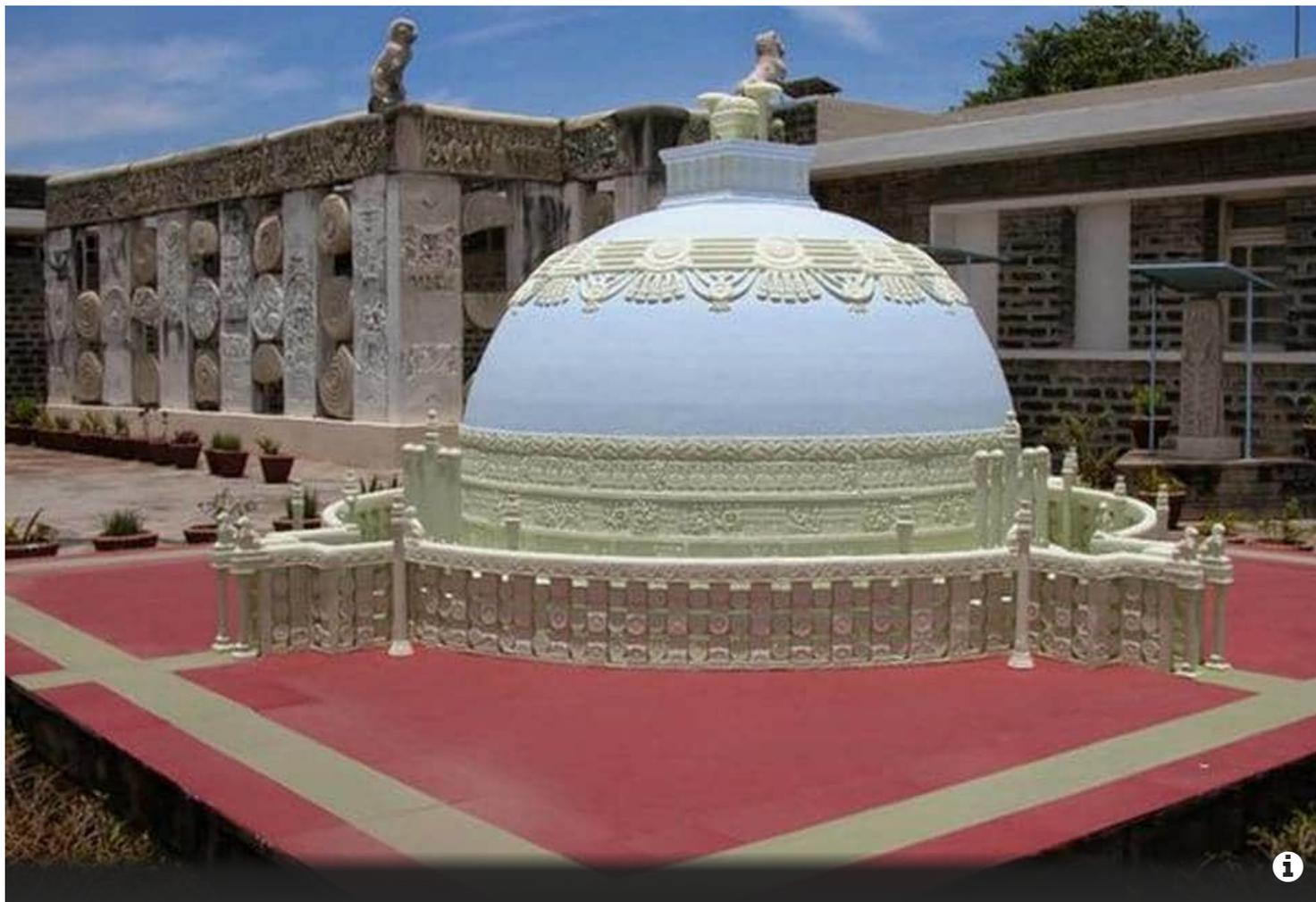


VIJAYAWADA

## Mix-up as heritage town is mistaken for new A.P. capital



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VIJAYAWADA:, OCTOBER 29, 2016 00:00 IST

UPDATED: DECEMBER 02, 2016 12:29 IST

### Letter 'h' plays truant, as many assume that the ancient town of 'Amaravathi' is 'Amaravati'

Many residents in the ancient Amaravathi Heritage Town are a disgruntled lot as their important parcels and letters have been arriving late. The delay is linked to the name 'Amaravati', according to a few residents. "Many of my parcels and postal dispatches come late. I am told it's because this town, Amaravathi, shares its name with the new capital of Andhra

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and member of the Amaravathi Heritage Society, a local civil society body constituted as part of the Government endeavour to develop the ancient heritage town.

“I missed a recent function in a neighbourhood village because I received the invitation after the event. When I asked the postman, he said it could be due to a mix-up as a result of the name confusion,” says Kola Venkanna, who is into construction business in Amaravathi. “Hurried sorting of the mail may be resulting in such delays,” he complains. The name confusion is apparently an issue not just in the two Amaravathi/thi regions but everywhere as many people mistake the ancient and historic Amaravathi town for the perceived world destination in Velagapudi village.

## **Historic village**

The heritage town located on the banks of the Krishna river served as the capital centre of the Satavahana and several kingdoms in the ancient and more recent times. This village has a historic Buddhist site, the Maha Chaitya, the largest stupa in India, which is under the protection of the Archaeological Survey of India. The new capital of Andhra Pradesh has been named after this heritage town. But the name confusion has gone beyond postal mix-ups. It has led to real estate speculation resulting in land prices going through the roof. “Some of the traditional houses and heritage structures are being destroyed and there is no legal provision to protect such valuable heritage representing the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries. It has become very difficult to protect historical heritage from the 1790s,” says Prof. Amareswar Galla, Curator, Amaravathi Heritage Town and International Heritage Adviser to the Andhra Pradesh Government.