Padayatra's. Due to torrential rains that evening, we held a namma-hatta programme with the small Nitai-Gaurasundara deities at the home of local devotees. In the morning we bade farewell to the Beed devotees and began the 130km walk to Latur.



Srila Prabhupada appearance day in Beed





Pola procession

Dindrud: joining the Pola festival when farmers worship their hard working oxen

By the Lord's arrangement, we reached Dindrud on September 9, day of the famous Pola festival. Unique to Maharashtra, occurring after the monsoon sowing, Pola is the day when farmers worship their hard-working oxen. On Pola, no farmer lets his oxen work; instead they bathe their animals and adorn their necks with flower garlands. As we arrived, the villagers were amazed to see our majestic Gujarati oxen pulling the deity cart. Many of them offered obeisances, to our oxen first and then to Their Lordships. I explained that these deities are Lord Caitanya and Nityananda, who are none other than



Padayatra oxen on the Pula Ox Festival

Krishna and Balarama. A farmer patted one of our oxen on the back and said, "On this Pola, you have brought the Lord to our village." That evening our oxen were at the head of the parade and the padayatris followed with the small Nitai-Gaurasundara deities and the kirtana party. When we performed arati the villagers danced with us to the sound of the maha-mantra, after which we distributed prasadam to everyone.

Radhastami: celebrating the 35th birthday of the All-India Padayatra

On September 16, Radhastami day, we reached Motegaon, home of Suryavamshi dasa, an ayurvedic doctor who had spent more than twenty years on the road. He had arranged a warm

welcome for the padayatra party us with flower garlands and kirtan. The villagers had constructed a pandal for their ongoing Ganesh festival; in the morning we placed our cart just outside the pandal and started kirtan. This was followed by a grand abhisheka of Their Lordships and the offering of fifty-six preparations. In the evening, we did Gaura-arati at the same place. This Radhastami was particularly memorable because it was the thirty-fifth birthday of the All-India Padayatra. On September 2, 1984, Lokanath Maharaja and ISKCON leaders had launched a padayatra from Dvaraka dhama, India's westernmost point, to celebrate the 500th anniversary of Lord Caitanya's appearance, and since then it has travelled non-stop throughout the sub-continent.



Puspa abhisheka of Sri Sri Nitai-gaurasundara



Lecture by Akhiladhara Dasa



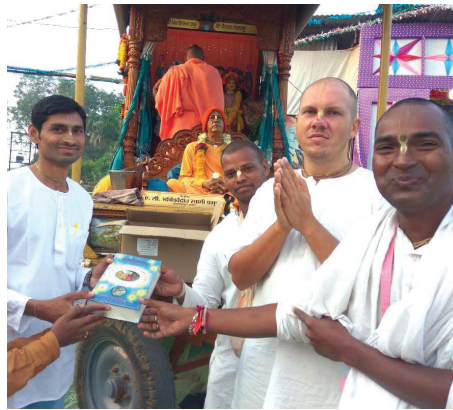
Avinash carrying Their Lordships

How the Lord stole Avinash's heart in Bori with maha prasadam

In the Vidarba area we reached the village of Bori where Padayatra India had stopped in 2009, nine years ago. During that visit, after an evening darsana, I had called a young boy to take prasadam with me. He was very enthusiastic about this prasadam, saying, "I have never tasted such wonderful prasadam. In our village, prasadam means some sugar granules and a small piece of coconut." As soon as I heard his words, I exclaimed in Marathi, "zali krupa Nitai Gaurasundaran chi." (The Lord has showered His mercy upon you). Seeing him as a special guest of Their Lordships I started discussing with him the glories of the holy names and invited him for the next morning program. To my surprise, he came for mangala arati, after which I gave him chanting beads. He spent the whole day with us, started chanting and bought some books. After we left the area, we kept in touch by phone. Soon Avinash was chanting 16 rounds. He always kept asking me about the whereabouts of padayatra. Avinash kept contact with devotees by serving in ISKCON Yavatmal, helping others to practice Krishna Consciousness, celebrating Janmastami with us in Nasik and spending a few days with padayatra in Gujarat.

Avinash kept praying for Nitai-Gaurasundara to come to his village again. As soon as he heard that Padayatra India was coming to Bori on October 8 he started to make preparations for our arrival. He informed all the villagers, organised a grand welcome with arati and garlands, the washing of everyone's feet, including our oxen. He had the roads decorated with beautiful rangolis, arranged our accommodations and preaching programs in a pandal and people's homes. The service that he favored the most was to gather abundant bhoga in order to make delicious prasadam for all. He said, "Each and every person in the village should honor prasadam, nobody should be left out. Once I ate prasadam,

and it brought about a revolution in my life. Prasadam is divine and out of this world!" During the whole time we were in Bori Avinash was continually running to serve and help, even forgetting to eat and drink. When we left Bori he had tears in his eyes, praying that the Lord and His servants would come again to his village. After our departure he started preaching in his village with the help of a group of youths and a few congregational devotees. It's a mystery how the Lord inspires anyone to become a devotee. Some are attracted by kirtana, some by padayatris, some by our oxen, others by our simple lifestyle, and still others are kidnapped by the Lord through prasadam.



Devotees giving Srimad Bhagavatam to Avinash

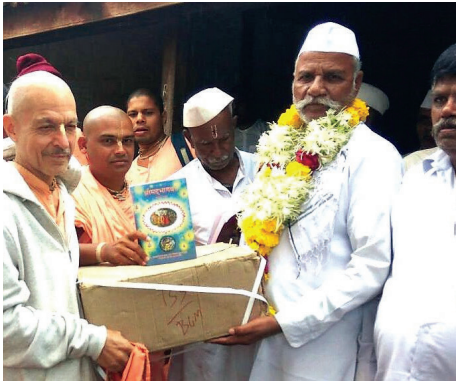


Yavatmal devotees honoring padayatris (Acarya Dasa on the left)



Ready to walk Back to Godhead

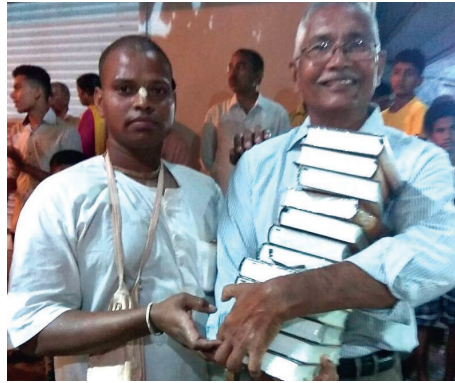




Akhildhara Dasa selling a Srimad-bhagavatam set

Taking a break in Yavatmal during the month of Kartika

On Oct 20 a grand reception organised by the devotees of Yavatmal ISKCON temple awaited us at the Kamleshvar Mahadeva Temple. Gaurabhagavan



Belgaum Books are the basis

Dasa had made beautiful posters welcoming the padayatra and posted them everywhere. Local leader Pranatanh Dasa, who had spent 2 years on Padayatra India, has lot of affection for Sri Sri Gaura Nitai and His traveling preachers. We were also fortunate to again have the association



Take a book!

of Rupa Raghunath Maharaja, a powerful preacher. While most padayatris left to participate in the Vraja Mandala Parikrama, the Deities, the six oxen and six padayatris stayed in the Yavatmal center

2018 GLOBAL BOOK SCORES

Month	S1	S2	S3	H4	Total
Jan	3135	-	442	4131	7708
Feb	1018	-	173	888	2079
March	1170	-	254	1765	3189
April	3314	-	246	2277	5837
May	2815	-	189	2120	5124
June	1731	9	101	1616	3457
July	1727	0	94	715	2536
August	9864	34	217	822	10937
September	4351	50	462	1384	6247
October	3269	12	342	1528	5151
November	197	0	36	605	837
December	1679	17	195	6226	8117
Total	34270	122	2751	24077	61219

STEADY PADAYATRAS IN MAURITIUS

by Ayodyanananath dasa



Offering of lamps

This year we dedicated World Holy Name Week Festival and the Kartik month Padayatra to the quick recovery of His Holiness Jayapataka Maharaja.

First we held a three day padayatra from September 21 to 23. It started at 5p.m from "Caro-Battat" and reached the Nrisimha Mandir in Valetta a few hours later. The procession was followed by local people and about 100 of them packed into the Mandir Hall. The whole program consisted of katha, a fired-up kirtana, Gaura arati and delicious prasadam for all. On the second day we walked for 3 hours from Petit Verger to Moka Harry Hall, where Ram Govinda Maharaja delivered the evening lecture to a public of 150 people. The last day, also in late afternoon, we walked from the village of Valetta to the Vuillemin Shivala Hall. About 100 people attended the Hall program, and listened to the lecture delivered by Sanatan Das, a local padayatra preacher. The program ended at 9 p.m that day.

During the entire month of Kartik the Padayatra team covered 20 villages, giving the public the occasion to offer a lamp to Sri Sri Radha Damodar carried in the back of a vehicle. Everyday hundreds of people joined the Dipa Utsav program followed by the distribution of sweets.

UNITED FRONT MAKING HEADWAY IN KWAZULU-NATAL, SOUTH AFRICA

by Braja Hari dasa, Coordinator of Padayatra South Africa



Merebank

Padayatra South Africa began eight years ago when Lokanath Maharaja instructed ISKCON Durban temple president Svarup Damodar to launch the programme in KwaZulu-Natal, one of the country's largest provinces. The idea was to get the project under way and then have it gradually taken up throughout the country, and indeed after observing our efforts in Durban the devotees in Johannesburg were soon motivated to follow suit.

Unfortunately, through the years the number of interested people visiting the Durban temple has dropped and the home programmes have dwindled. At one stage KwaZulu-Natal had fifty-two Nama-hatta centres, but now there are only fifteen. As members of the Festivals Committee, we sought to employ padayatra as a grass-roots means of rectifying the situation. I discussed our ideas with Maharaja and he gave us his blessings.

Our intention with padayatra this year, therefore, was to get more involved with the various Nama-hatta groups that are affiliated with the ISKCON centres in South Africa. We now have the Nama-hattas invite us with our deities and paraphernalia to their programmes, the goal being to rekindle householder interest in Krishna consciousness. Of course, book and prasadam distribution have continued as usual, but more importantly we wanted to assist the Nama-hatta devotees to increase attendance and simultaneously encourage the community to join our padayatra procession – and become more involved in temple activities generally.

Looking back over the year, I think we are achieving our objectives because the Nama-hatta leaders have assured me that the initiative has been paying dividends. Hopefully, in 2019 we will consolidate this with a greater number of padayatras in South Africa arising from our association with the Nama-hatta groups.

NB: You can find the entire articles on the Padayatra website (padayatra.com) for Noida, All India Padayatra, South Africa in Lenasia, etc.

ISKCON AHMEDABAD OBSERVES ONE-DAY PADAYATRA MILESTONE

by Murali Mohan dasa



On June 10 – ekadasi day – in the auspicious month of Purushottama, the Ahmedabad devotees conducted a one-day padayatra from Ujala Circle near Sarkhej to the Khodiyar Mata temple. The walk began at 6am and continued till noon, so that the padayatris would be spared the scorching heat. As always, we had our nicely decorated deities of Nimai-Nitai and Srila Prabhupada accompanying us on a palanquin carried on a devotee's head. We divided the 120 devotees participating into several groups: seventy in the kirtan team walking in the procession, and smaller groups distributing books along the way to shops, houses, pedestrians and vehicle drivers. On the walk we sold about 200 small books and seventy Bhagavad-gitas. The padayatra ended at the Khodiyar Mata temple, where we had a 30-minute kirtan and a short class on the importance of padayatra. Ekadasi prasadam was then served to everyone. At 7.30am on August 5, more than 100 devotees and congregational members assembled at the Saibaba temple in Sattadhar Square to embark on ISKCON Ahmedabad's twenty-fifth one-day padayatra. After breakfast prasadam, followed by a roaring kirtan, the party set off with their Nimai-Nitai and Srila Prabhupada deities, stopping throughout the day to hold thirty-

minute kirtans at some of the city's most prominent locales. At the Nilakantha mahadeva temple, one of the oldest Shiva temples in India, scores of the daily worshippers joined the devotees dancing in the kirtan, with many swelling padayatra's ranks for the rest of the day. Padayatra eventually concluded at the home of Bachubhai Panchal and his wife, Pushpaben, at the Ashapuri Society in Godashar, where the Panchal family sponsored and served a delicious prasadam feast to the now more than 325 devotees and participants on this celebratory occasion. Surat temple president Jashomatinandan dasa then gave a talk on the history of padayatra and how it is going all over India continuously, as directed by Lokanath Maharaja. Jashomatinandan also invited everyone to participate in our monthly one-day padayatras.

In December we conducted a one-day padayatra which started from the Gopeshwar mahadev temple in Shastri nagar at 7.30am and continued for about 7km to the house of a congregational devotee. In the tradition of our one-day padayatras, we visited various institutions on the way to distribute the holy names and books, including the Kameshwar Mahadev temple in Naranpura.



Malegaon bullock cart

ONE DAY PADAYATRA IN MALEGAON, MAHARASHTRA, INDIA

by Caitanya Jivan Dasa and Vitthala Dasa

We got our inspiration from the one day padayatra organized the previous December by nearby ISKCON Jalgaon. Ram Govinda Maharaja, who participated in that walk, urged us to do the same in our town. The main goal of our walk to make people aware of the importance of harinama and inspire them to take it up. It was also to fulfill Lokanath Maharaja's desire to follow in the footsteps of the All India Padayatra by having padayatra in every Indian village. And we also wanted to distribute lots of books. Preparations started 15 days in advance under the guidance of the Jalgaon devotees.

On February 11 about 270 devotees from nearby villages assembled at the main square of Malegaon. Sri Sri Gaura Nitai of Nasik had taken Their seats on Their decorated cart. After a small inaugural arati ceremony for the Deities we walked towards Nimkhedi Jagannath Kutir. What made this padayatra special was that not only men and women were enthusiastically participating, but also many young children, jumping and dancing all the way, encouraging the adults. Onlookers were surprised to see children so happily chanting and walking; people would fold hands and pay obeisances to Their Lordships and the vaisnavas. The devotees of Nimkhedi welcomed us warmly, appreciating that we were walking on the day of Vijaya Ekadasi. About 17 km later we reached the Old Muktai Nagar temple at Prabhupada Niwas. Vraj Prema prabhu spoke about the glories of padayatra and how it had brought all of us together. The feast sponsored by Dhanvantari prabhu ended that blissful day, during which we distributed about 200 books



ONE MAN PILGRIMAGE IN THE ISLAND OF CYPRUS

by Vaikunthaloka Das

Note by editor: I selected a few sections of the 11 page report written by Vaikunthaloka, and condensed the rest. You can see the entire report on the padayatra.com website

Sharing Krishna consciousness with Harris

On April 7 Vaikunthaloka Das flew from Moscow to Cyprus with his camping equipment. "Wherever I went, I always tried to find some spirituality there. In fact, that was the true purpose of my travels. For many years I had a desire to live in a Christian monastery, to communicate with monks, to look at their lives." He also wanted to find a peaceful place to relax, reflect, study and pray. His method of traveling was by walking and hitch-hiking over the island. Once he got a ride with Harris, a native Cypriot doing yoga, and they struck some friendship.

Multimillion-dollar tourist complex in empty monasteries

One day Harris took Vaikunthaloka to the monastery of St. Neophytos: "A very special wide paved road leads to the monastery. Near the entrance is a huge parking lot filled with buses and cars, stalls with souvenirs, and shiny cafes where lots of tourists sit and drink beer. The inside of the monastery is also full of tourists; everything is clean, rich, and beautiful. I immediately notice that the cells are all locked and there are no priests around -after a while I see only one. Nearby are several caves, where once upon a time the holy elders spent years in prayer, solitude, and fasting. At the entrance to the cave sits a cashier, poking at his smartphone and checking the entrance tickets (4 Euros=300 Rupees per person)...This place of little spirituality was of no interest to me."

While walking through the mountains,

Vaikunthaloka stopped in another monastery, but it was the same situation as in the previous one. In the valley of Cedars he spent two cold days fasting and sleeping outside then pitched tent for a month and a half in the Lempa park, 6 km from the city of Paphos. "It was such a wonderful atmosphere of peace and quiet. I was doing yoga, asana, pranayama, meditation, and reciting mantras on japa beads. I also did physical exercises, read various spiritual books, studied the Bhagavad-gita, and learned some languages, Sanskrit, Hindi, and English. Every day until noon I drank only water, and after that ate fruits or continued to fast on water."

Meeting Father Simeon in the Monastery of St. Georges the Victorious

Vaikunthaloka continues: "Just a few days before leaving Cyprus I asked Harris to arrange that I spend one day in the Christian monastery of St. Georges, as he had some connection with Father Simeon, its abbot.... He introduced me to Father Simeon and Father Demetrianus. I was given a personal cell where I left my backpack. And all together we went to attend the religious service. There were about 50 parishioners in the church. The women were on the left side, and the men were on the right side. I really liked the atmosphere of the service. I quite clearly felt the spiritual resonance. Praying together nourished my soul....At the end of the service, everyone went out into the yard and began to eagerly socialize with each other. I was approached by several young people from the parish, and we also had interesting conversations. Father Demetrianus also joined us. The people were very polite, pious and educated. They asked me reasonable and serious questions, they were interested in my life. I told them

that I was also a monk from Russia, but in Vaishnavism. The more they learned about me, the wider their eyes became."

Later on Vaikunthaloka had a talk with 45 years old Father Demetrianus, who had spent 25 of them serving in that monastery. "I also learned from him that the monastery residents do not eat meat. We talked a lot about the lives of various Christian saints, and about Jesus. He showed me Christian books, photos and prayers - there were even some in Russian. Almost all of our views were the same... The next day I was approached by a young monk, Father Denisius. He was very interested in me and Hinduism... He looked so elated after talking to me, although I only shared with him my experience and views on life. All people are one big family. We are all different, but it's not a problem to be closer to one another. Differences make the picture more colorful. My love has grown. All these beautiful, new souls in my life will forever have a place in my heart and have thus expanded me, expanded my consciousness, and expanded my love!"



Father Dimitrionis, Vaikunthaloka and Harris

TELANGANA PADAYATRA STILL GOING STRONG IN THE HYDERABAD AREA

by Visnuswami Dasa



Intense book distribution



Telangana Padayatra cart and oxen



Visnuswami Dasa and his wife

After 5 years on the road, our small Telangana/Andhra Pradesh Padayatra is still going strong. We are now 4 devotees on our team: Srinivas Sevananda, Ramadas, Srinivas and I. In December 2017, we approached the city of Hyderabad and walked around many colonies. We got a good response from the people and local temple committees. Good book distribution also! Community members are providing accommodations for padayatris and supplying grass for the oxen, contrary to my expectations. I thought that getting a place to stay and grass would have been difficult in the cities but, by Caitanya Mahaprabhu's mercy, we are getting these easily. Of course in cities we have to purchase the grass. We get plenty of cheap or

free vegetables in the markets, but only after 8.30 pm, when sellers go home with what was not sold. Srinivas Sevananda Das feeds our oxen with different vegetables, wet or dry grass and paddy; as a result they are very healthy and strong.

We celebrated Gaura Purnima day in the Hyderabad Ramalayam temple. Nearly 70 people participated in our nagar sankirtana procession while others were dancing on their balconies. On July 14 we participated in the Hyderabad Ratha-yatra. Our bullock cart led the 10km long procession in front of Ratha-yatra cart. Thousands of devotees from the states of Telangana and Maharashtra participated in that joyful festival.

2018 BOOK SCORES

Mahabig Books	-	3040
Big Books	-	2165
Medium Books	-	884
Small Books	-	22763
Total Books	-	28,852



Kids crazy after the holy names

BARODA DEVOTEES HOLD A THREE-DAY WALK TO DAKOR DHAMA

by Sanatana Kripa dasa



"Sanatana Kripa Dasa (left) and Rupa Raghunatha Swami



Rupa Raghunath Maharaja walking along with ox cart

During the GBC meeting at ISKCON Ujjain in October 2017, I had the opportunity to converse with Lokanath Maharaja about Baroda's inaugural ox cart padayatra held earlier in the year. Maharaja then asked about our next walk and suggested we arrange a padayatra from Baroda to the Sri Ranchhorai temple in Dakor. After consulting with our Baroda temple authorities, it was decided to convey padayatra's Sri Sri Gaura-Nitai on an ox cart to Dakor on December 7, 8 and 9, 2018.

DAY ONE

About sixty padayatris attended Rupa Raghunath Maharaja's early morning arati to Sri Sri Gaura-Nitai, but as soon as the padayatra departed at 6.30am more devotees joined for the first leg of the walk, almost doubling the number of participants. Dakor is about 60km from Baroda and as we had only three days, we arranged to travel much of that on the first day and thus passed through eight villages distributing Srila Prabhupada's literature and performing harinama sankirtana. Our first stop was at Undera at 8.30am for breakfast prasadam and by midday we had walked on to Koyali, where we

performed Guru puja before heading for Fajalpur on the banks of the River Mahi. From there we hired a tractor to transport the padayatris to Sarsa where our night halt was scheduled, arriving there at 3pm for a piping hot prasadam feast prepared by our cooking team. Having welcomed the devotees from ISKCON Vallabha Vidyanagar we then spent the evening in Sarsa on nagar sankirtana and book distribution.

DAY TWO

With our ranks swelled again by several devotees from the Baroda temple, we set off at 6am for our first halt at Maruti farm in Khambhaloj village where we heard a Srimad-Bhagavatam class by Rupa Raghunath Maharaja. Soon after class we headed for our overnight halt in the village of Ode, where we did book distribution in the evening as devotees from Moramba joined us for the final push to Dakor the next day.

DAY THREE

On the last day more than 170 devotees were now in the party and

everyone was anticipating darsana of Sri Ranchhorai in Dakor. Soon after the morning programme the padayatris departed for the first stop of the day at Santram mandir in Umreth village. Following breakfast prasadam we performed nagar sankirtan and book distribution for two hours in Umreth, devotees doing door-to-door book distribution to ensure everyone received a Bhagavad-gita.

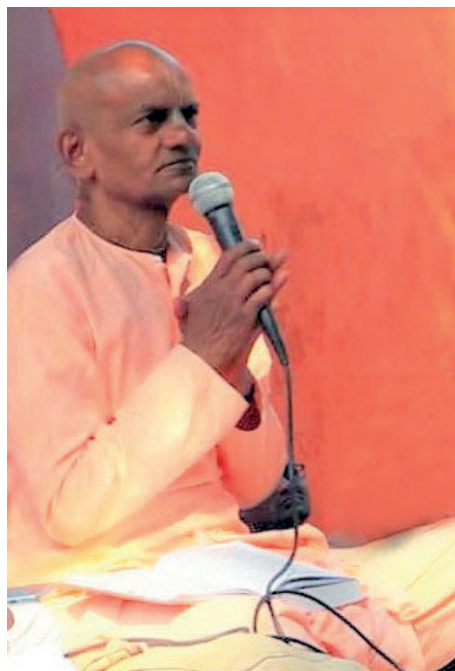
Leaving Umreth at noon, just over an hour later we reached Dakor dhama. In the afternoon Adi Guru dasa gave a lecture on Dakor-lila including the history of the Ranchhorai temple, which was originally a Shiva place of worship and developed into a Vaishnava centre with the increasing fame of the temple built in the late-eighteenth century. After the devotees had darsana of Sri Ranchhorai, our youth preaching director, Vamshidhari dasa, gave the farewell to all.

This was ISKCON Baroda's second annual padayatra and we are now determined to organize such padayatras every year. We travelled to 12 villages, distributed 1220 Bhagavad-gita as it is and lots of prasadam, especially bananas and groundnuts.

VRAJA MANDALA PARIKRAMA 2018



Lokanath Swami, leader of the ISKCON Vraja Mandala Parikrama since 1986



Radha Raman Swami at Chirghat



Istadev Dasa one of the main organizers and Padayatra India leader for many years



Crossing the Yamuna



Walking through one of the 12 forests of Vraja



Feeding 1500 devotees twice a day for one month was quite a feat, and a feast..

Largest attendance so far: 1500 devotees from India, Mauritius, Brazil, Russia, China, Korea, Australia, USA and Spain.

Leaders and organizers who guided the devotees and stayed with them for the entire parikrama (October 24 to November 23): Radha Raman Maharaja, Bhadra Dasa and Brajvilas Dasa.

Visitors who gave enlightening Krishna katha talks: Lokanath Swami, Bhakti Caru Maharaja, Bhakti Vaishnava Ashrya Maharaja, Sarvabhauma Dasa and Kundal Krishna Dasa.

Follow the parikrama from your armchair in your own home thanks to this website : <http://www.vrajmandalparikrama.com/>

Daily schedule, great photo gallery, names of the devotees to contact, list of the 10 offenses to the dhama. You can also order Lokanath Swami's wonderful book, Vraja Mandala Darsana, from that site.



Time to collect one's luggage before settling down in their tent



Vrndadevi



One of the many loving exchanges, Archamurti Dasi receiving the simple gift of a beadcounter



Sunrise at Seshashayi



Katha at Chirghat



Vrndadevi temple at Nandagaon



Vaishnavis kirtan party



20 DAY GRAND ODISHA PADAYATRA ORGANISED BY ISKCON BHUBANESWAR

by Pradyumna Das



Arati to Srila Prabhupada and Sri Sri Sankirtan Gaur Nitai

Like previous years, during the month of Kartika, the ISKCON Bhubaneswar Nama-hatta Department organized a grand padayatra from October 18 to November 16. It was inaugurated by Haladhar Maharaja at the ISKCON Preaching Centre of Lakhbindha in the district of Jajpur, in the presence of temple president Premanand Das, vice-presidents Satwatapati Das and Kasinath Pandit Das, Upendra Mishra Das, Chairman of the Temple Festival Committee and Gokulanand Das, Director of the ISKCON Congregation Unit. More than 100 devotees, from both ISKCON and the town of Jajpur, were present. Maharaja gave a nice speech and narrated the activities of the padayatras previously organised in the presence of Gour Govinda Swami.

The well decorated bullock cart, on which a murti of Srila Prabhupada was seated along with the deities of Sri Sri Sankirtan Gaur Nitai, was the main attraction for everyone. In each village along the route the procession was welcomed by the villagers, at the entrance of the village and on reaching

their pandals. A large banner read: "On the Occasion of the Disappearance day of Srila A.C.Bhaktiviedanta Swami Prabhupada (Founder Acharya of ISKCON), Sankirtan Padayatra 2018 (ParamVijayate Sri Krishna Sankirtanam)" From October 28 to November 16 the padayatris walked from the Birajapur ISKCON Preaching Center to the village of Khandra, visiting 20 villages. All the villagers attended the daily evening program. The main speakers, Haladhar Maharaja, Akshay Hari Das and Satwatapati Das, gave discourses on Hari-Katha and Gaura-katha to the rural masses.

This grand ISKCON Padayatra festival was a huge success, due to the 100% cooperation of the villagers. Our devotees distributed many books of Srila Prabhupada: 10 Bhagavatam sets, 5 Caitanya-caritamrita sets, 400 Small, 200 Gitas, 100 magazines and 500 Bhagavad Darsan in Odisha. Only Indian devotees participated: 40 temple devotees, 70 from the congregation and 400 visitors. Among these were 2 sanniyasis (the second one

being Bhakti Pran Gopinath Swami), 45 grhasta men, 25 grhasta women, 40 brahmacaris and 10 teen-agers. There was a total of 20 public festivals, 10 home programs and 11 school programs; and one newspaper article, without photo. Prasadam distribution was impressive with 4000 packets of khicadi and 2000 full plates of rice, dalma, vegetable and kheeri. In this way the devotees of our Nama-hatta department, under a very dynamic leadership, have gone a long way in preaching Krishna Consciousness in Odisha.



Chant, dance and be blissful



Haladhar Swami giving the inaugural speech in the Jajpur preaching center



Procession with banner

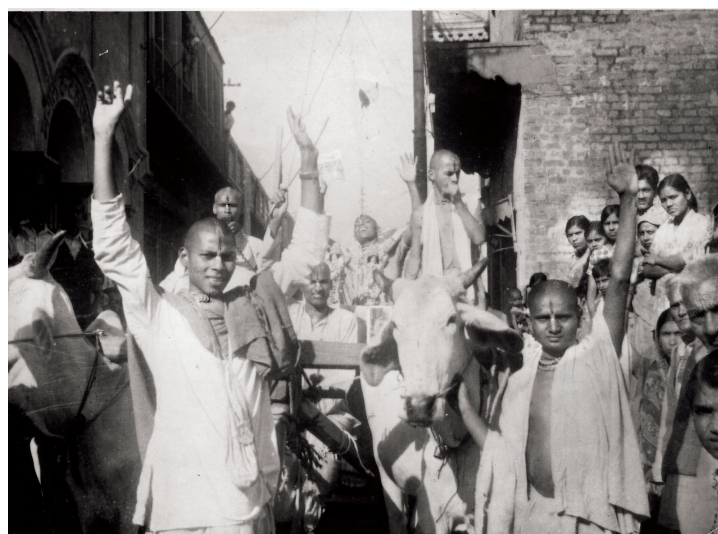
20 mn video on Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RYlfWksF30s>

STORIES FROM THE FIRST LONG BULLOCK CART PADAYATRAS IN INDIA

Note: The following stories are part of the Padayatra Worldwide trilogy of Lokanath Swami, first volume, On the road with Lord Caitanya.



The Nitai Gaura Deities of the 1977 padayatra, now worshiped in Bhubaneswar



The 1977 Bullock Cart Sankirtana Party on the way to Mayapur

FIRST PART: 1976-1977 Padayatra from Vrindavan to Mayapur

Envisioning a bullock cart sankirtana festival mela in Mayapur,
by Lokanath Swami

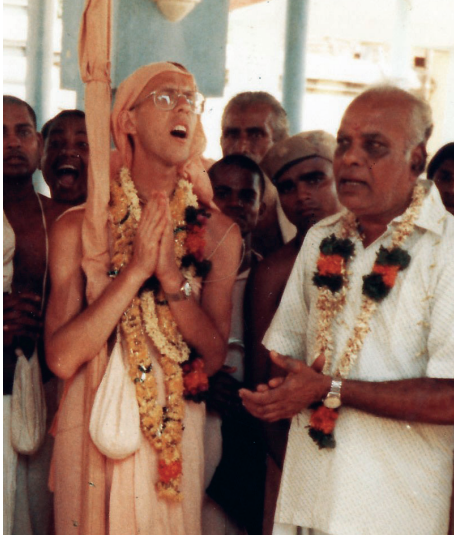
I thought about Srila Prabhupada's words [to travel village to village in India with bullock cart] all the way to the dharmashala, where the Nitai-Gaura sankirtana party was staying. Prabhupada knew I was leading the bus brahmacaris, and he was probably thinking of ways to engage me, I thought, so I could keep preaching. That's why he suggested replacing our two modern buses with two Vedic bulls.... What surprised me was how he had picked the right person for the job! He had made a proposal and it had immediately resonated with me. I had no second thoughts. I was more than willing to take up the task.

Back at the dharmashala I talked until one in the morning with Atma-tattva Dasa and others from my party. We were too excited to sleep! All I could think of was bullock carts and how to get them on the road. My parents were farmers, and I had grown up around cows and oxen. I was used to traveling by bullock cart. As a matter of fact, the only vehicles I could drive were a bicycle and a bullock cart. In the late 1940s, when I was born, few villages were connected to the power grid or by modern roads. If people needed to go to a nearby city or to buy supplies, their only means of transport was foot or bullock cart. I didn't even sit in a car until I was nineteen, when I went to Bombay to complete my education. In my native village of Aravade, Maharashtra, bullock carts led all the parades. Farmers decorated the oxen with colorful ribbons and painted their horns.

With Atma-tattva I calculated how to get bullock cart padayatras to travel to different parts of India simultaneously. If each Indian temple had only one bullock cart, I said, we could spread out all over the country, and then organize a bullock cart sankirtana festival mela in Mayapur. I was envisioning all the padayatra parties coming together at that mela once every five years or so. Even though I had never told Srila Prabhupada about my village upbringing, I was convinced that he was aware of my experience with bullock carts. When I had first come to the Bombay temple I had told Giriraja Dasa, my temple president, and the rest of temple devotees about my background. ... Now that Prabhupada was asking me to go to the villages by oxcart, I felt I had the right qualifications to complete the assignment; Prabhupada was sending me back to my roots.

SECOND PART: 1984-1986 International padayatra from Dwarka to Mayapur via South India

**Take a break, go on padayatra, and
leave your troubles behind,**
by Jayadvaita Swami



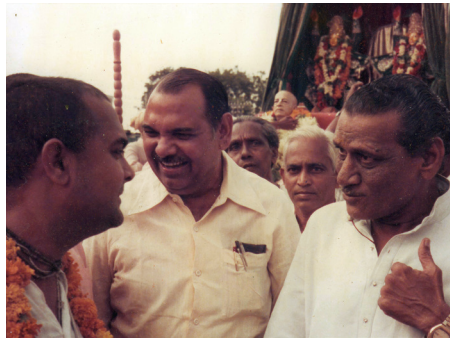
Jayadvaita Swami in a South Indian temple

The years 1985-86 were the height of what's now known as the zonal guru era in ISKCON. There was a lot of unhappiness among the devotees about controversial questions regarding the status of ISKCON's eleven gurus. So one of the reasons I was on padayatra was just to leave all that behind...

So, if you find you're spending your time dissatisfied and griping about ISKCON politics or whatever, one excellent alternative is to go on padayatra. I can spend my time stewing over what I'm unhappy about: "The devotees are this and the GBC's that," "The temple president promised me this, then he did that," "Prabhupada wanted this, but they are doing that." – so many gripes and dissatisfactions. But what am I going to do? "Bloop"? Go back to my mother? Go back to school? Join the army? What am I going to learn sitting in my temple complaining about the brahmacaris or the grhasthas or the management? Just

go for a long walk and put yourself in touch with reality. Chant Hare Krishna! Walk, tire yourself out, and at the end of the day sit down and do a little reading or take your bath in the nearby river or pond....You can just have a good time – don't worry about politics. Just chant, walk, and visit holy places. Your biggest preoccupations will be how many kilometers the walk is and when prasada is and how to keep all these people from pouring kum-kum and turmeric all over your feet – just a wonderful program for anyone who needs a break from everything else. You get people who pay big money to go out camping; this padayatras absolute camping.

**An unusual advertisement which
amazingly bore many fruits,**
by Yasomatinandana Dasa



Yasomatinandan Das with Gujarati officials

In Ahmedabad we even bought an advertisement in a Gujarati newspaper inviting the public to walk with the padayatra. In it we explained the padayatra program and how Lord Caitanya is responsible for delivering the whole world in Kali-yuga, how He Himself took sannyasa and traveled all over India, and how we were doing the walk in His memory. We got good response in the form of awareness. Dwaraka is not that close to Ahmedabad, about 500 kms, but still, we got about five hundred people of all ages, mostly young, who were inspired to travel all the way to Dwaraka to walk with us. More than fifty of them [older men and women] actually joined the walk.

Book distribution is much better around padayatra,
by Radhakunda Dasi

In Gujarat we had a ladies' traveling book distribution party, so whenever padayatra would come around we would join them and distribute books. It was so much better when padayatra was around...It was nice that people got daraana of Lord Caitanya, because in Gujarat hardly anyone has Deities of Lord Caitanya... People knew a little who Lord Caitanya was, that He appeared in Bengal, but they didn't have a clue about His teachings. So distributing Srila Prabhupada's books was essential, the ultimate in giving mercy I remember at the end of the day going in front of Them with an empty box of books, understanding that They were the ones who had sold all the books. It was very ecstatic.

Very warm welcome by Muslims,
by Dhruva Maharaja Dasa



Muslim Mayor in Lakhtar near Suradranagar GujaratV

In Gujarat about 10% of the people are Muslims. In even the Muslim-majority towns people came to greet us and garland the Lord Caitanya. Sometimes they attended our evening programs, curious about the foreign devotees. Once we were requested by the residents of Palej to visit their town. The Muslim sarpanch (mayor) fully welcomed the sankirtana party of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. As we entered the city he gracefully garlanded Srila Prabhupada's mūrti and all the devotees. That evening, in front of practically the whole town, he



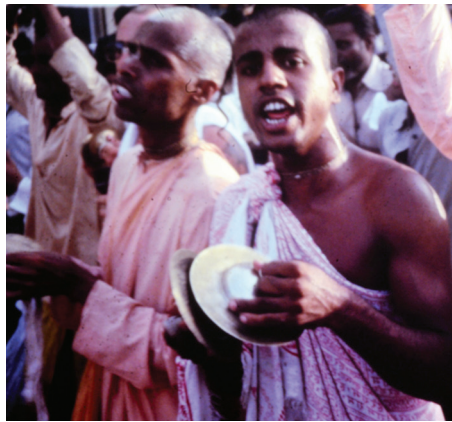
publicly thanked us for coming and accepted a copy of Bhagavad-gita As It Is. He had heard that the padayatra had performed kirtana the previous evening in the town's streets and temples, but to our surprise he was wondering when we were planning to do kirtana in the mosque! This was highly irregular, as in another town we had been asked to refrain from singing while walking by the mosque out of respect for their religion. We accepted his invitation and made plans to perform kirtana in the mosque the next morning, before our departure.

The next morning we passed through a densely populated Muslim area with all the devotees singing and dancing. People seemed to be everywhere – on the streets, in the doorways, on the balconies, and in the alleys. The procession was headed by none other than the mayor – all the way up to the main mosque. At the mosque the imam greeted us with folded hands and asked us to wash our feet before entering. Then they proceeded to give us a tour of the mosque, which produced a nice cultural exchange. We had one of our devotees from Algeria, Nimai-Nitai Dasa, read from the Koran, which pleased them no end! Before leaving we performed a mellow kirtana without instruments (to acknowledge etiquette). As we were leaving, the imam from another mosque requested us to visit his mosque. We fulfilled his wish before leaving town, confident that religious unity and international integration could come naturally with the sankirtana movement of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu.

Escaping dangerous communists in Tamil Nadu,

by Sriman Pandita Dasa

One evening Lokanath Swami was giving a lecture in Hindi in a small town of Tamil Nadu, where a part of the population is communist. Attending was a group of fanatical communists, and they didn't like at all that Maharaja was speaking Hindi and not Tamil. These fanatics wanted to attack him in some way – verbally and even physically, who



Srimad Pandit Dasa

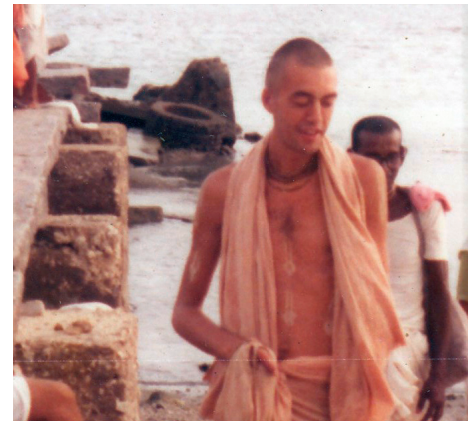
knows, maybe they would beat him. They are dangerous people who can do anything, and it's best not to have anything to do with them.

After the evening stage programs, these communists approached the house where Maharaja was staying with the rest of us. It was about 9:30 p.m. and all the lights were off. I was informed by one of the local guys that these communists were looking for Maharaja. But it was difficult for me to know who was a communist and who was a good person among all the people assembled around the house. The communists were also drunk – one of them came to the side of the house and asked me, "Where's the person who gave the lecture?" Of course, I lied and told them I had just arrived, so didn't know. But they were insistent, and they waited around, trying to find out who had spoken. In the meantime, Lokanath Swami was locked in his room. He'd been informed that these people were looking for him and that he shouldn't go out. He had turned out all the lights. The communists waited and waited, and eventually they left because the house was locked. They couldn't do anything. Happily, they didn't come back the next morning. We left when it was daylight. It was safer to come out at that time, when there were many people surrounding us and saying goodbye.

Chanting brings rain in a drought affected part of Andhra Pradesh,

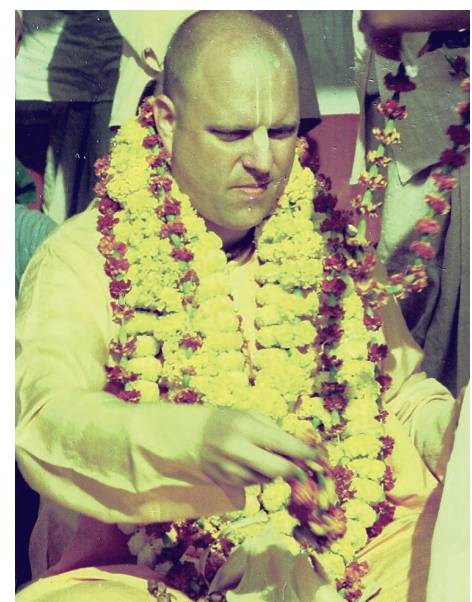
by Havirdhana Dasa

In one village the headman told me,



Havirdhana Dasa, one the Padayatra organizers

"We are very poor; we have not had rain for seven years." I replied, "It's because you are not doing the yajna for this age. You are not chanting the holy names of Lord Krishna. If you put on our program, rain is guaranteed." At the time I felt I was sticking my neck out a bit. The man still refused to put on the program, and we still had to find the money to feed all the devotees and animals. I begged him to at least give us some accommodations, and as usual they put us in the local school. Eventually we managed to organize a program in that village. That night it rained so much that we could not complete our full program. I think this man went into hiding, because when I went to find him to say, "See what has happened because of our chanting," he was nowhere to be found.



Jayapataka Swami



Gaur Nitai Deities next to Prabhupada's bhajana-kutir in Mayapur

Jayapataka Swami's begging for padayatra's Sri Sri Nitai-Gaurasundara,
by Lokanath Swami

At the end of the festival and on the night before the padayatris were ready to leave Mayapur, Jayapataka Swami marched down to where I was staying. He practically fell to his hands and knees and begged me to give him our large padayatra Gaura-Nitai Deities. He wanted Them back because he was the one who installed Them at the start of the padayatra in Dwaraka. "I've come to beg something," he told me. "You wouldn't beg for the Lord, would you?" I asked. This was followed by a bit of transcendental repartee. "If He leaves Mayapur, Sacimata will cry," Maharaja said. "But it's His duty to travel. He'll leave anyway," I argued. "They have gone all around India and now arrived in Their home. Let Them stay here," Maharaja begged.

The Deity of Lord Caitanya had a long vertical crack, and Maharaja said it would get worse with all the cart's jolting. This was just an excuse to us, because we knew Maharaja was simply attached to the Deities. But so were we and the other padayatris. Even though we had decided to continue walking after Mayapur, I finally surrendered to his intense plea and let him take the Deities in exchange for another set. We

agreed: our Sri Sri Nitai-Gaurasundara could stay in Mayapur provided Jayapataka Swami arranged to feed Them opulently every day – the way Radha-Madhava are fed. In addition, he would make a generous donation to padayatra so we could buy a new set of Deities. Then in the middle of the night we switched our Deities for the small Gaura-Nitai from the Calcutta sankirtana bus. Our original Deities would now reside on a small altar next to Srila Prabhupada's bhajana-kutir near the Chandrodaya Mandira's main gate.



Prasadam for all



Mister Padayatra driving the cart

32nd KARTIKA VRAJA PADAYATRA OF PARASURAMA DASA

by Parasurama Dasa

This was our 32nd bullock cart Kartik Padayatra tour of Vraja, going through the 12 forests of Vrindavan. Usually in the Western world we go on harinama, preaching to people who know nothing about bhakti yoga, or the Supreme Lord, Sri Krishna. Most people are not even vegetarian and have never heard of our principles of devotional service. But when you go on harinama in Vraja, it's a different ball game, these people love Krishna and the holy names. They are certainly not ordinary people. The vrajabasis are ready to sing and dance for the Lord with love, as can be seen in the videos. This year we distributed 31,000 small books, "The teachings of Lord Caitanya", and tons of bananas prasadam.

Loka Saranga prabhu, a regular Vraj

Padayatra devotee,, had a serious car accident a year ago during the padayatra in the Czech Republic. He was lucky to be alive, he even had to learn how to walk again. And now, by Krishna's mercy, he is fully recovered, and again singing and dancing in the dust of Vraja. We were also fortunate to have 3 members of the Harinam Ruci Party.

Next year we will have space for 3 extra devotees to join the party. They need to be physically fit.

To book a space please contact Parasurama Dasa: "foodforalluk@gmail.com"

Videos: <https://youtu.be/eC02BQC3ue4> (8 minutes)

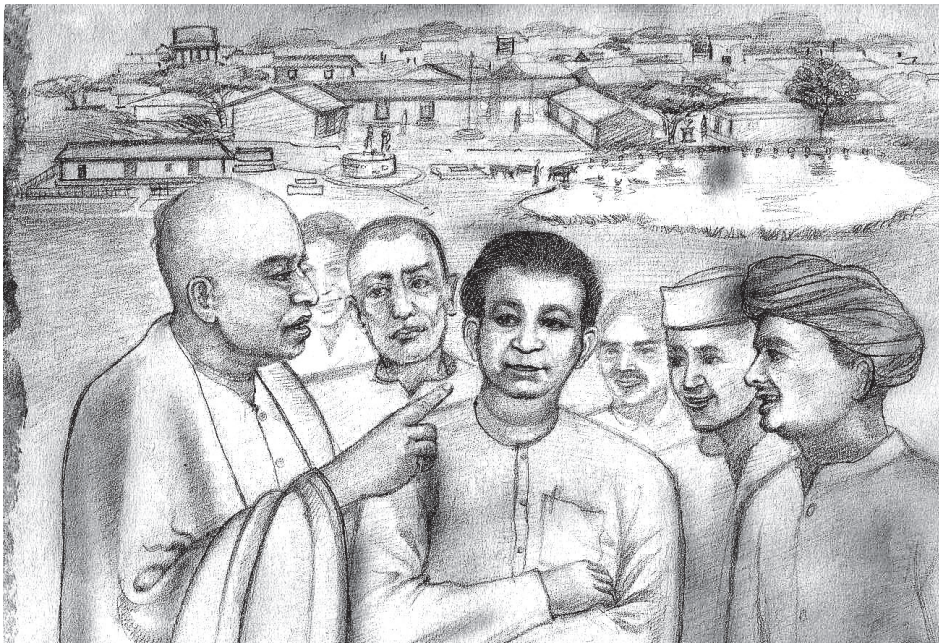
<https://vimeo.com/10101860> (20 minutes)



“IMPOSSIBLE IS A WORD FOUND IN A FOOL’S DICTIONARY!”

What are the reasons every ISKCON temple, farm and preaching center around the world could not organize a One Day or a Week-End Padayatra?

by Gaurangi Dasi



Srila Prabhupada and his first disciple Acarya Prabhakar walking on padayatra from Jhansi to Chirgaon in 1952.

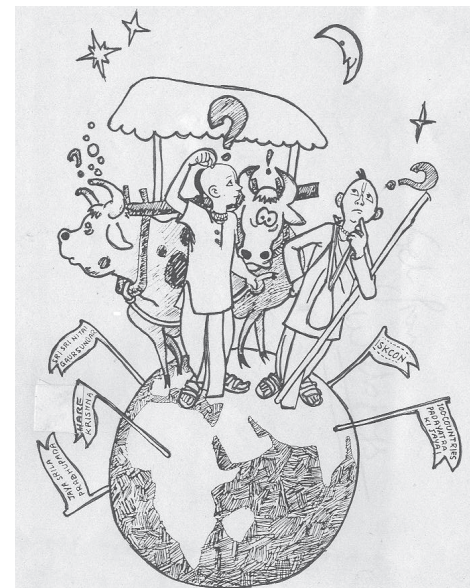
I’m really wondering what are these reasons or rather, excuses. Srila Prabhupada is the one who said that impossible is a word found in a fool’s dictionary. Our founder-acarya wanted millions of padayatra carts around the world. We are very, very far from the thousands and even the hundreds, what to speak of the millions. Since 1976, and to this very day, India has been showing the way in the matter of organizing bullock cart padayatras. Of course one might say that there are still many oxen there and many devotees to participate in these walks. But what about the vaisnavas of the Czech Republic who have been organizing a summer oxcart padayatra for the past

25 years and those of Slovenia who have done it for 17 years? And our Mister Padayatra, Parasurama Dasa, still heading summer walks in England and doing his annual one month Vraja Mandala bullock cart padayatra for the past 32 years? What motivates these devotees? There must be some nectar and joy somewhere along the road?

There are many oxen lying idle on our farms who would love to pull a temple / cart for Sri Sri Gaura Nitai and Srila Prabhupada. And if getting oxen is too complicated, or even impossible, what about using your 2 God-given legs to walk around your town, city or village while chanting the holy names

and spreading the good news through Srila Prabhupada’s books? If you don’t like to dress in a sari or a dhoti, no problem! The public has to see that they don’t need to change their dress in order to participate in the sankirtana movement of Lord Caitanya.

And what about all these young and energetic devotees looking for fun, adventures, challenges and enlivening company? I know they’re not all sitting behind a computer or mesmerized by their smartphones and other electronic gadgets. They’re organizing huge festivals, kirtan melas, bus tours and traveling sankirtana parties. But where are those thinking of doing a padayatra? I really hope and pray that some of them will get in action in 2019.





Bhakta Manoj with son Nimai



Jayabhadra Dasi and Nimai

Meet the new Padayatra Ministry's coordinator

Bhakta Manoj Barai, the new Padayatra Ministry's coordinator, is a doctor living with his family in Amravati, Maharashtra. His wife, Jayabhadra Dasi, has been assisting the Padayatra Ministry for many years by transcribing all the reports of the All India Padayatra, given on the phone by its leader, Acarya Dasa.

Read the narration of Manoj's first visit to All-India Padayatra on the Padayatra.com website

PADAYATRA WORLDWIDE MINISTRY

Please send all news, articles, reports, photos, questions and suggestions to the Padayatra Ministry's coordinator:
Bhakta Manoj "HYPERLINK "<mailto:padayatraiskcon@gmail.com>"
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IMPORTANT NOTICE: SEND US GOOD PHOTOS OF HIGH RESOLUTION.

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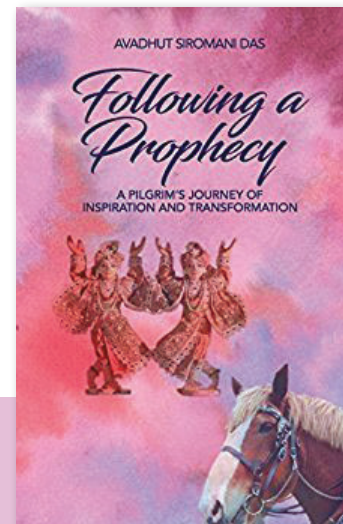
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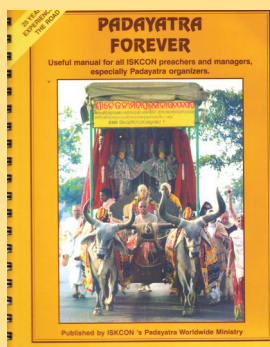
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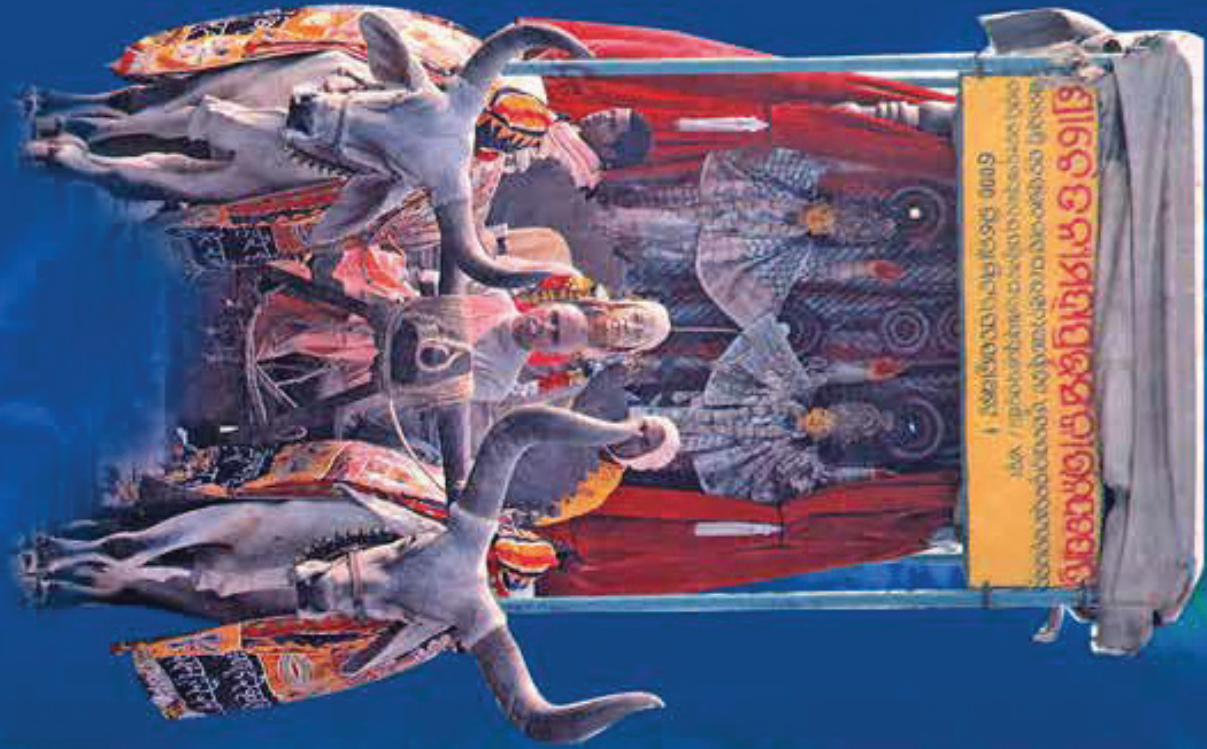


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