

SHREE SHREE SAMALESWARI TEMPLE



SHREE SHREE SAMLESWARI TRUST BOARD

SAMBALPUR - 768 003, ORISSA, INDIA

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INTRODUCTION

Shree Shree Samaleswari, the presiding deity of Sambalpur, is a strong religious force in western part of Orissa and Chhattisgarh state of India. On the bank of the river Mahanadi the mother goddess Samaleswari is worshipped from ancient times as Jagatjanani, Adishakti, Mahalaxmi and Mahasaraswati. The region in which the temple is situated has a rich cultural heritage. Sambalpur region is popularly known as Hirakhanda from ancient times. Ptolemy has described the place as Sambalak, According to Tavernier, the French traveller, and Edward Gibbon, the English historian, diamonds were exported to Rome from Sambalpur.

Sambalpur is famous for Sambalpuri songs, dances, forest and world famous Sambalpuri handloom fabrics. The rhythmic beats of Sambalpuri drums are heart-pounding and pulse racing and create profound joy.

HISTORY AND LEGENDS

Sambalpur was under the rule of Patnagarh kingdom. Patnagarh kingdom was handed over to the king of Vizianagaram by Prataprudra Dev who was defeated in a war. When Vizianagaram kingdom became weak and was nearing its fall, Narasingh Dev declared Patnagarh as an independent kingdom with the help of his great warrior brother Balam Dev.

Patnagarh Kingdom

The independent kingdom of Patna was ruled by Narasingh Dev between 1540 A.D. to 1547 A.D. The capital of the kingdom was near the present Patnagarh town on the bank of the river Mayabati. It is said that in the midnight of the dark fortnight of shraavana in the rainy season the queen of king Narasingh Dev suffered from intense labour pain and her life was in danger. A traditional mid-wife, expert in delivering children, lived in a village on the other side of the river Mayabati. But the river was in full spate with swift current. Balam Dev swam across the flooded river and brought the mid-wife from her village on his shoulder. With the care and treatment offered by the mid-wife the queen delivered a son who was named Hamir Dev. King Narasingh Dev was greatly pleased by the valour of his younger brother Balam Dev and granted the large tract of land in his favour which later became the kingdom Huma Desh and later came to be widely known as the independent kingdom of Sambalpur.

Some years later, the queen-mother asked her son Narasingh Dev and Balam Dev to accompany her to a place known as Kalapathar on the bank of the river Anga. Standing at a vantage point she faced towards the kingdom of Patna and pointing out the territory to king Narasingh Dev said that he would be the independent king of Patna state. She again faced towards Huma Desh and indicating the vast territory, told her younger son Balam Dev that he would be the independent king thereof. Thus was born the kingdom Huma Desh later known as the kingdom of Sambalpur. Balam Dev ruled Sambalpur some time between 1540 A.D. to 1557 A.D.

Chowhan Dynasty in Huma Desh

King Balam Dev established the Chowhan dynasty in Huma Desh with the capital at Bargarh (near the modern town of Bargarh) on the left bank of the river Jira. For military reasons or for smooth governance of the vast territory, later on he shifted the capital to Nuagarh, near the Barapahar range of mountain and then camped at Chaunrpur on the right bank of Mahanadi (near the existing Chaunrpur village) to select a new place as his capital. Balam Dev, besides being a great warrior was also a keen hunter.

Hounds and Rabbits

It is said that on a particular day he crossed river Mahanadi and came to the right bank

with his hounds for hunting. While hunting, he noticed a miracle. He saw that his hounds, instead of chasing a small rabbit, were being hotly chased by the rabbit itself. It seemed his hounds were in mortal fear of the rabbit. The king stood stunned and later noticed that the rabbit returned to the foot of a huge simili tree on the left bank of Mahanadi and disappeared. Balaram Dev returned to his camp and had a strange dream at night. Goddess Samaleswari manifested herself before him and said that she was residing in gumadarha inside the river and that he should establish her at the foot of the simili tree and build a temple. She blessed the king and vanished. Next morning Balaram Dev made up his mind and considering the importance of the left bank of Mahanadi on the ground of religion and administration he established his fort. He installed Goddess Samaleswari under the simili tree and built a temple. Sambalpur was a small village at that time. Samaleswari temple was built some time in the middle of 16th century. It was rebuilt by the 7th independent king of Sambalpur namely Chhatra Sai Deo who reigned during 1657 to 1665 AD. and endowed vast landed property for seva and Puja of the deity to a group of sevayats. Some historians say that, the idol of goddess Samaleswari under the simili tree was worshipped by tribals since third century A.D. till the temple was built by Balaram Dev.

Legend of Kalapahar

According to legend Kalapahar, military commander of the nawab of Bengal, in course of one of his visits to Sambalpur camped with a huge army at a place near Durgapali on the bank of Mahanadi beyond the temple Samaleswari. He had a huge drum made of cow hide and had oversized bells (Hulgulas). It is said that with the beating of the drum and the confusing noise made by the bells (Hulgulas), the limbs of deities of the temple automatically disappeared. The intention of Kalapahar was to destroy the temple of Samaleswari and other temples in the historic town of Sambalpur and deities installed therein. Before Kalapahar could start the depredation, in a fine evening, a beautiful milk-maid dressed up in gold jewellery with a basket of milk, curd and cheese on her head, reached the camp of Kalapahar. She sold the articles to Kalapahar and his army. Next morning it is said that the entire army including Kalapahar suffered from cholera and other allied diseases causing total chaos. Kalapahar abandoned invasion of the temple and left the territory with survivors of his army leaving most of his armoury, the huge drum and the brass bells (Hulgulas). It is believed that the Goddess Samaleswari manifested herself in the form of a milk-maid and caused devastation in the army of Kalapahar. Whether this is a fact or fiction no one can say, but for many years, a huge drum and a large number of bells used to be kept at the Mukhashala of the Samaleswari temple. Even a large number of tombs believed to be those of the dead soldiers of Kalapahar are found in a mango grove near Samaleswari College building on the bank of river Mahanadi.

There are many legends in connection with the temple and in reality the devotees feel the presence of such power in the day to day affairs.

It is known that one person namely Krupasindhu Panigrahi and his wife were buried in the foundation of the temple during construction. In course of time human sacrifice was discontinued and the practice of sacrificing buffalo was adopted. Again in course of time this practice was also abandoned. The last buffalo sacrifice in the temple was within a couple of decades which is in public memory. It is heard that in ancient times human sacrifice was offered once in a year. Human sacrifice was stopped following miracle of Maa Samaleswari with a saint from Amritsar, who became the Mahanta of Gopaljee Math later on.

Maa Samaleswari has a very special place in the hearts of the people of Western Orissa and Chhattisgarh.

The deities worshipped inside the temple and in the premises of the temple :

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|--|--------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| 1. The presiding deity Maa Samaleswari | 28. Nrusingh | 57. Navadurga | 86. Bijaya |
| 2. Bhubaneswari | 29. Bamana | 58. Arunastambha | 87. Singha |
| 3. Chhatrabauti | 30. Kachhapa | 59. Maheswari | 88. Singha |
| 4. Bighnaraj | 31. Buddha | 60. Raktamauli | 89. Matandi |
| 5. Ugratara | 32. Palasi | 61. Brunda | 90. Singha |
| 6. Maa Kali | 33. Nauli | 62. Tara | 91. Shankha |
| 7. Narasinghi | 34. Matsya | 63. Ahalya | 92. Singha |
| 8. Durga | 35. Ram | 64. Draupadi | 93. Singha |
| 9. Mangala | 36. Sitala | 65. Kunti | 94. Indramukhi |
| 10. Jwalamukh | 37. Garudakshi | 66. Mandodari | 95. Singha |
| 11. Banadurga | 38. Narayan | 67. Gouri | 96. Singha |
| 12. Barahi | 39. Garuda | 68. Souri | 97. Ardrabati |
| 13. Chhinnamasta | 40. Ghorarupi | 69. Bahana Singha | 98. Singha |
| 14. Matangi | 41. Baraha | 70. Hasta | 99. Singha |
| 15. Ramachandi | 42. Kanakangi | 71. Singha | 100. Bimati |
| 16. Banjari | 43. Shandashi | 72. Singha | 101. Singha |
| 17. Hanuman | 44. Divyarupa | 73. Gaja | 102. Singha |
| 18. Ghantasini | 45. Kamakshya | 74. Supati | 103. Prachanda |
| 19. adabramha | 46. Durgatinashini | 75. Nageswari | 104. Singha |
| 20. Bhanumati | 47. Ekadanta | 76. Supaswi | 105. Singha |
| 21. Dakshini | 48. Chandinayak | 77. Narayani | 106. Kapali |
| 22. Uttara | 49. Ganesh | 78. Hasti | 107. Ambi |
| 23. Balaram | 50. Karamsani | 79. Singha | 108. Chinamali |
| 24. Bagheswari | 51. Hanuman | 80. Gaja | 109. Mauli |
| 25. Bakratunda | 52. Bhairav | 81. Singha | 110. Ghodaghat |
| 26. Parsuram | 53. Basundhara | 82. Gaja | 111. Ghikundi |
| 27. Kalki | 54. Ambica | 83. Ananta | 112. Akhada Hanuman |
| | 55. Swarupa | 84. Singha | |
| | 56. Bhairav | 85. Singha | |

Akhada Hanuman, Bhairva and Mauli Devi are worshipped in separate temples while Sitala Thakurani is worshipped in "Sangudi" or Mandap Mandir. A large size Bahana Singha Bigraha has been installed in recent years in the middle of the temple premises which is supposed to be the biggest astadhatu Bahana Singha Bigraha in Asia. The Bhumi Puja of the said place was performed by his holiness Jagadguru Shankaracharya of Goverdhanmath, Puri, namely Swami Nischalananda Saraswati.

Almost all towns and villages of this region have a temple of Maa Samaleswari. In modern Orissa no single goddess has sway over a large territory after Lord Jagganath. The main temple of Goddess Samaleswari at Sambalpur is the source of inspiration.

FESTIVALS :

Many festivals are observed in the temple throughout the year with much pomp and ceremony.

1. Jyestha Purnima - Jalasayee of Bhairava baba
2. Sravana Purnima - Srabanbhishek
3. Bhadraba Shukla Panchami - Nuakhai
4. Bhadra Krushna Astami - Ambica Puja

5. Aswin Amabasya - Mahalaya, Dhabalmukhi or Ganga Darshan besha
6. Aswin Shukla Pratipada - Navaratri Pujarambaha
7. Aswin Purnima - Dhvajarojan and Raj-Rajeswari besha
8. Kartika Amabasya - Shyama Puja
9. Poush Purnima - Poushyabhishek
10. Magha Shukla Panchami - Maha Saraswati Puja
11. Magha Purnami - Purnahuti of 24 Prahari Mahamantra Namayagna
12. Makara Sankranti - Purnahuti of 3 days deepa mahayagna
13. Falguna Purnima - Gundikha, Dolapurnima
14. Chaitra Shukla Pratipada - Basantika Navaratri Pujarambaha,
15. Bishuba Sankranti - Sitala Thakurani Puja
16. Akshya Trutiya - Shree Shree Samaleswari bhajan Samaroha

DETAILS OF DASAHARA FESTIVALS

Aswin Krushna Astami -	Sohala Pujarambaha
Amabasya -	Dhabalmukhi or Gangadarshan besha (Mahalaya)
Aswin Shukla Pratipada -	Navaratri Pujarambaha and Jagar Prajwalana, Sailaputri besha
Aswin Shukla Dwitiya -	Bramhacharini besha
Trutiya-	Chandraghanta besha
Chaturthi -	Kushmanda besha
Panchami -	Skandhamata besha
Sasthi -	Katyayani besha
Saptami -	Kalaratri besha
Astami -	Mahaastami, Mahagouri besha, Akhada Khandadhua procession,
Nabami -	Mahanabami, Sidhhidatri besha
Dashmi -	Vijaya Dashami, Ranajita Procession

On Aswina Purnima new flags are hoisted on the temple and the devotees have holly darshan of Raj-Rajeswari besha. The most beautiful and heart touching besha of devi stands fourth among Dasamahavidya. Adi Shankaracharya worshipped Raj-Rajeswari in Sriyantra.

On Nuakhai Annabhoga rice from new paddy is offered to Maa Samaleswari. It is the most important mass festival in the western part of the state.

On Mahalaya more than one lac devotees have a holy devi darshan of Dhabalmukhi besha. It is believed that darshan of dhabalmukhi Samaleswari gives the blessing of Gangadarshan. So it is known as Ganga darshan Besh.

Devi Samaleswari is worshipped with Bhubaneswari mantra by Kshyatriya sevayats.

They belong to 12 families and use the surname "Rai". On days of festivals like Nuakhai puja is offered in a total 112 places in the temple premises. No one including pujakas demand money or any thing from the devotees which creates an atmosphere for comfortable darshan. On the other hand the Pujakas, members of Samaleswari Yubak Sangha and other organisations as well as local people co-operate in solving problems of the devotees.

During this festival the akhada Ustad and akhada masters display martial art along with their players with sticks, swords and fire which attracts the people very much.

Sambalpur is named after Goddess Samaleswari. Devotees, pilgrims and tourists from all parts of the country come to this place in large numbers to have a holy darshan of Maa Samaleswari, the presiding deity.

Every Tuesday and Saturday a large number of devotees and tourists come from different parts of the country.

TIME SCHEDULE OF THE TEMPLE

Mangala Alati	-	5.00 a.m.
Bhoga and Pahada	-	12.00 Noon to 12.30 Noon
		(Darshan is restricted daily for 30 minutes only)
Alati	-	8.00 p.m.
Bhoga	-	9.00 p.m.
Closure of Temple	-	10.00 p.m.

On festival days and on all Tuesday there may be deviation up to 1 hour.

Sale of Annabhog 12.15 noon onwards.

SCHEME FOR DONATION :

1. Nitya Mahabhog Yojana

Rs. 5400.00 is to be paid for offering of Annabhoga on one specific day in a year according to Chandramasa to mark the occasion of birthday, marriage anniversary, death anniversary etc. Cheque/Drafts can be sent in favour of Nitya Mahabhoga Yojana.

2. Installation of Marble Plaques

Rs. 5000/- is to be paid to install a marble plaque of 1'6" x 1'0" size in the temple premises. The income from this source is spent towards construction of Samaleswari Bhawan. Cheques/Drafts in favour of Samaleswari Bhawan along with the text of the matter to be carved on the stone is to be sent. Cheques and Drafts can be sent in favour of Samaleswari Bhawan.

3. Donation for Samaleswari Bhawan

Any amount is accepted for construction of Samaleswari Bhawan which consists of Yatriniwas, Kalyan Mandap, Natya Mandap, Library etc. It is a prestigious building under construction at an estimated cost of Rs. 70 lacs. Cheques and Drafts can be sent in favour of Samaleswari Bhawan.

4. General Donation :

Donation for the development of the temple, special puja and for temples fixed fund and donation for specific purposes are accepted. Cheques and Draft can be sent in favour of Shree Shree Samaleswari Trust Board.

All cheques/Drafts/Money orders may be sent to - Shree Shree Samaleswari Trust

Board, Sambalpur - 768003, Orissa, India. The same can be deposited in our office from 8.00 a.m to 12.00 noon on all working days for which due money receipts are given. Any ornaments and valuables may be donated in the same process. The devotees may donate in the donation box and hundi installed inside the temple.

Although endowment of Goddess Samaleswari had large landed property in the past, nothing remains at present. The temple mainly depends upon donation from devotees and grants from Government and Non-Government Organisations. The total area of the temple is Ac 4.48 Dc at present.

OUR BANKERS

Indian Bank, Opp. Town Police Station, Sambalpur - 768001

State Bank of India, Main Branch, Sambalpur - 768001

Punjab National Bank, Ashoka Talkies Road, Sambalpur - 768001

Allahabad Bank, Gole Bazar, Sambalpur - 768001

ICICI Bank, Ainthapali, Sambalpur - 768004

(Online donation facility available with ICICI Bank)

The donors may send their donation to Sambalpur Branch of the above mentioned banks. They may inform about the same by e-mail to samaleswaritrustboard@rediffmail.com or to samaleswaritempletrust@hotmail.com.

LOCATION :

Sambalpur is situated in the eastern region of India at a distance of 320 k.m. from the Orissa State capital Bhubaneswar.

It has direct train links with New Delhi, Kolkata, Chennai, Ahmedabad and Bokaro and Bombay through Jharsuguda Junction. Calcutta- Bombay National High way No.6 passes through the town while Sambalpur-Cuttack N.H. 42 starts from here which is linked with Kolkata - Chennai N.H. No.5 at Cuttack. Sambalpur is linked with N.H.200 at Jharsuguda (50 Kms.). Sambalpur has easy link with all places of the country.

Nearest Airport is Raipur of Chhattisgarh (270 K.M.) and Bhubaneswar (320 K.M.) Air strips for small air craft are also available at Jamadarpali (15 K.M.) and Jharsuguda (50 KM)

For accommodation there are several Guest Houses, hotels (Govt. & Non. Govt) and Dharmshala in Sambalpur.

PLACES OF TOURIST INTEREST :

Hirakud Dam Project (15 Km). Hydro Electric Power Plant at Burla (15 K.M.) Hydro Electric Plant at Chiplima (35 Kms.), famous Bimaleswar temple at Huma (29 Kms), Ghanteswari Temple at Chiplima (35 kms.), Pradhanpat waterfall at Deogarh (90 Kms.), Mukteswar Temple at Jamenkira (55 Kms) Ushakothi Wild Life Sanctuary (40 kms.), Mandhata Baba temple at Maneswar (8 Kms.) Nrusinghanath Temple at Paikmal (175 kms.), Gud Guda water fall and stream, near Kuchinda (117 kms.), Debrigarh wild life sanctuary (35 kms.)

MAJOR INSTITUTIONS :

1. Sambalpur University. 2. University College of Engineering. 3. Veer Surendra Sai Medical College. 4. Gangadhar Meher College. 5. Office of Revenue Divisional Commissioner (Northern Division) 6. Office of Deputy Inspector General of Police 7.

Office of District Magistrate. 8. Office of Collector. 9. Superintendent of Police. 10. Railway Divisional Office. 11. LIC Divisional Office. 12. Regional and Divisional Office of all prominent organisations. 13. Headquarters of Mahanadi Coalfields Ltd. 14. Indian Aluminium Co. Hirakud 15. Hirakud Power Generation Corporation. 16. Hira Cables, 17. Hirakud Re-rolling Mills, 18. Hirakud Industrial Works, 19. Bhusan Steels Ltd. Neighbouring district Bargarh is the rice bowl of Orissa and has several industries while Jharsuguda district is well known for Industries, coal mines and thermal plant.

GENERAL INFORMATION :

Area 6698 Kms

Population 8,09,000 (1991 census)

Climate

Temperature - Max temperature 48° C Min - 10°C

Rain Fall 141.3 cm

Language :

Sambalpuri, Oriya, Hindi, English & Tribal dialects.

Clothing

Summer - Light Cotton clothes

Winter - Woollen Clothes

People - Gentle and Simple

MANAGEMENT OF SHREE SHREE SAMALESWARI TEMPLE :

The temple is managed by Shree Shree Samaleswari Trust Board formed and administered u/s 42 (a) of Orissa Hindu Religious Endowment Act 1951. This monument has been declared a state protected monument under ancient monument preservation Act. 1956 (Act of 1956)

Shree Shree Samaleswari Trust Board is an upgraded trust board having special scheme order. The head of the trust board is designated as president. There are four other members including one representative of sevayats. One executive officer and staff are appointed to take care of the temple and the office.

The Commissioner of Endowments looks after the administrative affairs of all the temples in Orissa. In Sambalpur Addl. Asst. Commissioner of endowments is posted to represent the commissioner.

Though the temple is managed by Shree Shree Samaleswari Trust Board the devotees extend substantial help in this regard. The associated organisations namely Shree Shree Samaleswari Dasahara Festival Committee. Samaleswari Yuvak Sangh, Samaleswari Namayagna Committee, Samaleswari Akhada Mandali and Samaleswari Bhajan Mandali render great help to the management.

Every effort is being made to make this temple, a major place of tourist interest and pilgrimage. The recent years marked significant improvement mostly through public munificence. The atmosphere of the temple and the premises is wholesome and beautiful. All praise goes to the enthusiasm of the public who, in recent years, have been able to maintain this important shrine in the best possible manner. Many projects are completed and many others are under execution.

Major works done :

1. Repairing of temple's roof, concrete premises of temple, small temples in the premises and kitchen of the temple.
2. Water supply system along with hand & foot wash system.
3. Drainage system.
4. Attractive light arrangement inside the temple, temple premises and roof of the temple.
5. Fixing of lightening arrestor at the top of temple.
6. Installation of two water fountains.
7. Construction of Bhoga mandap and sale of Annabhoga.
8. Construction of shoe stand and trust board counter
9. Extension of temple premises by sand and soil filling
10. Plantation
11. Construction of retaining wall and compound wall.
12. Preservation of ancient Elephant gate.
13. Completion of marble works.
14. Construction of Jagar Mandap.
15. Establishment of Police beat house.
16. Renovation of river side tower.
17. Regularisation of trust board office
18. Installation of Asia's biggest Astadhatu Bahan Singha Bigraha
19. Implementation of nitya mahabhoga Jogana.
20. Fixation of new attractive iron gate at the main entrance.
21. Extension of the concrete ground and construction of retaining wall.
22. Regularisation of dittum.
23. Maintenance of cleanliness.
24. High standard sound arrangement.
25. Installation of electric Jalar, the automatic alati baja machine.
26. Installation of 6 KVA diesel generator
27. Starting of Bhajan Samaroh, Deep Mahayagna and other spiritual and cultural activities including prabachana etc.
28. Development of parking space.
29. Arrangement for performance of all rituals.
30. Publication of literature on temple.

Projects under process :

1. Construction of Samaleswari Bhawan measuring a plinth area of 16652 Sqft., Consisting of Yatri Nivas, Kalyan Mandap, Natya Mandap and Library etc. at an estimated cost of Rs. 70 Lac. is nearing completion. The Bhumi Puja of the said prestigious building was performed by Gajapati Sri Divyasingh Dev.
2. Construction of Big flower garden namely Balram Dev Udyan.
3. Construction of Museum on the history of Samaleswari temple and Sambalpur.
4. Installation of life size bronze statue of King Balaram Dev
5. Publication of Books on the deity.
6. Making of Bhajan Cassettes.
7. Arrangement of daily Satsang in the temple premises.

The development work of the temple is in rapid progress. The temple administration seeks assistance from all possible sources.

ADDRESS FOR CORRESPONDANCE :

Shree Shree Samaleswari Trust Board

Samaleswari Temple, Sambalpur - 768003, Orissa, India., Tel.: (0663) 2401369 (Off)

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PRESENT TRUST BOARD :

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Akshaya Kumar Rai	-	Member	06646 - 265115 (R)

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