

level. Originally the structure had ten openings but at certain point of time openings of northern side has been closed. The characteristic feature of the building is the whispering effect, produced on two niches carved on the wall surface of eastern side and western side of the structure.

Mosque and the Dargah

The religious and sepulchral structures of Peer Jada Sheikh Salauddin is another important edifice of the complex. In 1532 A.D. Bahadur Shah ruler of Mandu led an invasion on the Raisen fort. To protect the fort from its' destruction the then ruler Silhadi embraced Islam and changed his name as Salauddin. After being recognized as peer, the present dargah and mosque were constructed. Niches and brackets of the mosque are highly decorated.



Mosque

Apart from it in the large courtyard of various sizes cannons are in display, giving an impression of the past.

Dhobi Mahal

The building located towards the south side of the Pameya temple, is a double storied structure with two separate blocks. Curiously both blocks are constructed in proper alignment. Like Rani Mahal here also an underground chamber is placed at its backside but here it appears to be used as a water structure. Remnants of a stone structure near the underground chamber suggest its importance.

Water Structures

The fort throws glimpses of excellent hydraulic management skill of the past. Presence of four large size tanks and as many as forty eight wells within the fort



Motiya tank

limit justifies the claim. Among the important water structure Madagan Tank, Motia Tank, Rani Tal, Dola Tal and Hamam etc are noteworthy.

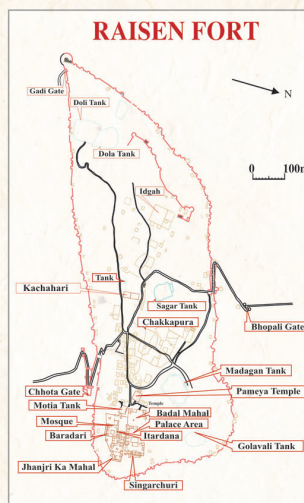
The Hamman

It is a single chamber structure with a domical roof. The chamber consist of two water tanks and a place for bath. They are provided with a fire-place too for the provision of hot water. Several types of oils & herbs were applied and the body massaged before bath. Such steam baths are useful for many skin diseases. Similar hammams are also seen at Mandu.

Besides the above in the Baradari complex, there are two underground water tanks constructed near the mosque. The rain water of the terrace and of ground floor was collected in these through different channels. The procedure of harvesting rain water gives a glimpse of their excellent water management system.

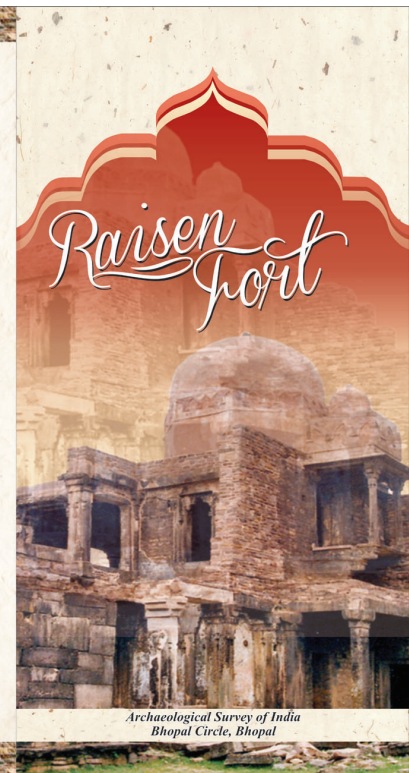
Sculpture Shed

The museum has a total of 112 sculptures displayed in the gallery in an arranged manner by classifying them into Saiva, Vaishnava, Jaina and Miscellaneous sections. Some of the important sculptures are dancing Ganesha, Uma-Maheswar, Hari Hara, Ardhanariswara, Garuda, Navagraha, Vishnu, Parsvanatha, Sati stones and other sculptural fragments. For the collection of this rich cultural heritage credit goes to the District Archaeological Society.



Sculpture Shed
Timing : Open all days from 09 am to 5pm

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Archaeological Survey of India
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General Introduction

The fort is situated on the hill top at Raisen popularly known as Raisen fort (23° 20' N, 77° 47' E) is situated about 40 Km. north-east of Bhopal on the Bhopal-Raisen Road and is about 20 Km on the south-east of Sanchi. The fort is built on a moderately undulating plateau of sandstone rocks which has more than 300 feet of elevation difference at the top from the ambient ground surface below. The line of fortification is built at above 200 feet from the ambient surface and has more than 150 feet elevational difference wherein the different tanks and palatial building are built using advantage of topography. In the palace area the identified structures include *Jhanjri Ka Mahal*, *Singarchuri*, *Pameyha Temple Mosque*, *Dhobi Ka Mahal* and tanks known as *Motia Tank*, *Rani Tal*. The general area of the fort also has several other tanks namely *Dola Tank*, *Doli Tank*, *Kachahari Tank*, *Sagar Tank*, *Madagah Tank* and *Golavali Tank*. Interspersed with these tanks ideally situated in the topographical differences these water structures provided sustenance to the denizens of the fort during medieval times. The rich history of the site is known from the presence of ancient temples, mosques, idgah, sati stones and graves besides the various gateways associated with memories of attacks by various rulers across more than 500 years of its active existence.

Tradition

The name Raisen is probably a corrupt form of *Rajavasi*. As per local tradition the place has been named after the name of Rai Singh, the founder of the place. Another belief that johar was committed by the daughter of Rana Sangram Singh with her 600 followers during medieval time makes the fort immortal among the people.

Fortification and Gateway

Brief History

The fort spreading over 10 sq.km area is strategically located. It retains lofty elevation and is having a massive line of fortification wall studded with thirteen large size bastions making it invincible. Nine gateways are piercing the fortification wall at different points. Excavations conducted at this site has revealed a early historic facet of Buddhist population from about 5th or 6th century AD. Later Rajput held the fort from the early mediaeval period.

The fort further witnessed several wars and vicissitudes of fortunes from 13 cent. AD onwards. Among the notable event, in 1234 AD. Sultan Iltutmish took over the possession of Bhilsa and Raisen and had proceeded towards Ujjain where he allegedly had destroyed the famous temple of Mahakala. In 1283 AD the region passed into the hands of Khalji. In about 1520 AD a local chieftain named Silhadi took over the region under his control who by that time had his supremacy over the Bhilsa and Sarangpur region. The year



Navkhanda Mahal

1543 AD. witnessed the arrival of Sher Shah to the region. Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi gives a vivid account of the siege of Raisen Fort. In 1561 AD Raisen fort came under the control of Mughal emperor Akbar. During his reign Raisen was the head quarter of a Sarkar in the Subah of the Ujjain. Several inscriptions in Nagari and Persian character are seen inscribed on the fort walls. The curious rock paintings of early periods depicting various themes are other important remains noticed in its adjoining hills which show the artistic creativities of man during early times.

Excavations

Excavation was undertaken in 1976 inside the fort by M.D. Khare of the Central Circle of Archaeological Survey of

India with a view to expose the buried structures. Excavation in the eastern part of the fort has revealed three phases of structural activity of which the uppermost phase is datable to 15 century AD. Structures are built of random rubble set in mud mortar with the wall plastered and floors are paved with stone slabs. A floor of lime concrete around a cistern and in front of rooms and small drain sloping towards the systems were exposed. Other important objects unearthed included two circular stones, copper coins of Muhammad Tughluq, copper and iron objects and a head of Vishnu. The image is assigned to the late Gupta period. Pottery include red ware, grey ware and black ware.

Structures

Many religious and secular structures such as *Rani Mahal*, *Badal Mahal*, *Baradari*, *Itardana* are located within the fort. They are in various stages of preservation. Details of some important structures are as below.

Pameya Temple

The temple stands on a high platform and consists of a *garbhagriha*, a pillared *mandapa*, a large courtyard and an entrance porch. The porch is supported by four large size square pillars. Doorjamb of the porch is decorated with various geometrical designs. Figure of Lord *Ganesha* is carved at the center of the lintel.

The *garbhagriha* of the temple is a rectangular chamber with plain interior walls. The temple is *pancharatha* on plan and is having a outer *pradakshina patha*. Doorjambs are decorated with floral motives. Figure of Lord *Ganesha* is carved at the center of the lintel suggesting it as a Siva temple. The *mandapa* of the temple is a rectangular structure with thirty two large size square pillars. A large courtyard with two underground chambers beneath it adds to ones curiosity. The underground chambers are having flat ceilings supported by pillars. Traces of flight of steps at the courtyard suggest that possibly it had a covered terrace too.

Badal Mahal

The palace has a grand-arched entrance from the west. Remnants of two storied structures, pillared halls, structures with domical roof on either sides of the gateway in addition to a large courtyard at the center speak of the architectural grandeur of the *Mahal*.



Shiv Temple

Rani Mahal

This is a majestic double storied, rectangular structural complex, divided into 7 segments, each supporting a domical super structure. A large Hammam known as "*Rani Tal*" located at the center of the courtyard is an outstanding feature of the palace. It has 124 square pillars holding a super structure and is approachable by two flight of steps, both from the southern side with a small pavilion at its center.

Apart from this an underground chamber, measuring 30x3.25x6m, is located within the structural complex behind the *Mahal*.

Jhanjri Mahal

The building located on the southern side of *Rani Mahal* is believed to have been occupied by the queen of *Jhanjri*. One can step in to the palace through a corridor with a decorated entrance. Geometrical and floral decorative motives are carved on the doorjambs. The palace rectangular on plan consists of two storied structures, pillared halls and a large courtyard. Here two dome shaped super structures are noticed.

Baradari

Within the fort area, the Baradari complex is the best preserved one with various well known structures like the *Itardana*, the *Masjid* and the *Dargah*.

Itardana

The structure is known for its whispering effect. It is a rectangular structure with a vaulted roof with three miniature stupis on the roof terrace. Externally the structure is simple and plain whereas niche shaped decoration is seen on the interior faces of walls. Niches are carved at a height of 2.30mt. from the ground