


Lingaraja Temple

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Why in News

Recently, the Odisha Government has restricted public entry into the **Lingaraj Temple** after four sevayats (priests) tested positive for the novel coronavirus.

In **August 2020**, the government had decided to give a facelift to the temple, akin to its pre-350-year structural status.



Key Points

- Lingaraj Temple, **built in 11th century AD**, is dedicated to **Lord Shiva** and is considered as the **largest temple of the city Bhubaneswar (Odisha)**.
- It is believed to have been **built by the Somvanshi King Yayati I**.
- It is **built in red stone** and is a classic example of **Kalinga style of architecture**.

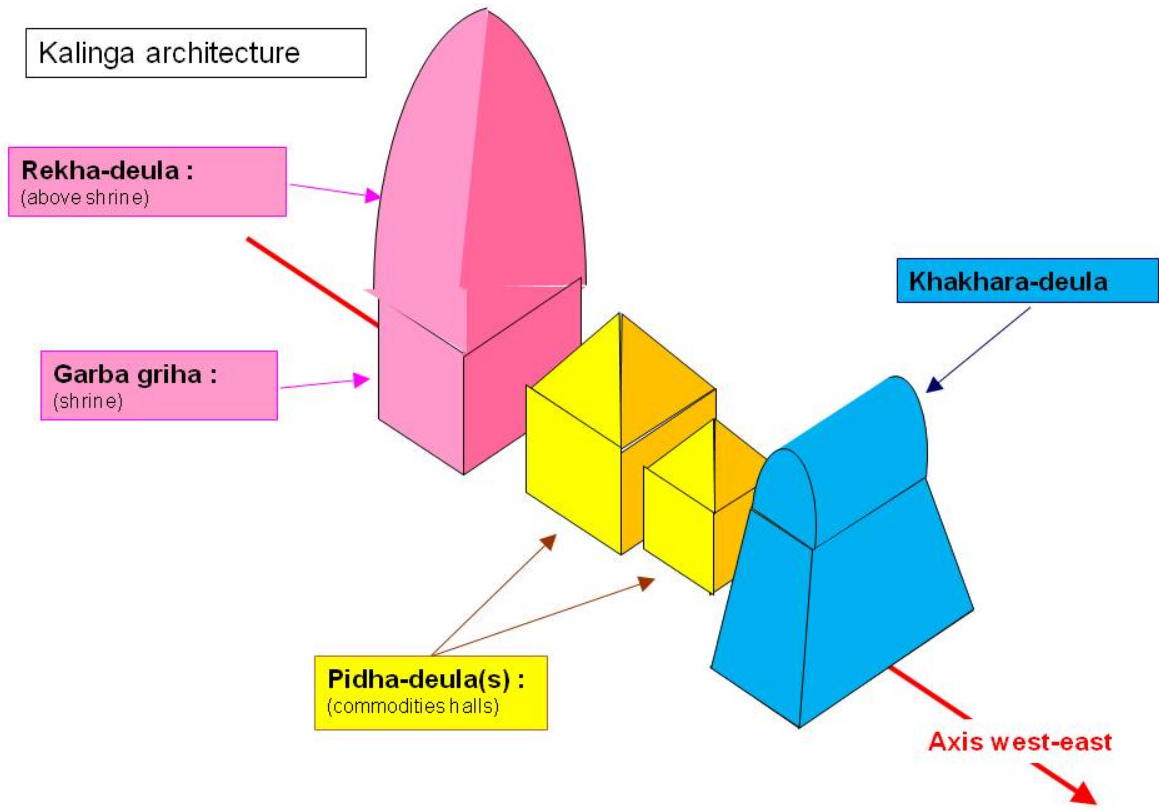
The temple is **divided into four sections** - **Garbha Griha** (sanctum sanctorum), **Yajna Shala** (the hall for prayers), **Bhoga Mandap** (the hall of offering) and **Natya Shala** (hall of dance).

- The sprawling temple complex has **one hundred and fifty subsidiary shrines**.
- Lingaraj is referred to as '**Swayambhu**' – self-originated Shivaling.

- Another important aspect of the temple is that it **signifies the syncretisation of Shaivism and Vaishnavism sects in Odisha.**
 - Perhaps the rising cult of Lord Jagannath (considered an incarnation of Lord Vishnu) which coincided with the completion of the Lingaraja Temple had a role to play.
 - The **presiding deity in the Temple is known as Hari-Hara**; Hari denotes Lord Vishnu and Hara meaning Lord Shiva.
- The temple is **out of bounds for non-Hindus.**
- The other attraction of the temple is the **Bindusagar Lake**, located in the north side of the temple.
- On the western banks of Bindusagar, lies the **garden of Ekamra Van** named after the Hindu mythological texts where Bhubaneswar the capital city of Odisha was referred as **Ekamra Van or a forest of a single mango tree.**

Kalinga Architecture

- **About:**
 - The Indian temples are broadly divided into **Nagara, Vesara, Dravida and Gadag styles of architecture.**
 - However, the **temple architecture of Odisha corresponds to altogether a different category** for their unique representations called **Kalinga style of temple architecture.**
 - This style **broadly comes under the Nagara style.**
- **The Architecture:**
 - In Kalinga Architecture, basically a **temple is made in two parts**, a tower and a hall. The **tower is called deula** and the **hall is called jagmohan.**
 - The **walls** of both the deula and the jagmohan **are lavishly sculpted** with architectural motifs and a profusion of figures.
 - The most repeated form is the **horseshoe shape**, which has come from the earliest times, starting with the large windows of the chaitya-grihas.
 - It is the **deula which makes three distinct types** of temples in Kalinga Architecture:
 - **Rekha Deula.**
 - **Pidha Deula.**
 - **Khakhara Deula.**
 - The former two are associated with Vishnu, Surya and Shiva temples while the third is mainly with Chamunda and Durga temples.
 - The Rekha Deula and Khakhara Deula houses the sanctum sanctorum while the Pidha Deula constitutes outer dancing and offering halls.



Source:TH