

13th century temple built by Kayasthas unearthed

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In news— 13 th-century Hindu temple ruins have been recently unearthed amidst a shrub jungle northeast of the Durga temple, atop a hillock in the Pushpagiri Kshetram of Vallur mandal in Kadapa district of Andhra Pradesh.

Pushpagiri/Pushpachala-

- The hillock, also known as Pushpachala, **is famous for the chain of temples dedicated to the pantheon of Hindu gods such as Chennakesava, Umamaheswara, Rudrapada, Vishnupada**, Trikooteswara, Vaidyanatha, Subrahmanya, Vighneswara and Durga Devi.
- With the **river Penna flowing** southwest, this hilly region has over a hundred small and big temples in its vicinity.
- **Pushpagiri is referred to as Hari-Hara Kshetra**, as there are a number of temples dedicated to both Shiva and Vishnu.
- **The Pushpeswara Swamy shrine is revered as a self-manifested idol**, which can be found from Mackenzie local record No. 1211.
- **The architectural features of the ruins reveal a style which is contemporary to a temple at Vallur, built by the Kayastha rulers** in the 13 th Century AD.
- The structure in ruins came to light when a team guided by Sri Vidyasankara Bharathi, the pontiff of Pushpagiri Peetham, visited the area ahead of launching a 'Giri Pradakshina', a sacred trek perambulating the hill, as a form of fulfilment of a vow.
- According to historians, the images on the stone panel depicting the king and his two queens could also be identified with Kayastha Ambadeva.

- The temple was damaged over time by treasure hunters, as indicated by the pulling out of the consecrated idols. Heritage enthusiasts want the shrub jungle cleared and the dilapidated structure revived.

About Kayasthas-

- The Kayasthas, including the great Ambadeva, were subordinates to the rulers of the Kakatiya dynasty.
- They ruled the region with Vallur as the capital.
- The founder of this dynasty was Gangaya Sahini (1239-1257 AD.)
- He was a subordinate ruler of Kakatiya Ganapatideva.
- His kingdom covered the regions of Palnadu, Kadapa and Panagallu of Nalgonda district.