

Bhubaneswar

Bhubaneswar, the capital of Orissa, is also popularly known as the "Temple City of India". Being the seat of Tribhubaneswar or 'Lord Lingaraj', Bhubaneswar is an important pilgrimage centre. Hundreds of temples dot the landscape of the Old Town, which once had more than 2000 temples. Bhubaneswar is the place where temple building activities of Orissan style flowered from its very inception to its fullest culmination extending over a period of over one thousand years.

Approach: Bhubaneswar is well connected by air, rail and road to the rest of India.

Lord Siva Obtains Sri Bhubaneswar Dhama From Lord Krsna

In *Skanda Purana* it is mentioned that. "Once in Kasi, there was a king who was a great devotee of Lord Siva, but his desires were unfulfilled. That king underwent very severe penances to conquer Krsna. He was in *tapasya* trying to satisfy Lord Siva as he had that desire that he would conquer Krsna. One cannot understand the behavior of a *vaisnava*. Even the demigods can not understand, what to speak of the human beings. Sivaji became satisfied and pleased with his *tapasya*. At that time Sivaji told him, "Alright you go and fight against Krsna, I'm following you, I'll support you, I'll help you."



So that king then started for battle and Siva with all his followers followed behind the *raja*, king. Then Krsna, Vasudeva, Devaki-nandana, Son of Devaki, could understand these things, so He released His Sudarsana Cakra. That Sudarsana Cakra cut off the head of the king. After that

Sudarsana Cakra cut off the heads of all the Siva *bhaktas* in Kasi. This Varnasi became a crematorium ground - all were dead. So Siva became very angry and released his Pasupatastra. But what he'll do, Pasupatastra is no match in front of Sundarsana Cakra. It could not do anything. So at last, Siva also became very terrified, frightened and tried to run away, but where will He go?

Then Siva could understand except for Krsna nobody can save me now. So He surrendered unto the lotus feet of Krsna, Govinda. He offered many prayers. Siva says, "O Lord of my heart, I have one prayer. I am always very puffed up. I have great false ego, but now I understand I can not leave You, I can not stay anywhere else, please tell me where I shall stay." This is described in the *Skanda Purana*.

So Vasudeva said, "My *ksetra* is there, Sri Purosottama Ksetra. So in the North of that *ksetra* is Ekamra Kanana. That place, Ekamra Kanana is very, very auspicious and will give *bhukti* and *mukti*, a very beautiful place. So you'll stay there and you'll be known as "Bhubaneswar." "So I give you that Ekamra Kanana. You go and stay there and become the guard of that *ksetra*, '*ksetra pala*'."

So this is Bhubaneswar. It is also known as 'Hemacala' and 'Svarnadi Ksetra.' In this *ksetra* *crores*, *crores*, *koti lingum crores* of Sivajis are here. It is also known as *asta-tirtha*, the famous eight *tirthas* reside here. Bhubaneswar is superior to Varnasi and is more dear to Siva than Varnasi.

Other Glories of Bhubaneswar -

A description of the holy place Sri Bhubaneswar is found in various literatures including Svarnadri-mahodaya, Ekamra Purana, Skanda Purana, and other Sanskrit Puranas. In those literatures this place is addressed by various names such as Bhubaneswar, Ekamraka-kshetra, Hemacala, and Svarnadri-kshetra. Being requested by some sages, Vyasa Bhagavan

revealed the glories of the rarely attained Ekamraka-kshetra [It is said that Srila Vyasadeva described Bhubaneswar in a literature he wrote named Ekamra-candrika and that the Ekamra Purana mentioned above is derived from it.]

This place has been known as Ekamraka-kshetra because long ago there was a huge mango tree here. There are ten million siva-lingas and eight tirthas at this place. This place is superior to Varanasi and dearer to Sambhu, the best of the Vaishnavas. In Utkala, on the shore of the southern ocean, there is a river named Gandhavati that flows east. This river is non-different from the Ganges. This Brahma-kshetra, Ekamraka-tirtha, is situated on the bank of this most sacred river. [The Gandhavati river is on the south side of Old Bhubaneswar, and today is known as "Gangua Nala".]

This place is more pleasing than Kailash. The length and breadth of this place are three yojanas. One yojana was filled with temples, and two miles of this place was covered by the shade of that mango tree. Since time immemorial at this place pious persons have taken bath, chanted mantras, performed sacrifices, offered oblations, performed abhiseka, offered worship, offered prayers, accepted prasadam garlands, heard the Puranas, served the lotus feet of the Lord's devotees, and executed the nine forms of devotional service. In the Svarnadri-mahodaya it is stated that Lord Purushottam is the maintainer of this place. The eternal Supreme Brahman is eternally present here in the form of Tribhuvaneshwar-linga. According to the statement, lingyate jnayate yasmad, the Supreme Brahman resides in the midst of the demigods in the form of a linga within a mountain of gold in the state of Utkala. It is further stated in the Svarnadri-mahodaya that since Lord Ananta Vasudev personally protects this area with a cakra and club in His hands He is known as the ksetra-pala, or protector of this place. Pious activities performed without first taking darsana of Sri Ananta Vasudev yield no results. Only those who have unflinching devotion for Lord Ananta Vasudev are able to attain the mercy of Sri Bhubaneswar, who is very dear to Ananta Vasudev. When Bhubaneswari Bhagavati heard from the mouth of Sambhu the glories of Ekamraka-tirtha, which is superior to Varanasi, she expressed a desire to visit this place. Sambhu then told Bhubaneswari,

"You first go there alone, and I will meet you there later." Having received her husband's permission, she rode on her carrier lion and soon arrived at Ekamraka-tirtha. When she arrived she saw that this place was more pleasing than Kailas. She also saw a great linga emanating a white and black effulgence. Bhubaneswari began to worship that linga with all ingredients.



One day after Bhubaneswari had gone to another forest to pick flowers, she returned and saw one thousand cows as white as jasmine flowers come out of a lake and begin to lavishly bathe that great linga with milk. After circumambulating the linga, they returned to where they had come from. When she saw the same incident on another occasion, she took the form of a cowherd girl and began to follow those cows. She passed fifteen years in this way. While wandering in that forest one day, the two young demon brothers, Kritti and Vasa, became captivated by the unprecedented beauty of that cowherd girl and expressed to her their self-destructive, wicked intentions. Sati immediately disappeared from the sight of the two demons and remembered the lotus feet of Sambhu. As soon as Bhagavati remembered Mahadev, he immediately took the form of a cowherd boy and appeared before the cowherd-girl form of Sati. Sati in the form of a cowherd-

girl offered obeisances to Sambhu, who had taken the form of a cowherd boy. Mahadev said, "O Sati, I understand why you remembered me. There is no need to feel anxiety. By the will of the Supreme Lord these two demons have expressed wicked intentions to you to invite their own ruination. Let me explain to you their history in detail. There was once a king named Drumila who performed many sacrifices and thereby pleased the demigods. The demigods gave him the benediction that he would have two sons named Kritti and Vasa, who could not be killed by any weapons. So now, by the will of the Supreme Lord, you will have to kill those two sinful demons." Being ordered by her husband, Sati began to wander about within the forest in her form as a cowherd girl and within a short time she met those two demons. To deceive them, Sati told them, "I can fulfill your desires, but I have a condition. I will only become the wife of he who can carry me on his shoulder." Hearing Sati's statement, the two intoxicated brothers began to quarrel between themselves. Then Sati in her form as a cowherd girl placed her two feet on the shoulders of the two brothers and assumed the form of Viswambhari.-the one who has the power to carry the heavy burden of Vishwa (Creation).



By the weight of Sati, the two demons were crushed and destroyed. This Puranic incident concludes by describing that since that time, Sati and Sambhu, the husband of Sati, left their golden temple in Kasi and have been living in this Ekamraka forest.



After killing the two demons Kritti and Vasa by crushing them under her feet, Bhuvaneshwari fell asleep with an intense thirst. To quench Bhuvaneshwari's thirst, Mahadev pierced a mountain with the tip of his trident and created a reservoir of water. This reservoir of water became renowned as Sankaravapi. Yet Bhuvaneshwari desired to drink water from a properly established reservoir. Sambhu thus sent his bull-carrier to bring water from all the holy places and to invite Brahma to both establish that reservoir and to perform a sacrifice. Being invited by the bull-carrier, Brahma and other demigods came to this place and offered their obeisances to Lord Bhuvaneshwar. The bull then brought waters of the Mandakini and other sources from heaven, they also brought water from Prayag, Pushkar, the Ganga, Gangadwar, Naimisa, Prabhasa, Pitri-tirtha, Ganga-sagara-sangama, the Payosni, the Vipasa, the Satadru, the Kaveri, the Gomati, the Krishna, the Yamuna, Saraswati, Gandaki, Rsikulya, and Mahanadi rivers, as well as other sources from the earth, the milk ocean and different places in Patala. When

Bhubaneswar saw all the tirthas assembled there, he took up his trident and pierced a mountain and said, "I have decided to create a lake at this place. All of you offer one drop of water into this lake." After the tirthas followed the order of Sambhu, then Lord Janardan and the demigods headed by Brahma took bath therein. Bhubaneswar and his followers also happily entered into those waters. Bhubaneswar then said, "Now two pure reservoirs of water, Sankara-vapi and Bindu-sarovar, have been established. If one takes bath in Sankara-vapi, one will attain the same features as myself, and if one takes bath in Bindu-sarovar, one will attain my abode." Thereafter the topmost Vaishnava Sambhu offered his obeisances to Janardan and said, "O Purushottam, please reside with Ananta on the eastern bank of this lake and take the positions of My controller and protector of this abode." Since then Lord Ananta Vasudev has been blessing His dear Sankar by giving him His remnants and has been residing on the eastern bank of Bindu-sarovar as Sambhu's controller and protector of this abode. Thus Bhubaneswar Sambhu is worshiped by offerings of Sri Sri Ananta Vasudev's remnants.

[Bhubaneswar Sambhu is widely known today by the name "Lingaraj". Since the time of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta, the process of offering Lingaraj, Ananta Vasudev prasadam has been discontinued.]

In the Svarnadri-mahodaya it is stated that this Bindu-sarovar is also known by the name Manikarni and is the essence of all tirthas. If a person takes darsana of Sri Ananta Vasudev after taking a bath in Manikarni, he will certainly go to Vaikunthaloka. By giving charity to brahmanas and Vaishnavas at this place one obtains a hundred times the fruits obtained at other holy places, and by offering oblations here to the forefathers with the remnants of Sri Ananta Vasudev, the souls of one's forefathers obtain inexhaustible satisfaction. Taking a bath in this Bindu-sarovar is equal to taking a bath at all holy places. By having darsana of Sri Ananta Vasudev after taking bath, one attains unlimited fruits. Festivals like the candana-yatra and boat festivals of Sri Sri Ananta Vasudev and Sri Sri Madana-mohana are held in this Bindu-sarovar.

Srimad Bhagavatam was First Spoken in Bhubaneswar by Lord Siva

At Ekamra Kanana



Lord Siva and Parvati
The Srimad-Bhagavatam was first spoken in Bhubaneswar, Ekamra Kanana. Lord Siva was speaking to Paravti Devi. Lord Siva says:

aham vedmi suko vetti

vyaso vetti na vetti va

bhaktya bhagavatam grahyam

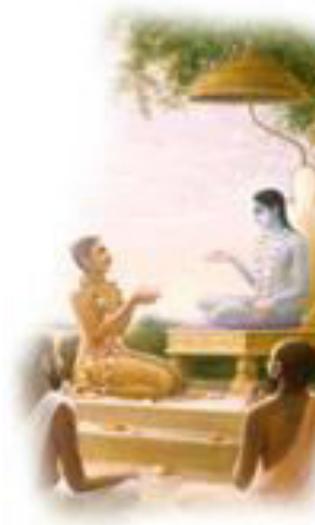
na buddhya na ca tikaya

[CC. Mad. 24.313]

“[Lord Siva said:] ‘I may know; Sukadeva Gosvami, the son of Vyasadeva, may know; and Vyasadeva may know or may not know Srimad-Bhagavatam. On the whole, Srimad-Bhagavatam, the spotless Purana, can be learned only through devotional service, not by material intelligence, speculative methods or imaginary commentaries.’”

“I know Bhagavata Sukadeva knows, I don’t know if Vyasadeva knows or not.” Bhagavata can only be understood by bhakti.

Lord Siva was speaking Srimad-Bhagavatam before Goddess Paravati here in Ekamra Kanana. At that time, a parrot was listening, suka means parrot. So at first Parvati Devi was listening and was saying “Hmm. Hmm, hmm. Then Parvati Devi fell asleep. That parrot was listening and saying “Hmm, hmm, hmm.” So Lord Siva couldn’t understand at first that Parvati Devi had fallen asleep then at last He noticed. So he thought who has been saying, “Hmm, hmm, hmm.” He saw a parrot sitting there so Lord Siva ran to catch the parrot but the parrot flew away. That suka then entered into the womb of Srila Vyasadeva’s wife. That parrot became Srila Sukadeva Goswami. This is how Sukadeva Goswami knows the Srimad-Bhagavatam. Bhubaneswar is such a famous place. It is known as Bhubaneswar-dhama, Bhubaneswar-ksetra. This is vaisnava-ksetra.



In Caitanya-Bhagavata, it is mentioned, that Mahaprabhu with His devotees came here to Bhubaneswar. They chanted and danced before Siva in the Bhubaneswar Lingaraja Temple. Took bath in Bindusarovar.



So following in the footsteps of Mahaprabhu all vaisnavas come and visit Bhubaneswar Shiva and chant and dance here.

As mentioned above following are the Places to Visit -

1) Lingaraj Temple, Bhubaneswar



Lingaraj Temple, Bhubaneswar's most well known landmark was built in 11th century by the Somavamsi Kings. Lingaraj is the best example of Orissa temple architecture.

The huge complex also houses the temple of Parvati and several other structures. Photography is strictly prohibited in the complex. Non – Hindus are not allowed inside the complex.



2) **Bindu Sarovar**

Considered one of the most sacred pools of Orissa, the Bindu Sarovar is also known as the Bindu Sagar. This sacred lake contains a drop of water from each of India's holy water bodies. The lake was created by Lord Shiva, while collecting the most pure waters of the earth to quench the thirst of his wife, Goddess Parvati. The lake becomes a hub of activity every year at the time of celebration of Ashokashtami festival. During this festival, the main deity from the Lingraja Temple is carried to the Bindu Sarovar and given a bath as a ritual. This procession consists of a lot of energy and enthusiasm and makes for a memorable sight.





3) Ananta Vasudev temple

Ananta Vasudeva Temple is a temple dedicated to Lord Krishna. The temple was constructed in the thirteenth century, and the deities of Krishna, Balarama and Subhadra are worshipped. Balarama (Ananta) stands under a seven hooded serpent. Subhadra holds Jewels pot and lotus in her two hands keeping her left foot over another jewel pot, while Krishna (Vasudev) holds a mace, chakra, lotus and a conch. The temple dates back to the period of Chandrika Devi, the daughter of Anangabhima III, during the reign of the king Bhanudeva. The western side of the temple lies near the bank of Bindu Sagar Lake.



4) ISKCON temple



History of ISKCON, Bhubaneswar

H.H Gaur Govind Maharaj began to preach in Bhubaneswar and translating Srila Prabhupada's books into Oriya. He printed a mini magazine and went door-to-door and office-to-office, preaching and collecting donations. Gradually some local devotees came forward to help him. From there he began his mission to fulfill Srila Prabhupada's desire for a temple in Bhubaneswar. In early 1977, after bringing water and electricity to the land, Srila Gour Govinda Swami requested Srila Prabhupada to come to Bhubaneswar. He arranged for Srila Prabhupada to stay comfortably in the government guesthouse, but Prabhupada refused, saying, "I will stay only where my disciple, Gour Govind has built a mud hut for me." Srila Prabhupada stayed in Bhubaneswar for seventeen days. He waited for Lord Nityananda's appearance day to lay the foundation stone of his last-founded project, in Orissa. The sannyasis and devotees accompanying Srila Prabhupada were surprised to see this jungle site. They said to Prabhupada, "This place is an out of the way place, a mud hut in the middle of the desert. There's nothing here. It would be better to build something at Puri. Why should we waste our time and money here?"

But Srila Prabhupada was adamant. “No! This place will be the heart of the city.”

When discussing with Srila Prabhupada the details of building a temple, Gour Govinda Swami said, “Prabhupada drove everyone out and called me into his room. He was there and I was there, no third person was there. No tape recording was going on. Nothing was there....calo! It is recorded in my heart. It is my asset. In a whispering voice he told me, “Gour Govind, they are objecting to a temple being built here. They want it at Puri. But I said, ‘No!’ I will do it here. This will be one of the best temples in the world, and it will be under your leadership.” At that time he told me, “You have to stay here. You have to do it.”

Srila Prabhupada gave specific instructions to Srila Gour Govinda Swami about the deities, their installation as well as the name of the temple. “He told me, ‘there is Krishna Balaram Mandir in Vrindavan. All right, do Krishna Balaram Mandir here.’ So this is Krishna Balaram Mandir. He said there should be three altars. The presiding deities, Sri Sri Krishna Balaram in the middle altar. Gour Nitai to Their right, and Jagannath, Balabhadra, Subhadra Devi Devi should be there because this is Orissa, the land of Jagannath. Except for Jagannath, Krishna-Balaram and Gour-Nitai will be made of brass and crafted in Orissa.” He also predicted that Jagannath would come on his own, and that prediction was fulfilled.

After Srila Prabhupada left this world on 14th November 1977, Srila Gour Govinda Swami preached extensively in Orissa and traveled all over the world. Many Western devotees came to help. Srila Gour Govinda Swami saw the temple almost complete in 1991 after a long 15 years of struggle. It was inaugurated on Nityananda Trayodasi day, the same auspicious occasion when in 1977 Srila Prabhupada laid the foundation stone.



As instructed by Srila Prabhupada, Srila Gour Govinda Swami installed Sri Gour Nitai, Sri Krishna Balaram and Sri Jagannath, Baladeva, Subhadra Devi Devi on three altars and named the temple Sri Krishna Balaram Temple.





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5) Kalinga War – King Ashoka

Bhubhaneshwar also is famous for historical site of battle of Kalinga won by King Ashoka . The banks of river Daya near foothills of Dhauli commemorate the incident.

