

## Cultural Calendar - May 2016

4  
Wednesday  
3.15 pm

### Curtain Raiser - International Day of Yoga 2016

Hatha Yoga  
conducted by the Art of Living, Sri Lanka  
for the undergraduates students of the  
University of Colombo  
Venue: New Arts theatre (NAT),  
University of Colombo



### Tagore Jayanti Celebrations Garlanding of Tagore Bust

by H.E. Shri Y.K.Sinha, High Commissioner of India  
Organised in collaboration with Centre for Contemporary  
Indian Studies, University of Colombo  
Venue: Main Library, University of Colombo

6  
Friday  
9.30 am

6.00 pm

## Cultural Calendar - May 2016

15  
Sunday  
7.00 am

### Curtain Raiser - International Day of Yoga 2016

Inversion Workshop  
conducted by The Om Space  
Venue : The Om Space,  
185/9, Havelock Road, Colombo 5  
To register – email - serenaburgess@googlemail.  
com or SMS 0750 783383  
(Limited seats available)



### Curtain Raiser - International Day of Yoga 2016

Nritya Yoga – Yoga in Kandyan, Bharatha  
Natyam, Kathak & Contemporary dance forms



Presented by Aru Sri Art Theatre, Ravibandhu  
Samanthi Narthana Ayathaneya, Moksha Art of  
Dance & Mesh Academy of Dance  
Venue: ICC auditorium

20  
Friday  
6.00 p.m

Screening of documentary "The Story of Gitanjali"  
Produced by Public Diplomacy Division, MEA, Govt. of India  
and Rabindra Sangeet by Shasthrapathi Charith Perera,  
Shasthrapathi Palinda Udawela Arachchi  
and Shasthrapathi Madhuranga Samarasinghe  
Venue: ICC auditorium

13  
Friday  
6.00 pm

### "Ma, you are the Divine"

A Bharatha Natyam Recital  
dedicated to motherhood of the world  
by Thushnathy Velauthan  
Venue: ICC Auditorium

Lecture - Healing Aspects of Homeopathy  
by Ms.Shobana Cooke (B.sc, C.Hom.)  
in association with A.A.Y.U.S.H

to register - Email - aym.lanka@gmail.com  
Shobana.Cooke@gmail.com  
Venue: ICC auditorium

14  
Saturday  
10.30 am

27  
Friday  
6.00 pm

Bharatha Natyam Performance  
by Ms. Abirami (M.Phil), Madras University  
Venue: ICC Auditorium

Mosaic Festival  
To mark the International Day of Cultural Diversity  
organized by Serendipity Trust (Guarantee) Limited  
Workshops and lecture demonstrations by the students  
and teachers of Indian Cultural Centre, Colombo  
Venue: Law Court Square, Galle Fort  
For details contact - 091 2248086

28  
Saturday  
10.00 am - 4.00 pm



# Sanskarika

Newsletter of the Indian Cultural Centre, Colombo

May 2016

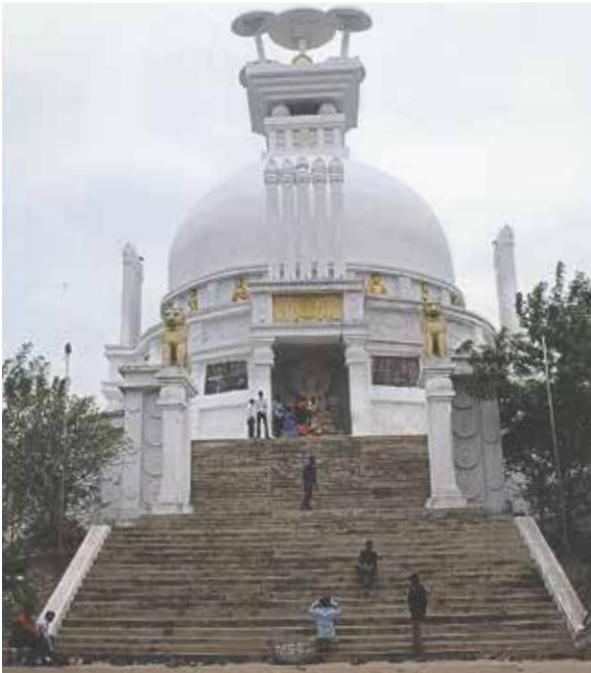


## Cultural Tapestry

### BUDDHIST SHRINES OF ODISHA

Odisha abounds in Buddhist art remains in addition to her present surviving vibrant Hindu temples. The antiquity of Buddhism in Odisha is as old as that of Buddha, while in Lalitavistara there is reference to Buddha's Kesa Asthi (hair relic) entering into ancient Odra (Odisha) country through two illustrious traders Tapasu and Bhallika. In subsequent period, the nail and tooth relics of Buddha too entered into Odra.

The advent of the religion came about in most popular form after the Kalinga War and the conversion of Ashoka.



This marked the growth of Buddhism and export of it to far-eastern and to some south Asian countries. It was Ashoka who sent missionaries to those far off countries like Singhal (Srilanka), Japan and China for propagation of this religion. Afterwards, it was during the reign of Bhaumakara dynasty in Odisha from 8th to 10th century A.D., Buddhism reached its zenith. Chinese travellers Fa-Hian and Hiuen Tsang's account of Buddhism in Odisha, the existence of Ashokan and post-Ashokan pillars, bell capitals, copper plates, discovery of Buddhist figures and images speak about the state of Buddhism in Odisha.

**DHAULI** : In a peaceful and serene environment, barely 6 kms. from the city centre, very closed to the Bhubaneswar-Puri N.H. No - 316, lies the great Buddhist shrine of Dhauli, famous for the rock edicts of Asoka.

It was here, at the foothills by the side of the river Daya (literary meaning kindness), that the valiant people of Kalinga defended their territory and turned the river water into red with blood. It was here after the Kalinga Victory in the year 261 B.C. that Asoka, the terrible was transformed into Asoka, the compassionate, and championed the cause of Buddhism.

The battle was described by Asoka

himself in his thirteenth Rock Edict which records : "One hundred and fifty thousand men -were carried away captive from that country, as many as one hundred thousand were killed there in action, and many times that number perished." Kalinga was conquered at last but the conquest changed the heart of the conqueror. This change in Asoka changed the course of religion and cultural history not only of India but also of the whole World.

Dhauli attained importance due to the engraving of the Asokan inscription on the rock beneath the elephant. This elephant is regarded Buddhistic along the inscription which was issued after Asoka adopted Buddhism. It contains eleven out of the well-known set of Fourteen Rock-Edicts found in the confines of his empire.

Written in the Brahmi script, the inscription, popularly known as Kalingan rock edict of Asoka has a special feature which not only presents an overall picture of the vast devastation caused due to the Kalinga War but it also describes various instructions to the Mauryan Viceroy placed at Tosali, capital of ancient Kalinga, to rule the people on these guidelines. In this rock edict he. made the famous declaration, "All men are my children and just as I desire for my own children that they should have bliss and happiness both in this world and the other world, so also I desire the same for all men."

The first specimen of art in stone is found here, in the shape of the

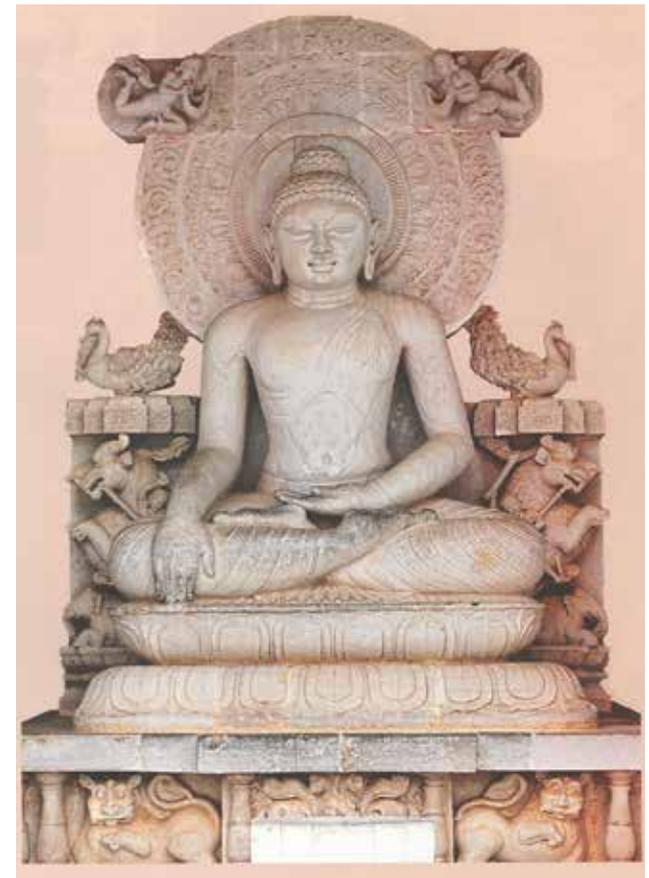
elephant sculpture. It depicts the forepart of an elephant coming out of a cave. The elephant has been carved out of the solid rock atop the face of the inscribed stone at the approach of the hill.

On a slightly higher place, there is the Shanti Stupa (Peace Pagoda), a 20th century structure of great aesthetic appeal. Built in the early seventies with an active Indo-Japanese collaboration between Kalinga Nippon Buddha Sangha and Japan Buddha Sangha under the personal supervision of Mahamaya Fuji, head of the Japanese Buddhist faith, this monument of peace stands in the form of a massive dome with lotus petals as its crown. This is a striking landmark in the skyline of the Temple City. The stupa, from its origin emerges as the central focus of worship. It represents Buddha's parinirvana - his passage from the world of suffering and illusion to the world of bliss and reality. It is a double -storeyed structure erected on a high terrace platform with two entrance ways with flights of steps. On the four sides of the lower part of the stupa there are four chambers adorned with four beautiful images of Buddha made from a single block of stone. Scenes from Jataka Tales are depicted on the entire wall of the lower part of the hemispherical stupa. Five chhatris (umbrellas) are placed on its flattened top which represent five important aspects of Buddhism. The temple of Vahirangeswar, worshipped by hundreds of local devotees stands on the top of the hill. This temple is a 12th century monument.

PUSHPAGIRI 90 kms. from Bhubaneswar, nestling on three hills, are the ruins of what must have once been an imposing Buddhist monastery complex called Puspagiri. In fact, it is yet another triangle which constitutes of Lalitagiri, Ratnagiri and Udayagiri. Amidst the sylvan surroundings of Mahanadi basin, the triangle is supposed to have once constituted the most important seat of Buddhist leanings next only to Taxila and Nalanda. The Chinese traveller, Hiuen Tsang visited this area in 639

AD and referred to it as Pusi-po 4 kill (Pushpagiri) in his travelogue -which embraced all the above three Viharas of Ratnagiri, Lalitagiri and Udayagiri.

**RATNAGIRI** : By the river Birupa, about 100 kms. away from Bhubaneswar, Ratnagiri has a rich concentration of Buddhist antiquities. A large-scale excavation has unearthed Buddhist shrines, large monasteries, a big stupa and a number of votive stupas. Established way back in 6th century AD., it appears that Buddhism was fostered at this place unhindered up to the 12th century AD. In the



beginning, this was an important centre of Mahajana form of Buddhism. During the 8th and 9th century AD., this became a great centre of Tantric Buddhism. Subsequently, in the 10th century AD, Ratnagiri played a significant role in the emergence of Kalachakra Tantra.

to be continued.....

**Odisha is one of the 29 states of India, located in the eastern coast.**

Source: **A Journey to Odisha** published by Orissa Tourism