

Chalukyan sculpture of Siva found in Andhra Pradesh

Sandstone sculpture found in Prakasam district of AP shows Siva as a physician

A rare sculpture of Lord Siva and Goddess Parvati dating back to the 7th century was discovered at a Chalukyan temple in Satyavolu village of Prakasam district, Andhra Pradesh.

The red sandstone sculpture portrays Lord Siva as the therapeutic physician (Rudra Bhaishajana) – as described in Rigveda – in which he holds a bowl in his left hand, which contains medicine from herbs to revive the ailing horse lying at his feet.

“Lord Siva is portrayed as a physician, who discovered medicine for certain chronic ailments. He is the last member of the divine trinity and is considered as the destroyer of the world,” Superintending Archaeologist of the ASI (Archaeological Survey of India), Chennai, D. Kanna Babu said.

He said that Siva was fairly represented in sculptural art of ancient India in many forms right from the Indus Valley civilization to the late medieval period.

Iconographic form

The ASI official, as part of the Temple Survey Project, visited the Chalukyan temple complex in Satyavolu village and discovered the sculpture at a corner inside the temple complex. “Such a highly exceptional iconographic form of Lord Siva had not been discovered so far. The sculpture belongs to early 7th century Chalukyan School of Art,” he said.

Further describing the sculpture, Mr. Kanna Babu said that the vertical stone slab prominently illustrates Siva and Parvati. The Lord is gracefully seated on a pedestal with the left leg on the seat, the other with knee bent and resting on the

ground. "Two locks of hair falling over his shoulders, he wears neatly entangled hair with a protrusion over the left of his head and knotted in a mountain dweller fashion," he said.

Historical importance

Goddess Parvati is in a gracious posture standing to Siva's left, carrying a vessel in her right hand, while the left hand rests on her waist.

"Beneath the panel is a horse standing with a lowered head. We stumbled upon this sculpture without realising its historical importance and ultimately, caused it damage," Mr. Kanna Babu said.

Source: xaam.in