

# The Role of Archaeological Museums in Rayalaseema: Significant Aspects

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## INTRODUCTION ON DISTRICT ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM, ANANTPUR

The District Archaeological Museum, Anantapur is located in a Govt. building named after Sri Padmasree Kalluru Subba Rao, a renowned freedom fighter of the District and thrown open to public from 28-10-1992 onwards. There are totally 18 glass showcases kept in a big museum hall consisting the antiquities right from pre-historic times to the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Nearly 50 stone sculptures are displayed on the cement pedestals dated from 3<sup>rd</sup> C.A.D. to 18<sup>th</sup> C.A.D.<sup>1</sup>.

### *Introduction on District Archaeological Museum, Kadapa :*

Sri Bhagavan Mahavir Govt. Museum was established in 1982 and located near District Collector's Bungalow on the way to Railway Station. The museum has four galleries. The entrance gallery of stone sculptures representing with Hindu Gods and Goddess. The Middle Gallery is stands for the Jaina Tirthankaras. The antiquities right from the Pre-historic times to the Late Vijayanagara Period is displayed in third Gallery. The showcases having the prehistoric stone tools, Megalithic Pottery, Early Historical material such as Pottery, Coins, Terrocotta Figurines and Bronzes, Arms & Weapons, Bidri Ware, Paintings etc. The Fourth Gallery is exclusively devoted for the Hero stones<sup>2</sup>.

### *Introduction on District Archaeological Museum, Kurnool:*

The Dist. Archaeological Museum is located in Budhawarapera of Kurnool Town in a new Government building constructed on the right bank of Handri River and thrown open to public on 31-8-1999. Many of the antiquities are displayed in the glass showcases in 'L' shaped Museum Hall. The

antiquities particularly stone sculptures collected from the submerged villages of Srisailam Project and datable from Chalukyan period to late Vijayanagara periods have displayed on cement pedestals in and around the museum hall with in the compound wall. The museum is also housed Pre, Proto and Early Historic, archaeological Artefacts, Pottery, Sculptures, Bronzes, Arms and Weapons, Paintings and Inscriptions<sup>3</sup>.

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM, CHANDRAGIRI (CHITTOOR DISTRICT)

Chandragiri is located 14 km south of Tirupati, the famous Hindu pilgrimage center popularly known as Balaji. Tirupati is well connected by Air (Renigunta Airport) and train. Chandragiri, denoting the 'Hill of the Moon', is traditionally associated with Chandra the Moon god who performed penance at this place for pleasing Lord Siva. Punctuated with fertile lush green fields and hillocks this picturesque place attained prominence during the medieval times. It has many a religious structure like temple of Raja Rajeswari, Venugopala, Kartikeya, Siva and Hanuman at the entrance of the fort as guardian deity, ponds, tanks, sculptured, mandapas besides a well built fortification at the summit and at the foot of the hillock<sup>4</sup>.

Museum established in the Raja Mahal, within the fort, in the year 1988-89 exhibits rich collection of stone and metal sculptures and other cultural vestiges retrieved from other historical places like Gudimallam, District Chittoor; Gandikota, District Cuddapah and Yaganti, District Kurnool. The museum houses a number of stone and metal sculptures of Saiva, Vaishnava and Jaina affinity. The replica of the Svedika Siva Linga (c. 2 century BC), with the robust relief of Rudra on its frontal facet from the Parasuramesvara temple of Gugimallam is

also displayed. The other artifacts retrieved from the excavations conducted around the Siva Linga in the sanctum of the said temple are also displayed<sup>5</sup>.

#### BHAGWAN MAHAVIR MUSEUM, KADAPA

Bhagwan Mahavir Museum is a government museum that exhibits artifacts of great archaeological and historical significance. It is in the historical city of Cuddapah. The museum was established in 1982 with donations from Jain businessmen and as a result it was named after their main deity, Mahavir<sup>6</sup>.

#### *Dam Site Museum Mylavaram (V), Dr.Y.S.R. Kadapa District*

Dam Site Museum, Mylavaram was established in 1981 on the banks of river Pennar. The Irrigation Department had constructed a major reservoir project in the year 1978. They have also collected so many stone sculptures and other antiquities from submerged villages. Therefore, it is needed to establish a Site Museum to display the antiquities. The museum housed stone tools, stone sculptures, metal objects, wooden objects and terracotta etc. The collection is spread over one galleries and open space around the building. The total were displayed 218 sculptures dated from 1<sup>st</sup> century A.D. to the post Vijayanagara periods<sup>7</sup>.

#### REFERENCES

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