

ASI Excavates Gupta Era Site in Madhya Pradesh to Find Relics

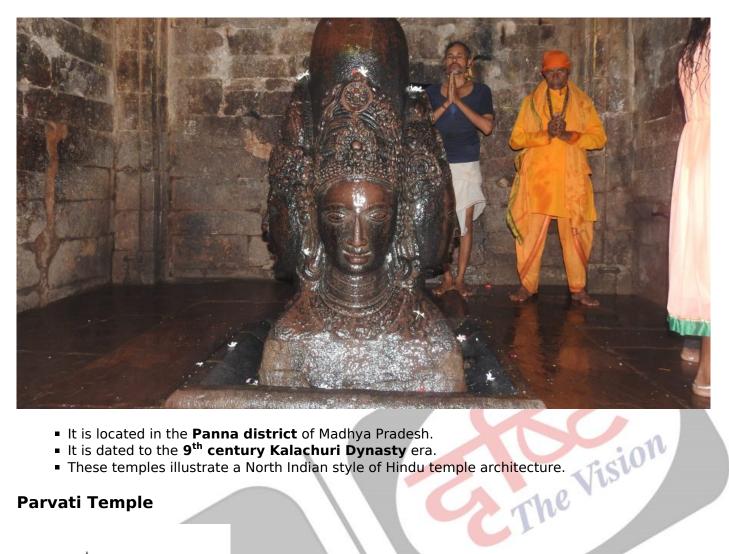
Why in News?

Recently, the <u>Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)</u> is excavating the site in Nachne village of Madhya Pradesh's **Panna district** to find relics of one of the oldest temples of India and to study the condition of ancient temples.

Key Points

- The site is in close proximity to two ancient temples- a Gupta-Era Parvati Templeand Chaumukhi Temple, built by the Kalachuri Dynasty.
- The excavation work is underway on Chaumukh Nath Temple premises, which houses an 8th
 -century four-faced Shiva Linga.
 - As per ASI, the Shiva Linga has been carved out with remarkable vitality, especially the fierce open-mouthed face of the god on its south side.
 - As of now, ASI excavated two mounds and after brushing off centuries of earth, layers of bricks have been undiscovered.
- The objective of excavation in Nachna is to see the condition of ancient temples in India and how temples evolved and developed.
- The site has eight archaeological mounds and the excavation team has got permission to dig two mounds.

Chaumukhi Temple



- It is located in the **Panna district** of Madhya Pradesh.
- It is dated to the 9th century Kalachuri Dynasty era.
- These temples illustrate a North Indian style of Hindu temple architecture.

Parvati Temple



- Parvati temple of Nachna is dated back to the Gupta period. It was built in the 5th century.
- This temple is Constructed on a terrace, 35 feet wide, this temple is composed of a small square sanctum, 15 feet side.

Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)

- ASI, under the Ministry of Culture, is the premier organization for the archaeological research and protection of the cultural heritage of the nation.
- It administers more than 3650 ancient monuments, archaeological sites and remains of national importance.

- Its activities include carrying out surveys of antiquarian remains, exploration and excavation of archaeological sites, conservation and maintenance of protected monuments etc.
- It was **founded in 1861 by Alexander Cunningham** the first Director-General of ASI. Alexander Cunningham is also known as the **"Father of Indian Archaeology".**
- It oversees all archaeological undertakings within the nation by the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, of 1958.

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