

>

Title: Need to provide financial assistance for excavation of archaeological findings at Sisupalgarh in Orissa.

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY (PURI): Hon. Speaker, Sir, archaeologists have made an interesting finding at the ancient city, Sisupalgarh in Orissa, which is more than 2,500 years old. They believe that it is older and bigger than even Athens in Greece. Situated on the outskirts of Bhubaneswar, Sisupalgarh was once a thriving metropolis with population of over 25,000. That makes it even larger than the biggest city of classical Greece – Athens. Even though Sisupalgarh was discovered in the year 1948, it was not until three years ago that excavations started there. The Head Archaeologist of University of California, Dr. Monica L. Smith says "these cities from a very early time, about the third or fourth century BC, were very densely populated and urban in every sense of the word." A group of archaeologists believe that it is older and bigger than even Athens in Greece. A team of archaeologists from Deccan College in Pune, University of California and Archaeological Survey of India are manning the digs. What has been excavated is a very small area of the site and the area has been given a different perspective. Researchers have to depend largely on foreign funding for the excavation of this important site as the Government of India has not yet stepped in to help.

Our country 'Bharat' in general and Orissa, the erstwhile Kalinga, in particular, is having rich culture and heritage and we are proud of that. But it is sad that when the foreign countries are taking interest in our archaeologically important site and are investing funds, we are miser in utilizing the necessary funds in these discoveries.

Sir, through you, I would urge upon the Government of India to take the necessary steps and invest funds for further discovery. They should take immediate steps for the purpose.