The Curca spring: A possible ancient Jewish settlement in Goa, India.

by Ivar Fjeld
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This report has been sent to the Chief Minister of Goa, Shri Laxmikant Parsekar with c.c to:

1. The Minister of Defense, Shri Manohar Parrikar
2. Deputy CM of Goa, Shri Francis D’Souza
3. The Governor of Goa
4. The Department of Tourism, Goa
5. The Archeology Survey of India, Goa Circle
7. The Department of History, Goa University, prof. Pratima Kamat
8. MLA, St.Andre, Goa, Shri Vishnu Wagh,
9. Israel Antiquities Authority, Dr. Gideon Avni, Jerusalem.
10. Hebrew University in Jerusalem, Dr. Shalva Weil.
11. Chairman and Managing Trustee, Mr. Solomon Sopher.
   Sir Jacob Sassoon Charities and Allied Trusts, Mumbai
13. Consular General of the state of Israel, Mumbai.
14. President and councilor of Indian Jewry, Mr. Albert I Talegawkar.
16. Shavei Israel, Mr. Michael Freund, Jerusalem.
17. Jawaharlal Nehru University, Prof. Pius Malekandathil.
This photo is possibly taken in 1987
The gallery wall had collapsed when the site was cleansed in 2002
An architect has made this drawing.
The pool is 8X13 meters, and from 1,5 to 2 meters deep. With steeps
The stones have fallen into the pool
The arches are decorated. The floor has colored tiles.
The settlement is more than 3.000 M2 in private ownership.
10 reasons why this can be a site of Jewish origin:

- 1. The Cairo Geniza documents.
- 2. Gaspar Da Gama
- 3. Not claimed by Catholics, Muslims, nor by Hindus.
- 4. The records of the onslaught of the Portuguese in 1510.
- 5. Located above a Hindu dominated village.
- 6. Panoramic view over city and harbor of Gopakapattana.
- 7. "Haunted land".
- 8. The bid to remove Judaism from the soil of Goa
- 9. Spring, bath, mikveh
- 10. A possible 13th century Jewish structure
1. The Cairo Geniza documents

Abraham bin Yiju, (1120-1160 CE):

“As in the case of Yiju, we follow his story from letters he wrote in Hebrew while at Sindabur (Goa)”. There are a total of 70 letters of Abraham bin Yiju among the Geniza Documents”.

Source: Private blogg

https://landofhope.wikispaces.com/When+Asia+was+the+World

http://historicalalleys.blogspot.in/2009/12/another-jewish-trader-allan-bin-hassun.html

Allan B. Hassun (1116-1117 A.D):

In Hussun we find another Jewish merchant, making commercial voyages from Aden to Sindbur (Chandrapura) After carrying out trading transactions in the port of Sindabur, he proceeded to Munaybar (Malabar).

Maritime India: Trade, Religion and Polity in the Indian Ocean
By Pius Malekandathil, page 25.

Globalization, Pre Modern India, edited by Nagendra Rao (page 159).
1. The Cairo Geniza documents

Gopakapattana (Govapuri)

Corresponding to the hectic trading activities with the ports of Goa, the name of Chintabor (Sindabur or Chandrapura of Goa) also entered into the famous Catalan map prepared by Majorcan Jew called Abraham Cresques in 1375 for the King Charles V of France.

One of the most visible aspect of this Development Was the relatively high amount of capital accumulation in Goa, particularly in the hands of the sea-traders and ship-operators.

Source: Globalization, Pre Modern India, edited by Nagendra Rao (page 159 and 161).
Prof. Pratima P. Kamat from Department of History Goa University, has questioned if ancient Gopakapattana was a settlement of Jewish merchants.
Hanjaman of Gopakapattana and anjuvannam of Jewish merchants?

“Hence one wonders whatever the hanjuman of Gopakapattan, referred to above, was in fact anjuvannam, or a settlement of Jewish merchants. Anjuvannam derived from anjuman, the Persian word for community or association, was the term used to describe the Jewish settlement. For example the Jewish settlement of Kudungallur or Cranganore was know by this term”.

Prof. Pratima P Kamat: “Goa, the trust with trade”, published 2009, page 99
On the Geniza documentation:

“The Goan port of Sindabur features regularly in these letters of the Jewish “India traders”. For it was an important link port of call on the Aden-Malabar run in the early twelfth century”.

Prof. Pratima P Kamat: “Goa, the trust with trade”, published 2009, page 99
10 reasons why....

2. Gaspar Da Gama

We know from the historical records that “Gaspar Da Gama” was the commander of The fleet of Adil Shah, and claimed to be the Prime Minister of "Sabaio". Jews were elevated to high offices in the Bahamani sultanate, who ruled over this area from 1469 A.D onwards. The merchants of Goa were granted autonomy over local affairs.

3. Not claimed by Catholics, Muslims, nor by Hindus

The settlement is not claimed by any of the faith societies of Goa. A not claimed ancient settlement of this nature and size, in this area, Is likely to be land that belonged to a Jewish community.
10 reasons why....

4. The records of the onslaught of the Portuguese in 1510. A.D

When Albuquerque captured Goa in November 1510, there was a massive manslaughter on the island of Tiswadi (Ilas de Goa). 7,000 men in support of the Adil Shah regime were killed, all over the taluka. The Curca spring survived this attack. Therefore it is not likely to be of Religious Muslim origin. All the local mosques and religious shrines of the Muslims were destroyed by the Portuguese.

5. Located above a Hindu dominated village

The settlement area with the ruins are located at an 20-30 meter elevation above a Hindu dominated village and the Nearby paddy fields. The settlement is not claimed by the local temple trust. No Religious structure of Hindu origin is found on the site. There are no records of this site belonging to any of the Hindu kings of the Kadamba dynasty, who ruled Over the city of Gopakapattana. (960 A.D to 1310 A.D).
10 reasons why....

6. Panoramic view over city and harbor of Gopakapattana.

From the settlement you have a 180 degree view of the Gopakapattana basin, the site of the ancient city and its harbor. This must have been a rich mans area. Chinese pottery could easily be picked up from the ground on 6th of March 2015.

7. "Haunted land"

The local Hindus claim the land is "haunted". Offerings to local spirits are placed at the border Line between the village and the settlement. From a Biblical perspective, those who steel Jewish land are placed under a curse. The Village must be categorized as a backward area, that has not experienced much development.
8. The bid to remove Judaism from the soil of Goa

The bid to remove Judaism from the soil of Goa and replace the Jewish faith with Catholicism is well documented.

There is no reference to any Jewish Site in the official history of Goa.

This book was published by Ivar Fjeld, and released during the events of the Heritage conference weekend in Goa, 30\textsuperscript{th} of January to 2\textsuperscript{nd} of February 2014. 

www.gogoa2014.com
10 reasons why....

9. Spring, bath, mikveh

With the existence of valid historical records of Jewish merchants doing trade in this area, this site is likely one of the Jewish properties.

The Curca spring is the largest spring in this area. Jews looking for a place to settle will prefer to stay close to a spring. Such a location is ideal for the construction of private mikveh's, or a Mikveh related to a local synagogue.

10. A possible 13th century Jewish structure

While studying photos of the Jewish temple of Baku, structures and walls of Jewish courtyards in the Kingdom of Castile (Spain), I have come to the conclusion that the present structure at Curca Spring possibly can be of 13th century origin.
The records of plans of restoring the site
December 1st 2002.

NEW TOURISM MASTER PLAN:

Curca spring, Cabo de Rama Fort, Old Goa heritage area, the bubbling tank of Mahamaya temple in Sanguem and the Chorlem Ghatare some of the new potential sites identified in the Goa Tourism Master Plan, for promotion in future. (GT)
Feature 1st of December 2002
Present condition of the spring structure
Tomorrow’s Vision
Goa Curca Spring

The proposal for the restoration and development work of the Curca Spring was put forth by the Department of Tourism, Government of Goa in 2001. Architects Rajesh J. Kenkre and Rohan S. Timble were awarded this restoration project.

http://www.echogoa.org/html/goa%20curca%20spring.htm
Subject: Re: spring "ARCAR" at Curca (Tiswadi) a need for development. - msg#001270

List: http://goanet.netfirms.com
culture.region.india.goa

“Dear Godfrey
Thanks for the email dated 29th March 2003.
For your information Goa Government has decided to renovate the spring”.

With Kind Regards,
Yours sincerely,
Manohar Parrikar
Chief Minister of Goa

The Manohar Parrikar government fell on 29 January 2005
Villagers pitch for Curca spring's development

• TNN | May 30, 2011, 04.41 AM IST PANAJI:
  Curca villagers pitched for the beautification of the historical Curca spring, stating it has been lying in a state of neglect for several decades due to failure of authorities to pursue a plan for its restoration.

The Chinese pottery found on this site on 6th of March 2015.