

**MATERIAL FOR INCLUSION IN  
THE INDIAN ARCHAEOLOGY – A REVIEW FOR THE YEAR  
2001-2002  
IN RESPECT OF DHARWAD CIRCLE, DHARWAD.**

**EXPLORATIONS AND EXCAVATIONS  
KARNATAKA.**

TRIAL EXCAVATION, HIREBENKAL, DISTRICT KOPPAL. -Trial excavations by way of putting 2.5x2.5m trenches were taken up at Durgadadadi and Talavaramule, in the megalithic habitational site at Hirebenkal under the direction of S.V.Venkateshaiah, assisted by M.V.Visweswara, M.Kalimuthu, A.V.Naganoor, R.S. Athani and S.Lingaraju of the Dharwad Circle, Dharwad with the objective of ascertaining the cultural sequence and archaeological potentiality of the site.

The site at Durgadadadi bounded by large granite boulders, located on one of the saddles of the hill top, overlooking the village Chikkabenakal was taken up for digging based on the surface indications like the presence of fragmentary Neolithic implements, occurrence of rolled and rain washed pottery and ashy deposits. Excavation to a depth of 1.5 meters has brought to light two distinct layers of habitation deposit. Layer-1-yielded large quantities of semicharred animal bones, probably of cattle. Some of the bones are found bearing chopped /cut marks. Layer-2 has yielded typical Megalithic pottery. The ceramic industry of this period is represented by typical black-and-red ware, polished red ware, and

dull red ware. A small button shaped etched Carnelian bead is an interesting find besides terracotta beads.

The second locality, *Talavaramule* located at the foot hills of the northern slopes, was also excavated to a depth of 1.5m where in natural soil was struck. This site has yielded two layers of Megalithic cultural materials. Layer-1 measuring 40-50cms in thickness has yielded pottery of dull red ware and implements like points and arrowheads made of bone. Layer-2 has yielded typical Megalithic black and red ware pottery within a house plan indicated by circular postholes.

The available evidence though scanty due to limited work, clearly establishes the megalithic association of the site.

### **OTHER IMPORTANT DISCOVERIES / EVENTS**

Dharwad Circle, Karnataka

**2001 – 2002**

1. NATIONAL AWARD FOR GROUP OF MONUMENTS (WH), PATTADAKAL, DIST: BAGALKOT. – The Group of Monuments at Pattadakal was awarded the prestigious National Tourism Award under the category of ‘*Best Maintained Tourism Friendly Monument*’ for the year 2000-2001, based on the recommendations of the Ministry of Tourism and Culture. In view of the availability of all tourist amenities and maintenance of the temple Group in its pristine condition, the Ministry recommended it for the award, which was received by S.V.Venkateshaiah, Superintending Archaeologist 25<sup>th</sup> January 2002 (P.I.I).

2. ANCIENT QUARRY SITE, PATTADAKAL, DIST: BAGALKOT. – A team of archaeologists headed by S.V.Venkateshaiah, Superintending Archaeologist assisted by M.V.Visweswara and S.Lingaraju, of the Dharwad Circle has discovered a rare quarry site (Pl.II), wherefrom quality rock material was extracted for the construction of the celebrated Badami Chalukyan edifices of 8<sup>th</sup> century A.D. at Pattadakal, the famous World Heritage site. The significance of the site lies in the fact that it exemplifies the technical skill of the architects in selecting the site yielding the finest rock material in the close proximity to the construction spot, knowledge of the qualities of the stone suitable for temple construction, translation of the requisite measurements for fashioning the architectural members, mason-marking each quarried block based on its suitability for conversion into specific architectural member and imparting training to the artisans by engraving illustrations of sculptures, architectural members etc.

Investigations in the vicinity of the State Reserve forest located about five kilometres due north of Pattadakal in the sandstone hilly outcrops locally called *Motura Maradi* and *Shankaralingana Gundu*, located at an altitude of over 300 feet from the surrounding ground level, have brought to light, evidences of large-scale quarry activities during the Badami Chalukyan times. The site still has a number of quarried stone blocks of various sizes, scattered all around (Pl.III), which could be used for fashioning of pillars, beams, architrave, pillar-capital, roof-slabs etc., of a temple besides weathered waste-blocks. The site has also yielded eight label inscriptions in the characters of 8<sup>th</sup> century A.D., perhaps recording the names of the craftsmen employed for quarrying.

The site displays a number of line-drawings of divinities like Ganesha (Pl.IV), Mahisha-Mardhini, Shivalinga, Nandi etc., animal figures of

lion, camel (?) and peacock besides a variety of architectural and decorative motifs like pillars, arches, *chaitya*-motifs and *mandalas*. A number of horizontal strokes in groups, possibly indicative of the attendance of the artisans employed are also found at many places along with mason-marks, which have been identified both at the quarry site as well as in the temple complex at Pattadakal. Yet another unique aspect of the discovery is the high-quality, rust-proof wedge and hammer-gun used for the large scale quarrying operation during the Chalukyan times.

3. STONE KETTLEDROM (?), HIREBENAKAL, DIST: KOPPAL. –S.V.Venkateshaiah, Superintending Archaeologist, assisted by M.V.Visweswara and S.Lingaraju of the Dharwad Circle have discovered a unique stone kettledrum (Pl.VA and VB) near the megalithic burial complex at Hirebenakal. This roughly hemispherical stone, positioned in a strategic location amidst the hillocks, has a diameter of 2.20 mt. and a maximum radial height of 1.5 mt. It rests on a huge, 10 mt. high monolithic boulder with the beating surface, forming a convenient angle of about  $65^{\circ}$  from the horizontal plane. A spherical or spheroidal boulder on the hillock appears to have been chamfered at a desired angle for fashioning this solid percussion instrument as evidenced by peripheral chisel marks. The drum, when beaten by a stone or a wooden hammer emanates musical sound, which could be distinctly heard beyond a radius of 1 Km including the burial complex and the habitation site located at diametrically opposite ends. This kettledrum might have served the purpose of cautioning the inhabitants of the site against invaders or for inviting them for congregations of socio-religious or ritualistic significance. Tentatively, the authorship of this kettle drum can be assigned to the megalithic folk (8<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> century B.C.), who had gained requisite technological expertise to fashion such stone objects and the acquaintance of musical knowledge.

### **III.MUSEUMS**

1. ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM, AIHOLE, DISTRICT BAGALKOT.- Aihole valley model was prepared locating the geographical, geomorphological features and the protected monuments so as to enable the tourists to have a glance of the surrounding environs and gain preliminary knowledge about the monuments. Spotlight illumination was provided in the galleries for better look of the displayed sculptures. New wooden pedestals for installing sculptures were prepared.
2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM, BADAMI, DISTRICT BAGALKOT.- The toilet block was repaired and rendered functional by replacing the damaged sanitary fittings and overhead water tank. The opening space of the veranda was provided with iron grills for safety of the displayed sculptures on the Wall showcases were provided for small antiquities.
3. ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM, BIJAPUR, DISTRICT BIJAPUR.-The damaged floor stones in the galleries were removed carefully and relaid with fresh stone slabs. The damaged background cloth of the showcases in the gallery Nos.4, 5 and 6 was removed and new background cloth matching with the original was provided. Focus spotlights were provided to the displayed sculptures for better appearance. Fiberglass shutters and metal frames were provided to the doors and windows of the cellar.