Since the dawn of the civilization, Indians have shown great interest in trade. The morphological features of the sub-continent have contributed to the development of maritime activity. The geographical location of Indian Peninsula projecting into the Indian Ocean bowl is favourable for contacts with Africa on the west and with eastern Archipelago. During the early historical times (c.3rd B.C to c. 3rd A.D) the land routes extended from Taxila to Kaveripattinam in the south and Tamulk in the east up to Broach in the west. The major city centre of Kalinga (Ancient Odisha) of that time were Tosali, Kalingapatnam, Tamralipti, Pithunda which were all in the trade circuit. Here, an attempt is made to present the historical evidences that shows great heritage of Puri City being a pilgrim centre down in the lanes of history. The study of trade routes on the basis of archaeological and material evidences is the age old trend of Indian historical research apart from literature. The visible material evidences are considered as primary sources to study the history of a region or a place.

The important Indian urban trade centres in the early historical(c.3rd B.C to c.3rd A.D) period were Bharukaccha (Broach) on the west coast, Puskalavati on the north-west frontier, Sravasti, Champa (modern Bhagalpur), Pataliputra, Varanasi, Kausambi, Ayodhya, Mathura, Vidisa and Ujjain in central India and Tamralipti, Tosali and Samapa, Kalinga Nagara on the east coast and Paithan or Pratisthna in Deccan region of India. These trade centres were well connected with the roads and communication network which has been described in Dathavamsa. Milestones were provided on the corner of the roads at intervals which helped to indicate the distance and direction which were evident from various excavated sites of India. This is proved in some of the early historical sites of India like Sisupalgarh, Kankia-Radhanagar, Manikapatna, Kausambhi, Taxila and some others.

The strategic geographical location of Odisha helped her in rising to great heights in respect of trade and communication from pre-Buddhist period. Odisha served as a bridge between the trans-oceanic and inland trade of India, causing migration of cultural traits along with trade and commerce. The entire strip of land running along the coast of Bay of Bengal and bounded on the north by river Kapisa or Kansai and on the south by the river Godavari was known in ancient times as Kalinga Desa and constituted one of the prosperous kingdoms of India. The Astadhyayi of Panini (c.5th B.C ) mentions Kalinga as an important Janapada. So great was the fame of Kalinga as a maritime power in ancient times that Kalidas in his Raghuvamsa referred to
the king of Kalinga as the lord of the sea “Mohodadhipatt”.

There are a number of literary references available regarding overseas trade route and commerce, so also inscriptions and excavated sites throw much light on the ancient trade routes. The literary evidence are found from Arya Manjushrimulakalpa Buddhist Jatakas, Samantaprasadika, Uttaradhyanasutra, Brahmand Purana, Arthasastra, Madalapanji, Yuktikalpataru, Brihatsamhita, Dasakumaracharita, Sambapurana, Pavanaduta Kavya, Sunyasamhita, etc. Puri or Sri Kshetra or Purusottama Kshetra or Jagannatha Dham being on the coast and a religious centre emerged as a city centre towards 7th-8th century A.D. with the establishment of Dhaam by Sankaracharya, of course, there was a settlement since the dawn of civilization which awaits the spade of archaeologists.

In the second quarter of the 7th century A.D. Yuan Chwang, the Chinese pilgrim was travelling widely in India, and he also came to Odisha (Kalinga, Utkala, Kangoda), called Wu-Tu in the text. He says in his travels, near the shore of the Ocean in the south-east of this country was the city Che-li-ta-lo, about 20 li in circuit, which was a thoroughfare and resting place for sea-going traders and strangers from distant lands. This place has been restored to its Sanskrit name Charitra and some scholars have identified it with Citrotpola and some others with Charitpura or Puri. It is interesting to note that in 7th century A.D. the Chinese pilgrim Iising mentioned a place called Srikshetra in Burma which is generally identified by Jayanas with Prome region of Burma. Sumatra inscription of king Jayanas (7th century) reveals that his royal park was named as Srikshetra. Srikshetra stands for Sri Purusottama had spread as far as South East Asia, there by establishing a close communication contact.

The Archaeological excavation at Manikapatna, about 45 kms towards south of Puri provides a running chronology of historical habitation being a port or trade centre from 1st century A.D. to 18th century A.D. which serves as benchmark to study the settlement pattern and trade route of Puri. Abul Fazal described Manikapatna as a sea port where taxes were collected. There was a toll gate named Samudrakara Bandha on the bank of Chilika where taxes were collected from the sea traders. The site of Manikapatna contains a series of mounds distinctly visible on the surface. On the top of the highest mound, there is Bhabakundaleswar temple of 13th century A.D. To the east of this temple is another important monument i.e., a Muslim tomb datable to 1885 A.D. The reference of Manikapatna first appears in the legend of Kanchi-Kaveri expedition of the Gajapati King Purusottama Deva of 15th century A.D. The limited excavation revealed (1989-90, 1992-93) a cultural deposit of two periods. The period I has revealed two Celts probably of Neolithic period along with pot-sherds. The period I is dated by the excavator from 2nd century B.C. to 5-6th century A.D., and with the end of period I there is a hiatus.

The deposit of period II can be dated from 9th century A.D. to the early part of 19th century A.D. In the lowest strata of period II, fragments of good quality jade green colour Chinese celadon made their appearance. In the habitation area no complete structures are encountered.

The most spectacular findings from Manikapatna are ceramics of various types including both indigenous and foreign fabrics. This is probably the only site in the entire east-coast
of India from where so many varieties of imported wares have been found. Some of these wares are rouletteware, knobbedware, egg-white glazed and glazed chocolate, Arabic ware, keoline ware, Chinese celadon, Chinese porcelain, black, grey, and black and red ware, a shred with Khorosti script and a Puri-Kushana coin. Other noteworthy objects from the site are a Ceylonese coin with legend Srimad Sahassamala, two triangular copper coins of Shaha Alam, two east India copper coins, a British Medal, Mughal coins, a Chinese coin, harpoon, spearhead, fish-hooks, game pieces, iron beads, terracotta beads of arecanut shape, terracotta figurines, two stone shels, a four armed Vishnu image of chlorite, grinder and pestle, a male torso made of khondalite, female miniature head, cart wheels, a large number of bangles of conch shell, terracotta lamps etc. Manikpatna is the only site along the sea coast of India from where varieties of ceramics including Chinese Celadonware have been reported. The presence of pottery, artifacts and coins indicates the impact of early sea trade between Odisha and the Mediterranean world. Findings of Rouletted ware, shreds with Khorosti scripts, semi contact between Odisha, Bengal, Assam and Tamilnadu dates back to early historic period. Manikapatna played a vital role in the internal trade of the east coast of India. It was a strong port and ruled by a Jagirdar up to early part of 19th century. During the Mughal and Maratha period, it was a flourishing port town as we get inscriptive evidence from the tomb. The formation of the sand bars and sedimentation in the Lake caused the decline of Manikapatna port. So also remains of archaeological importance has brought to limelight recently at Bardhyakuda, Podaghar, Jhatipadara and around Chilika which are datable to the early historical period to medieval period.

So also the excavation at Khalkatapatna near Konark focuses on the trade activities during Ganga period. This Khalkatapatna was one of the major ports of Odisha which flourished during 11th century A.D. The evidence found from excavation (1987, ASI) are a brick jetty floor, Chinese Celadonware, Chinese porcelain, with blue floral design, egg-white glazedware and chocolateware, stamped pottery with geometrical design. Besides, Chinese coins are also found from this site. A fragment of Chinese copper coins which is dated to 14th century A.D, and the circular copper coin had a square perforation at the centre having a legend in Chinese character have been found. All these materials suggest that there was a strong trade relation between China and India and point to great marine trade in east-coast.

There are many places in Puri district which bear the tradition of maritime trade. Some of the places like Banikapatna, Balipatna, Bandari (Astarang Block), Vandareswara (Near Charchika), Boitabhangatutha of Vishnupur near Nimapada very close to river Kushabhadra, Bedapurapatna in Gop block and near Kakatpur in Prachi Valley and several places like Boyitakuda and a place called Jahaja-Padiya or ship field bear testimony of sea trade. Archaeological remains are visible in these places of Puri district which were the outlets for trade and commerce and served as trade routes in the historical periods.

The construction of huge temples such as Sri Jagannath temple at Puri and Sun Temple at Konarak and display of sculpture panels on double mast boats, pilgrims Martand Bhairava and establishment of several shrines of Mangala, Ramachandi, Baltharchandi, Kalijai (goddess) etc, provide much evidence on continuity of sea trade on the coast.
**Madalapanji**- the temple chronicle of events of Sri Jagannath, records the historical events like Rakta Vahu’s capture of Kalinga and Puri coming by sea-voyage. It appears that people from other countries like Greece, Rome, China, Persia etc, had come to Kalinga/Utkala for trade. These people have been termed as Yavana. The Madala Panji indicates the existence of foreigners in Kalinga and confirms that Kalinga’s contact with foreign countries. This is also known from the *Brahmanda Purana*, particularly Chilika as a trade route. The discovery of Kushana coins at Gurubai (near Jhanikuda) on the strip of land between the Chilika lake and the sea suggests a trade route in the area. Later period during mid 16th century the idols of Jagannatha, Balabhadra and Subhadra of Puri were taken to this place and kept in hide from the Muslim attacks. So also places like Nairi, Chakanasi (near Brahmapur Island) where idols of Puri Temple were kept and taken to Banapur and Marda in Ganjam district. So also the remnants of Vishnu temple at Satapada (near Shelter Centre) and Siva and Vishnu temple at Nairi, Vaisnavite temple at Palur etc. suggest a strong communication network starting from Puri to southern part of Odisha through Chilika during 14th-15th century A.D. Vasudeva Somayaji the author of *Gangavansanucharitam* has described that he came to Puri from Burwa, a port in Ganjam by a boat and returned on the land route to Khallikote after crossing the Chilika lake in a boat in the year 1762 A.D.

During early medieval period the surplus agrarian and industrial products led to the growth of trade and commerce, which has continued from the early times. The rural trade was mainly carried out by the *hattas* (weekly markets). The epigraphic evidences of the Bhaumas, Ganga and Gajapati periods often refer *hattas* as the nuclei of rural trade. The ruling monarchs established these *hattas* by bringing the undertaking of public utility. The Puri copperplate inscription of Bhanudeva II, dated 1312 A.D. and Alipur plates of Narasinghdeva II, dated 1294 A.D. refers to a number of *hattas* of medieval Odisha. These village markets have acted as a direct link among cultivators, craftsmen and artisans which have served the need of the village people.

There existed a number of inter-state and intra-state trade routes in medieval Odisha. The expedition of Rajendra Chola (11th century A.D.) to Dandabhukti through Odisha suggests the existence of inter–state roads connecting the Baster region of Madhya Bharat. Srikshtera or Purusottam Kshetra (Puri) was a major pilgrimage centre in India at least from Ganga period and was connected with different regions by roads. The migration of Brahmanas to Odisha also proves the existence of inter-state routes. The great Vaisnava saint Sri Chaitanya came to Puri from Navadwipa by following a route. A Ganga grant dated c. 909 A.D. refers to a route named Dharmaraja Kalinga–Marga which connected Odisha with South India. So also there are several pilgrim routes connected to Puri along with coast to south India and central and western India along with Mahanadi river popularly called Jagannath-sadak. The routes are refrided by many pilgrims and saints. There still exists some archaeological remains along Palur coast and Boud Sonepur on the bank of Mahanadi.

The Van Den Brokes map was prepared in 1960 A.D. In this map places like Jagannath, Cuttack Bhadrak, Baleswar, Remuna, Narasinghapur, Pipili, Jaleswar and Dantan are shown on a high way. Towards the end of 19th century and early part of 20th century we get a Portuguese currency note chat printed the picture of the Jagannath. On obverse of the Rupia paper currency the name of the bank Banco National
Ultramarino and Nova Goa have been printed in bold upper character. On the reverse of the currency the name of the Banco National Ultra Marino in bold upper character at the top three Jaganntha temple of Puri at the centre and uma Rupia in bold character have been printed at the below of the currency. The main temple (vimana) and the Jagamohan have been shown clearly. The compound wall, the steps leading to the temple and two rooms at the main entrance of the temple are also clearly shown. The Bazaar outside of the temple selling Prasad in clay pots is also depicted on the right side. It is also clear from the currency that the Jagannath temple was depicted on currency before transplantation of Arunastambha which was brought from Konarak. The Portuguese had trade centres in Odisha Coast. The Jagannath temple of Puri and the Sun Temple at Konarak were known to the Europeans as White Pagoda and Black Pagoda and were served as the landmarks during navigation.

The existing temple of Lord Jagannath was known to international sailing community as an important landmark while moving in the Bay of Bengal. Sailing directions and ship logs mention about the exact location of the temple from distant sea (20 kms from shore) Kempthorn (1679 A.D) has given the exact course of coastal navigation in folio 136-68 which mention that “from Maneclapatam to Jauggernaut course is East-North East and distance is 10 miles.” It could be safely concluded that most likely, Puri was used as a Port from Arab period (10th Century A.D) and later on Portuguese along with other Europeans had full knowledge about local shipping at Puri. Probably for this reason, Kempthorn in his international direction of sailing have mentioned Jaggernaut. There are several references found in the shiplog of Capt.Talbot (1680 A.D), Capt Hide (1681 A.D), Capt.Lake (1683). All these Captains mostly were coming from on their way from or to London mention about the landmark to approach Odisha coast was Mahendragiri in south and next important was Jaggernaut. Maneclapatam was also an important landmark. However, some of these records are kept in British Museum London which need more research to know more about the maritime past of Odisha in general and Puri in particular.

The state of internal routes was well described by Mr. Toynbee in his sketch of History of Odisha, when we took the province in 1803, there was not a road, in the modern sense of the word, in existence. What were then called roads were mere fair-weather cart-track without bridges and proper ferry arrangements for crossing the numerous water-course which they intercepted; they passed, however, for the most part over high ridges of uncultivated land, and were thus more practicable than they would be at present day, when cultivation has been so enormously extended. The traffic from south to Cuttack passed along the eastern shore of the Chilika lake, between it and the sea, to Puri and thence followed exactly the line of the present great Jagannath road. It now all passes through Khurda along Ganjam road, the old route being abandoned to Nuliya fisherman and antelope. The ruins of the old rest houses for pilgrims (It found in Berhampura island which was explored in the year 2006)- the only visible record of its existence.

Another line from Puri passed through Khurda and the Barmula pass in to central provinces via Sambalpur. Proceeding northwards the line from Puri passed through Cuttack, Padampur, Arakpur, and Brahmabarda to Jajpur and thence to Bhadrak through Dhamnagar. Thence lines followed as nearly as possible that of present road. It was not, however, until 1804-05 that this line was adopted. The former route
was through Nilgiri and Mayurbhanj. It passed in many places through dense jungle infested by tigers and other wild animals and to keep down these, the Moghuls and Maratha used to give grants of land rent free to individuals on condition of their reclaiming the grant.

However, pilgrim business was the main trade of Puri since the historical days, hence the pilgrim route is considered to be the main trade route. W.W. Hunter, in early twentieth century writes that “the great spiritual army marched its hundreds the sometimes its thousands of miles along burning roads, across unabridged rivers and through pestilent regions of jungles and swamps. Those who kept to the road had spent their strength long before the holy city (Puri) was reached. The sturdy women of Hindustan braved it out and sang songs till they dropped; but the weaker females of Bengal limped piteously along with bleeding feet in silence, broken only by deep sighs and an occasional sob. Many a sickly girl died upon the road; and by the time they reached Puri, the whole party and their feet bound up in rags, plastered with dirt and blood.” At that time Bengal pilgrims had to tramp all the way from Ulberia to Puri on Jagannath Trunk Road, only the wealthier classes travel in bullock carts or palanquins, while pilgrims from the south used to come by road along the strip of land between Chilika Lake and the Bay or in few cases by boats across the Chilika Lake in the year 1810. Raja Sukhamaya Ray of Bengal had taken leading step for construction of the Jagannath Road which facilitated pilgrims to come easily. So also in 1901 railway line was opened to Puri. So also the single road leading to Puri was declared as National Highway in the year 2002 and the Road network was strengthened and by now keeping eye on the Navakalevar 2015 the NH-203 is being widened and multiple option is wide opened to control the crowd and for visitor management.

Thus, Puri being on the Bay of Bengal was well connected with all over India and south-East-Asia since historical days. The sea ports like Manikapatna, Gourangapatna, Khalkatapatna and others were very active during different periods of history as we have discussed. So also the internal communication pattern through land route made this city as cultural capital of India. Due to a strong communication network, it was possible for the kings and emperors to build such gigantic temple structure. It is an established fact in Indian History that all the famous religious and sacred sites had strong trade and commerce background. It can very well be attested from the western Indian cave sites as well as Indian temple sites like Mahabalipuram, Kanchi, Kaveripattanam, Simanchalam, Konarak, Puri, Dilwara etc.

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Offering

Shyam Prakash Senapati

Oh Lord!
You are nothing
And everything
You are sound
And resound.

Cause and creator of the Sea, Sky and the Earth
You cover and uncover the word
And the technical word.

In each and every moment
I take re-birth that is
Your shadow and compassion.

Oh, Wooden-God, Janardan!
Give a new sacred text
In exchange, I will
Offer you
My Poet-heart.

Shyam Prakash Senapati, Editor, Abhinandanika, Senapati Bhawan, Grand Road, Puri-752001.