

Bali Kicks Off Month-Long Hindu Art Festival

<http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2011/06/11/bali-kicks-month-long-art-festival.html>

JARKATA, INDONESIA, June 11, 2011 (The Jakarta Post): President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono on Friday night officially opened the month-long 33rd Bali Art Festival, a much awaited event staging hundreds of art and culture performances.

This year's festival is held simultaneously with the Bali World Cultural Forum and the National Competition of Utsawa Dharma Gita (chanting of Hindu hymns).

A large musical production of Bhishma Dewabharata, an episode from the famous Hindu epic Mahabharata, was the highlight of the opening ceremony at the Ardha Candra open stage at the Art Center in Denpasar.

There are an estimated 15,000 Balinese artists, grouped in 334 sekaa (traditional art group) participating at the festival, which will feature hundreds of art performances — including dance, theater, music and art exhibitions — at the Art Center until July 9.

How a Hindu Temple Challenges The Senses

<http://www.wa.de/nachrichten/hamm/stadt-hamm/hindu-tempel-fest-herausforderung-sinne-1282874.html>

HAMM, GERMANY, June 14, 2011 (Wa.De): The annual Hamm Hindu temple festival was once again characterized by a

variety of colors, smells and music - a thrill for the senses. The procession on Sunday was attended by about 18,000 visitors. Devotees from France, the Netherlands, England and Norway were spotted arriving to honor the Goddess Sri Kamadchi Ampal.

This year a huge contingent of police and security forces of the Public Services Office was present to provide security, traffic and crowd control. Loud music in the festival marketplace was also prohibited so that emergency announcements could be heard, according to Ulrich Kroker from the temple committee. The celebration went smoothly, police said.

The marketplace in front of the temple held booths for Tamil food, arts and crafts and saris. Hundreds of people followed the procession headed by Kavadi dancers and Naathaswaran music, played by drummers and trumpeters. They were followed by the big temple chariot, on which sat the Goddess murthi accompanied by priest Arumugam Paskaran

Dvajasthamba in Churches.

The Dwajasthambam - or the Kodimaram in a temple is the flag pole that signifies obtainment of all that is desired by the devotees.

Next whatDwajasthamba Pujas & vedic chants to welcome Hindus?

Hindu – styled flag mast for Cathedrals
A new flag mast has been erected at the National Shrine of Saint Thomas, San Thome.

This new pole is 60 feet tall and has a diameter of 11/2feet. The core of the pillar is made of concrete and iron rods and this core is covered with brass fittings.

The basement is made of granite, says Rajasekar, the person who is overseeing the erection of the pole. He is based in Tuticorin.

This flag mast is in the style of the masts at Hindu temples.

Many churches in coastal and southern Tamil Nadu sport such traditional flag masts. Fr. Kanikairaj, parish priest at the San Thome cathedral says that the new mast is a donation made by a Catholic from Kanyakumari.

Source : Mylapore Times

Sea of Pilgrims at Puri for Annual Jagannath Chariot Festival

PURI, ORISSA, July 4, 2011 (Indo-Asian News Service): Tens of thousands flocked to Orissa's Jagannath Temple in Puri as the annual chariot festival or Rath Yatra began on Sunday.

All the rituals have began almost on scheduled time, Laxmidhar Pujapanda, the public relations officer of Jagannath Temple, said.

The festival marks the journey of three Hindu Deities - Jagannath, brother Balabhadra and sister Subhadra from the 12th century Jagannath temple, about 56km from state capital here. They are carried in three splendid wooden chariots, pulled by devotees, to the Gundicha temple, about two kilometres away.

Half a million devotees had reached Puri by 8am, Pujapanda said. "The weather is

conducive and we hope by evening, the numbers could swell to more than a million," he said.

The festival culminates nine days later when the Deities make their way back home to the Jagannath temple in their return journey known as Bahuda Yatra. A glimpse of the Deities on the chariot is considered to be very auspicious.

Thousands of policemen have been deployed to maintain law and order. Closed circuit security cameras have been installed at various places to keep a watch on troublemakers and manage crowds.

At least 56 special trains are running from different parts of Orissa, West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh to meet the extra rush of passengers to Puri during the festival, the Bhubaneswar headquartered East Coast Railway said

TVs for Madurai Meenakshi Temple

Source MADURAI, INDIA, June 28, 2011 (hindu.com): For the devotees standing in the winding queues for darshan at the Meenaksi Sundareswarar Temple here, the temple authorities are installing a total of ten 32-inch LCD televisions for their benefit.

The devotees will be able to see pictures of the presiding Deity, festival schedules and puja time while they are moving in the lines, official sources said.

While one of the 10 TVs had been installed opposite the 'Unchal Mandapam' and was already in operation, the rest will be installed in another 10 days. More TV sets could come up later based on devotees' response