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Odisha Forest department grows 'Phasi' trees for Puri Jagannath Rath Yatra chariots

The plantation was made in 10 hectare area in Sarabadi and Bajra of Gumma forest area under Badagarh range, says Assistant Conservator of Forests Prabhakar Nayak

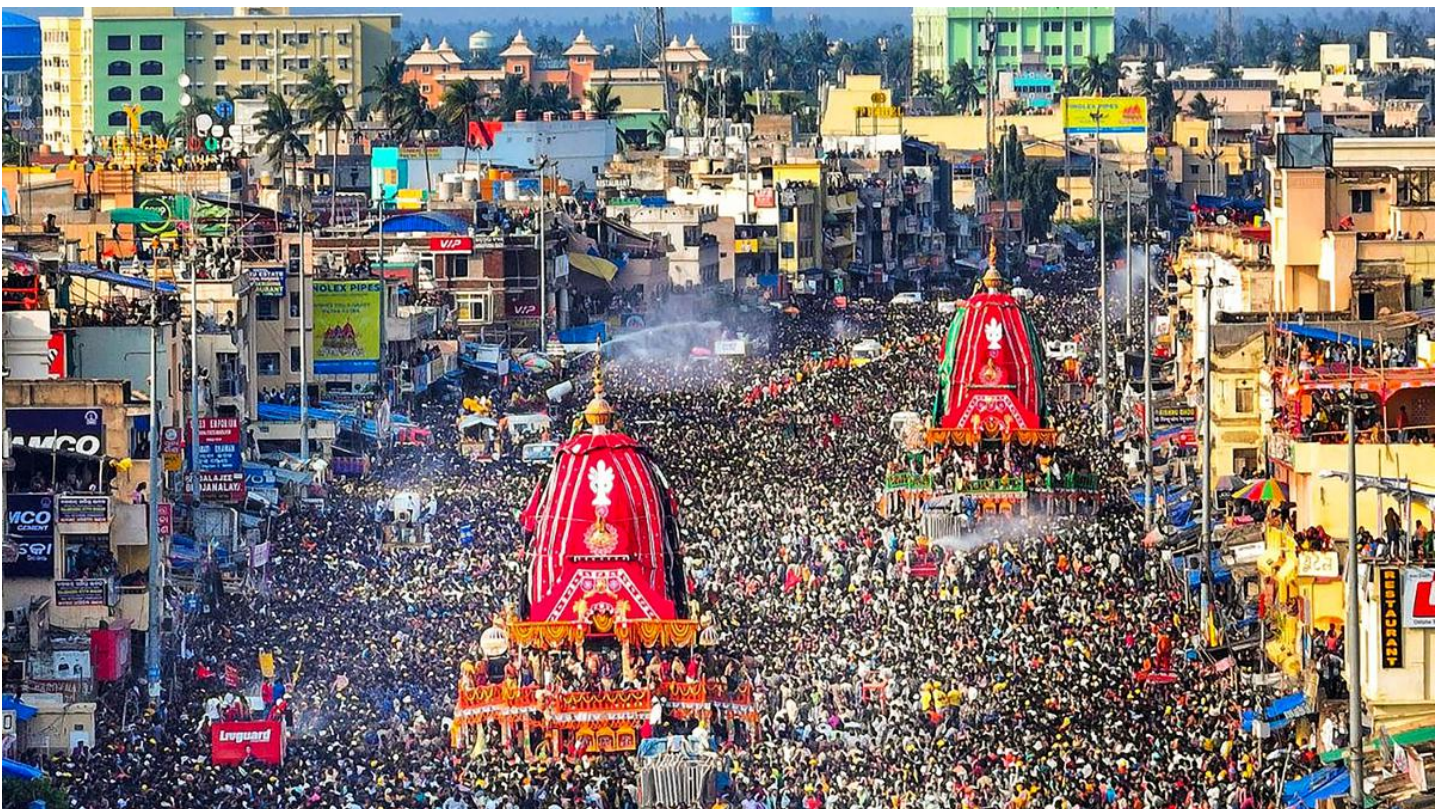
June 24, 2023 03:55 pm | Updated 03:55 pm IST - Berhampur

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Crowd of devotees during the annual Rath Yatra of Lord Jagannath, in Puri, on June 20, 2023. | Photo Credit: PTI



Of 1 all Jagannath Rath Yatra.

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The wheels of the chariots of Jagannath Rath Yatra are made from phasi logs. As many as 72 numbers of phasi logs of 14-foot long and six-foot girth are required for making wheels of three chariots of the deities for rath yatra.

"To cater for the requirement of the phasi logs for making the chariots for the Jagannath Rath Yatra in future, we have planted around 30,000 phasi and 2,000 neem plants in two major areas of Ghumusar south Forest division in Ganjam district", said Prabhakar Nayak, Assistant Conservator of Forests, Ghumusar south division.

The plantation was made in 10 hectare area in Sarabadi and Bajra of Gumma forest area under Badagarh range, the official said.

replacing the plants which have died in the area. We have raised a nursery for the replacement of the dead plants," said Mr. Nayak.

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While the phasi plants were inside the area, the neem trees are planted on the boundaries. The entire area has been made green fencing to prevent the entry of others. Moreover, forest guards have been deployed to guard the plantation, he said.

The forest personnel will take care of the trees till they mature, which will take around 50 years, he added.

The Puri Jagannath temple administrator faced difficulty in collecting the woods, particularly the phasi, for some years due to the dwindling of the species in the forest areas. They collected this species from private lands as donation. Ghumusar south and north divisions in the district have supplied some woods, including phasi to the Jagannath temple administration this year for the construction of chariots, said Sudarshan Behera, DFO (Divisional Forest Officer) Ghumusar north, who is also in-charge of Ghumusar south.

The phasi logs were collected from private lands as people donated the timbers gladly, Mr. Behera said.



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