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TOURIST IMPORTANCE OF BUDDHIST SIGHTS IN GUNTUR DISTRICT-A STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Buddhism was first introduced to the world in the 6th century BCE by Siddhartha Gautama. It first spread outside the ancient kingdom of Magadha. At the time India already had an established reputation for being a land of pioneers in spiritual and intellectual innovation. The Indian demographic at the time, however, had reached a point where it could be divided into two broad sects: the self centered aristocracy, and the ritualistic masses. Eventually, resentment towards the injustices suffered by the lower classes, and the overwhelming powers of the priestly class prompted the development of alternative teachings and philosophies. Today the town is a popular tourist destination because of attractions like the famous Amaravathi Stupa and the archaeological museum. The banks of river Krishna serve as popular picnic spots among the locals and draw numerous tourists. Guntur is a very important part of the state of Andhra Pradesh as it is considered the cradle of learning and administration. It is regarded as one of the most developed cities in the state because it has the maximum of learning institutes and administrative organizations. The language and literature, art and architecture, social norms and religious practices of that time were shaped by the enlightening stimulus of this great religion. The magnificent remains of many Buddhist Viharas and stupas in Guntur district give us a glorious glimpse of the ancient times when Buddhism flourished in the district. Guntur is an important tourist destination of Andhra Pradesh and is famous for Buddhist monuments. Find peace and tranquility as you make the circuit of the Buddhist sites.

KEY WORDS: Tourism, Buddhism and Monuments Importance.