

## Rock cut caves, Udaygiri and Khandagiri



Orissa



Twin hills known as Udaygiri and Khandagiri contain excavated rock cut caves utilized for Jaina monastic retreats. There are altogether 18 caves in Udaygiri hill and 17 caves in Khandagiri hill. These caves were excavated by Kharvela and his successors in the early centuries of the Christian era. Most of the caves consist of a row of cells with portico and a courtyard. The cells have pilaster on either side with crowning animal figures and arches over them. These are decorated with flowers, creepers and animal motives.



**Contributions solicited in the range of Rs. 25 - 100 Lakhs for following activities:**

1. Conservation and preservation of monuments.
2. Environmental development.
3. Tourist facilities.

## Buddhist Site, Ratnagiri



Orissa



Ratnagiri in District Jajpur in Orissa is located at a distance of about 70 km from Cuttack. Extensive excavations conducted at the site brought to light remains of a magnificent Buddhist settlement consisting of *stupas*, monastic complexes and temples hitherto unparalleled in Orissa and comparable to the well known Buddhist



site of Nalanda. The place has been identified as Ratnagiri monastery on the basis of sealings containing the legend “*Sri Ratnagiri Mahavihariya-aryabhikshu sanghasya*”. It has been established from the available evidence that constructional activities started at the site as early as the fifth century AD. This continued till the 12<sup>th</sup> century AD. Two other Buddhist sites, namely Lalitgiri and Udaigiri are in close vicinity.

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## Buddhist Site, Udaigiri

Recent excavations from 1985 to 1989 have brought to light remains of a large monastic complex, measuring 35 m square, a modest brick *stupa*, a good number of unique sculptures of the Buddha and other Buddhist divinities.

The site was known as *Madhavapur Mahavihara* in its heyday as evident from seals and sealings recovered from the excavations. The antiquity of the Buddhist remains of Udaigiri is datable to eighth century AD.



Orissa



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## Archaeological Site, Lalitgiri



Orissa



Lalitgiri, a site of the Buddhist Monastic Triangle (the other two being Udaigiri and Ratnagiri) in Jajpur district, is one of the earliest Buddhist sites in Orissa. Recent excavations here have revealed a *stupa* on the hill-top, four monasteries, an apsidal *chaitya-griha*, numerous sculptures of Buddha and other *Mahayana* divinities, myriads of votive *stupas*, inscriptions, antiquities and other art objects.

Lalitgiri is the only site in Orissa where the finding of a relic casket was reported. The excavation results show that the cultural sequence of Lalitgiri ranged from the post Mauryan (2<sup>nd</sup> century BC) to the medieval times in an unbroken sequence.



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