



Shakta Pitha Bhattarika

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Shakta Pitha Bhattarika of Badamba in the district of Cuttack is one of the notable holy place of Orissa. This sacred pitha is associated with Devi Bhattarika. The river Mahanadi the longest river of Orissa flows in the side of the temple of the Bhattarika. The river is deep here. In the foot of the Ratnagiri hill temple of Bhattarika is located. River Mahanadi, Ratnagiri hill, temple of Bhattarika, and famous places like Narayana, Nilamadhava, Vindhya vasini, Simhanath attract thousands of Pilgrims, devotees and tourists. According to a popular legend this pitha is established by Parsuram and also he carved the image of goddess in the tip of his arrow. In this pitha



Bhattarika Temple, Badamba

Parsurama penanced to gain mercy of the deity to kill Bhattas or Kshetriyas. The Goddess became pleased with him and offered him the desired boom. So the Pitha is associated to the epic age. According to the Ramayan, Ram,

Lakshmana and Sita on their way to Panchvati paid prayer to the Goddess Bhattarika. The Mankadagadia hill on the other side of Mahanadi where the foot mark of Ram, Lakshmana and Sita are worshipped is also quite significant. Another legend says that Krishna and Satyabhama visited Bhattarika and it was revealed to Arjun during his Agyantavasa. The Demon Gosimha kidnapped

Satyabhama in disguise during that period. Arjun fought bravely and killed Gosimha demon. After that Krishna, Satyabhama and Arjun prayed Goddess Bhattarika; the presiding deity of the Badamba royal family. The term Bhattarika has different meaning. According to History and legend

of Badambagada, Gajapati of Orissa ordered Hattakishor and Mallakishor the two brothers to establish two villages named Sankha and Mahuri. After that they became king in that place. Tribal chief of that area opposed these two brothers



when they tried to construct Fort. A terrible battle was fought and finally tribal chief and his wife died in the battle. Before death the wife of the tribal chief advised king Hattakishore to worship the deity Bhattarika. Another name of the deity Bhattarika is Bruhadamba. The king named his state Bhuhadamba bearing the name of the Goddess. But latter it is know as Badamba Devi Bhattarika seated in *Lalitasana* holding a lotus in one hand and the other hand in Varadamudra. She is *suryopasanatatpara*. It is seen that the sun God is worshiped here. In the Jagamohan of the Bhattarika temple an image of sun god is kept. Another meaning of the Devi Bhattarika is “respectable lady.” Devi Bhattarika associated with eight small images, five in *padmasana* and three in *Lalitasana*. The associated images are Prabha, Maya, Jaya, Sukshma, Visuddha, Suprabha and Abhaya. According to Buddhist “Yogachara” system the Devi is seated in the centre of Chakra associated with eight deties. The priest worships the goddess as Rajarajeswari, Mahamaya, Tripura Sundari, Siddha Bhattarika. Some research scholars opine that the place was

linked with Buddhism. At the time of Bhaumakara rule the particular place was associated with tantric Buddhism. The Somavamsis who were dead enemies of Buddhism might have converted the pitha into the Hindu fold. The tiny Buddhist image is now placed in the central niche. The present Tara image appears to be a later insertion. The worshippers of the goddess Bhattarika are non-Brahmin, this brings about a folk character of the deity. In the daily ritual of the deity the cooked fish is offered. Devi Bhattarika is considered as the deity of navigation and the Fisherman community. The popular myths, legends, archaeological evidence prove that Bhattarika Pitha has been Shakta Pitha.

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Goddess Ramachandi Temple near Konark, District - Puri