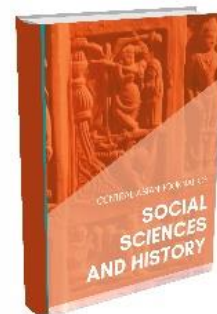




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Important Archaeological Sites in Undivided Midnapore District: An Overview

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ABSTRACT

Numerous prehistoric sites in the West Midnapore district are currently being excavated. These sites are significant in the history of Midnapore and the partition of Midnapore. Buddhism and Jainism seem to have had a significant effect on the area in the past. Samudragupta-issued coins have been discovered close to the town. This area was formerly a part of the Kalinga (prehistoric Odisha) kingdom. A portion of undivided Midnapore was included in the realms of Shashanka and Harshavardhana. The present study is undertaken to explore the archeological sites of undivided Midnapore district.

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Introduction:

The Medinipur district of the Indian state of West Bengal is headquartered in Midnapore. On the banks of the Kangsabati River, also known as Kasai and Cossye, is where it is located. In India's struggle for independence, this region had played a pioneering role. The sons of the soil of Midnapore include several independence warriors who valiantly faced the death penalty. They had gladly offered their lives on the independence pyre in order to liberate their country from the bonds of servitude.

The origins of the name Medinipur are subject to dispute. According to one story, Medinipur was given its name after the local goddess Medinimata, which means "mother of the world" and is an embodiment of the Shakti. According to a different story, Midnapur was given its name because, in its heyday, it had more mosques than Medinipur combined.

Numerous prehistoric sites in the West Midnapore district are currently being excavated. These sites

are significant in the history of Midnapore and the partition of Midnapore. Buddhism and Jainism seem to have had a significant effect on the area in the past. Samudragupta-issued coins have been discovered close to the town. This area was formerly a part of the Kalinga (prehistoric Odisha) kingdom. A portion of undivided Midnapore was included in the realms of Shashanka and Harshavardhana. However, the bustling port of Tamralipta, which is close to modern-day Tamluk and was mentioned in the travelogues of Fa Hien and Hiuen Tsang, is the most important archaeological site in the area. The Chaitanya Charitamrita records that later Chaitanya travelled through the region on his trip from Puri to Varanasi. Gajapati Mukunda Deva, the last independent Hindu dynasty to govern over Kalinga-Utkala, fell in the 16th century, and this area was afterwards administered by Jaleswar Sarkar, one of the five Sarkars of Mughalbandi Odisha, under the Subehdar of Odisha. Tamluk, Soro, and Dhalbhumgarh in the south, together with the Bay of Bengal in the east, were the northern and southern boundaries of Jalshwar. During the reign of Shah Jehan, Bahadur Khan was in charge of Jaleswar Sarkar or Hijli (which included Midnapore). Shah Shuja, Shah Jehan's younger son and Bengal's subshdar at the time, triumphed against him.

Objectives: The present study is undertaken to explore the archeological sites of undivided Midnapore district.

BANKATI:

This location is part of the Sankrail PS subdivision in Jhargram. Here, hundreds of stone-age weapons going back to that era have been found. Here, you may also find miniature Mesolithic-era weapons and weapons constructed of quartzite that date to the Neolithic and Mesolithic periods. Here, weapons such as pebble tools, scrapers, and cutters have been found.

CHAUGARH:

This location is part of the Gopiballavpur PS subdivision of Jhargram. Here, hundreds of stone weapons have been found, the majority of which are quartzite pebble tools. Chart stone is used to make arrowheads, scrapers, and blades from the Mesolithic era. Additionally discovered here are Neolithic-era sand stone pebble tools.

CHHOTOTURKI:

This hamlet in the Gopiballavpur PS of the Jhargram subdivision is where Neolithic and Mesolithic-era weaponry have been discovered. Stone tools from the Mesolithic period, like as arrowheads and scrapers, are formed of chartreuse.

DHANSJOL:

In the Gopiballavpur PS of the Jhargram sub-division, weapons from the lower, middle, and upper Palaeolithic periods have been discovered. There are also quartzite-made weapons like axes, scrapers, cutters, etc. available.

DOLKI:

This hamlet is located in the Jhargram subdivision's Nayagram PS. Here, several stone-age weaponry have been discovered. These tools date from the Lower Palaeolithic through the Neolithic. Lower Palaeolithic weaponry were fashioned of quartzite, whereas axes, arrowheads, scrapers, and other tools were created of chart stone during the upper Palaeolithic period. The same stone was used to make cutters, blades, and arrowheads in the middle Palaeolithic. There was also a Neolithic axe made of sand stone discovered nearby.

GHORIPINCHA:

This location is in the Jhargram subdivision's Gopiballavpur PS. Here, many kinds of stone artefacts from the lower Palaeolithic through the Neolithic periods have been found. Here, you may find pebble tools, axes, and cleavers. Quartzite was used to make axe and arrowheads in the middle Palaeolithic period. Neolithic artefacts, including as arrowheads, have been found here.

HATIBARI:

This location is in the Jhargram subdivision's Gopiballavpur PS. Here, quartzite-made cutter weapons from the lower Palaeolithic period have been uncovered. Pebble Neolithic tools may also be discovered here. Weapons from the Palaeolithic period include 'U' and 'V' letter shapes. Here, you may find both abbevillian and achullian weapons.

HATIMARA:

This location is in the Jhargram subdivision's Gopiballavpur PS. Here, hand axes and cutters made of quartzite from the lower Palaeolithic period as well as a blade and scraper made of chart stone from the middle Palaeolithic period, round-shaped proto-evidence made of sand stone from the Neolithic period, and a chisel have been found.

JAMAGARA:

This location, in the Gopiballavpur PS of the Jhargram sub-division, has lower and middle Palaeolithic artefacts on display.

In the village of Karkata, in the Binpur PS of the Jhargram sub-division, a significant prehistoric site has been found. From this location, a large number of stone weapons were collected. Most of these date to the Palaeolithic period. The Neolithic period was not found here.

KAYASOL:

This hamlet is in the Gopiballavpur PS of the Jhargram sub-division, and it is the source of many of the stone weapons that have been found. Here, weapons from the Mesolithic and lower and middle Palaeolithic periods have been discovered.

KELE JHARIA:

Jhargram PS is responsible for this location. Here, stone weapons from the Mesolithic and lower and middle Palaeolithic periods have been discovered. Here, mesolithic weaponry have been discovered, including scrapers, arrowheads, blades, and triangular stone weapons. These weapons made of chart stone are crucial.

KURCHIBANI:

This location is in the Nayagram PS of the Jhargram Subdivision. Here, weapons from the Mesolithic and lower Palaeolithic periods have been discovered. Mesolithic weapons were fashioned of chart stone, whereas these were constructed of quartz stone.

KURUMBERIA:

This location is located in the Jhargram subdivision's Gopiballavpur. From this site, remnants of lower Palaeolithic and Mesolithic cultures have been found. Mesolithic cutlery, blades, and arrowheads have been discovered here.

MACHA BANDHA:

Here, artefacts from the Palaeolithic, Mesolithic, and Neolithic eras have been found. Here, quartzite-made hand axes from the lower Palaeolithic era have been found. Ring stone weapons may be among the Neolithic artefacts mentioned.

Other important pre-historic sites:

Sl. No.	Name of the site	Sub-division	PS
1.	Mantabani	Jhargram	Jamboni
2.	Payrakuli	Jhargram	Gopiballavpur
3.	Panbaraj	Jhargram	Gopiballavpur
4.	Panisol	Jhargram	Gopiballavpur
5.	Phulladiha	Jhargram	Nayagram
6.	Pandapeta	Jhargram	Gopiballavpur
7.	Purnapani	Jhargram	Gopiballavpur
8.	Raybani	Jhargram	Gopiballavpur
9.	Salgeria	Jhargram	Gopiballavpur

Besides this, the sites of Subarnarekha basin, mention should be made of Sasara, Taldangra, Tenlate, Tikayetpur,, Urusbhanga, Astajuri, Amarshi, Barabhum, Baludi, Baharasol, Champakhal, Champahati, Garbeta, Gidhni, Gopagriha, Kalgaon, Kukrakhupi, Karnagarh, Lalgarrh, Salboni, Sapkota pahar and Bhelia etc. also.

Historical Temple of Medinipur :

Chapaleswar (Shiva) temple, Karnagarh

The historical landmarks include at 1851, the Jagannath Temple at Nutan Bazar was constructed, presumably at the behest of an Odisha Ganga royal descendent. The Hanuman-jeu Temple in Mirzabazar, the Sitala Temple in Barabazar, and the Habibpur Kali Temple are further temples from the eighteenth century.[3] The Rukmini temple at Nutanbazar, which was established in the 17th century, is one of the town's older temples. A temple belonging to the Ramakrishna Mission is situated next to a primary and secondary school. Although it is a more recent addition, the goddess Kali at the Battala temple is a significant temple in the area.

The city is littered with majars and dargahs. The most famous mosque in the community is Jora Masjid, which also hosts an important annualur. Locals hold Dewan Baba's majar next to the District Court and Fakir Kua's majar close to the bus terminal in high regard. The water from the well at Fakir Kua majar is said to have medicinal properties, however it is questionable whether this is true or not.

Two of the most well-known temples are the Chapaleswar and Mahamaya temples in Karnagarh, which are both constructed in the Odisha style of temple construction and are located 10 km north of the town. Karna Keshari of the Odisha-based Keshari/Soma Vamsi Dynasty constructed both in the tenth century. In addition to its historical significance, this temple was a focal point of the Chuar Revolt during the Indian Independence Movement.

A few miles outside of the city in the hamlet of Pathra are also some magnificent Hindu and Jain temples. There are hundreds of little temples here that date back to antiquity, but many of them are in deterioration owing to lack of maintenance, succumbing to the Kasai River's waters, and villagers stealing bricks. Yeasin Pathan created an NGO called the Pathra Archaeological Preservation Committee, which was able to convince the Archaeological Survey of India to rebuild the temples. Many of the temples have been restored thanks to a 1998 donation of 2,000,000 Indian rupees. This archaeological site is remarkably remote and seldom visited since it is difficult to get to and not well-known outside of the nearby vicinity.

Midnapore rose to prominence as a significant Brahma Samaj hub during its heyday. As the headmaster of the Zilla School, Rishi Rajnarayan Basu served as one of the leaders of the Brahma Samaj movement. A quiet trace of the Brahma presence in the past may be seen in the decrepit Brahma Samaj "Brahma Samaj Mandir" building outside Midnapore Collegiate School. Some of the more than 150-year-old administrative and educational structures are still in use today.



The royal ruins at Gopegarh Heritage Park



A view of the Kasai from Gopegarh Heritage Park

Conclusion:

India has a long history of commercial relations with non- Indian countries. Herodotus, Tesius, Diodorus etc. mention India. The Rigveda mentions trade by sea at various places. Smritipuranas, Buddhist scriptures etc. also mention the maritime trade of Indian merchants. Neither West India, South India nor South East India were unfit for sea trade. Tamralipta was an important port in Eastern India at that time. The name Medinipur did not exist then. Over time, Tamralipta or Tamralipti came

under Medinipur. This tamralipta is known by many names in ancient times. Such as Damalipta, Tamalini, Tamalika, Vishnugriha etc. Although there is considerable controversy over the location of Tamralipta, it is beyond the scope of this article. All that can be said is that Tamralipta (the current name of which is believed to be Tamluk) is a city situated on the west bank of Rupnarayana river. According to archaeological evidence, Tamlaripta was famous as a center of trade and commerce in prehistoric times. That it was a famous port in eastern India during the historical period is evident from Dipavamsa, Mahavamsa, Srimi and Ptolemy accounts, Periplus of the Erythrean Sea by the anonymous Greek author, Chinese travelers Ying- tsing, Fa- hien, Hiuen Tsang, Kathasaritsagar, Daskumar Charit etc. known From the 6th to the 5th century BC, Tamlaripta gained fame as a center of trade and commerce and maintained its prominence in ancient times.

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