

1,300-yr-old Buddhist Stupa discovered in Odisha

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In news– The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) stumbled upon a 1,300-year-old stupa right in the middle of a mining site in Odisha's Jajpur district recently.

Key findings-

- A 4.5-metre tall stupa belonging to the 7 th or 8 th century was discovered.
- It is **from this place that Khondalite stones were supplied for the beautification project around the 12 th Century Shree Jagannath Temple in Puri.**
- **The archaeological asset was found at Parabhadi which is situated near Lalitagiri, a major Buddhist complex,** having a large number of stupas and monasteries.
- Lalitagiri is a major Buddhist complex in the Indian state of Odisha.
- The complex is home to stupas, 'esoteric' Buddha images, and monasteries, which is the oldest site in the region.
- Significant finds at this complex include Buddha's relics. Tantric Buddhism was practiced at this site.

Khondalite stones mining-

- **Khondalite stones were widely used in ancient temple complexes.**
- After discovery of the Buddhist stupa from the mining site, the ASI intervened and asked Odisha government to stop mining through its Odisha Mining Corporation (OMC). The mining has since stopped.
- The State government had come up with an ambitious plan to spend ₹3,208 crore under the Augmentation of Basic Amenities and Development of Heritage and Architecture

(ABADHA) scheme in three years to transform Puri into a world heritage city.

- **Khondalite stones are proposed to be used widely to maintain aesthetic value of some projects such as heritage security zone, Jagannath Ballav pilgrim centre, Puri lake development project, Atharnala heritage project and Matha Development Initiative.**
- **Sukhuapada was the biggest of six Khondalite stone blocks reserved for OMC.**

Note:

- **Khondalite is a foliated metamorphic rock.**
- **In India, it is also called Bezwada Gneiss and Kailasa Gneiss.**
- Khondalite is mainly composed of feldspar, quartz, and mica, and has a distinct pinkish-grey coloration. It
- It was named after the Khond tribe of Odisha and Andhra Pradesh because well-formed examples of the rock were found in the inhabited hills of these regions of eastern India.