# President Murmu opens Odisha's historic Bali Jatra in Cuttack

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## News

President Droupadi Murmu inaugurated the Bali Jatra in Cuttack on 24 Nov 2026, Kartika Purnima, reaching the festival ground along the Mahanadi aboard the boat 'Kalinga Tarangini' from the Silver City Boat Club. The eight-day fair (24 Nov – 1 Dec) is held on the Bali Jatra ground on the bank of the Mahanadi. Governor Braj Mohan Ram and Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi received her at Bhubaneswar, and an interaction with women entrepreneurs of self-help groups at the ORMAS pavilion was also on her programme.

## Key facts for the exam

| Point | Details |
|---|---|
| **Festival** | Bali Jatra ("voyage to Bali") |
| **Place** | Bali Jatra ground, Mahanadi riverbank, Cuttack |
| **Dates** | 24 Nov – 1 Dec 2026 (begins on Kartika Purnima) |
| **Recalls** | Sea voyages of Kalinga traders (Sadhabas) to Bali, Java, Sumatra and Borneo |

## Background

- On Kartika Purnima, people float small paper or banana-bark boats ("boita bandana") to remember the Sadhabas, whose ships (boitas) sailed with the north-east monsoon winds to South-East Asia.

- Ancient Kalinga was a great maritime power; Ashoka's Kalinga War (c. 261 BCE) changed his life. Odisha became a separate province on 1 April 1936. Cuttack is known for its silver filigree work (Tarakasi, GI-tagged).

**Tamil Nadu link:** Tamil merchant guilds also traded across the sea: the Lobu Tua inscription (1088 CE) at Barus, Sumatra, was left by the Tamil merchant guild of the "Five Hundred" (Ainnurruvar).

## Frequently asked questions

**What is this news about?**

President Droupadi Murmu inaugurated the Bali Jatra in Cuttack on 24 Nov 2026, Kartika Purnima, reaching the festival ground along the Mahanadi aboard the boat 'Kalinga Tarangini' from the Silver City Boat Club.

**What are the key facts to remember for the exam?**

Festival: Bali Jatra ("voyage to Bali"); Place: Bali Jatra ground, Mahanadi riverbank, Cuttack; Dates: 24 Nov – 1 Dec 2026 (begins on Kartika Purnima); Recalls: Sea voyages of Kalinga traders (Sadhabas) to Bali, Java, Sumatra and Borneo.

**What is the background to this news?**

On Kartika Purnima, people float small paper or banana-bark boats ("boita bandana") to remember the Sadhabas, whose ships (boitas) sailed with the north-east monsoon winds to South-East Asia.

## Practice questions (with answers)

**1. Bali Jatra is held in which city, on the bank of which river?**

**A)** Bhubaneswar, Daya

**B) Cuttack, Mahanadi**

**C)** Sambalpur, Brahmani

**D)** Puri, Bhargavi

**Answer: B** – Explanation: On the Mahanadi bank in Cuttack, 24 Nov – 1 Dec; President Droupadi Murmu opened the 2026 fair. The Mahanadi rises in Chhattisgarh and flows into the Bay of Bengal.

**2. Bali Jatra begins on which day?**

**A)** Makar Sankranti

**B)** Akshaya Tritiya

**C) Kartika Purnima**

**D)** Rath Yatra day

**Answer: C** – Explanation: People float small paper or banana-bark boats ('boita bandana') that day to recall the ancient trading voyages.

**3. What were the ancient Kalinga traders who sailed to Bali, Java and Sumatra called?**

**A) Sadhabas**

**B)** Manigramam

**C)** Banjaras

**D)** Chettis

**Answer: A** – Explanation: Their ships were called 'boitas' and sailed to South-East Asia on the north-east monsoon winds. Manigramam was a Tamil merchant guild.

**4. On what date did Odisha become a separate province?**

**A) 1 April 1936**

**B)** 1 April 1912

**C)** 1 November 1956

**D)** 26 January 1950

**Answer: A** – Explanation: 1 April is 'Utkal Divas'. In 1912 Bihar–Orissa was carved out of Bengal. The Kalinga War (c. 261 BCE) changed Ashoka.

**5. Which Tamil merchant guild left the Lobu Tua inscription (1088 CE) at Barus, Sumatra?**

**A)** Anjuvannam

**B)** Nagarathar

**C)** Chitrameli Periyanattar

**D) The 'Five Hundred' (Ainnurruvar)**

**Answer: D** – Explanation: It shows that Tamil merchant guilds, like the Kalinga traders, traded across the sea with South-East Asia.