

Regarding Buddhist Sites

SHRI SUKANTA KUMAR PANIGRAHI (KANDHAMAL): Hon. Chairperson, Madam, I wish to bring to the attention of the Government the rich yet neglected Buddhist heritage of Boudh District of Odisha. The very name Boudh signifies its historical connection with Lord Buddha and Buddhism. Yet, the region has not received due recognition and support for its preservation and promotion.

Archaeological findings including a large image of Lord Buddha in Bhumisparsha Mudra, ancient monastic remains, pillars, bricks, and votive stupas, indicate that Boudh was once a flourishing centre of Buddhism. Additionally, Dambarugarh was a known hub of Tantric Buddhism, where scholars wrote influential Buddhist scripts. Despite these discoveries, Boudh remains out of India's officially-recognised Buddhist Circuit.

I urge the hon. Minister of Culture and Tourism to take the following steps, which include, to direct the Archaeological Survey of India to conduct a comprehensive study ? (*Interruptions*)