

*Archaeological Survey of India  
Guwahati Circle  
Selected Newspaper Cutting*

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*The Assam Tribune  
18<sup>th</sup> July 2012*

**Regional workshop**

GUWAHATI, July 17 – The Archaeological Survey of India is going to organise a regional workshop on 'Archaeology of North-Eastern India' on July 20 and 21 along with a photo exhibition at the Hotel Brahmaputra Ashok, Guwahati. The workshop aims to dwell on recent prehistoric and historical investigations carried out by various eminent scholars of the region. It would offer participants a platform to exchange opinions views and theories and also help in establishing a well defined chronological framework. – Staff Reporter

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**Archaeological Survey of India**  
**Guwahati Circle**  
**Selected Newspaper Cutting**

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*Purvanchal Prahari*  
*19<sup>th</sup> July 2012*

**पुरातत्व विभाग का दो दिवसीय कार्यशाला कल से**

गुवाहाटी, 18 जुलाई (एसं)। उत्तर-पूर्वोत्तर भारत पुरातत्व विभाग की ओर से लोगों में पुरातत्व विभाग के प्रति जागरूकता फैलाने के लिए 20 जुलाई से दो दिवसीय क्षेत्रीय कार्यशाला का आयोजन नगर के ब्रह्मपुत्र अशोक होटल में किया जाएगा। इसकी जानकारी आज भारतीय पुरातत्व विभाग, गुवाहाटी मंडल के पुरातत्वविद डा. एसएस गुप्ता ने अपने कार्यालय में आयोजित एक संवाददाता सम्मेलन में दी। इस अवसर पर उन्होंने कहा कि जिन स्थानों पर खुदाई होनी थी, उन स्थानों पर शायद खुदाई नहीं हो पाई। जिसके कारण अभी भी बहुत कुछ ऐतिहासिक धरोहर भूमि के अंदर छुपी हो सकती है। यह आज भी चर्चा का विषय बना हुआ है। गुप्ता ने कहा कि कुछ ऐसे भी तथ्य हैं, जिससे यह पता चलता है कि नव पाषाण काल के पहले से ही खेती

होता था। कामाख्या मंदिर का प्रथम निर्माण शायद 8वीं सदी में हुआ था, इस मंदिर के कुछ ईंट से यह भी पता चलता है कि इसका पुनः निर्माण 16वीं सदी में कोच राजवंशी के राजा नर नारायण के शासन काल में हुआ था। जो करीब 15-16वीं सदी के बीच का समय बताया जाता है। जिससे यह अनुमान लगाया जाता है कि करीब 1300 सौ साल पहले इस मंदिर की स्थापना हुआ था। गुप्ता ने प्रागज्योतिषपुर पर कहा कि यह स्पष्ट रूप से कहा नहीं जा सकता कि यहीं क्षेत्र प्राग ज्योतिषपुर है। अनुमानतः प्रागज्योति एवं जयंतिया हिल के बीच के स्थानों को प्रागज्योतिषपुर मान लिया गया है। नगर के काहिलीपाड़ा स्थित खुदाई से भी कई तरह के मूर्तियां एवं ऐतिहासिक धरोहर मिले हैं। 17वां सदी के राजा भास्कर बर्मन के पहले का कोई प्रमाण नहीं मिलता है।

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*Archaeological Survey of India  
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Selected Newspaper Cutting*

*The Telegraph*

*19<sup>th</sup> July 2012*

# ASI workshop to highlight region's past



**UNFOLDING HISTORY**

**A STAFF REPORTER**

**July 18:** The Guwahati circle of the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) will hold a regional-level workshop on the Archaeology of North-Eastern India at a city hotel on July 20 and 21.

The workshop will highlight the numerous historic findings from across the Northeast.

The workshop will be accompanied by an exhibition titled Archaeological Discoveries in North-East India where people will get to see interesting photographs of historical

sites and objects.

Archaeologists from the entire Northeast will participate in the two-day workshop.

"During excavations we have found relics and objects of historical and pre-historic importance from different parts of the northeastern states. In fact, several archaeological findings have revealed that the earliest inhabitants of this region belonged to the middle Pleistocene period. Paleolithic findings were excavated from different sites like the Daphabum area in Lohit district of Arunachal Pradesh, Khangkhui cave site,

Songbu and Tharon cave site in Manipur, Tilla site in Tripura, Rongram valley of Garo Hills in Meghalaya. Prevalence of upper Paleolithic and Mesolithic cultures have also been found here," said S.S. Gupta, superintending archaeologist of the Guwahati circle of the ASI.

"We have also found the presence of megaliths in the form of raised upright monoliths and horizontally laid tables and this tradition still prevails among the Naga, Khasi, Jaintia and Karbi tribes. Various investigations that have been made so far have to be

now assessed in a chronological manner and the workshop will focus on this. The participants will also focus on the ways the existing archaeological sites in the region can be preserved. Various valuable photographs of the discoveries made by archaeologists will also be displayed in an exhibition," said Gupta.

The archaeological department also highlighted the kind of problems they faced while carrying out excavations at the Ambari site in the city.

"The Ambari site is prominent as we have encountered structural evidence from the

lowest level of the site that appears to be of the Sunga-Kushana period that dates back to the 2nd century BC. Nowhere in the Northeast have we found any other site, which dates back to such an early period. We have also found ceilings with inscriptions of this age. But the problem is we could not dig further as water emerged after a certain level, mainly because Ambari is a low-lying area. However, this has not damaged the site in any manner. If we dig deeper we are sure to find more evidence of the Sunga-Kushana period," he added.

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**Archaeological Survey of India  
Guwahati Circle  
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*Eastern Chronicle*

21<sup>st</sup> July 2012

**MEET ON ARCHAEOLOGY**

**Bold steps from ASI  
needed to save monuments  
from encroachment:  
Prof Phukan**

**CHRONICLE NEWS SERVICE**

Guwahati: "Human being is the main enemy for our ancient monuments, not nature." JN Phukan, retired Professor of History Department, Gauhati University, said this at the regional conference on archaeology of North-east India here on Friday.

Addressing the delegates from all the States of the North-eastern region in the inaugural session of the conference, JN Phukan said, "It is unfortunate that the people living near the monument sites encroach the lands of those sites and narrow them down. And hence there should be aggressive and affirmative action taken from ASI (Archaeological Survey of India) side to stop the encroachments in these areas."

Participating in the conference held at Hotel Brahmaputra Ashok, here Director General of ASI, New Delhi, Gautam Sengupta said, "Archaeological Survey of India can improve coordination with the local communities and research scholars and can help in better preservation of the historical monuments from various parts of the North-eastern region." However he preferred not to make any comment on any strategic plans from ASI to pressurise the State



A view of Rang Ghar, a monument in Assam

**"There are only 79 monuments from the North-east being listed in the ASI list which is very less"**

**AK Sinha**

Director  
ASI, New Delhi

Governments for conservation of the monuments of historical importance many of which have been in dilapidated conditions and need special attention.

In the presidential address of the inaugural ceremony, AK Sinha, Director of ASI, New Delhi said, "As I have noted down that there are only 79 monuments from the North-east being listed in the ASI list which is very less. I feel that more number of monuments from this region should be included in the list."

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Guwahati Circle  
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*Seven Sister Post*

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# ASI pitches for heritage tag to Ahom-era monuments

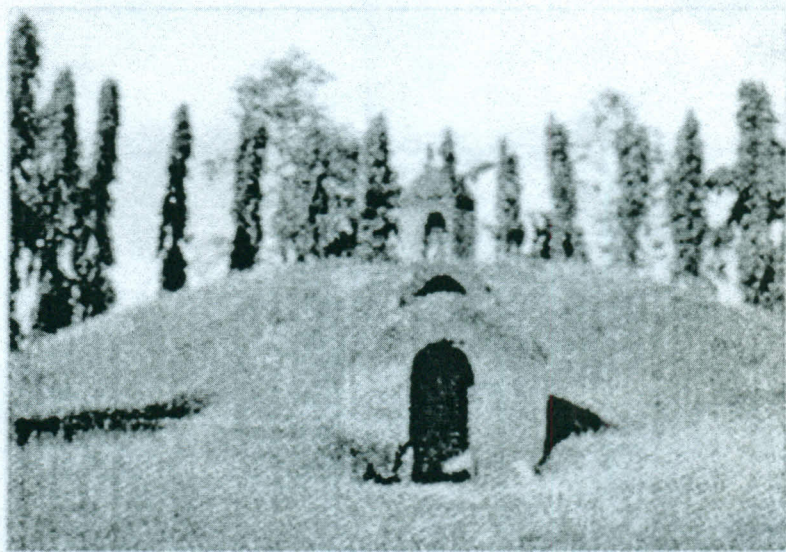
■ DEEPIKA PATAR  
GUWAHATI JULY 20

THE plethora of architectural heritage dating back to the Ahom reign could be Assam's next claimant for a World Heritage Site tag.

With Majuli's claim still hanging fire, the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has made a case for proposing the Ahom heritage for protection under the Unesco's World Heritage Site cultural landscape project.

"The group of monuments spread over Sivasagar district bears testimony to the rich heritage of the Ahom kingdom. There are no parallels in the country like the Ahom monuments. And, we feel, the monuments have enough value to be collectively preserved as a 'World Heritage Site,'" said A.K. Sinha, ASI director, on Friday during the Regional Conference on Archaeology of North-East India at Hotel Brahmaputra Ashok.

Sinha also lamented that despite the historical and archaeological importance of the Ahom monuments, the state government was



Moment by Datta

Charaideo maidam in Sivasagar. It is believed the maidams at Charaideo are comparable only to the pyramids of Egypt

doing precious little for their scientific preservation and upkeep.

The Ahom-age monuments are scattered over a vast area in Sivasagar district — Sivasagar town, Gaurisagar, Joysagar, Gargaon and Charaideo — which was once the base of the 600-year long reign. The monuments include temples known as 'doulis', palaces, underground secret passages, tanks, a rock-bridge,

an open-air amphitheatre and the burial places of kings and nobles known as 'maidams', comparable to the pyramids of the Pharaohs and the Mayan kings of Peru.

In fact, the Ahom rulers shaped the map of present Assam, building a homogeneous state by bringing together tribes and communities under one umbrella from the time the first ruler arrived in the state in 1228.

► Turn on P4

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*Continued from p1*

Sinha claimed that the Ahom doulis — there are several of them — are the only monuments which are also found in Myanmar.

JN Phukan, retired professor of history from Gauhati University, said that the maidams at Charaideo are 'comparable only to the pyramids of Egypt'.

The ASI has several Ahom-age monuments under its protection that include the Karanghar, the group of four maidams at Charaideo, the palace at Gargaon, several doulis, the Gaurisagar tank, the Ranghar and eight canons of the Ahom period on the bank of the Sivasagar tank.

SS Gupta, superintending archaeologist at ASI's Guwahati circle told Seven Sisters Post that in 2010 they had sent a proposal nominating the Ahom monuments as a world cultural heritage site to the director general at New Delhi but the proposal was put on the backburner.

"We were assured that our proposal will be taken up for

consideration. We are again planning to send our proposal," said Gupta.

ASI officials informed that all protected monuments/sites can be classified into various categories such as — megaliths; temples and temple ruins, rock-cut cave temples, rock-cut reliefs and sculptures of Hindu, Buddhist and Jain deities, monoliths; forts, pavilion, palaces, and other secular structures.

The ASI central team said that that due to the apathetic attitude of the state government, many archaeological sites still remained unexplored. "It is the state government which has to come forward with proposals for nomination of world heritage sites," Sinha added.

Commenting on the Majuli issue, Sinha said that for Majuli to become a world cultural heritage site, the problem of the erosion and floods in the island have to be controlled. "We will push Majuli's case once again as per guidelines of the Unesco," Sinha said.

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*The Assam Tribune*

*26<sup>th</sup> July 2012*

# **150 years of archaeology body celebrated**

## **STAFF REPORTER**

GUWAHATI, July 25 – The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) as part of its 150th anniversary celebrations organised a two-day regional conference on 'Archaeology of North-eastern India', which concluded in the city on Saturday, stated a press release.

Scholars from Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya and Nagaland participated in the event which deliberated upon important aspects of archaeology in the region.

Dr Gautam Sengupta, Direc-

tor General, ASI, New Delhi, stressed the need for ASI to improve its coordination with the local communities and research scholars, which he said would ensure better preservation of historical monuments situated in various parts of the North-east.

The chief guest, Prof. JN Phukan, Professor of History, Gauhati University, called for taking "aggressive and affirmative" action from the side of ASI to stop encroachments in and around the Centrally-protected monuments.

In his presidential address,

AK Sinha, Director, ASI, emphasised on the need of including more monuments/sites from the north-eastern region in the Centrally-protected list.

On the first day of the academic session, 10 papers were presented. The first paper titled 'Heritage of North-East India' presented by AK Sharma, Retired Superintending Archaeologist, AST & currently Archaeological Advisor in the Dept of Culture, Government of Chhatisgarh highlighted the rich archaeological heritage of the North-east, as evident from the excavations

at Sekta in Manipur, Bhaitbari in West Garo Hills District of Meghalaya and explorations conducted in Nagaland.

Dr Paromita Das, Associate Professor, Dept of History, Gauhati University, in her paper 'Historical Archaeology of Kapili-Jamuna Valley of Assam' presented a glimpse of the material remains in the form of temple ruins, and stone & terracotta sculptures of an ancient flourishing kingdom in the Kapili-Jamuna Valley.

A search for recurrent associated elements within the structured symbolic practice of

erecting megaliths in Cherrapunjee in relation to their contextual meaning was presented by Dr Sukanya Sharma, Associate Professor, Dept of HSS, ITT, Guwahati in her paper 'Megaliths of Cherrapunjee.'

In his paper 'Some Collections of Terracotta Plaques, Panels & Art Motifs in the Archaeological Museum, Sri Suryapahar', Bimal Sinha, Asstt Superintending Archaeologist, Sri Suryapahar Archaeological Museum showed the terracotta plaques and art motifs preserved in the archaeo-

logical museum, Sri Suryapahar in Goalpara district of Assam which throws light on different cultural aspects of life as depicted in these plaques during the historical past in the region.

The two-day conference concluded with the valedictory function chaired by Dr RD Chaudhury, former Director General, National Museum, New Delhi.

A photo exhibition on 'Archaeological discoveries of North-East India' was also organised during the conference, the release concluded.

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