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आज़ादी का  
अमृत महोत्सव

# Khajuraho

A saga of Chandella



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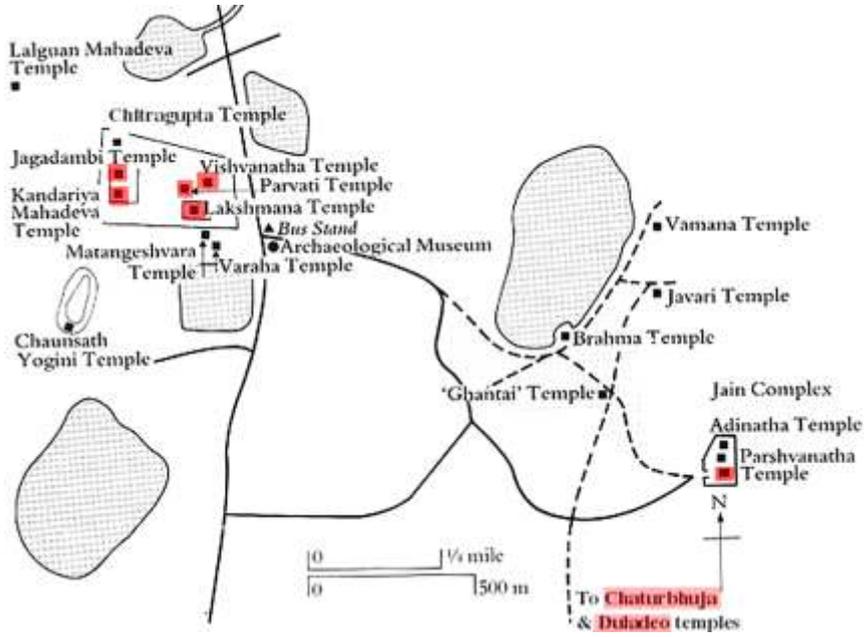


ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA  
JABALPUR CIRCLE

# Khajuraho



measurement 100 0 100 200 300 meter



## सामान्य सूचना

खजुराहो हवाई, रेल एवं सड़क मार्ग से जुड़ा है। निकटतम रेलवे स्टेशन खजुराहो है। मंदिरों और संग्रहालय के सम्बन्ध में अधिक जानकारी के लिये निम्नलिखित से सम्पर्क किया जा सकता है।



important sculptures displayed in the five galleries of the museum are representative of the Brahmanical, Jaina and Buddhist faiths. Presently museum is running in newly constructed separate campus (since 2015). The display and setting of various galleries' work is in progress.

### **FUTURE VISION**

Archaeological Survey of India has initiated several development programmes for the total transformation of the place, both environmentally and aesthetically and to project it as a global destination of tourism. In order to translate it into an action oriented programme, recently the A.S.I. has acquired 25 hectares land around the western group of monuments between Chausath Yogini Temple and the Shivsagar Lake. Here it is proposed to knit together and integrate all the monuments of western side in one single harmonious group with infrastructural facilities such as cafeteria, interpretation centre, public comforts, etc. A similar programme is envisaged at the eastern and southern group of monuments.

### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

**Timing :** Open on all days from sunrise to sunset.

**Entry Fee :** Indian nationals and those from SAARC and BIMSTEC countries Rs. 35/-  
other nationals Rs. 550/-  
Free for persons up to 15 years.

### **MUSEUM**

**Timing :** Open from 8 am to 5 pm

### **LOCATION**

Khajuraho, Located in Chhatarpur District of Madhya Pradesh is about 65 km. south of Mahoba, 47 km. east of Chhatarpur and 44 km. north east of Panna. In ancient time of place was known as Chedi and in early medieval time as Jejakbhukti. It has a tropical climate with an average rainfall of 101 cm. and in peak summer temperature goes up to around 48°C.

### **TRADITION :**

Khajuraho was discovered by T.S. Burt, a British engineer in 1838. Between 1852 and 1885, Alexander Cunningham carried out a detailed survey of antiquities of Khajuraho and published the same. Since then, monuments of Khajuraho have been a tourist destination. According to tradition, Khajuraho was so called because one of its city gates was ornamented with two golden Khajur trees (date palm). Possibly in ancient time the place was full of Khajur trees and hence it was named after 'Khajur'.

### **HISTORICAL BACKGROUND :**

During the Janapada time (6th-5th Cent. BC) the region was part of the Chedi Kingdom and then it came under the Mauryan supremacy. From the early historic time to the arrival of Chandellas, the region has witnessed the rule of Kushanas, Nagas, Imperial Guptas, and the Pratiharas. According to the Chandella and other contemporary records the land was known as Jejakbhukti or Jejakabhukti with a few derivative variants like



Jejahuti, Jajhahuti and jijhahuti in Chandella times. Mahoba inscriptions delineate the genealogy of Chandella dynasty and refer that the Kingdom has been named after King Jeja. The earliest inscription of King Dhanga dated to 954 AD suggests the occupation of Khajuraho by the Chandella rulers. Alberuni in 1022 AD speaks of the region as Jejahuti. The Madanpur inscription dated to 1182 AD refers the territory as Jejakabhukti or Jejakamandala.

## MONUMENTS AND BUILDING MATERIALS

Ruins at Khajuraho are spread over an area of roughly 13 sq. km. bounded in the east by Dantla hill, on the south by Khudar Nala and in the north-west by Lalguan Sagar. These temples along with numerous ponds are the finest creation of Chandella rulers. The temple building activities at Khajuraho have taken place between 900 and 1100 AD. The standing temples, 24 in number can be divisible into four groups, viz. Western Group, Eastern Group, Southern Group and Jain Group.



The Chausath Yogini, Brahma and Lalguan

Mahadeva temples are constructed either wholly or partly of granite and remaining all temples are built of a fine grained variety of sandstone. These temples are dedicated to Saiva, Vaishnava and Jain pantheons. In spite of divergent sectarian affiliations, the architectural and sculptural schemes are uniformly homogeneous.

## ARCHITECTURE

The Khajuraho temples are built on a high platform without any enclosure wall marking the culmination of the central Indian building style in plan and elevation. All the components of temples viz : *ardhamandapa* (entrance porch), *mandapa* (hall), *antarala* (vestibule) and *garbhagriha* (sanctum) are interconnected internally and externally and are planned in an axis. In some of the large temples, lateral transepts with balconied windows and ambulatory path have been added.

## IMMORTAL ART

The temples in general are profusely carved with sculptures, various motifs and designs in series. They are divisible into five broad categories. The first category



comprises the cult images executed all around the temple. The second category comprises the Parivaradevatas and Parsvadevatas. They are placed in niches or figured against the walls of the temple. The third category consists of the Apsaras or Sura-Sundaries, known for their alluring appearance. These sculptures are carved either in round or in high or medium relief on the outer and inner walls, pillars and ceilings. These Sura-Sundaries are definitely represented as sensuous and youthful nymphs attired in the choicest gems, garments, grace and charm. But more frequently, the Sura-Sundaries are shown to express common human moods, emotions and activities as : disrobing, yawning, scratching the back, touching her breasts, rinsing water from the wet plaits of hair, removing thorn, painting her feet, playing with a baby, writing a letter, admiring herself in a mirror, applying collyrium, playing a flute or vina, playing with pets like parrots and monkeys.



The fourth category consists of secular sculptures, comprising of miscellaneous themes including domestic scenes, teacher and disciples, dancers and musicians, erotic couples or groups. The last includes some of the finest sculptural compositions of Khajuraho vibrating with a rare sensitiveness and warmth of human emotions. It is believed that these erotic sculptures shown on the temples are auspicious rather than indicative of lack of morality.



## INDIVIDUAL MONUMENTS AND THE CHRONOLOGY

**Chausath Yogini temples** - The temple, an earliest known building at Khajuraho is constructed of coarse granite. It has an exceptional plan and design with sixty seven

peripheral shrines possibly used as *garbhagriha* for cult images. The pedestals of images inscribed with short labels indicate the construction date of the temple to the last quarter of the ninth century.

**Lalguan Mahadeva temple (900 AD) :** - The temple belonging to the transition phase is built partially of granite and sandstone. It has a pyramidal superstructure of receding tiers of *pidhas*.

**Brahma temple (Circa 900 AD) :-** The temple is made of granite and sandstone with a simple plan and design and a small *sikhara* over it. It was originally dedicated to Vishnu.

**Veraha temple (900-925 AD) :**

- It is situated in front of the famous Lakshman temple and is built of sandstone.

**Matangeswara temple ( 900-925 AD) :** - The temple built by king Harsha is plain and made of sandstone on a high *jagati* (platform). The large *yonipitha* with a polished *linga*, enshrined in *garbhagriha* of the temple, occupies almost the whole floor of the sanctum.



**Lakshman temple (390-**

**950AD) :** - The temple, dedicated to vaikuntha of Lord Vishnu was built by Chandella ruler Yasovarman alias Lakshmanvarman. It has inner *pradakshina path* making it a *sandhara* type temple.

**Visvanath temple (11th Centry AD) :** - The temple originally built in *Panchayatana* style now have only two remaining sub-shrines with all other components of a developed temple. Inscription on the temple refers the construction of the temple by king Dhanga.

**Nandi shrine :** - It is a detached pavilion enshrining a huge Nandi. It is an integral part of Visvanath Temple complex.

**Parvati Temple :** - Though it is known as Parvati temple. originally it was dedicated to a Vaishnava deity as the lintel of the temple depicts Vishnu image.

**Chitragupta Temple (1000-1025 AD) :** - The temple is dedicated to Surya. The presiding deity in the sanctum is an impressive sculpture of Surya driving

a chariot drawn by seven horses. Three small figures of Surya are seen depicted on the lintel of the ornate doorway. It is a *Nirandhara* temple.

**Jagadambi temple (1000-1025 AD) :-** The Jagadambi temple built by king Ganda is called so after the image of Parvati enshrined in the sanctum, but it was originally dedicated to Vishnu as evident by the prominence of Vishnu on the door lintel sanctum. It is very much similar to Chitragupta temple.

**Kandariya Mahadeva temple (1025-1050 AD) :-** The temple dedicated to Siva, is built of sandstone by the most powerful ruler of the dynasty, king Vidyadhara. Its *sikhara* is clustered with eighty four *anga sikharas* which is graded and is in ascending series.

**Ruined Siva temple :** - The temple was probably dedicated to Siva's consort Parvati, as indicated by the door lintel.

**Vamana temple (1050-75 AD) :** - The temple is dedicated to Vamana incarnation of Lord Vishnu. It is a *nirandhara* temple consisting of a plan of *saptaratha* sanctum. The *sikhara* is embellished with *chaitya* arches. In contrast to the locally developed temples, erotic scenes are absent here.

**Javari temple (1075-1100 AD) :** - It is a nirandhara temple dedicated to Vishnu.

**Ghantai temple ( 10th C. AD) :-** It is locally known as Ghantai on account of the chain and bell motifs so prominently carved on its tall and elegant pillars. Originally, the temple was dedicated to Jainism as evident by the presence of an eight armed figure of Yakshi Chakreswari, seated on a garuda on the door lintel of the sanctum.

**Parsvanatha temple (950-970 AD) :-** This temple, originally dedicated to the first Tirthankar, is one of the finest monuments and the largest the extant Jain temples at Khajuraho.

**Adinatha temple :** - The Adinatha temple, is a *nirandhara* temple. Only the





sanctum and vestibule are present. It has a close kinship to the Vamana temple in plan and design.

**Duladeo temple (1100-50 AD) :-** This temple dedicated to Siva is *nirandhara* in construction style. This shrine also shows some distinctive traits of iconography. Astavasu figures are invariably depicted on procodile instead of the usual bull.

Chaturbhuj temple (1100- AD) :- It is *nirandhara* temple carrying a simple *sikhara* of heavy proportions and is devoid of erotic sculptures. The well known image of four armed Dakshanamurti Siva is enshrined here.

## CONSERVATION

At first, Maharaja Pratap Singh of Chhatarpur executed the repairs in lime and plaster between 1843 and 1847 to check further decay of these temples. The Archaeological Survey of India, realizing the tremendous artistic and architectural importance of the Khajuraho monuments, sanctioned liberal grants from 1902 onwards. The first systematic and comprehensive program of conservation was drawn out in 1904 and executed between 1904 and 1910. Intermittently, between 1920 to 1923 and 1924 to 1927 several conservation works were undertaken. After taking over the charge in 1953 the Archaeological Survey of India has been undertaking several conservation works since then.

The south-eastern shrine of Lakshmana temple and shown visible signs of tilting due to the subsidence in foundation. It was decided that the whole shrine has to be dismantled; the foundation is to be strengthened and then reassembled block



by block. To execute the same structure photo and graphic documentation was done. The entire work has been carried out with meticulous care and precision.

## EXCAVATIONS

In 1981, excavation of the largest Satdhara mound, located east of the Western Group of Temples was started and continued over the years. It has revealed the remains of Pratihara and Chandella period.

Important findings apart from the structural remains include sculptures of Mahishasurmardini, Saraswati, Vamana incarnation of Vishnu, and Yamuna, terracotta beads, terracotta pendants, figurines of bull, games man, disc and iron objects. Among the iron objects some remarkable ones are the tanged arrow heads, fragmentary blade of dagger and leaf shaped spear head besides nails and other miscellaneous artifacts.

Excavation carried out in 1990-2000 at Bijamandal has unearthed the largest temple at Khajuraho bigger than the Kandariya Mahadeva. Kandariya measures about 30 mts. in length but the Bijamandal temple extant remains have a length of 34.60mts. It however, is slender in comparison to Kandariya by about 75 cms.

**MUSEUM :** In 1910 at the initiative of Mr. W.A. Jardine, the then British Political Agent in Bundelkhand, the loose sculpture and architectural members of the ruined temples of Khajuraho were collected and preserved in an enclosure built adjoining to the Matangeshwar Temple of western group of temples. The open air collection continued to be known as Jardine Muscum until the Archaeological Survey of India took over it, in 1952. The present museum building was declared open for public on 18th Nov 1967. The most

