2600 years old Pratima of Bhagwan Mahavir got stolen and recovered after 9 days

Temple of Shri Kshatriyakund Teerth

The temple is dedicated to Bhagwan Mahavir, the twenty-fourth Jain Tirthankara. The creative temple work boast about the skills of the craftsmen. The idol of the Bhagwan has been beautifully carved from a single black stone and was installed at Kshatriyakund, Lachwad, and some 2,600 years ago. This rare idol, which weighs 250 kilograms & 60 cm in height, is estimated to be worth several crores.

Incident Timeline:

A group of eight armed criminals escaped with an ancient idol of Bhagwan Mahavir from a temple at Lachuar in Jamui district on Friday night (November 28, 2015) around 1 am. The incident has shocked members of Jain community around the world.

"The criminals, who had their faces covered, entered the temple premises by breaking open the main iron gate. They tied the hands of the temple manager, Maheshwar Mishra, and other workers with ropes and uprooted the statue with the help of iron shovels. The criminals later loaded the idol in a vehicle and fled," said Vivek Bharti, SHO of Sikendra police station.

Mishra, the manager of the temple and chief priest, said the criminals took two hours to uproot the statue. Sunil Kumar Suchanti, president of Pawapuri Jain Temple Management Committee (JTMCG), said Lachwad, the birthplace of Bhagwan Mahavir, has been a sacred destination for Jains. Theft of Bhagwan Mahavir's idol from a place of reverence is not an ordinary incident and the administration should take initiative to recover the idol.

Sadhvi Sampragyaji, Bihar head of Veerayatan, said nothing could be more shocking and distressing for the people of Jain community than the theft of sacred idol of Bhagwan Mahavir, a perennial source of spiritual inspiration for them.

Nine days later, priceless ancient Idol was recovered from a field on Sunday, 6th December after a high-level investigation. The temple is an Archaeological Survey of India site, but is not protected. As the idol theft affected sentiments of locals and the Jain community in the state, the DGP stepped in to ensure that the thieves were not able to transport the idol out of the state. Bhagalpur-zone Inspector General of Police, BS Meena said the idol was recovered from a field in Bicchwa village. Meena claimed, after the gang behind the theft failed to transport the idol out of the state, it informed the police about its whereabouts through an indirect source.

Jain community across the World heaved a sigh of relief after the idol's recovery and celebrated the day as Vijay Diwas.