



Unfamiliar Temple Tourist Spots in Rayalaseema- Significance to Anantapur and Kurnool Districts

Mr. G. N. Venkateswara Rao, (PhD)

Research Scholar
Dept. of History & Archaeology
Acharya Nagarjuna University
Guntur.

Dr N Venkateshwarlu,

Lecturer in History,
VSR Govt Degree College, Mova, Krishna.

The **temple** is designed to dissolve the boundaries between man and the divine. Religion tourism is a popular trend among the tourists. Rayalaseema comprises of four southern-most districts -Anantapur, Chittoor, Kurnool and Kadapa- in Andhra Pradesh. The region got its name because it was under the rule of Krishna Deva Raya and is a mineral rich region. While the tourism there is not as highlighted as the other districts in the erstwhile united Andhra Pradesh; there are many places that one must see in the region. This paper tries to bring out some of the unfamiliar temples situated in the districts of Anantapur and Kurnool in order to cater the needs of pilgrimage tourists who visit both districts.

Unfamiliar Temple Tourist Spots in Anantapur District

Anantapur District is the biggest district of Andhra Pradesh. It is situated in the western part of Deccan plateau and forms the southernmost part of Rayalaseema. Anantapur District was formed in the year 1882 having been separated from Bellary district. Anantapur district has fairly good elevation which provides the district with tolerable climate. Anantapur is the

southern-most district of the Rayalaseema region of Andhra Pradesh. While agriculture remains the most important economic activity of the district, it is characterised by high levels of instability and uncertainty. Being located in the rain-shadow region of Andhra Pradesh, the district is drought-prone. The methodology consists of a combination of secondary data analysis and primary surveys, interviews and consultation with a cross-section of people. While an analysis of secondary data on Anantapur District provides a macro-picture of changes in the district as a whole, the personal interaction with key informants provides an insight into specific local concerns. Despite the fact that this drought prone district has rich tourism potential, many places do not find their place as tourist centers in the tourism map of the AP with the exception of Lepakshi and Timmamma Marri Manu. Tourism potential if properly harnessed can bring about prosperity and development to the district where the alternative for development are non-existing. Only a few which require huge investment and take a long time to recoup.

Alurukona



This place is well known for its waterfall 25 to 30 feet in height. It is 4 miles from Tadipatri. This waterfall and picturesque surroundings with hills and trees all around is worth a visit for picnickers though the track is not easy to negotiate. From the Ranganathaswamy temple, the view is enchanting. There are a number of mantapas at the foot of the waterfall. The temple of Ranganatha", is to the western edge of the mountain stream. The car festival of the temple deity comes off in chaitra (April-March) on the full moon day and is well attended. The festival is conducted at Aluru and the idols are then brought from the temple to the village. This spot can be converted into a tourist centre by constructing of swimming pool.

Bhairavani Thippa

This place is about 28 miles from Kalyandurg and is named after Bhyrava whose temple lies on the hillock nearby. This otherwise insignificant village is the site of the Bhairavanithippa project which harnesses the water of the Hagiri. The original village at the foot of the hillock was evacuated to facilitate the construction of the dam.

Bukkapatnam

The village is 18 miles north east of Penugonda on the eastern bank of Chitravathi River at the foot of Mallappakonda range of hills. The hillocks around the tank here are full of temples of which the important are Vajragiri Venkataramana Swamy, Anjaneya Swamy, Ahobila Swamy and Thirumalaraya. The car festival of Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy is held during March / April and draws pilgrims from different parts of the district.

Bukkarayasamudram

The village is at the northern end of the Anantapur tank and is believed to have been constructed by Chikkappa Odeyar, Bukka I's-Minister. A fort to the north of the village is now in ruins. The temples of Veerabhadra and Bhadrakali greet the visitors at the entrance. On top of the Devarakonda hill there is a temple of Kondameedarayudu. A car festival for this deity in Magha (January-February) attracts a large concourse from the neighboring villages. This is a railway junction on the Bangalore - Guntakal line.

Gadekal

The village 16 miles north of Uravakonda is widely known for the Samadhi (Tomb) of Bheema Lingeswara Kavi. Bheemakavi is a legendary figure whose life appears to be similar to that of Vemulavada Bhima Kavi of E.G. District and Vemulavada of Karimnagar District. A massive temple in granite was built over the Samadhi of the poet at this place. The local 'Besthas' officiate as priests at the shrine.

Gandlapenta

Katarupalle the village is situated 10 miles east of Kadiri, the place owes its importance mainly to the existence of the tomb reputed to be that of Vemana a great telugu poet and philosopher, who lies buried at Katarupalle. A Mantapam has also been built near the Samadhi. A five day festival is held in memory of Saint on Chaitra Suddha Navami (March-April).

Gutibayalu

This place is about 21 kms. South-East of Kadiri. There is a Banyan Tree, perhaps the biggest of its kind in the South, its branches spreading over nearly 5 acres, locally called "Thimmamma Marrimanu"



after the name of Thimmamma, who is said to have committed " Sati" in 1434 A.D at this spot, where this Banyan Tree sprouted.

Hemavathi

Hemavathi is located at a distance of 140kms from Anantapur. It is famous for Doddeswara Swamy temple built during the Pallava Reign. The stone used in making the idols sounds like metal when struck and is also remarkably polished. A Nandi made of black basalt granite, 8 feet in length and 4 feet in height sits at the entrance. There is a 6 feet tall Lingam installed inside the sanctum sanctorum. The temple area houses two other temples dedicated to Lord Shiva called the Siddeswara Swamy temple and Mallikarjuna Swamy temple. There is a Museum in side which has rare idols of historical importance of display.

Jambu Dweepa at Konakondla

The Jain Mythical cosmographical diagram of Jambu Dweepa engraved on a stone on the top of the hill Alchemists at Konakondla village in Vajrakarur Mandal which was identified by Sri R.V. Chakravarthy, Head Master, Parishad High School, Konakondla in the year 1966. The pilgrims, especially south Indian Jain pilgrims are mostly attracted by this Jambu Dweepa which is 70 kms from Anantapur or 10 kms from Guntakal Railway Station. Adjacent to this, there are Kambam Narasimha Swamy Hills, Rasasidda hillock and Kari Basappa hillock. There is a Thirthanka Temple with idols of Thirthankaras (high priests) on Rasasidda hillock. This may belong to 13 th Century A.D.

Unfamiliar Temple Tourist Spots in Kurnool District

The district of Kurnool has occupied a special place in our state especially in spirituality. Many temples that attract even foreign pilgrims are located in the district. It is being praised as the main tourist centre especially with the temples of Lord Siva. The historical evidences are available to show that many great spiritual leaders visited the temples of our district. Here are the Nallamalla Forests, the centre of attraction with the natural wealth trees and the forest. In this region we have Srisaillam, Mahanandi, Ahobilam and 'Yagant' as main visiting places.

"Roja Darga" the symbol for the unity of Hindus and Muslims

'Roja Darga' located on the banks of river Tungabhadra in Kumool town is the symbol of unity between Hindus and Muslims. Though it is the temple of Muslims, more Hindus visit the place and worship). As the people have the strong conviction that their desires will be realized when they visit the Darga, many Hindus and Muslims visit the Darga on every Thursday and Friday. It's the opinion of some Muslim Peetadhipathees that it is due to the power of this Darga that the floods of the river Tungabhadra do not affect the region and the people.

The History of the Darga

A well known story of this region that Baba Hajarat Syed Shaw Ishhak Sanavulla Khadri who came from Bagdad' when he was eighteen and did (relay fasting) in village called Bamala' for 50 years. Later he went to Bagdad' once again and got married and gave birth to Syed Shaw Taj Mohammad Kahdri.



It was known that his son Khadri came to Kumool and settled in a small village called Boja'. He promoted the feeling of brotherhood by being close to both Hindus and Muslims and people started calling him as Baba'. It is in popularity that his name and fame had spread as his fortune telling also could become real. It is the opinion of some Muslim elders that it is due to the glory of Baba the natural calamities were stopped in the region.

The Temple of Sri Malla Malleswara Swamy (Guttu Mallappa)

The temple of 'Guttu Mallappa' is located near by the village 'Neradi', in 'plolaguna' mandal of Adoni Revenue division, on a hill, 800 ft above the seashore. It is also known as the temple of 'Harihara'. It also teacher the religious harmony that 'Hariharas' are the one. For every Vijaaya Dasami' the annual celebrations' are conducted in hilly rich manner.

The Temple of Sri Ranamandala Anjaneya Swamy

It is located in "Yadagir' of 'Adorn' mandal. This is the historical background of the temple belied by most of the people. The great hermit Vyasa was on the visit to the southern part of India, especially Yadagiri of Adoni mandal along with his disciples. at That was the afternoon and the time of worship when he could 'not find any temple or God in that place, with his power of penance and wealth of his philosophical thought pours down some water on a particular stone from his pot which was changed as the statue of Anjaneya. It was worshipped greatly by Vyasa and his disciples. It is a well known belief that Sri Krishnadevaraya used to

visit this God and receive his blessings before he begins his Vijaya Yatra.

The Temple of Sri Manikanta Ayyappa Swamy

This is located at the heart of Kurnool beside K.C. Canal in Saphthagiri Colony on the main road. This is evergreen with ever visits of tourists, and devotees. The atmosphere is always colorful with every Pujas, Abhishekam and special weekly Pujas. The Statue of Swamy was dedicated on Nov 28, 2001 which has become-the crown of Kurnool as well as Rayalaseema.

We can visit Varasiddi Vinayaka at the edge of K.C. Canal, Vigneswara, Subhramanya, and Ayyappa at the entrances ever green garden on both sides of the way. The romantic statues in difference angles of dance please our hearts. It is appreciable that the temple is very convenient to Ayyappa Maladharas, devotees and tourists as well.

Sri Lakshmi Jagannada Swamy Gattu

"Sri Lakshmi Jagannada Swamy Gattu" is very holy and glorious temple among the temples of our holy India. It is located at the village of Lakshmi Puram in Kalluru Mandal of Kurnool district. It is 10 k.m. away from Kurnool by the side of N.H. 7. The specialty of this temple is that this Sri Lakshmi Jagannada Swamy was self existed in the shape of linga. The other visiting places of this particular temple are the temples of Govinda Rajulu, and Anjaneya Swamy, tomb of Sadhu Narayana, Tamarind tree, etc.

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