

BETUL

(01) DIGAMBAR JAIN TEMPLE (CAVE NO. 10) & OTHER TEMPLES, MUKTAGIRI



Muktagiri lies on the Betul-Paratwara road at a distance of about 50 kms from Bhainsdehi. There are a number of temples constructed by Digambar Jain from time to time them making it a Siddha Kshetra of the Jains of the 52 temples, two are quite old. One of them is the Cave no 10 Digambar Jain temple.

The temple seems to have been built in 13-14th century A.D. There is lotus decoration on both the flanks of the rectangular entrance gate of the rock-cut cave. An image of the 24th Tirthankar Mahavir Swamai is installed in *padmasana* posture on the entrance gate. There is lotus decoration on both sides of the image and two small images are carved on both the flanks below. The entrance gate is arched. A *chaitya vatayan* exists on both sides of the entrance gate in the front portion of the cave. A lotus is carved on both the flanks of the *gawakshas*. The upper portion of the *chaitya vatayan* is carved with an image of a *tirthankara* in *padmasana*.

An elephant is carved on both sides of it, which are shown as performing *jalabhishek* on the image. There is a *chakra* carved above the image. The right flank of the *chakra* is again carved with the figure of a *tirthankara*. *Gawakshas* are engraved on three sides in the upper portion of the entrance gate and the *vatayans*. The interior of the cave and the *garbha-griha* is square in shape. A *mandapa* decorated with leaf patterns is based on four pillars in the center of *garbha-griha*. The *mandapa* is a circular structure based on two pillars and four *kudya stambhas*. There are *rathikas* on all three walls of the cave where images of Jain Tirthankaras are built. Besides, there are other small square *rathikas* on the flank walls, which are 56 in number. The *rathikas* are occupied by miniature images of Jain Tirthankaras. It is a state protected monument. Most of the sculpture range from 13th to 20th century A.D.

(02) PANDAVA KI KACHAHARI (SHIVA TEMPLE), SALBARDI



The monument lies in the mountain ranges near village Salbardi in Multai tahasil on Betul-Paratwada road. Its distance from Salbardi is half km and it is reached by a track. Built in 13-14th century A.D. the stone temple is originally dedicated to Shiva, which is locally called Pandavon Ki Kachahari on the basis of legends and Gond Raja Ki Kachahari by the tribals. The entrance gate of the temple is west facing and the *garbha-griha* faces north. The roof of the temple is flat and construction of *shikhar* is not visible. There are three rows of pillars in the temple and a *mandapa* based on four pilasters on both sides of the gate which is built on half-walls in the western direction. Five decorated *asanas* are

built in the left portion of *mandapa*, where Shivalinga might have been installed. There are *jalharis* on these *asanas* and an outlet for water nearby. Five pilasters are built on the front wall in the right flank. The exterior of the temple is plain.

The pilasters on both sides of the entrance gate of *mandapa* are decorated and the center of upper doorjamb is carved with Ganesha idol. The left flank portion of the entrance gate is decorated with floral patterns and images. The images are considerably damaged. The entrance gate of *garbha-griha* is three-jambed. The first jamb is embellished with vines, the second by entwined vines and the third jamb's decoration is not clear. The lintel-piece is occupied by an unclear figure of Ganesha. The *garbha-griha* is a square structure. Situated in the center it is based on five pilasters. A Shivalinga is enshrined in the *garbha-griha*. The temple is a state protected monument.

*(03) ANCIENT SHIVA TEMPLE RUINS OF FORTRESS, BHAINSDEHI



The ancient Shiva temple is located at a distance of one km from Bhensdeh tahasil headquarter. Situated on the bank of Purna river the monument may be ascribed to the 15-16th century A.D. Raised on a high platform the temple is considerably ruined. Its *mandapa* is totally raged. The *mandapa* might have been based on 16 pillars. A Nandi idol is installed at the entrance of *mandapa* and a Ganesha image in the *antaral*. All the pillars of *mandapa* are decorated.

The square-shaped *garbha-griha* is carved with a *chandrashila*. The elevation plan of the platform of the temple has six projections on which the plinth is built. There are five projections on the plinth, which are decorated with artifacts. The *jangha* portion has sculptures in two rows. There are *rathikas* on six pillars in the *bhadra* portion of *jangha*. The angular portion is decorated with various images including those of Chanwardharini, Nayak-Nayika, a lass applying vermilion, lasses in dancing postures and playing musical instruments, Ganesha, Mahishasur Mardini, Saraswati, Hanuman, Rama and Digpalas. The *shikhar* portion above *jangha* was renovated during Maratha period and a new oval-shaped spire was built on it.

The *shikhar* has been painted. The *garbha-griha* has no Shivalinga and its gate is of *dwi-shaka* type. Figures of trident, mace, *dwarपालas* holding *katavangas* are carved on right and left sides of the first gate. The lintel-piece is occupied by Ganesha. There is a plate above it, which is decorated with lotus figures. Another plate above it is carved with an eight-armed dancing Shiva image. There is a Vishnu image to the right and that of Brahma to the left in sitting position. An image of Ganesha is placed to the right of Vishnu and that of Saraswati to the right of Brhama. A panel above it is carved with images of danseuses. The *garbha-griha* has been renovated and whitewashed.

The pillars of the *mandapa* are square and carved with figures of Nayak-Nayikas in dancing postures and playing musical instruments. A lotus figures is carved on a circular pole above it. The upper portion of the pole is round and on it exists the bracket top. Atlantes are carved on all four sides of it. There is a deep stone well in front of the temple. Sculptures of Nayak-Nayikas, Krishna, Maithun Yugal, Shiva, Ganesha etc are lying scattered around on the premises. Other temple structures might have existed on the platform of this east-facing temple. Only remains of them are now available.

The temple seems to have been associated with tribal art and culture. It is a state protected monument. Bhainsdehi also has a ruined fortress believed to have been built by Thakur Samman Singh of the qiledar family of the place.

(04) TEMPLE OF RISHI BABA AND MATA MAI, DEHATI DOLANHAN

Village Dehati Dolahan is located on the bank of Tapti river on Multai-Masod road. Vestiges of two ancient ruined temples lie in this village on the same premises. One of the temples is known as Rishi Baba (Maharaj) temple and the other as Mata Mai (Bhawani) temple.



Rishi Baba Temple is a one-room square structure. Now its original shape is survived only by plinth. The temple has been renovated by using the original stone blocks of the *jangha* portion. The *shikhar* was later built with modern bricks. The interior walls of the temple are carved with sculptures of Brahma, Laxmi Narayan, Saraswati and Ganesha. The exterior walls are carved with images of Chamunda, Mahishasur Mardini, Natesh, Andhakasur Vadh, Harihar, Surya, Mithun Yugal, Purusha in Ardhaparyankasana, Sthanak Surya, Balram,

Vayu, Agni, Bhairava, warriors etc. Most of these sculptures are worn out.

Mata Mai temple is built on a square plan in *saptarathi* style. The original plan consists of *ardha-mandapa*, *antara* and *garbha-griha*. At present only *antara* and *garbha-griha* survive. The elevation plan is survived by only plinth. The doorframe of the temple's entrance gate is a *trishakha* type. The first *dwar shakha* is carved with foliage and the lintel-piece is occupied by Ganesha in the center. There is a Harihar image to the left and that of Vishnu to the right. Images of Ganga and Yamuna are carved on both the flanks of the doorjamb. A *kirtimukha* is carved on Ganesha Patti. *gandharvas* are carved as offering garlands on both sides of the *kirtimukha*. At present both the temples are in a state of ruin. They can be ascribed to 15th century A.D.

(05) KARAGAR OF SHRI SITARAM BABA, SALBARDI



Salbardi in Multai tahsil lies on the borders of Amaravati district of Maharashtra. This is a rock-cut cave situated at a short distance from Muni Dev Ka Mandir in Satpura mountain ranges about 2 km from village Salbardi. It falls on Betul-Multai-Marshi-Amaravati road. It is known as Karagar of Sitaram Baba.

The cave is in the form of *mandapa* based on two pillars made by cutting rock in front of the main cave. There is a square room on both the flanks of *mandapa*. The entrance gates of these rooms are decorated with wall pillars and half-flowers. The pillars of *mandapa* are square. Steps have been made by cutting rocks for access to the flank rooms. An entrance gate has been made by cutting rocks in the center of *mandapa* for entry into the cave. The doorframe is decorated with half-flowers. Through entrance gate one enters into a spacious rock-cut hall. In the center of the hall a rock-cut *mandapa* is based on four pillars, which support the roof of *mandapa*. A rectangular room has been cut into each of three walls of the rock-cut hall, which are incomplete. No image is carved or installed inside the rock-cut cave. The shape of *mandapa* is rectangular in lower portion and square in upper portion. The rock-cut cave and its pillars are plain having no decoration at all. The half-flower decoration occurs only on the entrance gates of the cave and the flank rooms. No inscription has been found here. On the basis of architecture the cave belongs to Rashtrakuta period of 8-9th century A.D. It is important from archaeological point of view.