



ASI to Restore Bhand Devra Temple in Rajasthan

Why in News?

The [Archaeological Survey of India \(ASI\)](#) is set to restore the 10th-century **Bhand Devra temple** in Rajasthan's Baran district, often hailed as the state's "mini Khajuraho."



Key Points

- **Architectural Style and Location:**
 - The Bhand Devra temple, **located on the bank of the [Ramgarh Crater](#)** in Baran district, is built in the distinctive [Nagara architectural style](#).
 - Its **resemblance to the [temples of Khajuraho](#)** is striking, earning it the **nickname "Rajasthan's mini Khajuraho."**
- **Historical Background and Patronage:**
 - The temple **was** originally built as a victory monument by **King Malaya Verma of the Nagavanshi dynasty**.
 - It received renewed patronage in **1162 CE** when **King Trishna Verma** of the Meda dynasty undertook its restoration.
 - These successive contributions reflect the temple's enduring historical and dynastic importance.
- **Neglect and Loss of Heritage:**
 - Years of neglect and apathy have left the temple damaged, with crumbling structures and stolen idols eroding its rich heritage.
- **A Geological and Cultural Wonder:**
 - The adjacent **Ramgarh Crater**, formed by an **asteroid impact around 165 million years ago**, is among **India's rare geo-heritage sites**.
 - It is a meteor impact crater of **3.5 kilometres diameter** in **Kota plateau of [Vindhya range](#)** located adjacent to Ramgarh village in Baran district in Rajasthan.

- It is officially recognized as India's third crater, with a diameter between the 14 km **Dhala crater** in **Madhya Pradesh** and the 1.8 km **Lonar crater** in Maharashtra.

Nagara or North Indian Temple Style

▪ About:

- Commonly found in northern India, Nagara-style temples are marked by a curvilinear tower (Shikhara), sanctum sanctorum (Garbhagriha), and pillared hall (Mandapa).
- These temples are usually constructed on a raised stone platform (Jagati) with steps leading to the entrance.
- The ground plan of a Nagara temple is typically square or rectangular with a four-sided layout.
 - **Shikhara (Curvilinear Tower):**
 - Early Nagara temples had a single Shikhara, but later ones often featured multiple towers.
 - **Garbhagriha (Sanctum Sanctorum):**
 - Located directly beneath the tallest Shikhara, the Garbhagriha houses the main deity.
 - It represents the spiritual core of the temple and is often devoid of elaborate ornamentation, signifying inner sanctity.
 - **Jagati and Pitha (Elevated Platforms):**
 - Nagara temples rest on a high platform known as Jagati, which elevates the temple both physically and symbolically.
 - **Adhisthana (Base Platform):**
 - Rising above the Pitha and Jagati is the Adhisthana, the base platform upon which the superstructure (temple tower and walls) is constructed.

Khajuraho Temple



▪ About:

- Built by the **Chandela dynasty** in the 10th and 11th centuries, these temple groups present a unique example of architecture and sculpture.
- The number of temples built in the Nagara style has now reduced to only 20, among which the temple of Kandariya Mahadev is especially famous.
- The temples here belong to two religions – Jain and Hindu.

▪ World Heritage Site:

- It was included in the list of [UNESCO World Heritage Sites](#) in 1986.

Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)

- ASI, under the **Ministry of Culture**, is the premier organisation for the archaeological research and protection of the cultural heritage of the nation.
 - **Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains (AMASR) Act, 1958** governs the functioning of ASI.
- 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”.

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