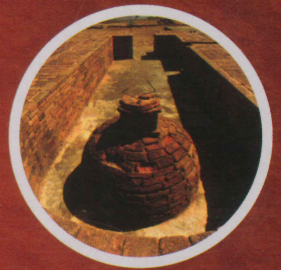
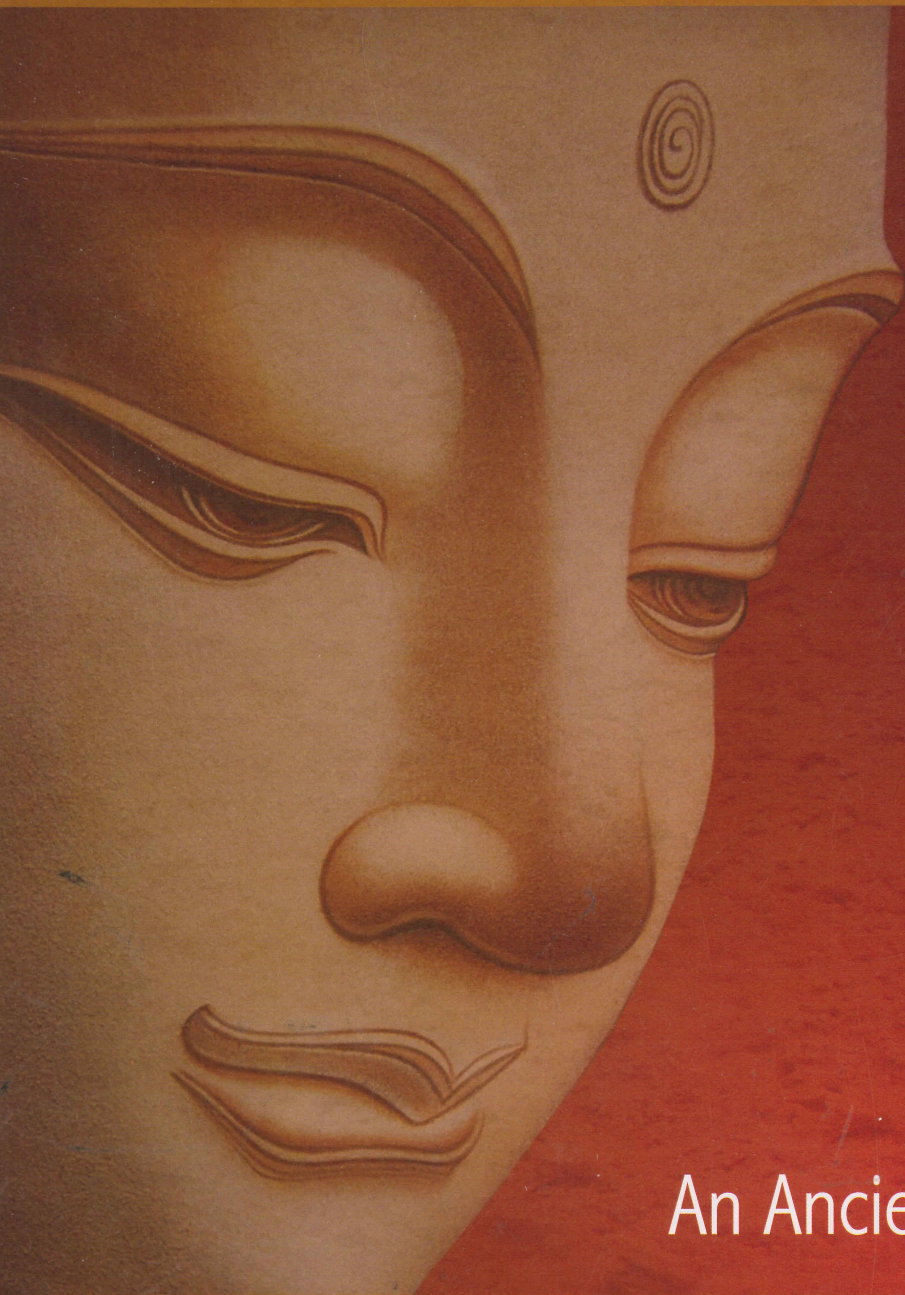


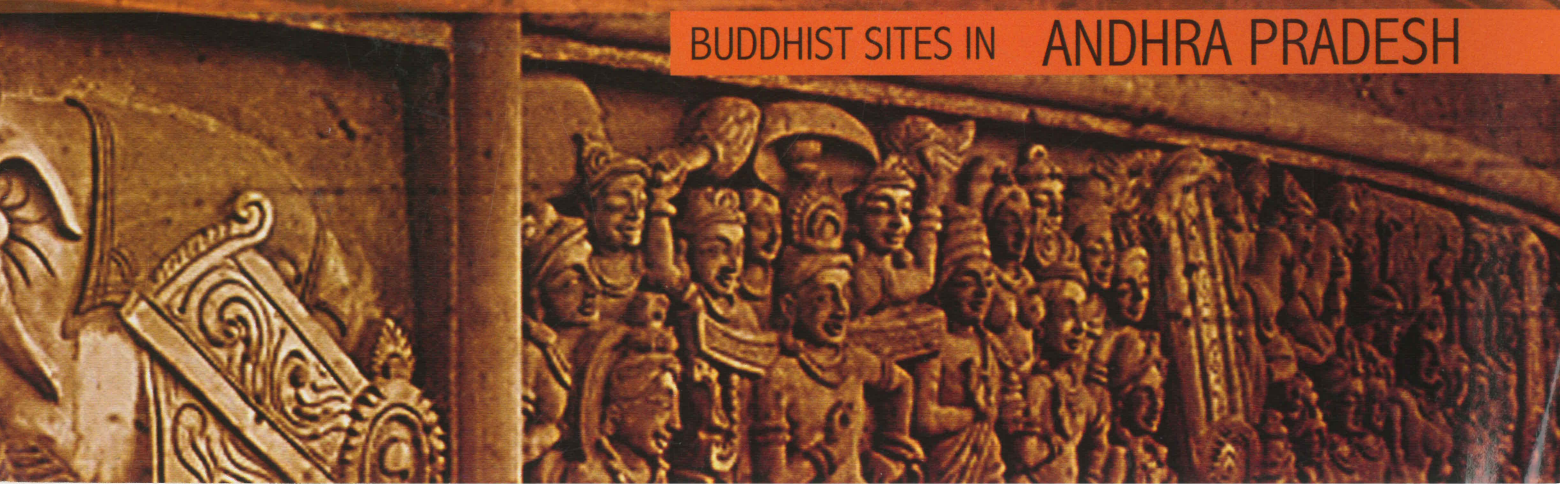
Incredible!ndia

Andhra Pradesh  
TOURISM



## An Ancient Buddhist Bastion

BUDDHIST SITES IN ANDHRA PRADESH







# MAJOR BUDDHIST SITES IN ANDHRA PRADESH



- |                   |                    |                    |                   |
|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Kalingapatnam  | 11. Adurru         | 21. Gajulabanda    | 31. Ramathirtham  |
| 2. Salihundam     | 12. Guntupalli     | 22. Phanigiri      | 32. Nandaluru     |
| 3. Ramathirtham   | 13. Aswaraopet     | 23. Nagarjunakonda | 33. Buddham       |
| 4. Thotlakonda    | 14. Alluru         | 24. Amaravati      | 34. Wardhamankota |
| 5. Bavikonda      | 15. Gummadidurru   | 25. Bhattiprolu    | 35. Waddaman      |
| 6. Sankaram       | 16. Ghantasala     | 26. Chandavaram    | 36. Kotilingala   |
| 7. Kottur         | 17. Jaggayyapeta   | 27. Dupadu         | 37. Gopalapatnam  |
| 8. Lingarajupalem | 18. Nelakondapalli | 28. Chinnaganjam   | 38. Pavuralakonda |
| 9. Kodavali       | 19. Dhulikatta     | 29. Peddaganjam    | 39. Dharapalem    |
| 10. Kapavaram     | 20. Kondapur       | 30. Uppugundur     | 40. Danthapuram   |



# ANDHRA PRADESH

## Wellspring of Buddhism

Buddhism exercised a profound influence on the lives of the people of the ancient Andhra desa for more than a millennium. Edicts at Amaravati, Erragudi and Rajulamandagiri suggest that Buddhism in Andhra desa received great patronage from Asoka the Great during the 3rd century B.C.

Of the 18 major sects then prominent in India, nine had their base in Andhra desa. The language, literature, arts, architecture, social norms and religious practices were conditioned to a great extent by Buddhism. The religion flourished mainly during the reigns of Satavahanas, Ikshvakus, Salanakayanas and Vishnukundins.

The remains of ancient Buddhist settlements, including viharas and stupas, across Andhra Pradesh give us glimpses of the glory of Buddhism when it flourished in the State. There are 144 sites in various parts of State that have withstood the ravages of time. About 24 of them are major centers. It is from these places that Buddhism spread to the Far East, including Sri Lanka, China and Japan.

A journey through these hallowed sites is a ticket to abiding peace, tranquility and bliss.

Hyderabad, the capital city of Andhra Pradesh, Vijayawada, the business hub, and Visakhapatnam, the thriving port city, are focal points from where you can comfortably reach these Buddhist sites.

This travel is always blessed! Come on, the Buddhist trail beckons ...



A useful single day's life of intense effort is better than a hundred years of idleness and inactivity.

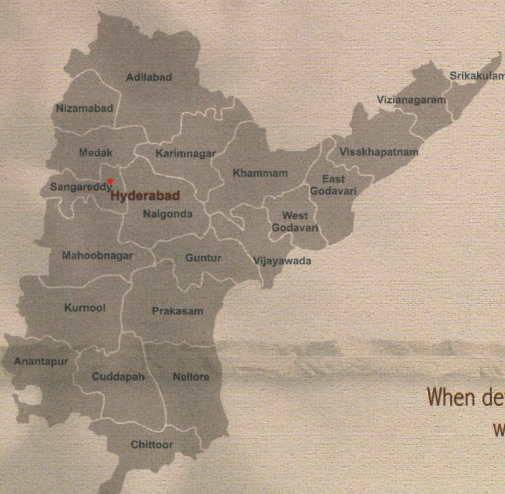
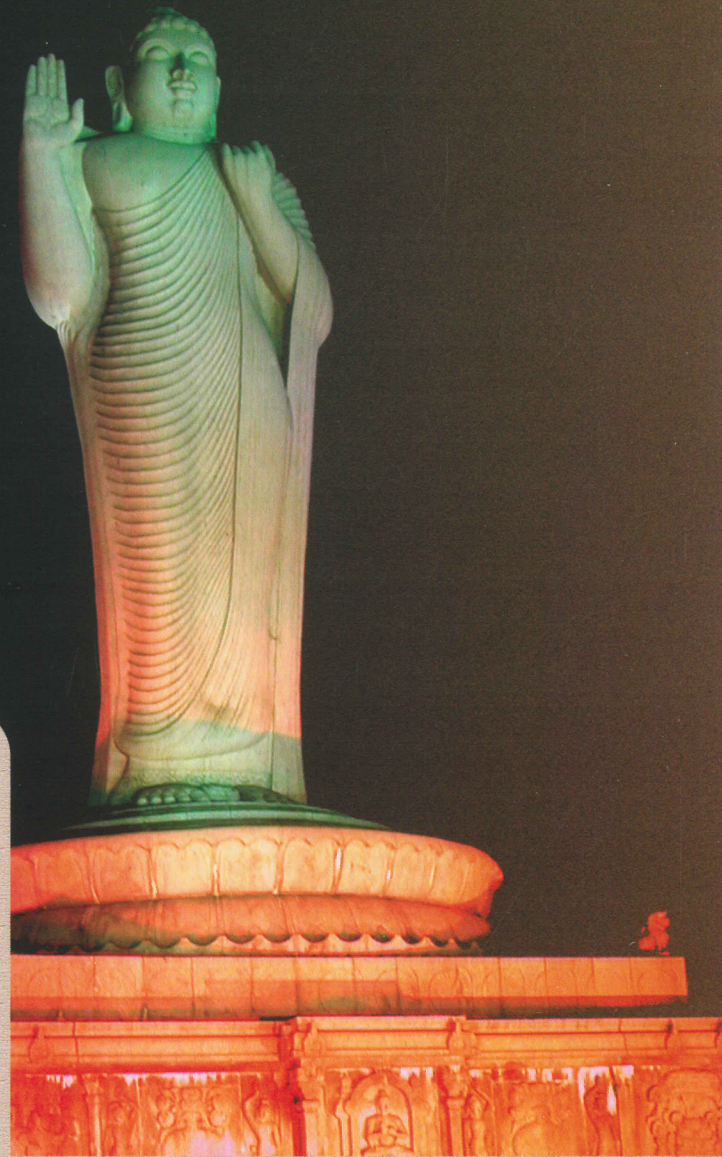


# HYDERABAD CIRCUIT

## Hyderabad Circuit STATUE OF BUDDHA

A pleasant boat ride takes you to the towering 18-meter-high 350-tonne monolithic statue of the Buddha, poised in serene majesty in the midst of the

Hussain Sagar lake. This gigantic statue of the Enlightened One on Hyderabad's Rock of Gibraltar, blissfully presiding over the city, presents the right setting for beginning your journey. You can then explore the rest of the destinations on the Buddhist circuit in the right spirit. The Buddha Statue can be reached by boats and cruises operated by Andhra Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation from Lumbini Park.



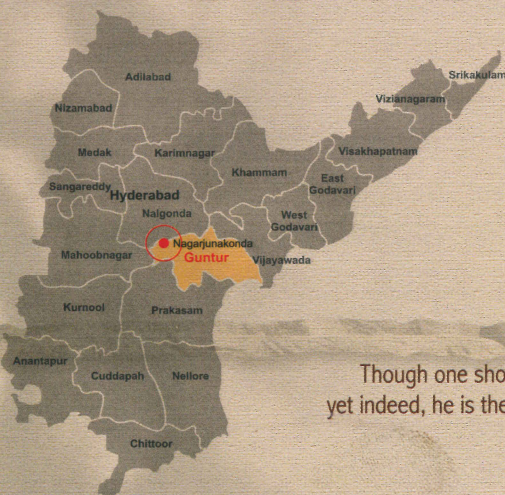
When developed, the mind leads to great benefit;  
when undeveloped, to great harm.





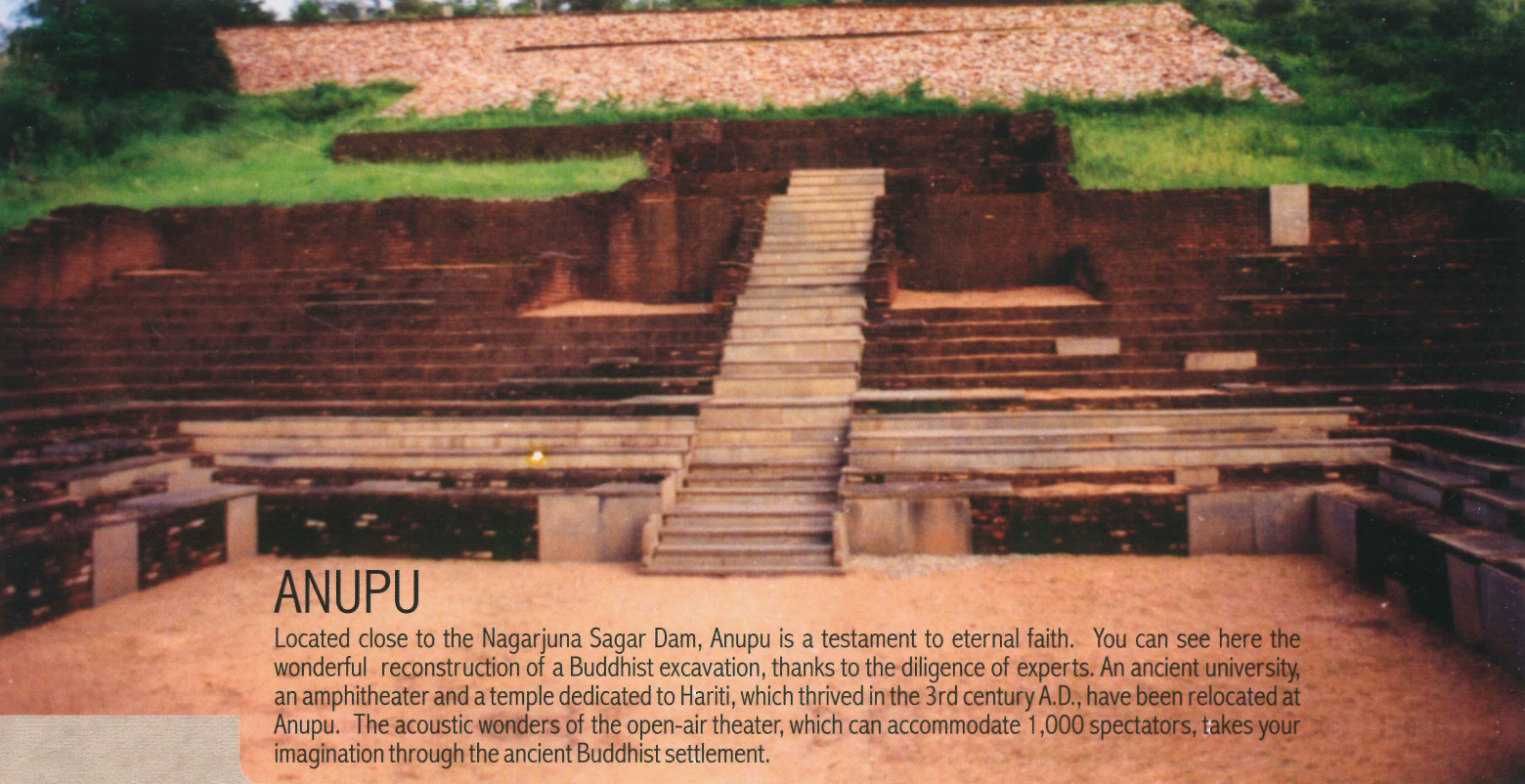
## NAGARJUNAKONDA

Nagarjunakonda, known as "Sriparvata" in ancient times, is located on the banks of the Krishna river in Guntur district. Also called "Vijayapuri," it was the capital city of the Ikshvakus. A prominent center of higher learning, it attracted students from all over India, Sri Lanka and China. Acharya Nagarjuna, Buddhist savant after whom the reconstructed place is currently named, lived and taught here between the 2nd and 3rd centuries A.D. when Sriparvata reached its acme. During excavations, several monasteries and other structures, including the Maha Chaitya, the bathing ghat and the amphitheater, surfaced here. During the construction of the Nagarjuna Sagar Dam, the ruins of this ancient Buddhist University and chaityas were transplanted brick by brick atop the hill that now forms the island of Nagarjunakonda and also at Anupu. A monolithic statue of the Buddha, standing in sublime peace, is the chief attraction of the museum at Nagarjunakonda.



Though one should conquer a million men in battlefield;  
yet indeed, he is the noblest victor who has conquered himself.





## ANUPU

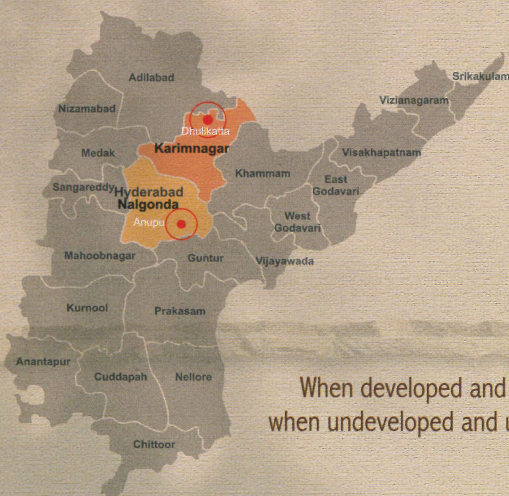
Located close to the Nagarjuna Sagar Dam, Anupu is a testament to eternal faith. You can see here the wonderful reconstruction of a Buddhist excavation, thanks to the diligence of experts. An ancient university, an amphitheater and a temple dedicated to Hariti, which thrived in the 3rd century A.D., have been relocated at Anupu. The acoustic wonders of the open-air theater, which can accommodate 1,000 spectators, takes your imagination through the ancient Buddhist settlement.

## DHULIKATTA

Dhulikatta is situated in Karimnagar District, 200 km from Hyderabad. Excavations at Dhulikatta revealed a Buddhist stupa and a vihara built on a prominent mound at a junction of two perennial rivulets. The enlarged garbha of the stupa was originally bedecked with more than 50 carved slabs, some of which are intact. One of the slabs depicts the Muchilinda Naga - a five-headed cobra protecting Lord Buddha, symbolically represented by his feet and exquisitely delineated. At the top of the Naga, over the embossed frame, is an inscribed label in early Brahmi script, datable to 175 BC. Associated



with the structures, punch marked Satavahana and Roman coins, ivory combs, seals, silver portrait coin, beads and bangles, and terracotta figurines were recovered.

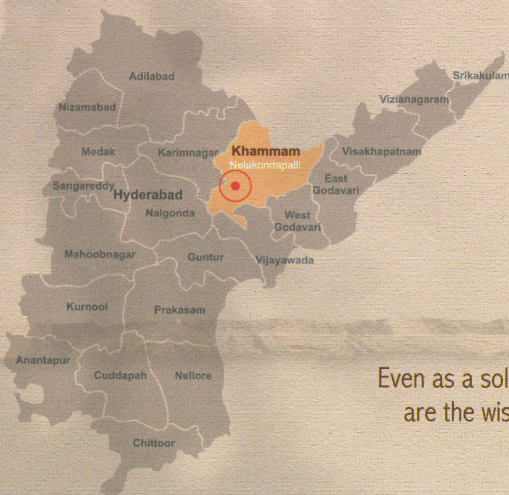


When developed and cultivated, the mind leads to great benefit and happiness;  
when undeveloped and uncultivated, it brings about stress, suffering and great harm.



## NELAKONDAPALLI

About 180 km from Hyderabad, Nelakondapalli in Khammam District is a recently discovered Buddhist site. Initial excavations here yielded a stupa, nine Buddhist idols and other significant artifacts. Subsequent excavations unearthed a spoked stupa. Other important finds include huge Buddha images in standing posture, Vishnukundin coins, viharas, Maha Chaitya, votive stupas, terracotta figurines and pottery. The finds date between the 3rd and 5th centuries AD. It is believed that it served as a link between coastal Andhra and Telangana areas for traders as well as Buddhist monks.



Even as a solid rock is unshaken by the wind so  
are the wise unshaken by praise or blame.



# VIJAYAWADA CIRCUIT

## AMARAVATHI

For those on the quest of supreme bliss and insights into ancient Buddhist settlements, Amaravati in Guntur District is undoubtedly the best place. Formerly known as "Dhanyakataka" and "Andhranagari," it is located on the right bank of the Krishna river, about 28 km from

Vijayawada. Acharya Nagarjuna built the country's largest stupa here 2,000 years back. The stupa at Dhanyakataka has been enlarged and embellished several times over the centuries. The dome of the Maha Chaitya here measures 57.5 mts in diameter. The massive monument, once towering 30 metres high

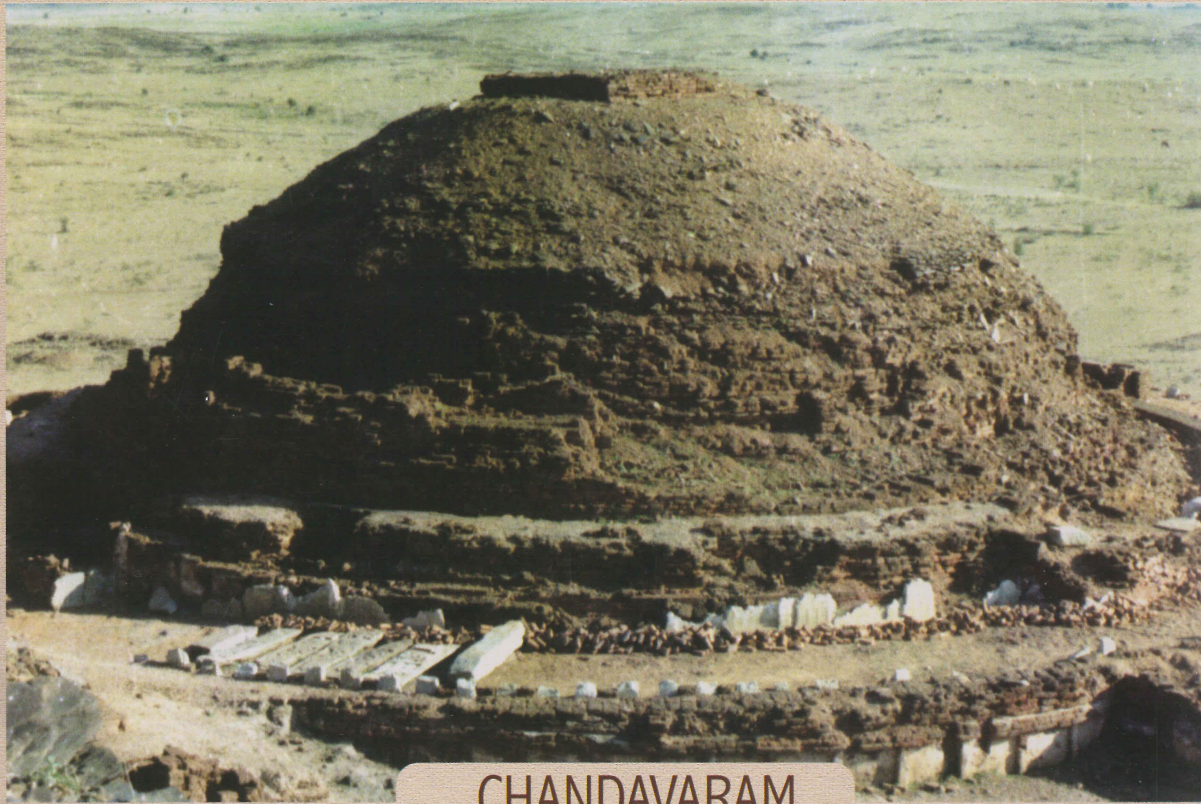


and adorned with marble sculptures, is perhaps the most enduring memorial of Buddhism in the world. It is also known as "Dipaladinne (mound of lamps)". Perhaps the largest marble-surfaced dome in the world, it is reckoned among the most sacred Buddhist centers in India.



The well guarded and protected mind can lead to great benefit;  
the unguarded mind to danger and even great harm.





## CHANDAVARAM

This important Buddhist site in Prakasam District is famous for its double-terraced stupa — the only other stupa of this kind is in Sanchi, Probably the biggest in south India. Excavations here revealed more than 24 beautifully carved limestone panels that once decorated the dome of the stupa. Apart from the Maha Stupa built on terraced platform, apsidal chaitya griha, votive stupas, drum slabs, Satavahana coins, Brahmi label inscriptions dating to the period between 2nd Century BC and 2nd Century AD were found at this site. The absence of Ayaka pillars at Chandavaram suggests the existence of Hinayana form of Buddhism in the remote areas. A sangharama and several minor stupas are situated nearby. This is clearly a significant Buddhist destination you cannot afford to miss!

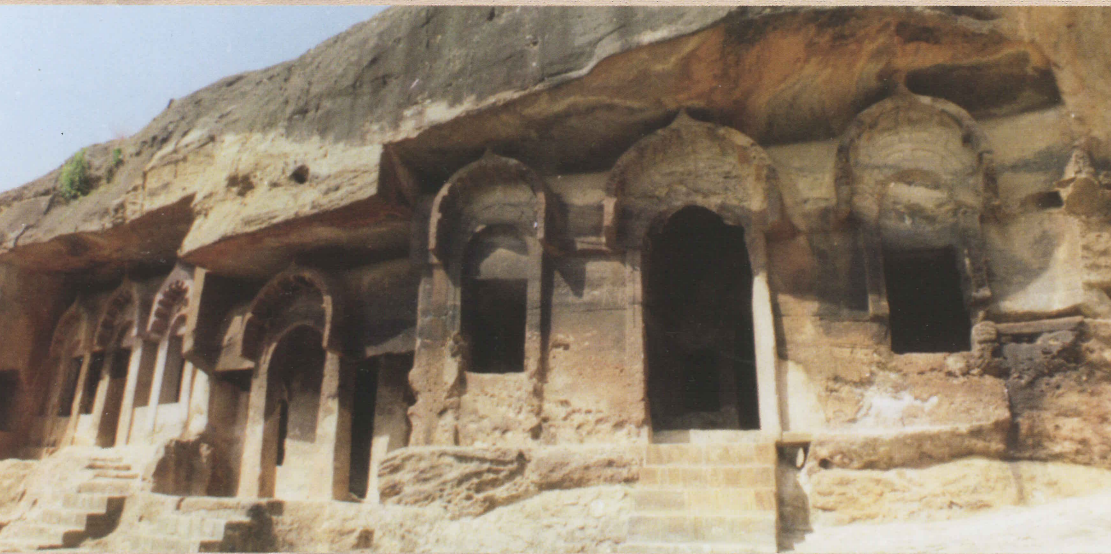


Real peace comes from within. Seek not from outside.



# GUNTUPALLI

Guntupalli in West Godavari District is known for its rugged beauty, pleasant surroundings and rock-cut wonders in a horse shoe shaped ravine. Among the most beautiful Buddhist sites in south India, it is located about 120 km from Vijayawada. The entire site holds some of the most



enchancing rock-cut Buddhist shrines, chaityas, stupas and viharas. The serene atmosphere of the place and its natural beauty reminds one of Lomasa Rishi and Sudama caves near Bodh Gaya. Dignaga, the great Buddhist logician, is believed to have lived in this arama (resting place).

# BHATTIPROLU

Located on the right bank of the Krishna river in Guntur District, about 25 km from Repalle and 50 km from Vijayawada, Bhattiprolu, known as "Prathipalapura" in ancient times, is home to what could be the oldest known stupa. The dome of the stupa measures 132 feet in diameter and rises to a height of 65 feet. This pre-Mauryan stupa enshrined a Buddhist relic. It was once adorned with exquisite sculptures depicting key events during the Buddha's time. King Kubiraka, some merchants and the elite of this land built a Maha Chaitya, with panels showing milestones in the life of the Enlightened One. During excavations, inscribed stone relic caskets, crystal beads and caskets, gold and copper flowers, pearls, silver coins and jewels were found here. A fragment of bone, believed to be that of the Buddha and attested by an inscription, was also found.



The mind — when cleansed,  
well guarded and protected — can lead to great benefit.



# GHANTASALA

Dating back to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Century AD, this site lies in the Divi Taluk of Krishna District, 21 km west of Machilipatnam and 75 km from Vijayawada. The remains of an important Buddhist stupa, a broken pot with a lead coin, beads, semiprecious stones, crystal pieces, two bits of gold leaves and



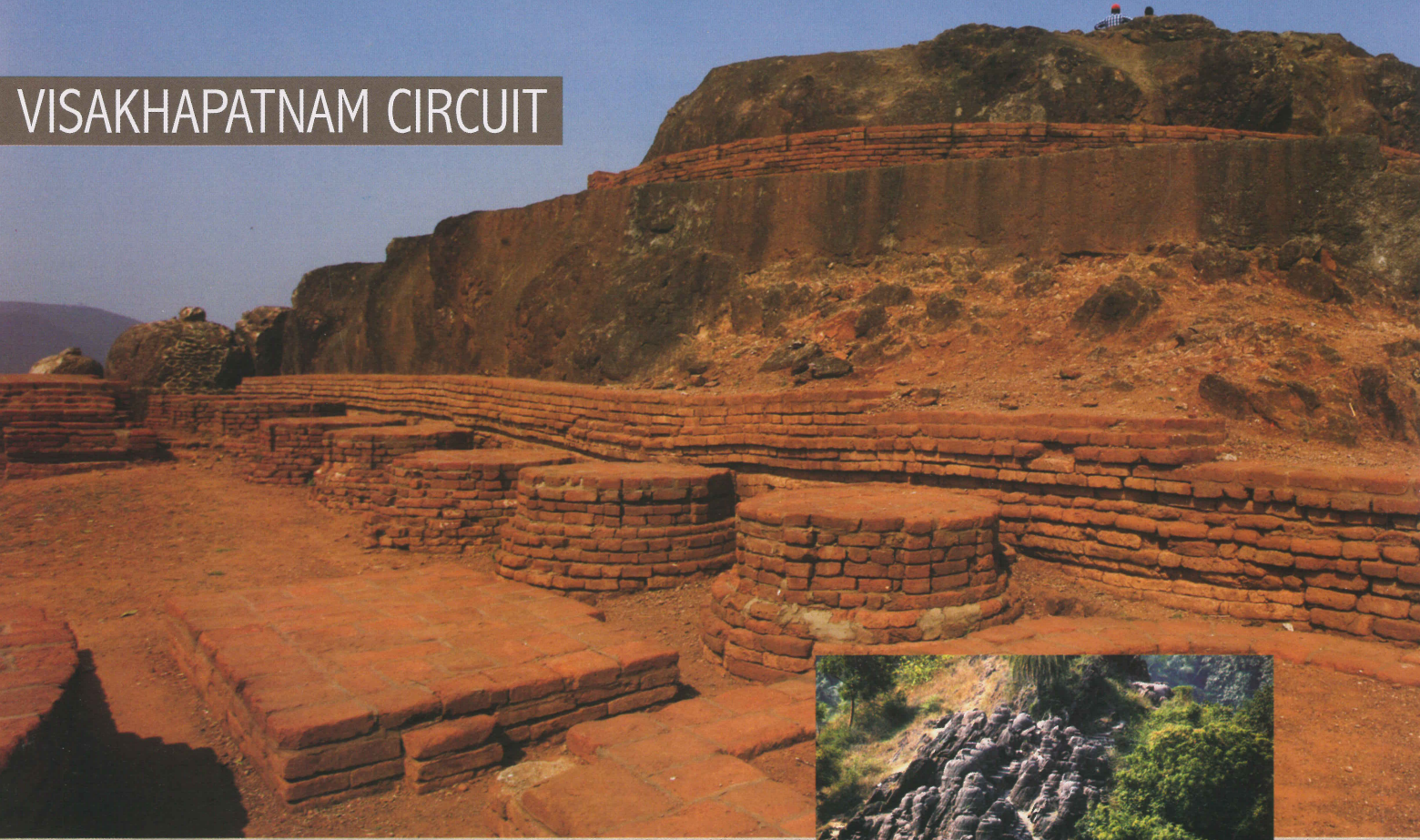
sculptured slabs surfaced here. A medallion, showing the return of Boddhisatva Siddhartha to Kapilavastu after his renunciation, is a major attraction here. The cubic centerpiece of solid bricks adorning the stupa here is a rare discovery. Interesting inscriptions pertaining to the 12 constellations of the zodiac are a big draw at this site.



When developed and apparent, the mind leads to great benefit;  
when undeveloped and unapparent, to great harm.

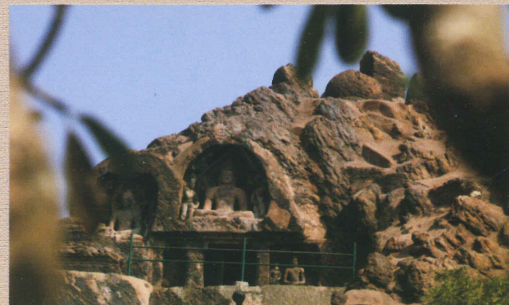
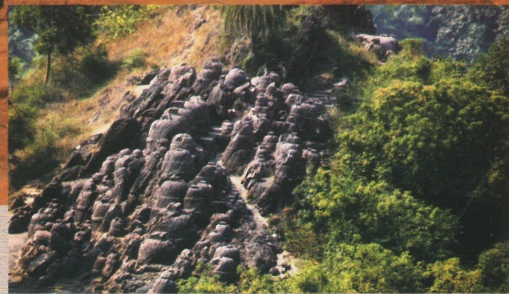


# VISAKHAPATNAM CIRCUIT



## SANKARAM

Sankaram is situated 41 km from Visakhapatnam and 3 km from Anakapalle. Numerous monolithic votive stupas, rock-cut caves and structures belonging to the first century AD were discovered here. At Lingalametta nearby, there are numerous rock-cut monolithic stupas on a hill. A Maha Stupa nearby yielded a relic casket. Three chaitya halls, a number of votive platforms, stupas, 70 copper coins of the Eastern Chalukyan dynasty, seals, inscribed clay tablets, a gold coin of King Samudragupta's time, one Satavahana lead coin, Vajrayana images and other structures were unearthed here.



One should not accept anything with mere faith; but one should use one's common sense and intelligence before accepting anything.



## BAVIKONDA

Archeologists found a rich harvest of the most ancient Buddhist sites in north Andhra, which was part of the ancient Kalinga region. On a hillock called Bavikonda, near Thimmapuram village on the Bhimili beach road in Visakhapatnam, an extensive Buddhist settlement was discovered. The finds here comprised a Maha Chaitya enshrining Buddha Dhatu, viharas, stupas and a big stone-pillared congregation hall, where lectures and debates are believed to have been held. The vihara consists of three arms laid out in the



form of a Trisala. These Maha Stupas had four entrances at cardinal points. Other artifacts unearthed here include a Satavahana lead coin, Roman silver coins, fragments of Brahmi label inscriptions and Buddhapada slabs with ashtamangala symbols dating back from the 3rd century BC to the 3rd century AD.



The unrestrained mind leads to great harm.



## THOTLAKONDA

Thotlakonda is located 128m above sea level and excavations brought to light mahastupa, votive stupas, pillared halls, refectory, viharas, Satavahana, Roman coins, Brahmi label inscriptions, Buddha padas etc., It is 18 kms. from Vishakapatnam on Vishakapatnam - Bhimili beach road.

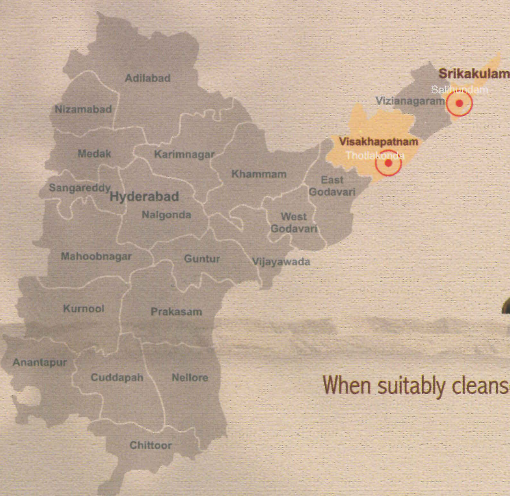


## SALIHUNDAM

Salihundam, a tiny village, is situated on the south bank of the Vamsadhara river in Srikakulam district. It is 5 km from the old sea port town of Kalingapatnam. A Maha Stupa, votive stupas, platforms and viharas are located on a hillock here. From here, Buddhism spread to Sumatra and other Far-Eastern countries. Thanks to scientific digs in this site, several inscribed stones, a terracotta



casket with relics, inscribed conches, stone and crystal relic caskets, silver coins and seals were found here. The inscriptions range in date from the 2nd century AD to the 6th century A.D. Experts say further excavations could shed light on the ancient "Dantapura", presently Dantavakrunikota, which is a nearby site.



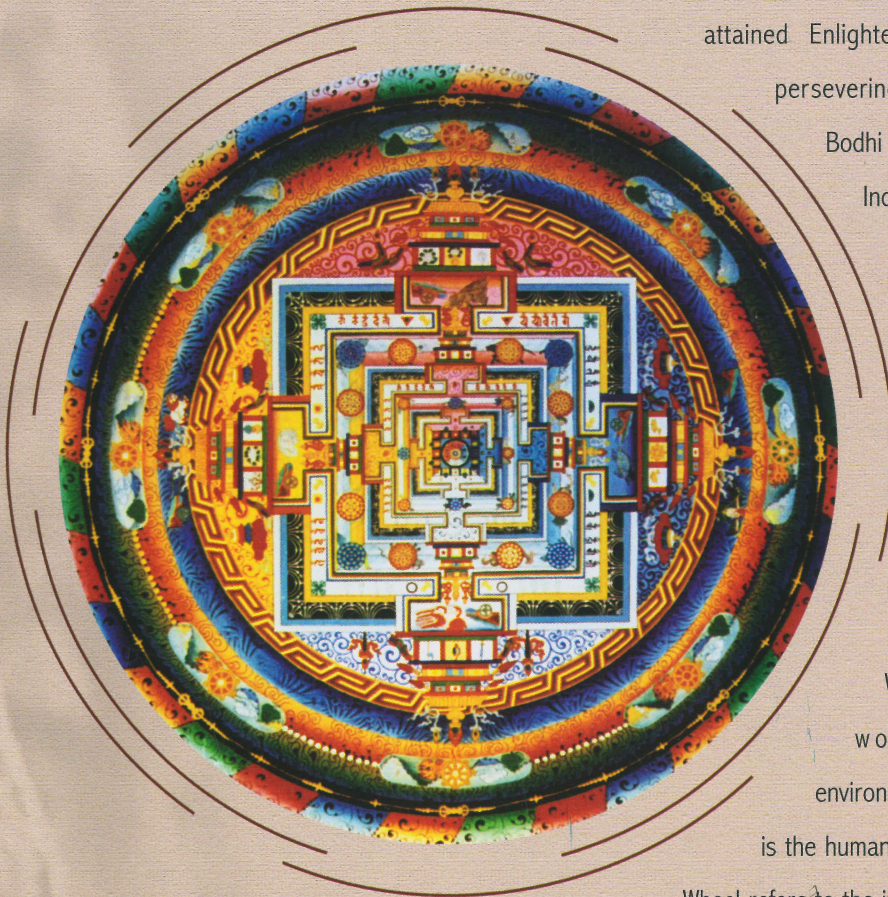
When suitably cleansed, the mind can lead to great benefit.



# KALACHAKRA

## Kalachakra- The Wheel of Time

Kalachakra shows the way to attain true enlightenment for the sake of others. It was taught by Shakyamuni Buddha, who attained Enlightenment after sitting perseveringly underneath the Bodhi Tree at Bodh Gaya in India. The full import of Kalachakra tantra is given in three Kalachakras -- Wheels of Time: The Outer Wheel, The Inner Wheel and the Other Wheel. The Outer Wheel is the external world comprising environment; the Inner Wheel is the human body, while the Other Wheel refers to the initiations and paths of the "Shri Kalachakra" together with their results. The practice of Kalachakra tantra, like all Buddhist systems, is based on receiving proper initiation.







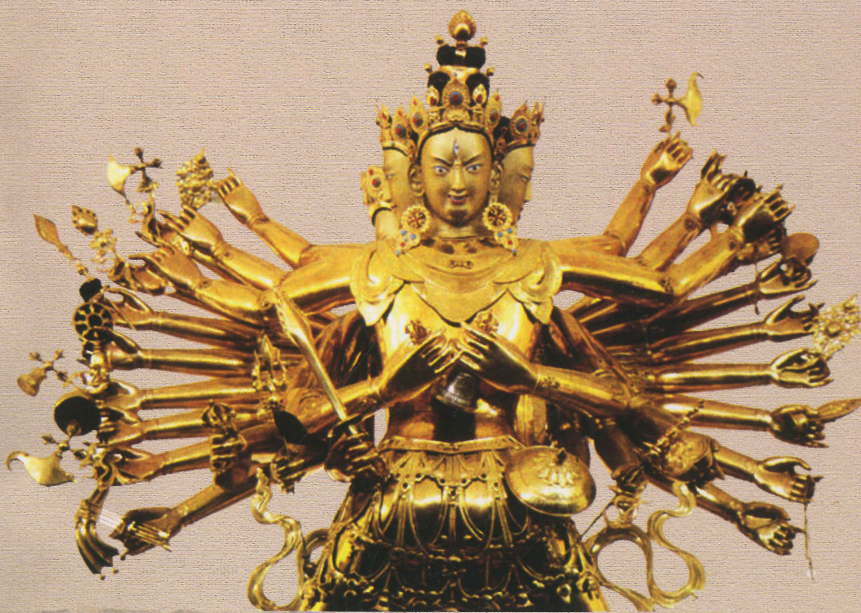
There are eleven Kalachakra initiations: seven for those "entering like a child", three for the "exalted," and one for the "most exalted" adherents. The general aim is that, through initiation, the guru ripens the disciple's psyche. In modern terms, the Kalachakra tantra is interpreted at three levels: external, internal and alternative. The external concerns the laws of time and space of this physical world; and, accordingly deals with astronomy, astrology and mathematics. The internal concerns the elements and structure of the human body, including its energy system. The alternative is the doctrine, path and fruit of actual meditation.





The Kalachakra concepts were taught by the Buddha in the 6th century BC in India. Over the centuries, the teachings are believed to have been transmitted in an unbroken lineage from teacher to student. In the 11<sup>th</sup> century, the Kalachakra went from India to Tibet. During the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the VII Dalai Lama introduced it to Namgyal Monastery. This continuous lineage extends to the XIV Dalai Lama of our own time. His holiness the Dalai Lama has conducted Kalachakra mahasammelan during January 2006 at Amaravathi.

## Come, treasure legacies of Buddhism in Andhra Pradesh





## How to get there :



All Buddhist sites and other places within Andhra Pradesh are well connected by train and road. Places connected by air are Hyderabad, Visakhapatnam, Tirupati and Vijayawada. Andhra Pradesh Tourism has made transport arrangements at all Buddhist sites.

## Where to stay:

Hotels in Hyderabad, Vijayawada and Visakhapatnam cater to diverse needs of tourists, ranging from standard rooms to five star accommodation. Private transportation is available at economical prices within Andhra Pradesh. A.P. Tourism organizes conducted tours and provides comfortable accommodation at all its guest houses .



**INDIA TOURISM OFFICE:**

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**Visakhapatnam:** RTC Complex , Ph: 0891-2788820, Fax: 2788822, Cell: 9848813584;

**Vijayawada:** Godavari Motor Complex: M.G.Road, Ph: 0866-2571393;

**Tirupati:** Room No. 5&6, Sridevi Complex, Tilak Road, Ph: 0877-2255385, 2289126.

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