

BADRACHALAM

Bhadrachalam, a town in Khammam District of Andhra Pradesh, India is a famous pilgrimage place. Whenever we hear the word Bhadrachalam, the first word that comes into our mind is "Lord Rama." **Lord Sree Sita Ramachandra Swamy Temple** is located in the place in the worship of Lord Sri Rama and Sita. The temple is located in the Dandakaranya forest area on the banks of river **Godavari**. The temple is constructed by a famous devotee of Lord Rama named Kancharla Gopanna, who is popularly known as Bhakta Ramadas. It is the place which is visited by Lord Rama along with Sita and Lakshmana many years ago at the time of their exile.

At parnasala, from a distance of 32km from the temple, Lord Rama has built a hut to stay during their vanavasam. It is the place from where Sita was abducted by Ravana. The name of Bhadrachalam is coined as it has a great historical background. Lord Rama has shed his mortal and manifested himself in that place to save his devotee Bhadra. He did this as he promised Moksha to him. Due to this reason the place is named as Bhadra. Later it is changed to Bhadradri and Bhadrachalam.



History of temple:

A sacred place that attracts lakhs of devotees from all over the world, it is the abode of Lord Rama (The seventh incarnation of Sri Mahavishnu). This hill place which is encircled by holy

river Godavari flowing towards southern direction is the famous shrine Bhadrachalam-The name derived from Bhadragiri (Mountain of Bhadra-a boon child of Meru and Menaka). According to a Ithihasas, the significance of this shrine dates back to the Ramayana Era. This coherent hill place existed in "Dandakaranya" Of Ramayana period where Rama with his consort Sita and brother Laxmana had spent their vanavasa-and Parnashaala(the

place connected to the famous Golden Deer and the place from where Sita was abducted by



Ravana.) is also in the vicinity of this temple site. It is at this Mandir site that, long after Ramavatara, Bhagawan Mahavishnu manifested Himself as Rama again to fulfil a promise He made to His Bhakta Bhadra, who continued his Tapas through Yugas, praying for the grace of the Bhagawan Sri Ramachandra murthy.

Exigency of Incarnation The history depicts that the need emerged the incarnation of Vy kuntha Rama was that to fulfill a long desire of his ardent devotee Bhadra. Maharsi Bhadra Bhadra performed penance at the bank of river Godavari in this " Dandakaranya " to get grace of lord Rama and in countenance of his beloved God - The exulted "Rishi" implored Rama to be seated on his head ,but Rama who was in search of his consort Sita gave promise to his Bhakta that his desire would be fulfilled on his way back , after finding Sita and accomplishing the process of punishing the wicked Ravana and establish 'Dharma' . Thus the sage had been in continuation of the frightened penance as Rama could not accomplish the promise in Ramavatara . Then Sri Mahavishnu manifested himself as Vy kuntha Rama and rushed to his devotee Bhadra , signaling his arrival by blowing 'Shanku',accompanied by his consort Sita and brother Laxmana ,

resembling that of 'Gajendra Moksham ' - Thus , the moorthies of Rama (having four hands) - Shanku on the right , Chakra at his left and Dhanurbhana (Bow and Arrow in the rest two hands) , Sita had condescended on the left lap of Rama and brother (at Rama's left) are existed . And the hill place where the Deities were seated on , was the head place of Bhadra - achalam (hill) ,thus this shrine was transformed into Bhadrachalam .

The idols of Vy kuntha Rama, Laxmana and Sita were found by Pokala Dhammakka. Pokala Dhammakka, an ardent devotee of Rama lived in the 17th

century and was an inhabitant of Bhadrireddypalem, a mile away from this holy place. On one fine night, she had darshan of Rama in her dream who said "the saints and sages are worshiping my embodied moorthy settled on Bhadragiri" and asked her to trace them, perform pooja and attain salvation. On the very next day morning she started searching for the idols-peeped into an ant-hill and found the idols hidden in it. She poured hundreds of pots of Godavari water on the ant-hill which tardily dissolved and gave way for the appearance of the hidden Deities. Since then, she used to perform pooja daily and offer 'naivedyam' with fruits fallen from near palmyra tree and constructed a mandapam of thatch hut with the help of local villagers. Bhagawan Rama told Dhammakka that at a later date, one of his devotees would construct a Mandir at this site. Dhammakka waited patiently for the devotee. The devotee turned out to be Bhakta Ramadas.

Bhakta Ramadas and construction of templeBhadrachalarama temple was constructed by Kanchan Gopanna popularly known as Bhakta Ramadas in the year 1674 A.D.





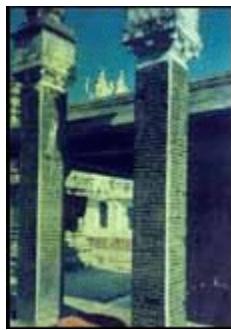
Kancharla Gopanna, popularly known as "Bhakta Ramdas", a fervent devotee of Rama, was born to Linganna Murthy and Kamamba in Nelakondapalli village of Khammamett Taluk in 17th century (1620 AD). He was nephew of Akkannna, the administrative head in the court of Nawab Abul Hussan shah known as 'Taneshah' of Golkonda (he was the last ruler of Golconda before Aurangazeb captured it in 1687A.D.) and was appointed by him as Tahsildar of 'Palvoncha Paragana'. Thus he was discharging his official duties earnestly and collecting revenues due to the Nawabs in continuation of daily preaches -Chanting of 'Ramanama' and the feeding the poor at his house. Ramadasa, who heard the news that the villagers of palvoncha paragana were proceeding to witness a Jatara at Bhadrachalam , became curios and he too visited Bhadrachalam. He found the deities in an amazing appearance. Ramadas, then asked the villagers to contribute liberally for the construction of the temple. After the contributions were found to be insufficient, the villagers appealed him to spend the revenue collections for the construction of the temple with a promise to repay the amount after harvesting the crops. Accordingly, Ramadas constructed the temple with an amount of Rs 6 Lakhs collected from the land revenues with out the permission of the Nizam Nawab.

When the temple reached to the nearing completion, he had a problem of fixing 'Sudarshana Chakra' at the crest of the main temple. He was deeply distressed and fell into sleep. On the same night, Rama in his dream asked him to have a holy dip in river Godavari where he will find that- accordingly. On the next day morning Gopanna did so and found holy Sudarshana Chakra in the river with out much difficulty. He presumed that Sudarshana Chakra itself was shaped up with the divine power of his beloved God Rama. Soon after the construction, his miseries started. He was dismissed from service for mis-utilisation of revenue for constructing the temple and was kept in jail for 12 long years in Golkonda Fort and was tortured. Unable to withstand the miseries, Ramadas implored Rama to relieve him by singing many praising and emotional songs which got popularized from the stanzas of 'Dasaradhi Sathakam' and 'Keertanas' of Bhakta Ramadasa.

The Nizam Nawab Tanishah, the then ruler of Nizam's territory became a devotee of Rama who realised the devotion spirit of Ramadas after his imprisonment and took over the charge of temple administration. This resembles the communal harmony amongst the Hindus and Muslims. The Nizam Nawab realised Ramadas'devotional spirit and dedication towards Rama, when Rama and Laxmana repaid 6 lakh Mohurs exposing themselves as Ramoji and Laxmoji, the servants of Bhakta Ramadas to get release of their devotee from the imprisonment. Thanisha gave voucher to these divine looking persons who approached him at his house during late night. Then they kept the voucher under the pillow of Gopanna where he was jailed. Tanishah who woke up on the very next day morning realised that those divine looking persons were none other than Rama and Laxmana and made arrangements to get release of Gopanna and prayed to forgive him by placing all the Gold Mohurs received last night at the feet of Gopanna. But, he refused to take



back those mohurs except two as a mark of divine significance. (Those two can still be seen kept in Bhadrachala Sri Sita Ramachandra Swamy vaari Devasthanam).



Influenced by the majesty of Lord Rama, Golkonda Ruler Tanishah earmarked the income derived from the said Palwoncha paragana which came to Rs 20,000 and odd for the maintenance of the temple which was continued during Nizam's reign and offering Pearls (Mutyalu Talambralu) on the occasion of kalyana mahotsavam (Sri Rama Navami) to Deities on an elephant through a specially sent messenger. That procedure of sending pearls to the Deities is still followed by present state Government and continues to offer during Sri Rama Navami Festival (Kalyana mahotsavam). Tumu Narsimha Dasa, Tahasildar of Palwoncha paragana, along with his associate Varada Ramadasa came here from Guntur and took over the charge of Bhadrachalarama temple after Ramadas made inscribed the performance of Nitya Poojas and sevas right from early morning "Suprabhata Seva" till night "Pavalimpu Seva" before closure of the temple as "Silaasaasanaalu" on these two pillars. This inscription gives details of daily dictum and daily rituals also.

Visiting Places:

Parnashala

This is supposed to be the exact spot where Rama, during his vanavasa in Dandakaranya, constructed a hermitage and spent his exile with his concert Sita and brother Laxmana. Agastya had selected this spot for Rama and is about 35KMs from Bhadrachalam.

The picturesque display of some scenes of vanavasa could be seen at Parnashala. One can see the foot prints of Sita devi, Mosaic of Maarecha in the guise of golden deer and Ravana in the guise of Sanyasi for Bhikshatana. Also found in the vicinity are Sita Vaagu-where she had bathed and collected the turmeric and Kunkum from near by stones and the marks of her saree on the rock near Sita Vaagu. These are all the visiting places for the pilgrims. As Ravana kidnapped Sita, the deity at Parnashala is called Sokarama. The tracks of the chariot of Ravana while kidnapping Sita can be seen on the mountain on the other side of the river bank at Parnashala temple.

Jattayu Paaka (Yetapaka)

This Place is situated from 2Kms away from Bhadrachalam. According to Itihasas, the bird Jatayuvu, a devotee of Rama had obstructed Ravana while he was proceeding on the chariot after kidnapping Sita. After the fearful battle between Ravana and Jataayuvu, the heavily injured bird had waited at this place in search of Rama. A wing of this bird fell at Rekkapalli, about 55 Kms from here, in V.R. Puram Mandal.



Dummugudem

Here Rama is called the Atmarama. The story reveals that Rama killed 14000 demons headed by Kharadeoshana. As the village was said to be built upon the ashes of these demons, the place is named after as Dummugudem.

Gundala

It is a place 5 Kms away from the sacred town Bhadrachalam, where springs of hot water could be traced on the river bank when we dig a pit at any place in this area. It is believed that the divine trios (Brahma Vishnu Maheswara) had their dips in winter season according to Brahma Purana.

Sree Rama Giri

This place is situated on the bank in the down stream of river Godavari, about 55 Kms from here. The deity of Yoga Rama Temple is on a hill and is named as Ramagiri.



Rama Darshan

The day begins at the temple with "Prabhadhotsavam" or awakening ceremony at 4.30 AM with specially composed songs of Tumu Narasimhadas, poems, Sannai Trupets Naubat etc. Abhishekam will be performed at 7.00 AM to Lord Rama on Sundays and all the remaining days abhishekams will be performed at Badruni Sannithi on the same time.

Travel-RTC timings

Bhadrachalam is reachable from all major cities in Andhra Pradesh, and other states. Via with (Khammam, Vijayawada, Hyderabad, Hanumakonda, Rajahmundry) regular buses plying in that route.

Nature and its Beauty:

The scenic beauty of "Paapikondalu" and "Perantalapalli" a village in the vicinity of "Paapikondalu" cannot be explained by mere words and better be visited. The mighty river Godavari narrows down and passes through a stretch of hills (Paapikondalu) and the resultant picturesque is a visitor's delight.

Location and Route:

This hill place is located on Bhadrachalam-Rajahamdry waterway at a stretch of nearly 3 Kilometers all along the pleasure trip on either side of the holy river Godavari. One needs to reach Kunavaram(the location where river Sabari merges into Godavari) by road from Bhadrachalam town which is about 50 KMs and then take a Motor Launch to Rajahmandry on the river Godavari. The traveling distance by motor launch from Kunavaram is about 4 and half hours.

Address: District Khammam, Bhadrachalam, Telangana 507111, India

District: Bhadravati Kothagudem district