

**Impact  
Factor  
3.025**

**ISSN 2349-638x**

**Refereed And Indexed Journal**

**AAYUSHI  
INTERNATIONAL  
INTERDISCIPLINARY  
RESEARCH JOURNAL  
(AIIRJ)**

**UGC Approved Monthly Journal**

**VOL-IV**

**ISSUE-XII**

**Dec.**

**2017**

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### **Jain Centres In Chikodi Taluka**

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Jainism is one of the earliest religions in Chikodi taluka. Jainism made its entry in the pre-Christian era. Inscriptions revealed that Jain saints came to preach the doctrines of the religion in about 225 B.C.<sup>1</sup>

Jainism was a very popular religion from 4th to 13th century because many dynasties of this period belonged to Jainism and it declined subsequently due to spread of Shaivism and Veerashaivism. Many Jain temples were converted into Shaivalayas, Vaishnavayas and Gramadevi temples. For instance, one Adinatha basati built by Kamalapur family of Kabbur was converted into Shaiva temple. As records were destroyed, it is very difficult to recognize it as basati.<sup>2</sup>

Six percent of Jains are found in this region. The local Jains of the taluka are mostly Digambaras and Shwetambaras who are mostly immigrants from Gujrat and Rajasthan.<sup>3</sup>

Stavanidhi, Kothali, Nipani, Chikodi, Sadalga, Examba, Khadaklat and Karosi are some of the important Jain religious centres in Chikodi taluka.

#### **Stavanidhi:**

Tavadi or Tavandi or Stavanidhi variously called is situated on the Southern side 7 km away from Nipani. A celebrated Jain centre in Chikodi taluka and addressed by the Jains as "Sri Atishaya kshetra". The place can be reached after a deviation to the right from Sankeshwar Nipani (Highway) road.<sup>4</sup>

The place has the famous Brahmadeva temple complex in later Chalukyan style with five small shrines in a row. However, the Brahmadeva temple is the earliest with a garbhagriha, an ardhmantapa and a navaranga.

The garbhagriha has a short shikhara in earlier style and the pillars of the navaranga are lathe-turned.<sup>5</sup>

The Parshvanatha image is fine standing statue in imitation of later Chalukyan style, has an inscription on its pedestal dated 1400 A.D. states that the image was carved by one Jinnoja and installed by one Laxmisenā Bhattaraka and the basati was constructed by Laliyadevi, the great grandmother of Senarasa.

The Adinatha image installed in a separate shrine is about one meter tall. Next to, it is Chintamani Parshvanatha also in the same style has an inscription on the pedestal in 13th century characters reading "Dravida Sanghata Suparshwadevaru".

Behind it is another small Parshvanatha image. There are loose sculptures of Neminatha and two other Tirthankaras. Next to this is the Shantinatha also Chalukyan enshrined separately. The temple complex has fine shikharas all in Kadambanagara style but renovated. On the upstairs in a small shrine, chaturasra in which is installed square abacus with images of Adinatha, Shantinatha, Parshvanatha and Neminatha on "its four sides, beautifully wrought."<sup>6</sup>

Behind the temple is a small hillock where the village proper is located. The village has temples like Maruti, Lakshmi etc. On a rock, near the basti, some footprints and some big letters in

Kannada are engraved. On the opposite hill is an old temple of Koogu Brahmadeva, which is approachable by steps. There is a Padmavati shrine too at the place. The place is a busy pilgrim centre. The temple trust provides a choultry and other facilities to the devotees. At the entrance of the town is the Bahubali Brahmacharya Ashrama, a recent building. The jatra is held during Vaishakha Poornima for three days when nearly 30,000 people assemble.<sup>7</sup>

**Kothali:**

Kothali has a recently created (1977) Jaina centre a small hillock locally called Shantigiri. The hillock is approachable through a deviation from the main road (two km.)<sup>8</sup> The entrance of this huge openair complex has a beautiful gateway. There are the three standing statues of Chandraprabha (five meters tall), Shantinatha (seven meters) and Mahaveera (six meters) all in white marble installed on an elevated platform at the centre, surrounded by a flower garden. All around this are open sheds also called Kamalamandira built in U shape, which house the seated marble images of all the 24 Tirthankaras. To the left of the gateway is a big hall called 'Samavasarana Bhavana' meant for religious congregations and it has small shrines of Ashtama Nandishwara Mandir, Panchameru Mandir, Parshvanatha Mandira. Adinatha Mandir and Bharata-Bahubali Mandir.<sup>9</sup>

Acharyarathna 108 Sri Deshabhushana Muni Maharaj founded the Ashrama in 1967 and it is named after him and later in 1979, the present complex was completed. The jatra is held on Vaishkha Shuddha Saptami when nearly 5,000 people assemble.<sup>10</sup>

The Shantigiri Ashrama also runs a residential high school on the traditional gurukula pattern in the village below, managed by a separate trust. The village proper below the hillock has an Adinatha basati with a black stone image.<sup>11</sup>

**Nipani:**

There are three Jaina basatis dedicated to Adinatha (new), Neminatha (Digambara) and Chandraprabha (Shwetambar) at Nipani.

**1. Adinatha Basati :**

The first Tirthankar of Jaina Adinatha basati is situated in the middle of the Nipani town near Prabhat Theatre. Shrimant Nipanikar gave this place to Basati. This basati was established in 1918. It has garbhagriha and navaranga. The black stone image of Adinatha in the garbhagriha belonged to 10th century. There are images of 24 tirthankaras including Shree Brahma deva and Padmavati in the basati. The Manastambh of 31 feet is carved in red stone in front of the basati. This basatis also called Digambar basati.<sup>12</sup>

**2. Shree Neminath Basati :**

This basati near Gandhi Chowk was built in 18th century. The black colour marble image of Neminath 5 feet and the Manastamba of 20 feet carved in red stone in front of the basati are the main attractions.<sup>13</sup>

**3. Shree Chandraprabha Shwetambar Jaina Mandir:**

This basati is in Gandhi Chowk and more than 100 years old. This is the only ancient Jinalaya (fain basati) of the Nipani town in the South India. There are three Grahmandirs in a basati in which the 3 images of Shree Bhagawan Munisurat Swami Jinalay and Shree Bhagwan Rikhardev Jinalaya are here. There is one sikhara for the entrance, which was donated by Shrimant Shiddhajirao Desai Nipanikar. There is a boarding house for a tourist.<sup>14</sup>

**Sadalaga:**

Sadalaga has three basatis locally called Dodda basatit Kallu basati and Shikhara basati.

The Dodda basati, a modern structure, has an image of Parshvanatha with a makaratorana on its prabhavali indicating its Chalukyan origin. The Adinatha image installed outside has an inscription on its pedestal probably dated in Saka 1213.<sup>15</sup>

The Kallu basati with an Adinatha image has a garbhagriha, an aidhamantapa and a navaranga, which are renovated with later Chalukyan pillars. The outer wall has fine Chalukyan sculptures and other linear designs.

The Shikhara basati has a Chalukyan image of Parshwanatha. It has garbhagriha, ardhmantapa and navaranga. The images of yaksha Dharanendra on the left side and yakshini Padmavati on the right side in the basati.<sup>16</sup>

**Eksamba:**

The Adinatha basati of Examba was built in 1155. It is in later Chalukyan style. It has an inscription belonging to the rule of Kalachuri Bijjala and is dated 1165 A.D. It refers to a Shilahara chief Vijayaditya as the subordinate of the king. A herostone here dated 1139 is also of Bijjala's time and records the death of one Padevala Jinna.<sup>17</sup>

Other two basatis of the place are of Shantinatha and Neminatha (both fallen). An officer of Shilahara Vijayaditya built the Shantinatha basati when they were administering from Valovada. A record dated 1235 A.D. from the same place states that Kesiyamayya Dannayaka made a grant of land for feeding house with the consent of Ratta Lakshmidivarasa. Other monuments of the place are Adinatha and Swetambara Vasupujya basatis.<sup>18</sup>

**Chikodi:**

Chikodi has Parshvanatha and Adinatha Basaties. The Adinatha basati is described as 300 years old has also a Suvrata Tirthankara statue in Chalukyan styie. There is a loose inscriptional slab in Nagari script with engravings on both. the sides.<sup>19</sup>

**Khadaklat:**

Khadaklat has a Parshavanatha basati built in later Chalukyan style with a garbhagriha, an ardhmantapa and a navaranga. The Parshvanatha (seated) is in black stone, about one metre tall and has an inscription on its pedestal. A small Shantinatha image is placed in the navaranga. AH inscription slab built into the wall of this basati is dated 1174 A.D., records a gift for the repairs and maintenance of the fort of the agrahara latti and gift of 20 he-bulffaloes to God Hawchikeshvara of the same place by the 500 Swamis of Ayyavole and other merchant guilds.<sup>20</sup>

**Karosi:**

Karosi is 10 km. from Chikodi is another historical place in Chikoai taluka. There is one old fort One Jaina Pitha is discovered in this fort. According to Shadakshara, it belonged to 12th century, which is of 78 centimeter long, 48-centimeter wide and 30-centimeter in height. There is one hole in the middle of the pitha and three lions on are carved in this pitha. There is one inscription, which mentions that Jayadevanayak made the image of 16th tirthankar Shantinatha. Senbhova Singayya, who wrote this inscription, was the son of Jayashetti. Senbhova Singayya wrote the son of Jayashetti this inscription. This Pitha is of Mahaveeras and there is Shantinatha image. So there are Mahaveera and Shantinatha basatis in the village.<sup>21</sup>

Parshavanatha and Adinatha basatis are also found in Akkol Bedikihal, Bhoj, Ingali, Kabbur, Kerur Pattankudi and Manjari. Many Jaina Munis such as Kumarkirti Panditdev (13th century A.D.),

Munichandra (13th century A.D.), Shree Vijayakirti (13th Century A.D.), Jaina muni (13th Century A.D.), and poets like Achan Hnd (1165 A.D.), Senbhov Singayya (12th century A.D.) belonged to Chikodi taluka and composed Jaina works. Ten Jain inscriptions are also found in Chikodi taluka.<sup>22</sup>

**Footnotes & References:**

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