

KAMAKHYA TEMPLE

The *Kamakhya Temple* (Assamese: *kāmākhyā mandir*); also Kamrup-Kamakhya is a Hindu temple dedicated to the mother goddess Kamakhya. It is one of the oldest of the 51 Shakti Pithas. Situated on the Nilachal Hill in western part of Guwahati city in Assam, India, it is the main temple in a complex of individual temples dedicated to the ten Mahavidyas: Kali, Tara, Sodashi, Bhuvaneshwari, Bhairavi, Chhinnamasta, Dhumavati, Bagalamukhi, Matangi and Kamala. Among these, Tripurasundari, Matangi and Kamala reside inside the main temple whereas the other seven reside in individual temples. It is an important pilgrimage destination for general Hindu and especially for Tantric worshippers.



Purva Tirupati Sri Balaji Temple

The **Purva Tirupati Sri Balaji Temple, located in Betkuchi, Guwahati**, spreads this divine message to all. The Complex, located on two acres of prime land, has a clean environment. A gentle breeze wafts across the lawns surrounded by blooming coconut and Ashoka trees, flowers, plantains & bougainvilleas.

The door of the entrance to the Complex is decorated in ancient style. Ganeshji, the acclaimed remover of obstacles, graces the entrance of the temple complex. The Temple of Lord Balaji has a Rajagopuram (70 ft. in height), a Maha Mandapam, an Ardha Mandapam, and the Sanctorum. Between the main entrance and the Temple is the Dhvajastambham (Flag pole), which is 60 ft. in height and is made of a single Sal tree and covered by copper plate with brass coating. As per tradition, it was installed within a month's time from the Kumbhabhishekham.

The main deity is of Lord Balaji. It is carved out of a single stone weighing 4 tonnes and the features, the smiling face, ornaments carved on the stone with Sankha (conch) Chakra and Four arms (one Abhya Hastam showering blessings, and the other on the hip) all add to the solemnity and serenity of the Temple. The Utsava Murthy comprises of Lord Balaji, his consort, Ubhayee. Nachiar and Chakrathalwar are carved out of metal. As in Tirupati, Goddess Padmavathi (Avatar of Mahalakshmi) blesses from an adjacent temple. On the directive of His Holiness Sri Sankaracharya of Kanchi Kamakoti Peetam, Guwahati being the seat of Goddess Kamakhya, a temple has been built for Goddess Durga. She has 8 arms, bearing the Sankha, Chakra, knives, bows and arrows. The bow is made of stone which, when tapped produces a metallic sound. Garuda, the Vahana of Lord Balaji, has a separate temple. A Yangasala has been built in traditional style to enable devotees to perform Yagnas of their choice. The Gopurams are constructed as per the shilpa shastras and are in the South Indian architectural style. These magnificent Gopurams range from eight feet in the Ganesh Temple to 70 feet in the Rajagopuram. They are painted white and glisten when sunlight falls on them. The exquisite wooden doors have been handcrafted in Chennai. The temple is well illuminated at night.



UMANANDA

Umananda Island (from Assamese *Uma*, another name for the Hindu goddess Parvati, the wife of Shiva; and *ananda*, "happiness") is the smallest river island in the midst of river Brahmaputra flowing through the city of Guwahati in Assam, a state in northeast India. The British named the island *Peacock Island* for its shape.

According to history, in the year 1694, the Ahom king Supaatphaa ordered his minister Gargaya Handique Phukan to build a Hindu temple, called Umananda Temple. In 1897, an earthquake damaged the temple heavily, but was later repaired by a local merchant. The temple displays mixture of both Hindu Vaishnavism and Shaivism. There are Assamese craftings of Ganesha, Shiva, Parvati, Vishnu, and other Hindu deities. During the repairing work of the temple some new Vaishnavi scripts were written on the walls. Craftsmen also carved figures out of rock on the island.



DEEPOR BEEL

Dipor Bil, also spelt **Deepor Beel** (Pron: dipɔ:(r) bil) (Assamese: দীপৰ বিল) (*bil* or *beel* means "lake" in the local Assamese language), is located to the south-west of Guwahati city, in Kamrup district of Assam, India^[1] It is a permanent freshwater lake, in a former channel of the Brahmaputra River, to the south of the main river. It is also called a wetland under the Ramsar Convention which has listed the lake in November 2002, as a Ramsar Site for undertaking conservation measures on the basis of its biological and environmental importance.

Considered as one of the largest beels in the Brahmaputra valley of Lower Assam, it is categorised as representative of the wetland type under the Burma monsoon forest biogeographic region.

The Dipor Bil is reported to provide, directly or indirectly, its natural resources for the livelihood of fourteen indigenous villages (1,200 families) located in its precincts.^[4] Freshwater fish is a vital protein and source of income for these communities; the health of these people is stated to be directly dependendent on the health of this wetland ecosystem. A member of Deepor Beel Fishermen's Cooperative Society has succinctly stated: "Our forefathers protected this wetland and we are committed to do the same as we depend on the wetland for our livelihood. We will protect this wetland at any cost and against any odds".



GUWAHATI PLANETARIUM

Guwahati Planetarium is one of its kind centre of astronomical research in Assam and the entire North-Eastern region of India. The Guwahati Planetarium is unrivalled in Assam and rest of northeast India with its distinctive dome and sloping walls that sets it apart in the skyline of the area. The Planetarium uses the Japanese Goto GX instrument. The hardware includes the GX starfield projector, sixty special-effects projectors, and the sky theatre's sound system. The show software is also supplied by Goto.

Besides daily shows, the Planetarium also regularly organises seminars, workshops and conferences for the astronomy fraternity, and exhibitions, quizzes and outdoor viewing facilities during eclipses for students and the local community.

Facilities at the Planetarium include a library.

The Guwahati Planetarium, is a sincere attempt to reach the young and scientifically inclined minds and provide them a glimpse of the available treasure trove assembled over centuries by the human explorers. Apart from the regular Sky watching sessions conducted by the experts at the planetarium, special shows projected on a dome shaped overhead screen are the star attraction of the Planetarium. These shows are available in Assamese, Hindi and in English and the timings are as convenient with enough entertainment at the planetarium museum and Science section to keep enthusiasts busy.

The Planetarium^[1] is getting a unique hybrid planetarium projection system, the first one of its kind in the entire northeast region. It is the second planetarium in India to get such a system, the first one being New Delhi Planetarium.

Apart from the projection system, an astronomical gallery, mobile 'taramandal' and an astro-van are soon going to be launched by the National Council of Science Museum (NCSM) at the planetarium. The state science and technology department has already sanctioned funds of around 38 Lakhs for the upcoming projects.



REGIONAL SCIENCE CENTRE

Regional Science Centre, Guwahati, popularly known as Science Museum, is one of the units of National Council of Science Museums functioning under the Department of Culture, Govt. of India. The basic purpose of this Science Centre is to popularize Science among the people of this region. Since its inauguration on March 15 1994, this Centre has been attracting students, teachers and general public as it provides an able forum for them to learn science through interaction and fun. Apart from its permanent galleries with a number of participatory exhibits on science, this Centre organizes regular educational programmes and activities, especially for the students, in order to inculcate scientific temper in them by imparting science education in a non-formal way.



Srimanta Sankaradev Kalakshetra

Srimanta Sankaradev Kalakshetra commonly **Kalakshetra** is a cultural institution in the [Panjabari](#) area of [Guwahati](#), [Assam](#), named after the medieval poet-playwright and reformer [Srimanta Sankardev](#). It includes a cultural museum, library and various facilities for preserving, demonstrating and performing cultural items, besides a children's park. In addition to being [Northeast India](#)'s largest cultural congregation, the Kalakshetra is also a major tourist spot in Guwahati. Built in the 1990s, the artistic excellence of Assam and rest of the north-eastern region is displayed here. There are eateries, places of worship, emporiums and open-air theatres within the sprawling Kalakshetra premises.

It is governed by a body of executives, selected by the Assam Government's Cultural Department and is headed by a Director of the Assam Civil Service or Indian Administrative Service cadre. The Kalakshetra is divided into several complexes. The Central Museum exhibits the articles used by different ethnic groups of Assam. The museum also houses several cultural objects of the state within it. The open-air theater can accommodate 2000 people and hosts cultural programs in its premises. Traditional dance and drama performances are conducted in this theater. The Kalakshetra also has the Artists' Village, which replicates the village society of Assam. The Sahitya Bhavan is the library in the Kalakshetra, which has a huge collection of rare books and manuscripts. It is a repository of the literature of the region. Another section of the art complex is the Lalit-Kala Bhavan. It is the center used for exhibitions and workshops on art and culture. A heritage park is also a part of the huge complex of the Shankardev Kalakshetra. Now a [cable car](#) facility is also available inside the park to commute the tourists. Nice view of the hills of [Shillong](#) plateau can be seen from the fields of Kalakshetra. The museum provides you a summary of [Assamese Culture](#). The [Bhupen Hazarika](#) museum is another attraction of Kalakshetra.



The Assam State Zoo cum Botanical Garden

The Assam State Zoo cum Botanical Garden (popularly known as Guwahati Zoo) is the largest of its kind in the North East region and it is spread across 432 acre (175 hectare). The zoo is located within the Hengrabari Reserved Forest at Guwahati, India. The zoo is home to about 895 animals, birds and reptiles representing almost 113 species of animals and birds from around the world. Over the years, the zoo grew and expanded to accommodate eye-catching exotic ones like chimpanzees, white rhinos & black rhinos, zebras, ostriches and giraffes from Africa; puma, jaguar and llama from South America and kangaroos from Australia. To get these exotic animals the zoo used to send indigenous animals like one horned Indian rhinoceros and others, to many countries. Through later the importance was shifted to indigenous species and several captive breeding programs also started which were successful. In the year 1959 a forest division was created as Assam State Zoo Division and the zoo was put under this division.



Pabitora Wildlife Sanctuary

Pobitora (Pron: 'pəʊbi,tɔ:rə) or **Pabitora** (Pron: 'pəbi,tɔ:rə) **Wildlife Sanctuary** (Assamese: পৰিতৰা অভয়াৰণ্য) is a wildlife reserve in the Morigaon district of the state of Assam in India. It is located about 30 km east of Guwahati. The Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary is about 48 km by road from Guwahati. It is a 1-hour drive through a road passing by River Brahmaputra, and a small portion of the village of Mayong. It has a dense population of the Great Indian one-horned rhinoceros. It covers 38.8 km². Though the total notified area of the park is 38.80 square kilometres, only 16 square kilometres is the effective rhino habitat. Pobitora was declared a reserved forest in 1971 and a wildlife sanctuary in 1987. It covers flat flood plains and a hillock (Raja Mayong).

