

**Report
of the
Jaipur Circle
of the
Archaeological Survey of India
2022-26**



**11th May 2026
Superintending Archaeologist
Archaeological Survey of India
Jaipur Circle, Jaipur**

Acknowledgments

The Jaipur Circle of the Archaeological Survey of India was founded in the year 1985. Since then, it was looking after 162 monuments under various sub-circles till the bifurcation of Jaipur Circle in the year 2014 with creation of new circle 'Jodhpur Circle' to look after the monuments of Western Rajasthan. Now this Circle is looking after 88 number of Centrally Protected Monuments (two have been delisted due to their being untraceable recently), which are divided in five Sub-Circles. During the period 2022-26, this Circle office carried out various conservation works as well as excavations for which this office is very much thankful to the Government of Bharat for providing the opportunity to serve our country. Secretary Culture, Director General, Archaeological Survey of India and all senior officers are to be thanked for all the achievements of this Circle office.

A number of important works have been carried out by this office during this period and for carrying out those works this office is thankful to the services of Sarvashri Suresh Kumar Kumawat, ASAE, Ashok Kumar Mina, ASAE and Ratan Lal Jitarwal, ASAE. Our team members, Shri Harmanbir Singh Sandhu, Sr. CA has worked quite efficiently in most of the Sub-Circles and Shri Mahendra Kumar Jat, Sr. CA carried out conservation works in Jaipur Sub-Circle and Ranthambhor Fort efficiently. Other CAs have also contributed in conservation works. For carrying out excavation, this office is thankful to the colleagues especially Sarvashri K.L. Saini and Ravindra Jangid (Surveyors), and students who have formed the part of excavation team. The efforts of Shri Sanjeev Barala, AA were appreciable in Bewan and to some extent Bahaj – I excavations and the routine office works whereas Shri Kumar Saurabh, AA who joined recently worked efficiently in Ojhiyana excavations along with Sanjeev Barala for a brief period. For smooth functioning of the office and timely execution of works, I would like to acknowledge the support of Shri Manoj Kumar Dwivedi, Dy.SA, Shri Madan Mohan Singhal, AO, Shri Ashwani Kumar Meena, JAO and Shri Batti Lal Meena, SSA and all the staff member of the Circle office as well as who are posted at various Sub-Circle office and at the monuments. The assistance of Shri Rajiv Nayan Dubey who is looking after the Stores is to be appreciated from the core of my heart. Here I would like to mention that many colleagues either got relieved or joined Jaipur during this period but all of them have contributed in some way. Here I would like to claim excuse for any exclusion of works carried out or mention of some names involved during this period due to paucity of time in preparation of this report.

(Dr. Vinay Kumar Gupta)

Superintending Archaeologist

Introduction

The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), under the Ministry of Culture, established in the year 1861 is the premier organisation for the archaeological researches and protection of the cultural heritage of the nation. Maintenance of ancient monuments and archaeological sites and remains of national importance is the prime concern of the ASI. Besides, it regulates all archaeological activities in the country as per the provisions of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958. It also regulates Antiquities and Art Treasure Act, 1972. For the maintenance of ancient monuments and archaeological sites and remains of national importance the entire country is divided into 37 Circles and 1 Mini-Circle. The organisation has a large work force of trained archaeologists, conservators, epigraphists, architects and scientists for conducting archaeological research projects through its Circles, Museums, Excavation Branches, Prehistory Branch, Epigraphy Branches, Science Branch, Horticulture Branch, Building Survey Project, Temple Survey Projects and Underwater Archaeology Wing.

Jaipur Circle

Rajasthan (Lat. 24°30'-30°12'N.; Long. 69°15'-76°45'E.), erstwhile Rajputana, popularly known as the land of princes, forts, and palaces, is the largest state of India. It is bounded on the north and north-east by Punjab, Haryana, and Uttar Pradesh; south-west by Gujarat; south-east by Madhya Pradesh and north-west by Pakistan. The state of Rajasthan as it stands today comprised 33 districts till 2023 covering approximately 3,42,239 sq. km. area with part of Thar Desert (Marusthal) and uneven topographical features. It has its own identity in terms of mythology, spiritualism and geographical set-up. Traditionally known as Marusthal (eastern part of Thar Desert) comprising nearly sixty per cent of the total area, is arid or semi-arid consisting mainly sand and sand-dunes. Mewar has series of hills, elevated plateau, and a central track of fertile plains and rivers which helped in shaping the history of the region.

In 1985, the Jaipur circle was created after the bifurcation of already existing three circles i.e. Delhi, Bhopal and Vadodara for the better preservation, conservation and maintenance of the 152 nationally protected monuments of Rajasthan. After that, 9 more monuments were declared to be of national importance. In the year 2014, Jaipur Circle was bifurcated with creation of new circle 'Jodhpur Circle' to look after the monuments of Western Rajasthan.

Sub-circles

Jaipur is the headquarter of the Circle headed by the Superintending Archaeologist. For proper administrative control and distribution of work, the jurisdiction of Jaipur Circle is divided into five Sub-Circles which are headed by Conservation Assistants:

- Alwar
- Bharatpur
- Deeg
- Jaipur
- Kota

Ranthambhore Fort is the World Heritage Monument under the series of 'Six Hill Forts of Rajasthan' declared by the UNESCO in the year 2013.

There are 3 Nos. of ticketed monuments i.e., Ancient Site at Bhangarh, Baori at Abhaneri and Deeg Palace at Deeg under the jurisdiction of Jaipur Circle. At present, Jaipur Circle is looking after the maintenance and conservation of 88 monuments/sites. All the Centrally Protected Monuments under Jaipur Circle are open for public from sunrise to sunset.

These monuments of Rajasthan could be broadly classified as protohistoric and early historic sites, i.e., remains of Brahmanical and Jain temples, Buddhist caves and idols, mosques, Idgah, *chhatris*, forts, palaces, *havelis*, *sarai*, tanks, *baoris* (stepped-wells), gardens, colossal images, monoliths, pillars, inscriptions and paintings. Jaipur Circle of Archaeological Survey of India is making best possible efforts for regular conservation and preservation of various Centrally Protected Monuments in the State as per the archaeological norms by professionals under the supervision of Superintending Archaeologist of the Circle. The conservation challenges in the region are manifold owing to its diverse geographical and respective ecological conditions. The region experiences very low to scanty rainfall and is generally hot, which itself is a major factor for cause of decay and damage to the historical monuments and sites. Besides, sand bearing winds with high-speed hitting the stone surface of the monuments, fluctuation in day and night temperature are also the factors responsible for damage to the monuments and sites.

The measures taken are mainly structural conservation. Resetting of the bulged-out members, scientific clearance of debris for exposing the buried parts of the ancient structures, restoration of damaged ancient enclosure and fortification walls, lime punning, restoration of damaged and missing stone *jalis*, fountains and *chhajja* stone, underpinning, pointing and water tightening of the masonry of the bastions and fortification walls, besides, correcting the original position of the tilted structure with the help of jacks. To safeguard the sites from the encroachments, dwarf walls with MS railings were provided at some of the monuments. The works related to laying of approach pathways including levelling and dressing within the premises of the monuments, display of sculptures/architectural members on pedestals, construction of sculpture sheds, store-cum-inspection rooms have also been attended at a number of monuments and sites recently.

The Circle has carried out major conservation works at Ranthambhor Fort, Deeg Palace, Bhangarh, Bayana Fort, Atru, Krishnavilas, Kansua, Charchoma, Dara, Jamwa Ramgarh, Nilkanth, Todaraisingh, Lalsot, Abhaneri etc. ASI has also taken up initiative in providing approached pathways including levelling and dressing around the monuments, display of sculptures/ architectural members on pedestals, construction of sculpture sheds, store-cum-inspection rooms near the sites, etc.

The basic public facilities like drinking water, toilets, bi-lingual notification tablets, bi-lingual cultural notice boards in matching sand stones, stone benches, dustbins, wheel chairs, suggestions box, slogans boards, direction boards and guide maps are provided at frequently visited monuments/sites of the Circle.

Innovative works at Jaipur Circle

1. Jaipur Archaeological Gallery cum Interpretation Centre

For the first time in the history of ASI such an innovative work has been carried out. During the field seasons 2022-23 to 2025-26, Bewan, Bahaj (2 years) and Ojhiyana (all three unprotected mounds), have been excavated. The report of two major excavations have been completed and the report of ongoing Ojhiyana excavation is in progress. All the antiquities and the important artefacts found from these excavations have been properly recorded, stored and displayed in a new museum gallery cum interpretation centre developed at the then vacant Jagatpati Joshi Hall in the Jaipur Circle office. It houses 1184 objects, many of them are the rarest antiquities like the sealings of PGW period with the earliest evidence of Brahmi script in India, a unique jasper seal of early Mauryan period, earliest Siva-Parvati terracotta figurines dating back to 3500 years, unique objects including semi-precious beads etc. as found in the excavations at Bahaj and Bewan. Antiquities found from other sites of Rajasthan namely Lachhura, Ojhiyana and Nagar Fort are also displayed providing it a unique varied nature. Of late two display showcases of confiscated objects including medieval swords, daggers, ivory objects etc. have also been installed. Two new display showcases have been provided to keep the antiquities obtained from the ongoing excavations at Ojhiyana. The museum is a unique blend of technology and archaeology. Documentaries on excavation of Bahaj, ancient site Bhangarh Fort, Ranthambhore Fort and virtual tours of Nilkanth, Abhaneri, Bayana etc. are also installed in the latest touchscreen kiosks. 3-d Models of excavation at Bahaj are also being provided which are developed by IIT Hyderabad in collaboration with Jaipur Circle of ASI. A seating arrangement for about 40 visitors including students has been made who can spend 2-3 hours easily in this museum cum interpretation centre. A model of Chand Baori installed in the museum and acquired from Chennai after more than one and half years is also an attraction. All the information of displayed objects is provided in the touchscreen kiosks and in the QR codes along with many other information related to monuments of Rajasthan. Reading material in the form of 8 booklets, recently written by the author and published by Jaipur Circle based on author's research on Centrally Protected Monuments is also being provided. After obtaining permission from the top authorities, the museum cum interpretation centre should be made open to public, particularly students free of charge. Possibly, advance bookings with details of visitors would be required for management and security purposes.





2. Bahaj Archaeological Gallery cum Interpretation Centre at Kishan Bhawan, Deeg

A lot of space is lying vacant at various ASI monuments and at the same time, a lot of collections are lying with ASI offices. When a good number of antiquities were found from Bahaj and the Director General ASI Shri Yadubir Singh Rawat directed to display the Bahaj antiquities in some vacant space available within the Deeg Palace, it was decided that a gallery of the excavated artefacts can be developed in a vacant hall of Kishan Bhawan, of which two halls were already in use as a Period Museum. In total 14 store cum display boxes were provided there and about 2000 antiquities or artefacts from Bahaj were displayed there in the first round. At present this number has increased to around 4000 artefacts. Two touchscreen kiosks have also been provided there with documentaries on excavation of Bahaj, ancient site Bhangarh Fort, Ranthambhore Fort and virtual tours of Nilkanth, Abhaneri, Bayana etc. A permanent exhibition on the Bahaj excavation is also installed there. This display of antiquities at Jaipur and Deeg highlights the importance of developing displays in meagre budget and also the point that an excavation belongs to the nation and nation has every right to read a detailed excavation report and see the artefacts recovered from such excavations.



3. Interpretation centres at Abhaneri and Harshnath

New interpretation centres have been developed at Abhaneri and Harshnath where 4 and 2 touchscreen kiosks have been provided respectively. At present the touchscreen kiosks have been provided with documentaries on excavation of Bahaj, ancient site Bhangarh Fort, Ranthambhore Fort and virtual tours of Nilkanth, Abhaneri, Bayana etc. Information on 8 centrally protected monuments recently published by Jaipur Circle is also provided there. The data of sites particularly Nilkanth and Harshnath would be

added in due course of time. The country wise monument related data can be added in these kiosks in near future.



4. Booklets on 8 centrally protected monuments

There was a serious lack of information on various ASI protected monuments coming under the jurisdiction of Jaipur Circle particularly those which are deserted ancient temple towns. These sites include Nilkanth, Atru, Harshnath, Krishnavilas, temples of Hadoti (Kota) region and Bayana. Besides Abhaneri, Bayana and Ranthambhor also required authentic and scholarly information. With deep research, information was collected, researched and research-based publication of about 40-50 pages each have been brought out by the Jaipur Circle on 8 of these monuments and sites. All these booklets have been conceptualised and written by the present author with the help of students and staff.



5. Toilet blocks at Ranthambhor Fort and Bhangarh

Since independence proper toilets could not be provided at Ranthambhor Fort and Bhangarh Fort as both form part of reserve tiger forest. With some strategic moves taking the forest officials into confidence, this office could develop toilet blocks at both of these monuments which cover a vast area and are popular tourist destinations.



6. QR Codes

QR codes have been provided with detailed and sometimes only important information at various monuments including short videos for differently abled persons particularly at the ticketed sites: Bhangarh, Deeg Palace and Abhaneri. Besides sites like Harshnath, Atru, Krishnavilas, Kansua, Charchoma, Bijolia, Nilkanth, Bayana have also been covered in.



7. New Sculpture Sheds at Nilkanth, Harshnath, Atru, Krishnavilas and Bijolia

New sculpture shed has been built at Nilkanth where 151 sculptures are displayed properly. The construction of a new and larger sculpture shed has begun. The idea is that the entire collection of sculptures will be displayed in the two new sculpture sheds and the old existing buildings after rearrangement of sculptures. The new sculpture shed work at Harshnath is near completion but due to the lethargic attitude of the contractor, it has not been completed. The sculptures and architectural fragments have been properly displayed at the ASI building at Harshnath. The new sculpture house at Krishnavilas is erected but the work of providing pedestals and arranging sculptures there would take time. Similarly, the old sculpture room at Atru has been strengthened and a part demolished which was beyond repair. A new sculpture shed work is in progress there. Similar is the case with Bijolia where only the platform part has been prepared for a sculpture shed.



Nilkanth



Preparation of foundation at Atru



Harshnath ASI camp office



Krishnavilas



Foundation base prepared at Bijolia

Excavations

Jaipur Circle under the direction of the author has carried out excavations for all four years during his tenure. The first excavation was taken up in the year 2022-23 at Bewan in District Sikar, the second excavation was taken up at Bahaj in District Deeg for two years consecutively during 2024 and 2025 and then from 1st April 2026 to 10th May 2026 excavation was carried out at Ojhiyana in District Beawar.

1. Excavation at Archaeological Mound Bewan, District Sikar, Rajasthan (2022-23)

Jaipur circle has conducted excavation at ancient mound at Bewan, Patan, Distt. Sikar, Rajasthan during the year 2022-23 under the direction of Dr. Vinay Kumar Gupta, assisted by K.L Saini, Ravindra Jangid, Sanjeev Barala. The site (27°46'02.9" N., 75°59'35.2" E) lies 4 km to the southeast of Patan and 20 km to the west of Kotputli town and roughly 20 km east of Neem-ka-thana. The famous archaeological site of Ganeshwar is situated about 20 km to the southwest of Bewan and the Khetri mines are about 50 km distant to the northwest. The mound having deposit of approximately 10 meters.

During the course of excavations, 9 quadrants measuring 4.25 x 4.25 m forming part of different trenches have been taken up for excavations. 5 quadrants could not be continued for long due to structural activity of either medieval or historical phases. In two quadrants, we have observed significant archaeological vestiges from about third century CE to the Ochre Coloured Pottery (OCP) period. In two quadrants which have significant medieval deposits and are situated in the centre of the mound, we have been able to reach the cultural deposit of circa third century BCE. The site is important for providing an uninterrupted cultural sequence from the Sultanate period to the earliest cultural period of the area. The layers are running almost horizontally all over the site with limited disturbances. The overall deposit will help in understanding the socio-cultural life in relation to the climate of the area. The site seems to be an important centre of early metallurgy of iron and copper that continued till the Sultanate period. There are chances that we may come across the earliest dates of iron and copper metallurgy from this site. A huge amount of slag, tuyere and ores have been recovered during the excavations. The cultural phase denoted by the significant occurrence of grey ware with occasional occurrence of Painted Grey Ware, Black Slipped Ware, Northern Black Polished Ware and the all-important Black-&-red ware is important for metallurgical activities. Even in the earliest phase, which seems to be Ochre Coloured Pottery phase or the Ganeshwar culture phase, metal slags have been observed.

Stratigraphy

In all seven trenches with varying number of quadrants were excavated at the site. Out of these six, in three trenches natural soil could be touched. YD1/Q4 was located near the center of the mound whereas YM9/Q2 and YN8/Q1 were located near the periphery of the mound. The maximum number of layers, 31 in number, were encountered in the deepest central Trench YD1/Q4 where the deposit started from the medieval period and ended at the OCP/Ganeshwar period with a total depth of around 12.70 m. Trench wise description of stratigraphy is as follows:

Trench YN8/Q1

There are twenty layers visible in the west facing section. The total deposit of layers is 10 m.

Layer 1

This layer is disturbed due to human activity. The nature of soil is loose and the colour of the layer according to Munsell soil color charts is yellow (10YR-7/6). The layer begins at 0 cm at the top and goes down to 77 cm in the lower side from the datum point. It is uneven from top to bottom. Mixed cultural material has been found in this layer. The contents include potsherds (Red Ware, Grey Ware, Decorated Red Ware, Glazed Ware and Black Ware), brickbats, beads and iron objects.

Layer 2

This layer is similar to layer 1. It is in grey colour (10YR-6/1). The nature of soil is the same as the previous layer. It begins at 77 cm and ends at 130 cm from the datum point. The average thickness of this layer is 53 cm. Mixed cultural material has been found in this layer. The contents include potsherds (Red Ware, Grey Ware, Decorated Red Ware and Glazed Ware), brickbats, animal bones, beads, hopscotch and iron objects etc.

Layer 3

This layer is similar to layer 1 and 2 but it is in a whitish colour (5Y-8/1). The nature of soil is the same as the previous layer. It begins at 130 cm and ends at 179 cm from the datum point. Mixed cultural material has been found in this layer. The average thickness of this layer is 49 cm. The contents include potsherds (Red ware, Grey Ware, Black Ware and Decorated Red Ware), brickbats, animal bones, and beads.

Layer 4A

This layer apparently belongs to the post-Gupta period. The layer is in a light brownish grey colour (2.5Y-6/2). The nature of soil is semi compact and it is uneven from top to bottom. It begins at 179 cm

and ends at 251 cm from the datum point. The average thickness of this layer is 49 cm. The contents include potsherds (Red Ware and Black Ware), brickbats, animal bones, beads and copper objects.

Layer 4B

This layer belongs to the post-Gupta period. The layer is in grey colour (10YR-6/1). The nature of soil is semi compact and it is uneven from top to bottom. It begins at 179 cm and ends at 251 cm from datum point. The average thickness of this layer is 49 cm. The contents include potsherds (Red Ware, Grey Ware, Black Ware and Decorated Red Ware), brickbats, animal bones, sling ball and figurine.

Layer 5A

This layer apparently belongs to the Gupta period. The layer is in a pale brown colour (2.5Y-7/3). The nature of soil is compact. It begins at 251 cm and ends at 279 cm from the datum point. The average thickness of this layer is 28 cm. The contents include potsherds (Red Ware), brickbats, sling balls, animal bones, beads, animal figurines, glass bangles, wheel, hopscotch, and iron objects.

Layer 5B

This layer apparently belongs to the Gupta period. The layer is in a light grey colour (2.5Y-7/2). The nature of soil is compact. It begins at 279 cm and ends at 307 cm from the datum point. The average thickness of this layer is 28 cm. The contents include potsherds (Red Ware, and Decorated Red Ware), brickbats, animal bones, terracotta wheel, household item, iron and copper objects.

Layer 6

This layer belongs to the Kushan period. The layer is in a brownish yellow colour (10YR-6/6). The nature of soil is loose. It begins at 307 cm and ends at 450 cm from the datum point. The average thickness of this layer is 143 cm. The contents include potsherds (Red Ware, Stamped Ware and Rangmahal type pottery), brickbats, highly burnt bricks, slag, ore, tuyere, sling ball, bead, household items, hopscotch and iron objects.

Layer 7A

This layer belongs to the Kushan period. The layer is in light grey colour (10YR-7/2). The nature of soil is semi compact. It begins at 450 cm and ends at 465 cm from the datum point. The average thickness of this layer is 15 cm. The contents include potsherds (Red Ware, Stamped Ware and Rangmahal type pottery), brickbats, animal bones, slag, beads, hopscotch and bone objects.

Layer 7B

This layer belongs to the Kushan period. The layer is in a whitish colour (10YR-8/1). The nature of soil is semi compact. It begins at 465 cm and ends at 485 cm from the datum point. The average

thickness of this layer is 20 cm. The contents include potsherds (Red Ware, Black Ware, Stamped Ware and Rangmahal type pottery) and copper objects.

Layer 8

This layer belongs to the Sunga period. The layer is in a light yellowish-brown colour (10YR-6/4). The nature of soil is semi compact. It begins at 485 cm and ends at 582 cm from the datum point. The average thickness of this layer is 97 cm. The contents include potsherds (Red Ware and Stamped Ware), animal bones, slag, bead, wheel, shell bangle, terracotta bangle and iron objects.

Layer 9

This layer apparently belongs to the Sunga period. The layer is in a light grey colour (2.5Y-7/1). The nature of soil is semi compact. It begins at 582 cm and ends at 624 cm from the datum point. The average thickness of this layer is 42 cm. The contents include Red Ware potsherds, animal bones, slag, sling ball, gamesman, beads, household items, crucible, terracotta bangle, shell bangle, animal figurine and iron objects.

Layer 10

This layer is in a whitish colour (10YR-8/1). The nature of soil is semi compact. It begins at 624 cm and ends at 634 cm from the datum point. The average thickness of this layer is 10 cm. The contents include potsherds of Red Ware.

Layer 11

This layer belongs to the Mauryan period. The layer is in a light grey colour (10YR-7/1). The nature of soil is semi compact. It begins at 634 cm and ends at 663 cm from the datum point. The average thickness of this layer is 29 cm. The contents include potsherds (Red Ware and Grey Ware), animal bones, slag, sling ball, pendent, hopscotch, gamesman, beads, terracotta wheels, bangles, animal figurines, bone and iron objects.

Layer 12

This layer apparently belongs to the pre-Mauryan period. The layer is in a light grey colour (10YR-7/1). The nature of soil is semi compact. It begins at 663 cm and ends at 693 cm from the datum point. The average thickness of this layer is 30 cm. The contents include potsherds (Red Ware and Grey Ware), slag, sling ball, beads, hopscotch, wheel, household items, shell bangle, animal figurine, bone and iron objects.

Layer 13

This layer apparently belongs to the Mahajanapada/NBPW period. The layer is in a brownish yellow colour (10YR-6/6). The nature of soil is compact. It begins at 693 cm and ends at 711 cm from the

datum point. The average thickness of this layer is 18 cm. The contents include potsherds (Red Ware, NBPW and Grey Ware), animal bones, slag, gamesman, beads, hopscotch, wheel, household items, terracotta bangle and iron objects.

Layer 14

This layer belongs to the Mahajanapada/NBPW period. The layer is in a light grey colour (10YR-7/2). The nature of soil is semi compact. It begins at 711 cm and ends at 735 cm from the datum point. The average thickness of this layer is 24 cm. The contents include potsherds (Red Ware, NBPW, BRW and Grey Ware), animal bones, slag, beads, hopscotch and animal figurine.

Layer 15

This layer belongs to the BRW/PGW period. The layer is in a yellow colour (10YR-7/6). The nature of soil is compact. It begins at 735 cm and ends at 763 cm from the datum point. The average thickness of this layer is 28 cm. The contents include potsherds (Red Ware, BRW, BSW, PGW and Grey Ware), animal bones, slag, wheel, hopscotch, stamp, household items, animal figurine and terracotta bangle objects.

Layer 16

This layer belongs to the BRW/PGW period. The layer is in a light grey colour (10YR-7/2). The nature of soil is semi compact. It begins at 763 cm and ends at 780 cm from the datum point. The average thickness of this layer is 17 cm. The contents include potsherds (Red Ware, BRW, BSW, PGW and Grey Ware), animal bones, slag, hopscotch and beads.

Layer 17

This layer belongs to the BRW/PGW period. The layer is in a very pale brown colour (10YR-7/4). The nature of soil is compact. It begins at 780 cm and ends at 787 cm from the datum point. The average thickness of this layer is 7 cm. The contents include potsherds (Red Ware, BRW, BSW, PGW and Grey Ware), animal bones and bone objects.

Layer 18

This layer belongs to the BRW/PGW period. The layer is in a light grey colour (10YR-7/1). The nature of soil is loose. It begins at 787 cm and ends at 816 cm from the datum point. The average thickness of this layer is 29 cm. The contents include potsherds (Red Ware, BRW, BSW, PGW and Grey Ware), animal bones, slag, ore, tuyere, crucible, wheel, hopscotch, gamesman, household items, weight, animal figurine, iron and copper objects.

Layer 19

This layer belongs to the OCP/Ganeshwar period. The layer is in a yellowish-brown colour (10YR-5/8). The nature of soil is compact. It begins at 816 cm and ends at 970 cm from datum point. The average thickness of this layer is 154 cm. The contents include OCP/Ganeshwar potsherds and animal bones.

Layer 20

This layer belongs to the OCP/Ganeshwar period. The layer is in a yellowish-brown colour (10YR-5/8). The nature of soil is compact. It begins at 970 cm and ends at 1000 cm from datum point. The average thickness of this layer is 30 cm. The contents include OCP/Ganeshwar potsherds and animal bones.



Pl. BWN 03. Trench YN8/Q1



Pl. BWN 04. Trench YN8/Q1



Pl. BWN 05. Trench YN8/Q1



Pl. BWN 06. Trench YN8/Q1

Trench YN8/Q1: Section facing West

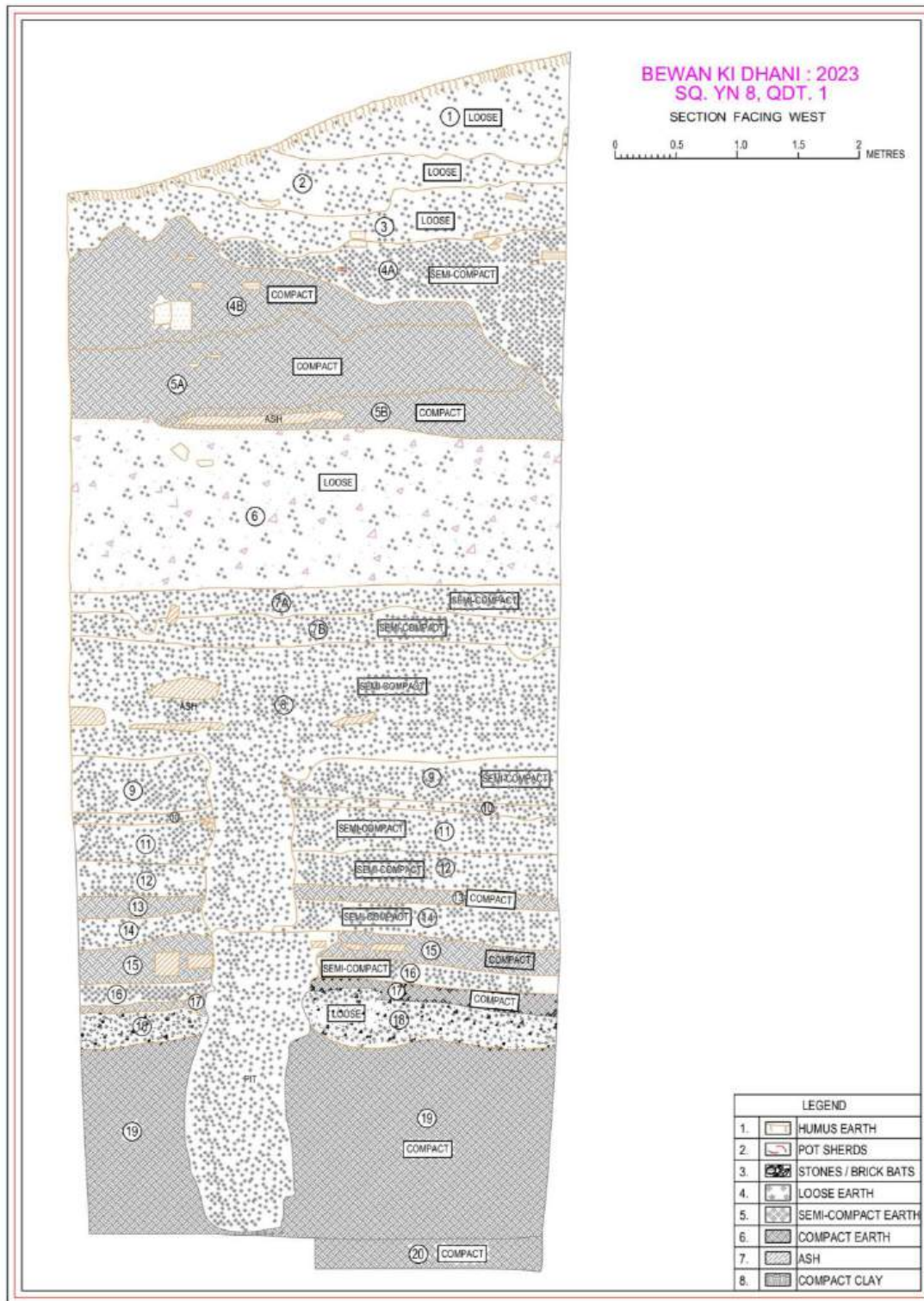


Fig. BWN 03. Trench YN8/Q1: Section facing West

Trench YD1/Q4

There are thirty-one layers visible in the west-facing section. The total deposit of layers is 12.70 m.

Layer 1

This layer is disturbed due to human activity. The nature of soil is compact. It begins at 10 cm and ends at 24 cm from the datum point. The average thickness of the layer is 14 cm.

Layer 2

This layer belongs to the Sultanate period. The nature of soil is semi compact. It begins at 24 cm and ends at 38 cm from the datum point. The average thickness of this layer is 14 cm. The contents include potsherds (Red Ware and Decorated Red Ware) and stones.

Layer 3

This layer belongs to the Sultanate period. The nature of soil is semi compact and it is uneven from top to bottom. It begins at 38 cm and ends at 66 cm from the datum point. A stone wall is visible in the section which cuts layers 4, 5, 6 and 7. The average thickness of this layer is 28 cm. The contents include potsherds (Red Ware and Decorated Red Ware), stones and hopscotch.

Layer 4

This layer belongs to the Sultanate period. The nature of soil is semi compact. It begins at 66 cm and ends at 99 cm from the datum point. The average thickness of this layer is 33 cm. The contents include potsherds (Red Ware and Decorated Red Ware), stones, animal bones, hopscotch, sling ball, glass bangle and iron objects.

Layer 5

This layer belongs to the Sultanate period. The nature of soil is semi compact. It begins at 99 cm and ends at 104 cm from the datum point. The average thickness of this layer is 5 cm. The contents include Red Ware and Decorated Red Ware potsherds. No antiquity has been found in this layer.

Layer 6

This layer belongs to the Sultanate period. The nature of soil is semi compact. It begins at 104 cm and ends at 118 cm from the datum point. The average thickness of this layer is 14 cm. The contents include potsherds (Red Ware, Decorated Red Ware and Glazed Ware), animal bones, stones, hopscotch, and iron objects.

Layer 7

This layer belongs to the Sultanate period. The nature of soil is semi compact. It begins at 118 cm and ends at 130 cm from the datum point. The average thickness of this layer is 12 cm. The contents include potsherds (Red ware, Decorated Red Ware and Glazed Ware), animal bones, stones and iron objects.

Layer 8

This layer belongs to the Sultanate period. The nature of soil is compact. It begins at 130 cm and ends at 150 cm from the datum point. The average thickness of this layer is 20 cm. The contents include potsherds (Red Ware, Black Ware, Decorated Red Ware and Glazed Ware.), brickbats, stones, animal bones, copper coin, hopscotch, sling ball, bead, glass bangles and iron objects.

Layer 9

This layer belongs to the Early Medieval period. The nature of soil is semi compact. It begins at 150 cm and ends at 191 cm from the datum point. The average thickness of this layer is 31 cm. The contents include potsherds (Red Ware, Grey Ware and Decorated Red Ware), stones, brickbats, animal bones, hopscotch, glass bangle, terracotta animal figurine and iron objects.

Layer 10

This layer belongs to the Early Medieval period. The nature of soil is loose. It begins at 191 cm and ends at 200 cm from the datum point. The average thickness of this layer is 9 cm. The contents include Red Ware sherds and Slag.

Layer 11

This layer belongs to the Early Medieval period. The nature of soil is semi compact. It begins at 200 cm and ends at 216 cm from the datum point. The average thickness of this layer is 16 cm. The contents include potsherds (Red Ware and Grey Ware), brickbats, stones, animal bones, hopscotch and sling balls.

Layer 12

This layer belongs to the Early Medieval period. The nature of soil is compact. It begins at 216 cm and ends at 246 cm from the datum point. The average thickness of this layer is 30 cm. The contents include potsherds (Red Ware and Thin Red Ware), stones, animal bones, brickbats, hopscotch, sling ball, glass bangle, terracotta animal figurine, and iron objects.

Layer 13

This layer belongs to the Early Medieval period. The nature of soil is semi compact. It begins at 246 cm and ends at 262 cm from the datum point. The average thickness of this layer is 16 cm. The contents include Red Ware potsherds, animal bones, brickbats, hopscotch, beads, and iron objects.

Layer 14

This layer belongs to the post-Gupta period. The nature of soil is semi compact. It begins at 262 cm and ends at 280 cm from the datum point. The average thickness of this layer is 18 cm. The contents include Red Ware potsherds, slag, animal bones, hopscotch, shell bangle and iron objects.

Layer 15

This layer belongs to the post-Gupta period. The nature of soil is loose. It begins at 280 cm and ends at 310 cm from the datum point. The average thickness of this layer is 30 cm. The contents include Red Ware potsherds, animal bones, beads and iron objects.

Layer 16

This layer belongs to the post-Gupta period. The nature of soil is compact. It begins at 310 cm and ends at 321 cm from the datum point. The average thickness of this layer is 11 cm. The contents include Red Ware potsherds, animal bones, glass bangle and iron objects.

Layer 17

This layer belongs to the post-Gupta period. The nature of soil is semi compact. It begins at 321 cm and ends at 348 cm from the datum point. The average thickness of this layer is 27 cm. The contents include Red Ware potsherds, animal bones, hopscotch, sling ball, shell bangle and weight.

Layer 18

This layer apparently belongs to the Gupta period. The nature of soil is compact. It begins at 348 cm and ends at 382 cm from the datum point. The average thickness of this layer is 34 cm. The contents include Red Ware potsherds, brickbats, animal bones, beads, sling ball, shell bangle, glass bangle and iron objects.

Layer 19

This layer belongs to the Gupta period. The nature of soil is semi compact. It begins at 382 cm and ends at 446 cm from the datum point. The average thickness of this layer is 64 cm. The contents include Red Ware potsherds, animal bones, shell bangle, sling ball, beads, bones and iron objects.

Layer 20

This layer belongs to the Gupta period. The nature of soil is compact. It begins at 446 cm and ends at 470 cm from the datum point. The average thickness of this layer is 24 cm. The contents include Red Ware potsherds, animal bones, brickbats, beads, and hopscotch.

Layer 21

This layer belongs to the Gupta period. The nature of soil is semi compact. It begins at 470 cm and ends at 547 cm from the datum point. The average thickness of this layer is 24 cm. The contents include potsherds (Red Ware and Black Ware), animal bones, brickbats, sling ball, weight, hopscotch, beads, and iron objects.

Layer 22

This layer belongs to the Kushan-Gupta transition period. The nature of soil is semi compact. It begins at 547 cm and ends at 690 cm from the datum point. The average thickness of this layer is 143 cm. The contents include potsherds (Red Ware and Thin Red Ware), animal bones, brickbats, sling ball, shell bangle, figurine, hopscotch, household item, and iron objects.

Layer 23

This layer belongs to the Kushan period. The nature of soil is semi compact. It begins at 690 cm and ends at 750 cm from the datum point. The average thickness of this layer is 60 cm. The contents include potsherds (Red Ware and Stamped Ware), animal bones, brickbats, hopscotch, wheel, beads, slag, and iron objects.

Layer 24

This layer belongs to the Kushan period. The nature of soil is compact. It begins at 750 cm and ends at 841 cm from the datum point. The average thickness of this layer is 91 cm. The contents include potsherds (Red Ware, Rangmahal type pottery and Stamped Ware), animal bones, brickbats, copper bangle, shell bangle, sling ball, figurine, beads, household items, slag, bone and iron objects.

Layer 25

This layer belongs to the Sunga period. The nature of soil is semi compact. It begins at 841 cm and ends at 870 cm from the datum point. The average thickness of this layer is 29 cm. The contents include potsherds (Red Ware and Stamped Ware), animal bones, brickbats, shell bangle, beads, crucible and slag.

Layer 26

This layer belongs to the Mauryan period. The nature of soil is compact. It begins at 870 cm and ends at 916 cm from the datum point. The average thickness of this layer is 46 cm. The contents include potsherds (Red Ware and Grey Ware), animal bones, brickbats, hopscotch, sling ball, figurine, pendent, beads, slag and iron objects.

Layer 27

This layer belongs to the pre-Mauryan period. The nature of soil is compact. It begins at 916 cm and ends at 978 cm from the datum point. The average thickness of this layer is 62 cm. The contents include potsherds (Red Ware and Grey Ware), brickbats, animal bones, hopscotch, sling ball, terracotta figurine, pendent, beads, slag, terracotta bangle, gamesman, and bone objects.

Layer 28

This layer belongs to the Mahajanapada/NBPW period. The nature of soil is semi compact. It begins at 978 cm and ends at 1006 cm from the datum point. The average thickness of this layer is 28 cm. The contents include potsherds (Red Ware, NBPW, BRW, Grey Ware and Micaceous Grey Ware), bones, hopscotch, terracotta wheel, pendant, beads, terracotta bangle and slag.

Layer 29

This layer belongs to the Mahajanapada/NBPW period. The nature of soil is semi compact. It begins at 1006 cm and ends at 1051 cm from the datum point. The average thickness of this layer is 45 cm. The contents include potsherds (Red Ware, NBPW, BRW, BSW and Grey Ware), animal bones, crucible, hopscotch, terracotta wheel, pendent, figurine, gamesman, beads, terracotta bangle and slag.

Layer 30

This layer belongs to the BRW/PGW period. The nature of soil is semi compact. It begins at 1051 cm and ends at 1165 cm from the datum point. The average thickness of this layer is 114 cm. The contents include potsherds (Red Ware, PGW, BRW, BSW and Grey Ware), animal bones, slag, ores, tuyere, crucible, hopscotch, terracotta wheel, pendent, figurine, gamesman, beads, terracotta bangle, bone and copper objects.

Layer 31

This layer belongs to the OCP/Ganeshwar period. The nature of soil is compact. It begins at 1165 cm and ends at 1270 cm from the datum point. The average thickness of this layer is 105 cm. The contents include OCP/Ganeshwar potsherds, animal bones, slag, household item, gold and copper objects.

.



Pl. BWN 07. Trench YD1/Q4



Pl. BWN 08. Trench YD1/Q4

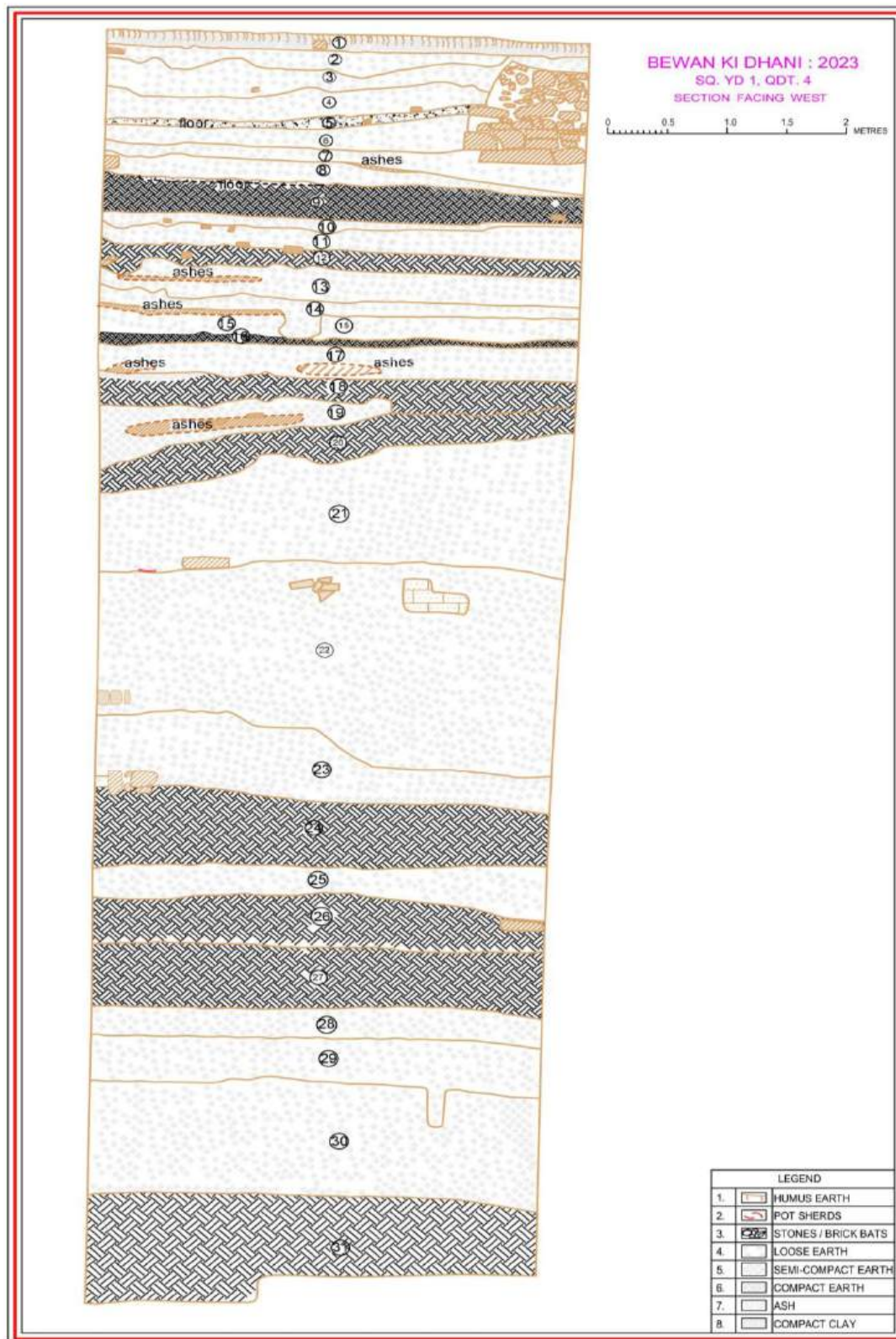


Fig. BWN 04. Trench YD1/Q4: Section facing West

Photographs of trenches and some Antiquities: -



Pl. BWN 01. General view of the mound



Pl. BWN 02. Aerial view of the trenches



Pl. BWN 03. General view of Trench YB5 and YB6



Pl. BWN 04. General view of Trench YD1, Q1 and Q4



Pl. BWN 05. OCP/Ganeshwer Pottery



Pl. BWN 06. PGW Pottery



Pl. BWN 07. Terracotta Human figurine



Pl. BWN 08. Shell bangles



Pl. BWN 09. Bone Points



Pl. BWN 10. Stone/terracotta Beads

Excavations at Bahaj (2024 and 2025) and Braj Chaurasi Kos

Vraja is an old Sanskrit word which has now changed to Braj in popular local dialect. Vraja and Braj/Brij words are presently used to denote a particular area related to the childhood activities of Bhagavāna Kṛṣṇa. Vraja word is derived from Sanskrit *dhātu* Vraj which as per dictionary (Katre 1969: 337) means “to go, to walk, to proceed” implying “motion and movement”. The place where cows move or graze has also been called Vraja (*vrajanti gāvo yasminniti vrajaḥ*). In the *Ṛgveda*, Vraja word has been used for *gauśālā* or for the areas where cows graze - *yaṃ tvāṃ janāso abhisañcharanti gāva ushṇamiv vrajaṃ yavishṭha* (10.4.2) and prayers have been made for the growth of cattle wealth - *gavāmaya vrajaṃ vṛdhi kṛṇudhva rādho adriṇaḥ* (*Ṛgveda* 1.10.7).¹ The *Amarakośa* (3.3.30) provides three meanings of the word Vraja: *goshṭha* (cow’s stable), *mārga* (pathway) and *vṛnda* or herd (*goshṭhādhvanivahā vrajaḥ*). In the *Yajurveda* (1.25), the grazing ground of the cows and *gauśālā* have been called *vraja* and *goshṭha* respectively - *vraja gachchha goshṭhān*. In the *Śukla Yajurveda* (6.3), reference is found of Vraja related to the grazing ground of cows having beautiful horns – *yāte dhāmānyuśmasi gamadhyai yatra gāvo bhūriśṛṅgā ayāsah*. The *Sāmaveda* (3.318) mentions that Vraja is same as *Goloka Dhāma* – *śūro nṛshātā śravasascha kāmā ā gomati vraje bhajāṃ tvam naḥ* (Chaturvedi 1987: 57). Pāṇini’s *Ashṭādhyāyī* mentions Vraja where it means a fold, stall, cow-pen, cattle-shed (Katre 1969: 537) – *gocharasañcharavahavrajavyajāpaṇanigamāscha* (3.3.119).

The author has earlier suggested that the word Virāja mentioned in the *Atharvaveda* might have some connection with the word Vraja (Gupta 2013: 2). In the *Atharvaveda* (8. 10), the cosmic principle Virāja is successively associated with various classes of beings: gods, *asuras*, men, manes (*pitaraḥ*), tree-spirits (*vanaspati*), the seven seers, *gandharvas*, *apsarās*, *yakshas* and snakes. In each case the two chief representatives of the group are mentioned as the calf (*vatsa*) and the milker of Virāja, which evidently is conceived as a “cow”. Besides for Vraja being one of the most sacred landscapes and originator of various art and iconographic forms, the conceptualization of the cosmic principle in the form of a cow also indicates towards the great association of the region with the cows. This link between Virāja (also defined as cosmic deity) and Vraja is quite significant and can’t be ignored.

The *Uttarakāṇḍa* of the *Rāmāyaṇa* (*Sarga* 68-70) deals with the incidents of Madhupurī; the fight of Śatrughna with Lavaṇāsura and the establishment of the capital city Madhurā. The *Harivaṃśa Purāṇa* (54/56-62) provides some important information about Mathurā. It also mentions that this city was established in the forest area of Madhuvana by Śatrughna after killing the demon Lavaṇāsura there. It also speaks of the fortification wall, moat, the crescent shape, gardens, high rise buildings, prosperity (in terms of crop production, availability of precious jewels) and the commerce of the city.

In the *Harivaṃśa Purāṇa* (Vishṇu Parva, 9.30), Vraja denotes the interior parts of the region near Mathurā, in a sense the villages of cowmen – *tad vrajasthānaṃ adhikaṃ su śubhe kānanāvṛtaṃ*.

¹ This and the following Vedic references are cited by Mittal (1966: 1). These are quite popular in tradition and even one of the greatest classical singers of India, Pandit Jasraj has sung them.

The *Vishṇu Purāṇa* (*Pañchama Aṁśa*) also mentions Vraja in similar sense. The places of Vraja mentioned in both these texts are: Gokula, Vṛndāvana, Govardhana, Tālavana, Bhāṇḍīravana and Yamunā. The word Vraja is used in similar sense in the *Śrīmadbhāgavata Purāṇa* (10.1.10) - *vraje vasan kiṁkaron madhuparyāṁ cha keśavaḥ*.

Mathurā, the most famous place of Vraja is frequently mentioned in Brāhmaṇical literature. The epics, especially the *Mahābhārata* are stocked with references to Mathurā and the Śūrasena region. The genealogy of solar and lunar dynasties describes several kings who held sway over this land. Pāṇini's *Ashṭādhyāyī* mentions a number of references related to Mathurā (all indirectly). The place has been described as a stronghold of Andhaka-Vṛshṇi clans (6.2.34). Patañjali's *Mahābhāṣya* while elaborating the *Ashṭādhyāyī sūtras* mentions that the glory of Mathurā owes to the traditions of the *Mahābhārata* (Sharma 1984: 18). In it, Mathurā is mentioned on at least eight occasions and at one place the text (5.3.57) admires the general conditions of this place saying that the people were happy and good looking and better off than the residents of Sāṁkāśya and Pāṭaliputra (Sharma 1984: 18-19). Kauṭilya in his *Arthaśāstra* describes the cotton cloth of Mathurā as of high quality (II.11.115). *Manusmṛti* (2.16) mentions Vraja region (Śūrasena) as part of *Brahmarshi* country.

The *Garuḍa Purāṇa* mentions Mathurā along with other six most holy cities of India in this famous śloka:

*Ayodhyā Mathurā Māyā Kāśī Kāñchī Avantikā|
Purī Dvārāvātī chaiva saptaitaḥ mokshadāyikāḥ||*

The *Padma Purāṇa* (73.44-45) mentions Mathurā to be even holier than the holiest city of Kāśī. It further adds that Mathurā is the city of Lord Vishṇu and is worshipped by many deities as a *sanātana purī* (583.12-14). In the *Varāha Purāṇa* (152.8-9), Lord Varāha tells the Goddess Earth that no place on earth, space or nether world is so liked by him as is Mathurā which is higher than the heavens in its reputation for being the birth place of Kṛṣṇa.

Area of Braj based on *Purāṇas* and traditions

Among all the *Purāṇas* in which Braj has been mentioned, the reference in the *Varāha Purāṇa* is the most significant. The *Mathurāmaṇḍala* section of the *Varāha Purāṇa* solely deals with Braj *maṇḍala*. A part of this text is famous as *Mathurā Mahātmya* (Chapter 158). In it, the extent of Mathurā *maṇḍala* has been told as 20 *yojanas* and at many places it has been repeated while telling the importance of various places in this territory (*viṁśatiryōjanāntu māthuraṁ maṁ maṇḍalaṁ| yatra tatra naraḥ snāto muchyate sarvakilvishai||* 158.1). In the *Vāyu Purāṇa*, the extent of Mathurā *maṇḍala* has been told as 40 *yojanas*, but this reference has not attained wider popularity as references of the *Varāha Purāṇa* have. One *yojana* roughly measures about 4 *krośa* (*kos*) or 7 miles (12 km) and hence the traditional extent of Braj is considered to be 84 *krośas*. A popular *kiṁvadanti* in Braj says (Mittal 1966: 5) - *ita varahada uta sonahada sūrasena uta grāma| vraja chaurāsī kosa mein mathurāmaṇḍaladhāma||*

Growse (1883: 78) had talked about a similar tradition but it was possibly a corrupt form of the above *kimvadanti*. This couplet had probably got drawn from *Śrīmadgargasamhitā*, one of the important compositions exclusively related to Vraja and its episodes. In it Gargāchārya talks about Vraja to Nandarāya in the following *ślokas* (*Vṛndāvana Khaṇḍa*, Chapter 1, *ślokas* 11-12):

prāgudivyaṃ varhishado dakṣiṇasyāṃ yadopurāt|
paśchimāyāṃ śoṇapurānmathurāmaṇḍalaṃ viduḥ ||
viṃśadyojana vistīrṇasārdhayadyojane navai|
mathurāmaṇḍalaṃ divyaṃ vrajamahurmanīshinah||

In these references Varhishad or Barhad in the north-east direction can be identified with Barhad near Bijaigarh in District Hathras. In the south of Braj is Yadupura or Śūrasena kā Grāma which has been identified with Bateshwar near Shikohabad along the River Yamuna. In the west of Braj is Śoṇapura or Sonhad which can be identified either with Sohna near Gurgaon or with Saundhad near Hodal. Gargāchārya mentioned that surrounded by these places, the region is called as Vraja by *manīshis*. While in local tradition, only three side extremes have been mentioned; in *Śrīmadgargasamhitā*, attempt has been made to mention the four extremes by putting Varhishad in the northeastern direction. In one of the editions of *Vrajabhakti Vilāsa* of Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa published by *Gauḍīya* scholar Baba Krishnadas, the northern limit of Braj has been mentioned as Sonagaon while the reference quoted by F.S. Growse mentions Bhuvana vana as the northern limit. The mention in the *Vrajabhakti Vilāsa* (Chapter 6.1) is as follows:

chaturśīti krośādhyāṃ chaturdikshu virājitā|
mathurā maṇḍala tkrośamekaṃ viṃśatikaṃ bhajet||
chaturdikshu pramāṇena pūrvādikramato gaṇat|
pūrva bhāge stithaṃ kroṇaṃ vanaṃ hāsyabhidhānakam||
bhāge cha dakṣiṇe koṇaṃ śubhaṃ janhuvanaṃ stitham|
bhāge va paśchime koṇe parvatākhyavanaṃ stitham||
bhāgehuttara koṇasthaṃ sūryapatana samjñakam|
ityetā vrajamaṇyadā chatushkoṇābhidāyini||

It appears that the northern limit of Braj would have been Sonagaon and can be identified with Sohna near Gurgaon. Growse (1883: 79) has identified Upahāravana with Sohna as well but for the northern limit he identified Bhuvanavana with Bhūshaṇa vana near Shergarh which does not appear to be the case. Because of the contribution of *Gauḍīya* scholars, view of greater Braj can be ascertained which has been called as ‘cultural Braj’. Rūpa Gosvāmī on the basis of his researches of various *Purāṇas* had arrived at the conclusion that from Yāyāvara to Śaukarī Vateśvara was the position of Braj. Yāyāvara has been identified with Jewar in Gautam Buddha Nagar District. Based on the references provided by Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa and the analysis of various scholars like Mittal, and Growse, the following limits of the greater Braj (a single religio-cultural entity) can be drawn: in the north Śoṇapura (Sohna near Gurgaon) or Yāyāvara (Jewar along Yamuna in District Gautam Buddha Nagar);

in the east Varhishad (Barhad near Bijaigarh, Hathras, which would be in the north-east direction actually) or Soron (along the Ganga if it is the ancient Saurapura) and Hāsyavana (Hasayan in District Hathras or Hasangarh near Jalesar); in the south Janhuvana (Jajau near Dholpur) and Bateshwar near Shikohabad (in the south-east direction); in the west Apahārīvana (Pahari village, near Govindgarh in District Alwar). Mathura city has to be considered the centre point of Braj.

A beautiful description of Vraja in *Vishṇu Rahasya* as cited by Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa in the *Vrajabhakti Vilāsa* (1.93) is “Mathurāpurī is the *hṛdaya* of Vraja, Madhuvana the *nābhi*, Tālavana and Kumudavana the two breasts, Vṛndāvana the forehead, Bahulāvana and Mahāvana the two arms, Kokilāvana and Bhāṇḍīravana the hands, Khādiravana and Bhadrakavana the shoulders, Chhatravana and Lohajāṅghavana two eyes, Bilvavana and Bhadravana two ears, Kāmyakavana the *chibuka*, Triveni and Sakhīkūpa the lips, Vihvala etc. the teeth, Surabhivana the tongue, Mayūravana the *lalāṭa*, Mānengitavana the nose, Śeshasāyī and Parmānandavana the nostrils, Karahla and Kamai the hips, Karṇavana the *liṅga*, Kṛṣṇākshipanaka the anus, Nandanavana the head, Indravana the back, Śikshāvana the *vāṇī*, Dayāvana, Lohavana, Nandragrāma, Śrīkuṇḍa, Govardhana, Jāvavaṭa, Saṃketavana, Nārādavana, Madhuvana, Mṛdvana, Janhuvana, Menakāvana, Kajalīvana, Nandakūpavana etc. are the fingers of hands and feet of Vraja in the form of Śrīkṛṣṇa. *Indriyas* are the *gau* (cows), *Jīva* is the *Gopa*. *Gopāla* is the supreme soul (*Paramātmā*). Desires of the *Jīva* are the *Gopikās*.

Another aspect of Braj can be taken as the area in which the language of Braj (Brajbhasha) is spoken. This region is quite larger than the area so far talked about. This area extends up to Gurgaon, Mewat in the north-west direction, Gautam Buddha Nagar in the north, Sambhal/Chandausi (Bahjoi), Bareilly, Badaun districts and parts of Pilibhit, Shahjahanpur in the north-east, parts of Mainpuri, Farrukhabad, Etawah districts in the east, Bhind district in the south-east, Morena, Gwalior, Datia in the south, Dausa in the south-west and Alwar in the west. Among this area the districts where pure Brajbhasha is spoken are: Mathura, Aligarh, Hathras, Palwal, Bulandshahr, Kasganj, Badaun, Bharatpur, Karauli, Dholpur, Morena, Agra, Firozabad and Etah (Map 2). This vast area has been included by Dharendra Varma (1954: 33), a great linguist in his analysis of Brajbhasha speaking region. The far-off parts of this area are those in which Brajbhasha is spoken with slight regional variations. The area of Brajbhasha speaking Braj region is 38,000 square miles (Varma 1954: 34). In the northeastern direction, this area where Brajbhasha is spoken is quite extended. The area of Brajbhasha speaking Braj region as well as the population is far greater than many important European countries combined.

Geographical Features of Braj

The vast area of Braj is mostly fertile plain land irrigated by the Ganges, the Yamuna and their tributaries. The area in the west and to the south-west has low lying Aravalli hills in the Alwar and Dausa districts respectively and the area in the south has some Vindhyan hills as well. The major cities

are situated on the course of the major rivers as well as without them. Noida, Mathura, Palwal and Agra are on the Yamuna, Bulandshahr and Soron on the Ganges, Kasganj on the Kali Nadi, Dholpur-Morena on the Chambal whereas Aligarh, Hathras, Bharatpur, Alwar, Gwalior have no major streams visible at present. There is possibility of the presence of dried-up streams at some of the major sites.

Important *vanas* of Braj

Braj is the land of sacred groves and forests. Besides the important 36 *vanas* (12 major and 24 *upavanas*), there were many such other *vanas* or small groves in the region. Many of the village names in Braj and the greater region derive their names from various sacred groves.

12 major *Vanas* as mentioned in the *Braja Vastu Varṇana*

1. Madhuvana, 2. Tālavana, 3. Kumudavana, 4. Bahulāvana, 5. Kāmavana, 6. Khādiravana,
7. Vṛndāvana, 8. Bhadravana, 9. Bhāṇḍīravana, 10. Belavana, 11. Lohavana, 12. Mahāvana.

The *Vraja Bhakti Vilāsa* mentions Chhatravana and Kokilāvana instead of Madhuvana and Vṛndāvana which seems faulty.

24 *Upavanas* of Braj as mentioned in the *Braja Vastu Varṇana*

1. Arishṭavana, 2. Satohā, 3. Govardhan, 4. Barsānā, 5. Parandra, 6. Nandgāon, 7. Sanket,
8. Mānsarovar, 9. Śeshasāyī, 10. Belavana, 12. Gopālpura, 13. Pārsaulī, 14. Ānyor, 15. Ādibadrī, 16. Vilāsgarh, 17. Pisāyo, 18. Āñjankhora, 19. Karahlā, 20. Kokilāvana, 21. Dadhivana (Dahgaon), 22. Rāwal, 23. Bachchhavan (Sehi), 24. Kauravavana.

Vanas* of Braj as mentioned in the *Vraja Bhakti Vilāsa

12 *Vanas* (according to the *Padma Purāṇa*)

Mahāvana, Kāmavana, Kokilāvana, Tālavana, Kumudavana, Bhāṇḍīravana, Chhatravana, Khādiravana, Lohajāṅghavana, Bhadravana, Bahulāvana and Belavana.

12 *Upavanas* (according to the *Varāha Purāṇa*)

Brahmavana, Apsarāvana, Vihvalavana, Kadambavana, Svarṇavana, Surabhivana, Premavana, Mayūravana, Mānengitavana, Śeshasāyīvana, Nāradavana and Parmānandavana.

12 *Prativanas* (according to the *Bhaviṣhya Purāṇa*)

Raṅkavana, Vārtavana, Karhāvana, Kāmavana, Āñjanavana, Karṇavana, Kṛṣṇākshipavana, Nandaprekṣaṇākṛṣṇavana, Indravana, Śikṣhāvana, Chandrāvalivana and Lohavana.

12 *Adhivasas* (according to the *Vishṇu Purāṇa*)

Mathurā, Radhākuṇḍa, Nandagrāma, Gaḍha, Lalitāgrāma, Vṛṣabhānupura, Gokula, Baladeva, Govardhana, Yāvavāṭa, Vṛndāvana and Saṃketavana.

Braj 84 kos Parikramā

The concept of Braj Parikramā seems to be related to the pan Indian concept of *tīrthāṭana* (religious tourism). The concept was developed to understand the pilgrim centres in a holistic

manner. The Braj Parikramā is related to nature's worship as all the natural sources like groves, rivers, hills, lakes, ponds and even the dust of Braj (Braj-raj) are revered. This concept of worship of nature can be understood by the prevailing practice of Vallabhīya Pushtimārgī sect who still call Braj Parikramā as Vanayātrā. In antiquity, the first Vraja yātrā is credited to Uddhava who was sent by Kṛṣṇa himself to Vraja to meet his parents and the *gopīs* and relieve them from the agony caused by separation (*Śrīmadbhāgavata Purāṇa* 10.46.3). It is here that for the first time the importance of Vraja as the *līlā-sthala* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa is highlighted when the *gopīs* tell Uddhava that their mind gets absolved in him as they behold the streams, hills and woodlands as well as the playgrounds graced by the footprints of Śrī Kṛṣṇa:

Sarichchhailavanoddesān mukundapadabhūshitān/

Akrīḍanīkshamāṇānām mano yāti tadātmatām// (10.46.22)

Again, *Śrīmadbhāgavata Purāṇa* (10.47.54-55) informs that Uddhava stayed for few months there in Vraja in order to drive away the grief of cowherd women. Celebrating in song the story of the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa, he brought delight to Gokula. *Śrīmadbhāgavata Purāṇa* (10.47.61) again refers to Uddhava expressing his desire of being incarnated as anyone of the shrubs, creepers or herbs in the woodlands of Vṛndāvana, catching the dust of feet of *gopīs*, who trod the path of devotion leading to Kṛṣṇa:

Āsāmaho charaṇareṇujushāmahaṃ syām vṛndāvane kimapi gulmalataushadhiṇām/

Yādustyajam svajanamāryapatham cha hitvā bhejurmukundapadavīm śrutibhirvimṛgyām//

Uddhava also says that he repeatedly salutes the dust of feet of the blessed women of Nanda's Vraja, whose loud singing of the stories of Kṛṣṇa purifies the three worlds:

Vande nandavrajastrīṇām pādareṇumabhīkshaṇaśaḥ/

Yāsām harikathodgītāṃ punāti bhuvanatrayaṃ// (10.47.63)

Śrīmadbhāgavata Khaṇḍa of the *Skanda Purāṇa* mentions that Vajranābha, the great grandson of Kṛṣṇa had heard the story of the *Śrīmadbhāgavata* from Uddhava at Govardhana. It indicates a second Vraja-yātrā of Uddhava, though he is mentioned to be staying at Badrikāśrama. Nārada is also said to have visited Vraja. *Pātāla Khaṇḍa* of the *Padma Purāṇa* mentions that Nārada searched for Rādhā in Vraja and had the glimpse of *Rāsa-līlā* at Kusuma Sarovara. The *Vṛhad Nārādīya Purāṇa* (*Uttara Khaṇḍa*, 79th chapter, *Mathurā Mahātmya*) gives a detailed account of Nārada's Vraja yātrā mentioning the *vanas* and *upavanas* (Shesh 1959: 91-117). *Śrīmadbhāgavata Khaṇḍa* of the *Skanda Purāṇa* gives a detailed account of the life of Kṛṣṇa and how his great grandson Vajranābha was brought to Mathurā by Arjuna and made the king of Mathurā. When Parīkshita, king of Hastināpura, visits Mathurā, he advises Vajranābha to re-establish the places related to the life activities of Kṛṣṇa. With the help of Rshi Śāṇḍilya many places were re-established, cantonment was established at Govardhana, Dīrghapura (Dig), Mathurā, Mahāvana, Nandigrāma (Nandgaon) and Vṛhatsānu

(Barsana). But with passage of time, these places were lost and were revived during the medieval period by Vallabhācharya and his pupils on the one hand and Chaitanya and his disciples on the other hand.

Braj 84 kos Parikramā route and archaeology

Braj 84 kos Parikramā has three routes at present: one outer Parikramā and two inner Parikramās. Places visited in the shorter inner circumambulation cover major part of Mathura District and Deeg and Kaman tehsils of newly formed District Deeg. The outer Parikramā and second inner Parikramā cover a larger area and also include parts of District Palwal (Haryana) and Aligarh. The important sites on the outer Parikramā route are:

Mathura, Bad, Dhangaon, Tarsi, Nagari (Umri), Kumudvan, Sonkh, Bachhgaon, Konthra, Samai, Bahej, Kuchawati, Deeg, Didawali, Tankoli, Khoh (south-west), Adibadri, Alipur Brahman, Barolidhau, Khuntपुरi, Kedarnath, Badali, Luhesar, Agarawali, Kalawata, Bhojanthali, Nandera, Unchera, Parehi, Pai, Jurahra, Wikati, Jakhokar, Nehrida, Suhira, Punahana (north-west), Maryaka, Andhop, Saundhad, Lohina, Banchari, Moroli, Palri, Khambi, Likhi, Hasanpur, Marav, Khajpur, Managarhi, Awakhera, Kaneka, Seupatti, Bajna (north-east), Lalpur, Shall, Jarailiya, Sikandarpur, Tehra, Bijau, Rajagarhi, Karahri, Dadisara, Tentigaon, Eroli, Harnaul, Nasiti, Jawra, Arua, Kasera, Kukrari, Raya, Saras, Itauli, Bandi, Baldev (south-east), Khirari, Jhandipur, Shahpur.

During archaeological investigations in the area, it is observed that majority (50%) of the sites date back to the Painted Grey Ware (PGW) period in antiquity and then continued during the succeeding cultural periods, about 40% to the early centuries of the Common era and the remaining 8% to the medieval period, few are just isolated religious sites like Adibadri, Kedarnath, Bhojanthali.

PGW sites:

Mathura, Bad, Dhangaon, Tarsi, Umri, Sonkh, Bachhgaon, Samai, Bahaj, Dig, Khoh, Nandera, Unchera, Parehi, Pai, Jurahra, Punahana, Andhop, Saundhad, Banchari, Moroli, Khambi, Likhi, Hasanpur, Marav, Awakhera, Bajna, Shall, Rajagarhi, Karahri, Tentigaon, Eroli, Harnaul, Nasiti, Jawra, Raya, Bandi, Khirari, Jhandipur.

Sites belonging to Early centuries of the Common Era: Kumudvan, Konthra, Didawali, Tankoli, Barolidhau, Khuntपुरi, Luhesar, Agarawali, Kalawata, Parehi, Wikati, Jakhokar, Nehrida, Suhira, Maryaka, Lohina, Palri, Managarhi, Kaneka, Lalpur, Jarailiya, Sikandarpur, Tehra, Dadisara, Arua, Kukrari, Saras, Itauli, Baldeo and Shahpur.

Archaeology of Inner 84 kos Parikramā²

At present the Inner 84 kos Parikramā of Gaudīya and Vallabha *paramparā* (with slight variations) passes through the following places:

² The places marked in bold are PGW period sites.

Mathura, Madhuvana (**Maholi**), Tālavana (**Tarsi**), **Mukundpur**, Kumudavana, Śāmtanu Kuṇḍa (**Satoha**), Gandheśvara (Ganeshra), Bahulāvana (**Bati**), **Ral**, **Maghera**, **Jaint**, Garuḍa Govinda (Chhatikara), **Mora**, Datiya, **Aring**, Mādhurī Kuṇḍa, **Jakhangaon**, **Tosh**, **Jansuti**, **Basonti**, Mukhrai, **Rādhā Kuṇḍa**, Śyāma Kuṇḍa, Kusuma Sarovara, Nārada Kuṇḍa, Gvāla Pushkariṇī, Yugala Kuṇḍa, Killola Kuṇḍa, Mānasī Gaṅgā, **Govardhan**, Indradhvajavedī, **Jamunavata**, Parsauli, **Paintha**, **Sonkh**, **Bachhgaon**, Anyor, Gaurī Kuṇḍa, Saṃkarshaṇa Kuṇḍa, Govinda Kuṇḍa, Navala Kuṇḍa, Apsarā Kuṇḍa, Śakra Kuṇḍa, Punchhri, Śyāmaḍhāka, Rāghava Paṇḍita's cave, Surabhi Kuṇḍa, Airāvata Kuṇḍa, Harajī Kuṇḍa, Jatipura, Bilachhu Kuṇḍa, Chakreśvara Mahadeva, Sakhitara, **Nimgaon**, **Padar**, **Kunjera**, **Pali**, Dehrawali, **Mana**, **Sahara**, Surya Kuṇḍa, **Pelkhu**, **Bhadar**, **Kaunai**, Jāvaka Kuṇḍa, Gulāla Kuṇḍa, **Gantholi**, **Bahaj**, **Devsaras**, **Mundsaras**, **Parmadra**, **Dig**, Badrīnārāyaṇa, **Gohana**, **Khoh**, Alipur, Ādi Badrī, **Pashopa**, Kedāranātha, Bilonda, Charana Pahari, Bhojana Thālī, Kāmyavana (**Kaman**), **Bajhera**, Sunahra, Kadambakhandi, **Unchagaon**, Sakhīgiri Parvata, **Barsana**, Gahavara vana, Dabhala, Rasoli, Prema Sarovara, **Sanket**, **Rithaura**, **Mehrana**, **Satvas**, Nandera, Bhojana Thali, **Nunera**, Śṛṅgāravaṭa (**Singar**), **Bichhor**, **Banchari**, **Hodal**, **Dahgaon**, **Lalpur**, **Kamar**, **Hulwana**, Sancholi, **Gindoh**, Nandgaon, Kadamba Ter, **Jab**, **Dhamsinga**, **Kosi**, **Paigaon**, **Chhata**, **Semri**, **Nari**, **Sankhi**, **Arbai**, **Ranbari**, **Bhadawal**, **Khanpur**, **Umraya**, **Rahera**, **Kamai**, **Karahla**, **Pisaya**, Ludhauri, **Anjnokh**, **Khayra**, Bijwari, Kokilāvana, **Chhoti Bathain**, **Badi Bathain**, Charana Pahari, Rasauli, **Kotvan**, **Khambi**, Seshsayi, Rupanagara, **Majhoi**, Ramapura (Barha), Ujhiani, Khelanavana, Rāma Ghāṭa, Kajroth, Akshaya vaṭa, Gopi Ghāṭa, Chīraghāṭa, **Nandaghāṭa**, Bhogaon, Jaitpur, Hajara, Barahra, Bajna, Jonai, Sakraya, Atas, Deviatas, **Parkham**, **Chaumuha**, **Ajhai**, **Sihana**, **Pelhora**, **Pasauli**, Barauli, **Tarauli**, Ahuri, **Sehi**, Mai, Basai, **Bhadravana**, Bhāṇḍīravana, **Manth**, Belavana, Mānasarovara-Rādhārānī temple (near **Barnoli-ki-dhai**), Aira, Panigaon, **Lohavana**, Rawal, Gadhui, **Ayara Khera**, **Raya**, **Sonkh-khera**, **Pachawar**, **Khirari**, **Jagdishpura**, **Karab**, Sihora, **Bandi**, Dauji, Hathaura, Brahmāṇḍa Ghāṭa, Chintāharāṇa Ghāṭa, **Mahāvana**, Gokula, Koyla, Barha, Aurangabad, Mathura, Akrūra Ghāṭa and Vṛndāvana. Besides, the above-mentioned sites, the present day yātrā also reaches and halts at **Qila Beswan** (Dharaṇīdhara kshetra), **Sonai**, Mansādevī (near **Sonoth**), all archaeological sites of significance, though falling outside the 84 kos map.

Among all these places Mathura, Govardhan, Kaman, Barsana, Mahavan and Vrindavan are the places with most detailed itinerary and a pilgrim returns to these places more than once during the process of Parikramā. Among the above-mentioned places, the majority of settlements (in bold) date back to the PGW period, few to the Mauryan period. The rest of settlements are datable to the early centuries of the Common era except 5-6 settlements which are early medieval in nature. Other spots in the above list are ponds and temples which should be considered within the landscape of the ancient settlements. Few ponds are situated at some distance from the ancient settlements too, but in all probability their antiquity should be considered in relation to the ancient settlements only.

Issues with the archaeology of Braj or Mathura:

It is an established fact that Mathura is one of the most important archaeological cum cultural centres of Bharat, but the biggest drawback so far has been the limited archaeological information and the late dating of the earliest cultures of this region. In the pre-Independent Bharat, Mathura was excavated on many occasions but unscientifically, generally to obtain sculptures, relics, inscriptions and similar astonishing antiquities. No emphasis was given to establish the earliest chronology of the town. Archaeologically, Mathura came to prominence as an important place for art and archaeological studies after Col. Stacy found some antiquarian remains especially the 'Silenus sculpture' from here in the year 1836. After this, Sir Alexander Cunningham paid several visits to Mathura between 1853 and 1882 of which several accounts are available in the *Archaeological Survey Reports (A.S.R.)* written by him and his associates. The A.S.R. nos. I (pp. 231-44), III (pp. 13-46), XVII (p. 111), XX (pp. 30-54) deal specifically with the city of Mathura and its nearby area. During his first visit to Mathura (A.S.R., I, pp. 231-244) his main aim was to identify the spots at Mathura which matched with the description of Chinese travellers' (Xuanzang and Faxian's) accounts. He had explored the area around Katra and found some Buddhist art relics there and in the vicinity. He also identified various sites near River Yamuna as ancient mounds with probable Buddhist connection. Some of these mounds were: Nāga, Dhruva, Nārada, Saptarshi, Bali, Ānanda, Vināyaka Tīlās and Kans Qilā. Between the year 1861 and 1882 many new sites came to light because of the work of F.S. Growse, the then District Collector of Mathura (Growse 1883). Most of these sites as well as the then newly found sculptures kept at Mathura Museum were visited by Cunningham. Some of the conclusions drawn by them were:

1. The oldest city of the aboriginal King Madhu was at Madhupura, now Maholi.
2. The Aryan city, after the defeat of Madhu, was built on the site of present Katra, with the Bhuteshwar Temple as its centre.
3. The Jumna Fort was the last city.
4. The Buddhist establishment came into existence at Mathura during the third century BCE.
5. The possible site of Upagupta Monastery was either at Kankali (according to Growse) or Jail mound.
6. The Buddhism was on decline in the region from seventh century CE and had completely disappeared by the time of Mahmūd of Ghaznī's invasion in 1017 CE.

Other significant contribution to the archaeology of Mathura region came from A. Fuhrer in the years 1888-91 when he excavated the site of Kankali Tila (although a kind of destruction) which unearthed the earliest Jaina settlement in India at that site along with the finding of a large number of Jaina, Buddhist and Brahmanical art and architectural pieces (Smith 1904). Two very important sites excavated in the beginning of the twentieth century by Pt. Radhakrishna namely Tokri Tila at Mant and Mora shrines. Both these excavations were undertaken by Pandit in the years 1910-11 and 1911-12 (*ASI-AR* 1910-11 and 1911-12). The most striking find of the Tokri site was its identification as a Kushan *devakula* with a number of royal portraits, broken sculptures and a number of important Kushan inscriptions. At the site of Mora, the first clearance work was undertaken by Vogel himself

when he recovered a number of stone sculptures, one having a slightly legible inscription. After the excavations of Pandit at the site some important bricks with inscription of the period of Brihsvatimitra and possibly some broken stone sculptural pieces were found. At the site of Ganeshra, Pt. Radhakrishna recovered a number of Buddhist sculptures and brickbats, some of them having inscriptions. At the site of Jaisinghpura (possibly Kankor Tila), Pt. Radhakrishna obtained some Buddhist sculptures and some broken inscriptions. Some new sculptures and architectural remains were also found by Pandit at the site of Katra and most of these belonged to Buddhist faith.

Archaeological Survey of India Excavations at Katra Keshavdev:

In 1954, M. Venkataramayya and Ballabh Saran of the ASI conducted the first systematic excavation at the Katra site (*IAR* 1954-55: 15-16). This excavation was done in a very limited area. The site for the excavation was selected for its rich tradition in terms of literature, culture, inscriptions, coins, terracottas, sculptures and the surface find of PGW sherds. The excavators were inclined to excavate the site also because of two rings of mud-ramparts, one elliptically-shaped and the other quadrangular suggesting citadel. The detailed report of this excavation would possibly never come out.

The excavators laid a small trench at a distance of about 500 feet to the north of the superimposed mosque of Idgāh. The natural soil was touched at a depth of 42 feet and their last point was the portion of earth composed of hard clay and *kankar* bands. The most striking finding of the excavation was the presence of handmade potsherds besides the natural soil. No fragment of PGW was found from the layers although some pieces were collected as surface finds. It was possibly because of very limited area of excavation. The six feet deposit above the natural soil revealed plain grey ware and black slipped ware pottery types along with normal red ware pottery. This phase would have dated to pre-600 BCE period. No NBPW sherds were found in this deposit. The other antiquities from this layer included terracotta discs, balls, beads, a boat-shaped bird and perforated pottery.

The next period was distinguished by the occurrence of NBPW and in the chronological sequence it can be divided into three periods. The earliest remains include bamboo and reed huts with slightly baked or unbaked bricks, bone styli or needles, carnelian amulets and beads. The terracotta objects included grey mother goddess figurines and animal figurines including a dog in red colour. The ring-wells also came into existence at the site for the first time in this level. The second phase of finds was characterized by square copper coins, cylindrical terracotta beads, ear ornaments, etched carnelian beads, copper antimony rods, terracotta mother goddess figurines in grey colour with appliqué treated girdle, elephant figurines with lozenge-shaped eyes and bodies decorated with punched, stamped or notched circlets, monkeys with three legs (mostly in red colour). No complete plan of a house had come to light but well laid out walls, drains and ring-wells suggest a high degree of planning. This period can be assigned a date ranging between sixth century BCE and third century BCE.

The site was deserted for a very short period of few years after late second century BCE as the sealed ring-wells indicated. The third period is typified by a large variety of beads of semi-precious stones like agate, carnelian, lapis lazuli, jasper, amethyst as well as beads of shell, faience and copper coins, some of which belonged to the Kushan period. Stone caskets and a turquoise blue glazed finial were also found in this period. The fourth period assignable from 100 CE to 300 CE is to be identified by the terracotta figurines of dwarfs prepared by using double mould technique. The fifth and the last period belonged to the Gupta period as evidenced by coins, terracotta, sealings, Naigmesha, elephant and horse-rider figurines.

Mathura Excavations of 1973-77:

Under the supervision of M.C. Joshi, ASI conducted excavations in Mathura from 1973-74 to 1976-77 at nearly fourteen sites in different parts of the city (Joshi 1989: 165-170). These excavations unfolded a cultural sequence divisible in following five periods:

Period I: from *circa* sixth century BCE to closing decades of fourth century BCE

Period II: from closing decades of fourth century BCE to *circa* second century BCE

Period III: from *circa* second century BCE to about the end of first century BCE

Period IV: from the beginning of the first century CE to about third century CE

Period V: from *circa* fourth century CE to the close of sixth century CE

Some later remains and antiquities were also found in a very limited area but the excavators could not find regular sequence of post-Gupta cultures.

Period I:

The excavated data suggested the beginning of the settlement at Mathura right on the natural soil in the form of a small habitation during Period IA around Ambarish Tila (MTR-8), close to the Yamuna, towards the northern end of present city; the community used the PGW and associated pottery including BSW, though in small quantity. The early settlers of Mathura lived in small huts and in some cases built them on mud platforms. Evidence from the later levels of Period I (Period IB) indicated slight, although insignificant, growth of settlement. A notable feature of the sub-period was the emergence of nearly 17 sherds of NBPW along with PGW with some new designs suggesting an overlap of the two classes of pottery.

During sub-period IB, the availability of antiquities like terracotta discs decorated with painted parallel strokes or incision along the edges, gamesmen suggesting some kind of indoor game, terracotta *ghaṭa*-shaped and semi-precious stone beads, and a pestle, antimony rods of copper, a few iron implements, bone arrowheads and a circular object (ear-ornament) of a greenish glass were indicative of some general improvement in the living conditions of the community.

Period II:

It has been associated by Joshi with the process of urbanization as the mud fortification wall with a moat running by the side of it came into existence during this period. The most significant pottery of the period was plain grey ware and NBPW. A number of terracotta mother goddess figurines and animal figurines were found in this period's deposit. Other antiquities of note other than semi-precious stone beads were: square punch-marked copper coins, terracotta discs, beads, gamesmen, skin-rubbers, bone arrowheads, a legged quern carved with *triratna* motif, stone pestles and a variety of copper and iron objects especially arrowheads. The size of the settlement was as extensive as 3.9 square km during this period. Use of mud bricks was quite popular in this period while the burnt bricks were used for few selected structures.

Period III:

Joshi termed the Period III as the period of urban refinement. The archaeological material of this period shows certain signs of urban prosperity like the people used lime plaster for floors and tiles were used for roofing. This period witnessed the last phase of ring-wells, NBPW and grey ware. Red ware was used as the main ceramic industry, some with stamped marks. Most of the items of household use continued with addition of some sculptures, inscriptions etc.

Period IV:

Joshi termed this period as the period of cosmopolitanism. This period saw the all-round development in terms of material culture as is suggested by a number of Kushan coins, sculptures, inscriptions etc. Sprinkler as a new pottery type came into use.

Excavations at Sonkh:

German excavation team under the leadership of Dr. Herbert Hartel excavated the site of Sonkh about 24 km south-west of Mathura. It was one of the better-preserved mounds in District Mathura with fewer disturbances. The excavation work at the site started in the year 1966 and ended in the year 1973. The site provided a continuous sequence from the PGW period to late medieval (Jat) periods without any significant break. The report of Sonkh excavation is one of the best compiled excavation reports in India. The concise framework of various periods at Sonkh (Hartel 1993) is as follows:

Period I:

It was observed in the levels 37-40. The excavator termed it as PGW and BRW period. The main pottery type of the period was PGW and to a lesser extent BRW. Other important pottery types were BSW, ordinary red and red slipped ware. Vessels were partly decorated with incised, impressed or applied patterns. At the end of the period coarse grey ware was observed.

Period II:

It was observed in the levels 29-36. The excavator divided it in sub-periods of Pre and Early Maurya, Maurya and Śuṅga cultural phase. The exclusive pottery of the period was NBPW along with coarse grey ware, BSW and ordinary red ware.

Period III:

This period belongs to the Mitras and was observed in the levels 25-28. The pottery included red ware continuing from the previous tradition. Some new shapes, especially ovoid-shaped storage jars with appliqué cordons and symbols (*svastika*, *nandyāvarta*) came into use. Some handles in shape of monkeys were also found. Ring-wells and structures of baked brick came into existence.

Period IV:

This period belonging to the Kshatrapas and Rāmadatta was observed in the levels 23 and 24. The typical pottery of this period was red ware, characterized by definite differences in the shapes like globular water jar, small goblet, beaker. In the end of this period the fashion of stamping the vessels with symbols begin.

Period V:

This period belonged to the Kushans and was observed in the levels 16-22. The pottery includes red ware with the characteristic Kushan stamping of storage vessels, jars etc. with symbolic, floral and geometric ornaments. Moulded small bowl and spouted water jars were also observed in good number.

Period VI:

Levels 12-15 of this period were ascribed to the Gupta and early medieval period. Red, mostly red slipped ware was the main pottery of the period which was delicately thrown and had smooth surface with distinct black horizontal stripes. Later on, black painted swans and floral motifs were observed. Other important pottery types of this period included moulded bowls with relief ornaments, goblet with moulded bowl and stem, bottles with sprinkler necks and spouts.

Period VII:

The medieval period was observed in the levels 8-11. In this period the quantity of pottery reduced considerably. Decoration was mainly of black painted stripes, swans and peacocks. Cone lid with knob replaces bell-shaped lid as well as bowl lid. Besides appearance of thin grey ware with white slip, incised and painted variety were observed.

Period VIII:

This period found in levels 1-7 belonged to Late Fortress levels of Mughals and Jāts. The main pottery was black-on-red painted pottery. In levels 6, 7 and 8 moulded grey and red jars and bottles with relief decoration were found. Appearance of *hookah* was a new significant feature of this period.

Excavations at Bahaj:

The site of Bahaj (27°47'14.14" N and 77°37'37.130" E, **Pl. 1**) is located at a distance of 4 km east of District headquarters in Deeg, Rajasthan. The sacred Govardhan hill and Mathura are situated 6 km and 30 km east of the site respectively (**Map 1**). The above-mentioned famous archaeological site Sonkh (Hartel 1993) is situated about 15 km to the north-east of Bahaj. The area is generally flat and fertile. Some isolated hillocks are located towards the north-west of the site. The hills are part of the Aravallis. The site has been reported in *Indian Archaeology: A Review*, first by the Rajasthan State Archaeology department in 1970 as a red ware yielding site (IAR 1970-71:31) and then by B. S. Negi of Delhi Circle of the Survey as a Painted Grey Ware site (IAR 80-81:55). Prof. Dilip Kumar Chakrabarti along with the author also explored this area in 2003 and identified it as a huge early historic settlement (Chakrabarti 2004:57-69). Subsequently, the author designated the site as a Painted Grey Ware yielding site (Gupta 2013:97) and was able to associate the ancient town of Vajjanagara mentioned in Jaina inscriptions from Kankali Tila, Mathura with Bahaj site (Gupta 2020:327). The local tradition believes that the site is the old place of Vajranābha, the great grandson of Bhagavāna Śrī Kṛṣṇa, credited for revival of Braj spots after the demise of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and his Yādava colleagues and based on that the mound is known as Vajranābha-kā-Kherā.

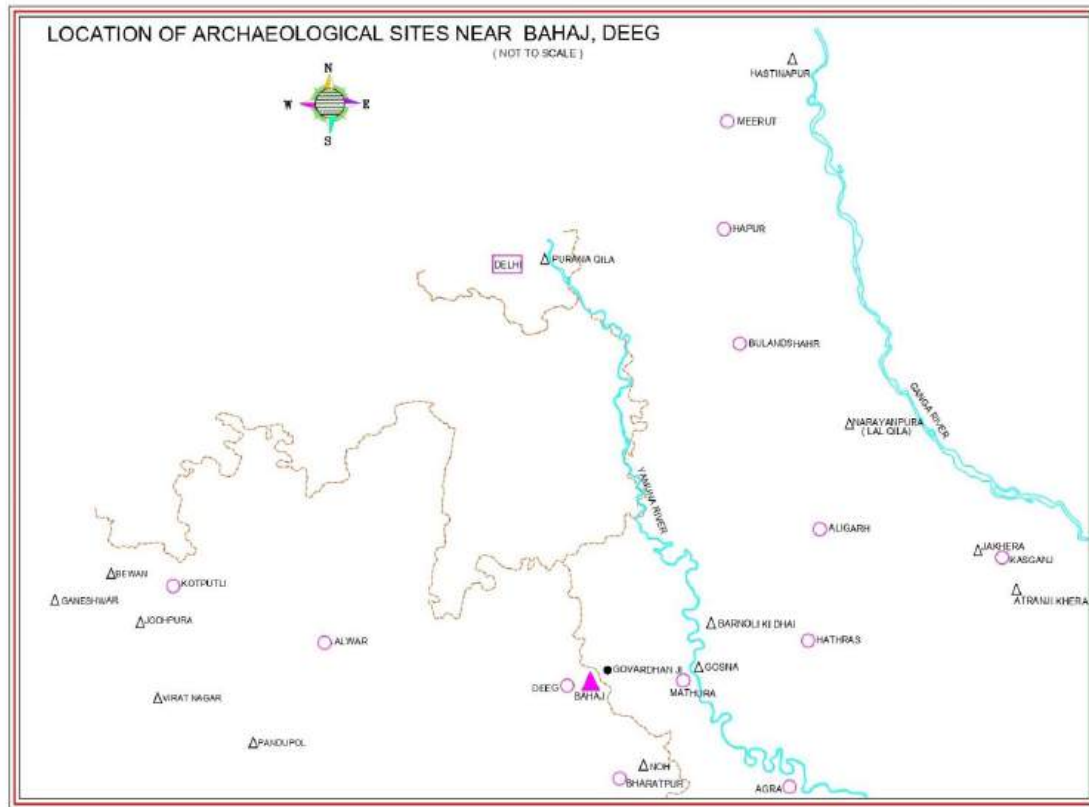
Objectives

Since Bahaj lies just 06 km west of the famous pilgrimage site of Govardhan, 4 km east of the ancient PGW site of Deeg Fort and 15 km north-east of Sonkh and in between Bahaj and Govardhan, there is another extensive mound of Gantholi, the site seemed to be a promising one to take up for excavations. Explorations conducted by the author also suggested that the area of Deeg and Kumher tehsils is extremely rich in terms of ancient sites (Gupta 2013). Therefore, it was highly likely that Bahaj could shed light on the chronology of Braj region as well as the PGW culture since it is situated in such close vicinity to important PGW and Early Historic sites. This assumption could only be verified by excavations. It was also probable that a pre-PGW or OCP culture was present at this site since the site had a remarkably thick deposit. Besides, Bahaj is well-associated with local Braj legends and also lies on the ancient pilgrimage route of Braj 84 Kos Parikramā further strengthening its position as an important site on a historic and cultural map. The overall cultural deposit was supposed to help in understanding various periods of Indian culture and the overall antiquity of the Braj region and Mathura.

Excavations

The site was taken up for excavations for two seasons between January 2024 and July 2025 (**Fig. 1**). During the first season of excavation, **14** quadrants measuring 4.25 x 4.25 m forming part of different trenches, *i.e.*, XB8, ZA7, ZB9 particularly were taken up for excavations. In the second season of

excavations, 15 trenches comprising 50 quadrants were undertaken for excavation, the most important among them are the Trenches XB9, ZB6, XG3, XG4 and XF3. The site provides an uninterrupted cultural sequence from the recent times/ medieval period to the earliest cultural period of the area. The trenches at the centre of the mound during the first season provided information of cultures starting from the Medieval period to post-Gupta, Gupta, Kushan, Śuṅga, Mauryan, Pre-Mauryan and PGW period with occurrence of BRW and OCP in the lowest deposits of PGW culture. In another area towards the periphery (contour- 211 m) of the mound, the cultural sequence starts from the Śuṅga period and goes down to the OCP period. The layers are running almost horizontally all over the site with limited disturbances. The overall deposit helps in understanding the socio-cultural life in relation to the climate of the area. Various cultural phases are marked by the occurrence of Red Ware, Grey Ware, Painted Grey Ware, Black Slipped Ware, Northern Black Polished Ware, Black-&-Red Ware and Ochre Coloured Pottery (OCP) indicating various historic to proto-historic periods.



Map 1: Location of the mound



Pl. 1: An aerial view of the mound

Stratigraphy:

Palaeolithic Period (Middle and Upper Palaeolithic tools found in the lowest deposit)

Period I: Govardhan-Bahaj Culture/OCP Period (deposit 1 m to 2.5 m)

Period II: BRW-PGW Period (deposit 30 cm to 70 cm)

Period III: PGW Period (deposit 3 m to 6.5 m)

Period IV: Pre-Mauryan (Late NBPW) Period (deposit 80 cm to 1 m)

Period V: Mauryan Period (deposit 80 cm to 1.2 m)

Period VI: Sunga Period (deposit 1 m to 2.25 m)

Period VII: Kushan Period (deposit 60 cm to 2.75 m)

Period VIII: Gupta Period (deposit 80 cm to 1.5 m)

Period IX: Early Medieval Period (deposit 1 m to 1.25 m)

Period X: Late Medieval Period (deposit 1.5 m apx.)

Important Findings

The site of Bahaj has provided some astonishing evidence. Many of the evidence have come to light for the first time in the Indian archaeology. Some of these are mentioned below:

1. Palaeo-channel:

The first and foremost is the finding of a dried-up palaeo-channel at a depth of 21-23 metres of the archaeological deposit. During the cutting of lowest deposit in the Trench ZA7, a deposit of *kankar* (calcrete) soil was observed for a uniform thickness of about 60 cm. Below this calcrete deposit was encountered riverine silt. When this silt was further probed for about 30-40 cm, to our surprise we could observe the water flowing marks of the dried stream in the silt. The calcrete deposit has been found throughout the site as well as outside it wherever we probed in trial trenches but the water flowing marks of the dried stream were not observed in any other trench other than ZA7 and ZB6 which are about 25 meters apart in the central part of the mound. From the ground level of surrounding fields this calcrete deposit is not more than 2-3 m deep. The attempts to locate this lost river through remote sensing/ satellite imagery data indicate that this river would have flowed from the north-west of Bahaj to the south-east somewhat parallel to the Yamuna River. Further scientific studies are being conducted on the sediments and satellite data by the relevant scholars.

2. Palaeolithic tools:

One of the most important findings of the site is the presence of Palaeolithic tools below the OCP layers as well as within these layers pushing back the antiquity of the entire Braj region to the pre-Holocene period. The findings have provided some glimpse of hunter-gatherer prehistoric community surviving in this area. Flake tools belonging to Middle and Upper Palaeolithic period were explored on the Govardhan and nearby hills and similar flake tools have come up in the lowest deposits at Bahaj, thus taking back the antiquity of the site to

thousands and thousands of years back. Presence of middle Palaeolithic and Upper Palaeolithic tools in this area which is adjacent to the Ganga-Yamuna doab is very significant as far as Prehistoric India is concerned.

3. **Bahaj-Govardhan Culture/ OCP Period:**

The earliest culture in terms of settled life evidence from the site is that of OCP/ Bahaj-Govardhan culture. The pottery assemblage includes the Ochre Coloured Pottery (OCP) along with incised ware, chocolate slipped ware, pots with handles, black-on-red ware and a variety of pottery which in spite of having similarities with Ganeshwar-Jodhpura pottery (Agrawala and Kumar 1982: 125-134) on one hand and Atranjikhhera pottery (Gaur 1983) on the other hand has some distinctive types and shapes. The thickness of this lowest cultural deposit ranges between 1 m to 2.5 m and if the AMS dates justify an early dating, the culture can better be termed as Bahaj-Govardhan culture rather than just being called as the OCP culture. The finding of mud structures with proper shape and alignment and the walls cutting almost at right angles is a very significant occurrence for this earliest period of the site. The dates acquired till now indicate beginning of this culture around 3000 BCE and continuing till around 2000 BCE.

4. **Iron in OCP Culture:**

One of the most significant findings of Bahaj excavations is the presence of iron in the OCP deposit. In Trench XG4, Q2 at a depth of 478 cm an iron nail has been found. This was not the only occurrence of significance. Iron slags were also found in the deposits underlying this iron nail. The presence of iron in BRW phase is reported from Atranjikhhera (Gaur 1983) but its finding in the preceding OCP phase is very interesting and important. Since there is no cultural break between OCP and BRW cultures at any of the spots in the entire area of excavation, it is quite obvious that technology and culture is continuing from the preceding periods and iron and copper metallurgy being no exception. The finding of iron object from OCP period was not reported in other trenches of the site and also was also not found in the lowest OCP deposits of Trench XG4. In any case, the finding of iron in Trench XG4 in the middle to upper phases of OCP is going to have an implication on the dating of iron and it might go towards the third millennium BCE.

5. **BRW Culture:**

BRW culture is already reported from Atranjikhhera (Gaur 1983), Jakhera (Sahi 1993), Noh (*IAR* 1963-64, 1964-65, 1965-66, 1966-67) and Jodhpura (Agrawala and Kumar 1982: 125-134) sites but not much information is available about this phase. At Bahaj, BRW phase is coming in continuation of earlier OCP phase without any kind of cultural break but the overall pottery assemblage is quite distinct with possibly only few shapes and types continuing. In BRW phase, the fine BRW shows close resemblance with the BRW of Ahar culture (Sankalia *et.al.* 1969) but here this fine BRW is giving rise to experimentation and the making of PGW, NBPW and BSW. The culture at Bahaj is BRW-PGW rather than BRW as identified at above-mentioned

sites. Similar BRW-PGW phase was identified by the author during his excavations at Bewan, District Sikar (Gupta 2024). Many of the PGW types at Bahaj in this phase have close resemblance to the BRW identified at Narhan culture sites (Singh 1994) which actually seems to be a variety of PGW only. Similarly, the white painted BRW of Ahar culture has similarities with the BRW of Bahaj including the ones which have white painted strokes. Similar strokes in ochre, black and white colour appear on varieties of BRW and the early PGW.

6. PGW Culture:

The site has revealed a thick deposit of Painted Grey Ware culture going up to 6.5 m in Trenches ZA7 and ZB9 whereas in all other trenches, the thickness of PGW deposit ranges between 2.75 to 4 m. In all such trenches clearly distinct deposit of BRW culture and Bahaj-Govardhan Culture is also present. Such a thick deposit of PGW is expected to throw some new light about this culture particularly chronology. The finding of two mud structures built with a base of stones arranged in a somewhat curvilinear pattern in Trenches ZB6 and XF3 is quite significant. During the late phase of PGW, the finding of a terracotta pipe with circular cross-section is also important.

7. Earliest occurrence of NBPW:

In the early-middle levels of PGW culture, Northern Black Polished Ware potsherds were found which suggest experimentation in producing such deluxe pottery and should have implications on early dating and spread of NBPW culture. While the early origin of NBPW at this site (or this area) is significant, it is probable that the pottery was not frequently used here even when NBPW was extensively being used in Eastern U.P. and Bihar. This experimental stage of preparation of NBPW pottery is observed at a depth of about 3.5 to 4 m of PGW deposit. This confirms the early experimentation of making PGW and NBPW pottery from the BRW pottery.

8. Yoni-shaped Yajñakuṇḍa:

In the upper levels of PGW in Trench XB8, a Yoni-shaped Yajñakuṇḍa was exposed. It was given the proper shape of a Yoni with two courses of burnt bricks and occasional use of mud brick to fill the gap at the junction point towards the north. The burnt bricks are specially designed and prepared to give a proper shape of Yoni. Below the Yoni-shaped structure, complete ring-well was dug which ran for about four meters but did not go till the level of ground water. The structure was ritualistic to the extent possible and on preliminary investigation, grains of *moong* (green gram) and *jau* (barley) were found along with bones (possibly sacrificial) and a number of complete but small pots. Few of the vessels had a hole at the bottom. Results of further investigations are awaited, but finding of a ring-well with the Yoni-shaped super structure for ritualistic activities in PGW period is very significant.

9. Comb-pattern sacrificial pits:

At the same cultural level as the above-mentioned Yoni-shaped Yajñakuṇḍa and in the same Trench XB8, a pattern of comb-shaped sacrificial altars was observed. The exact number is

difficult to confirm as the activity was continuing inside the northern section. The pits were not regular in plan but were having ashy deposit and on preliminary investigation the presence of grains of *moong* and *jau* was confirmed. Use of these grains with ash confirmed their ritualistic use.

10. Clay sealings with Brahmi letters:

One of the most striking finds of the site is the presence of four sealings made of unbaked clay from the upper levels of the PGW period. Such sealings have never come to notice from anywhere in the subcontinent. The sealings are of two varieties. Two of them have similar impression on four sides and the remaining two have similar impressions on four sides. One of the impressions has two separate elephant-riding figures (in all possibility deities) and two standing figures who to some extent match with the representations of Saṃkarṣaṇa and Vāsudeva on some early Mathura coins (Gupta 1989: 124-139). There are some other devices in the impression but these are not clearly identifiable. The other type of impression observed on two other sealings is very complex and has yet not been identified but in all probability seems to depict some religious subject. The most important aspect of these sealings is the presence of three Brahmi letters on each of the first variety of sealings. The letters on one sealings read “*Janaka*” and the other read “*Nokhara*”. Since the sealings have been found from the upper levels of the PGW period, these are easily datable to *circa* 600 BCE as per stratigraphy. The Brahmi characters on these sealings are the earliest known examples of Brahmi script in the subcontinent.

11. Śiva-Pārvatī terracottas:

In terms of religious beliefs, the most significant is the finding of a male and female anthropomorphic figure along with three votive circular discs from the mid to early PGW period. These figurines are possible representation of Bhagavāna Śiva and Mātā Pārvatī as Gangaur which is popularly celebrated in Chaitra month in Rajasthan and some parts of North India. It is an 18-day festival which culminates on the last day. It is celebrated for the worship of Śiva and Pārvatī. During the festival, women make idols representing Bhagavāna Śiva and Goddess Pārvatī using clay or wood. It is quite possible, that the discovery of this male and female anthropomorphic figures along with three votive/offering discs is actually evidence of Gaṇagaur *pūjā* which would push back the antiquity of Gaṇagaur to *circa* 1500 BCE period. The reason for the identification of terracottas as Śiva and Pārvatī is their physiognomy. The female is usual Venus-shaped figurine as are generally found from various ancient cultures whereas the other terracotta is clearly a male as discerned by its features; and the intentionally marked *ūrdhvaretas* confirms its identification as a male figure. Since Śiva is the only deity shown as *ūrdhvaretas* being the *ādiyogī*, having utmost control on his desires, the figurine is identifiable as Śiva. This confirms the identification of the female figurine with Pārvatī as both these deities are worshipped together in India particularly during the Gaṇagaur festival. This

identification opens a window for identification of various Venus shaped female figurines as that of Pārvaṭī herself.

12. **Early Coinage:**

Another important information which Bahaj excavation has provided is related to the early coinage of India. The first and foremost observation about the early coinage is that most of the earliest coins are made of copper and very few in silver. The punch-marked and uninscribed copper cast coins have been found together. The earliest coins have been found from the pre-Mauryan levels of *circa* fifth century BCE, few from inside the ritualistic miniature pots and a lot of stuck coins from regular archaeological deposit. The condition of the coins indicates a long usage before their deposition confirming an earlier date of their manufacture. Thus, the antiquity of coinage in India should easily go back to the sixth-seventh century BCE.

13. **Yajñakuṇḍas:**

Another important finding is the presence of *Yajñakuṇḍas* dug up on a large scale in a linear pattern during the Mahājanapada period and filling them up with the natural sandy soil and occasionally with miniature pots containing uninscribed copper cast or punch-marked coins. This activity was observed in a section of Trench ZA7 and the deposit of Trench XB8. The sandy soil brought from outside was pure, i.e. without any impurities. The ritual pits were about 40 cm deep and, on their base, the *kankars* were found to have got deposited. The same activity was observed at the same level in some other destroyed sections of the site.

14. **Terracotta votive tanks showing an evolution:**

In the realm of Hindu religious practices, *Māṭṛkā* worship through terracotta votive tanks is well-established. The votive tanks which were found earlier were dated to the Kushan period and not before that. From the Bahaj excavations, a terracotta votive tank has been reported from the PGW period. The tank has various partitions but is devoid of any figurines. From the Mauryan period two terracotta votive tanks have been found, one of which has a small bird-shaped figurine placed on the surviving rim part whereas the other has a plain rim. During the Śuṅga-Kushan period, the terracotta votive tanks evolve further and now on their rims *Māṭṛkās* are placed either with a human or a non-human (bird/animal) face. A Kushan votive tank has two surviving stairs in the middle and on the base are depicted snakes and turtles. This base of the tank represents the physical world full of *māyā* and one has to step up on the stairs and cross the *saṃsāra vaitaraṇī* after completing the climb on these stairs. When *Māṭṛkās* are shown seated on the rim part, they are to be propitiated to achieve this goal.

15. **Stone-rings and a tablet:**

From the pre-Mauryan deposit in the Trench XB8, two stone-rings made up of hard jasper stone have come to light. Both the stone-rings are quite broken but survive enough to confirm their typology and dating. Both the ring-stones have a round hole in the centre and there are carvings in the interior section of these holes. Prof. Prithvi Kumar Agrawala (1979: 75-111) who has

done a brilliant study of stone-rings has dated this variety of stone-rings in the pre-Mauryan period *circa* early fourth century BCE. This excavation confirms his dating on the basis of stratigraphy. One of the stone-rings in the central hole/ring has a figure of a standing female deity followed by the depiction of an acanthus leaf. The same two motifs would have been repeated three times as one figure of female deity is complete while two partially survive. On the top and periphery, it has two circular decorative bands. The other stone-ring is a quite small fragment in which a mythical animal could be seen. Of the same period is a jasper stone tablet in which a standing female deity, a mythical animal and a dove survive. Such stone-rings are generally found from major city sites like Vaishali, Kausambi, Pataliputra and Taxila, so, the finding of such stone-rings and a unique stone tablet indicate Bahaj to be an urban settlement even during the pre-Mauryan times.

16. **Early Mauryan seal:**

A rare Early Mauryan seal made of jasper stone was unearthed from Trench ZB6 from the deposit of the Kushan period. The seal was found in very finely preserved condition. Overall, it comprises nine symbols or Brahmi letters with a sound of 'm' denoted by a dot as the tenth one. The seal has incised depictions of: a turtle (*kūrma*), a fish (*matsya*), a lizard (*gr̥hagodhā*), a stag (*mṛga*), a peacock (*mayūra*), a *svastika*, a *nandipada* (or Brahmi 'ma') and Brahmi letters 'Śa Nā'. All the symbols have relevance in Sanatana dharma. *Kūrma* is related to Bhagavāna Viṣṇu's second incarnation, *matsya* with Viṣṇu's first incarnation, *gr̥hagodhā* or *godhā* with Mātā Pārvatī, *mṛga* with Bhagavāna Śiva, *mayūra* with Kārttikeya, *svastika* and *nandipada* are well known religious symbols and 'Śa Nā' can actually have been 'Śa Ni', i.e. name of planetary deity Śani. It seems that the seal was an object of high reverence because of which it was kept carefully by its possessors for more than three centuries. At the back there seems to be a knob to hold it but it is too shortened and smoothened for some unknown reasons. The most important aspect about this seal is that such seals and representations are not found in early historical period. If not for the presence of Brahmi letters, this seal seems to be in continuity of the Harappan tradition.

17. **A possible Virupākṣa head in terracotta:**

In a rare finding, a human male head in terracotta was found from the Mauryan period deposit. The figure has moustache and beard and a possible third eye. A torque in the neck has circlet decoration and the eyes are also marked as circlets, features which are typical of Mauryan period terracottas. Apparently, till now no such male head has been found from the Mauryan period and this male head seems to be the representation of terrific form Śiva, Virupākṣa as the facial features indicate.

18. **Triśūla with ḍamarū symbol:**

A very significant find from the levels of *circa* 200 BCE which in general parlance is called Śuṅga period but in actuality may be late Maurya period, is a potsherd which has a *triśūla*

(trident) with a *ḍamarū* (pellet drum) tied to it, engraved on it. Firstly, the presence of trident in that period is quite significant as we might not be having any other example of trident in sculptural and terracotta art from that early period. Secondly, the presence of *ḍamarū* is even more exciting as *ḍamarū* is not found in the iconography of Śiva till a very late time. *Ḍamarū* is also not part of Śaivite iconography in early religious texts, though *ḍamarū* in Indian psyche is well associated with Śiva and it is believed that from the sound of *ḍamarū* itself the seven *suras* of music have originated. The finding confirms the antiquity and veracity of such Indian religious beliefs.

19. Terracotta plaques with *Navagrahas* and *Saptarṣi Tārāmaṇḍala*; Aśvinī Kumāras; Possible Śani figure among *Navagrahas*; *Brahmāṇḍa*; Twin lions:

From the deposit of *circa* 200 BCE five unique terracotta plaques have been found which belong to Trenches XB8 and XB9. The deposit from which these have been recovered is associated with the large furnace activity exposed in these trenches. The concept of nine planets and seven stars (*Navagraha* and *Saptarṣi Tārāmaṇḍala*) is quite ancient in Indian as well as western astronomy but in sculptural art these are not found represented till the post-Gupta period. For that reason, such an early representation of these concepts in terracotta art is very significant.

Similarly interesting is the finding of the terracotta plaque with twin horse-faced crowned deities who are identifiable as twin Aśvinī Kumāras, *mānasaputras* of Sūrya named Dasra and Nāsatya. The Aśvinī Kumāras find mention in the *R̥gveda* as well as *Avestā*, so just like the above-mentioned plaque this plaque also forms part of our shared heritage. Aśvinī Kumāras are also not represented in sculptural art till the post-Gupta period, so finding of this plaque is again very significant.

The next terracotta plaque is again very interesting. It represents a pot-bellied human-shaped figure with terrific or slightly non-human features in the centre surrounded by various planets formed in the shape of concentric circles projecting towards their centre. The total number of such planets is eight and the central figure makes the count nine. It seems to represent the nine planets with one of them given prominence who is represented in human form. This prominent planet seems to be Śani because of his human form but terrific facial features.

Another terracotta plaque found from the same deposit is again very interesting. It represents a number of hemispherical structures with the one in the centre given slight prominence. Since some of the terracottas are related to planets on confirm basis, this terracotta seems to represent the entire Universe with various planets surrounding a slightly prominent central planet that may be the Sun. We know that the Sun is a star but in ancient Indian tradition the Sun was considered one of the nine planets and the most powerful one in the entire Universe.

The fourth terracotta plaque is again unique as it shows a set of twin lions. The plaque is much broken but definitely had the twin lions as the main theme. In Indian tradition we do

not come across the concept of twin lions but in Egyptian and Greek traditions the concept of twin lions is found. Among all these terracottas, none can be said to be related to Indian tradition only, rather these belong to a common shared heritage and the plaque with twin lions confirm that these terracottas have a certain outside impact as well.

20. A unique ritualistic terracotta pot with image:

From the deposit of *circa* second century BCE in the Trench ZB9 was found a unique terracotta which on front has a human-shaped body and in the back is shaped as a pot. The human-shaped figure has its head in the form of a *Yakṣa*. There is a projecting spout in the centre of its body which might indicate either navel or penis but is difficult to confirm. In either case it is related to the creation of the universe. There is a slit cut on the back side pot also. The *Yakṣa* like features of the head of the figure and the concept of origin of the Universe indicate that the image might be identified as Śiva who is called *yakṣasvarūpāya* and is responsible for the creation of the Universe. The pot is designed to put water and the spout to put out water. In case the spout marks the navel, it is easily related to the creation but in case it is penis, one has to look for the mythological story in which Agni drinks the semen of Śiva during the birth of Skanda-Kārttikeya. The two ejaculation points for water, the spout on front and the slit on the back possibly symbolise the Siva-Sakti aspect.

21. Nṛsiṃha terracotta image:

In a unique find, a terracotta image of a deity has been found from inside a structure which somewhat appears to be a shrine. The deity is having a human body and the face of a lion with moustaches. The deity is wearing a *yajñopavīta* and seems to be holding someone. From the features, the deity is identifiable as Nṛsiṃha and in that case he might have held Hiraṇyakaśipu in his arms, but that remains unclear due to non-survival of any such thing in his hands. The presence of Nṛsiṃha idol during the Kushan period and a possible shrine dedicated to him is very important.

The site has also revealed evidence of various manufacturing activities in terms of bone and shell industry during the Śuṅga and Kṣatrapa periods. This is evident by the presence of debitage such of both bones and shell along with various finished products like bone tools, shell bangles and beads etc. Shell bangle production in Braj area by the craftsmen is really remarkable. Additionally, a semiprecious stone bead industry was also found.

Conclusions

In the entire Braj landscape what survives are the ancient mounds on which modern day settlements are situated and majority of these settlements without a doubt go back to PGW period in antiquity. So, in the ancient times, the landscape of Braj would have comprised the PGW settlements and the sacred groves, ponds, hills, streams and rivers. The landscape of the whole Braj region is different from other parts of sub-continent can just be understood by the presence of so high number of ancient settlements

in close vicinity. Even the surrounding landscape of contemporary Kurukshetra and Hastināpura regions is a no match to it in that context. After studying and observing the available data and tradition it can be inferred that prior to arrival of medieval reformer saints, few places like Mathura, Vrindavan, Gokul, Mahavan, Baldeo, Govardhan, Kaman, Nandgaon, Barsana were already important and famous but the rural landscape was not that popular. There might have been pre-existing tradition of circumambulation of these sacred sites, particularly Mathura, Vrindavan and Govardhan. The form and nature of 84 kos Braj parikramā prior to the sixteenth century is not clear, but it would have existed in some form for sure, otherwise the settlements related to these parikramā places would not have been so old in antiquity.

The excavation at Bahaj has been quite a successful endeavour. This excavation has revealed a very rich regional cultural scenario pushing back the antiquity of the sacred Braj region and Mathura and its surrounding region by at least one or two millennia. The discovery of a palaeo-channel just beneath the archaeological deposit at around 23-meter depth forces to change the previously held view that majority of high archaeological mounds in the Braj region are lofty because of being situated on an elevated sand dune. The presence of a palaeo-channel indicates that the area cannot be an elevated surface, rather it would have been low lying area. The pottery of OCP period has striking resemblance with the ceramic assemblage of Bewan, Ganeshwar (in Sikar District) and Atranjikhhera (in Kasganj District) thus, challenging the previously held view that the OCP of northeastern Rajasthan is different from that of the Doab region. Copper bangles, fish-hook and steatite beads (Pl. 22) have also been found from the OCP deposit. The thickness of PGW deposit of about 7.25 to 7.75 m is again an unprecedented occurrence having critical implications on site formation and chronology. The site has also provided evidence of manufacturing activities such as shell bangle production, semiprecious stone bead manufacturing, bone tools manufacturing. The presence of furnace along with metal objects suggests metal processing activities were undertaken by the people of this region. The presence of Palaeolithic tools in the lowest cultural deposit is a significant occurrence which requires further research. The continuity of cultures at Bahaj till the recent times with such thick archaeological deposit is a remarkable phenomenon and the results of various scientific analyses are going to provide some exciting information about our ancient past.

As far as chronology of various archaeological cultures at the site of Bahaj is concerned, it is possible that the Palaeolithic tools found from the lowest deposit belong to the Upper and Middle Palaeolithic periods which may date back between 10000 BP to 1,00,000 BP. The settled archaeological culture of the site which is being termed Bahaj-Govardhan Culture along with the OCP may date back to the early third millennium BCE as per established dating of Ganeshwar culture. There is a possibility that the Bahaj-Govardhan culture may date even earlier. The dates of BRW and PGW may also go beyond the established dates as the PGW has such a thick archaeological deposit here as has not been found from any other excavated site.

When we delve into the importance of archaeological findings from Bahaj, the most significant is the early dating of the oldest culture. Till now, it was believed that the culture at Mathura and the surrounding region starts with the PGW culture which was dated at Mathura city in the sixth century BCE and at Sonkh in the ninth century BCE and the rise of Mathura as a cosmopolitan city was credited to the influx of outsiders from the north-west of Bharat in the centuries preceding the Common era and the Kushan period. But Bahaj now challenges this view and confirms that all or most of the settlements in the region date back to the OCP period if excavated properly. The development of settlements in the region is a gradual process and during the PGW period this entire area was the most prosperous area of the entire sub-continent in the contemporary world. This prosperity and richness of archaeological deposit of the PGW period gave rise to the prosperity and advancement of the succeeding cultures during the Mahājanapada, Maurya and Śuṅga periods finally culminating in the cosmopolitan nature of the Kushan and Gupta periods. The PGW period is in fact responsible for the religious environment of Mathura which later on provided opportune conditions for development of Mathura art and iconography, the religious dogmas and the images. The use of stone as a medium might be credited to the Śuṅga and Kushan periods but the tradition of making images was old and quite prevailing but in different mediums either perishable or the highly expensive metals.

References:

Primary Sources:

- Arthaśāstra* of Kauṭilya. 1961 (tr.) Shamsastri, R. Mysore: Mysore Printing and Publishing House
- Ashṭādhyāyī* of Pāṇini's (tr.). Pt. Isvarachandra. 2009. Delhi: Chaukhambha Sanskrit Pratishthana.
- Braja Vastu Varṇana* by Jagatānanda.
- Garuḍa Purāṇa*. Gorakhpur: Gita Press.
- Harivaṃśa Purāṇa*. Gorakhpur: Gita Press.
- Mahābhārata*. Gorakhpur: Gita Press.
- Padma Purāṇa*. Gorakhpur: Gita Press.
- Rāmāyaṇa*. Gorakhpur: Gita Press.
- Ṛgveda Saṃhitā* (available on www.vedicheritage.gov.in)
- Śrīmadbhāgavata Purāṇa*. Gorakhpur: Gita Press.
- Śrīmadgarga Saṃhitā*. Gorakhpur: Gita Press.
- Varāha Purāṇa*. Varanasi: Kashiraj Trust.
- Vishṇu Purāṇa*. Gorakhpur: Gita Press.
- Vraja Bhakti Vilāsa* by Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa. Mathura (Kusumsarovar): Baba Krishnadas.
- Yajurveda Saṃhitā* (available on www.vedicheritage.gov.in)

Secondary Sources:

- Agrawala, Prithvi Kumar. The Early Indian Mother-Goddess Votive Discs. *East and West*, Vol. 29, No. 1/4, December 1979, 75-111.

- Agrawala, R.C. and Vijay Kumar. Ganeshwar-Jodhpura Culture: New Traits in Indian Archaeology. *Harappan Civilization-A Contemporary Perspective*, Oxford & IBH Publishing Co., New Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta, 1982, 125-134.
- Archaeological Survey Reports (A.S.R.)* Nos. I, III, XVII, XX.
- Archaeological Survey of India Annual Report (A.S.I.A.R.)* for the year 1910-11 and 1911-12.
- Chakrabarti, D.K. *et.al.* Bateshwar, Mathura and Ahar: Sites in the Agra-Mathura-Aligarh-Bulandshahr Sector of the Upper Ganga-Yamuna Doab in U.P. *South Asian Studies*, Vol. 20, 2004, pp. 57-69.
- Chaturvedi, Vasudeva Krishna. 1987. "Vedon mein Braj" *Braj-Vibhav* (Hindi). Ed. Gopal Prasad Vyas. Delhi.
- Gaur, R. C. *Excavations at Atranjikhhera*, Delhi, 1983.
- Gupta, P.L. 1989. "Early Coins of Mathura Region" *Mathura: The Cultural Heritage*. Ed. D.M. Srinivasan. AIIS, Delhi: 124-139.
- Gupta, Vinay Kumar. *Mathura: An Art and Archaeological Study*. Delhi. 2013.
- Gupta, Vinay Kumar. Identification of Ancient Places and Towns in and around Mathura (Based on Corelation of Archaeological Findings with the Places Mentioned in Ancient Literature and Epigraphs). *Heritage: Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies in Archaeology* **8.2** (2020): 324-337.
- Growse, F.S. 1883. *Mathura: A District Memoir*. Delhi.
- Joshi, E.B. 1968. *U.P. District Gazetteers- Mathura*. Vol. 12. Lucknow.
- Joshi, M.C. 1989. "Mathura as an Ancient Settlement", *Mathura: The Cultural Heritage*. Ed. D.M. Srinivasan. AIIS, Delhi: 165-170.
- Katre, S.M. 1969. *Dictionary of Pāṇini*, Part III. Poona: Deccan College.
- Mani, B.R. and V.K. Gupta. 2014. "Rajagriha" *History of Ancient India*, Vol. VII. Eds. D.K. Chakrabarti and Makkhan Lal. Delhi: 599-608.
- Mittal, Prabhu Dayal. 1966. *Braj Kā Sānskritik Itihās* (Hindi). Delhi: Rajkamal.
- Hartel, Herbert. *Excavations at Sonkh*. Berlin, 1993.
- Indian Archaeology 1954-55-A Review*
- Indian Archaeology 1963-64-A Review*.
- Indian Archaeology 1964-65-A Review*.
- Indian Archaeology 1965-66-A Review*.
- Indian Archaeology 1966-67-A Review*.
- Indian Archaeology 1970-71-A Review*.
- Indian Archaeology 1980-81-A Review*.
- Sahi, M.D.N. *Aspects of Indian Archaeology*. Jaipur, 1993.
- Sankalia, H.D., S.B. Deo and Z.D. Ansari, *Excavations at Ahar (Timbavati)*. Deccan College, Pune, 1969.
- Sharma, R.C. 1984. *Buddhist Art of Mathura*. Delhi: Agam Kala Prakashan.

Vogel, J.Ph. 1972. *Indian Serpent Lore*. Varanasi & Delhi.



Map 2: Map showing Braj Cultural Sphere

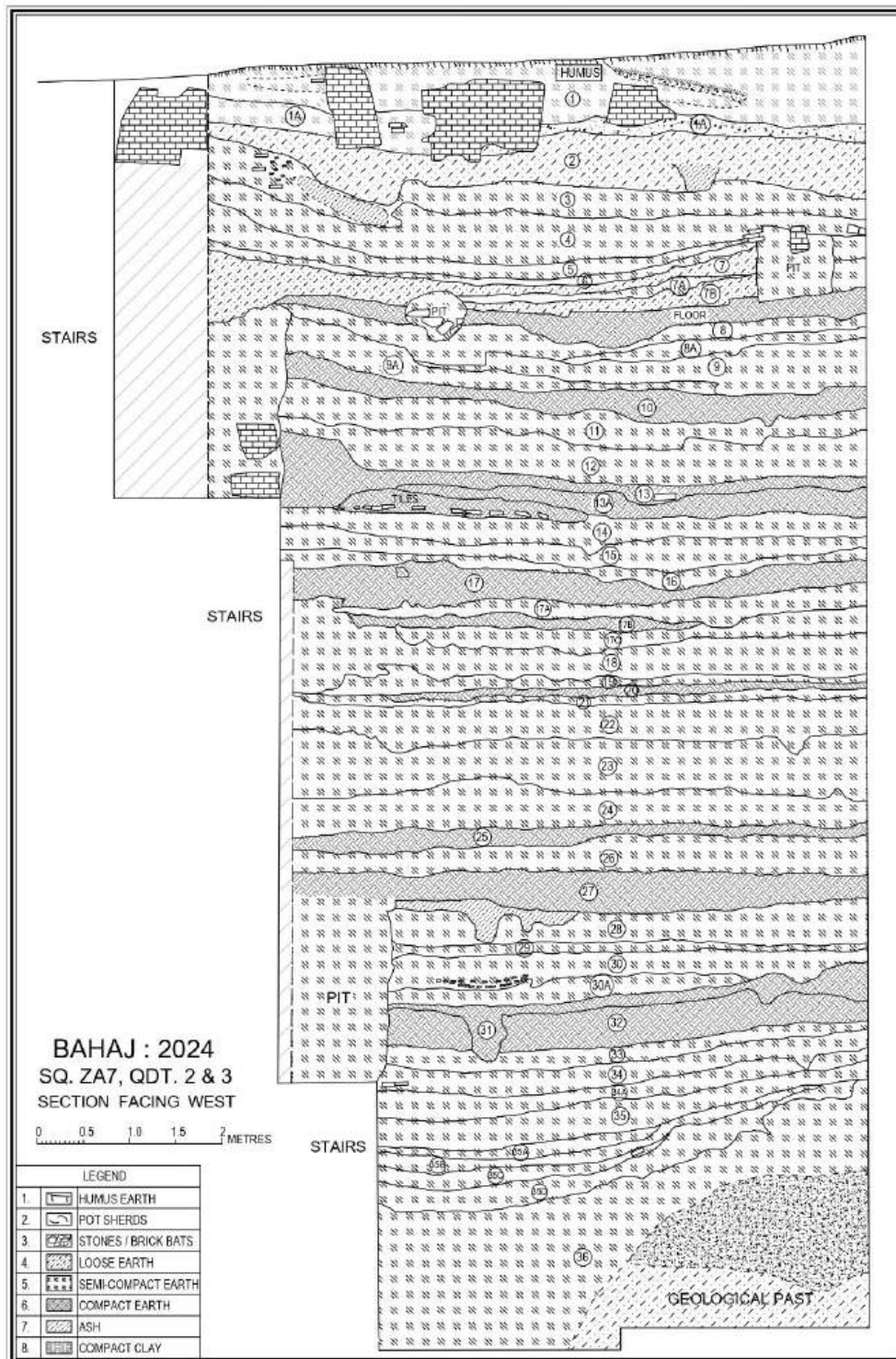


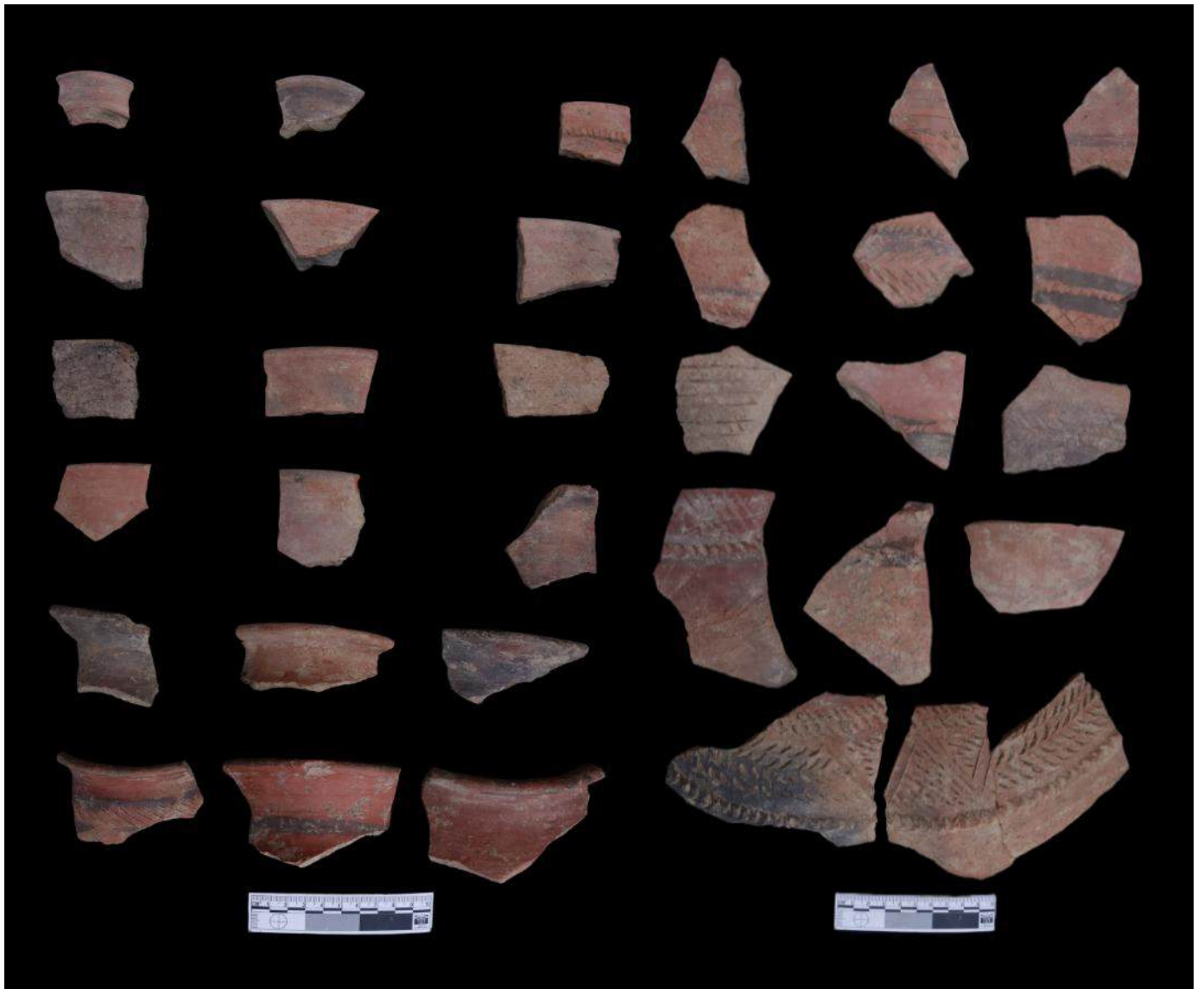
Fig. A: Trench ZA7: Section facing west



Pl. 2. Trench ZB6: Evidence of palaeo-channel



Pl. 3. Palaeolithic tools found in the lowest cultural deposit



Pl. 4. OCP/ Bahaj- Govardhan Culture potsherds



Pl. 5. Trench XF3: Mud structures aligned at almost right angles



Pl. 6. Experimental PGW potsherds



Pl. 7. Mud structures built with a base of stones arranged in a linear pattern in Trenches XF3 (left) and ZB6 (right)



Pl. 8. Trench XB8: Terracotta pipe and Storage jars from PGW period



Pl. 9. Trench ZA7: Experimental NBPW potsherds



Pl. 10. Trench XB8: *Yoni*-shaped pit and ritualistic activity in combed pattern



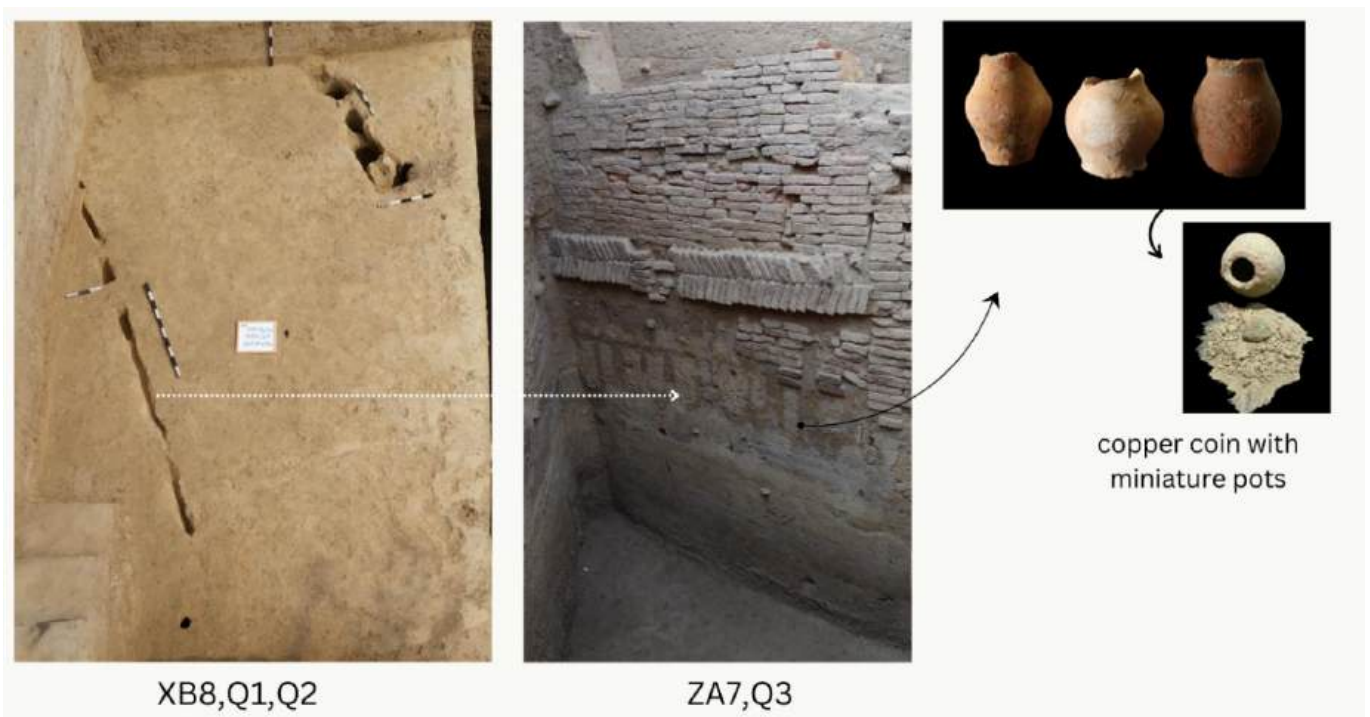
Pl. 11. Trench XB8: Clay sealing of PGW period with Brahmi letters



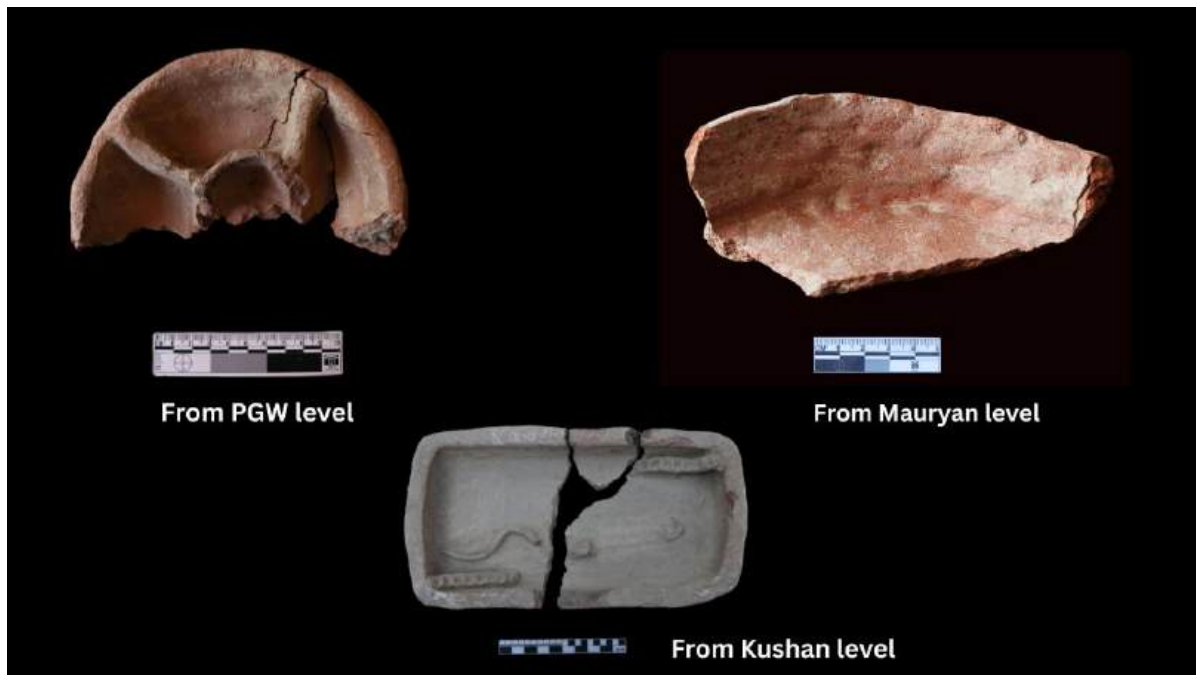
Pl. 12. Trench ZA7: Anthropomorphic figures possibly representing Bhagavāna Śiva and Mātā Pārvatī with three votive discs as offering, Early PGW period



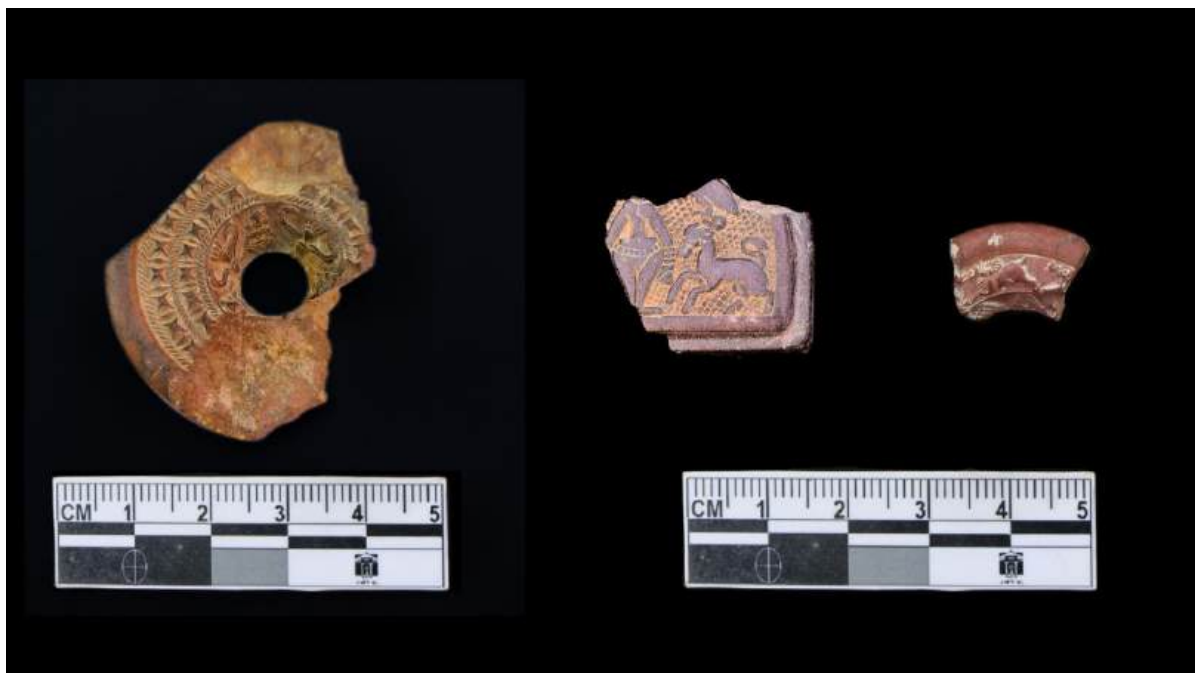
Pl.13. Various Copper and Silver coins found from various trenches



Pl. 14. Trench ZA7: *Yajnakundas* in linear pattern containing natural sand and miniature pots



Pl. 15. Terracotta votive tanks found during excavations



Pl. 16. Stone-rings and tablet made of Jasper, *ca.* 400 BCE



Pl. 17. Trench ZB6: Early Mauryan level seal made of Jasper



Pl. 18. Virupāksha figure found from Mauryan level (left) and a potsherd with representation of *trisūla* with *damarū* tied to it from late Mauryan-Śuṅga level (right)



Pl.19. Trenches XB8 & XB9: Terracotta plaques with *Navagrahas* and *Saptarshi Tārāmaṇḍala* (centre bottom); Āśvinī Kumāras (left); Possible Śani figure (right); Twin lions (centre top), *ca.* 200 BCE



Pl. 20. A unique terracotta pot with Yaksha like features (Śiva?)



Pl. 21. Nṛsiṃha figure, Kushan period



Pl. 22. Steatite beads from OCP period

Excavation at Ojhiyana, District Beawar:

From 1st April till 10th May, excavation was undertaken at the unprotected mound Ojhiyana in District Beawar (formerly forming part of Bhilwara District) under the direction of the author. The small level excavation has turned out to be quite fruitful with hitherto unknown thick deposit of the Ahar/ Banas culture. The site which was excavated twice by the ASI during 1999-2001 and 2024 is destroyed to a larger extent with the coming up of a National Highway. Unfortunately, detailed reports of any of these excavations is not available. This small-scale excavation was taken up to understand the stratigraphy and to collect samples for various archaeological and scientific investigations. A trench was laid out in the vicinity of the previously excavated trenches at the point where maximum archaeological deposit of the site was expected. The presumption turned right and a total deposit of about 9 m from the highest point of the trench to the lowest point has been reported which is about 1.5 m more than the previously known maximum deposit at the site. A proper pottery sequence is being established and the pottery includes quite interesting types and varieties, though the most common type is black-&-red ware pottery, many times painted in white. Few pottery types are quite akin to PGW in fabric and appearance which are subject of further investigation. About 300 antiquities have been unearthed which include a large number of terracotta bull figures, two of the figurines are of cows with marking for udders, a good number of terracotta gamesman, steatite beads and other bead types. The most significant finding is the presence of glass in this deposit which may be the earliest finding of glass in Indian context. A detailed report of this limited excavation is in progress.



Ancient Site at Bhangarh, Distt. Alwar

This ancient township was founded by Raja Bhagwan Das, the then ruler of Amber in the later half of sixteenth century and was made capital of Madho Singh, brother of Raja Man Singh. The remains at Bhangarh consist of fort walls, bazars, *havelis*, temples, royal palaces, marble *chhatris* etc. Among temples, important are Gopinath temple, Somesvara temple, Keshava Rai temple, and Mangla Devi temple. The royal palace is said to have seven storeys known as Satamahala but now only four storeys remain. A stone inscription on the bank of the Som Sagar Talav, 5 km away from Bhangarh, reveals that Madho Singh was Diwan in the court of Mughal emperor Akbar.



Adjoining cells of Mahal Complex at Bhangarh Fort



Before Conservation



After Conservation

Restoration of stone flooring for safe and easy movement.
Surface dressing & providing stone flooring for safe and easy movement.

Southern side front portion of Mahal Complex at Bhangarh Fort



Before Conservation



After Conservation

The parapet wall was raised and restored for public safety.

Upper Courtyard of Mahal Complex at Bhangarh Fort



Before providing pathway



After providing pathway

Providing pathway for proper visitor movement.

Lower courtyard at Bhangarh Fort



Before providing pathway



After providing pathway

Pathway was provided from Mahal Complex to Someshwar Temple for proper visitor movement.

Lower courtyard at Bhangarh Fort



Before providing pathway



After providing pathway

Pathway was provided from Gopinath Temple to Mahal Complex for proper visitor movement.

Ramp of Mahal Complex



Before Conservation



After Conservation

Railing was provided for safe and easy visitor movement.

Lower courtyard at Bhangarh Fort



Before Conservation



After Conservation

Pathway was provided from Gopinath Temple to Mahal Complex for proper visitor movement.

Inner enclosure wall at Bhangarh Fort



Before Conservation



After Conservation

Apron was provided along the enclosure wall to prevent soil erosion, enhance stability & improve drainage of rainwater.

Structure near Tripoliya Gate



Before Conservation



After Conservation

Structure near Tripoliya gate was exposed, restored and stone pitching was provided for surface stability, proper drainage and easy movement of visitors.

Haveli near Keshav Rai Temple



Before Conservation



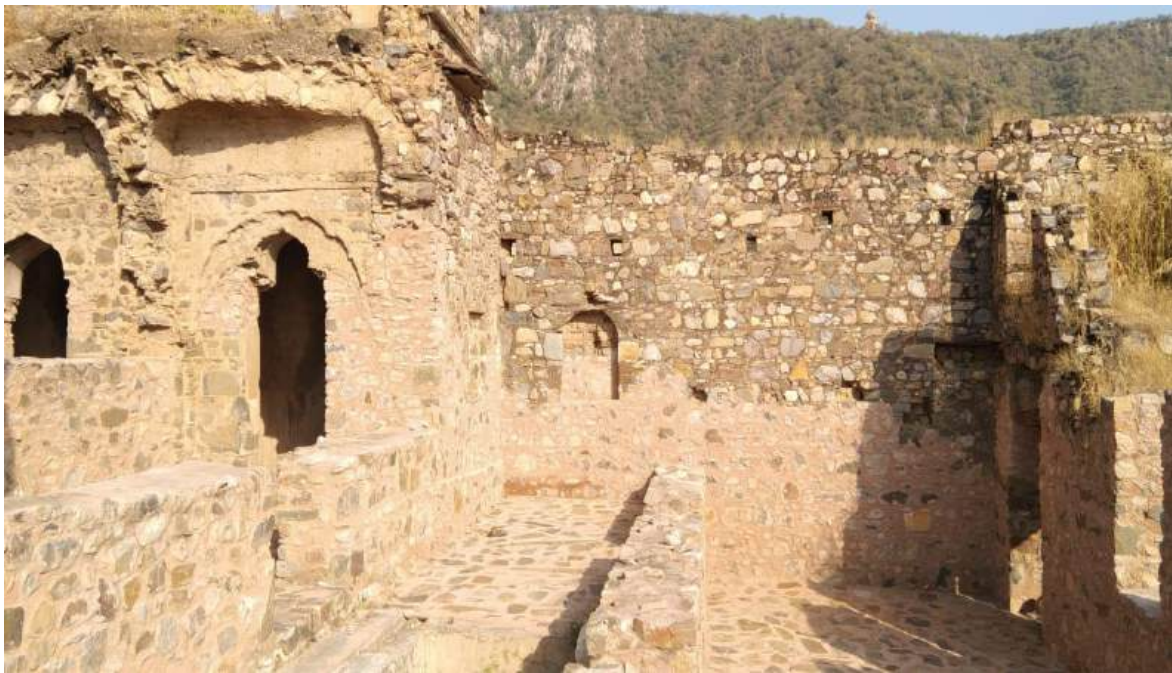
After Conservation

The haveli has been restored with strengthened walls and stone flooring after removal of vegetation and debris.

Haveli near Keshav Rai Temple



Before Conservation



After Conservation

The haveli has been restored with strengthened walls and stone flooring after removal of vegetation and debris.

Haveli near Keshav Rai Temple



Before Conservation



After Conservation

The fortification wall (western side) of Bhangarh Fort



Before Conservation



After Conservation

The fortification wall has been restored improving the stability and appearance.

The fortification wall (western side) of Bhangarh Fort



Before Conservation



After Conservation

The fortification wall has been restored improving the stability and appearance.

Fortification Wall Delhi Side Gate from Bastion No. 8 to Bastion No. 10



Before



After



Before



During



After

Mahal complex at Bhangarh

Before conservation, dislodged and scattered stone blocks were positioned irregularly. There was a loss of the original flooring alignment. Following conservation, the restoration of the original floor level and circulation space was achieved. Stability and load-bearing capacity were enhanced. Material authenticity was preserved. Over-restoration was avoided.



Before



After



Before



After



Before



After



Before



After

Ancient structure along the enclosure wall from Tripoliya Gate to Someshwar Temple



Before



After



Before



After

Haveli near Keshav Rai Temple at Bhangarh, Distt. Alwar

The preservation process encompasses the removal of debris and the levelling of surfaces, which collectively enhanced stability and improved architectural clarity.



Before



After



Before



After

Fortification wall and bastion no. 10 towards the northern side of the hill at Bhangarh

Debris has been removed, the wall has been rebuilt, the bastion has been reinforced, the pathway has been laid, the slope secured, and a few of the original stones have been systematically reused.



Before



After



Before



After



Before



After

Northern Side Fortwall after Bastion no. 10, further portion towards the hill at Bhangarh

The initial condition depicts a collapsed fortwall, overgrown with vegetation, accompanied by scattered stones and signs of erosion. Throughout the conservation process, activities such as debris removal and the reconstruction of masonry were done. The final stage showcases a stabilised fortification, a paved surface, and a secured slope.



Before



During



After

Toilet Block and other Tourist Facilities at Bhangarh



Before



During



After



During



After

Conservation and restoration of Mahal Complex (Phase-II) at Bhangarh



Before



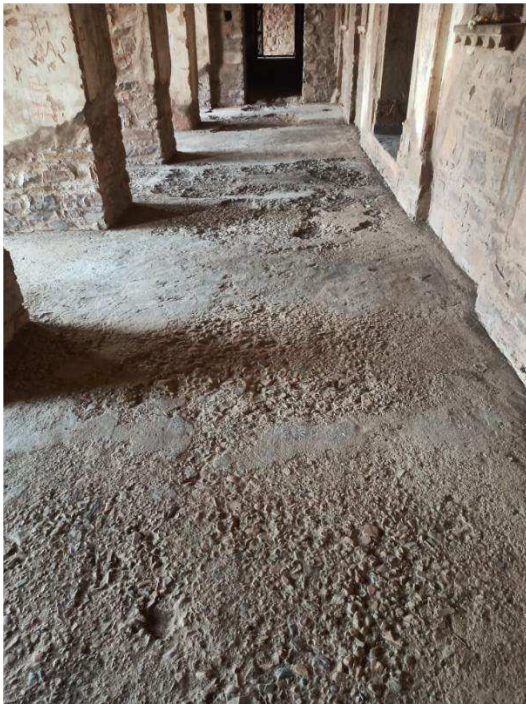
After



Before



After



Before



After



Before



During



After

Fallen collapsed burj on the southern side of entrance gate of Mahal Complex at Bhangarh



Before



After



Before



After

Nilkanth, Distt. Alwar

The site of Nilkanth, known after the deity Siva enshrined in this temple, was anciently known as Rajyapura and later Paranagar. The temple is a three-shrined complex of which the central one facing west and dedicated to Siva-linga, has preserved its full elevation including *sikhara*, while the lateral shrines are now bereft of their superstructures. The three shrines are *pancharatha* and share a common *rangamandapa*, supported on four central pillars and preceded by a porch. The temple has a *pitha* which supports a *vedibandha* with niched figures. The *jangha* of the central shrine bears figures of Narasimha (north), Harihararka (east) and Tripurantaka (south) on the *bhadra* niches and those of *surasundaris* and *dikpalas* on other projections. The *rangamandapa* has a concentric ceiling of coffered cusps of the *padmasila* type while all the pillars are laden with figural ornaments of *surasundaris* and *gandharvas* in multiple zones. While the door-frame of the central shrine has Natesa as the *lalatabimba*, the lateral shrines have lost all indications of their attribution. The temple is assignable to the far end of the tenth century A.D. and was built by Maharajadhiraja Mathanadeva, a local Pratihara feudatory, as stated in an inscription dated A.D. 961. Besides Nilkantha temple, the site has other shrines are now in dilapidated condition, Bataka-ki-Deori, Kotan-ki-Deori, Lachholava-ki-Deori, Dabar-ki-Deori, Hanuman-ki-Deori, Bagh-ki-Deori and Naugaja temple are important among them.

Naugaja or Temple of Santinatha is situated about 100 m west of the Nilkanth. Stands on high *jagati* consists of sanctum and miniature shrines on the sides. A colossal image of Jaina tirthankara Santinatha stands in the sanctum. An inscription preserved in National Museum records that the temple dedicated to Santinatha was built on the 13th day of the dark half of Baisakha in the year VS 979 (AD 922-23) during the reign of Gurjar Pratihar Mahipala Deva of Kannauj and the architect was Sarvadeva of Simhapadra.



Rakhna Ki Devri



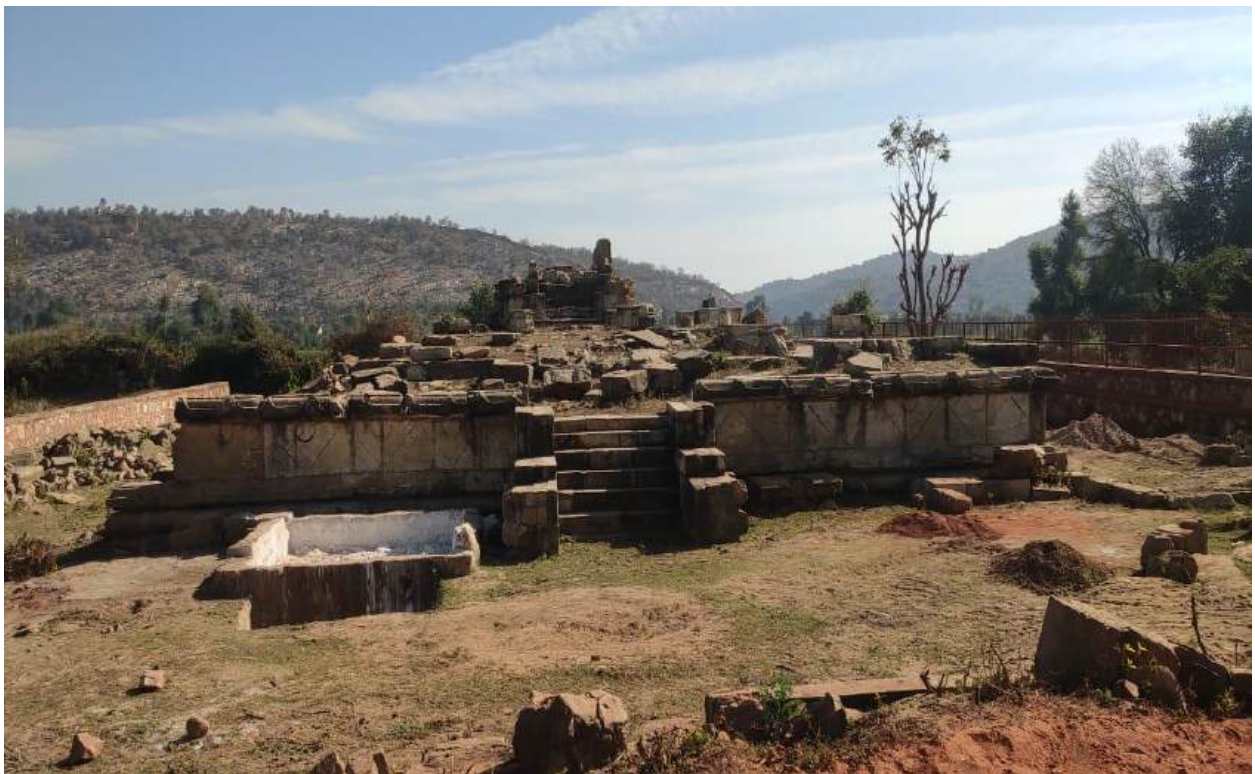
Before



After



Before



After



Before



After

Hanuman Ki Devri and Hanuman Ki Devri to Bagh Ki Devri at Nilkanth



Before



After

Hanuman Ki Devri and Hanuman Ki Devri to Bagh Ki Devri at Nilkanth



Before



After

Ancient Structure near Hanuman Ki Devri at Nilkanth



Before



During



After

Bagh ki Devri and adjoining structure at Nilkanth (Phase II)



Before



After

Bagh ki Devri and adjoining structure at Nilkanth (Phase II)



Before



After

Ancient water tank at Shiv temple at Nilkanth



Before



After

Ancient water tank at Shiv temple at Nilkanth



Before



After

Ancient water tank at Shiv temple at Nilkanth



Before



After



Before



After

Shiv Temple, Nilkanth



Before



After

Kotan Ki Devri No. 1 to 4 at Nilkanth



Before



During



After

Kotan Ki Devri No. 1 to 4 at Nilkanth



Before



During



After

Baori inside Office Campus at Nilkanth



Before



After

Baori inside Office Campus at Nilkanth



Before



After

Kotwall near Naugaja Temple to Bagh Ki Devri side at Shiv Temple Nilkanth



Before



During



After

Sculpture Shed at Camp Office, Nilkanth



Before



During



After



Before



After

Camp Office, Nilkanth



Before



After

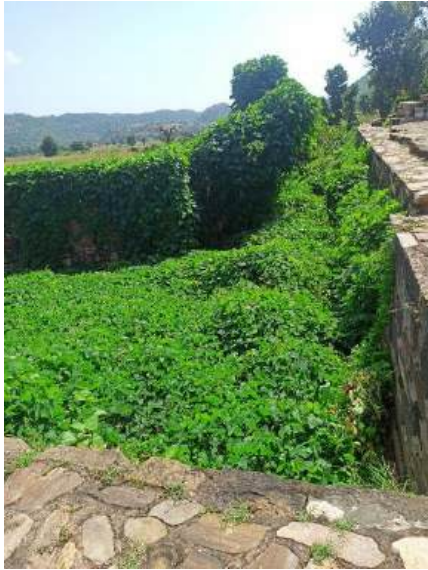


Before



After

Naugaja Temple at Nilkanth



Before



During



After

Naugaja Temple at Nilkanth



Before



During



After

Naugaja Temple at Nilkanth



Before



After

Kotwall near Kotan Ki Devri No. 4 to further portion at Shiv Temple Nilkanth



Before



During



After

Shiv Temple at Nilkanth



Before



After

Shiv Temple at Nilkanth



Before



After

Shiv Temple at Nilkanth



Before



After

Shiv Temple at Nilkanth



Before



After

Exposition of old temple flooring at Nilkanth Temple



During



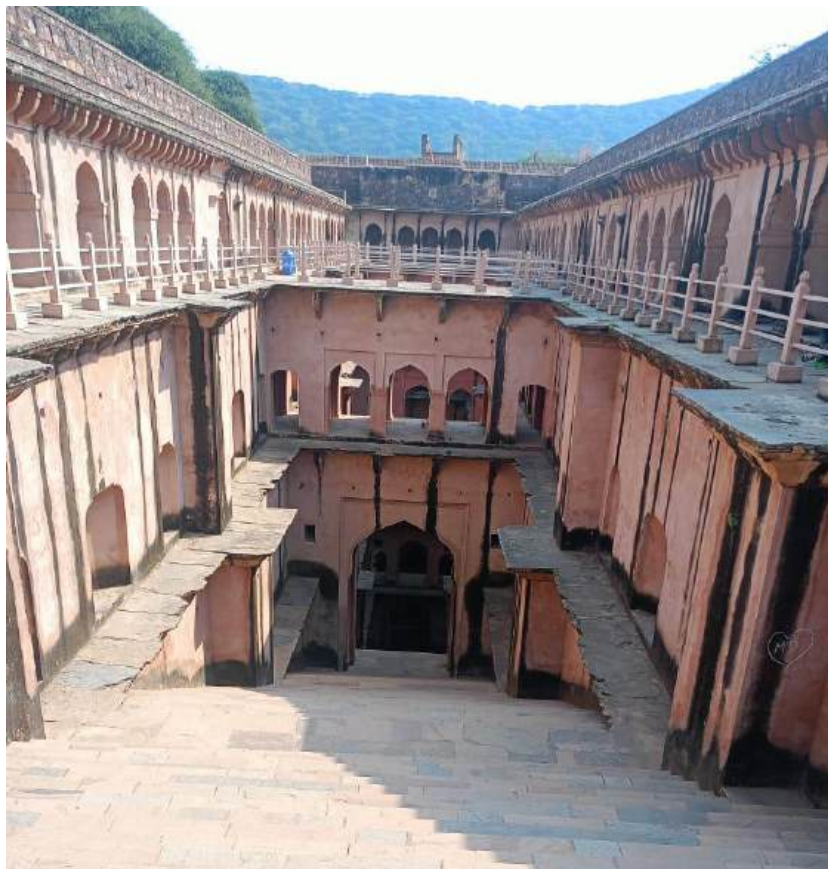
During

Baori and Adjacent Archaeological Remains at Neemrana, Distt. Alwar

The step-well at Neemrana built at one end of the town constitutes well planned and elaborately executed which served a great utilitarian purpose for provision of water supply. It comprises Nine storey in elevation aligned in East-West directions measuring about 93 mts and width of 22 mts in north-south direction. In the rear side, there is a deep well having depth of approximate 50 mts. with a through each storey is connected with the well through a small opening/window. Whole Baori is built below the ground surface. Storeys go on diminishing in size downward. The top storey of the structure consists of alternately arranged large and small cells along three sides. Each storey is provided with projected *chhajjas* in inner sides.

The Baori is said to be constructed by the local Chauhan ruler Raja Maha Singh in Vikram Samvat 1797 (1740 AD). It represents a perfect developed stage of perfect step-well construction and water management system in the bygone ages and seems to be the largest and unparalleled in the region.

It is declared as a monument of national importance by the Archaeological Survey of India in 2018 and single monument on Delhi-Jaipur route.



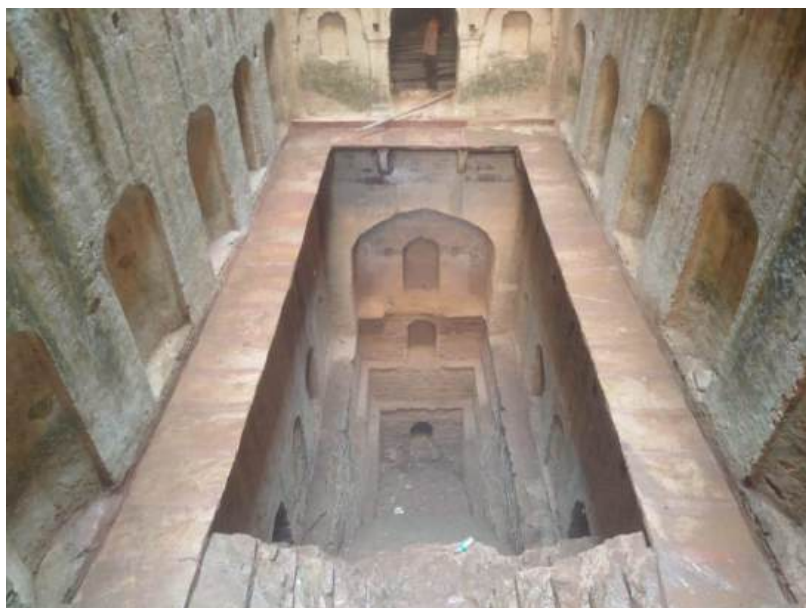
Baori and Adjacent Archaeological Remains at Neemrana, Distt. Kotpulti-Behror



Before



During



After



Before



After

Boundary wall at Neemrana Baori



Before Conservation



After Conservation

Boundary wall was provided to prevent unauthorized entry into the Baori premises.

1.1. Ruins of Temples at Atru or Ganesh Ganj, Distt. Baran

Among the heaped ruins of several temples only one is clearly recognizable. This temple was once large in size and dedicated to Siva known as Gadgach temple. It consisted of a sanctum, *antarala*, *ardhamandapa* and a porch. The temple remains attest influence of Pratihara art and on the basis of iconographic and architectural features, it is datable to tenth-eleventh century A.D. Besides, the temples of Panihari, Chanihari, Sardevmata, Gadia and Phool Devra dedicated to Siva, Mahisasurmardini and Vishnu are important among them, and are also assignable to same period.



Chhinahari Temple at Atru, Distt. Baran



Before



After



Before



After



Before



During



After

Nagadev Temple at Atru, Distt. Baran



Before



After

Gadgach Temple at Atru, Distt. Baran



Before



After

Gadgach Temple at Atru, Distt. Baran



Before



After

Gadgach Temple at Atru, Distt. Baran



Before



After

Gadgach Temple at Atru, Distt. Baran



Before



After

Gadgach Temple at Atru, Distt. Baran



Before



After

Gadgach Temple at Atru, Distt. Baran



Before



After

Gadgach Temple at Atru, Distt. Baran



Before



After

Gadgach Temple at Atru, Distt. Baran



Before



After

Gadgach Temple at Atru, Distt. Baran



Before



After

Gadgach Temple at Atru, Distt. Baran



Before



During



After

Gadgach Temple at Atru, Distt. Baran



Before



After

Gadgach Temple at Atru, Distt. Baran



Before



After

1.1.Ancient Ruins and Structural Remains at Krishnavilas, Distt. Baran

In early days the site was famous by the name of Vilasa. It is an old place with the relics of many temples and old fort which belong to *circa* ninth or tenth century AD when it was a flourishing town. Most of the temples are dedicated to Vishnu. A ruined Vaishnava temple locally known as Charkhambha has yielded a Vishnu image dated V.S. 1178 (A.D. 1121). Among important Vaishnava sculptures carved out of red sandstone are numerous panels of ten *avataras*, Krishna with flute, magnificent image of reclining Vishnu, etc. along with Vaishnavism, Jainism also seems to be popular at Krishnavilas as is evident from the old remains of Jaina temples. The *prasasti* of the Jinadattacharya written in V.S. 1161 (A.D. 1218) also mentions about the place. The Muslim Governor of Ranthambore seems to have brought about the destruction of the town.



(Charkhambha)

Shrines at Char Khamba at Krishnavilas Distt. Baran



Before



After

Shrines at Char Khamba at Krishnavilas, Distt. Baran



Before



During



After

Shrines at Char Khamba at Krishnavilas, Distt. Baran



Before



After

Shrines at Char Khamba (Phase II) at Krishnavilas, Distt. Baran



Before



After

Shrines at Char Khamba (Phase II) at Krishnavilas, Distt. Baran



Before



After

Shrines at Char Khamba (Phase II) at Krishnavilas, Distt. Baran



Before



After

Chhipa ki Chandni at Krishnavilas, Distt. Baran



Before



After

Chipa ki Chandani at Krishnavilas, Distt. Baran



Before



After

Devji ka Dher at Krishnavilas, Distt. Baran



Before



After

Dev ji ka Dher at Krishnavilas Distt. Baran



Before



After

Dev ji ka Dher at Krishnavilas Distt. Baran



Before



After

Dev ji ka Dher at Krishnavilas Distt. Baran



Before



After

Dev ji ka Dher at Krishnavilas Distt. Baran



Before



After

Jain Temple at Krishnavilas, Distt. Baran



Before



After

Jain Temple (Phase-II) at Krishnavilas, Distt. Baran



Before



After

Adjoining Structure at Khai Ka Dher at Krishnavilas Distt. Baran



Before



After

Khai ka Dher (Phase-II) at Krishnavilas, Distt. Baran



Before



After

Khair ka Dher (Phase-II) at Krishnavilas, Distt. Baran



Before



After

Khai ka Dher (Phase-II) at Krishnavilas, Distt. Baran



Before



After

Sat Okhali Temple at Krishnavilas, Distt. Baran



Before



After

Sat Okhali Temple at Krishnavilas Distt. Baran



Before

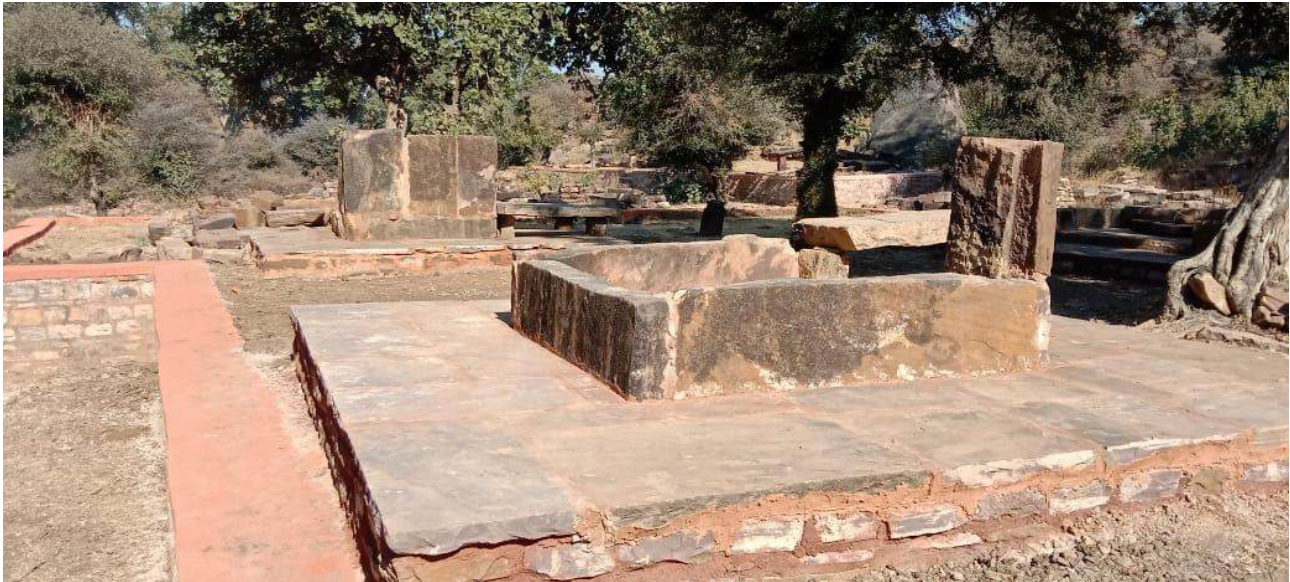


After

Sat Okhali Temple at Krishnavilas Distt. Baran



Before



After

Sat Okhali Temple at Krishnavilas Distt. Baran



Before



After

Sat Okhali Temple at Krishnavilas Distt. Baran



Before



After

Sat Okhali Temple at Krishnavilas Distt. Baran



Before



After

Sat Okhali Temple at Krishnavilas Distt. Baran



Before



After

Sat Okhali Temple at Krishnavilas Distt. Baran



Before



After

Shiv Dher at Krishnavilas Distt. Baran



Before



After

Shiv Dher at Krishnavilas Distt. Baran



Before



After

Shiv Dher at Krishnavilas Distt. Baran



Before



During



After

Shiv Dher at Krishnavilas Distt. Baran



Before



After



Before



After

Shiv Dher at Krishnavilas Distt. Baran



Before



After

Shiv Dher at Krishnavilas Distt. Baran



Before



After

Shiv Dher at Krishnavilas Distt. Baran



Before



After

Shiv Dher at Krishnavilas Distt. Baran



Before



After

Shiv Dher at Krishnavilas Distt. Baran



Before



After

Shiv Dher at Krishnavilas Distt. Baran



Before



After

Shiv Dher at Krishnavilas Distt. Baran



Before



After

Shiv Dher at Krishnavilas Distt. Baran



Before



After

Shiv Dher at Krishnavilas Distt. Baran



Before



During



After

Shiv Dher at Krishnavilas Distt. Baran



Before



After

Ongoing exposition work of an ancient shrine at Jhandawala Dher, Krishnavilas



During



During

Old Temple, Statues and Inscriptions at Shergarh, Distt. Baran

Shergarh is supposed to have been named after its capture by Shershah of the Sur dynasty in course of his Malwa campaign. The ancient name of this town was Kosavardhana, “the increaser of treasury”. Being a place of strategic importance, Shergarh was ruled by different dynasties from early times. An inscription found here refers to Samanta Devadatta who ruled in V.S. 847 (A.D. 790) and built a Buddhist temple and monastery here. Hindu rulers patronized Buddhism, Saivism and Jainism. The temple of Somnatha was the principal place of worship in tenth-eleventh century A.D. The Lakshmi-Narayana Temple, consisting of a sanctum, *antarala*, *mahamandapa* and *ardhamandapa* is well preserved and is assignable to the eleventh century A.D. An inscription in this temple narrates the genealogy of the Paramara kings of Dhar from Vakpati to Naravarman. An inscription of V.S. 1171 (A.D. 1228) records that a devotee of Siva built here a water-house. According to an inscription of V.S. 1191 (A.D. 1134), Khandela Walla Shresthi Sant's sons had the icons of Shantinatha, Kunthanatha and Aristhanemi installed here.



North side adjoining structure of the Laxmi Narayan Temple at Shergarh, Distt. Baran



Before



After

Adjoining structure south side of the Laxmi Narayan Temple at Shergarh Distt. Baran



Before



After

Old Temples, Statues and Inscriptions at Shergarh Distt. Baran



Before



After

Old Temple Statues and Inscriptions, Shergarh, Distt. Baran



Before



After



Before



After



Before



After



Before



After

Ancient Fort with its monuments at Bayana, Distt. Bharatpur

Bayana was also known earlier by various names such as Santipura, Sripatha, and Vijaymandirgarh. The construction of fort is ascribed to Vijayapala in the eleventh century A.D. It served as strategic point during Muslim invasions. The region around Bayana seems to be quite old. A fragmentary inscription dated A.D. 300 referring to a Maharaja Mahasenapati elected by the Yaudheya Republic has been found here. An inscription of A.D. 372 records the erection of the sacrificial post on the completion of a *pundarika* sacrifice by Vishnuvardhana who may be a feudatory of the Gupta ruler Samudra Gupta. A big hoard of Gupta gold coins was discovered at a distance of 10 km from here.

The ancient fort is built over the Mani hill. It is enclosed by a massive wall strengthened with round bastions. The main entrance is from the south, guarded by series of gateways. There are several palaces, *baoris*, *havelis*, temples, pillars, *minars*, within the fort. Rani Mahal, Hanumanji-ka-Mandir, Bhimlat and minar are important among them.



Ancient Structure near main entrance gate at Bayana Fort, Bayana, Distt. Bharatpur



Before



After

Fallen Burj No. 07, West Side Near Water Drainage at Bayana Fort Bayana, Distt. Bharatpur



Before



After

Shiv Temple and adjoining structure at Bayana Fort, Bayana, Distt. Bharatpur



Before



After

Shiv Temple and adjoining structure at Bayana Fort, Bayana, Distt. Bharatpur



Before



After

Shiv Temple and adjoining structure at Bayana Fort, Bayana, Distt. Bharatpur



Before



After

Shiv Temple and adjoining structure at Bayana Fort, Bayana, Distt. Bharatpur



Before



After

Fortification wall and Bastion in between Bastion no 2 and 3 at Bayana Fort, Distt. Bharatpur



Before



After

Fortification wall and Bastion in between Bastion no 2 and 3 at Bayana Fort, Distt. Bharatpur



Before



After

Bastion No. 01 Adjoining the 2nd gate western side at Bayana Fort Bayana, Distt. Bharatpur



Before



During



After

Bayana Fort, Bayana Distt. Bharatpur



Before



After

Bayana Fort, at Bayana Distt. Bharatpur



Before



During



After

Adjoining structures near Gate No. 5 & 6 of Bayana Fort, Distt. Bharatpur



Before



During



After

Adjoining structures near Gate No. 5 & 6 of Bayana Fort, Distt. Bharatpur



Before



During



After



Before



After

Southern side of Bazar along the pathway at Bayana Fort, Bayana, Distt. Bharatpur



Before



After

Idgah at Brahmabad, Dist. Bharatpur



Before



After

Idgah at Brahmabad, Dist. Bharatpur



Before



After

Islam Shah's Gate at Brahmabad, Dist. Bharatpur



Before



After

Shiv Temple at Bayana, Distt. Bharatpur



Before



After

Shiv Temple at Bayana, Distt. Bharatpur



Before



After

Shiv Temple at Bayana, Distt. Bharatpur



Before



After

Fortification wall and bastion in between Bastion No. 3 to 5 at Bayana Fort, Distt. Bharatpur



Before



After



Before



After

**Upper portion of fortification wall and bastion in between Bastion No 1 to 3 at Bayana Fort,
Dist. Bharatpur**



Before



During



After

**Upper portion of fortification wall and bastion in between Bastion No 1 to 3 at Bayana Fort,
Dist. Bharatpur**



Before



After

Fort wall between Bastion No. 1 & 2 near Gate No. 2 at Bayana Fort, Dist. Bharatpur



Before



During

Structure between Gate No. 4 & 5 at Bayana Fort, Bayana, Distt. Bharatpur



Before



After

Structure between Gate No. 4 & 5 at Bayana Fort, Bayana, Distt. Bharatpur



Before



After

Structure between Gate No. 4 & 5 at Bayana Fort, Bayana, Distt. Bharatpur



Before



After

Structure between Gate No. 4 & 5 at Bayana Fort, Bayana, Distt. Bharatpur



Before



After

Structure between Gate No. 4 & 5 at Bayana Fort, Bayana, Distt. Bharatpur



Before



After

Structure between Gate No. 4 & 5 at Bayana Fort, Bayana, Distt. Bharatpur



Before



After



Before



After

Usha Mandir and Masjit at Bayana, Distt. Bharatpur



Before



During



After

Usha Mandir and Masjit at Bayana, Distt. Bharatpur



Before



During



After

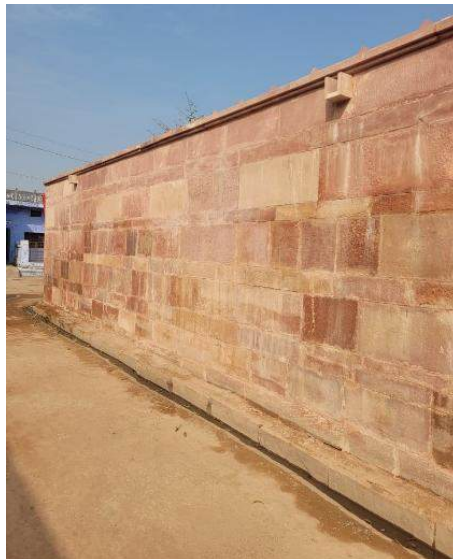
Usha Mandir and Masjit at Bayana, Distt. Bharatpur



Before



During



After

Usha Mandir and Masjit at Bayana, Distt. Bharatpur



Before



During



After

Usha Mandir and Masjit at Bayana, Distt. Bharatpur



Before



During



After

Fortwalls including Chowburja gate and Approach Bridge at the Chowburja and Ashtadhatu Gates at Bharatpur, Distt. Bharatpur

The fort wall is massively built of stone rubbles in lime mortar with occasional use of *lakhauri* bricks at top and is surrounded all around by a deep and wide moat filled with water. The fort has only two gateways i.e. Chowburja Gate on the south flanked by round bastions on either side and Ashtadhatu Gate on the north. Both the gateways are approachable through long bridges. The bridge in front of Chowburja Gate is approximately 50 m long and 12 m wide. The other bridge is comparatively longer. It is datable to the eighteenth-century CE.



Front of Girraj villa at Bharatpur fort, Distt. Bharatpur



Before



After

Front of Girraj villa at Bharatpur fort, Distt. Bharatpur



Before



After

Front of Girraj villa at Bharatpur fort, Distt. Bharatpur



Before



After

Fort wall near Ashram at Bharatpur fort, Distt. Bharatpur



Before



After

Fort wall near ashram at Bharatpur fort, Distt. Bharatpur



Before



After

Fort wall near ashram at Bharatpur fort, Distt. Bharatpur

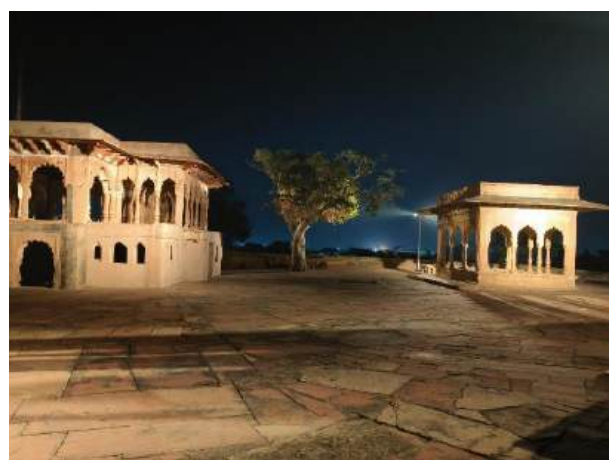


Before



After

Illumination at Jawahar Burj at Bharatpur, Distt. Bharatpur



Lal Mahal at Rupvas, Distt. Bharatpur

It is a historical town mentioned by Jahangir as a *jagir* of Rup Singh which was subsequently given to Amanullah. Rup Singh is said to be originally a descendent of the Maharana of Chittaur. He built a palace and a beautiful tank, though the former is now in dilapidated condition. Because this palace is built of red sandstone, it is popularly known as Lal Mahal and is datable to seventeenth century A.D. The ruined palace comprises five courtyards entered through a lofty arched entrance from the south. Overlooking the tank, there are beautiful residential apartments all along the southern embankment.



Lal Mahal at Rupvas, Distt. Bharatpur



Before



During



After



Before



During



After



Before



During



After



Before



During



After

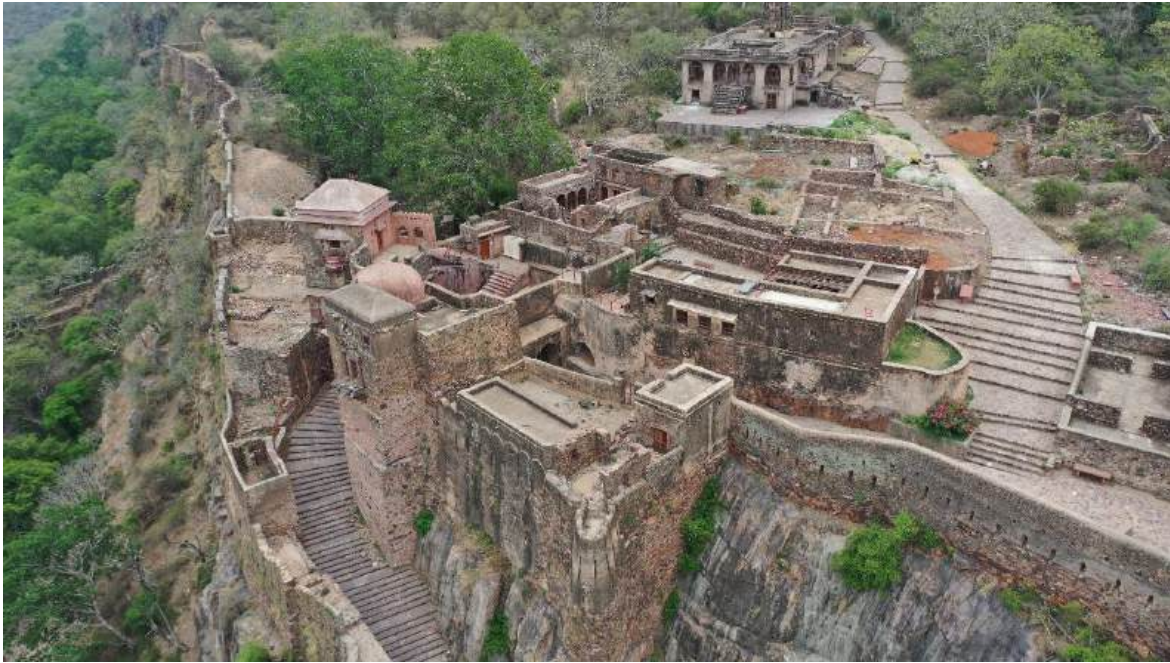
Ranthambore Fort at Ranthambore, Distt. Sawai Madhopur

The Ranthambhore fort is an established example of forest hill fort which formed a significant part of the Chahamana kingdom of Sakambhari. It is said to have been constructed by Maharaja Jayantha in the 5th century CE. The Yadavas ruled over it and subsequently, the fort was occupied by the Muslim rulers of Delhi. Hammir Deo was the most powerful ruler of Ranthambhore and the remains of the palace of Hammir in the fort are among the oldest surviving structures of an Indian palace.

Ranthambhore is an exceptional testimony to the Rajput cultural traditions of Rajasthan recording warfare, sacrifices and building activities of three major Rajput clans and sub clans of the Chauhans, Sisodias and the Kachchwahas. Loss of the fort from the hands of the Rajputs in 14th and 16th century CE were significant events that changed the political landscape of India, with respect to the strengthening of the imperial rule of the Sultanate and Mughals in the national context.

Ranthambhore Fort embodies the most primal methods of medieval war-fare, which was completely dependent on exploitation of natural terrain and features (including forest). The fort is located on a hill in the heart of a dense forest represents the “forest fort” typology of forts in combination with the “hill fort” typology and is a masterpiece of ingenuity, ensuring that the natural terrain around the fort allows it to be visually obscure from enemies. The ensemble of fortifications, gateways, palace structures, water bodies within Ranthambhore fort exemplify Rajput fort planning on the hilly terrain. It exhibits characteristics of a strong defensive military stronghold of the Rajputs in the Mewar Braj cultural zone of Rajasthan with technological adaptations utilizing the natural resources of water bodies and mountains in the eastern plain of Rajasthan.

Ranthambhore Fort is surrounded by tiger wild life sanctuary from all sides, which provides a natural habitat for hundreds of wild animals and birds. The fort is protected as monument of National Importance of Indian under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act of 1958 and also designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site among the six hill forts of Rajasthan in 2013.



(Gneral View)



(Hammir Mahal)

Nagad Khana, Ranthambore Fort, Distt. Sawai Madhopur



Before



After



Before



After

Adjoining structures at Singh Ji Ki Haveli, Ranthambore Fort, Distt. Sawai Madhopur



Before



After



Before



After



Before



After



Before



After



Before



After

Singh Ji ki Haveli, Ranthambore Fort, Distt. Sawai Madhopur



Before



During



After



Before



After



Before



During



After



Before



After

Navlakha Gate, Ranthambore Fort, Distt. Sawai Madhopur



Before



After



Before



After



Before



After



Before



After

Bawari, near Navlakha Gate, Ranthambore Fort, Distt. Sawai Madhopur



Before



After



Before



After



Before



After

Mishardhara Gate, Ranthambore Fort, Distt. Sawai Madhopur



Before



During



After



Before



During



After



Before



After



Before



After



Before



After



During



After

Badal Mahal complex, Ranthambore Fort, Distt. Sawai Madhopur



Before



After



Before



After



Before



After



Before



After



Before



After



Before



After



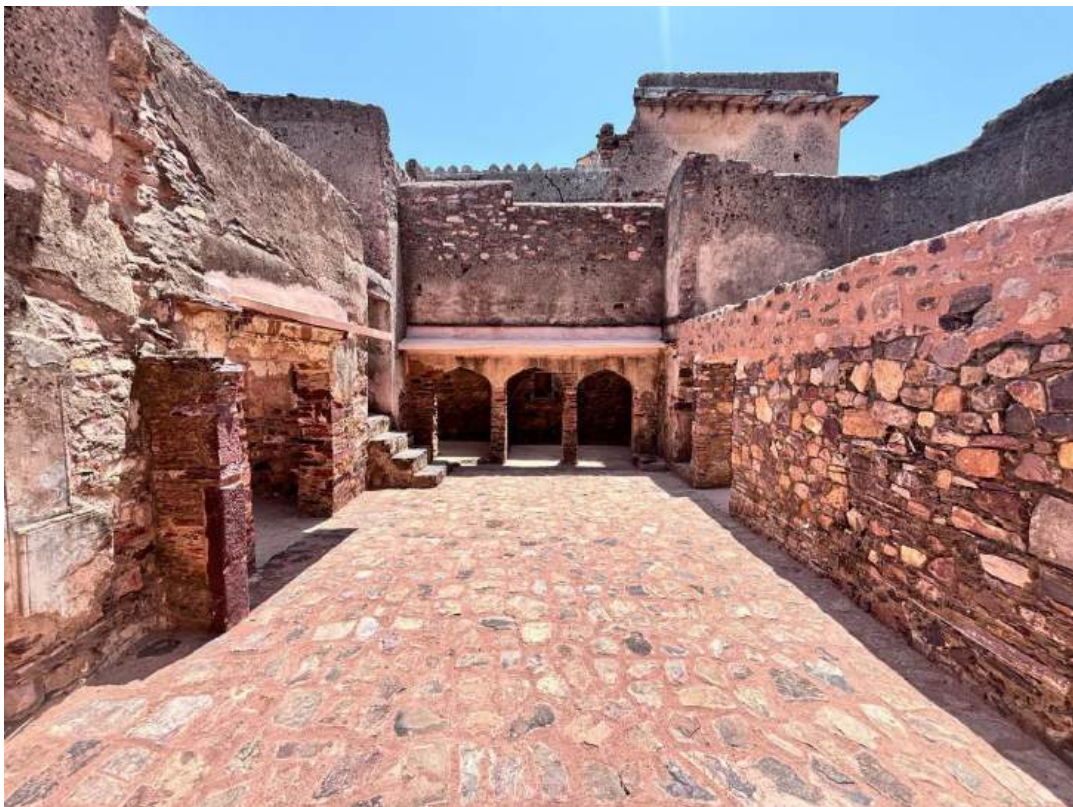
Before



After



Before



After



Before



After



Before



After



Before



After



Before



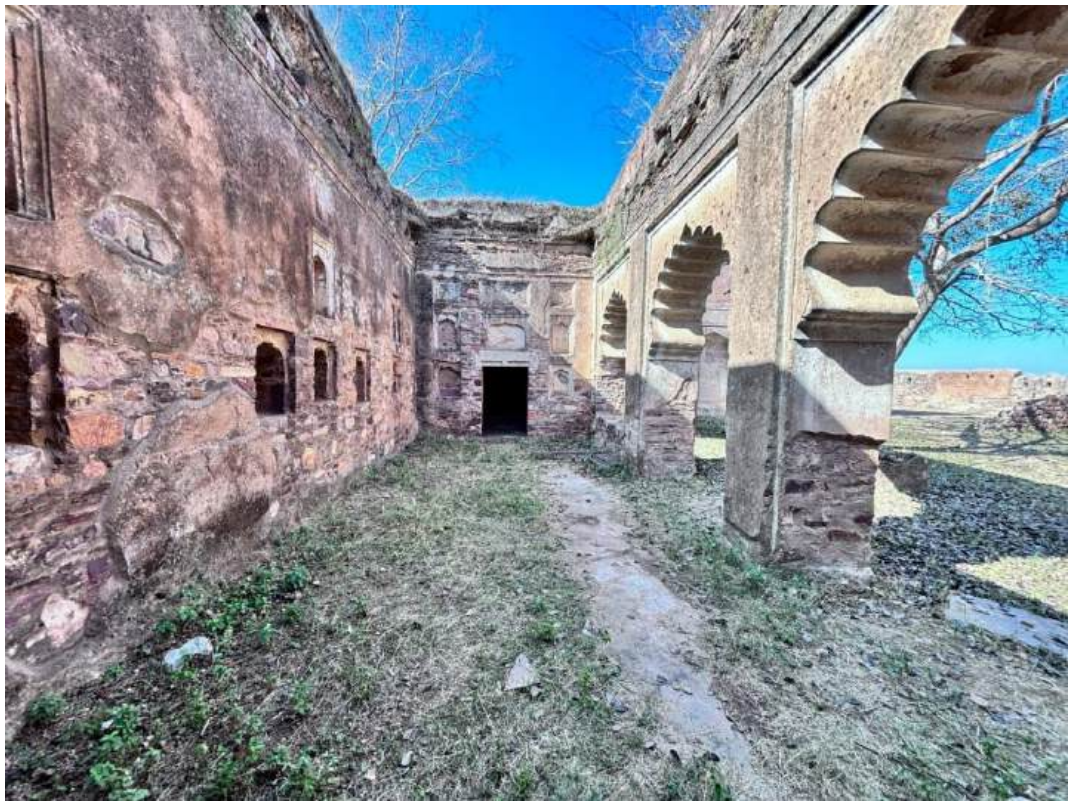
After



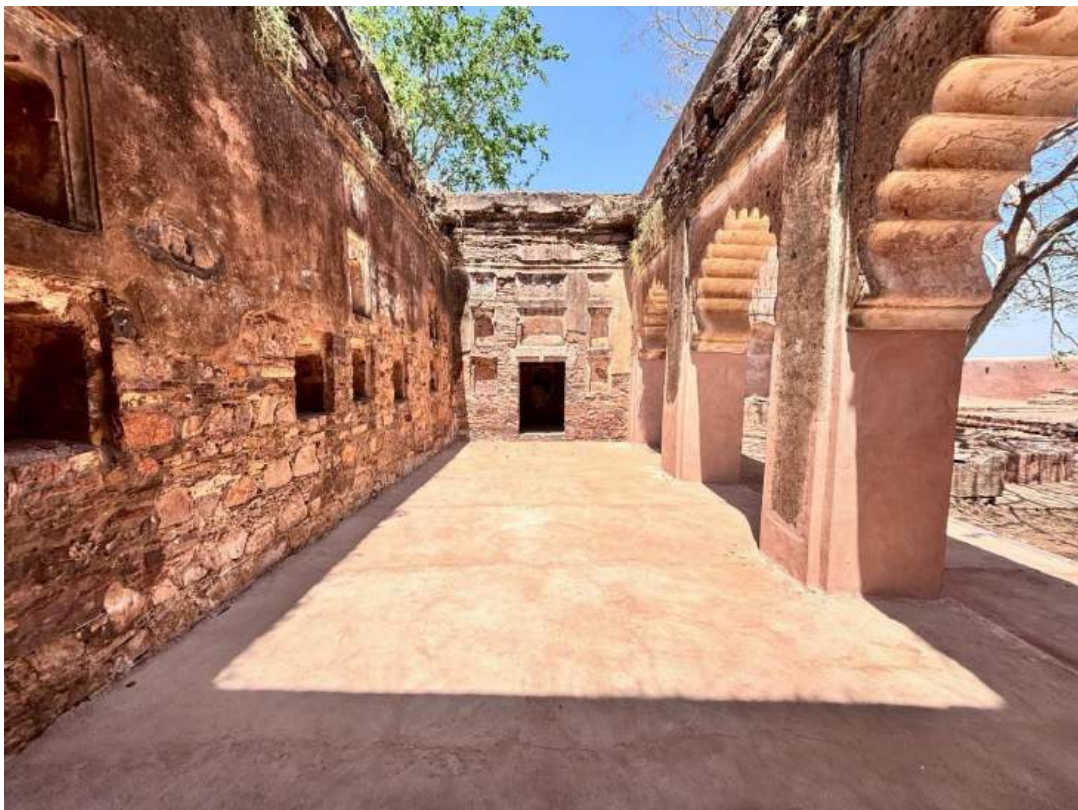
Before



After



Before



After

Battish Khambha Chhatri, Ranthambore Fort, Distt. Sawai Madhopur



Before



After



Before



After



Before



After



Before



After



During



After

Patali Devi temple, Ranthambore Fort, Distt. Sawai Madhopur



Before



After



Before



During



After



Before



During



After

Rani Mahal Complex, Ranthambore Fort, Distt. Sawai Madhopur



Before



After



Before



After

Bhojanshala near Ganesh Temple



Before



During



After



Before



During



After



Before



After



Before



After



Before



After



Before



After



Before



During



After



Before



After



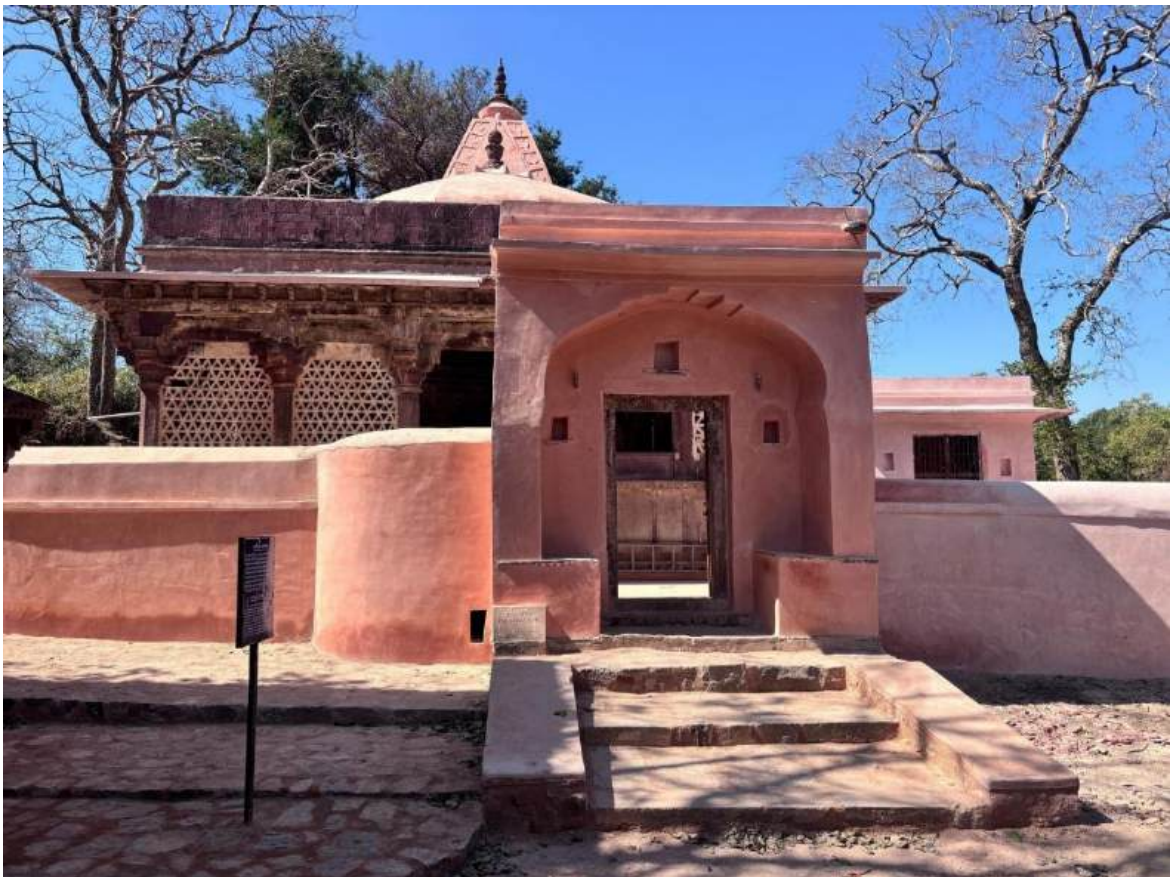
Before



After



Before



After



Before



During



After



Before



During



After



Before



During



After



Before



After

Chhatri near Jogi Mahal



During



After



Before



After

Harshnath Temple at Harsh, Distt. Sikar

This Siva temple, situated at the top of the Harshagiri hill. According to an inscription dated V.S. 1030 (A.D. 973), it was built by a Saiva ascetic Bhavarakta, alias Allata, during the reign of the Chahamanas king Vigraharaja-I. It is surrounded by numerous sub-shrines, which like the main temple have been in utter ruins. In spite of its dilapidated condition, the main temple is noteworthy for the excellent quality of structures and relief carvings. It faces east and consists on plan of *pancharatha* sanctum, joined to a *rangamandapa* with four central pillars and lateral transepts with *kakshasana* balustrades preceded by a separate *nandimandapa* and a distant *torana* in the same axis. Its pillars are profusely carved while inside the sanctum are sculptured on the west wall a central image of standing Parvati (labelled Vikata) engaged in *panchagnitapa*, flanked by female attendants swaying with lyrical grace.



Harshnath Temple at Harshnath, Distt. Sikar



Before



After

Harshnath Temple at Harshnath, Distt. Sikar



Before



After

Harshnath Temple at Harshnath, Distt. Sikar



Before



After

Harshnath Temple at Harshnath, Distt. Sikar



Before



After

Harshnath Temple at Harshnath, Distt. Sikar



Before



After

Harshnath Temple at Harshnath, Distt. Sikar



Before



After

Harshnath Temple at Harshnath, Distt. Sikar



Before



After

Harsh Nath Temple, Distt. Sikar



Before



After

Harsh Nath Temple, Distt. Sikar



Before



After



Before



During

Pipaji Temple, Todaraisingh, Distt. Tonk

The temple faces west and consists of a *garbhagriha*, an *antarala*, a square *mandapa* with *kakshasana* and a porch. The sanctum is *pancharatha* on plan. The *sikhara* was of the northern type but now only its lower part is preserved. The *mandapa* and portico are roofless. The pillars of *mandapa* are richly carved showing *ghatapallava*, *kirttimukha* and bell motifs, attesting impact of Pratihara art. The doorjamb has three ornate *sakhas* and shows Vaishnava *dvarapalas* at base and Ganesa figure on the *lalata*. The *garbhagriha* lacks the enshrined image. The temple is built over an underground step-well. It is datable to *circa* twelfth-thirteenth century CE.





Before



During



After



Before



During



After



Before



After

**Banjaron ki Chhatri containing pillars similar to the railing pillars of Bharhut Stupa at Lalsot,
Distt. Dausa**

It is a six pillared *chhatri* with a dome shaped roof. The pillars reused in the *chhatri* are superficially similar to the railing pillars of Bharhut. These carved pillars of white spotted red sandstone are datable to the pre-Kushana period.



Banjaron ki Chhatri, Lalsot, Distt. Dausa



Before



After

Banjaron ki Chhatri, Lalsot, Distt. Dausa



Before



After

Banjaron ki Chhatri, Lalsot, Distt. Dausa



Before



After

Banjaron ki chhatri lal sot Distt. Dausa



Before



After

Banjaron ki chhatri lal sot Distt. Dausa



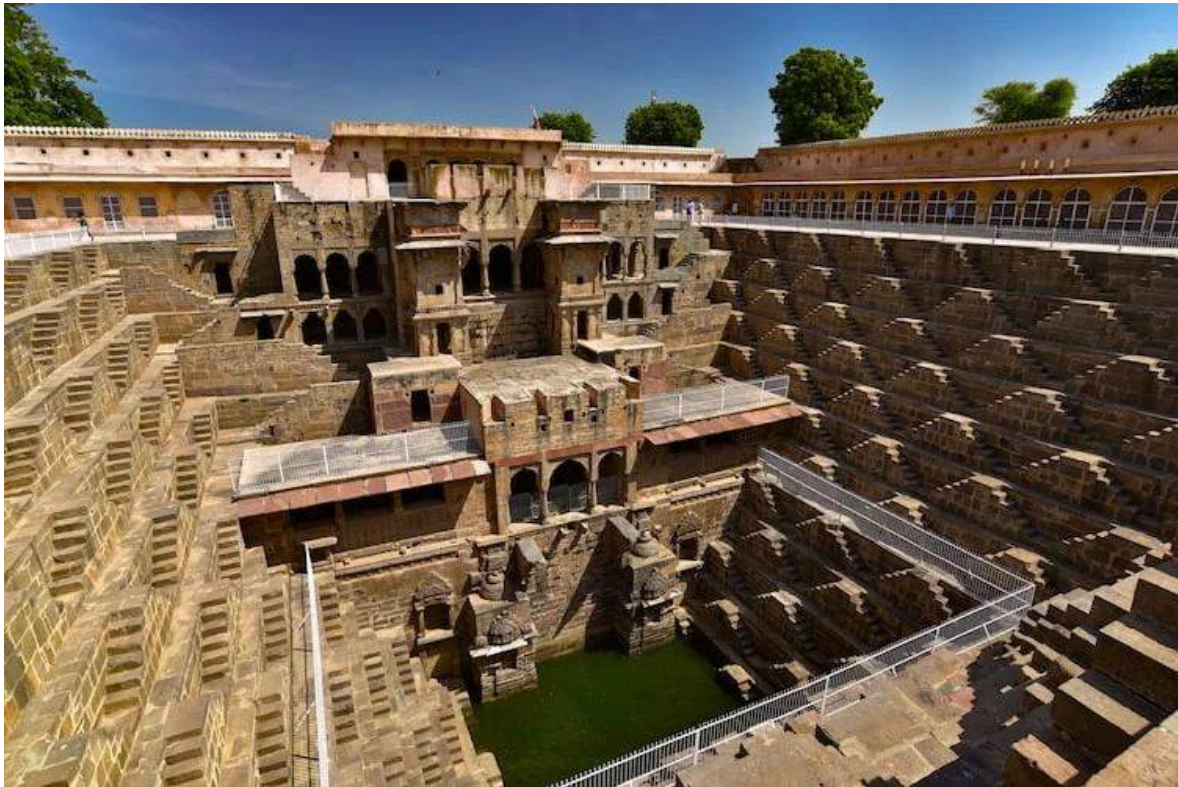
Before



After

. Baori at Abhaneri, Distt. Dausa

Named after Raja Chanda, a Rajput ruler of the eighth century A.D., this grand *baori* has imposing design and dimensions (about 19.5 m in depth). It has been provided with double flights of steps on each of its ten landings on the three sides. The fourth northern side consists of a multi-storeyed corridor supported on pillars and two projecting niche-shrines which have beautiful images of Mahishamardini and Ganesa. There is also a very small room known as Andheri Ujala. The *baori* is enclosed by a high wall having a gateway to the north. The enclosure is provided with verandah on all four sides.



Baori at Abaneri, Distt. Dausa



Before



After



Before



After



Before



After

Baori at Abaneri, Distt. Dausa



Before



After

Baori at Abaneri, Distt. Dausa



Before



After



Before



After



Before



After



Before



After



Before



After



Before



After

Ticket counter at Baori, Abhaneri



Before Conservation



After Conservation

The boundary wall of the monument was raised to prevent unauthorized access to the monument premises.

Baby Care Room at Baori, Abhaneri



Before Conservation



After Conservation

A baby care room was renovated and re-opened for public use.

Baori at Abhaneri



Before Conservation



After Conservation

Pointing work of steps was carried out to strengthen the structure and prevent water infiltration thus improving the stability of the stepwell.

Harsat Mata-ka-Mandir at Abhaneri, Distt. Dausa

It is a dilapidated temple of which only the sanctum shorn of its superstructure has survived standing on two stepped terraces. The sanctum is *pancharatha* on plan with pillared *mandapa* and porch. The sanctum is enclosed by an ambulatory. The temple has a sculptured niche on each buttress of the wall. The cardinal niches show Vasudeva-Vishnu, Pradyumna and Balarama-Sankarshana respectively, on the south, west and north, indicating that the original temple was dedicated to Vishnu. At present, it enshrines an image of Devi, locally called Harshat Mata. The main attraction of the temple are its sculptures carved in the niches around the plinth of the upper terrace, exhibiting religious and secular themes which include dance, music, garden-sports and love, depicted with rich luxuriousness and a sense of gay abandon. The temple is assignable to the eighth century.



Harsat Mata-ka-Mandir, Abaneri, Distt. Dausa



Before



After



Before



After

Harsat Mata-ka-Mandir, Abaneri, Distt. Dausa



Before



After

Harsat Mata-ka-Mandir, Abaneri, Distt. Dausa



Before



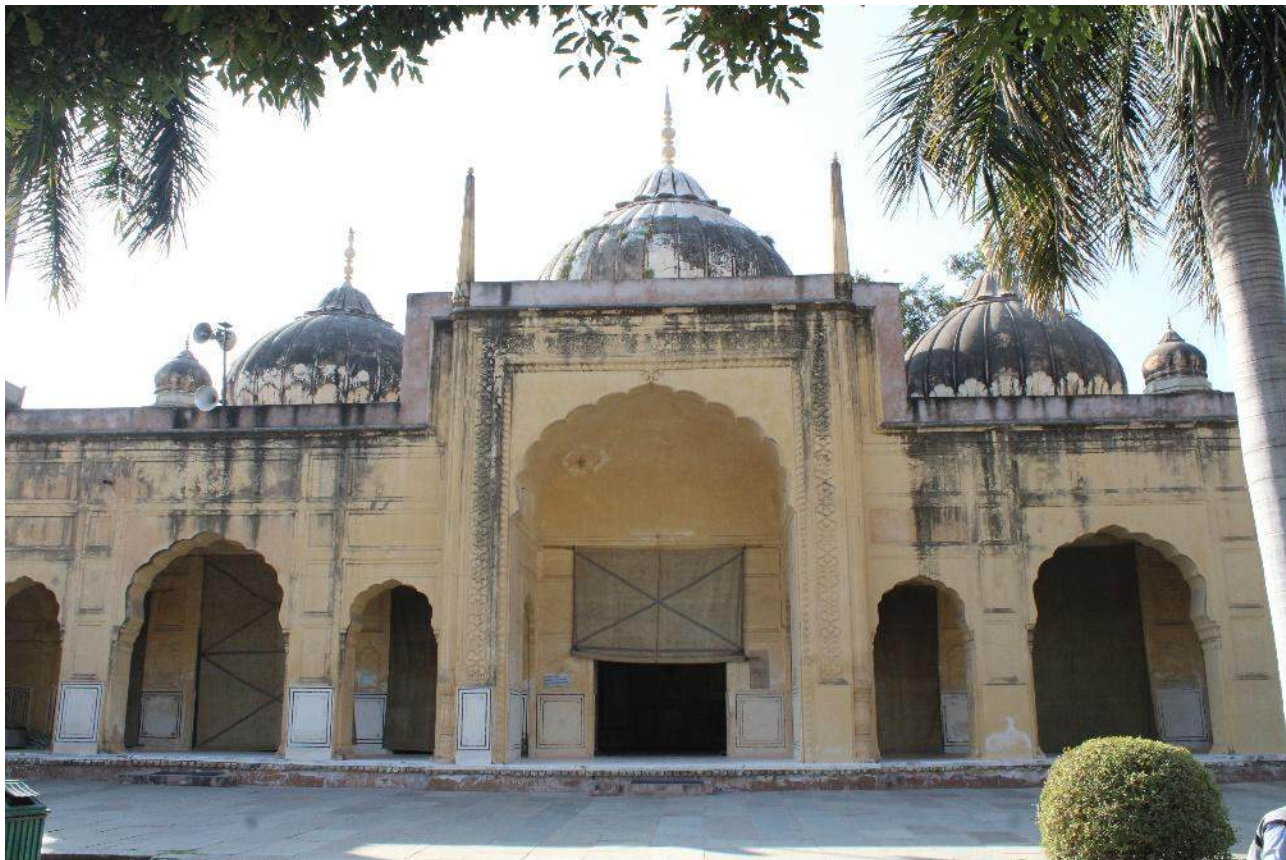
After

. Jama Masjid (Akbari Masjid) at Amber, Distt. Jaipur

This mosque is built on the usual plan has five arched screen and deep *mihrab* on the western wall. In front of the mosque there is a courtyard entered through small gateways from three directions. Four high *minars* built on the corners enhanced the beauty of the mosque. An inscription in Persian on the left side of the central arch states that this mosque was built by Raja Bharmal on the order of emperor Akbar in A.H. 977 (AD 1569).



Jama Masjid, Amber, Distt. Jaipur



Before



After



Before



After

Kalyanraiji's Temple at Todarai Singh, Distt. Tonk

This magnificent medieval temple, facing east, is dedicated to lord Kalyanji. It is built on a very high platform and consists of a *garbhagriha*, an *antarala* and a pillared *sabhamandapa*. The sanctum is *pancharatha* on plan having curvilinear *sikhara* with *uruhsringas* and *karnasringas* and a short *griva* surmounted by *amalaka*. The *bhadra* niches contain images of Uma-Mahesvara, Siva-Trimurti and Simhavahini goddess on the north, west and south respectively. The door-frame is intricately carved and is *panchasakha*. A figure of seated Ganesa is shown as *lalatabimba*. The most noteworthy figures are of Dholamaru on camel shown on the eastern outer wall of the pillared *sabha mandapa* on either side of the entrance. The temple is datable to *circa* sixteenth century A.D.



Kalyanraiiji's Temple at Todaraisingh Distt. Tonk



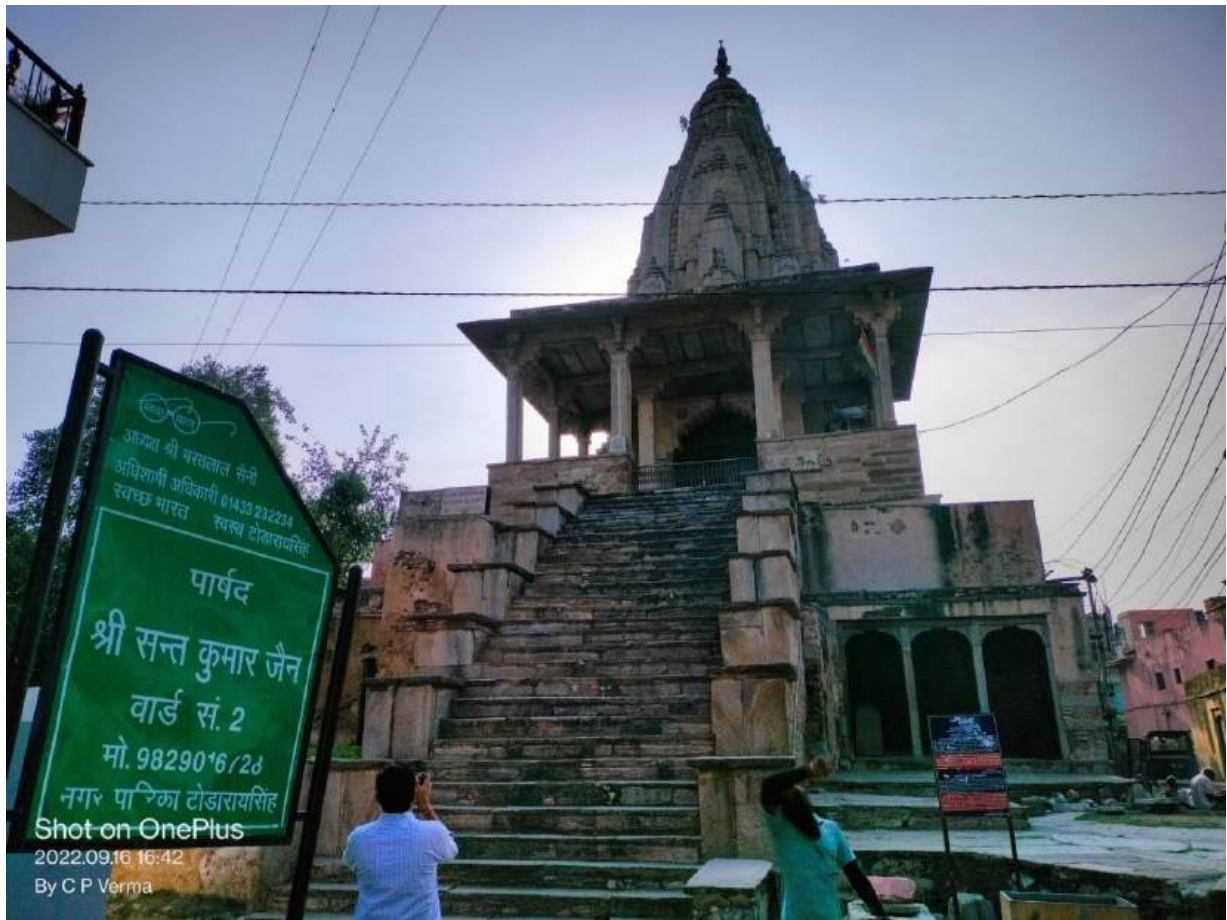
Before



During



After



Before



After



Before



After



Before



After



Before



After

Laxminarayan Temple at Todaraisingh, Distt. Tonk

Popularly known as Gopinath Temple, this edifice is dedicated to Vishnu. It consists of a *garbhagriha*, an *antarala*, a *mandapa* with *kakshasana* and a portico. The temple is *panchratha* on plan with open *pradakshinapatha*. The *adishthana* portion is richly carved showing panels of *kirttimukhas*, elephants, horses and human figures depicting scenes of Dholamaru, Lakshmi-Narayana, dancing Ganesa, Varaha, Narsimha, Gaja-Lakshmi, etc. The panels at the *jangha* level depict figures of Lakulisa, Vishnu, Ushtra-vahini, *mithuna*-figures and female figures in various postures. The *sikhara* is curvilinear with *urusingas* and *karna-sringas* surmounted by *amalaka*. The *mandapa* pillars are highly ornate showing *ghata-pallava* design. The door-frame is *trisakha* with Ganesa as *lalatabimba*. It is datable to seventeenth century A.D.



Laxminarayan Temple at Todaraisingh, Distt. Tonk



Before



After

Laxminarayan Temple at Todaraisingh, Distt. Tonk



Before



After

Laxminarayan Temple at Todaraisingh, Distt. Tonk



Before



During



After

Laxminarayan Temple at Todaraisingh, Distt. Tonk



Before



After

Laxminarayan Temple at Todaraisingh, Distt. Tonk



Before



After

Shergarh Fort

The fort is situated about 7 km south of Dholpur city on the left bank of the Chambal river near a road bridge on the National Highway No. 2. The fort was built earlier and was enlarged, repaired and used by Shershah Suri in 1540 CE. The stone fort has four gates and is entered from east through a large gate. The fort has palace buildings, a temple of Hanuman and a tomb, besides some ruined structures.



Shergarh Fort, Distt. Dholpur



Before



After



Before



After

Excavated site Samber, Distt. Jaipur

The extensive mound on the bank of a dried up lake represents ancient Sakambhari, capital of the imperial Chahamanas of the medieval period. The mound 600 m north to south with an average width of about 550 m was first excavated by Hendley in 1884 and then by D. R. Sahni in 1936-38. The excavation yielded 45 separate small dwellings at six levels ranging in date from the third-second century BCE. to the tenth century CE. The small finds are numerous and varied. The recovered coins, nearly 200 in number, include six silver punch-marked coins, one of the Indo-Greek King Antiochos Nikephoros and a few of the Kushanas, Yaudheyas and late Indo-Sassanians. Beads and pieces of gold have also been found. Copper and iron objects were recovered in large number. Dicing was a favourite amusement. The numerical marks on ivory dice are enclosed in concentric circles. Terracotta figurines seem to be of the Sunga, Kushana and Gupta dates. The glazing of pottery was practiced in this ancient town from very early times.





Before



After

Laxminarayan temple at Amer, Distt. Jaipur

The temple consists of a sanctum, vestibule and an open assembly hall and rests on a high platform relieved with deep cells. It was built by Bala Bai, wife of Prithviraj of Kachhawaha dynasty in the first quarter of the sixteenth century CE. Bala Bai, daughter of Rao Loon Karan of Bikaner, was a great devotee of lord Krishna.





Before



After

Sri Jagat Siromani Temple at Amber, Distt. Jaipur

The temple was built in the memory of Jagat Singh by his mother, Rani Kanakawati, wife of Man Singh I of Amber (A.D. 1589-1614) and is the best specimen of early decade of seventeenth century A.D. Dedicated to Radha-Krishna and facing west, the temple consists of sanctum, vestibule and *mandapa*, with projecting screen windows on either sides. It stands on high ornate *pitha* followed by *vedibandha* and *jangha*. The square sanctum is crowned by *sikhara*. The two-storeyed *mandapa* has lateral transepts on either sides. The upper storey has balcony at three sides resting upon four pairs of pillars and two pairs of pilasters. The walls of the upper storey and the ceiling bear paintings depicting floral designs and mythological scenes whereas the outer walls are richly carved with floral and geometrical pattern. The Garuda-*mandapa* sharing common platform in front of the temple is intricately carved. The twin torana over the stairs leading to the temple is flanked by figures of elephants. The construction of the temple was started in A.D. 1599 and completed in A.D. 1608.



Sri Jagat Siromanijis Temple, Amber, Distt. Jaipur



Before



After



Before



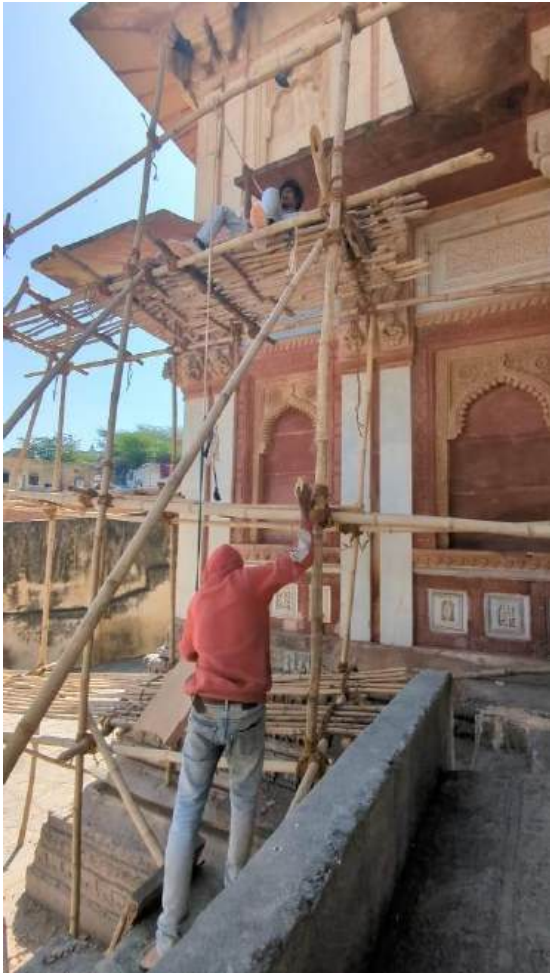
After



Before



After



Before



After



Before



After

Sri Jagat Siromaniji Temple, Amber



Before Conservation



After Conservation

Sri Jagat Siromaniji Temple, Amber



Before Conservation



After Conservation

Recess pointing work.

Sri Jagat Siromaniji Temple, Amber



Before Conservation



After Conservation

Recess pointing work.

Sri Jagat Siromaniji Temple, Amber



Providing and fixing stone dustbins



Providing support railings to go upstairs to see paintings at first floor of the temple



Recess pointing work at top of ceiling



Replastering work



Replastering work

Fortress known as Medhaji-ka-Mahal at Jamwa Ramgarh, Distt. Jaipur

This is an important fort having a historical value. It is pertinent to mention that Kachhwahas (rulers of Jaipur) first of all conquered this region from Meenas. It is very old fort of this area. Presently the relics are existed. About 1000 years ago it was the power key of Meenas and subsequently came under control of Kachhwaha Rajputs descedents of Raja Dulhe Rai.



Fortress known as Medhaji-ka-Mahal, Jamwa Ramgarh, Jaipur



Before



After



Before



After

Fortress known as Medhaji-ka-Mahal, Jamwa Ramgarh, Jaipur



Before



After



Before



After

Fortress known as Medhaji-ka-Mahal, Jamwa Ramgarh, Jaipur



Before



After

Fortress known as Medhaji-ka-Mahal, Jamwa Ramgarh, Jaipur



Before



After

Fortress known as Medhaji-ka-Mahal, Jamwa Ramgarh, Jaipur



Before



After



Before



After



Before



After



Before



After



Before

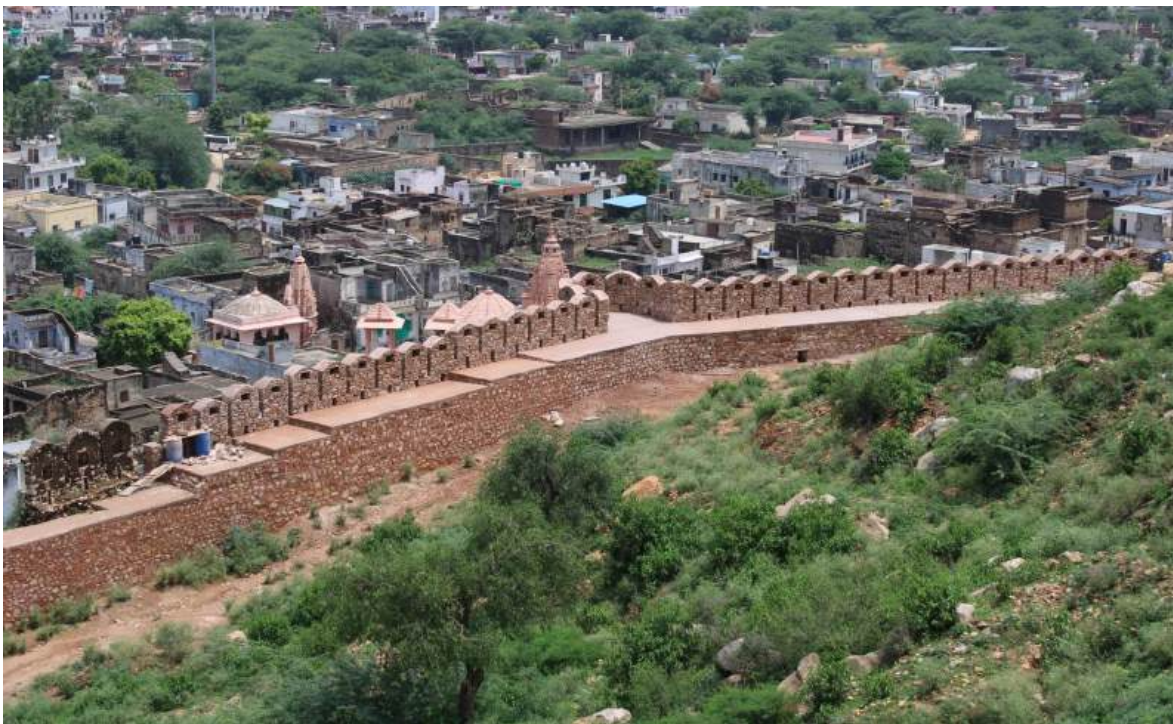


After

Fortress known as Medhaji-ka-Mahal, Jamwa Ramgarh, Distt. Jaipur



Before



After

Fortress known as Medhaji-ka-Mahal, Jamwa Ramgarh, Distt. Jaipur.



Before



After

Fortress known as Medhaji-ka-Mahal, Jamwa Ramgarh, Jaipur



Before



After

Fortress known as Medhaji-ka-Mahal, Jamwa Ramgarh, Jaipur



Before



After

Fortress known as Medhaji-ka-Mahal, Jamwa Ramgarh, Jaipur



Before



After



Before



After

Fortress known as Medhaji-ka-Mahal, Jamwa Ramgarh, Jaipur



Before



After



Before



After



Before



After

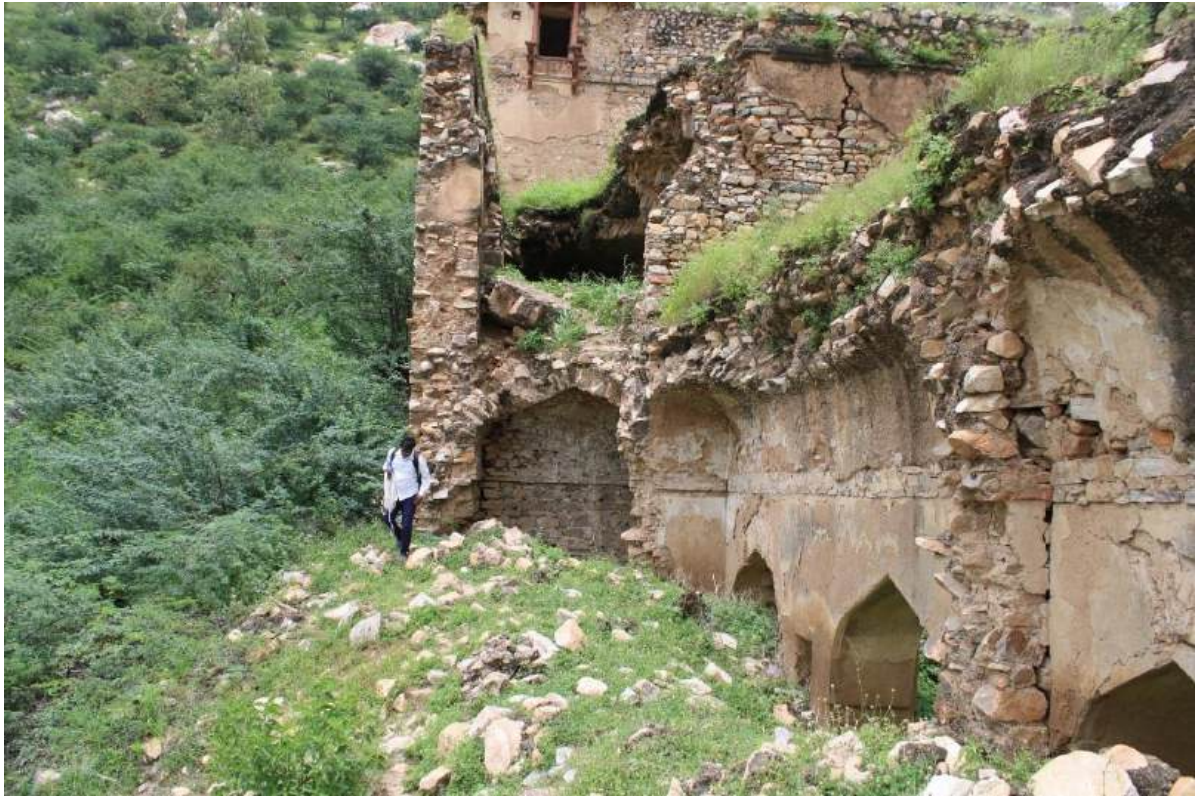
Palace near Mata ji ka Temple at Jamwaramgadh, Distt. Jaipur



Before



After



Before



After



Before



After



Before



After



Before



After



Before



After



Before



After

Fortress known as Medhaji-ka-Mahal, Jamwa Ramgarh, Distt. Jaipur



Before



After



Before



After

Fortress known as Medhaji-ka-Mahal, Jamwa Ramgarh, Distt. Jaipur.



Before



After



Before



After

Fortress known as Medhaji-ka-Mahal, Jamwa Ramgarh, Jaipur



Before



After



Before



After

Singh pole gate at Deeg Palace Deeg Distt. Deeg



Before



After



Before



After

Deeg Bhawans (Palace) at Deeg, Distt. Deeg

The Deeg Bhawans, popularly known as Water-Palaces, were raised by the Jat rulers viz. Surajmal (A.D. 1756-63) and Jawahar Singh (1764-68). Built of sandstone slabs of pinkish colour and finely plastered, this architecture is often designated as the Jat style. The buildings include (i) Gopal Bhawan with two flanking pavilions, viz. Sawan and Bhadon Bhawans, (ii) Suraj Bhawan, (iii) Hardev Bhawan, (iv) Kishan Bhawan, (v) Kesava Bhawan, (vi) Nand Bhawan, (vii) Singh Pol, (viii) Central Garden and two tanks named Gopal Sagar and Rup Sagar. The architecture is basically of the trabeate order but the use of arcuate system has been made in certain cases. The general features are engrailed arches resting on ornate pillars, hypostylar halls, flat terraces, balconies and pavilions with Bengal roofs. Semicircular, trifoiled and pointed arches are also met. Though not very imposing in conception, each bhawan possesses a dignity and delicacy. Besides, the Kachcha Bagh, also known as Rani Bagh, served as royal garden for the local rulers. This garden is situated at the back of the Gopal Bhawan across the Gopal Sagar (tank). The garden is connected with the palaces through Singh Pol as well as Suraj Gate. There is a rectangular pavilion in the centre of the garden which is enclosed by plastered stone wall. Various fruit trees are grown in the garden. It is datable to eighteenth century AD.



Hardev Bhawan at Deeg Palaces Deeg Distt. Deeg



Before



After



Before



After



Before



After



Before



After



Before



After



Before



After



Before



After



Before



After

Traditional Fountains at Deeg Palace, Distt. Deeg



Before



After



Before



After



Before



After



Before



During



Before



After



Before



After



Before



During



Before



After



Before



After

Astabal and back side area of Hardev Bhawan at Deeg Palace, Deeg, Distt. Deeg.



Before



During



Before



During

Hardev Bhawan at Deeg Palace, Deeg, Distt. Deeg



Before



After



Before



After



Before



After



Before



After



Before



After



Before



After



Before



After



Before



After

Maintenance and repairing of traditional fountains at Deeg Palace, Deeg



Before



After



Before



After

Sawan Bhawan at Deeg Palace Deeg Distt. Deeg



Before



After

Sawan Bhawan at Deeg place, Distt. Deeg



Before



During



After



Before



During



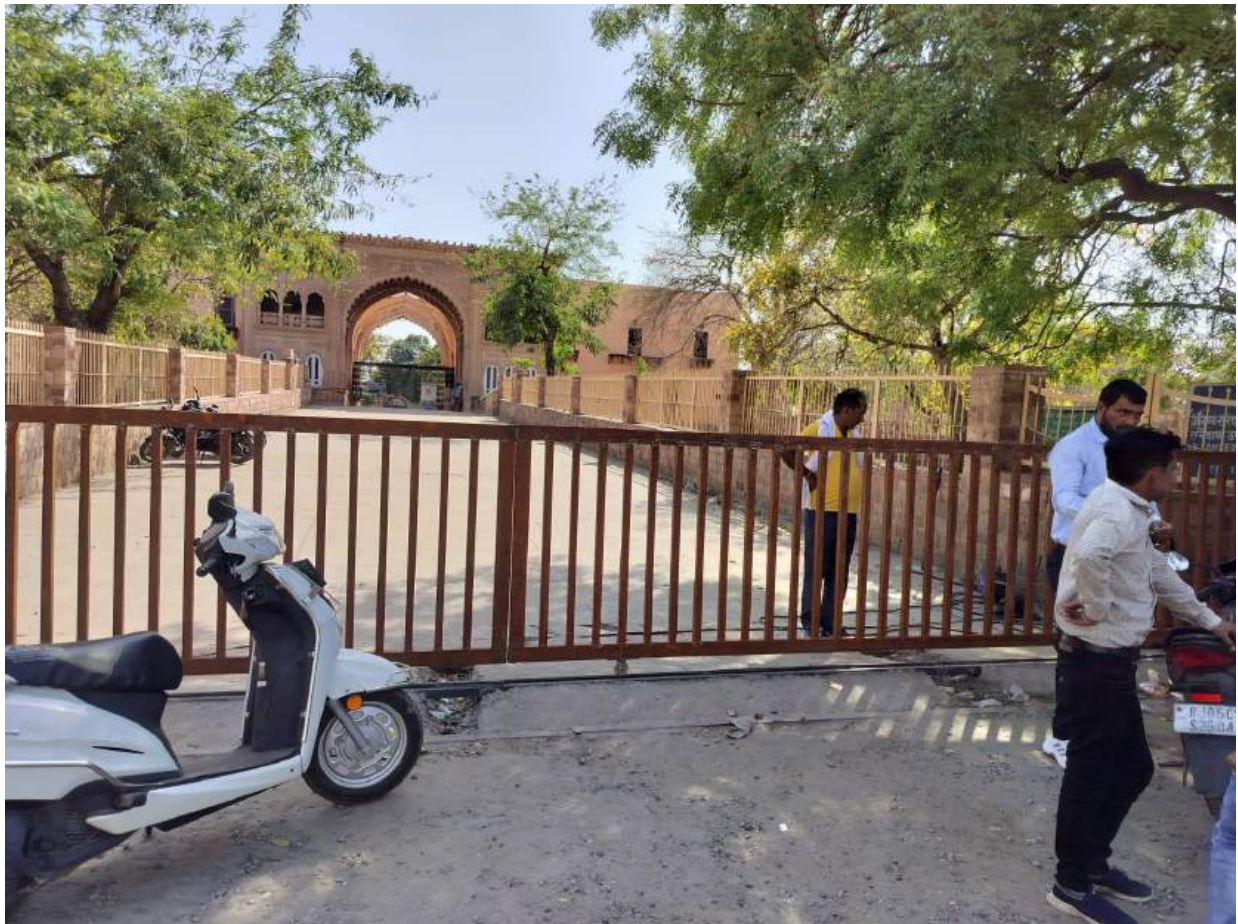
After

Singhpol Gate, Deeg

The condition of the entry to the Singhpol Gate was chaotic. In spite of opposition from some selfish people, a channeled gate was provided, making the entry to the magnificent monument pleasing.



Before



After

Siva Temple and two unpublished Gupta Inscriptions at Charchoma, Distt. Kota

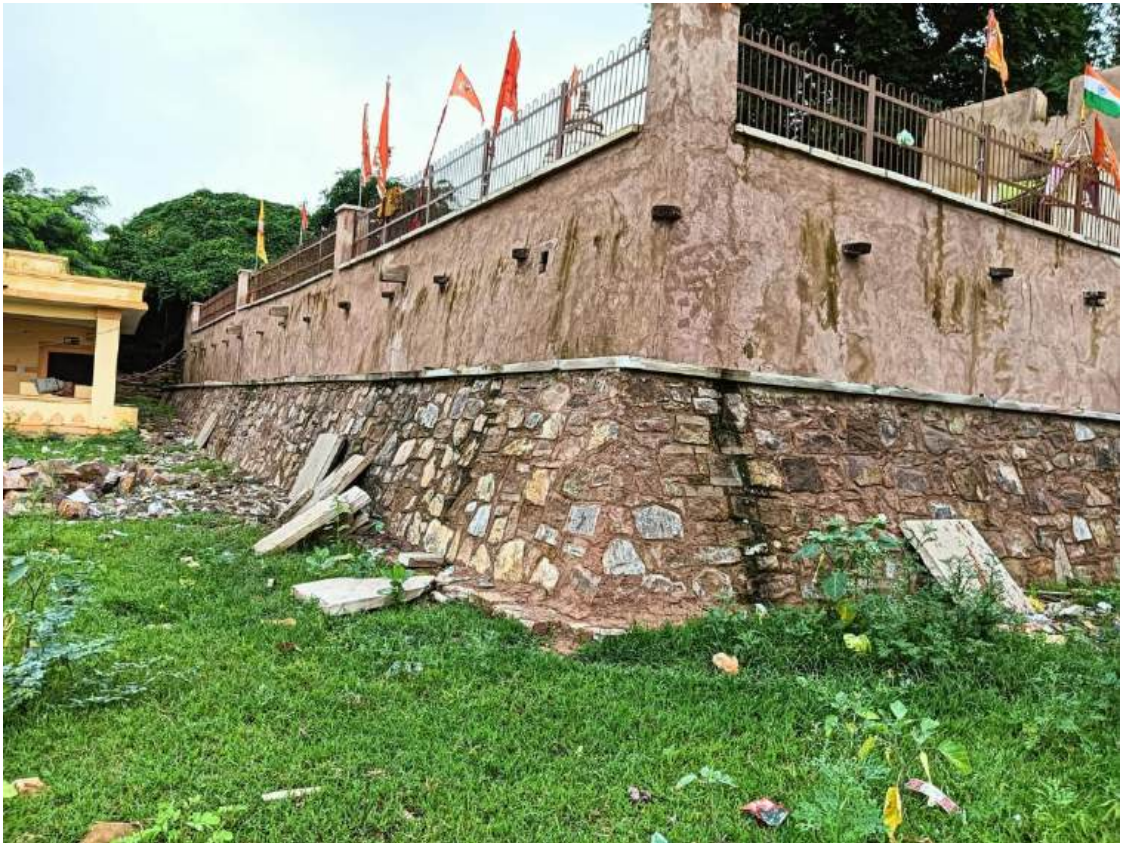
The temple is located roughly 25 km south-west of Kota town and consists of a *garbhagriha*, an *antarala* and a *sabhamandapa*. The *sabhamandapa* is rectangular and has a flat roof. The temple was renovated during the nineteenth century A.D. In the temple premises, there are two Brahmi inscriptions with Gupta letters. A four-faced Siva-*linga* is enshrined in the centre of sanctum. Stylistically, the temple seems to be ascribable to the Gupta period.



Charchoma Siva Temple and two unpublished Gupta Inscriptions



Before



After



Before



After



Before



After

Shiv Temple at Charchoma, Distt. Kota



Before



After



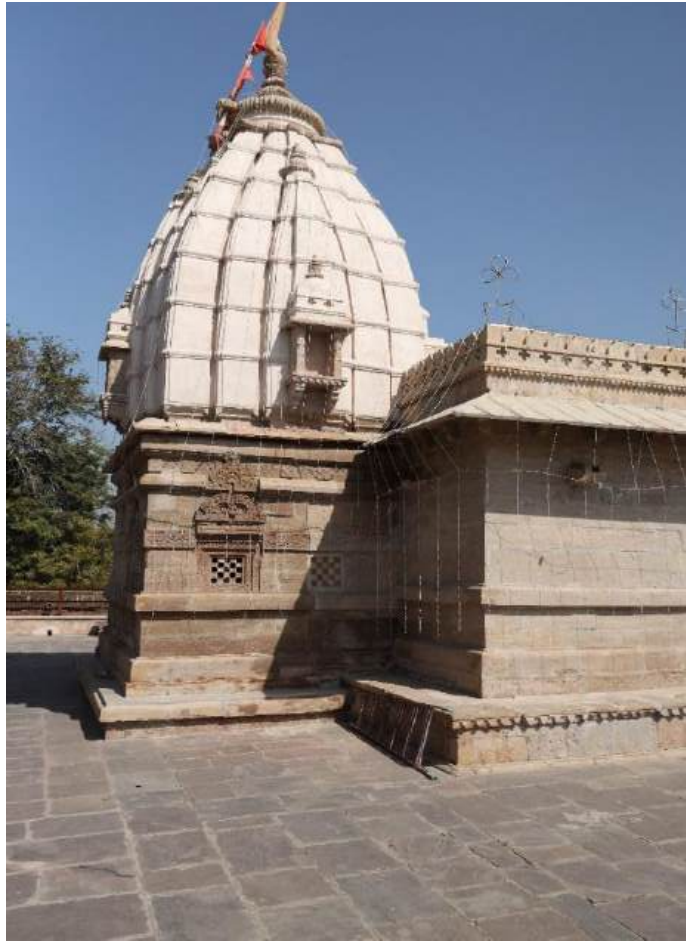
Before



After



Before



After



Before



After



Before



After



Before



After

Temple, fortwall and Statues at Dara or Mukandara, Distt. Kota

The narrow hill-girt valley known as Dara Mukundara has two principal monuments. One is a small fortress, also called Shikargah of the late medieval period which is entered through a large arched gateway from south-east. It has double-storeyed structures. The lower storey has a dalan with a large water storage tank. At the back of the residences, is a small shrine dedicated to Siva. In the courtyard, near the entrance is a step-well. The other monument is a Gupta period stone temple called Bhim-ki-Chauri, erected on a jagati (platform) and entered from the lateral sides. Facing east, the temple has a unique plan comprising a sanctum enclosed by heavy pillars and pilasters, preceded by a pillared *nandimandapa* of which only traces remain. The upper part of the sanctum pillars is adorned with floral and geometrical reliefs and its ceiling with a pattern of five lotuses. The temple has yielded interesting loose sculptures and architectural members including a figure of Ganga and a boy beating a flat metallic drum surrounded by rich scrolls of the typical Gupta period.



Temple, Fort wall and Statues Dara Distt. Kota



Before



After



Before



After

Temple Fortwall and Statues, Dara, Distt. Kota



Before



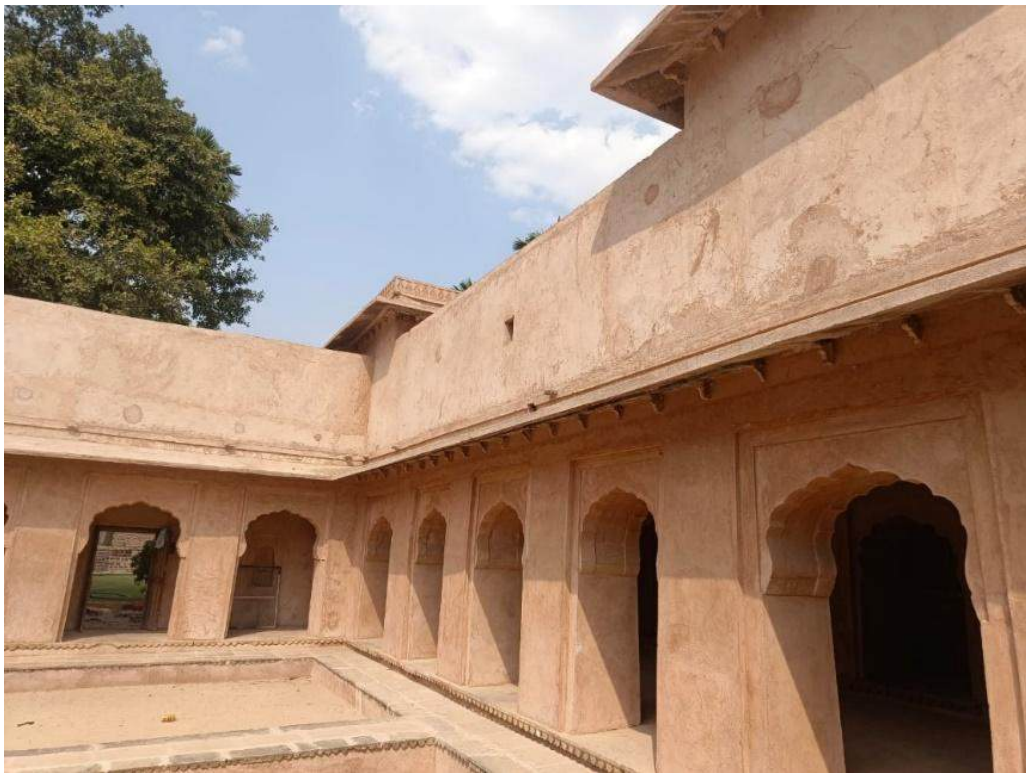
during



After



Before



After



Before



After



During



After



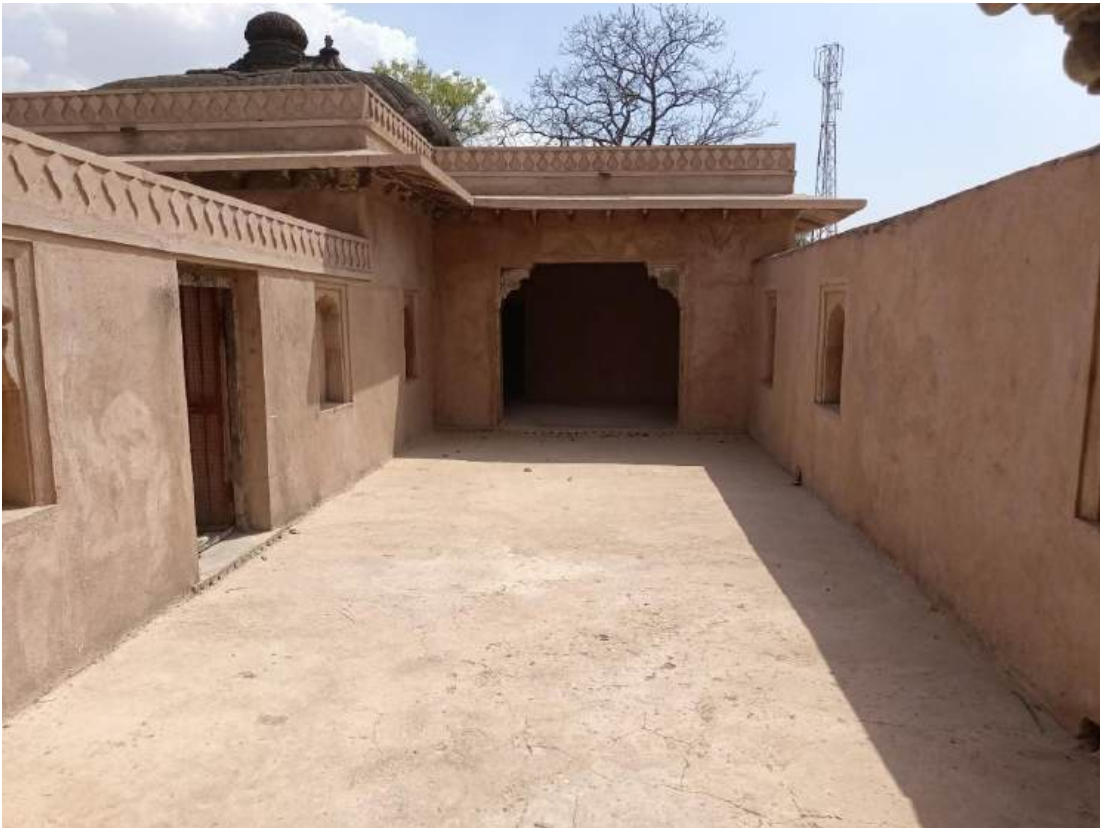
Before



After



Before



After

Temple with Inscription, Kanswa, Distt. Kota

The surviving remains of the ruined east-facing Siva temple are located on the bank of a spring in the outskirts of the present-day Kota. The temple consists of a *pancharatha* sanctum, kapili walls, a rebuilt *gudhamandapa* and a pillared *mandapa*. The sanctum facade has an ornate *adhishtana* and bears on the upper part of the *jangha* (wall) *kapota* cornice and ornate Mouldings. An inscription of Sivagana dated VS 795 (CE 738) occurs on its south *bhadra*.





Before



After



Before



After



Before



After



Before



After



Before



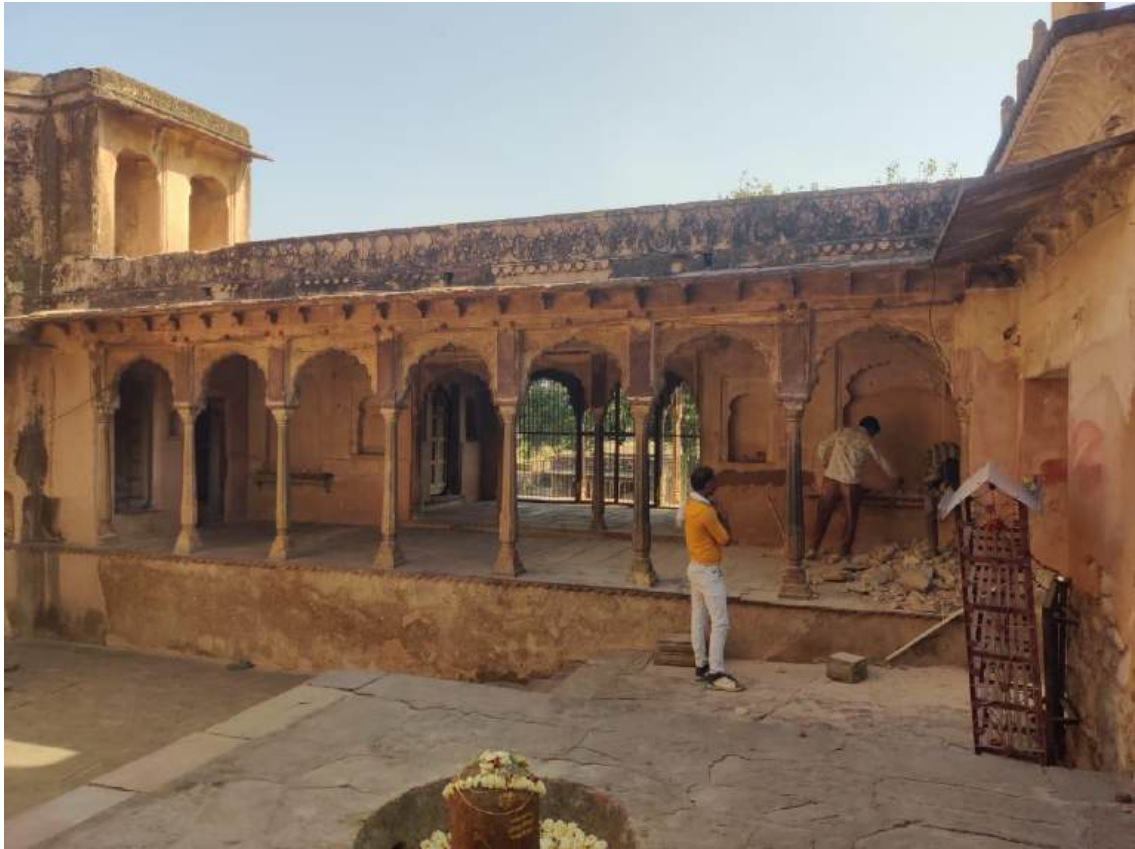
After



Before



After



Before



After

Samadhi inner portion of the temple complex at Kansuwa, Distt. Kota



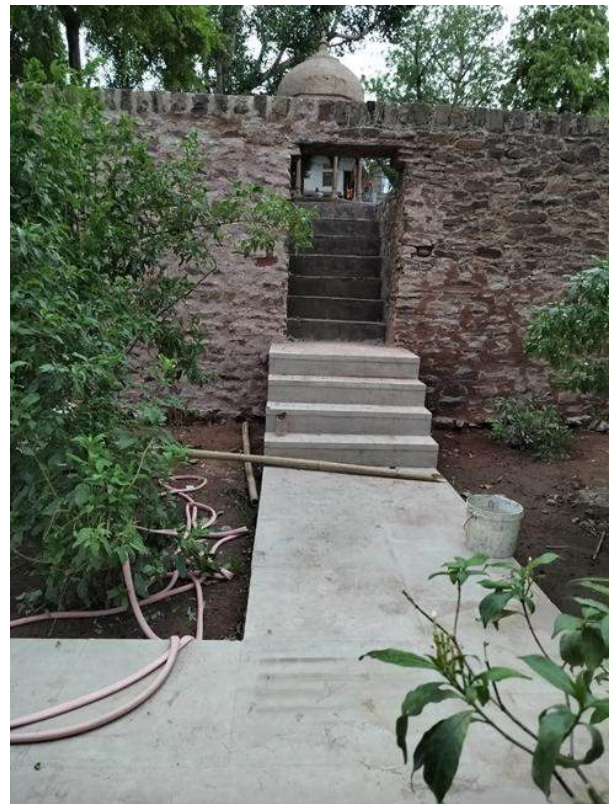
Before



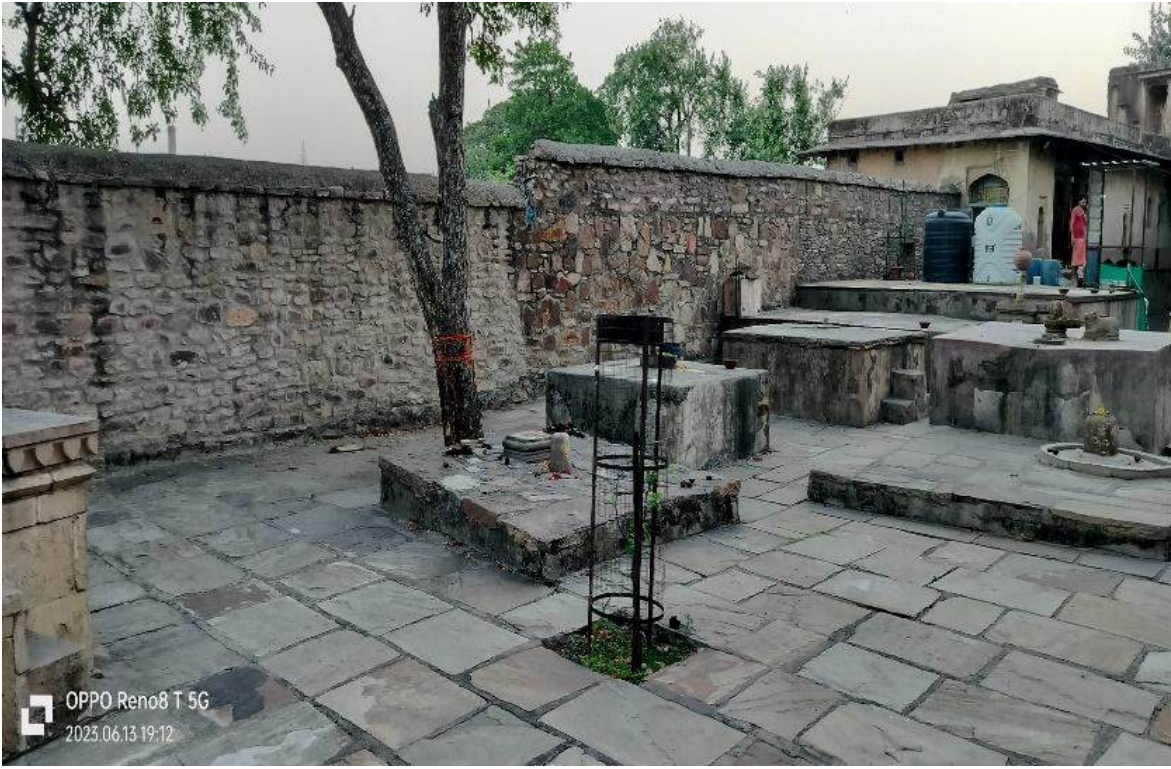
Before



After



After



Before



After



Before



After



Before



After



Before



After



Conceptualised, composed and authored by:

Dr Vinay Kumar Gupta

Superintending Archaeologist, Jaipur Circle

Archaeological Survey of India

With assistance of Jaipur Circle team