

ABSTRACT

Katas Raj is momentous for many religions because of its more than a dozen sacred monuments. These monuments belong to Sikhism, Buddhism, Shaivism, Vaishnavism and Hinduism. It is compelling for Sikhs because of the historic Hari Singh Nalwa fort. It is cogent for Buddhists because of the ancient stupa of Asoka. Katas Raj is much more symbolic for the Hindus; every year several Hindus visit this place, perform holy baths and fill their pitchers with the holy water of Katas Raj; they assume the water; as the tears of Lord Shiva. The place is important for the Hindus because of its ancient Shiva Linga also; which is fixed at the core of the Shiva temple, Katas Raj. Katas Raj is the holiest temple of Hindus, after the temple of Jwalamukhi, Himachal Pradesh, India. As per the Hindu traditions, Katas Raj has the second holiest water; after the water of the River Ganges. With the government's efforts, this site can also take place in the world heritage sites by UNESCO. It is the need of the hour to take immediate steps to conserve all historic Hindu temples and Sikh Gurdwaras inside the country; so that the country can earn revenue and reconstruct its image in the nations of the world. This research document is an attempt to explore and analyze the historical architectural cogent of the Katas Raj group of temples and its current stature in Hinduism. The study aims to inquire why people visit this bygone temple? The current study finds out the positive management policies for the protection and promotion of the Katas Raj group of temples. Direct observations and in-depth interviews have been conducted to query about the recent problems.

ABBREVIATIONS

AD	Anno Domini
BC	Before Christ
CE	Common Era/ Current Era
MNA	Member of the National Assembly
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization
ADP	Association of the Development of Pakistan
PHED	Public Health Engineering Department
PKR	Pakistani Rupee
KPK	Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
PM	Prime Minister
KM	Kilometer
IT	Information Technology
PTI	Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf
ETC	Et cetera

INTRODUCTION

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INTRODUCTION

District Chakwal lies in the North of the Punjab, Pakistan. Chakwal was created as a district on 1st July 1985 by combining sub division Chakwal of district Jhelum, subdivision Talagang of district Attock and subdivision Kallar Kahar of district Kusaab. Fourth tehsil Lawa was carved out of subdivision Talagang and fifth tehsil Choa Saidan Shah was also carved out of subdivision Pind Dadan Khan of district Jhelum. Chakwal considers as an ancient city because of the ruins of the temples. There are many historical buildings in Chakwal such as Shiva Ganga Malkana temple, Malot temple, Kallar temple, Katas Raj and Bagh-e-Safa etc.¹

Katas Raj apprises its magnificence from the glory of its past. The word ‘Katas’ or ‘Kataksha’ is derived from the Sanskrit language, which means ‘Spring of Raining Eyes’. The pond itself is held to have been called by a variety of names. Initially, it was ‘Vis-Kund’ or ‘Poison Spring’ as its water was unpleasant. It was next described as ‘Amar-Kund’ after that ‘Chamar-Kund’ and finally ‘Kataksh-Kund’ or ‘Spring of Raining Eyes’.²

Katas Raj has dichotomous anecdotes of the Shiv and Pandav brothers associated with its historical existence. The past stories tell that it is a Shiva temple of Lord Shiva, who stands as a powerful god in the Hindu religion. His energy is called Shakti, which can destroy everything but is also a symbol of new life. Sati was the first wife of Shiva. When his beloved wife Sati died, he was so dejected and broken-hearted that the tears rained from his eyes and formed two pools; one in Pushkar near Ajmer and the second one is Kataksha in the Salt Range. The later narrative tells that according to Mahabharata (it has been written in the 300 BC originally) five

¹ Dr.Liaquat Ali Khan Niazi, “*Tareekh-e-Chakwal, Tareekh-o-Saqafat*”, Sang-e-Meel Publications, Lahore 2019 Pp25- 27 (translated by the scholar).

² Abrar Babary, Mahwish Zeeshan, “Reminiscent of Hinduism: An Insight of Katas Raj Mandir”, *The Explorer Islamabad: Journal of Social Sciences*, Vol-1, Issue (4): Pp 121-124 Department of Anthropology, PMAS-Arid Agriculture University, Rawalpindi 2015 Pp 121-122.

Pandava brothers stayed there at Katas Raj, during their exile period from their homeland by Kauravas from Ayodhya.³

Katas is located in the northern part of the Salt range about 40 kilometers away from Chakwal. The height of the Katas is 2200 feet above sea level. It is 27 kilometers away from Kallar Kahar. Before the partition of the Indo-Pak, Hindus used to visit this temple and performed worship and bathed in the sacred pool. Even to date Hindus bathe in its holy water to purify. The pool looks partly artificial due to its clean water. According to Hindu belief, Ashnan; taking bath in the holy pond washes away the sins because the holy water is associated with the tears of Lord Shiva. Katas Raj is considered sacred among Hindus, standing as a locus of the center for Hindu pilgrims.⁴

In Hinduism Lord Shiva and Shiva Linga both keep significance. The majority of the Hindus believed that Shiva Linga puja brings prosperity, wealth and peace to the worshiper's life. Another reason for Shiva Linga worship for Hindu females is, that they believe that they will get good spouses as Parvati got Shiva after the worship of Shiva Linga. Hindus believe that the worship of Shiva Linga rewards prosperity and stress release to the worshippers. Shiva Linga presents the power of Lord Shiva. It can be made with different stones but in most of the Shiva Lingas, black marble is used. However, this Linga inside the Katas Raj compound is made of sandstone. Red stone, which is an indication of Mughal architecture, is used at the entrance wall

³ Abrar Babary, Mahwish Zeeshan, "Reminiscent of Hinduism: An Insight of Katas Raj Mandir", *The Explorer Islamabad: Journal of Social Sciences*, Vol-1, Issue (4): Pp 121-124 Department of Anthropology, PMAS-Arid Agriculture University, Rawalpindi 2015 Pp 121-122.

⁴ Abrar Babary, (2015). Pp121-122

of Ramachandra temple. This temple has two Jharokhas (Mughal architectural windows) and an inside Mughal muralism delineation art with multi-colours.⁵

Katas Raj temple compound is considered equally consecrated for Hindus as Makkah and Madina are for Muslims. Katas is having Satghara temples ranging from 8th to 10th century AD, Hari Singh Nalwa's Haveli, Bairagi house, Old Library Building or Maharaja Sundernath's Mansion, Caves along with Sadhu's houses, the Police station of 1907, Shiva Temple along with Baradari and sacred pool, Buddhist structural remains of 5th to 6th century AD and other small temples.⁶

Many caves are present in the Katas Raj temple complex, along with the houses. These houses are called "Sadhu's houses". The caves are large enough that a human enters these caves. Different things are found during the excavation of this site such as Penis stones, Urinary stones, Stupa stones, Pillars, Flower stones (that mostly belong to stupa), Writing stone known as katba, two other pillars on which some signs and pictures of men and women, and Statues on which pictures of the horses are there. Many of the things that were extracted during the excavation process were sent to the Taxila and Kallar Kahar museums.

Details of the Katas Raj subsidiaries are the following: -

1. Stupa of Katas Raj
2. Satghara temples
3. Ramachandra temple
4. Hanuman temple

⁵ Abrar Babary, (2015). Pp121-122

⁶ Muhammad Kamran, "Katas Raj Mandir", Taxila Institute of Asian Civilization QAU, Islamabad 2015 p4.

5. Caves/ Sadhus' houses
6. Well of Pandava Brothers
7. Mansion of Hari Singh Nalwa
8. Shiva temple
9. Havan Kund
10. Pond of Katas Raj
11. Bairagi house
12. Mansion of Maharaja Sundernath/ Old Library Building
13. Mahant Mansion
14. Tunnel
15. Police Station of Katas Raj
16. Swami's Residence
17. Al-Beruni's University

And many other small shrines and temples of Hindus are there at Katas Raj. The total area of the Katas Raj site is 164 Kanals.⁷

⁷ Muhammad Kamran, "Katas Raj Mandir", Taxila Institute of Asian Civilization QAU, Islamabad 2015 p4.

The sacramental water of Katas Raj adds to its sanctity, where thousands of pilgrims come for their purification and perform their religious rituals. Katas' sacred water has the same importance as that of Ganga's River in Hinduism. This holds the second most significant in terms of the holy waters of Hinduism. Katas's Water fell from Shiva's eyes and Ganga's water fell as an offshoot of Shiva's hair. It was Brahma who provided the benefit to Bhagiratha to make it possible for Ganga to stream on Earth. To hold her fall, Shiva permitted Ganga to collapse on his head and protected her in his knotted hair and prettified Shiva's head.⁸ There was a language University in Katas in the 11th century AD, from which renowned Muslim mathematician, astronomer and historian Al-Beruni, who is the author of the book "Kitab-ul-Hind" also, learnt Sanskrit.⁹

Statement of the problem

Preservation and protection of archaeological, historical and cultural sites, is a serious problem in Pakistan. Several problems regarding heritage protection and positive promotion policies are also looked upon in this research work. This research study is about the historiography and significance of the Katas Raj temple complex. Katas Raj temple complex is multi-cultural and multi-religious. This study aims to find out the cultural, religious, historical and archaeological significance of Katas Raj, as an exclusive study on this topic has not been conducted yet.

Aims and Objectives

1:- To elaborate the historical and cultural background of the Katas Raj of the Mahabharata age.

⁸ Kishore Nand (IT Teacher Punjab School of Mines, Katas), Personal Interview by the researcher, September 13, 2021.

⁹ Dr.Liaquat Ali Khan Niazi, "*Tareekh-e-Chakwal, Tareekh-o-Saqafat*", Sang-e-Meel Publications, Lahore 2019 Pp134-136.

2:- To describe the archaeological significance of Katas Raj.

3:- To highlight the recommended steps for the preservation and conservation of the archaeological site of Katas Raj.

Research Questions

1:- What is the historical and cultural significance of Katas Raj?

2:- How is Katas Raj important archaeologically?

3:- What measures are to be taken by the government to preserve and conserve the archaeological site of Katas Raj?

Theoretical Framework

Hinduism is supposed to be the oldest religion on the planet Earth. According to the Hindus' opinion, Hinduism is a proper code and conduct (Dharma) for life. To describe their narrative, they use the term "Sanatana Dharma " which means the 'eternal faith'. In short "Sanatana Dharma" and "Vaidika Dharma " are the other names of Hinduism. According to Lokamanya Tilak, 'A Hindu is he, who believes that the Vedas contain self-evident and axiomatic truth'. In Hinduism, the temple is the place of God and it is the most artistic place and the center of their lives. A temple serves socially and spiritually both for the Hindus.¹⁰

Temple is a Latin word, which means, a place which is specified for all religious and spiritual activities such as meditation, sacrifice, prayer and worship. It is a place that is to be conducted by the priest. Temple has the same meaning as the word "template" does. Temple has

¹⁰ Sheikh Khurshid Hasan, "Pakistan: Its Ancient Hindu Temples and Shrines", National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research Centre of Excellence, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad 2008 Pp1-8.

a lot of meanings in the local jargons of India. It is known as Mandir in Hindi and Urdu. While in Telugu, it is Devasthanam. According to “Manimaran”, ‘The Mandir word is derived from the ancient Sanskrit, which means the God’s house’. In Hindi, the meaning of Mandir is the ‘inner-self’ of a person. The temple is a link between man, the universe and the deities in a sacred space. In Hinduism, people do not visit a temple every day but in their homes, usually they have small temples or a ‘Puja Room’ for their daily prayers. Hindus only visit temples on special occasions for their religious and cultural activities.¹¹

The temples of Hindus never play a pivotal role in the funerals and weddings. However, many people chose the Havan (the holy fire) for their marriage inside the temples (as many people conduct marriage ceremonies in the Havan-Kund of the Shiva temple of Kataraj since its restoration by the Punjab Archaeology Department). Hindus do not offer congregational prayers except the “Bhajans” and the “Kirtans” as these are the fidelity melodies. In fact the history of temple architecture is more than 5000 years ancient and there is a lot of variation now in the temple architecture in Hinduism, with different shapes and sizes; octagonal and semicircular with different types of vaults and wickets. The architectural structure of the temple evolves on the two theories: -

Shilpa Shastra

Shilpa Shastra deals with art and craft, forming statues, stone panoramas, painting, jewelry, carpentry and many other things.

¹¹“Temples of Koh-e-Jud & Thar”, Anjuman Mimaran, Lahore 1989 Pp9-14.

Vastu Shastra

Vastu Shastra deals with the buildings' architecture, buildings of temples, towns, forts, houses and their layouts etc.

The temple architecture has three major styles, Nagara, Vesara and Dravida.

Nagara Style

Initially, this style of the temple was evolved in the fifth century A.D. it is basically a shaped tower type style, which also known as 'Shikhara', 'Nagara', 'Indo-Aryan' or 'Northern-Indian'. Salt range temples such as the Satghara group of temples (four temples of Katas Raj) and Malot temples (two temples) are the best examples of Northern Indian architectural style temples. It is rouged of layers upon layers of architectural components such as "Kapotas" (it is a Sanskrit word, which means covering) and "Gavakshas" (is also a Sanskrit word, which means cow's eye), all components garnished by a large circular bolster like component called "Amalaka". The Nagara style is Trivarga (a Sanskrit word, which means a group of three), in its preferment natural elements namely "Jagati" (a Sanskrit word for pedestal), "Kati" (a Sanskrit word for impediment) and "Manjari" (a Sanskrit word for belfry).



FIGURE 1 NAGARA STYLE OF TEMPLE ARCHITECTURE (WWW.GOOGLE.COM)

The fortification walls in Nagara style are often so dilapidated and broken up that the steeple frequently gives the inkling of being ring-shaped. There are many concepts regarding the roots of Shikhara that progressed from the cupola shacks of Eastern and Central India before the Christ time period. Moreover, many officialdoms are of the view that the Nagara style of temples, was enlarged out of the Buddhist stupa gingerly becoming broadened from the rig-spherical heap, by the numerous doctrinal changes that occurred during the initial centuries of the first millennium up to it eventually got hold of the kind of a pillar or a steeple. The Nagara style of temples has acquired its tendrils all over the extent and width of the Indo-Pak.

The branches of the Nagara style are instituted in Rajputana from 8th to 11th centuries AD, in Kashmir from 200 AD to 1300 AD, in Orissa from 800 AD to 1250 AD, in Bengal from 8th to 17th centuries AD, in Gwalior in the 11th century AD, in Deccan from 11th to 13th centuries AD and in Gujarat from 941 AD to 1311 AD etc. Shikhara style has formed outstandingly at Orissa. So, the Shikhara style slowly matured into a foursquare emergence owning many magnificent halts at each and every one. It makes the foisting of the Shikhara easy thereby amplifying the splendor and magnificence of the shape and its structure. Halted angles and rib cages successfully make a donation of the brightness and silhouette, following in the embellishment of the general beauteousness. Moreover, these halts supply appropriate parallel sectors for the exhibit of the statues of the deities.¹²

Dravida Style

The Dravidian style of temples is common in Southern India. The optical consequence of the Dravidian style of temples is that of a steeple climbing on a series of parallel platforms. In the Dravidian style of architecture, the location of the Shikhara is petitioned only in the fundamental members of the erection e.g., ring-shaped, quadrangle semestral or octennial cupola shaped characteristics. The Dravidian style of temples has coextensive surrounding barriers. The ingress court is motioned by a high "Gopura " (a Sanskrit word for an entrance gateway). The Dravidian temple architecture style is further divided into five following categories: -

(i) Chalukyan: This kind of temple had been used mostly from 600 AD to 750 AD. This style has attained its own features; its examples are Aihole, Badami and Pattadakal temples etc.

¹²Shaikh Khurshid Hasan, "Pakistan: Its Ancient Hindu Temples and Shrines", National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research Centre of Excellence, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad 2008 Pp9-16.

(ii) Pallavas: This style had been mostly used in architectural styles from 600 AD to 900 AD. The Kailasanatha temple in Kanchipuram is its best example. It deals with the different Oasis and vestibule than the other kinds of Dravida.

(iii) Cholas: This kind of Dravida style had been used mostly from 900 AD to 1150 AD. Brihadeesvara temple at Thanjavur is a true example of the Cholas Dravida style of temple architecture.



FIGURE 2 DRAVIDA STYLE OF TEMPLE ARCHITECTURE (WWW.GOOGLE.COM)

(iv) Hoysala: This style of Dravida had been used from 1100 AD to 1350 AD mostly. Such types of temples are actually dissimilar to Dravida and Nagara style of temple architecture. The Keshava temples hold many slanted protuberances having many sided columns as Hoysala have got tangled plans.

(v) Vijayanagara: This style of the temple was mostly used from 1350 AD to 1565 AD. The main attribute of this style is the parallel series of the egg-shaped paddock barriers with “Gopuras” (entrance gateways) in the middle of each side. The most spectacular temples of Vijayanagara are in Kanchipuram, Madura, Vellore and Thiruvannamalai.¹³

Vesara Style

Vesara style of temple architecture is a combination of Nagara and Dravida styles of temple architecture both. However, it has its own oddities; it is also called the Deccan style of temple architecture because such types of temples lie in Deccan. The main characteristic of such types of temples is cask-conditioned ridges. However, their frontage comprises four areas specifically. (i) Foundation area (ii) Pilastered area (iii) Cornice area and (iv) Shikhara area. Among these four the Pilastered area has the originality of the Gandhara Architecture. Remaining embodiments of the Pilastered area, for instance, are accessible in the temples of the two-headed Eagle at Sirkap (Taxila and Mankiala stupa). In the Pilastered area, there is mostly a trefoil métrier in most of the temples. This alteration has acquired its rhizomes in the Gandhara architecture and its chisels.

It is obvious that the temples in quest have acquired a distinguished style of architecture having been impacted both by the architectural heritage of Hellenism and Gandhara. Since

¹³Shaikh Khurshid Hasan, “Pakistan: Its Ancient Hindu Temples and Shrines”, National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research Center of Excellence, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad 2008 Pp9-16.

almost all the famous temples have been built between the 8th to 10th centuries AD. It was the time period of Hindu Shahis in Kabul, Kashmir and Punjab. Who defeated Turki Shahis and adopted their (Shahis) title. So it will be more pertinent to allot them a particular style of architecture specifically “The Hindu Shahi Style of Temple Architecture” as there are patterns even in the pre-Islamic time period when the style was named after an unquestionable ruling bloodline like Gupta, Chola and Chalukyan etc.¹⁴

Ultimately one can say that classification of temple architecture into two or three kinds is so unfair because every area and every time period has its own feature of architecture. For example, if we study the Nagara style of temples in Orissa, the temples at Bhubaneswar, Sun temple at Konarak and Khajuraho are very non-identical in their theoretical and architectural plans. Coomaraswamy has finalized definite doubts regarding the categorization of the temples into Nagara and Dravidian, and so does Ferguson and Rowland. Ferguson’s classification is based on genetic deliberations. The categorization by the others is also disappointing as it only takes into consideration the terra firma plan of the temples.

¹⁴Shaikh Khurshid Hasan, “*Pakistan: Its Ancient Hindu Temples and Shrines*”, National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research Centre of Excellence, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad 2008 Pp9-16.



FIGURE 3 VESARA STYLE OF TEMPLE ARCHITECTURE (WWW.GOOGLE.COM)

However, Rowland's point of view is quite pragmatic. He stated that it is impossible to construct any dissension of style on any kind of progressive basis as Hindus, Buddhists and Jains; all practiced almost all styles with the diminutive moderations of shapes to fulfill their ceremonial needs. In the same technique, the Dravidian style of temples is there in South India so he (Rowland) stated that, it is better to think of the three types of temples in the same technique as we perceive the Greek orders.

Temples in Southern India are different from those in Northern India. While the Vesara style of the temple is a combination of the Nagara and Dravidian style both. One can understand

that Hindu temple architecture is different, in different areas of the subcontinent but there are many things common also in all temples of the subcontinent. The majority of the temples are built on the top of the hills, alongside banks of the rivers and especially in the quaint places very near to the seashores to please the gods and the goddesses.¹⁵

The Hindu temple architecture has a variety and many common things also. Some of the characteristics of the Hindu temples are as under: -

The Sanctuary

The whole structure of the building of a temple has different names in different parts of India. In Nagara temple architecture (in Northern India); the temple is called "Mula-Parasada ", while in Dravidian temple architecture (in Southern India); it is called "Vimana". The upper part of the Vimana or the Mula-Parasada is called "Shikhara " and its lower part is called "Garbhagriha ".

The Dome and the Steeple

The Steeple of the dome is called "Shikhara"; in Sanskrit it is called "Summit". Shikhara represents the highest peak of the temple.

The Inner Chamber

The inner chamber of the temple is called "Garbhagriha" or inner chamber. It is the place of the Murti or idol. In most Hindu temples, common worshipers are not allowed inside the Garbhagriha. Only the Pandits or priests can access there.

¹⁵Shaikh Khurshid Hasan, "Pakistan: Its Ancient Hindu Temples and Shrines", National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research Center of Excellence, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad 2008 Pp9-16.

The Temple Hall

Most of the temples have halls, which are the congregational places for dancers and devadasis, where they perform dances, pray, chorus songs and do meditations. The halls are usually decorated with paintings of gods and goddesses.

The Front Porch

This area of the temple is usually adorned with a big metallic bell that hangs from the ceiling. Worshippers ring this bell during their arrival and departure at the temple (before and after their puja).

The Reservoir

Most Hindu temples are built alongside the natural watercourses, rivers and lakes. However, reservoirs of freshwater are built inside all temples' premises. Katas raj temple is a fine example of a natural water reservoir. This water is used for rituals as well as to keep the temples' floor clean or even for a ritual bath before entering the holy shrines of the temples.

The Walkway

Most of the temples have a walkway around the wall of the inner chamber for the strolling of the worshippers around the idol as a mark of respect to the god or the goddess of that particular temple.

Pitha

It is the platform of the temple.

The Amalaka

A fluted pillar-like stone placed almost in every Hindu temple at the summits of the shikhara is called the amalaka.¹⁶ Besides this, there are two foremost groups of the pedestals in temples architecture: -

- Vedibhadra
- Pratibhadra

Most of the Salt range temples have Pratibhadra pedestals.¹⁷

My research is based on Hindu temples. Kataraj temple is located in the tehsil Choa Saidan Shah of the district Chakwal. The temple is located near the Punjab school of mines Kataraj. There are many historical monuments inside the Kataraj temple complex. The architecture of the temple signifies the Northern Indian architecture and it throws light on the Hindu Shahi time period. My research focuses on the Kataraj temple complex, along with the features, material and constructional techniques of this temple and also covers all the possible aspects related to the history.¹⁸

Literature Review

"Tareekh-e-Chakwal" is a book written by Liaquat Ali Khan Niazi. The book comprises a brief description of the historical places of Chakwal, such as Malot fort, Kataraj, Takht-e-Babri (Kallar Kahar), Shiva Ganga Malkana temple etc. The author briefly explained the history of the Kataraj temple complex and the sacred watercourse of the Kataraj. Though the book

¹⁶ Shaikh Khurshid Hasan, "*Pakistan: Its Ancient Hindu Temples and Shrines*", National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research Center of Excellence, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad 2008 Pp9-16.

¹⁷ "*Temples of Koh-e-Jud & Thar*", Anjuman Mimaran, Lahore 1989-p37.

¹⁸ "Explore Punjab, Punjab Heritage Special", *The Tourism Development Corporation of Punjab* 2019 p11.

has been written in the Urdu language one can say that this is the first comprehensive book on the culture, history, politics and archaeology of Chakwal.¹⁹

“Historic Temples in Pakistan: A Call to Conscience” is a book written by Reema Abbasi. The book is a fine piece on the operational temples of whole Pakistan with fine photography. It has a chapter on the Katas Raj temples compound and the writer tells the exact measurements of the holy watercourse, Ramachandra temple, Shiva temple, caves, Mahant mansion, mansion of General Hari Singh Nalwa and four temples of Satghara statistically with photography.²⁰

“Architecture in Pakistan” is a book by Pakistani architect Kamil Khan Mumtaz. He is an architect in private practice in Lahore. He was trained at the Architectural Association, London in the 1960s after that he returned to Pakistan to practice and teach. He was head of the National College of Arts Lahore, from 1966 to 1975. In 1985, he wrote the book ‘Architecture in Pakistan’, a concept of Media Publication. It is a book of several ancient architectural designs of Pakistani buildings including Salt range temples such as Amb, Nandana, Kallar, Katas and Malot.²¹

“Islamabad and Environs” is a geographic book by M. Hanif Raza. The book contains geographical information about the Rawalpindi division’s areas city-wise. It throws light on the mines and minerals of Choa Saidan Shah and also the temples of Choa Saidan Shah.²²

¹⁹ Dr.Liaquat Ali Khan Niazi, “*Tareekh-e-Chakwal, Tareekh-o-Saqafat*”, Sang-e-Meel Publications, Chakwal 2019.

²⁰ Reema Abbasi, “*Historic Temples in Pakistan, A Call to Conscience*”, Niyogi Books, New Delhi 2014.

²¹ Kamil Khan Mumtaz, “*Architecture in Pakistan*”, Concept Media Pte Ltd 1 Grange Road, Singapore 1985.

²² M.Hanif Raza, “*Islamabad and Environs*”, Colorpix, Islamabad.

“Rawalpindi” is an Urdu book written by Raja Muhammad Khalid Janjua, on the history of the Rawalpindi division. The book contains comprehensive information about several historical and ancient buildings in the Rawalpindi division.²³

“Temples of Koh-e-Jud & Thar” is a tourist guide published under Anjuman Mimaran in 1989. It is a travel book on the travels of Salt range temples by the famous archaeologists of Pakistan. It is based on the field trips towards the temples of Katas, Amb, Malot, Kallar, Nandana, Kafir Kot and Shiva Ganga Malkana temple. It is a preliminary analysis of the Salt range temples, which are often known as Hindu Shahi temples.²⁴

“Jhelum District Gazetteer 1904” consists of the ancient geography of India regarding Singhapura and Katas Raj with references to some renowned archaeologists such as Alexander Cunningham, Dr. Stein and Professor Buhler and Chinese traveler Hiuen Tsiang.²⁵

“The Salt Range and Potohar Plateau” is a book by Salman Rashid on the historical significance of the Salt range. Basically it is a book of geography, which describes the chronological history of the Salt range temples such as Satghara temples, sacred watercourse, Ramachandra temple, Malot fort and ancient Singhapura civilization etc.²⁶

“Remnants of the Sikh Empire: Historical Sikh monuments in India and Pakistan” is a book by Bobby Singh Bansal, which was published in 2015. Bobby Singh Bansal is an award-winning writer, historian and documentary filmmaker. He wrote this book on mansions of Sikh

²³ Raja Mohammad Khalid Janjua, “*Rawalpindi, Rawalpindi Division Ki Mukhtasar Tareekh, Ahm Waqiyat or Malumaat*”, S.T Printers, Rawalpindi 2002.

²⁴ “*Temples of Koh-e-Jud & Thar*”, Anjuman Mimaran, Lahore 1989.

²⁵ *Gazetteer of the Jhelum District*, 1904.

²⁶ Salman Rashid, “*The Salt Range & the Potohar Plateau*”, Sang-e-Meel Publications, Lahore 2001.

Generals and Maharajas, which prevail in India and Pakistan as Sikhs ruled over Punjab in the first half of the 19th century, after the decline of the Mughals.²⁷

“Crafts of Salt Range Khewra” is a book by Dr. Muhammad Ashraf, under the ‘Directorate of Handicrafts and Design, Punjab Small Industries Corporation Lahore. It is a complete encyclopedia of the Salt range’s people, early history, origins, geographical distribution, eminent personalities of Potohar and Salt range, archaeological aspects of Salt range, and temples of Salt range, forts of Salt range, Crops, birds and animals of Salt range.²⁸

“Archaeological Survey of India, Report for the Year 1872-73, Vol-V” is a survey book on several Indian Archaeological places including Katas Raj by Alexander Cunningham. He was a British army engineer, who later took an interest in the archaeology and history of India. He was appointed to the position of Archaeological Surveyor. He wrote numerous famous and informative books. He explored the Salt range and its temples plus the Gandhara civilization and initiated the brief geography of ancient India. This Survey book is a brief geography of ancient India; it throws light on the ancient civilizations of India.²⁹

“Pakistan: Its Ancient Hindu Temples and Shrines” is a book by Sheikh Khurshid Hasan with photography. Sheikh Khurshid Hasan is an archaeologist of international repute. With more than 35 years of service in the Federal Department of Archaeology. His contributions are varied and multifaceted in the fields of archaeological research, conservation and preservation of cultural heritage and development of museums. He has contributed many research articles on

²⁷ Bobby Singh Bansal, “*Remnants of the Sikh Empire, Historical Sikh Monuments in India & Pakistan*”, Hay House Publishers India, New Delhi 2015.

²⁸ Dr. Muhammad Ashraf, “*Crafts of Salt Range Khewra*”, Directorate of Handicrafts and Design: Punjab Small Industries Corporation, Vol-IX, Lahore 2014.

²⁹ Alexander Cunningham, “*Archaeological Survey of India: Report For The year 1872-73, Vol-V*”, Office of the Superintendent of Government Press, Calcutta 1875.

different aspects of the architectural heritage of Pakistan. The book throws light on the architecture of the ruins of the Hindu temples and shrines in Pakistan. The author described the Salt range temples also, such as temples of Katas Raj, Kallar, Malot, Shiva Ganga, Nandana and Amb along with their architectural significance.³⁰

“Historical Forts in Pakistan” is a book also by Shaikh Khurshid Hasan. The book contains all information about all the forts of Pakistan with photography. It provides a brief historical and architectural account of the Salt range forts such as the fort of Malot and fort of Nandana etc.³¹

“History of Pakistan: Pakistan through Ages” is the last book of renowned historian and archaeologist Ahmad Hasan Dani. The book comprises all eras (from ancient to modern) of Pakistan including the Kashmiri Hindu Shahi bloodline to the ancient history of the Northern Areas of Pakistan.³²

“Reminiscent of Hinduism: An insight of Katas Raj Mandir” is a research article by Abrar Babary and Mahwish Zeeshan. The article throws light on the significance of Katas Raj in Hinduism. It deals basically with a query about why people visit this ancient temple. The article describes the significance of Shiva Linga in the Shiva temple and explains how Katas Raj is the second hallowed place for Hindus. As the holy pond’s water came from Shiva’s eyes and

³⁰ Shaikh Khurshid Hasan, “*Pakistan: Its Ancient Hindu Temples and Shrines*”, National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research Center of Excellence, Quaid-e-Azam University, Islamabad 2008.

³¹ Shaikh Khurshid Hasan, “*Historical Forts in Pakistan*”, National Institute of Historical & Cultural Research Center of Excellence, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad 2005.

³² Ahmad Hasan Dani, “*History of Pakistan: Pakistan through Ages*”, Sang-e-Meel Publications, Lahore 2019.

Ganges' water fell as an offshoot of Shiva's hair, after Ganges' water, the holy pond of Katas is significant for Hindus on the second number.³³

“Masonry Art: Preservation of Archaeological sites in Chakwal ” is a research article by Anum Fayyaz and Mahwish Zeeshan. The article describes the architectural design and material of archaeological sites of Chakwal such as Katas Raj temple compound, Malot fort and Takht-e-Babri. It throws light on the historical significance of the sacred pool and the story of Pandavas' exile and Satghara temples. It also describes the natural caves in front of Katas fort, fossils, coins, kanjoor stones, penis stones, urinary stones, katba and statues on which pictures of horses are present and many other things which have been found during the excavation of the Katas Raj. The article throws light on the anthropomorphous aspect of Katas Raj.³⁴

“Katas Raj Mandir” is a research paper by Muhammad Kamran. This paper presents an overall view of the Katas Raj temple complex with the help of a map and picture. The author described the trinity of the belief system in Hinduism. He explained the reason for “Shiva Linga puja” among Hindus. The author narrates the history of the Satghara group of temples and the five Pandava brothers, Yudhisthira, Bhima, Arjuna, Nakula and Sahadeva. All of them had a common wife Draupadi, which is an indication of polyandry being present in Hinduism.³⁵

“Identity Politics at Heritage Sites: Assessing the impact on the Ancient Temple Complex of Katas Raj, Pakistan” is a research paper by Fatima Siraj. This paper assesses the impact of identity politics on the ancient temple complex of Katas Raj. The paper argues that heritage sites

³³ Abrar Babary, Mahwish Zeeshan, “Reminiscent of Hinduism: An Insight of Katas Raj Mandir”, *The Explorer Islamabad: Journal of Social Sciences*, Vol-1, Issue (4): Pp 121-124, Department of Anthropology, PMAS-Arid Agriculture University, Rawalpindi 2015.

³⁴ Anum Fayyaz, “Masonry Art: Preservation of Archaeological Sites in Chakwal”, *The Explorer Islamabad: Journal of Social Sciences*, Vol-1, Issue (7): Pp 251-254, Department of Anthropology, PMAS-Arid Agriculture University, Rawalpindi 2015.

³⁵ Muhammad Kamran, “Katas Raj Mandir”, Taxila Institute of Asian Civilization QAU, Islamabad 2015.

like the Katas Raj are overdetermined by the forces of identity politics at the confluence of religion and culture. The paper has been divided into four sections. The first section is dedicated to sketching a landscape by drawing the region's historical significance. The second section explores the role of government and evaluates the problems faced by this structure in the current landscape. The third section explores the modern interactions with the ancient heritage sites. The fourth section is reserved to whether the structure reflects religious harmony or has become a victim of ignorance.³⁶

“The Temples of Katasraj in Pakistan between Legend and History” is a research paper by Muhammad Akram. The author is a lecturer of comparative religion in the Islamic studies department of the Islamic International University Islamabad. This research paper throws light on the multi-cultural and multi-religious aspect of the Katas Raj group of temples as it is swayed by Buddhism, Shaivism, Sikhism and Vaishnavism.³⁷

“Explore Punjab, Punjab Heritage Special” is a monthly magazine from Lahore which positively promotes tourism and religious tourism also through its monthly reports and articles. In its August 2019 edition, there is a report on Katas Raj by the Punjab Archaeology Department, which throws light on the religious and architectural significance of the Katas Raj temple complex.³⁸

“Ancient Geography of India” is another book by the archaeological surveyor Alexander Cunningham. This book is a thorough description of the ancient civilizations of ancient India. It provides a brief history of the ancient names of Katas Raj. However, Alexander Cunningham is

³⁶ Fatima Siraj, “Identity Politics at Heritage Sites: Assessing the Impact on the Ancient Temple Complex of Katas Raj Pakistan”, Academia, Accelerating the world's research, October 1, 2021, Academia Archives.

³⁷ Muhammad Akram, “*The Temples of Katasraj in Pakistan between Legend and History*”, (International Islamic University: Department of Comparative Religion).

³⁸ “Explore Punjab, Punjab Heritage Special”, *the Tourism Development Corporation of Punjab*, Lahore.

the only researcher, who claimed in this book that Katas Raj and the ancient state of the Singhapura, both are the same but later Dr. Stein went to Kahun valley and rejected this statement of Cunningham.³⁹

Research Methodology: -

This research study is composed of historical and descriptive research methods. Primary sources like photographs and maps have been used in this research work and interviews of the priests and guides of the Punjab archaeology department have been used. Direct observations have also been conducted in this research study. Secondary sources like books, research papers, articles, documentation and all the related literature of national and international scholars on Hindu temples and their architecture have also been used in this research study. The methodology of this research study is descriptive and based on field research.

Delimitation: -

This study covers only the archaeological, historical and cultural significance of Katas Raj's premises/subsidiaries. This study also deals with the obstacles in the way of promotions and preservation of the historical and architectural heritage of Katas Raj.

Significance of the Study: -

Katas Raj temple complex is a place of old ruins of Mahabharata age. One of the oldest human civilizations is buried in this village of Katas, and also in the whole district of Chakwal. This study is a complete and brief informative and historical document with reference to ancient Katas Linguistics University. This study is significant as it will help to reconstruct the history of

³⁹ Alexander Cunningham, "*Ancient Geography of India*", Cosmo Publications, New Delhi 2007.

the Katas Raj temple complex. This study would be a good source of information for those who are interested in the art and architecture of South Asian historical and sacred monuments. This research study will also be beneficial for the students of history, archaeology and tourism studies.

Organizational Structure: -

1:- Area Profile.

2:-Historical Significance of Chakwal.

3:-Ancient Archaeological Site at Katas Raj.

AREA PROFILE

1.1 Introduction

Pakistan is basically a tilling country. The latitude of Pakistan is 30.3753° N, which denotes Pakistan's positioning in the Northern Hemisphere. The longitude of Pakistan is 69.3451° E, which means Pakistan is a part of the Eastern hemisphere. So, Pakistan is situated to the North of the equator. Pakistan reclined over 1600 km's North to South and is about 885 km broad East to West. The total area is 796,095 square kilometers. 72 percent of the population of Pakistan consists of bucolic population, while the remaining 28 percent consists of urban population.⁴⁰

The concerned area in this study was Dhok-Roper Katas, commonly known as Katas Raj (A village consists of 35-40 families), where the research was conducted. It is located in Punjab, according to the census report 2017, the population of Punjab is 110 million and it is increasing 1.9 million annually. The population of Punjab is 57 percent of the whole of Pakistan. Total area of Punjab is 206251 square kilometers. Punjab is the most densely populated province of Pakistan and the land of Punjab is 25.8 percent of total area of the whole of Pakistan.⁴¹

There are 9 divisions and 36 districts in Punjab and these districts are further divided into tehsils administratively. My concerned division was Rawalpindi, which has four districts:

⁴⁰ K.U.Kureshy, "*Geography of Pakistan*", National Book Service, Lahore 1986 pp11-29.

⁴¹ K.U.Kureshy, (1986). pp11-29

1:- Rawalpindi district

2:- Attock district

3:- Jhelum district

4:- Chakwal district

My concerned district was Chakwal; further, Chakwal is divided into five tehsils administratively.

1:- Chakwal

2:- Choa Saidan Shah

3:- Kallar Kahar

4:- Talagang

5:- Lawa⁴²

1.2 Administrative Organization

Dhok-Roper Katas, commonly known as Katas Raj is a village in Dulmial Union Council, located in Northern parts of Punjab, under the administration of district Chakwal and further the administration of its tehsil Choa Saidan Shah. There are 8 union councils and 49 villages in tehsil Choa Saidan Shah. The population of Choa Saidan Shah is 119,368 among them males are 58,453 and females are 60,913 and transgenders are 2. And the total area of Choa

⁴² Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, June 29, 2021, Census Report 2017.

Saidan Shah is 473 square kilometers, out of which the total area of the Katas Raj Temple complex is 164 kanals.⁴³

1.3 Geographical Features

It is pivotal to know the geographical features of that particular society and area which is under observation.

1.3.1 Chakwal District

Brandreth Gate of Chakwal city can perfectly be declared as the capital of the Salt Range. It was built in 1892 to celebrate the services of the British civil servants but this gateway is the most neglected obelisk of Chakwal today as it is almost falling. The name Chakwal is derived from a tribe of Chaks. Chaks appeared on the pages of history firstly when the Sultan of Kashmir Zain Al Abedin flagellated their leader Pandu Chak to death because of their defiant activities as they were highly energetic. However, their activities did not shrink, so after the death of the Sultan in 1469, Chaks took control of Kashmir from Sultan's son Haider Shah. Finally, in the time period of Mughals, Akbar annexed Kashmir into his realm in 1582, Chaks scattered in the smooth land of the Salt Range that still hold up their name.⁴⁴

Chakwal is one of the 36 districts of Punjab. The population of Chakwal is 1500000 according to the census report 2017. Chakwal lies in the North of Punjab. Chakwal was created as an independent district on 1st July 1985. Before 1985 Chakwal city was the tehsil of district Jhelum, tehsil Talagang was a part of district Attock, tehsil Kallar Kahar was a part of district Khushab, police station Choa Saidan Shah was a part of tehsil Pind Dadan Khan of district

⁴³ Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, June 29, 2021, Census Report 2017.

⁴⁴ Salman Rashid, "*Salt Range and the Potohar Plateau*", Sang-e-Meel Publications, Lahore 2001 p152.

Jhelum and Lawa was a part of tehsil Talagang. In 1985, four tehsils merged into district Chakwal except Lawa. However in 2014, Lawa also amalgamated into district Chakwal as its fifth tehsil.⁴⁵

Chakwal has boundaries with Rawalpindi district and Attock district in the North, Jhelum district in the East and South-East, Khushab district in the South and Mianwali district in the West. Chakwal is a part of the Rawalpindi division. Chakwal lies between 71° 46'5" to 73° 17'2" East longitudes and 32° 32'11" to 33° 13'36" North latitudes. The total area of the district is 6,525 sq kilometers. There are five tehsils, 23 qanun goes and 198 patwaar circles within the proceeding limit of Chakwal. The population of Chakwal formed 1.36 percent of entire Punjab's population of 109.99 million according to the 2017 census report. The population of the district Chakwal has increased by 1.71 percent an average annual growth between censuses 1998-2017, which is less than the average annual growth of the Punjab which is 2.13 percent. Chakwal ranks 31st in terms of the population out of all 36 provinces of Punjab, in terms of annual growth rate, Chakwal ranks 28th in Punjab.⁴⁶

1.3.2 Topography

Geographically Dhok-Roper Katas is placed in the Salt Range and the Potohar Plateau as its physical features are typical of the district Chakwal. The South and South-East of the area are craggy and bumpy covered with swab jungle, covered with plains, and the North and Northern East consists of ripple plains with blotches of rocky area known as Khuddar in the local jargon.

One can classify the area into hills, lakes, dams, plains, rocks, versant plains, and alluvial plains. A part of the loam has also been extracted from the stones and shales. Katas is covered by

⁴⁵ Dr.Liaquat Ali Khan Niazi, "*Tareekh-e-Chakwal, Tareekh-o-Saqafat*" Sang-e Meel Publications, Lahore 2019 p30.

⁴⁶ Dr.Liaquat Ali Khan Niazi, (2019). p30

two lakes and natural watercourses, such as Kallar Kahar Lake which is just 25km away from the temple, Swaik Lake which is just 24.5km away from the Katas Raj and there are several watercourses in Katas including the holy pond of Katas Raj. The plains of the Dhok-Roper Katas are being cultivated even though these plains lie in the hilly region and a considerable area is covered with jungle. The mountain ranges which exist in the whole district are here in this area. These mountains are the Kallar Kahar hills, the Choa Saidan Shah hill range, leading into the Kallar Kahar on one side and Jhelum on the other, both falling in the Salt Range and in the Diljabban hills. These ranges are dry and rocky, covered with monsoon forest.⁴⁷

1.4 The Salt Range

Dhok Roper Katas also lies in the Salt Range, which runs from Jhelum River in the East to the West in Kalabagh. The Indus River is dotted with various temples, forts, Shrines, archaeological remains and different geological formations. The Salt range of Pakistan is considered one of the most important geological and historical landmarks of Pakistan. It is one of the best repositories of zoological and botanical fossils in Pakistan. The Salt range is famous for its archaeological sites, ranging from the Kot Dijian period of 3300 BC to the historical remains of the 19th century. Many ancient Hindu temples of the Hindu Shahi period of the 7th century CE to 10th century CE are standing at several places in the Salt range. In fact, Salt Range has associations with various legends in Hindu mythology. On the basis of the history, the age of the site can be traced back to the Harappan period. Excavations in this region have exhumed prehistoric tools and weapons such as terracotta bangles, knives, axes, pottery and fossils.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Dr.Liaquat Ali Khan Niazi, "*Tareekh-e-Chakwal, Tareekh-o- Sqafat*", Sang-e-Meel Publications, Lahore 2019 p30.

⁴⁸ Dr.Muhammad Ashraf, "*Crafts of Salt Range Khewra*", Directorate of Handicrafts and Design: Punjab Small Industries Corporation, Vol-IX, Lahore 2014 Pp165-239.

Historically, the Salt Range area is best known for its massive numbers of Buddhist sculptures and structural remains. These remains are associated with the region of Gandhara from the 1st century BC to the 5th century AD. These Gandhara remains are a blend of Indian, Central Asian and classical world's architectural traditions.⁴⁹ Besides Buddhism, there are several architectural remains in the Salt Range. These ruins are as under:-

- Buddho Mandir Near Kalabagh
- Remains of a Temple at Nandana
- Shiva Mandir Katas Raj
- Satghara group of Temples at Katas Raj
- Malot Fort
- Murti Site
- Dulmial
- Shiva Ganga Malkana Temple
- Warala Site
- Mansion of Hari Singh Nalwa
- Fort of Sikhawala Near Mohni Bagh Closed to Kallar Kahar Lake
- Takht e Babri
- The Fort of Kusuk
- Fort of Kallu Kot
- The Castle of Raja Ambarikha
- The monastery of Guru Gorakhnath
- Sassi da Kalara/Kallar Temple

⁴⁹ Salman Rashid, "*The Salt Range and the Potohar Plateau*", Sang-e-Meel Publications, Lahore 2001 pp62-67.

- Hanuman Mandir Katas Raj
- Ramachandra Temple Katas Raj⁵⁰

The prominent animals of Salt Range are as under:-

- Urial
- Wild Boar
- Golden Jackal
- Indian Grey Mongoose
- Wild Hare
- Wild Rabbit
- Snakes
- Dragon Lizard (reptile)
- Chinkara
- Jackal
- Wolf
- Wild Cats
- Dogs
- Tigers
- Squirrels⁵¹

Among these animals, Wild hare and Urial's lives are facing several threats in many areas of Pakistan including the Salt Range but with the efforts put by WWF and the Nawabs of

⁵⁰ Dr.Muhammad Ashraf, "*Crafts of Salt Range Khewra*", Directorate of Handicrafts and Design: Punjab Small Industries Corporation, Vol-IX, Lahore 2014 Pp 126-174.

⁵¹ Dr.Muhammad Ashraf, (2014). Pp 126-174.

Kala Bagh, the threats reduced to the minimum, especially for Urinals. While the prominent birds of the Salt Range are as under:-

- Black Kite
- Black Partridge
- Gray Partridge
- Indian Ring Dove
- Red Turtle Dove
- Peacock
- House Swift
- Golden Oriole
- Pigeon
- Black Breasted Rain Quail

All birds are common except the rain quail as it comes frequently.⁵²

Famous people of the Salt Range are as under:-

- Malik Ameer Muhammad Khan Awan, Nawab of Kala Bagh (former Governor of West-Pakistan).
- Maulana Shihab-Al-Din (was a prominent Philomath, who studied from Deoband and reached the level of Alim).
- Dr. Fazlur Rehman Malik (was a well-known Philomath of Islam).

⁵² Dr.Muhammad Ashraf, “*Crafts of Salt Range Khewra*”, Directorate of Handicrafts and Design: Punjab Small Industries Corporation, Vol-IX, Lahore 2014 Pp 126-174.

- Abdul Qadir Hassan (was a great Columnist for Jang Newspaper and Daily Express).
- Manmohan Singh (Ex-Prime Minister of India).
- Allah Baksh Malik (was secretary to the Government of Punjab).
- Air Chief Marshal Noor Khan (Former Governor West Pakistan).
- Lt. General Abdul Qayyum (Former Chairman Pakistan Steel Mills).
- Malik Lal Khan of Sarkalan (1st Coal Lease Owner of Wanhar region).
- Pir Fazal Shah (was the Raees-e-Azam of Wanhaar and was awarded with the title of Khan Sahab by the British Government).
- Malik Shehbaz (of Buchal Kalan).⁵³

While renowned Casts and Tribes of Salt Range are as under:-

- Janjua Rajpoot
- Awan
- Arain
- Syed
- Niazi
- Khokhar
- Khukhrain⁵⁴

⁵³ Dr. Muhammad Ashraf, (2014). Pp 126-174.

⁵⁴ Dr. Muhammad Ashraf, "*Crafts of Salt Range Khewra*", Directorate of Handicrafts and Design: Punjab Small Industries Corporation, Vol-IX, Lahore 2014 Pp 126-174.

1.5 Water Resources

There are many watercourses around Dhok Roper Katas, including the watercourse of Katas Raj Temple Complex but most of them fell dry because of the Cement factories of Choa Saidan Shah and Kallar Kahar. The watercourse of Katas Raj Temple fell dry because of the Bestway Cement Factory Tatral, Pakcem Cement factory Karuli and D.G Khan Cement Company LTD KhairPur. However, the Bestway Cement factory has been supplying the water to the temple through a pipeline since 2017 because of the *Suo Moto* action of the Supreme Court against the Bestway cement company.⁵⁵

Besides the watercourses, two Lakes are there in the surroundings of Dhok Roper Katas, Kallar Kahar Lake and the Swaik Lake. Only one river Soan is passing through the district of Chakwal. Soan River enters the district through the Pindi Gheb area then passes the Hasli-Warwal in Talagang then runs via Tamman, at the end falls into the river Indus in the Mianwali-Kohat area. In winter it takes the shape of a rill however, in summer a heavy flow of water runs in the streams. There are a number of Nalas in the area of Chakwal, such as:-

- Nala Wahan
- Nala Gabhir
- Nala Tarappi
- Nala Banhaa
- Nala Soj
- Nala Dharabi⁵⁶

⁵⁵ Fatima Siraj, "Identity Politics at Heritage Sites: Assessing the impact on the Ancient Temple Complex of Katas Raj, Pakistan", Academia, Accelerating the world's research, October 1, 2021-p9, Academia Archives.

⁵⁶ Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, June 29, 2021, Census Report 2017.

1.6 Climate

The climate of Dhok-Roper Katas is the same as the other areas of Chakwal. The weather in Katas is hot in summer and cold in winter. However, it is a fertile and rainy area. The hottest months are May, June, July and August. The temperature between the months of May-August is quite higher but the nights of the summer are equivalently cooler than the days of summer. While winter is quite agreeable here, the coldest months are December, January and February. The normal annual rainfall is about 853.2 millimeters in the entire Chakwal.⁵⁷

So the average temperature in January is 12.7, in February is 15.2, in March is 19.5, in April is 25.6, in May is 30.7, in June is 33.0, in July is 31.0, in August is 30.1, in September is 29.1, in October is 24.8, in November is 19.1 and an average temperature of December is 14.1.⁵⁸

1.7 Crops

Crops are mostly of two types

- Rabi Crops
- Kharif Crops

1.7.1 Rabi Crops

Rabi crops are grown in the summer season. The Cultivating period of such crops is from October to November and the reaping period is from April to May. Main Rabi crops of the Dhok-Roper Katas are as under:-

⁵⁷ Dr.Liaquat Ali Khan Niazi, “*Tareekh-e-Chakwal, Tareekh-o-Sqafat*” Sang-e-Meel Publications, Lahore 2019 Pp31-32.

⁵⁸ Dr. Liaquat Ali Khan Niazi, (2019). Pp31-32

1.7.1.1 Millet

Millet or Bajra is the Rabi crop of Katas. People mostly cultivate in October and November and reap between April to June.

1.7.1.2 Wheat

Wheat is the pivotal production of Dhok-Roper Katas. It is usually cultivated in November and December. Wheat reaps between April to May. The wheat of the Katas fulfills the needs of the masses of the Dhok-Roper Katas and also sold out at the markets of the Choa Saidan Shah. However, the people of the area stock the wheat instead of purchasing from the market later.

1.7.2 Kharif Crops

Kharif crops are the winter crops. The cultivating period is from April to June so the reaping period is from October to November. Main Kharif crops of the Dhok-Roper Katas are as under: -

1.7.2.1 Pulses

There are some kinds of diversifications of the pulses, cultivated as the Kharief crops and commonly fulfilled the needs of the area and sold out also at the Bazaars of the entire district.

1.7.2.2 Maize

Maize is another popular Kharief crop of Dhok-Roper Katas. Usually, Maize is tilled as a bran food in the rainy season. People love to make the loaf of Maize and apply “Dec Ghee” on it.

1.7.2.3 Groundnut

Groundnut is an important money-making crop for the villagers. It is the annual crop with yellow flowers on its plants.⁵⁹

1.8 Birds

Apart from very common birds like crows and sparrows, the prominent birds of Dhok Roper Katas are as under:-

- Gray Partridges
- Black Partridges
- Sea Partridges
- Quails
- Houbara Bustards
- Common Cranes
- Ducks
- Peacocks⁶⁰

Table 1 Calendar of Months in the Regional Jargon

	Mahn	15 th January to 15 th February
	Phagan	15 th February to 15 th March

⁵⁹ Shakeel, Interview.

⁶⁰ Shakeel Malik (tourist guide, Evacuee Trust Property Board), personal interview by the researcher, July 13, 2021.

	Chet	15 th March to 15 th April
	Besakh	15 th April to 15 th May
	Jeth	15 th May to 15 th June
	Harh	15 th June to 15 th July
	Sawunr	15 th July to 15 th August
	Bhadur	15 th August to 15 th September
	Asse	15 th September to 15 th October
	Katte	15 th October to 15 th November
	Monger	15 th November to 15 th December
	Poh	15 th December to 15 th January ⁶¹

Source: key informants

⁶¹ Shakeel, Interview.

1.9 Reptiles and animals of Dhok Roper Katas

Wildlife plays an important role in balancing the environment and provides stability to the different natural processes in the environment. People of certain areas played a pivotal role in the survival of the animals of Katas. As several ducks and turtles are living inside the Katas Raj Temple under the observation of the Evacuee Trust Property Board. Important animals and reptiles of Dhok Roper Katas are as under:-

- Pig
- Rabbit
- Urial
- Snake
- Dragon Lizard
- Donkey
- cow
- Sheep⁶²

1.10 Village Settings

Dhok-Roper Katas is not actually a village but a Mauza of union council Dulmial. The majority of the people belong to the “Awan” caste system. It is a Mauza that belongs to only 40 households. The population of the Dhok-Roper Katas consists of 360 personnel only.⁶³

⁶² Shakeel, Interview.

⁶³ Shakeel, Interview.

1.11 Religion

The majority of the households belong to Sunni Islam but some of them belong to Wahabi sect and some of them belong to the Shia sect. 100 percent population of the area is Muslim.⁶⁴ Before the partition of the Indo-Pak majority of the population was Hindu in this area. Hindus migrated from Katas Raj. However, one Hindu household has been living in Dhok Roper Katas since 1991. This is the family of Kishore Nand, who is an I.T teacher in Punjab School of Mines Katas. Actually, family belongs to the Khewra district of Jhelum.⁶⁵ Overall there is only one Hindu household in Chakwal district also. That is the family of Bhai Rawindar Kumar Chibber. This family is living in Karriala village of Chakwal. It is the 13th generation of this family. After the partition of India, this family refused to move to India.⁶⁶

1.12 Language

People of Dhok Roper Katas speak the Punjabi language; however the second language of the area is Urdu. Currently people try to teach their kids Urdu and English both. Interest in learning and speaking English is increasing day by day. Tourist guide “Muhammad Shakeel Malik,” told the researcher that he can fluently speak English now because of the foreign tourists, who often come to visit the Katas Raj Temple.⁶⁷

1.13 Mosques

⁶⁴ Shakeel, Interview.

⁶⁵ Kishore Nand (IT Teacher, Punjab School of Mines, Katas), personal interview by the researcher, September 13, 2021.

⁶⁶ Shakeel Interview.

⁶⁷ Shakeel, Interview.

There are total three mosques in Dhok-Roper Katas.

- Jamia Mosque Dhok Roper Katas
- Madni Mosque Dhok Roper Katas
- Masjid Dhok Roper Katas Fazalabad⁶⁸

1.14 Bazar

The main Bazar of the area is in Dulmial. People go shopping in Dulmial main Bazar. However, many people go shopping towards Choa Saidan Shah and Chakwal city.⁶⁹

1.15 Facility of Electricity

The village has the facility of electricity. Electricity has made the lives of the people easy. Electric devices like microwave ovens, washing machines, food grinders, personal computers and televisions are common among people. Because of the media awareness, People are becoming modern and fully aware of current affairs day by day. However, the load shedding is a serious problem for the villagers as it is a serious problem for the whole country.⁷⁰

1.16 Telephone Connections

People have the facility of landline phones. A number of telephone connections are given to several villagers but they observe ease over mobile phones. However, the telephone services keep the villagers in touch with their relatives in the cities and abroad.⁷¹

⁶⁸ Shakeel, Interview.

⁶⁹ Shakeel, Interview.

⁷⁰ Shakeel, Interview.

⁷¹ Shakeel, Interview.

1.17 Post Office

There is neither a post office in the Dhok-Roper Katas nor in the Dulmial union council. Initially, there was a postal office in the government Sir Syed Inter College Katas but later it was annulled and now people usually go to the Choa Saidan Shah postal office to avail the facility.⁷²

1.18 Transport Facilities

The main transport of the area is Rickshaw. However people use buses of the Dulmial bus stand to go outside the village as the Dulmial bus stand is five miles away from Dhok-Roper Katas.⁷³

1.19 Educational Facilities

There is one government co-education school and inter-college in Katas which provides quality education as it has qualified staff from the nearest areas. It is named as Sir Syed Government Higher Secondary school and inter-college Katas. The school building is very close to the Katas Raj temple complex, the boundary wall of the temple complex separates the school building from the temple complex. Temple and school are situated on the right side of the road; however the college building is there on the left side of the main road. Punjab School of Mines Katas is also situated on the left side of the road alongside Government Sir Syed Inter-College Katas. Besides this there is a branch of Punjab group of colleges also in the village, it is situated on the main Choa Saidan Shah road.

⁷² Shakeel, Interview.

⁷³ Shakeel, Interview.

There is another quality education school by the Bestway Cement Factory administration, which is the Bestway Foundation School Tatral. Tatral is also a mauza, located 5 kilometers away from the famous Katas Raj temple complex. Famous schools and colleges in the area are as under:-

- Punjab School of Mines Katas
- Allied School System Dhatta Kot
- Dar-e-Arqam
- Rock Hill Academy
- Bestway Foundation School Tatral
- Government Higher Secondary School Katas
- Government Sir Syed Inter-College Katas
- Kahun Public School
- Punjab Group Of Colleges, Potohar Campus Dhatta Kot⁷⁴

However, for higher studies, people go to Chakwal and Islamabad. It was the eleventh century AD when there was a Katas linguistics university from where famous mathematician Abu Rehan Al-Beruni learnt the Sanskrit language to learn more and more about the Hindu culture and civilization. In fact, Katas Raj is the place where he wrote his famous book “Kitab-ul-Hind” which depicts the religion, language, the value of statistics in the lives of the Hindus and their social customs. Katas Raj Temple Complex is also the place where Al-Beruni attempted to measure the circumference of the Earth.⁷⁵

⁷⁴ Shakeel, Interview.

⁷⁵ Dr.Liaquat Ali Khan Niazi, “*Tareekh-e-Chakwal, Tareekh-o-Sqafat*” Sang-e-Meel Publications, Lahore 2019 Pp134-136.

1.20 Health Facilities

There is a government hospital in Dhok Roper Katas. Certified Doctors and paramedical staff are working there. A chemist shop is there inside the hospital and in the Dulmial main Bazar also. Health facilities in Dhok Roper Katas are satisfactory. However, the common diseases in the village are diarrhea, fever, malaria and typhoid.⁷⁶

1.21 Water Supply and Sanitation

There is no governmental water supply system in the village. However, wells are dugged and motors are used for the water supply in many houses of Dhok Roper Katas. The most ancient well in the village belongs to the Pandava brothers, which is situated in front of the Katas Raj temple complex alongside the caves.⁷⁷

1.22 Source of Income

The lands are the major source of income for the people but they do not rely upon agriculture only. Many of them are serving in the army and other governmental services. Some of them are employed inside the Katas Raj temple complex as gardeners, guards and tourist guides as all the staff members inside the Katas Raj Temple Complex are local people of Katas. Many people found jobs in the nearest Cement factories. Some people rely on animal husbandry as their means of living as they sell cattle and milk. Another source of income is shop-keeping

⁷⁶ Shakeel, Interview

⁷⁷ Shakeel, Interview.

and private schools and colleges jobs and many are employed in Coal mines and some of them are working in the renowned Punjab school of mines Katas. Some of them are working in different governmental departments in different cities of Pakistan while some of them are living abroad for job purposes.⁷⁸

1.23 Dress

Males and females of Dhok Roper Katas wear very simple dresses. Men wear Shalwar Kameez or Dhoti Kurta and a Turban on special occasions with Kherian, Khussa and Chappal. They use an 18-20 yards long Turban and then roll it on their heads, while Dhoti consists of 6 yards mostly. Women wear Shalwar Kameez and Dupatta, with sandals or chappals and the young girls wear Frocks. However, the dresses of marriage ceremonies are different from these casual attires. The brides wear ‘Lehengas’ and the grooms wear ‘Sherwani’ with a fancy Turban.⁷⁹

1.24 Culture and Traditions

The culture of Dhok Roper Katas is based on the teachings of Islam. People live a straight and simple life. Women are mostly impounding their activities towards kitchen and children but many of them are qualified and working as government and private school teachers as well as lady health workers and paramedical staff members. The majority of the young girls observe the veil from the males, who are not relatives to them. However, males are the decision-makers and bread earners of their families and even today people follow the old traditions as the

⁷⁸ Shakeel, Interview.

⁷⁹ Dr.Liaquat Ali Khan Niazi, “*Tareekh-e-Chakwal, Tareekh-o-Saqafat*”, Sang-e-Meel Publications, Lahore 2019 p35.

males are the heads of the families. However many women are participating now with men shoulder to shoulder; physically and financially.⁸⁰

There are a lot of construction changes, which can be observed as people are demolishing the old houses and constructing the new houses and markets, made of concrete. The favorite instruments of the people are the “Dhol” and “Shehnai”.⁸¹ They are fond of Vegetables, chicken, fish, rice, pulses, mutton and beef.⁸²

Before the partition of India, when Hindus were in majority in the area, the culture, dress and traditions were different from now. Then the color of Hinduism was dominant in the attire, language, festivals and traditions. Before partition Holi, Devali, Navratri and Shivratri were the most celebrated festivals. At that time Muslims were not allowed to swim in the sacred watercourse of Katas Raj (currently in 2021, Muslims are not allowed to swim in the sacred watercourse again) as it was assumed by the Hindus that the water will become filthy in this way so they used to spend their lives according to the teachings and principles of their religion freely.⁸³

It is a fact that before independence, Chakwal was a Hindu majority area. So people are influenced by their rites, rituals and even ideas of them; even today. They follow Hindu traditions at their weddings and mournings. They spend a lot of money on their weddings. They observe 7 days long and elaborate wedding ceremonies. They observe “Godh-Bharai”, “Mayon”, “Shoe stealing of the groom” and many other Hindu customs which are costly. They take the dowry from the parents of the bride which is an extra burden to her family. Moreover, they

⁸⁰ Shakeel, Interview.

⁸¹ Dr.Liaquat Ali Khan Niazi, “*Tareekh-e-Chakwal, Tareekh-o-Saqafat*”, Sang-e-Meel Publications, Lahore 2019 p35.

⁸² Dr. Liaquat Ali Khan Niazi, (2019). p35

⁸³ Kishore, Interview.

mourn for forty days and observe the mourning ceremonies on specific days and dates, which is also a Hindu ritual. However, the Basant and the Baisakhi are not celebrated here with ardor as it is celebrated in the other parts of the Punjab.⁸⁴

1.25 Sports

People enjoy games like Cricket, Football, Volleyball, Kabaddi, Bull race, Horse race and dance, dog fight, Quail fight and Rooster fight etc.⁸⁵

1.26 Festivals

It is the soil of the Sufi Saints, Martyrs and the Conquerors, so people are puritans and have a lot of respect for such personalities. People believe in “Hierarchy or Peeri” and there are a lot of shrines in this area. People observe the “Urs” which means the death anniversary of a Sufi Saint, where people can watch the animal races, Sufi dances and can eat and drink freely.⁸⁶

1.26.1 Sakhi Saidan Shah Sherazi (Choa Saidan Shah)

This shrine is situated 28 kilometers from the Chakwal city in the tehsil Choa Saidan Shah. The name of the tehsil is also derived from the Sufi Saint Sakhi Saidan Shah Sherazi. A fair is mostly held at this shrine from 8th to 10th April. During this gala, people bathe the shrine of Sakhi Saidan Shah from both inside and outside. This festival is conducted under the administration of district council Chakwal. People beautify the tomb with flowers and pennants and divide sweets and other food items.⁸⁷

⁸⁴ Dr. Liaquat Ali Khan Niazi, “*Tareekh-e-Chakwal, Tareekh-o-Saqafat*”, Sang-e-Meel Publications, Lahore 2019 Pp35-38.

⁸⁵ Dr. Liaquat Ali Khan Niazi, (2019). Pp35-38

⁸⁶ Dr. Liaquat Ali Khan Niazi, (2019). Pp 35-38

⁸⁷ Dr. Liaquat Ali Khan Niazi, (2019). Pp 35-38

1.26.2 Jashan-e-Chakwal

This festival is conducted every year under the municipal administration of Chakwal from 11th to 16th of April in the “Mandi Moweshian ground” Chakwal. Competitions like horse races, bull races, circus and magic shows are a regular part of this festival.⁸⁸

1.26.3 Urs Jhamra Sharif

Jamara Sharif is 35 kilometers away from Chakwal city, which lies on the Southern side of Chakwal. This gala is celebrated at the shrine of “Bava Zaman Shah Motian Wali Sarkar from 26th to 28th Shawwal. Circus, magic shows, bull’s race, regional dances and Kabaddi are the indispensable part of this festivity.⁸⁹

1.26.4 Mela Karsal

In the memory of Shah Abdul Lateef, this gala is celebrated in the village of Karsal. Mauza Karsal lies 35 kilometers away from Chakwal on the Western side of the city. Many players from all over the country participate in the volleyball matches of this festival. The bull race is also an interesting part of this jamboree.⁹⁰

1.26.5 Mela Khairpur

Mauza Khairpur lies on the Eastern side of Kallar Kahar. It is merely 9 kilometers away from Kallar Kahar. A gala is conducted on the resting place of the “Bava Pir Wilayat Shah” from 5th to

⁸⁸ Dr. Liaquat Ali Khan Niazi, “*Tareekh-e-Chakwal, Tareekh-o-Saqafat*”, Sang-e-Meel Publications, Lahore 2019 Pp35-38.

⁸⁹ Dr. Liaquat Ali Khan Niazi, (2019). Pp35-38

⁹⁰ Dr. Liaquat Ali Khan Niazi, (2019). Pp35-38

7th June every year. Many regional Qawwals come to the shrine to pay tribute to Pir Wilayat Shah in their spectacular voices. People conduct bear fights, dog fights and bullfights here. Shopkeepers present their artificial jewelry, stones and many food items on the stalls. There is a zoo alongside the shrine for the amusement of the public.⁹¹

1.26.6 Mela Qadirpur

Qadirpur lies in the South-East of the Talagang tehsil. It is 7 kilometers away from the Chinji village in the East of the Talagang. The festivities are celebrated on the first Sunday of the Chet. Quail fights, dogfights, horse dances and bull races are a mandatory part of this jamboree.⁹²

1.26.7 Sakhi Ahu Bahu

The magnificent shrine lies at the top of the (one of the) hills of Kallar Kahar. Its distance from Chakwal is 27 kilometers and it is situated near the Khushab road. Inside the shrine, there are two graves of two brothers, who embraced martyrdom in a war with Hindus in Kallar Kahar. One grave is of Sahibzada Faiz Alam and the other one is of Sahibzada Noor Alam. Both were the grandsons of Hazrat Ghaus Azam and sons of Abdur Razzaq Sahib. Their martyrdom is celebrated on the 10th of Muharram every year. The architecture and the mirror work of the shrine are attractive. It is also called the shrine of the peacocks as there are several peacocks inside and around the shrine.⁹³

1.26.8 Mazaar Ghazi Murid Hussain Shaheed Bhalla

⁹¹ Dr. Liaquat Ali Khan Niazi, "*Tareekh-e-Chakwal, Tareekh-o-Saqafat*", Sang-e-Meel Publications, Lahore 2019 Pp35-38.

⁹² Dr. Liaquat Ali Khan Niazi, (2019). Pp35-38

⁹³ Dr. Liaquat Ali Khan Niazi, (2019). Pp35-38

The shrine is situated 10 kilometers away from Chakwal city on the Southern side where mauza Bhalla lies. It is the shrine of Murid Hussain who killed a Hindu blasphemer Dr. Ram Gopal and the British government executed him (Murid Hussain) in 1937. This martyrdom is celebrated on the 18th Rajab every year. Murid Hussain Shaheed was a poet of Urdu and Punjabi also. The name of the district complex Chakwal Ghaziabad is also dedicated to him.⁹⁴

1.26.9 Mazaar Pir Alam Shah Bhaun

This shrine is 10 kilometers away from Chakwal city. It is very close to Khushab road on the Southern side of Chakwal. Pir Alam Shah Bhaun was famous for his cure of madness through his wisdom and meditation. The festival is celebrated every year in August. Local singers present Qawwali also in the fete of the shrine.⁹⁵

1.26.10 Khanqah Qazi Ghaus Bhaun

This shrine is situated in mauza Bhaun in the neighborhood of the Chora graveyard. Qazi Ghaus was a miraculous and pious personality. His forefathers reached the rank of the Qazi-ul-Quzat (Chief Justice) during the period of the Mughal king Aurangzeb Alamgir.⁹⁶

1.27 Politics and Political Party

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf is the winning party of the area and Sardar Zulfiqar Dulha is the winner and dominant politician of the area from PTI. He is a member of the National Assembly since 2018 from the constituency: NA-64.⁹⁷

⁹⁴ Dr. Liaquat Ali Khan Niazi, “*Tareekh-e-Chakwal, Tareekh-o-Saqafat*”, Sang-e-Meel Publications, Lahore 2019 Pp35-38.

⁹⁵ Dr. Liaquat Ali Khan Niazi, (2019). Pp35-38.

⁹⁶ Dr. Liaquat Ali Khan Niazi, (2019). Pp35-38.

⁹⁷ Dr.Liaquat Ali Khan Niazi, “*Tareekh-e-Chakwal,Tareekh-o-Saqafat*”, Sang-e-Meel Publications, Lahore 2019 p488.

While from NA-65 Chaudhry Pervaiz Ilaahi was elected, he is from Muslim League Q; afterwards, he became the speaker of the Provincial Assembly. Raja Yasir Sarfaraz Khan was elected from PP-21, he is also from Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf and he became the minister of higher education and tourism after that. Tanveer Aslam Saithi was elected from PP-22, he is from Pakistan Muslim League N. Sardaar Aftaab Akbar was elected from PP-23 and his political party is Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaaf. Hafiz Ammar Yasir is elected from PP-24 and he belongs to Pakistan Muslim League Q and also became the minister of mines and minerals afterwards.⁹⁸

It was the very first time in the history of Chakwal's politics that Pakistan Tehreek-i-insaf had won the majority seats in the provincial assembly. Before the general elections of July 2018, the politics of Chakwal went through healthy competition between Muslim League N and Muslim League Q. However Malik Saleem Iqbal of Talagang and Fauzia Behram of Neela Dulha, both are from Pakistan People's Party; had won the Provincial Assembly elections many times.⁹⁹

The history of the politics in Chakwal is quite engrossing. On 19th November 1988, Chaudhry Liaquat Ali of Chakwal won the Provincial Assembly elections along with Malik Shehbaz Khan of Buchal Kalan, Fauzia Behram of Neela Dulha and Malik Saleem Iqbal of Talagang. On 24th October 1990, Gen (R) Abdul Majeed Malik and Sardar Mansoor Hayat Khan Tamman were elected for the National Assembly. In the general elections of 1993, Gen (R) Abdul Majeed Malik and Sardar Mumtaz Khan Tamman were elected for the National

⁹⁸ Dr. Liaquat Ali Khan Niazi, "*Tareekh-e-Chakwal, Tareekh-o-Saqafat*", Sang-e-Meel Publications, Lahore 2019 p488.

⁹⁹ Dr. Liaquat Ali Khan Niazi, (2019). p488.

Assembly. Chaudhry Liaquat Ali Khan, Raja Azmat Hayat, Sardar Ghulam Abbas and Malik Saleem Iqbal were elected in the Provincial Assembly Elections.¹⁰⁰

In the elections of 10th October 2002, Maj (R) Tahir Iqbal and Sardar Faiz Tamman were elected in the National Assembly elections, Chaudhry Aijaz Hussain Farhat PP-20, Malik Tanvir Aslam Sethi PP-21, Syed Taqleed Raza Shah PP-22, and Col (R) Sultan Surkhru PP-23 were elected for the Provincial Assemblies.¹⁰¹ While in the elections of February 2013, Maj (R) Tahir Iqbal and Sardar Mumtaz Tamman were elected for the National Assembly and Chaudhry Liaquat Ali Khan PP-20, Tanvir Aslam Sethi PP-21, Sardar Zulfiqar Ali Khan PP-22 and Malik Zahoor Anwar Awan PP-23 were elected for the Provincial Assemblies.¹⁰²

From 1988 to 2018 elections, many members of the National and Provincial Assemblies from Chakwal district had worked a lot for the development of the district and still these developmental plans are continued in the recent government 2018-2023; as they approved the construction of the roads, conserved the shrines and the ancient temples and upgraded the schools and colleges.¹⁰³

1.28 Punjab School of Mines Katas

School Of Mines was the need of the hour because there are several mines in the entire district. Punjab School of Mines is a training institution for laborers and engineers. As there are Several Coal, Salt, Dynamite, Marble, Fire Clay, Limestone and Gypsum mines in the entire

¹⁰⁰ Dr.Liaquat Ali Khan Niazi, "*Tareekh-e-Chakwal, Tareekh-o-Saqafat* " Sang-e-Meel Publications, Lahore 2019 Pp 452-453.

¹⁰¹ Dr.Liaquat Ali Khan Niazi, "*Tareekh-e-Chakwal, Tareekh-o-Saqafat* " Sang-e-Meel Publications, Lahore 2019 Pp 452-453.

¹⁰² Dr. Liaquat Ali Khan Niazi, (2019). Pp 452-453

¹⁰³ Dr. Liaquat Ali Khan Niazi, (2019). Pp 452-453

district. It is an excellent training school in Katas which is producing engineers and technical labor force also.¹⁰⁴

1.29 Mines and Minerals

District Chakwal is rich in mines and minerals. There are several mines of Coal, Gypsum, Dynamite, Salt, Fire Clay, Marble and Limestone. Even wells of Oil are there in Balkasar, Ratta Mohra, Jabbi Shah Dilawar and Dhulian Mial. The annual production of Oil is 23,54,250 barrels.¹⁰⁵

1.29.1 Coal

There are several mines of Coal in Kallar Kahar and Choa Saidan Shah such as in Ara, Warala, Neela Wahn, Chibber, Makrach, Basharat, Karuli, Khair-Pur, Malot, Bhal, Laphi, Bhulyal, Manara, Wihali, Choa Gunj Ali Shah, Diljabba. In fact in Ara (Police Station Choa Saidan Shah), Coal was discovered in 1896. Since 1896, Coal has been exteriorizing from Ara, for the needs for the engines of the trains. Currently, the production of the entire district of the Coal is 1814.369 Kilograms (2 tons).¹⁰⁶

1.29.2 Salt

Salt is extracting from Kala Bagh, Warcha and Khewra for hundreds of years. Before 1985, the exteriorizing of Salt was under the administration of the Government of Punjab. However in 1985, the Government of the Punjab signed the contracts for private Salt exteriorization. Salt comes out from Warala, Makrach, Wasnaal, Sardhi, Surkhru and Peer-

¹⁰⁴ Dr. Liaquat Ali Khan Niazi, (2019). Pp 452-453

¹⁰⁵ Dr. Liaquat Ali Khan Niazi, "*Tareekh-e-Chakwal, Tareekh-o-Saqafat*", Sang-e-Meel Publications, Lahore 2019 Pp33-34.

¹⁰⁶ Dr. Liaquat Ali Khan Niazi, (2019). Pp33-34

Khara. The annual production of Salt from Chakwal is 205871 tons and it is the world's best pink Salt.¹⁰⁷

1.29.3 Gypsum

Gypsum is exteriorizing from Peer-Khara, Matan Khurd, Wasnal, Neela Wahn, Dhok Chibber and Makrach. Gypsum of this area is excellent in quality and is commonly used in Cement and Plaster in Paris.¹⁰⁸

1.29.4 Limestone

The extracting of Limestone is also happening in many areas such as Kallar Kahar, Khair-Pur, Khandowa, Warala, Push, Dandot, Ratocha, Mustafabad, Karuli, Malot, Choa Saidan Shah, Buchal Kalan, Minhala and Sardhi.¹⁰⁹

1.30 Cement Factories

Many Cement factories have been planted in this area. The nearest factory to Katas Raj Temple Complex is Bestway Cement Factory Tatral, which can be seen from Satghara temples (Katas Raj). In 2011 the holy watercourse of Katas Raj Temple fell dry because of the heavy turbines implanted inside the factory, however after the Suo Moto action of the Supreme Court in

¹⁰⁷ Dr. Liaquat Ali Khan Niazi, (2019). Pp33-34

¹⁰⁸ Dr. Liaquat Ali Khan Niazi, "*Tareekh-e-Chakwal, Tareekh-o-Saqafat*", Sang-e-Meel Publications, Lahore 2019 Pp33-34.

¹⁰⁹ Dr. Liaquat Ali Khan Niazi, (2019). Pp33-34.

2017; now the factory is providing an artificial pipeline water connection to the holy watercourse.¹¹⁰

D. G. Khan cement factory Khair-Pur and Pakcem factory Karuli are also near the Dhok-Roper Katas and the Katas Raj group of temples. D.G. Khan Cement factory is one of the largest cement manufacturers in the country, with a production capacity of 14,000 tons per day. Other cement factories are named Bestway Cement factory Kallar Kahar, Dandot Cement factory and Lafarge Cement factory. All these factories were established in the Musharraf era, from 2004 to 2006.¹¹¹ However, the positive side of these factories is that these factories are providing jobs to the local people.

1.31 Roads

There is no “Kacha” road in the Dhok Roper Katas. The roads are quite new and made of concrete. The construction of the roads was completed in 2012; alongside the construction of the Katas Raj Temple Complex. Katas Raj is situated 25 km away from M2 motorway interchange of Kallar Kahar. It is 40 km away from the Chakwal district.¹¹² The Famous Hindu Temple is located rightly at the core of the Salt Range. It is 2200 meters above sea level.¹¹³

1.32 History of Katas Raj

One can understand the importance of Katas Raj from the Hindu mythological book, Mahabharata, which had been written three centuries before the birth of Christ. Mahabharata

¹¹⁰ Fatima Siraj, “Identity Politics at Heritage Sites: Assessing the Impact on the Ancient Temple Complex of Katas Raj, Pakistan”, Academia, Accelerating the world’s research, October 1, 2021 p9, Academia Archives.

¹¹¹ Dr.Liaquat Ali Khan Niazi, “Tareekh-e-Chakwal, Tareekh-o-Saqafat”, Sang-e-Meel Publications, Lahore 2019 Pp32-33.

¹¹² “Explore Punjab, Punjab Heritage Special”, *The Tourism Development Corporation of Punjab*, Lahore 2019 p12.

¹¹³ *Gazetteer of the Jhelum District*, 1904 p41.

narrates the fight between Pandavas and Kauravas, when Kauravas found the government of Ayudhya, they expel the Pandava brothers and their wife Draupadi from their realm and Pandavas spent four years here in Katas Raj from their fourteen years of “Bin Bas”. Here they built Satghara temples to pay tribute to their lord Shiva.¹¹⁴

Katas Raj is the second holiest place for Hindus in the world, due to two reasons. One reason is the gray-colored Shiva Lingam stone which is supposed to be 5049 hundred years old; because of it, the Shiva temple is also called the Black Temple.¹¹⁵ The second reason is more famous and has been written in various books. When the Daughter of Dakshiyā and the wife of Lord Shiva died, he cried so bitterly that 2 pools formed from his eyes, one in Katas and the other one in Pushkar near Ajmer. Hindus call these two sacred pools; the two eyes of the Earth.¹¹⁶

Katas’s pool had many names anciently; firstly its name was “Viskund” because the water of the pool was poisonous. It was later named “Amar kund” then “Chamarkund” and currently people call it “Amrit Kund” or “Amrit Jal”. Firstly the place was called “Kitaksh” or “Kitaksha” or “Kitakshkund” but nowadays it is called “Katas Raj”.¹¹⁷ The meaning of the Katas is the spring of the raining eyes. Katas is placed 8 miles away from Shiva Ganga Malkana temple and merely 9 miles away from the Fort of Malot. Katas lies opposite Pind Dadan Khan; the space between Katas and Pind Dadan Khan is 15 miles.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁴ Salman Rashid, *“The Salt Range & the Potohar Plateau”*, Sang-e-Meel Publications, Lahore 2001 Pp131-135.

¹¹⁵ Kishore Nand (IT teacher, Punjab School of Mines, Katas), personal interview by the researcher, September 13, 2021.

¹¹⁶ Abrar Babary, Mahwish Zeeshan, “Reminiscent of Hinduism: An Insight of Katas Raj Mandir”, *The Explorer Islamabad: Journal of Social Sciences*, Vol-1, Issue (4): Pp 121-124, Department of Anthropology, PMAS-Arid Agriculture University, Rawalpindi, 2015 Pp 121-123.

¹¹⁷ Alexander Cunningham, *“Archaeological Survey of India: Report For The Year 1872-73, Vol-V”*, Office of the Superintendent of Government Press, Calcutta 1875 p91.

¹¹⁸ *Gazetteer of the Jhelum District* 1904 p41.

It is situated in the middle of the Salt Range and at the end of the Eastern Kahun valley. Katas Raj was the center of the Hindu Yatra from all over the subcontinent, before the partition. But after the restoration of the Temple in 2012 by the Government of Pakistan; it is again the center of tourist attraction not only for Hindus but for whole of the world.¹¹⁹The winding curves of the Lahore-Islamabad motorway lead to the magnificent valley of Kahun. The valley is famous for its stunning natural beauty. Katas Raj is surrounded by lush green hills, with mineral water springs, sprouting from the routes of the hills.

The beautiful romantic atmosphere accommodates the spectacular glimpses of nature's best. It is a tourist destination because of its natural beauty, historic sites and sacred religious shrines. The century's old Katas Raj temple complex is situated in the middle of the Salt Range as it is easy to reach Katas Raj by road. One has to go via the M2 Lahore-Islamabad motorway at the Kallar Kahar interchange firstly, and then follow the road to the Choa Saidan Shah. Katas Raj is about 40 kilometers from the Chakwal district of Punjab, Pakistan. It is about 162 kilometers from Islamabad. It is 250 kilometers from Lahore.¹²⁰

The Katas Raj houses ancient temples, remains of a Buddhist stupa, a few medieval temples, a library building, and police station of British rule, the mansion of Hari Singh Nalwa and a holy pond at the core of all these buildings, which is considered sacred among Hindus. Katas was a part of the Varman and Karkota dynasties of Kashmir from 625AD to 939AD, as one can observe from the architectural style of the Satghara temples. According to a legend the five Pandava brothers, Yudhishtira, Bhima, Arjuna, Nakula and Sahadeva, the heroes of the Mahabharata stayed exactly there along with their common wife Draupadi, where the Satghara

¹¹⁹ Fatima Siraj, "Identity Politics at Heritage Site: Assessing the Impact on the Ancient Temple of Katas Raj, Pakistan", Academia, Accelerating the world's Research, October 1, 2021 Pp7-8, Academia Archives.

¹²⁰ Muhammad Akram, "The Temples of Katasraj in Pakistan between Legend and History", (International Islamic University: Department of Comparative Religion).

temples lie inside the Katas Raj temple complex. They stayed there for four years out of their fourteen year's exile from Ayodhya.¹²¹

Katas Raj temple complex is dedicated to the worship of “Shiva da Mahadeva” known as the god of the gods among Hindus. It is the only functional temple of district Chakwal and it is considered the holiest Hindu temple in Pakistan. It is believed that the temple existed since the days of Mahabharata as Krishna himself laid the foundation of Katas Raj.¹²² At the top of the Shiva temple, a police station the British period (1907) is also situated. Katas Raj has a collection of buildings that stretch in an unbroken line of the Buddhist down to the British rule, preserving at least 1500 years old history.¹²³

The pond in the complex is believed to have magical powers and is supposed to be where Yudhisthira defeated Yaksha with his wisdom and brought his brother back to life. According to another legend, it is believed that Lord Shiva lived the years of his marital life here. When his wife died, he cried so much in grief and for so long that his tears created two holy ponds, one in Pushkar near Ajmer (India) and the other one at Kitaksh (Pakistan). Kitaksh is a word of classic Sanskrit which means “god's tears”. So the word Katas is derived from Kitaksh. According to Hindus' beliefs, the pond is filled with lord Shiva's tears so bathing in the pond leads to the forgiveness of Sins and helps in the salvation of a human.¹²⁴

The government of Pakistan under a renovation program of shrines has renovated and restored the temple complex with a budget of 114.323 million rupees. The Government of Pakistan decided to restore the Katas Raj temple complex to its original state. Yet again it is a

¹²¹ Muhammad Kamran, “Katas Raj Mandir”, Taxila Institute of Asian Civilization QAU, Islamabad 2015 p4.

¹²² Kishore, Interview.

¹²³ Abrar Babary, Mahwish Zeeshan, “Reminiscent of Hinduism: An Insight of Katas Raj Mandir”, *The Explorer Islamabad: Journal of Social Sciences*, Vol-1, Issue (4): Pp 121-124, Department of Anthropology, PMAS-Arid Agriculture University, Rawalpindi, 2015 Pp 121-123.

¹²⁴ Abrar Babary. (2015). Pp121-123

holy place for Hindus now as it was before the partition. After the visit of L.K. Advani since 2005, the government of Pakistan has allowed pilgrims from India to visit the temple. So, a large number of people, who belong to Hinduism, visit these temples every year since 2005 to perform their religious practices and rituals.¹²⁵ Among all the sites of the Katas Raj temple complex, the worship of the Shiva temple is sacred. Hindu pilgrims believe that the worship of Lord Shiva removes distress and poverty and fulfills all their desires.¹²⁶

Hindus around the world visit this place every year. The Pakistan government makes elaborate arrangements for the comfortable stay and safety of the pilgrims. Keeping in view the sacred and historic value of the Katas Raj, Pakistan Government is approaching UNESCO to nominate the Katas Raj temple complex among the world heritage sites in Pakistan. Taxila, Rohtas Fort, Lahore Fort and Shalamar Gardens, Thatta, Makli hills, Takht-i-Bahi Buddhist Monastery and ruins of Mohenjo Daro are already included in the UNESCO World Heritage sites of Pakistan.¹²⁷

¹²⁵ Reema Abbasi, "Historical Temples in Pakistan, A Call to Conscience", Niyogi Books, New Delhi 2014 Pp 148-164.

¹²⁶ Reema Abbasi, "Historical Temples in Pakistan, A Call to Conscience", Niyogi Books, New Delhi 2014 Pp 148-164.

¹²⁷ Reema Abbasi, (2014). Pp 148-164

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF CHAKWAL

Captain Abbott, Alexander Cunningham, W. W. Norman, M. L. Dames and Vincent Smith have done a lot of research work on the Potohar region. Alexander the Great (356-323BC) had put his boats in the river Jhelum and this was the same way in which Zahir-ud-din Babar (1483-1530AD) went through with his army and cannons. Cunningham wrote in his survey report that this region was also a part of Asoka's great realm in 231-272 BC.¹²⁸

One can believe this fact by observing the stupa inside the Katas Raj temple complex, when Chinese traveler Hiuen Tsiang came here in 7th century AD, he also witnessed this stupa. When Hiuen Tsiang came here, Katas was under the government of the Hindu Shahi dynasties. After that, this region came under several conquerors such as Mehmood Ghaznavi, Mohammad Ghauri, Ghiyas-ud-din Balban, Feroz Shah Khilji, Taimoor and at last, it came under the government of Zahir-ud-Din Babar. After him, it came under the occupation of Sher Shah Suri and in 1810, Sikhs occupied the area.¹²⁹

Chakwal was created as a separate district in 1985. The name of Chakwal is derived from a tribe 'Chaks' and the name of their leader was 'Chakku'. The historical significance of the Chakwal can be assessed from the discovery of many ancient things such as a hundred thousand years of ancient skeletons of huge animals, jewelry and ancient utensils discovered in this valley.

¹²⁸ Dr. Liaquat Ali Khan Niazi, "*Tareekh-e-Chakwal, Tareekh-o-Saqafat*", Sang-e-Meel Publications, Lahore 2019 Pp 40-41.

¹²⁹ Dr. Liaquat Ali Khan Niazi, (2019). Pp40-41

Chakwal is famous for its ancient temples, historical monuments, mesmerizing lakes, waterfalls, lush green hills, watercourses and shrines of saints.¹³⁰

Another exciting part of Chakwal is the Salt Range. Although the Salt Range has several mines and minerals but among all; the Salt mine of Khewra is the largest of all. Because of this mine, it is called the Salt Range; which is also the largest Salt mine in Pakistan. Khewra Salt mine is producing the quality pink Salt and Pakistan is exporting this Salt to the many countries of the world. It is a part of the Salt Range but it lies in the Jhelum district. Many other mines of Gypsum, Coal, Salt and Limestone are situated in the various towns and villages of Chakwal and are connected through a boulevard. It is to be convinced that this particular area was under the sea thousands of years before. When the water vaporized, it left the huge Salt treasure behind; this was covered by many coatings of dust. The Salt Range is famous for its various Hindu temples also, 90 percent of them belong to the medieval period of Hindu Shahi dynasties (850-1026 CE)¹³¹

The first emperor of the Hindu Shahis was Kallar or Kallu. Who was a Kshatriya or a Brahmin, who toppled the Turki Shahi dynasty, and married the widow of its last emperor. These people are called Janjua Rajputs in history but these people were actually from the race of Huns, who clinched the title of the 'Shahi' from the Turki Shahis and were called the Hindu Shahis. They managed a realm from Kabul to Kashmir. Katas Raj was also a part of Kashmir at that time. But the Hindu Shahi emperors were not the local Hindus of India but belonged to a tribe of Huns.¹³²

¹³⁰ Salman Rashid, "*The Salt Range and the Potohar Plateau*", Sang-e-Meel Publications, Lahore 2001 Pp64-152.

¹³¹ M.Hanif Raza, "*Islamabad and Environs*", Colorpix, Islamabad 1985 p126.

¹³² Ahmad Hassan Dani, "*History Of Pakistan, Pakistan Through Ages*", Sang-e-Meel Publications, Lahore 2008 Pp155-157.

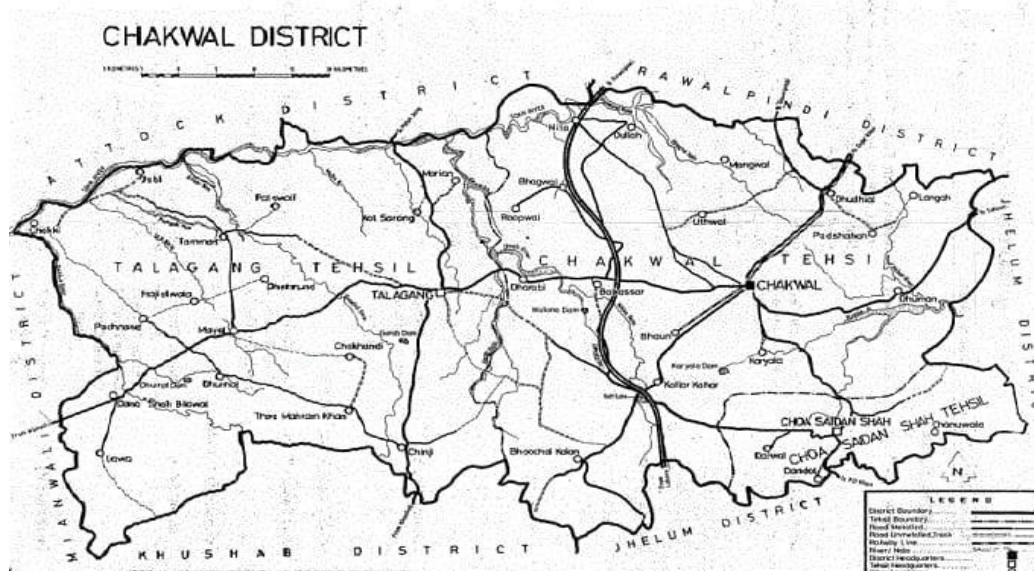


FIGURE 4 MAP OF CHAKWAL (WWW.GOOGLE.COM)

Kallar was the emperor from the mountains of the Hindukush to the river of the Jhelum. He is often called the ‘Spalapatideva’ in the books of Hindu mythology. After him, his son Samantadeva became the emperor of the Hindu Shahi. Coins of their age, show the sketches of the bull and horsemen. In the period of the Samanthadeva, Yaqub bin Laith triumphed over Kabul in 870 AD and decided to deploy a local Hindu governor named Khudra Rayaka. Thus Yaqub demolished the Hindu Shahis at once and his new capital was Indus.¹³³

However again another section of Hindu Shahis arose; this time Lalliya repossessed the realm of Hindu Shahis from the Seistani rulers. The son of Lalliya, Kamaluka conquered Ghazna in 900 AD and the Seistani ruler Amr bin Al-Layth fled to Gorgan. There he was defeated by Ismail (a Samanid ruler). In this way, Seistan became a part of the Samanid Empire. These ‘Lawaiks’ of the Samanid Empire later became friends of the Shahi rulers of Kabul.¹³⁴

¹³³ Ahmad Hassan Dani, “History Of Pakistan, Pakistan Through Ages”, Sang-e-Meel Publications, Lahore 2008, Pp155-157.

¹³⁴ Ahmad Hassan Dani, (2008). Pp155-157

Kamaluka's son Bhimadeva earned fame and royal titles also. He structured the roads between Kabul and Ghazna. However, during his period, Alaptigin attacked Kabul and Ghazna. Alaptigin was the governor of Khorasan. Bhimadeva was the antecedent of Jayapala deva. These Hindu Shahi rulers earned the majestic royal titles in Sanskrit literature such as Paramabhattacharaka, Maharajadhiraja and Parameshvara.¹³⁵

Hindu Shahis constructed a chain of new temples in the Salt range. Among them, the most famous temples are situated on the hills of the Choa Saidan Shah such as Satghara temples Katas Raj and temples of Malot fort. But in Hindu mythology temples of Satghara are associated with the Pandava brothers and not with the Hindu Shahi emperors. However, the research describes that these temples are hardly 1500 years ancient and not 2500 years ancient as the period of the Pandavas and Mahabharata is 300 years before Christ.¹³⁶

Lawaik Arabs and Hindu Shahis were in a good relationship, so in a fight over Ghazna between Samanid Turks and Lawaik Arabs, Jayapaladeva helped the Lawaik Arabs with his military power. So in that era, even though Jayapaladeva was defeated in the Lamghan, he administered his realm from Ghandhara valley (now KPK) to Lahore. In the realm of Jayapaladeva, a local Raja Bharat and his son Chandrat annexed their state with the Hindu Shahi realm except Lahore. Lahore was merged in the period of Anandapala (son of Jayapaladeva).¹³⁷

However, the Hindu Shahis were constricted only from Ghandhara to Peshawar because of Alaptigin and his son-in-law Subuktigin, while Mahmood bin Subuktigin handed over the

¹³⁵ Ahmad Hassan Dani, "*History Of Pakistan, Pakistan Through Ages*", Sang-e-Meel Publications, Lahore 2008, Pp 155-157.

¹³⁶ Shaikh Khurshid Hasan, "*Pakistan: Its Ancient Hindu Temples and Shrines*", National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research Centre of Excellence, Quaid-i-Azam University (New Campus), Islamabad 2008 Pp61-66.

¹³⁷ Ahmad Hassan Dani, "*History Of Pakistan, Pakistan Through Ages*", Sang-e-Meel Publications, Lahore 2008, Pp 155-157.

throne to his brother in 997 AD and this rift between the Samanids and the Jayapaladeva grew much more than before. Hindu Shahis lost Uddhandapur and Peshawar both. In this situation, Anandapala moved his capital to Nandana, where he built a magnificent fort (the ruins of this fort can also be seen in Nandana, Jhelum today) in 1002AD. Many battles had been fought between 1002-1026 AD between Mahmood and Anandapala and Trilochanapala (son of Anandapala). At last, Mahmood annexed Punjab into his realm and assumed Lahore as his capital. That was the end of Hindu Shahis in KPK and Punjab. This time period was the peak time of the Islamic spread in North-Western India (now Pakistan).¹³⁸

However, it was not the end of the Hindu Shahis in the subcontinent. The first Hun ruler assumed the throne in the 7th Century AD in Kashmir, his name was Durlabh Vardhana and in his era, Taxila was also a part of Kashmir (after observing the Kashmiri coins). His grandson Chandrapida, who ruled from 713-720AD, had special relations with the T'ang emperors of China. During the period of the Lalitaditya (the younger brother of the Chandrapida), the Hindu Shahis appointed an ambassador to China for the very first time. It was the period of the emperor Hiuen Tsang (713-755AD), who was a traveler also, visited Katas Raj's sacred pond and observed the stupa of Asoka in Katas Raj (the ruins of this stupa can also be seen inside the Katas Raj temple complex).¹³⁹

Lalitaditya was a magnified warrior; who conquered Multan, Kanauj and Gaud and Tukhara. The relations between the Hindu Shahis and the Chinese emperors were satisfactory, as

¹³⁸ Ahmad Hassan Dani, "*History Of Pakistan, Pakistan Through Ages*", Sang-e-Meel Publications, Lahore 2008, Pp 155-157.

¹³⁹ Ahmad Hassan Dani, (2008). Pp155-157

another Buddhist devotee Wo-K'ong visited the Kashmiri Hindu Shahi dynasty in the period of 759-763 AD and identified several stupas from Katas Raj to Kashmir.¹⁴⁰

2.1 Katas Raj

Katas Raj or Dhok Roper Katas is a medieval town, sacred to the Hindus. Katas Raj lies about 16 kilometers West of Choa Saidan Shah on Kallar Kahar, Choa Saidan Shah Road.¹⁴¹ This place is proof through its temples that the area was governed by the Hindu Rajas at once. Some of these temples are Tumble downed but many temples are in satisfactory condition, especially the temples which are located inside the Katas Raj temple complex, which have been well maintained by the Punjab Archaeology Department, Pakistan. There are more than 300 temples in the Katas Raj town. Hindu pilgrims from inside and outside Pakistan and travelers from Western countries often visit this town.¹⁴²

Katas is an important religious center for Hindus next to Banaras. Katas is mentioned in the Hindu epic book Mahabharata, which had been written in 300 BC. Katas Raj is located hardly 10 miles away from another Hindu temple named Malot fort or temples of Malot.¹⁴³ It is located in the middle of the Salt Range and at the end of the Kahun valley. Kataksha or Katas (in local cant now) means the 'spring of the raining eyes' in the Sanskrit language. Katas is globally famous for its sacred pond.¹⁴⁴ Before the partition of the subcontinent, nobody was allowed to bathe in the holy water of the pond except the Hindus (after the renovation and preservation of

¹⁴⁰ Salman Rashid, *"The Salt Range and the Potohar Plateau"*, Sang-e-Meel Publications, Lahore 2001 Pp132-133.

¹⁴¹ Muhammad Kamran, "Katas Raj Mandir", Taxila Institute of Asian Civilization QAU, Islamabad 2015 p2.

¹⁴² Kishore Nand, (IT Teacher, Punjab School of Mines, Katas), personal interview by the researcher, September 13, 2021.

¹⁴³ Alexander Cunningham, *"Archaeological Survey of India: Report For The Year 1872-73, Vol-V"*, Office of the Superintendent of Government Press, Calcutta 1875 p90.

¹⁴⁴ Abrar Babary, Mahwish Zeeshan, "Reminiscent of Hinduism: An Insight Of Katas Raj Mandir", *The Explorer Islamabad: Journal of Social Sciences*, Vol-1, Issue (4): Pp 121-124, Department of Anthropology, PMAS-Arid Agriculture University, Rawalpindi 2015 p121.

the Katas Raj temple complex, yet again Non-Hindus are not allowed to use and bathe in the holy pond).¹⁴⁵

As per the Hindu mythology, when the wife of Lord Shiva attempted suicide in the Havan (sacred fire), he cried so bitterly and for so long that a pool formed here, of his tears in Katas Raj and another in Pushkar (Ajmer Sharief, India).¹⁴⁶ Hindus call these two pools, the two eyes of the Earth. As the tears of the Shiva Da Mahadeva, are sacred to them. However, Hinduism is permeated by several mythological tales, which have been proved wrong by scientific and logical research several times. So, renowned Muslim mathematician Abu Rehan Alberuni also challenged this myth of Hindus and observed the rocks of Katas Raj very close to

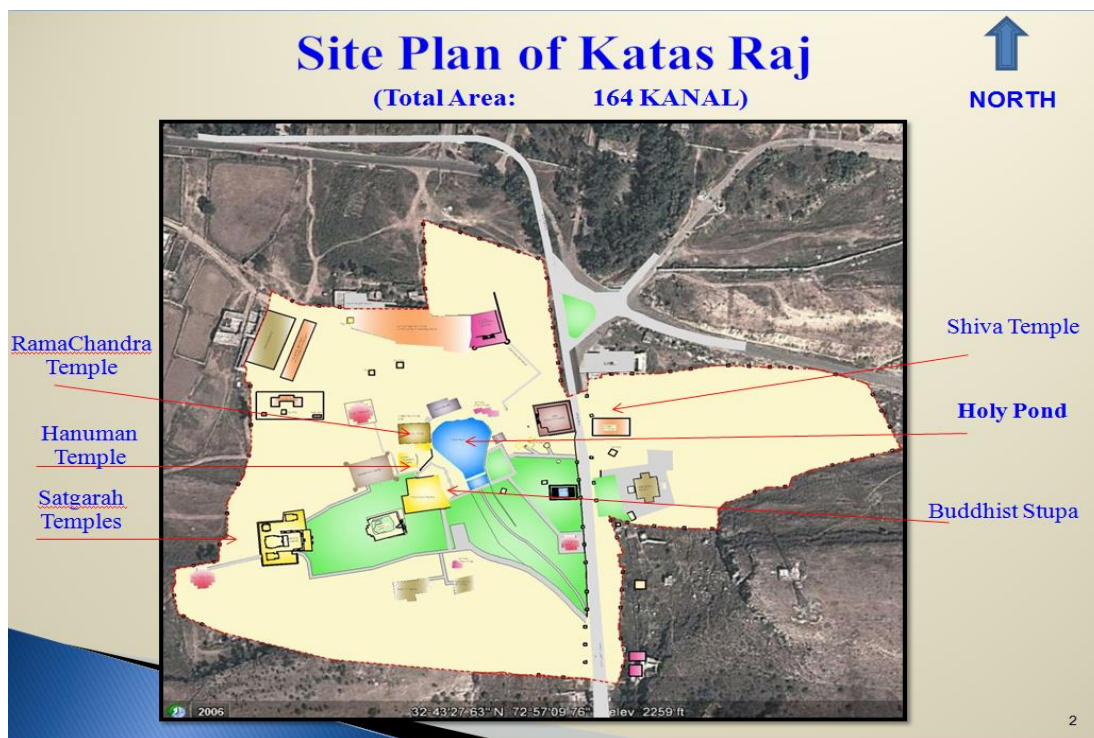


FIGURE 5 MAP OF KATAS RAJ TEMPLE COMPLEX (COURTESY: DIRECTOR PUNJAB ARCHAEOLOGY DEPARTMENT LAHORE, PAKISTAN)

¹⁴⁵ M.Hanif Raza, "Islamabad and Environs", Colorpix, Islamabad 1985 p126.

¹⁴⁶ "Temples of Koh-e-Jud & Thar", Anjuman Mimaran, Lahore 1989 p29.

the pool. He proved through his research that the pond of Katas did not form by the tears of Lord Shiva but it is a natural watercourse of the Salt Range as any other.¹⁴⁷

Katas is 2200 meters above sea level.¹⁴⁸ The name of the Pandava brothers is associated with this place also. During their exile in Punjab, they also lived there for some time and built the temples of Satghara to pay tribute to their lord Shiva Da Mahadeva.¹⁴⁹To extend the sacredness of the place, associations of such Hindu mythological personalities are interlinked with Katas Raj as such types of mythologies are associated with other temples of Hinduism also, like the Hindu temple in Balochistan at Hinglaj. Alexander Cunningham described the holy pool of Katas in his survey reports of 1871 and the second time in 1872-73 in his volume number 5, as per his reports the pool is not natural but artificial.¹⁵⁰

The rocks had been cut away to deepen the Eastern side of the pool. The length of the sacred pool is 122 feet and it is 19 feet deep. The pool is 10 feet wide but it was further widened to use as the passage for the road between Kallar Kahar and Pind Dadan Khan and also to provide a passage to the flood water during the monsoon season. That's why the pool had been widened up to 20 feet. So it is assumed that in the second half of the 19th century, when Alexander Cunningham, a Britain surveyor conducted his research and measurements of this area; the pool was prepared as a mini dam to obtain water for irrigation and other household uses.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁷ Raja Muhammad Khalid Janjua, "*Rawalpindi, Rawalpindi Division ki Mukhtasar Tareekh, Ahm Waqiyat or Maloomat*", S.T Printers, Rawalpindi 2012 pp131-132.(translated by the researcher)

¹⁴⁸ Shaikh Khurshid Hasan, "*Pakistan: Its Ancient Hindu Temples and Shrines*", National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research Center of Excellence, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad 2008 p61.

¹⁴⁹ *Gazetteer of the Jhelum District*, 1904 p42.

¹⁵⁰ Shaikh Khurshid Hasan, "*Pakistan: Its Ancient Hindu Temples and Shrines*", National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research Centre of Excellence, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad 2008 p61.

¹⁵¹ *Gazetteer of the Jhelum District*, 1904 p42.

In fact, before the settlement of the Cement factories (in the Musharraf era), the main water source of the Choa Saidan Shah was this mini dam of Katas Raj. After the installment of the Cement factories of the Choa Saidan Shah, many gardens of apricot and red roses (through which the industry of homeopathic medicines was flourishing in Kallar Kahar and Choa Saidan Shah), fell dry and dead because Cement factories drunk the natural water of this holy watercourse.¹⁵²

Cunningham observed the Ganiya Nala also, which passes through the pond of Katas 800 feet below. On the Western hills of Katas Raj named Kotera, the remains a temple and a fortification wall can be seen. It is the same fortification wall, where the Northern temples of Kashmiri style, the magnificent Satghara temples are situated. Alexander Cunningham identified six pairs of Satghara temples in volume number 5 of his report 1872-73 (now in the 21st century AD, these temples are only four).¹⁵³

2.2 Malot Fort

Malot is merely 9 miles away from the Kallar Kahar (tehsil of Chakwal), on the Southern side and it has the same distance from the Katas Raj town, exactly on the Western side of Katas Raj. Malot village lies in the South of the Karuli village. It is 3000 feet high from sea level.¹⁵⁴ Malot is also a medieval period fort and is also associated with the Hindu Shahis. It lies 2000 feet East to West, 1500 feet North to South and breadth is measured as 1200-500.¹⁵⁵ The peak of the Malot hill is fully covered with the ruins of the Malot fort. There is a gateway and two

¹⁵² Kishore, Interview.

¹⁵³ *Gazetteer of the Jhelum District*, 1904 p42.

¹⁵⁴ Shaikh Khurshid Hasan, "*Historical Forts in Pakistan*", National Institute of Historical & Cultural Research Center Of Excellence, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad 2005 p25.

¹⁵⁵ Shaikh Khurshid Hasan, "*Pakistan: Its Ancient Hindu Temples and Shrines*", National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research Center of Excellence, Quaid-i-Azam University (New Campus), Islamabad 2008 p54.

buildings of the Shiva temple alongside the ruins of the fortification wall of the Malot fort; which can be seen at the hill of Malot.¹⁵⁶ These temples are also structured in the Northern Indian or Kashmiri temple architectural design as the temples of the Satghara (Katas Raj) are.¹⁵⁷

As per the reports of architectural surveyor Alexander Cunningham, in the time period of Malot Fort's peak, it was hardly 2 miles away from the local population of Malot.¹⁵⁸ It is also famous among the majestic temples of the Salt Range.¹⁵⁹ As per the local traditions, the initial name of the Malot was 'Namrod', 'Marrod' or 'Ramrod'. General Abbot described its name as 'Shahi' or 'Shah Gharh' but according to the Janjua traditions, its name was 'Raj Shahi'. It was constructed by the Rajput Raja 'Mall', 'Mallu' or 'Malldeva' in 980 AD. Raja Mallu was a Janjua chief. The offshoots of Raja Mallu are living in the village of Malot till date.¹⁶⁰

The town of Malot embraced Islam in the 11th century AD and Raja Mallu passed away 600 years before. So the majority of the people assumed that the temple is more ancient than Raja Mallu.¹⁶¹ However, according to another legend, Malot was the abbreviation of the "Mulk Kot", as this title was an award from the Muslim Salateen-e-Dehli, for those Hindu Rajas, who used to accept the federation of their states, under the realm of Salateen-e-Dehli. Babar also mentioned in his Tuzk that such types of states used to be called "Malot" or "Mulk-Kot".¹⁶²

There is a huge perpendicular cleft on the elevation where the Malot temples lie. One of the temples at Malot has a maverick lump on the Eastern side of the major temple; it also worked

¹⁵⁶ Anum Fayyaz, Mahwish Zeeshan, "Masonry Art: Preservation of Archaeological Sites in Chakwal", *The Explorer Islamabad: Journal of Social Sciences*, Vol-1, Issue (7): Pp 251-254, Department of Anthropology, PMAS-Arid Agriculture University, Rawalpindi 2015 p253.

¹⁵⁷ Kamil Khan Mumtaz, "Architecture in Pakistan", Concept Media Pte Ltd 1 Grange Road #5-11/12 Orchard Building, Singapore 1985 p30.

¹⁵⁸ Alexander Cunningham, "Ancient Geography of India", Cosmo Publications, New Delhi 2007 p106.

¹⁵⁹ Alexander Cunningham, (2007). p106

¹⁶⁰ Salman Rashid, "The Salt Range and the Potohar Plateau", Sang-e-Meel Publications, Lahore 2001 Pp99-103.

¹⁶¹ Dr. Muhammad Ashraf, "Crafts of Salt Range Khewra", Directorate of Handicrafts and Design: Punjab Small Industries Corporation, Vol-IX, Lahore 2014 p204.

¹⁶² Salman Rashid, "The Salt Range and the Potohar Plateau", Sang-e-Meel Publications, Lahore 2001 Pp99-103.

as the gateway of the Malot fort. Among all temples of Salt Range, only Malot temples are situated in the core of a guarded city (inside a fort). Though the temple's buildings are copiously hewed and sculpted from their outer. However, they have a plain inner.¹⁶³

The way to reach the top of the Malot fort is very difficult. It was built for strategic purposes more than religious. It is secured from all sides with erect crags which are heightened 100-300 feet. While from the Northern side these crags are quite less in height, merely 40-50 feet but exist anyway.¹⁶⁴ When Alexander Cunningham came to visit this place in 1860, he found the Malot temples in a very critical condition. However, before the partition of the subcontinent, Hindu Brahmins from the Bali caste, used to look after this Shiva temple of Malot fort.¹⁶⁵

Malot is historic due to many ways; it is significant for the Janjua and Gadhok Rajputs both. It was the place where Daulat Khan Lodhi surrendered to Zahir-ud-Din Babar (1526-1530AD) as Babar mentioned in his Tuzk, Babar Nama. Mahan Singh, father of Maharaja Ranjit Singh (1839-1891AD) built a small fort there also.¹⁶⁶ It is also a significant part of the renowned Salt Range temple series including Amb, Nandana, Katas Raj, Kafir Kot, Mangla temple and Shiva Ganga Malkana temple etc. These temples were built post 11th century AD. In 1026 AD, Ghaznavids demolished the Hindu Shahis forever from the Salt Range.¹⁶⁷

Cunningham reported in 1860 AD that the Malot fort is in a broken condition and is about to drop down because of the acute weather conditions. Then he described the architecture and material which has been used. The Shiva temple of the Malot fort is 18 square feet, from its

¹⁶³ Shaikh Khurshid Hasan, "Pakistan: Its Ancient Hindu Temples and Shrines", National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research Center of Excellence, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad 2008 p54.

¹⁶⁴ Shaikh Khurshid Hasan, (2008). p54

¹⁶⁵ Shaikh Khurshid Hasan, (2008). p54

¹⁶⁶ Salman Rashid, "*The Salt Range and the Potohar Plateau*", Sang-e-Meel Publications, Lahore 2001 Pp99-103.

¹⁶⁷ Ahmad Hasan Dani, "*History of Pakistan, Pakistan Through Ages*", Sang-e-Meel Publications, Lahore 2008 Pp 156-157.

Eastern entrance gate. Its fluted pillars and sky-scraping triptych domes are plastered. The four sides of the Shiva temple are decorated with huge plasters under a breadth of 2-1/2 feet. Around all sides of the temple, above the triptychs, a murti (an idol) lies. The bottom of the temple is four feet in height and the height of the foreigner wall is two feet.¹⁶⁸

The roof is not there now it was tapered, as one can assess from the quad shape of the building; because of the acuteness of the weather, it was designed as tapered. However, the ringer roof still exists. The height of its shaft is 30 feet. While from the ground to the dome, it is exactly 28.4 inches. There is neither an idol nor the Shiva Linga found here. But surely both of these things used to be there in the past, in the period of its peak; when the temple was operational.¹⁶⁹

The distance between the gateway and the Shiva temple is 58 feet. Shiva temple is a huge building at the core of the Malot fort. Which is further divided into two rooms, each of them is 15-1/4 by 8-1/4 feet.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁸ Shaikh Khurshid Hasan, "*Pakistan: Its Ancient Hindu Temples and Shrines*", National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research Center of Excellence, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad 2008 p55.

¹⁶⁹ *Temples of Koh-e-Jud & Thar*", Anjuman Mimaran, Lahore Pp37-38.

¹⁷⁰ Shaikh Khurshid Hasan, "*Pakistan: Its Ancient Hindu Temples and Shrines*", National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research Centre of Excellence, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad 2008 Pp56-57.



FIGURE 6 MALOT TEMPLE (WWW.GOOGLE.COM)

The twelve crumpled shaped poles of the Shiva temple Malot and its cleft parts are a fine example of the Kashmiri temple architectural style and at the same time, it is very close to the Greek temple architecture. Both of the buildings of the Shiva temple Malot fort had separate stairs but unfortunately vanished. Malot fort is very much similar in its architecture, with the Martand temple of Kashmir. This was constructed by the Lalitaditya (724-760AD), a Hindu Shahi emperor, in the 8th century AD. So it is more obvious that the fort of Malot is also constructed by the Lalitaditya and not by Raja Mall or Mallu in 980 AD.¹⁷¹

It is a true example of the Kashmiri temple architecture of its top floor, tapered ceiling and crumpled plasters. However, it is in the opposite architectural style from the Kashmiri

¹⁷¹ Shaikh Khurshid Hasan, “*Pakistan: Its Ancient Hindu Temples and Shrines*”, National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research Centre of Excellence, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad 2008 Pp56-57.

temple architecture. Firstly, the Malot fort does not have triangular seating. This is a common characteristic of the Kashmiri temple architecture, in this way it is more similar to the Gandhara temple architecture, which was governed by the Hindu Shahis from the 8th to 10th centuries AD. So it is obvious that the Malot fort was built somewhere in the 8th to 10th centuries AD. One can say that it is a fine amalgamation of the Kashmiri and the Gandharan temple architectural design.¹⁷²

Secondly, by the style of its cleft parts, it is more close to the Greek temples.¹⁷³ In this way, one can say that the Malot temple is a true trine of the Greek, Kashmiri and Gandharian temple architecture.¹⁷⁴ A small grotto can also be seen on the smaller building of the Shiva temple Malot fort. It was a check post in the Sikh period (first half of the 19th century AD).¹⁷⁵ The quad of the grotto is 5.5 meters.¹⁷⁶ It is uninhabited now. It is the residence of the wild pigeons only.¹⁷⁷

Today only the ruins of the fortification wall, entrance gate and two buildings of the Shiva temples are present.¹⁷⁸ The red bricks of the fort have been stolen by the local and foreign tourists many times.¹⁷⁹ This temple is a proof of our ancient history and culture, which is, unfortunately, disappearing day by day. It is to be taken under the observation and restoration program of the Punjab Archaeology Department, Pakistan immediately.¹⁸⁰ As it is 3000 feet

¹⁷² Shaikh Khurshid Hasan, "*Pakistan: Its Ancient Hindu Temples and Shrines*", National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research Centre of Excellence, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad 2008 Pp56-57.

¹⁷³ "*Temples of Koh-e-Jud & Thar*", Anjuman Mimaran, Lahore 1989 Pp37-38.

¹⁷⁴ Anjuman Mimaran, (1989). Pp37-38

¹⁷⁵ Shaikh Khurshid Hasan, "*Pakistan: Its Ancient Hindu Temples and Shrines*", National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research Center of Excellence, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad 2008p57.

¹⁷⁶ Salman Rashid, "*The Salt Range & the Potohar Plateau*", Sang-e-Meel Publications, Lahore 2001 p101.

¹⁷⁷ Salman Rashid, (2001). p101

¹⁷⁸ Dr. Muhammad Ashraf, "*Crafts of Salt Range Khewra*", Directorate of Handicrafts and Design: Punjab Small Industries Corporation, Vol-IX, Lahore 2014 p204.

¹⁷⁹ Dr. Liaquat Ali Khan Niazi, "*Tareekh-e-Chakwal, Tareekh-o-Saqafat*", Sang-e-Meel Publications, Lahore 2019 Pp71-98.

¹⁸⁰ Dr. Liaquat Ali Khan Niazi, (2019). Pp71-98

above sea level, this place can also become a tourist site, with the inauguration of the paragliding club here.¹⁸¹

2.3 Shiva Ganga Malkana Temples

Two temples of Kali and Durga goddesses (two avatars of Parvati) are found near Dalwal village. It is 3 miles away from Malot, in its North-East, at Malkana. Shiva Ganga Malkana temple is very close to Panj Shahpur, which consists of two temples and a huge house building for the pilgrims. The temples are constructed with the densely layered architectural work of lime plaster. It is made of red sandstone. Sandstone work in buildings usually consists of dilapidated element, that's why these two temples are also disappearing day by day and are in a critical condition. It is rather a pedestal or a jeep-way; any other vehicle cannot reach the temples of Malkana. Undersides of the temples are more erected as compared to the common Greek undersides.¹⁸²

These two temples are dedicated to the second wife of Lord Shiva, 'Parvati Devi'. According to the Hindu mythology goddess Parvati had two avatars, 'Durga' and 'Kali'. In Hinduism, Goddess Durga is known as Shakti also. In Shaivism, Durga is a protective mother of the universe and a protector of all the good and harmonious things in the world. While goddess Kali is known for violence as she punishes the bad people and puts them to death. Kali is the most powerful and immortal demon in the history of Hinduism. Kali is considered the forceful form of the goddess Durga. Kali is presented as a black woman with four arms.¹⁸³

¹⁸¹ Dr.Liaquat Ali Khan Niazi, "*Tareekh-e-Chakwal, Tareekh-o-Saqafat*", Sang-e-Meel Publications, Lahore 2019 Pp71-98.

¹⁸² Dr.Muhammad Ashraf, "*Crafts of Salt Range Khewra*", Directorate of Handicrafts and Design: Punjab Small Industries Corporation, Vol-IX, Lahore 2014 p172.

¹⁸³ Kishore, Interview.

The buildings of temples are decorated with the triglyph arches, where the pictures of the animals are also hewed. A sweet-water stream is also flowing on the walking path of the Shiva Ganga Malkana temple. A small pool comes in the way of this stream. This pool is very much similar to the Katas' holy pool.¹⁸⁴ There is a huge Banyan tree in the middle of both of the temples. In this place, General Abbot found a head in the second half of the 18th century, which was recognized as Jupiter Ammon (an ancient Egyptian god).¹⁸⁵ A Buddhist sculpture was also found in the second half of the 18th century at the Warala site by the villagers, so they built a temple and fixed the sculpture there. That's why one temple is in satisfactory condition, while the other temple is in critical condition.¹⁸⁶

The other temple is constructed in the Kashmiri temple architectural style and this Hindu temple is older than the other.¹⁸⁷ The sculpture was found between the 18th century AD is $1\frac{1}{2}$ by $2\frac{1}{4}$ feet. It was founded by the Hindus of Dalwal from the Warala site and was fixed in the Shiva Ganga Malkana temple but later on, it was disfigured by some noxious people in the 20th century because it was bunk and baseless to them.¹⁸⁸

However, its parts were sent to the Lahore museum. It was restored there but some of the parts are still missing. Its core figure is 15 inches high, on its right and left are Bodhisattva and Maitreya, made of pilasters. All these are the standing figures of Buddha of 8 inches in height. Mezzanines are also decorated with other four figures, these figures are presenting Devas. On the top of the sculpture; Buddha is fixed. There were a total of 18 or 19 figures; some of them had

¹⁸⁴ "Temples of Koh-e-Jud & Thar", Anjuman Mimaran, Lahore 1989 Pp29-30.

¹⁸⁵ Anjuman Mimaran, (1989). Pp29-30

¹⁸⁶ Gazetteer of the Jhelum District, 1904 p40.

¹⁸⁷ Gazetteer of the Jhelum District, (1904). p40

¹⁸⁸ Gazetteer of the Jhelum District, (1904). p40

animal faces also. But some of them are disfigured and some of them are missing. It was kind of a little shrine in itself.¹⁸⁹

Unlike other Hindu temples, Shiva Ganga Malkana temple is not situated on the top of any hill, rather it is located in a pleasant vale on the verge of a perpetual stream.¹⁹⁰ This place is bewitching and there are a lot of fruit trees here. This place is 3 miles away from the Mughal bus stop. The road needs to be reconstructed as it is the way of trucks. This place can also become a

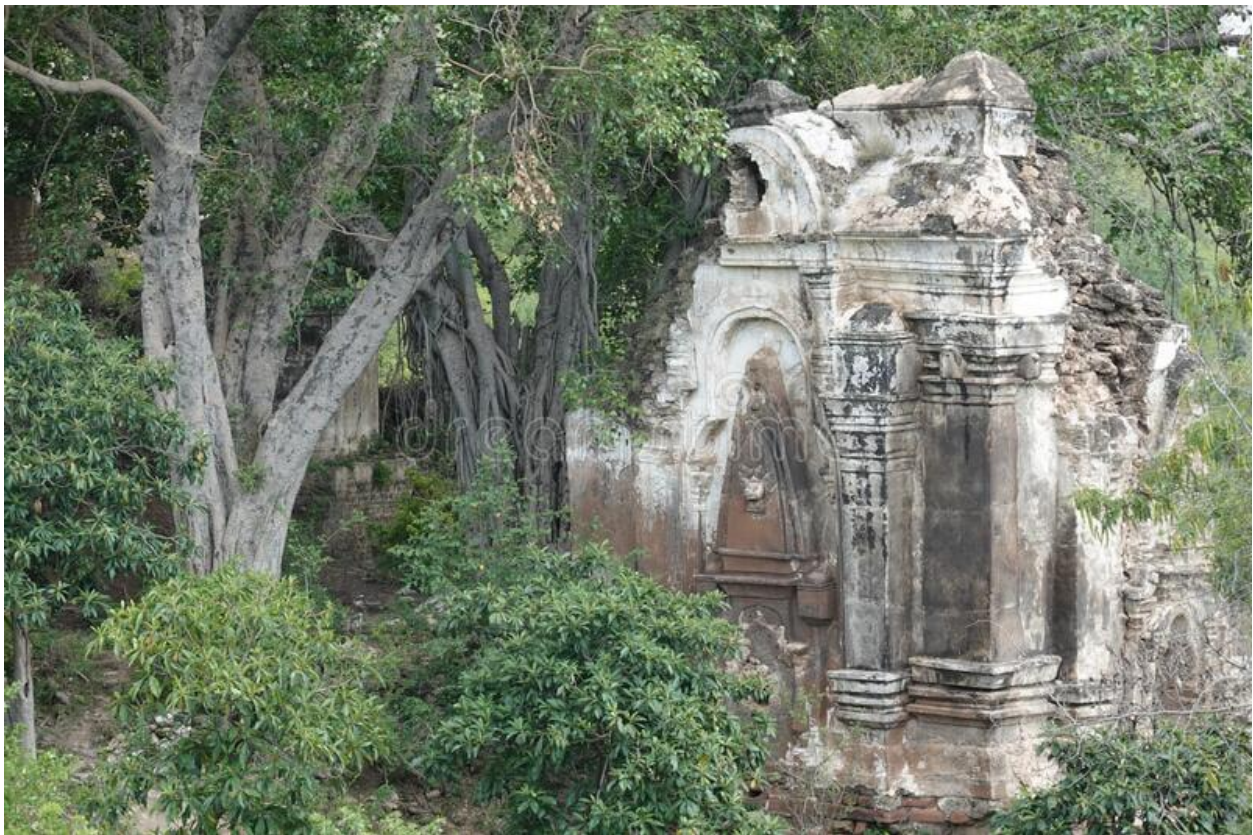


FIGURE 7 SHIVA GANGA MALKANA TEMPLE (WWW.GOOGLE.COM)

¹⁸⁹ Gazetteer of the Jhelum District, (1904). p40

¹⁹⁰ Dr.Muhammad Ashraf, "*Crafts of Salt Range Khewra*", Directorate of Handicrafts and Design: Punjab Small Industries Corporation, Vol-IX, Lahore 2014 p172.

tourist destination through the construction of the road and the restoration of the Shiva Ganga Malkana temples. Because these temples are decaying day by day and need to be handed over to the Punjab Archaeology Department as soon as possible.¹⁹¹

2.4 Sassi-da-Kalara/Kallar Temple

This temple lies in the North-Western corner of the district Chakwal. This temple is situated in tehsil Talagang; however it is 51 kilometers away from Talagang and 120 kilometers away from Rawalpindi.¹⁹² It is 3 miles away from the Shah Mohammadi village (on its Southern side). It is 1100 feet above sea-level. It is situated on a mound, the river Soan is also passing near it, near Mial.¹⁹³

It is a lonely standing temple and is also a true example of Kashmiri temple architecture, like the other temples of the Salt Range; it also belongs to the Hindu Shahis. Its period is estimated at 800-950 AD. Many people assume from its name ‘Sassi-da-kalara’ that it belongs to the famous folk-tale ‘Sassi-Punnu’; however natives of the mauza Kalara know nothing in this regard. Dr. Stein observed this temple and concluded that this temple is very much similar to the temple of Amb (the temple of Amb is 50 miles away from the temple of Kalara on the Southern side).¹⁹⁴

The temple has more than two names such as Sassi-da-Kallar, Sassi-da-Kalara and Kallar temple also. However, as per Mishra’s narration, the Kallar name is associated with the

¹⁹¹ Dr.Muhammad Ashraf, “*Crafts of Salt Range Khewra*”, Directorate of Handicrafts and Design: Punjab Small Industries Corporation, Vol-IX, Lahore 2014 p172.

¹⁹² Shaikh Khurshid Hasan, “*Pakistan: Its Ancient Hindu Temples and Shrines*”, National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research Centre of Excellence, Quaid-e-Azam University, Islamabad 2008 p57.

¹⁹³ “*Temples of Koh-e-Jud & Thar*”, Anjuman Mimaran, Lahore 1989 p32.

¹⁹⁴ Dr.Liaquat Ali Khan Niazi, “*Tareekh-e-Chakwal, Tareekh-o-Saqafat*”, Sang-e-Meel Publications, Lahore 2019 p72.

first Hindu Shahi emperor Kallar (843-850AD).¹⁹⁵This is the only temple of the Salt Range, which is made of huge sized burnt bricks.¹⁹⁶Each brick is 15 to 15.5 inches long and the width of the brick is 10 to 10.5 inches, while each brick is 12 inches in height. Architectural work is decorated with tracery. The entrance door of the temple is on the Eastern side; many parts of this door have fallen out with time (one can see the debris outside of the temple).¹⁹⁷

From dome to floor it is 10 feet in height while from the upper chamber to floor it is 18-1/4. The length of the temple is 22-1/4 feet and the width of the temple is 16 feet while the interior of the temple is as under, square 7-1/4; height is 7 feet from the floor and it is 8 inches deep.¹⁹⁸The temple has a porch in the front part and a quatrefoil cupola on four quatrefoil lavalries and an upper story with the same design.¹⁹⁹The chair of the temple is made of sandstone along with narrow stairs inside the temple, like the Shiva Temple Katas Raj. There is not any sculpture present inside the temple now; rather it is empty and full of dust.²⁰⁰

¹⁹⁵ Shaikh Khurshid Hasan, "*Pakistan: Its Ancient Hindu Temples and Shrines*", National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research Center of Excellence, Quaid-e-Azam University, Islamabad 2008 p57.

¹⁹⁶ "*Temples of Koh-e-Jud & Thar*", Anjuman Mimaran, Lahore 1989 p32.

¹⁹⁷ Dr. Liaquat Ali Khan Niazi, "*Tareekh-e-Chakwal, Tareekh-o-Saqafat*", Sang-e-Meel Publications, Lahore 2019 p72.

¹⁹⁸ Shaikh Khurshid Hasan, "*Pakistan: Its Ancient Hindu Temples and Shrines*", National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research Center of Excellence, Quaid-e-Azam University, Islamabad 2008 p58.

¹⁹⁹ Dr. Muhammad Ashraf, "*Crafts of Salt Range Khewra*", Directorate of Handicrafts and Design: Punjab Small Industries Corporation, Vol-IX Lahore 2014 Pp170-206.

²⁰⁰ Dr. Muhammad Ashraf, (2014), Pp170-206.



FIGURE 8 KALLAR TEMPLE (WWW.GOOGLE.COM)

As per the narration of the Jhelum Gazetteer 1884, during the excavation near the walls of the Kallar temple, a coin of Raja Venka Deva has been found. According to General Cunningham, Venka Deva was the emperor in the 8th century AD. The total area of the hillock of the Kallar temple is one acre. This temple is vanishing day by day as it is in a dilapidated condition because of the lack of interest and conservation by the concerned authorities, it is about to fall. It needs government attention and should be handed over to the Punjab Archaeology department as soon as possible, as it is a fine piece of our heritage; it needs to be preserved.²⁰¹

²⁰¹ Dr. Muhammad Ashraf, “*Crafts of Salt Range Khewra*”, Directorate of Handicrafts and Design: Punjab Small Industries Corporation, Vol-IX Lahore 2014 Pp170-206.

2.5 Ratta Chura Temple

The temple has almost disappeared but a pile of hewed cubes can be seen there around the Ratta Chura temple near Talagang. This temple was constructed with embellished and hewed cubes.²⁰²

2.6 Kallu Kot

It is a large Jaina or Buddhist site. Though the site is not appropriately gouged, hence many things have been found such as; jewelry, ceramics, tombstones, terracotta sculptures and stucco etc. This material has a resemblance with the disinter material of the Murti site and at the same time, the sculptures resemble the sculptures of the Gandhara; which survived till the later period of Gupta Art. Stairs of the stupa can also be seen from these ruins and the base of a monastery is also visible.²⁰³

The most exciting discoveries of the Kallu Kot are a shining monolithic hand-axe and a half Mach-head of ring shape, which specify that either the monument of Kallu Kot belongs to the Neolithic period or the material of the monument identifies the period between the 6th to 7th centuries AD. Kallu Kot is the most important discovery of the Chakwal architectural survey.²⁰⁴

2.7 Kallu Wala Dir

Forts of district Chakwal are ranging from the Bronze age period (3300-1200 BC) to the 19th century AD. Kallu Wala Dir fort lies in the South of Talagang near Lawa. This fort is 300 BC ancient and belongs to the Early Harappan (Kot Diji) period. It is a curved shaped castle,

²⁰² Dr. Muhammad Ashraf, "*Crafts of Salt Range Khewra*", Directorate of Handicrafts and Design: Punjab Small Industries Corporation, Vol-IX, Lahore 2014 Pp 170-206.

²⁰³ Dr. Muhammad Ashraf, (2014). Pp170-206

²⁰⁴ Dr. Muhammad Ashraf, (2014). Pp170-206

with four bulwarks and an entrance with an auxiliary miniature opening from the analogous material, such as chert blades and potsherds. This castle is situated on the top of a remote sky-high mountain.²⁰⁵

2.8 Kusuk Fort

The fort of Kusuk has all features of the Salt Range as it lies in the Salt Range near the settlements of the Katas Raj. It is still in a satisfactory condition in terms of conservation as it was used by the Janjuas against the Sikhs in the 19th century AD. The fort lies on a solitary hillock; it is placed in an effective place strategically by its look-over view towards the East. Both the Malot fort and the Kusuk fort are of the same period as both the forts were built in the post 11th century AD period in the Hindu Shahi dynasty. Another similarity between the Malot fort and the Kusuk fort is that both forts had undergone the Janjuas.²⁰⁶

²⁰⁵ Dr. Muhammad Ashraf, "*Crafts of Salt Range Khewra*", Directorate of Handicrafts and Design: Punjab Small Industries Corporation, Vol-IX, Lahore 2014 Pp 170-206.

²⁰⁶ Dr. Muhammad Ashraf, (2014). Pp170-206



FIGURE 9 KUSUK FORT (WWW.GOOGLE.COM)

2.9 Sikhawala Fort

Sikhawala fort or Sikhawali Dheri is situated on a secluded hill like other forts such as Kallu Wala Dir and Kusuk fort. Sikhawala fort lies very close to Mohni Bagh close by Kalar Kahar Lake. The fort is in a crescent shape and has stile ingress. For water preservation, a tank is also constructed inside the fort. It was built by the Sikhs to strengthen their defensive line, in the first half of the 19th century AD.²⁰⁷

²⁰⁷ Dr. Muhammad Ashraf, “*Crafts of Salt Range Khewra*”, Directorate of Handicrafts and Design: Punjab Small Industries Corporation, Vol-IX, Lahore 2014 Pp 170-206.

2.10 Bagh-e-Safa

The founder of the Mughal dynasty Zahir-ud-Din Babar built a garden in the South-West of the Kalar Kahar Lake because he was impressed by the enchanting beauty of this area. This is the first Mughal garden in South-Asia, named Bagh-e-Safa by the Mughal emperor Babar. The total area of the Bagh-e-Safa garden is 111 Kanals and 5 Marlas. This garden was under governmental observation in 1860 AD but now it is under the administration of the district council. As Babar was influenced by the lake and its surroundings, he used to narrate the lake of Kalar Kahar in his Tuzk as “Kalah-Kahar”, he recounted the incidents of 1519 that “there is a mountain 35 kilometers away from Bhera, it is often called the Koh-e-Judah in the Zafar-Nama and the other books of history. There are several fields of pulses in the surroundings of this mountain. In the plain party line of the mountain, there is a huge clean water pool (present lake) lies. As this was a marvelous place, I ordered a garden, which I named Bagh-e-Safa”.²⁰⁸

This place is 125 kilometers away from Islamabad. It was the tradition in the Mughal period that the most senior family member of the Gudhok family (who was living in the Mauza Bhaun, Chakwal) used to appoint the Mughals, from Humayun to Aurangzeb’s era. The last step letter of Mirza Diyanat Baig Khan-e-Khanan is the proof of the royal authorization for the Gudhok family to look after the garden. However, Kali Das was the first person from the Gudhok family who received the royal stamp letter from the Mughal emperor Nasir-ud-Din Humayun.²⁰⁹

²⁰⁸ Anum Fayyaz, Mahwish Zeeshan, “Masonry Art: Preservation of Archaeological Sites in Chakwal”, *The Explorer Islamabad: Journal of Social Sciences*, Vol-1, Issue (7):Pp 251-254, Department of Anthropology, PMAS-Arid Agriculture University, Rawalpindi 2015 p253.

²⁰⁹ Anum Fayyaz, (2015). p253



FIGURE 10 BAGH-E-SAFA (BY RESEARCHER)

2.11 Takht-e-Babri

Kalar Kahar is a celebrated city for the tourists of its hypnotic lakes, Bagh-e-Safa garden, Takht-e-Babri, shrines of sufi saints, Pea-Cocks and sweetwater springs. Takht-e-Babri lies in the core of the Bagh-e-Safa garden. Takht-e-Babri was constructed by the army of Zahir-ud-Din

Babar, by cutting a huge slope of the hill, where it is situated today. They cut the surface and made it plain for the throne of Zahir-ud-Din Babar. They cut the slope and made 3 stairs also. It is a square shape. Takht-e-Babri is the center of attention for the foreigner and local tourists. The overview of the Kalar Kahar Lake from the Takht-e-Babri is astounding.²¹⁰



FIGURE 11 TAKHT-E-BABRI (BY RESEARCHER)

This is the place where Zahir-ud-Din Babar deployed his army and addressed his corps from this rock. The hypnotic shrine of Sakhi Ahu Bahu is also there at the peak of this mountain. The mirror work inside this Shrine is staggering. The cave of Baba Farid Ganj Shakar is also

²¹⁰ Anum Fayyaz, Mahwish Zeeshan, "Masonry Art: Preservation of Archaeological Sites in Chakwal", *The Explorer Islamabad: Journal of Social Sciences*, Vol-1, Issue (7):Pp 251-254, Department of Anthropology, PMAS-Arid Agriculture University, Rawalpindi 2015 p253.

there on the same hillock, along with the holy water spring. It is to be said that when Baba Farid Ganj Shakar put his stick on a rock, a water spring started which never fell dry till date. The water of this flume is a cure for patients with ringworm and haunted people. At the end of the garden, there are two rest houses also on the same hillock, on the South-Eastern side of the garden. One is the 'Nasheman' rest house and the other one is named 'District Council' rest house. The overview of Kalar Kahar from these rest houses is bewildering.²¹¹

2.12 Singhapura and Murti Site

According to Hiuen Tsiang, there was a state of Sing-ho-po-lo in Gandhala valley. 13 kilometers away in the South-East of Dulmial village (Dulmial is 5 kilometers away from Katas Raj), the spellbinding ranches of Gandhala valley lie. The monarchy of Singhapura has consisted of 3000-3600 miles.²¹² Its boundaries were stretched till the river Indus in its West. The total territory of its capital was 14-15 miles and it was surrounded by the vertical rocky hills. So, it was naturally and strategically secured from external attacks. It was a fertile area; Hiuen Tsiang found a lot of fruit trees and crops. The climate of the area was cold and the bravery was the core feature of the society. However, the society had no emperor or ruler but it is a fact that Singhapura was a part of the Kashmiri Empire.²¹³

In the South of the capital, there was a stupa built by Asoka. The height of the stupa is 200 feet. According to Hiuen Tsiang, there were ten ponds in the surroundings of this stupa, which were connected through groundwater pipelines covertly. On the right and left sides of the stupa, there were many kinds of stones, on those stones, some weird languages were embossed. The water of the ponds was clear and clean and many kinds of fishes were there in these ponds.

²¹¹ Dr.Liaquat Ali Khan Niazi, "*Tareekh-e-Chakwal, Tareekh-o-Sqafat*", Sang-e-Meel Publications, Lahore 2019 p101.

²¹² Alexander Cunningham, "*Ancient Geography of India*", Cosmo Publications, New Delhi 2007 p107.

²¹³ Salman Rashid, "*The Salt Range & the Potohar Plateau*", Sang-e-Meel Publications, Lahore 2001 Pp62-66.

Hiuen Tsiang suggested this place for airing. He also identified a temple near stupa and the residential places (caves) for the pilgrims. He mentioned the lives of the Sadhus here and said that these people spend their days and nights in penance (Tapasya).²¹⁴

Hiuen Tsiang mentioned a Jain temple in Singhapura also. Singhapura was part of the Gandhara valley. However architectural surveyor Alexander Cunningham was the first person who put the assumption that Katas is the Singhapura of the Chinese traveler Hiuen Tsiang but after that Dr.Stein came to the Salt Range by himself to investigate the matter. So after Dr.Stein's observations, he had been written detailed letters to Dr. Buhler and mentioned that there is a place alongside the rill of the Choa Saidan Shah, named as Murti site (Murti site is just two miles away from the rill of Choa Saidan Shah). From the Murti site, several idols, ornaments, pottery, coins and slabs had been found.²¹⁵

These slabs were later used to make the bridge of Choa Saidan Shah and many idols, which were in satisfactory condition, were sent to the Lahore museum.²¹⁶ Freshet of Katas, which was divided into several rills in Gandhala valley; Murti mound is situated exactly there, where two large ponds lie on the way alongside an arena on the plateau. This arena alongside the Murti mound is 225 feet long, its width is 190 feet and it is 40 feet in height. However, the Murti mound is 100 feet in height. In the South of this arena, a heap of debris can be seen. The ruins of an ancient temple were identified from this debris. Two trenches were also identified in the North-West of the Murti site. The walls of the temple were built exactly on this site.²¹⁷

²¹⁴ *Gazetteer of the Jhelum District*, 1904 Pp41-46.

²¹⁵ *Gazetteer of the Jhelum District*, (1904), Pp41-46.

²¹⁶ *Gazetteer of the Jhelum District*, (1904). Pp41-46

²¹⁷ *Gazetteer of the Jhelum District*, (1904). Pp41-46

The bedrock of this temple had been excavated many years before. A bridge in Choa Saidan Shah was also built from this debris on the order of assistant commissioner Pind Dadan Khan. Parts of beautifully engraved pillars had also been found from the debris of the Murti site. From the excavation of the Murti mound, it was revealed that the walls were made of white sandstone covered with rough mortar. The walls are two feet wide, which is proof that this mound is not natural but it is a certified stupa.²¹⁸

More than 30 camel loads of sculptures were found from the Murti site and were sent to the Museum. Among this luggage, two female clothed idols were also found, which were very much similar to the idols, which were found in the Jaina caves of Elura. But the engraving on the Murti site's idols is much more exquisite than the idols of the Elura. People accept that the Murti mound belongs to Raja Patak Deepak, who left the throne before Raj Mallu.²¹⁹

Besides this, the Murti site is considered a Jain temple of Buddhist stupa by archaeologists and historians. According to Hiuen Tsiang, the distance between the Murti site and the Katas is 7 miles and the ancient state of Singhapura was not at the site of Katas Raj (as Alexander Cunningham said) but the Singhapura was located on the Northern arena of Katas Raj. Its notches can be seen on the hills, these notches lie in the surroundings of the Katas Raj.²²⁰

Professor Buhler admits to this view of Dr. Stein that the ancient state of Singhapura was located near the hills of Katas Raj and not at the Katas Raj. Professor Buhler also confesses that the Jain's temple was also situated at the Murti site. The areas are known as Dhani, Kahun and Vanhar now; in the 7th century AD, these areas of Chakwal were a part of the Singhapura monarchy. The state of Taxila was its contemporary state. When Hiuen Tsiang went through the

²¹⁸ *Gazetteer of the Jhelum District*, 1904 Pp41-46.

²¹⁹ *Gazetteer of the Jhelum District*, (1904). Pp41-46

²²⁰ *Gazetteer of the Jhelum District*, (1904). Pp41-46

state of Singhapura in 630 AD, he identified its capital; as 117 miles away in the South-East of the Taxila. Its boundaries were as under:-

- River Indus was in its West.
- Its 120 miles huge boundary with the state of Taxila on the Southern side.
- River Jhelum was in its South.
- River Soan was the border between the state of Taxila and the state of Singhapura.

According to the 'Book of Travels' of Hiuen Tsiang, there was a Budh university in Singhapura, which was not less than the ancient university of Taxila in terms of remediation of knowledge and culture. Raja Patak of Murti site is identified as 'Pir Patak of Ara', who is buried near the road of Jhangar (a place in mauza Ara). Pir Patak was not a Muslim; rather he was a Budh Bhikshu or a Hindu saint.²²¹

²²¹ *Gazetteer of the Jhelum District*, 1904 Pp41-46.

ANCIENT ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE AT KATAS RAJ

In the middle of the Salt range, about 40 kilometers away from the Chakwal city and 27 kilometers away from Kallar Kahar, on the South-Eastern side of Chakwal, the holy place in Hinduism ‘Katas Raj’ is situated at a height of more than 2000 meters above sea level (around 2200 meters).²²² Katas Raj considers the holiest place for the Hindus from the period of ‘Mahabharata’ which had been written 300 years before Christ.²²³

Katas Raj is considered sacred not only for Hindus but for Sikhs and Buddhists also as Katas Raj temple complex has monuments from Buddhist to the British era of the subcontinent as this temple complex is multicultural and multi-religious. Katas Raj temple complex has a Mansion of Hari Singh Nalwa of Sikh period, Shiva temple (which belongs to Lord Shiva), Stupa of Asoka, Satghara temples (which are associated to Pandava brothers), Tunnel, Hanuman temple, Ramachandra temple, well of Pandava brothers, Caves (Sadhus’ houses), Baradari or Havan Kund, Sacred pool, well of Pandava brothers, ancient linguistical university (where Al-Beruni learnt Sanskrit), Mahant Mansion, old library building and Police Station of British Raj etc.²²⁴

Katas Raj temple complex is attributed to the Hindu Shahi period (650-950 AD) and is frequently visited by pilgrims. The ancient Katas Raj group of temples is one of the most significant groups of Hindu temples in the Salt Range. The Salt Range runs from Jhelum River in the East and West to Kalabagh on the Indus River and is dotted with various temple shrines,

²²² Reema Abbasi, “Historical Temples in Pakistan, A Call to Conscience”, Niyogi Books, New Delhi 2014 Pp 148-149.

²²³ Reema Abbasi, (2014). Pp 148-149

²²⁴ Muhammad Akram, “The Temples of Katasraj in Pakistan between Legend and History”,(International Islamic University: Department of Comparative Religion).

archaeological remains and varying geological formations and has associations with various legends in the Hindu mythology. Archaeologically the area is best known for the massive numbers of Buddhist sculptural and structural remains associated with the region of Gandhara from the 1st century BC to the 5th century AD.²²⁵

These Gandharan remains a synthesis of the architectural traditions from India, Central Asia and the classical world. After the decline of Buddhism in Gandhara and the adjoining regions, Hinduism revived once again under the Hindu Shahi dynasty, which held sway over Gandhara and Punjab; and formed a powerful Hindu kingdom of Kashmir in the 10th century AD.²²⁶

During the reign of the Hindu Shahis, numerous temples were erected in North-West Frontier Province and the Salt Range in Punjab. There are some important remains of citadels and temples in the Salt Range built from 6th to 11th centuries AD.²²⁷ This region thus preserves an almost continuous record of temples, which can define the evolution of the distinctive school of Gandhara-Nagara architecture and defines the historical geography of the region.²²⁸

The corbelling method of construction employed in the Buddhist monasteries of Gandhara was followed and used by the Hindu Shahi rulers in their temple construction. In temples at Kafir Kot, Dera Ismail Khan, the temple of Kallar, Malot, Katas and Nandana in the Salt Range and elsewhere, the ceiling of the square cell is raised on several overlapping units of corbelled bricks and stones.²²⁹

²²⁵ Shaikh Khurshid Hasan, "*Pakistan: Its Ancient Hindu Temples and Shrines*", National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research Centre of Excellence, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad 2008 Pp57-66.

²²⁶ Shaikh Khurshid Hasan, (2008).Pp57-66

²²⁷ Shaikh Khurshid Hasan, (2008).Pp57-66

²²⁸ Shaikh Khurshid Hasan, (2008).Pp57-66

²²⁹ "*Temples of Koh-e-Jud & Thar*", Anjuman Mimaran, Lahore 1989 Pp21-41.

The type of temples found at Katas, have plain masonry walls and cantoned corner pilasters. The Katas sub-shrines elevation seems to form a series of cornices with tiny intermediate rows of pillars and a crowning ribbed dome. With its representation of many multiple stories, the Katas sub-shrine can be considered a type of proto-Nagara town.²³⁰ The site accommodates ancient temples, remains of Stupa, late medieval temples, Haveli Hari Singh Nalwa and shrines of recent origin all found scattered around the holy pond.²³¹

The architectural remains of temples in this region and also in South-Asian temple architecture; the Salt Range preserves an almost continuous record of temples that can define the evolution of the distinctive school of Gandhara-Nagara architecture of which remnants can be found at Katas Raj.²³² There are many legends associated with Katas Raj and a lot of sanctity is given to the built and natural heritage components. This has been a continuous phenomenon since ancient times, making this site of great religious value for the Hindus today, it is considered as sacred as Pushkar (India) is. Therefore, the significance of this site lies in its unique natural heritage, historicity, unique architecture and sacredness. These are the components that hold a lot of importance for the present and future generations of India and Pakistan as being a common heritage that spans centuries as well as boundaries.²³³ Some of the important monuments of the Katas Raj temple complex are as under:-

²³⁰ *“Temples of Koh-e-Jud & Thar”*, Anjuman Mimaran, Lahore 1989 Pp21-41.

²³¹ Anjuman Mimaran, (1989). Pp21-41

²³² Shaikh Khurshid Hasan, *“Pakistan: Its Ancient Hindu Temples and Shrines”*, National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research Centre of Excellence, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad 2008 Pp57-66.

²³³ Muhammad Akram, *“The Temples in Katasraj Pakistan between Legend and History”*, (International Islamic University: Department of Comparative Religion).



FIGURE 12 A VIEW OF KATAS RAJ TEMPLE COMPLEX (BY RESEARCHER)



FIGURE 13 MONOLITH OF RED SANDSTONE OF 1000AD KATAS RAJ (BY RESEARCHER)

3.1 Stupa of Katas Raj

It is situated in the East of the Katas Raj group of temples at a lower level and a distance of around 40 meters. This Stupa was built by Asoka in the 3rd century BCE.²³⁴ The present remains consist of a stone masonry set, in lime mortar roughly measuring 10-12 meters square rising; to a height of about 4 meters from the trench level dug recently and in the exposed section

²³⁴ Salman Rashid, *"The Salt Range & the Potohar Plateau"*, Sang-e-Meel Publications, Lahore 2001 p132.

of the structure facing East as many as sixteen layers of stone masonry could be counted. In the trench, at a depth of 1 meter from the present ground level sandstone slabs of moderate size are visible.²³⁵

At the South-East corner, some portions of the dressed surface indicate the exterior limit of the structure which appears to have been built on a raised platform with a flight of steps provided from the East. However, to obtain a clear picture of this structure, the surrounding area needs to be cleared by scientific digging. Such excavations may also reveal other facets of the structure and its usage etc. Due to ravages of the time, whatever decorative elements noticed on the exterior of this edifice by Alexander Cunningham (during his visit in 1872-73) have vanished.²³⁶

The Stupa site is covered with thick vegetation growth and debris is lying all around the site. The excavated Earth is damped near the structure. The exposed structure is consolidated with lime mortar to obtain proper alignment of the structure. Cut and dressed courses of original kind of stones are provided at the corners to ensure the stability of the structure. Further excavations have been done by the Punjab Archaeology department to work on the original working level. The sandstone flooring found in the South-Western corner of the trench is preserved. The top of the structure exposed to the vagaries of nature is, water-tightened in a stepped order to define the contour. The information notice board is also provided alongside stupa now.²³⁷

²³⁵Alexander Cunningham, "*Archaeological Survey of India, Report of the Year 1872-73, Vol-V*" Office of the Superintendent of Government Press, Calcutta 1875 Pp90-91.

²³⁶ Alexander Cunningham, (1875). Pp90-91

²³⁷ Reema Abbasi, "*Historic Temples in Pakistan, A Call to Conscience*", Niyogi Books, New Delhi 2014 Pp 153-154.

Alexander Cunningham, the then Director General of the Archaeological Survey of India, visited the site in 1872-73. He confirmed the finding stone of Asoka, about 200 feet in height, surrounded by ten springs as described by Hiuen Tsang (the Chinese Buddhist traveler of the 7th century AD). He also mentioned the existence of a ruined monastery on a mound and a broken embankment across the bed stream above the holy pond. Cunningham also identified Katas, the site of a large ruined temple as the site of the Jaina temple, whose partial basement measured 68.5 feet in length and 56.5 feet in breadth. It was ornamented with a row of pilasters supporting a dentilled frieze, similar to the basements of the Buddhist buildings at Manikyala. However, the Jaina temple could not be found by anyone after Cunningham.²³⁸

3.2 Satghara Group of Temples

Alexander Cunningham during his visit to Katas Raj in 1872-73, identified six pairs of temples (12 temples), situated on the peak of a small hillock. Rows of retaining walls are visible. But only two pairs (4 temples) of Satghara temples are there on Katas Raj hill today.²³⁹ The Satghara temples are approached through a series of flights of steps that have been re-laid with dressed Taxila limestone in the recent past. Near the temples, original flights of steps are visible. The largest among the four main temples is flanked by two other shrines of Satghara. Remains of another shrine could be seen at a distance of six meters towards the South-East of the main shrine at a lower level. Another shrine is located at a distance of 8-10 meters from the main shrine towards the North-East.²⁴⁰

²³⁸ Reema Abbasi, *“Historic Temples in Pakistan, A Call to Conscience”*, Niyogi Books, New Delhi 2014 Pp153-154.

²³⁹ Gazetteer of the Jhelum District, 1904 p42.

²⁴⁰ Gazetteer of the Jhelum District, (1904). p42



FIGURE 14 STUPA OF KATAS RAJ (BY RESEARCHER)

Cunningham traced several walls and towers of the old fortifications. He reached the walls of a gateway, which led down to a lower enclosure at the East end of which stand the Satghara temples. He mentioned these temples as being the only ancient remains of any interest that existed in Katas at that time. Their style is similar to that of the Kashmiri temples, of which the chief characteristics are dentils, trefoil arches, fluted pillars and pointed roofs all of which are found in the temples at Katas and other places in the Salt Range. Most of these temples were in a

ruined condition, built of soft friable sandstone which was crumbling away. This style of Kashmiri architecture prevailed under the Karkota and Varman dynasties from 625 to 939 AD.²⁴¹

He (Cunningham) found the Satghara group of temples, placed in pairs at regular distances about one large central fane and this again connected with the remains of a very large temple which was situated due East. There was another temple to the North, ruins of another in the South and ruins of two other temples in the front, which could be hardly discerned for their style. Cunningham noted that the large parts of these temples have been so often restored and plastered that they suffered more from the repairs of man than from the ravages of time.²⁴² Most people assume that there were a total of seven temples, that's why the place is called Satghara temples. But this assumption is false. The fact is that the name signifies the seven layers of the interior roof design view of these temples.²⁴³

In the Sanskrit language 'Sat' means 'faithful' or 'truthful' and 'ghar' or 'ghara' means 'house', which means a 'truthful house' or a 'faithful house' but not seven houses.²⁴⁴ These temples are renovated and preserved with the use of plaster and limestone. The upper part of the enclosure measures these temples 1200' × 800'; while the lower fort measures 800' × 400'. There are only two pairs of these temples that exist today (in the 21st century). One pair is of small temples, while the other two temples are quite larger. The whole circuit is about 3500 feet, while the distance between the Katas Raj pond and Ganiya Nala is hardly two miles.²⁴⁵

²⁴¹ Gazetteer of the Jhelum District, 1904 p42.

²⁴² Salman Rashid, "*The Salt Range & the Potohar Plateau*", Sang-e-Meel Publications, Lahore 2001 p135.

²⁴³ Kishore, Interview.

²⁴⁴ Abrar Babary, Mahwish Zeeshan, "Reminiscent of Hinduism: An Insight of Katas Raj Mandir", *The Explorer Islamabad: Journal of Social Sciences*, Vol-1, Issue (4): Pp121-124, Department of Anthropology, PMAS-Arid Agriculture University, Islamabad 2015 p123.

²⁴⁵ Shaikh Khurshid Hasan, "*Pakistan: Its Ancient Hindu Temples and Shrines*", National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research Centre of Excellence, Quaid-i-Azam University (new Campus), Islamabad 2008 Pp62-66.

The architectural style of these temples can easily be compared to the Northern or Kashmiri temple architectural style of India. It is a kind of Nagara style of temple architecture. The main characteristics of these temples are dentils, trefoil arches, fluted pillars and pointed roofs. All these characteristics are found in the Kashmiri temples' architecture.²⁴⁶ It shows that Katas Raj was also a part of the realm of Kashmir in the Karkota and Varman dynasties (625-939 AD) of Hindu shahis in the medieval period. So, the components and characteristics of all the Salt Range temples are the same from Jhelum to Kalabagh. Among these four temples, the largest temple is situated due east and it is 170 feet high from the surface of the Earth. All four temples have been plastered with limestone work by the preservation team of the Punjab Archaeology department, Pakistan.²⁴⁷

²⁴⁶ Shaikh Khurshid Hasan, "*Pakistan: Its Ancient Hindu Temples and Shrines*", National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research Centre of Excellence, Quaid-i-Azam University (new Campus), Islamabad 2008 Pp62-66.

²⁴⁷ Shaikh Khurshid Hasan, (2008). Pp62-66



FIGURE 15 LARGEST TEMPLE OF SATGHARA (BY RESEARCHER



FIGURE 16 A PAIR OF SATGHARA GROUP OF TEMPLES



FIGURE 17 LAST TEMPLE AMONG SATGHARA GROUP OF TEMPLES

3.3 Ramachandra Temple

Ramachandra temple is dedicated to Lord Rama, according to Hindu mythology Lord Rama was born on 10th January, 5114 BC and he (Rama) is the 7th avatar of Vishnu. Hindu mythological book Ramayana describes the life and expeditions of Lord Rama. The Ramachandra temple of Katas Raj is dedicated to Lord Rama. Alexander Cunningham mentioned in his survey book regarding his visit of 1872-73 of Salt Range's archaeological sites that Ramachandra temple is the latest architecture of Katas Raj, as it was built in the later Mughal or Sikh period.²⁴⁸

²⁴⁸ Alexander Cunningham, "*Archaeological Survey of India, Report for the year 1872-73, Vol-V*", Office of the

It is situated to the East of the Katas Raj group of temples at a distance of around 40 meters. The present building of the Ramachandra temple, comprising stone masonry set in lime mortar roughly, measures 10-20 meters square rising to a height of about four meters from the trench level dug recently and in the exposed section of the structure facing East as many as sixteen layers of stone masonry could be counted.²⁴⁹ According to a legend ‘when Hindus cannot approach the Shiva temple, they then go to the Rama temple’. It is a fact that Ramachandra temple was also a functional temple before the division of India. It has three stories. Its first floor was a living part for the pilgrims. On the second floor, the vacant place of an idol fixture and two Mughal Jharokas (windows) can be seen; while on the third floor, the view of the whole Katas Raj, along with the temple’s shikhara is worth watching.²⁵⁰



FIGURE 18 FOREFRONT OF THE RAMACHANDRA TEMPLE (BY RESEARCHER)

Superintendent of Government Press, Calcutta 1875 Pp92-93.

²⁴⁹ Shaikh Khurshid Hasan, “Pakistan: Its Ancient Hindu Temples and Shrines”, National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research Centre of Excellence, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad 2008 p63.

²⁵⁰ Reema Abbasi, “Historic Temples in Pakistan, A Call to Conscience”, Niyogi Books, New Delhi 2014 Pp161-162.

There is a secret set of stairs inside the Ramachandra temple; this way goes to the pool. It is of the view that it was a hidden way for the women towards the holy pond.²⁵¹ The shikhara of Rama temple is a tracery of Naag Devta (king cobra), so this temple is also a dedication to Lord Shiva as Shiva is the lord of snakes also in Hindu mythology.²⁵²

An idol is found in the substructure of the Ramachandra temple. According to Cunningham, over the entrance of Ramachandra temple, there was a standing figure; that was three feet in height and made of red sandstone. The idol had four arms. Lotus flowers were in its three hands and the fourth hand was on its backside. It had three heads also, a man's head in the middle, a boar's head in the right and a lion's head to the left, which he assumed would be the idol of 'Tantrika's god Vajra-Varaha'.²⁵³ According to Alexander Cunningham, the man's head was presenting the creator, 'Vishnu Narayana'. Boar's head was presented as the savior of the world, 'Vishnu Varaha' and the lion's head was presented as the ravager 'Vishnu Narsingh'.²⁵⁴



FIGURE 19 CHISELLED COBRAS ON THE VAULT OF RAMACHANDRA TEMPLE (BY RESEARCHER)

²⁵¹ Reema Abbasi, "Historic Temples in Pakistan, A Call to Conscience", Niyogi Books, New Delhi 2014 Pp 161-162.

²⁵² Reema Abbasi, (2014). Pp161-162

²⁵³ Gazetteer of the Jhelum District, 1904 p43.

²⁵⁴ Gazetteer of the Jhelum District, (1904). p43

The age of the Ramachandra temple is 300-400 years old because the red brick Mughal architecture on its front elevation tells the story of Mughal grandeur on its own. From the inside, it is vacant now. The pilgrims bring the sculptures with them on special occasions such as Maha Shivratri, Navratri and Deewali etc and after their worship and rituals; they bring back the sculptures with them. The fresco work on these Jharokhas, is outstandingly sophisticated. It has 8 niches for candelabras and 2 jharokha for daylight.²⁵⁵



FIGURE 20 FRESCO WORK INSIDE RAMACHANDRA TEMPLE (BY RESEARCHER)

²⁵⁵ Reema Abbasi, "*Historic Temples in Pakistan, A Call to Conscience*", Niyogi Books, New Delhi 2014 Pp161-162.

The wooden door on the front elevation of the Ramachandra temple is 4 by 8 feet. Its ground floor has 3 métiers also to put the statues here. Its sanctuaries are 10 by 30 feet in measurement with a 30 by 30 feet quadrangle. In the trench, at a depth of 1 meter from the present, ground level sandstone slabs of moderate size are visible. At the South-East corner, some portions of the dressed surface indicate the exterior limit of the structure, which appears to have been built on a raised platform with a flight of steps provided from the East. However, to obtain a clear picture of this structure, the surrounding area needs to be cleared by scientific digging. Such excavations may also reveal other facets of the structure and its usage etc.²⁵⁶



FIGURE 21 CLASSIFIED TRENCH OF THE RAMACHANDRA TEMPLE (BY RESEARCHER)

²⁵⁶ Reema Abbasi, *Historic Temples in Pakistan, A Call to Conscience*, Niyogi Books, New Delhi 2014 Pp 161-162.

3.4 Hanuman Temple

Hanuman or monkey god is also known as the lord of triumph. Hindus celebrate his birthday every year on the 27th of April. Lord Hanuman was a humble personality and a huge admirer of Lord Rama. Lord Hanuman had a huge army of monkeys under his command. Hanuman temple of Katas Raj is Prime for Hindus, as it is blessed with the Charans (feet) of Lord Hanuman. According to Hindu mythology, Lord Hanuman was here at Katas Raj at once. Both Ramachandra temple and Hanuman temple are situated parallel to one another. Hanuman temple is closed to all sites because it is on the western extreme of a higher rectangular enclosure with entrances on the South and the North.²⁵⁷

Close to the entrance arch door of the Hanuman temple, there is an open small area like a cave but it's a human-made cave. Pilgrims often come with their idols and after the worship; they bring back their idols so the cave temple is empty. The walls of the Hanuman temple from inside are decorated with the motifs of Lord Hanuman and his wife. A small niche was also there filled with incense sticks. The innards chamber of the Hanuman temple is 1.5 feet deep and 4.5 feet in height for the placement of Nandi, Ganesha and Hanuman's statues. It is situated 15 feet ahead of the entrance door inside the temple.²⁵⁸

Among Hindus, tales of Hanuman's courage, strength, bravery, innocence, compassion and selflessness have been passed down to generations and it is believed among Hindus that Lord Hanuman is still alive. It is said that Lord Hanuman's first wife was Suryaputri Survachala and after that, he married Anangkusuma, the daughter of Lankapati Ravana. Hanuman was exceptionally strong (capable of lifting and carrying any kind of burden for a cause). He is often

²⁵⁷ Reema Abbasi, "*Historic Temples in Pakistan, A Call to Conscience*", Niyogi Books, New Delhi 2014 Pp161-162.

²⁵⁸ Reema Abbasi, (2014). Pp161-162

called ‘Vira’, ‘Mahavira’, ‘Anjaneya’, ‘Bajrangbali’, ‘Deenabandhave’, ‘Kalanabha’, ‘Chiranjivi’, ‘Mahadyuta’, ‘Manojava’, (and many other such type of names, which signify the attributes of Lord Hanuman as he has 108 names in the Hindu mythology).²⁵⁹

In Hindu mythology, Lord Hanuman is often described as the son of “Pawan” (wind), the Hindu god for wind. Hanuman is known for his extraordinary daring feats and loyalty. The Ramayana describes him as an ideal devotee of Lord Rama.²⁶⁰



FIGURE 22 THE INNARDS CHAMBER INSIDE THE HANUMAN TEMPLE (BY RESEARCHER)

²⁵⁹ Kishore, Interview.

²⁶⁰ Kishore, Interview.

3.5 Caves/Sadhus' Houses

On the other side of the road parallel to the Katas Raj temple complex, there are 7 caves, which can be seen from the Katas Raj temple complex. After entering one cave, there are many other caves inside one cave, which are interlinked to the other caves. In one cave, more than 20 pilgrims can stay. These caves were designed in such a way that their constant temperature is 20° and it never increases in June-July even. These caves are not natural but are human-made. The hill where these caves lie is named as 'Kotera'. These caves are known as 'Sadhu's houses' or 'Sadhu ka makan'.²⁶¹ The caves are seven in number.²⁶²

According to a legend, the Pandava brothers structured these caves when they built the Satghara temples to give a tribute to their Lord Shiva. After them, these caves were used by pilgrims and Sadhus, who came here for "Tapasya" (penances), however nowadays a youth hostel has been built for the pilgrims since 2012 inside the Katas Raj temple Complex. Pieces of Kanjoor rocks, limestones, animal bones and sandstones are found inside these caves.²⁶³

²⁶¹ *Gazetteer of the Jhelum District*, 1904 p42.

²⁶² Reema Abbasi, "*Historic Temples in Pakistan, A Call to Conscience*", Niyogi Books, New Delhi 2014 p158.

²⁶³ Anum Fayyaz, Mahwish Zeeshan, "Masonry Art: Preservation of Archaeological Sites in Chakwal", *The Explorer Islamabad: Journal of Social Sciences*, Vol-1, Issue (7): Pp251-254, Department of Anthrology, PMAS-Arid Agriculture University, Rawalpindi 2015 p252.



FIGURE 23 CAVES IN FRONT OF KATAS RAJ TEMPLE COMPLEX (BY RESEARCHER)

3.6 Well of Pandava Brothers

This well is conserved by the Punjab Archaeology Department, during the restoration activities in 2012. It is on the Eastern side of the Katas Raj group of temples, very close to the seven caves or Sadhus' houses. It has been said that this well was excavated by the Pandava brothers, during their four years' strolling at Katas Raj, out of their fourteen years 'Bin-Bas'.²⁶⁴

²⁶⁴ Shakeel, Interview.



FIGURE 24 WELL OF PANDAVA BROTHERS (BY RESEARCHER)

3.7 Mansion of Hari Singh Nalwa

Next to Ramachandra temple, the mansion of Hari Singh Nalwa lies. It is situated in the middle of the Ramachandra temple and the Satghara group of temples. Hari Singh Nalwa was a valorous military commander and a stern executive of Maharaja Ranjeet Singh. His benefactions in the enlargement of the Sikh empire are extraordinary.²⁶⁵ With his maneuvers, he vanquished even the faraway areas from Hazara to Kashmir and Khyber to Afghan areas; just for the sake of the Sikh empire. His achievements in the Lahore darbar (court) of Maharaja Ranjeet Singh are

²⁶⁵ Bobby Singh Bansal, *Remnants of the Sikh Empire, Historical Sikh Monuments in India & Pakistan*, Hay House Publishers India, New Delhi 2015 Pp94-98.

much more than his contemporaries. When he was only fourteen years of age, he settled a property matter in Lahore and became an exceptional steward of Maharaja Ranjeet Singh.²⁶⁶



FIGURE 25 MANSION OF HARI SINGH NALWA (BY RESEARCHER)

In his military court in 1804, at Bhangi Fort Amritsar, Maharaja Ranjeet Singh gave him the title of Sardar and gave his 800 infantry men under the supervision of Sardar Hari Singh Nalwa. He annihilated Kasur (a city of Punjab Pakistan now) in 1807 and seized the renowned Attock fort in 1813 from Fateh Khan. Later in 1817, he grabbed a little borough of Khushab,

²⁶⁶ Bobby Singh Bansal, *“Remnants of the Sikh Empire, Historical Sikh Monuments in India & Pakistan”*, Hay House Publishers India, New Delhi 2015 Pp94-98.

named Mitha Tiwana from the Nawab of Mitha Tiwana Ahmad Yar Khan. However, in 1821, he conquered Mankera with the help of Nawab Ahmad Yar Khan.²⁶⁷

Sardar Hari Singh Nalwa captured Kashmir also in 1820 by capturing Shopiyan with an army of 12000 soldiers. It was a great victory as Kashmir ruled under Hindu Shahi emperors, Afghan commanders and Mughals for many centuries. So Nalwa became the first Sikh Governor of Kashmir but stayed there for only one year and was expelled by the Lahore darbar (court)



FIGURE 26 INTERIOR VIEW OF MANSION HARI SINGH NALWA (BY RESEARCHER)

²⁶⁷ Bobby Singh Bansal, *Remnants of the Sikh Empire, Historical Sikh Monuments in India & Pakistan*, Hay House Publishers India, New Delhi 2015 Pp94-98.

because he was savage towards the people of Kashmir. However, he helped his Kashmiri counterpart, Dewan Moti Ram, in the famine of Kashmir when he was appointed to the Afghan provinces.²⁶⁸

His last appointment was the area, which prevails from the West of Jhelum to Kashmir (Katas and the surroundings) and he stayed there till his death in 1837. So there in Katas Raj, he built a mansion, strategically on a hillocky and appropriate place. He built this mansion in such a mountainous place that the over-view from the Nalwa mansion is bewitching. This is a fort of oval shape, with four citadels style domes sticking out from every corner. The exterior walls of the Nalwa fort are five meters high and its main wooden gate is situated on the Western side. It is built with huge thick stones. It is in the veranda style from all four sides and its yard is open and airy. Rooms and verandas are simple in their design but thick in their structure.²⁶⁹

²⁶⁸ Bobby Singh Bansal, "*Remnants of the Sikh Empire, Historical Sikh Monuments in India & Pakistan*", Hay House Publishers India, New Delhi 2015 Pp94-98.

²⁶⁹ Bobby Singh Bansal, "*Remnants of the Sikh Empire, Historical Sikh Monuments in India & Pakistan*", Hay House Publishers India, New Delhi 2015 Pp 121-163.



FIGURE 27 BACK DOOR OF MANSION HARI SINGH NALWA (BY RESEARCHER)

The fort is in solid condition to date and that's why the Evacuee Trust Property Board is establishing this fort as 'Katas Raj Museum'. They will embellish this museum with the idols, pottery and jewelry, which had been found from the excavation of the Katas Raj and sent to the Lahore Museum, Taxila museum and Kallar Kahar museum in the past.²⁷⁰

The mansion of Hari Singh Nalwa was built in 1809.²⁷¹ Hari Singh Nalwa built two other exalted mansions in Gujranwala; named Badi (huge) Haveli (mansion) and Choti (small) Haveli.

²⁷⁰ Bobby Singh Bansal, *Remnants of the Sikh Empire, Historical Sikh Monuments in India & Pakistan*, Hay House Publishers India, New Delhi 2015 Pp 121-163.

²⁷¹ Reema Abbasi, *Historical Temples in Pakistan, A Call to Conscience*, Niyogi Books, New Delhi 2014 p156.

These mansions had been used as Madrassas (schools of Islamic education and norms) after the partition of Indo-Pak and their original doors were sent to the Lahore Museum.²⁷²

3.8 Shiva Temple Katas Raj

Shiva temple Katas Raj is dedicated to Shiva; as Lord Shiva is the most ancient god of Hinduism. Hindus believe that he (Shiva) was never born from any human body, and appeared suddenly during a war between Brahma and Vishnu. As per the belief system of the Hindus, Lord Shiva was there; when nothing was there in the universe and he will be there when the universe will be demolished. Shaivism is one of the four major sects of Hinduism along with Vaishnavism, Shaktism and the Smarta-Tradition. The believers of Shiva are called the 'Shaivas' and Shiva considers the creator, destroyer, healer and lurker among his worshippers.²⁷³

He has several other names such as 'Palan-haar', 'Naag-Abhushna', 'Pushkara', 'Shambhu', 'Shankar', 'Om-Kaar', 'Trishuli', 'Parmeshwara', 'Dev-Deva', 'Bholy-Nath', 'Chandar-Paal', 'Ajy', 'Maheshwara' and 'Ashutosh', 'Shri Maleeka Arjun', 'Bheema Shankar', 'Shri Vediye Nath', 'Mumleeshor', 'Shri Maha kalishor', 'Shri Nageshor', 'Shri Vishva Nath', 'Shri Kedar Nath', 'Shri Trimbakeshwar', 'Shri Dhosheshore', 'Shri Swamishore', 'Shri Rameshwar'. He wears the lion's skin as his clothes. And 'Nandi' bull is his means of transportation.²⁷⁴

Hinduism revolves around the two faith communities basically, named 'Shivaite' and 'Vaishnavite'. The temples of both of these faith communities sustain distinguished flecks, to metamorphose between a Shiva temple and a Vishnu temple. A small pointed turret of a Shiva temple sustains a tripartite bayonet. Under the hidden inner part of the Shiva temple, there is a

²⁷² Bobby Singh Bansal, "*Remnants of the Sikh Empire, Historical Sikh Monuments in India & Pakistan*", Hay House Publishers India, New Delhi 2015 Pp 162-163.

²⁷³ Kishore, Interview.

²⁷⁴ Kishore, Interview.

Linga and an external gateway on the Eastern side is a statuette of the holy bull. The Shiva temples are also known as Shivalas among the followers. However the steeple of a Vishnu temple sustains a ring or circle and under its shelter, a fetish of the Supreme Being is exhibited.²⁷⁵



FIGURE 28 SHIVA'S IDOL INSIDE THE SHIVA TEMPLE (BY RESEARCHER)

²⁷⁵Shaikh Khurshid Hasan, "Pakistan: Its Ancient Hindu Temples and Shrines", National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research Centre of Excellence, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad 2008 p16.

The word Shiva (Shi-va) means the one who is not but exists everywhere. So, there is a dimensionless existence of Shiva in Hinduism, especially in its branch Shaivism. They (Hindus) call him ‘Adiyogi’ also and practice the postures of Yoga by the figures of Shiva also. According to Hindu mythology, Shiva was the most beautiful human being ever seen. He was 9 feet in height as his head was leveled with a horse’s head.²⁷⁶

In South India, people are of the view that he was twice the height of an average woman of South India (now all the people and races are mixed up but in ancient India, women were mostly less than 5 feet). So, everyone was awestruck by his presence but he was a man without antecedents as he did not get birth physically from a human being but he appeared suddenly in a war between Vishnu and Brahma. According to Hindu traditions, 23 avatars of Lord Shiva have come and the 24th one is yet to come.²⁷⁷

Shiva is the god of demolition in Hindu mythology. He is a part of the Hindu trinity alongside God Vishnu and God Brahma. He is usually depicted in a sitting position with his legs crossed, holding a trident in his hand, which is called ‘Trishul’ in Hindi and Sanskrit. Shiva wears a snake around his neck as an ornament because he is the lord of snakes also (Bhagwaan Shiva Shankar) and this Naga (Cobra) also symbolizes his (Shiva’s) victory over death. Lord Shiva also has a third eye on his forehead, through which he can destroy the life of any human being with a simple glance of it.²⁷⁸

His deity is also known for reincarnation; so, he also takes part often in the creation of the universe because he is also known as the god of transformation. Lord Shiva is the Lord of dances also as his dances reveal the happier side of the god. Though his second wife Parvati was a

²⁷⁶ Kishore, Interview.

²⁷⁷ Kishore, Interview.

²⁷⁸ Kishore, Interview.

loving goddess and a devoting mother, her avatar 'Kali' symbolizes destruction like the deity of her husband Shiva. In India, Nepal and Sri Lanka, Shiva is the most celebrated supreme god.²⁷⁹

According to mathematician and traveler Al-Beruni, Shiva temple Katas is the holiest temple in Punjab after the temple of Jwalamukhi (volcano temple) Himachal Pradesh, India.²⁸⁰ The temple is 9.5 by 9.5 feet spaced from the inside and it is floored with white marble tiles. At the core of the worship room, 2.5 feet heightened Shiva Linga is situated, its color is gray and it is made of sandstone (most of the Shiva Lingas in India, Nepal and Sri Lanka are gray and are made of sandstones).²⁸¹ The main wooden door of the Shiva temple is 2.5 feet spacious and 5 feet heightened.²⁸²

Shiva Lingam represents the entire cosmos and the cosmos in turn is represented as a cosmic egg and an egg is an ellipsoid that represents neither a beginning nor an end. This Linga is the ancient among all the monuments of the Katas Raj temple complex.²⁸³ The worship of Linga releases the stress of the worshippers and it is believed among the female worshippers that through the worship of Linga, they can get good husbands as Parvati got Shiva through the worship of Linga.²⁸⁴

²⁷⁹ Kishore, Interview.

²⁸⁰ Reema Abbasi, "*Historic Temples in Pakistan, A Call to Conscience*", Niyogi Books, New Delhi 2014 Pp 148-159.

²⁸¹ Reema Abbasi, (2014). Pp 148-159

²⁸² Reema Abbasi, (2014). Pp 148-159

²⁸³ Kishore, Interview.

²⁸⁴ Abrar Babary, Mahwish Zeeshan, "Reminiscent of Hinduism: An Insight of Katas Raj Mandir", *The Explorer Islamabad: Journal of Social Sciences*, Vol-1, Issue (4): Pp 121-124, Department of Anthropology, PMAS-Arid Agriculture University, Rawalpindi 2015 p122.



FIGURE 29 SHIVA LINGA OF SHIVA TEMPLE KATAS RAJ (BY RESEARCHER)

The walls of the temple from the inside are painted in white color. It has 5 feet height métier behind the Shiva Linga and the picture of Lord Shiva along with his wife. This métier is 3 feet deep also for the placement of the figure of Shiva.²⁸⁵ On 17th June 2021, the first figure of Lord Shiva was placed there at Shiva Temple Katas Raj. It was inaugurated by the president of the Hindu Council of Pakistan, MNA Dr. Ramesh Kumar, vice president of the Hindu Council and MNA Naresh Chand and a senior member of the Evacuee Trust Property Board, Pakistan Raja Aasar Mul Munglai.²⁸⁶

²⁸⁵ Reema Abbasi, *“Historical Temples in Pakistan, A Call to Conscience”*, Niyogi Books, New Delhi 2014 Pp 158-159.

²⁸⁶ Kishore, Interview.



FIGURE 30 FLIGHT OF STEPS AT SHIVA TEMPLE (BY RESEARCHER)

There are 8 stairs, which are going toward the rooftop of the Shiva temple, each stair is 20 inches long. Shiva temple Katas Raj is the only functional temple of Katas Raj, where a priest is also appointed after the completion of the restoration works. However many priests have quit their job, as they are of the view that 18000/- PKR salary is not enough for them; moreover, they feel insecure in the hilly and the densely Muslim populated area of Katas.

Only one Hindu family has been living in the Katas Raj since 1991.²⁸⁷This is the family of IT teacher Kishore Nand, who is originally from Khewra, district Jhelum and is serving in Punjab School of Mines Katas Raj, as an IT teacher on BPS-17. Mr. Kishore Nand often

²⁸⁷Kishore, Interview.

performs the acting priest duties of the Shiva temple Katas Raj, when the appointed priest leaves his job. However, he does not receive the salary of the priest as authorities are of the view that; to give him another salary is wrong because he is already serving as a government teacher at Punjab School of Mines.²⁸⁸ Pandit Naimat Chand is the newly appointed Pandit (priest) since October 2021 and he also considers this hilly and densely Muslim populated area dangerous for him and his immediate family as he is also of the view that 18000/- PKR salary is not enough for him and his family in this dearness.²⁸⁹

Because of the gray Linga, this temple is also known as the Kala Mandir (black temple). Shiva Linga is a symbol that represents Lord Shiva as the most powerful deity. This Lingam represents all the energies in the world and beyond. According to Hindus, 'humans need a symbol to worship, that's why the Linga was created', Shiva Linga symbolizes the creative and destructive powers of Lord Shiva.²⁹⁰ Because of this temple, the Pandava brothers spent four years of their 'Bin- Bas' out of fourteen years there at Katas Raj and penanced as they were the huge admirers and followers of Lord Shiva.²⁹¹

²⁸⁸ Kishore, Interview.

²⁸⁹ Naimat Chand (Pandit of Shiva Temple Katas Raj), personal interview by the researcher, December 5, 2021.

²⁹⁰ Salman Rashid, *"The Salt Range & the Potohar Plateau"*, Sang-e-Meel Publications, Lahore 2001 p131.

²⁹¹ Reema Abbasi, *"Historic Temples in Pakistan, A Call to Conscience"*, Niyogi Books, New Delhi 2014 Pp 148-159.



FIGURE 31 INTERIOR VIEW OF SHIVA TEMPLE KATAS RAJ (BY RESEARCHER)

3.9 Havan Kund/Baradari

Havan Kund or Baradari is situated in the middle of the holy pool and the Shiva temple. Baradari on the pool's side is also a place of pilgrims' worship. It is used as a marriage hall also today. Baradari is also known as "Havan kund" as Havan is a ritual in which Hindus offer prayers and get married in front of the fire. Hindus do Havan because Havan is for the removal of evil influences and it facilitates positive thinking. It lies on the left side of the Shiva temple as it is next to the Shiva temple. It is hardly 6 stairs away from the sacred pond. It has 9 open doorways, which make it airy, 3 doors from each side, however from its Eastern side; it has two

wooden windows and one wooden door. Its total space is 50 feet but its core bower (which is often used for wedding Havans nowadays) is 15 by 15 feet.²⁹²



FIGURE 32 BARADARI OF KATAS RAJ (BY RESEARCHER)

3.10 Pond of Katas Raj

The holy pond of Katas Raj lies exactly at the core of the temple complex and all the buildings of the temple complex lie in its surroundings. In the past it had several names, firstly it

²⁹² Reema Abbasi, “*Historic Temples in Pakistan, A Call to Conscience*”, Niyogi Books, New Delhi 2014 Pp 148-159.

was named as 'Vis-Kund' because its water was lethal, then it was called 'Amar-Kund' and after that 'Chamar- Kund'. However in the second half of the 19th century, when Cunningham visited the place, it was called 'Kataksh-Kund', which means 'Raining Eyes'. It was spelt as 'Ketaksh' also by the Brahman Hindus many times, which means 'White Robes' or 'Swetavasa'. It was a sect of Jains; these people were also called 'Digambara' or 'unclothed people'.²⁹³

Their literature was also similar to Buddhism and the sculptures of their gods were also similar to the sculptures of Buddha. As Katas remained the religious center of Buddhism, Sikhism, Shaivism and Hinduism, one can assess from the religious monuments that this place was multi-cultural and multi-religious. Nowadays this holy water is called 'Amrit-Jal' or 'Amrit-Kund' by the Hindus as its water is considered sacred and sweet for them. From its erstwhile name 'Kataksh' which means the 'Raining Eyes', the name of the village is also recognized from this name, with a slight difference. Since the 20th century AD, it has been called 'Katas'. According to Hindus, this pool is filled with the tears of their lord Shiva. When his beloved wife Sati passed away, he cried so bitterly that a pool formed there in Katas and the other one, in the Pushkar (Ajmer, India). Hindus often call it the two eyes of the Earth.²⁹⁴

It has been said that Lord Shiva, who has been often called the demolisher (as his power can demolish everything), was a rambler and Sati was the daughter of a moneyed man Dakshiya, so he (Dakshiya) did not accept the proposal of Shiva and they both (Sati and Shiva) got married, without the permission of her family. After that when she went to meet her family, nobody talked to her and she jumped into the Havan (holy fire) and died. So this pond is sacred for the Hindus, they often come to bathe in the holy pond as bathing in the holy pond removes

²⁹³ Alexander Cunningham, "*Ancient Geography of India*", Cosmo Publications, New Delhi, 2007 p105.

²⁹⁴ Alexander Cunningham, (2007). p105

their sins (according to their beliefs). Pilgrims filled their pitchers with this water and brought it back to their homes also.²⁹⁵



FIGURE 33 KATAS RAJ POND (BY RESEARCHER)

Hiuen Tsiang narrated that this pond is full of snakes but these snakes never harm anyone as the pool is full of Bhagwan Shiva Shankar's tears (Shankar is the other name of Lord Shiva, Shankar means the lord of snakes). Though today (in 2021) people can only observe fishes and turtles in the holy pond. Cunningham measured that the pool is 23 feet profound but for Hindus, it is irrefutably incalculable. However the pool is 43 feet deep down in North-West and is 44 feet from the Eastern side but after the examination of Abu Rehan Al-Beruni, it was cleared that the pool is not natural but it is man-made. The rocks inside the pool had been cut down once just for

²⁹⁵ Abrar Babary, Mahwish Zeeshan, "Reminiscent of Hinduism: An Insight of Katas Raj Mandir", *The explorer Islamabad: Journal of Social Sciences*, Vol-1, Issue (4): Pp 121-124, Department of Anthropology, PMAS-Arid Agriculture University, Rawalpindi 2015 p121.

the sake of the enlargement of the pool. It was floated in the shape of a waterhole by constructing a hard ashlar wall around it which is 2.5 feet sturdy and 19 feet elevated.²⁹⁶

The Hindu Brahmins are of the view that this waterhole was constructed by Raja Patak, under the supervision of some of the emperors of Delhi. There is a 122 feet long passage slit, which was helpful for the spraying of the nearby area, before the establishment of the Cement factories in Katas village.²⁹⁷ These Cement factories were established in the Musharrf era. The heavy turbines of these factories pulled whole water inside the soil of Choa Saidan Shah and Kallar Kahar. As a result, many gardens of fruits and roses were demolished and the tears of Shiva also fell dry.²⁹⁸

However, the closest factory to the holy pond is the Bestway Cement Factory of Sir Anwar Pervaiz (Queen of England Elizabeth honored him with the title of ‘Sir’ as he is an established businessman in England and Pakistan). So, the Bestway Cement Factory is providing water to the holy pond of Katas Raj through a pipeline since 2017 after a suo moto action of the Supreme Court of Pakistan. As there are three Cement factories near the sacred pond of Katas Raj: -

- Bestway Cement factory Tatal
- D.G. Khan Cement factory Khair-Pur
- Pakcem factory Karuli²⁹⁹

Hinduism is full of mythical stories, which have been approved wrong by the science, so renowned mathematician, traveler and scientist Abu Rehan Al-Beruni (who is the author of the

²⁹⁶ Reema Abbasi, “*Historic Temples in Pakistan, A Call to Conscience*”, Niyogi Books, New Delhi 2014 Pp 149-150.

²⁹⁷ Reema Abbasi, (2014). Pp 149-150.

²⁹⁸ Shakeel, Interview.

²⁹⁹ Shakeel, Interview.

book 'Kitab-ul-Hind', which was originally published in 1030 AD) refused this myth that the pond of Katas formed from the tears of Shiva because he observed the rocks near the Katas Raj Pond and when gouged under a rock, a sluice came out from the soil. That was proof that the pond of Katas is filled with the sluice's water and not with the tears of Shiva. Besides this, there is a difference of hundreds of miles between the Katas and the Pushkar (Ajmer, India), so it is unreal, unscientific and illogical that these two ponds are the two tears of Lord Shiva, which came out from his two eyes after the death of his adored wife.³⁰⁰

This holy site was forsaken after the division of India. However, after three decades, in 1980s, a group of pilgrims came from India and this place was uprighted and cleansed for the very first time since 1947, so that the pilgrims could practice their rituals. It was President Zia-ul-Haq's era.³⁰¹ Then after 26 years of this event, Lalu Parshad Yadav (Indian politician and erstwhile Chief Minister of Bihar) and Lal Krishna Advani (Indian politician and erstwhile Deputy Prime Minister of India) visited this place in 2005 along with President Musharraf and after their visit, a boundary wall was created.³⁰² After that, the restoration and conservation work was completed in 2012. This site was under the Punjab Archaeology Department from 2006 to 2021 but after a case filed by the Hindu community; Supreme Court handed over this site to the Evacuee Trust Property Board on 26th May 2021.³⁰³

Evacuee Trust Property Board is responsible for conducting the holy expeditions of the Yatris (Pilgrims) and Punjab Archaeology Department deals with the restoration work of the sacred monuments. So Hindu community was of the view in the application that restoration

³⁰⁰ Raja Muhammad Khalid Janjua, "*Rawalpindi, Rawalpindi Division ki Mukhtasar Tareekh, Ahm Waqiyat or Maloomat*", S.T Printers, Rawalpindi 2012 Pp 131-132.

³⁰¹ Salman Rashid, "*The Salt Range & the Potohar Plateau*", Sang-e-Meel Publications, Lahore 2001 p135.

³⁰² Reema Abbasi, "*Historic Temples in Pakistan, A Call to Conscience*", Niyogi Books, New Delhi 2014 p164.

³⁰³ Kishore Interview.

works have been completed now and there is no need for the Punjab Archaeology Department now, so this holy site should be handed over to the Evacuee trust property board so that the more holy expeditions should be conducted by the Evacuee Trust Property Board. As the last four arrivals of the Hindu pilgrims, under the administration of the Evacuee Trust Property Board, took place on the prescribed dates: -

- 22nd February to 28th February 2017
- 13th December to 19th December 2019
- 19th February to 25th February 2020
- 23rd December to 29th December 2020

After the custody of this site, Evacuee Trust Property Board is now handling Katas Raj monuments along with other 31 Hindu and Sikh sacred buildings (13 Hindu temples and 18 Gurdwaras).³⁰⁴

3.11 Bairagi House

Bairagi house is situated 50 feet above sea level.³⁰⁵ It is often called the ‘Hermit House’ also. Its wooden windows and roofless rooms can be seen from very far. It is roofless now except for a puja room, which has a roof. This house was built in the surroundings of the holy pool and it is in a quadrangle shape.³⁰⁶

³⁰⁴ Muhammad Basharat (Office Assistant, Evacuee Trust Property Board Rawalpindi), personal interview by the researcher, June 26, 2021.

³⁰⁵ Alexander Cunningham, “*Archaeological Survey of India, Report for the Year 1872-73, Vol-V*”, Office of the Superintendent of the Government Press, Calcutta 1875 p90.

³⁰⁶ Reema Abbasi, “*Historic Temples in Pakistan, A Call to Conscience*”, Niyogi Books, New Delhi 2014 Pp 153-164.



FIGURE 34 BAIRAGI HOUSE (BY RESEARCHER)

3.12 Mansion of Maharaja Sundernath/ Old Library Building

On the right side of the Bairagi's house, a double story building lies. This is called the mansion of Maharaja Sundernath and sometimes an old library building because it was used as a library when renowned mathematician Al-Beruni came to learn Sanskrit from the Katas Linguistic University. The ruins of this university can also be seen, which are hardly one kilometer away from the mansion of Maharaja Sundernath. This mansion seems less a house and more a temple of Lord Vishnu, goddess Kali and Lord Ganesha. The huge shikhara of the temple

of Lord Vishnu can be seen from the entrance of the Katas Raj temple complex.³⁰⁷



FIGURE 35 FOREFRONT OF MAHARAJA SUNDERNATH MANSION (BY RESEARCHER)

3.13 Mahant Mansion Katas Raj

On the front area towards the yard of Hanuman temple, the roofless dilapidations of the Mahant mansion lie. These dilapidations are at a distance of just 34 steps from the Hanuman temple. The walls of the Mahant mansion are made of cornerstones and its 65 by 31 feet area is leveled with white marble, however, its niche is decorated with fresco work, where a tree and a couple can also be seen.³⁰⁸

³⁰⁷ Reema Abbasi, *“Historic Temples in Pakistan, A Call to Conscience”*, Niyogi Books, New Delhi 2014 Pp 153-164.

³⁰⁸ Reema Abbasi, *“Historic Temples in Pakistan, A Call to Conscience”*, Niyogi Books, New Delhi 2014 Pp 153-164.



FIGURE 36 MAHANT MANSION KATAS RAJ (BY RESEARCHER)

3.14 Tunnel

On the Western side of the Katas Raj Temple Complex, a 40 feet lengthy and 12 feet heighted tunnel is situated in the middle of the buildings. This is a marvelous feat of tangible architectural work without the use of ferric in it. It has been said that four out of ten Rig Vedas (Rig Vedas are ancient Sanskrit religious books of Hindus) had been written there.³⁰⁹

³⁰⁹ Reema Abbasi, “*Historic Temples in Pakistan, A Call to Conscience*”, Niyogi Books, New Delhi 2014 Pp 153-164.



FIGURE 37 TUNNEL OF KATAS RAJ TEMPLE COMPLEX (BY RESEARCHER)

3.15 Police Station of Katas Raj

On a mound above the Shiva temple, a building with a wooden front door and 18 by 17 feet marble party line, also lies within the premises of the Katas Raj group of temples. This building was serving as a police station of Katas Raj and was built by the Englishmen in 1907. This building is 11 steps high from the sanctuary of Shiva.³¹⁰

³¹⁰Reema Abbasi, *“Historic Temples in Pakistan, A Call to Conscience”*, Niyogi Books, New Delhi 2014 Pp153-164.



FIGURE 38 POLICE STATION OF KATAS RAJ (BY RESEARCHER)

3.16 Swami's Residence

On the right side of the Baradari building, this three-roomed building lies. It was converted into a priest's residential building in the 1950s. The last resident of this building was a priest named 'Swami' 1947, who was a lawyer also. These three attached rooms are 16 by 16 feet; however the building is roofless now. These buildings were tarnished badly by the native community as a symbol of heterodox holiness as they demolished windows, doors, bricks and frescoes.³¹¹

³¹¹ Reema Abbasi, "*Historic Temples in Pakistan, A Call to Conscience*", Niyogi Books, New Delhi 2014 Pp153-164.



FIGURE 39 SWAMI'S RESIDENCE KATAS RAJ (BY RESEARCHER)

3.17 Al-Beruni's University

Merely one kilometer away from the old library building/ mansion of Maharaja Sundernath, an alone standing building lies at the back side of the Government Primary School Katas Raj. Though this building also lies within the premises of the Katas Raj both of the institutions (Punjab Archaeology Department and Evacuee Trust Property Board) did not pay any kind of attention to it. However the building is, in a satisfactory condition, made of

limestone and solid bricks. This building is known as ‘Al-Beruni’s University, from where Al-Beruni learnt Sanskrit and wrote his distinguished book ‘Kitab-ul-Hind’.³¹²



FIGURE 40 AL-BERUNI’S UNIVERSITY KATAS RAJ (BY RESEARCHER)

In his book he foregrounded the culture, language, civilization and religion of the Hindus; especially he wrote the value of statistics in the lives of the Hindus in his book “Kitab-ul-Hind”. This was exactly the place, from where Al-Beruni measured the circumference of the Earth, however many authors are of the view that he measured the circumference from Nandana

³¹² Reema Abbasi, “*Historic Temples in Pakistan, A Call to Conscience*”, Niyogi Books, New Delhi 2014 Pp 153-164.

(Jhelum) and not from the Katas. This building is surrounded by the trees of Tasmanian Blue Gum now and the Eastern side of the building is dilapidated now.³¹³

3.18 Conservation and Developmental Works at Katas Raj Group of Temples 2006-2016

Katas Raj has special importance for the Hindu community because of its ancient Shiva Linga and the sacred pond which is considered the second most sacred water for the Hindus after the water of river Ganges as water of Katas Raj pond came from the eyes of Lord Shiva and the water of Ganges came from the hair of Lord Shiva. So this place is the center of tourist and archaeologists' attention yet again since 2005 when L.K. Advani and Lalu Prasad Yadav visited the place along with president Musharraf. So the restoration work on the Katas Raj group of temples had been started in 2006.³¹⁴

Temples and the other monuments of Katas Raj were transferred to the Punjab government from the Federal department of Archaeology on vide notification No. F. 9-6/2001-A.II date June 12, 2006. For the conservation of the old monuments and provision of better facilities to the visitors especially the Hindu pilgrims an ADP (the Association of the Development of Pakistan) scheme named "Conservation and Development of Katas Raj District Chakwal" was launched in 2006 to the approved cost of Rs. 108.170 million. The final revised cost of the scheme was Rs. 114.473 million. The scheme was completed in June 2016 (after one decade) however major buildings were completed in June 2014. The task was endowed to the three following agencies:-

³¹³ Reema Abbasi, "*Historic Temples in Pakistan, A Call to Conscience*", Niyogi Books, New Delhi 2014 Pp 153-164.

³¹⁴ Reema Abbasi, (2014). Pp 153-164

1. Directorate General of Archaeology (for the conservation of old temples, mansions, Buildings etc), Rs. 76.588 million.
2. Provincial Building Department (construction of Reception Block, Public toilets, Staff residences etc), Rs. 28.995 million.
3. Public Health Engineering Department (development of old lake), Rs. 8.890 million.

The total expenditure that was acquired by all three agencies was Rs. 114.323 million till June 2016. Following major conservation and building works have been carried out since the start of the ADP project.

3.18.1 Major Components of Work by the Directorate General of the Archaeology Punjab

Expenditure: 76.443 million

1. Conservation of Shiva temple
2. Conservation of Hari Singh Nalwa mansion
3. Conservation of Adjacent Structure with fortification wall
4. Conservation of Adjacent Structure with Ramachandra temple
5. Conservation of Ramachandra temple
6. Conservation of Bairagi house
7. Conservation of Hanuman temple
8. Conservation of Police Station

9. Conservation of Walkways
10. Conservation of Fortification wall
11. Conservation of Baradari
12. Fixing of iron grill
13. Illumination of Katas Raj
14. Landscaping
15. Development of Parking Area
16. Commodities and Services
17. Establishment/ Project Staff
18. Museum at Hari Singh Nalwa mansion
19. Conservation of Four Satghara temples

3.18.2 Major Components of work by the Buildings Department, Government of Punjab

Expenditure: 28.995 million

1. Construction of Reception Block
2. Construction of Public toilet Blocks
3. Construction of Staff Residence
4. Fencing around the historical site

5. Construction of Change Room

3.18.3 Major Components of Work by Public Health Engineering Department

Expenditure: 8.890 million.

PHED (Public Health Engineering Department) partially completed the task as due to drawing in the lake remaining work was not possible. That's why PHED reduced the amount from 12.383 million to 8.890 million, however, works done by PHED are the following: -

- Construction of the protection wall and embankment around it
- Stormwater channel
- Infiltration gallery
- Development of pond
- Collection sump
- Pumping machinery
- Staff room.³¹⁵

³¹⁵ Maqsood Ahmad Malik (Director, Punjab Archaeology Department), personal interview by the researcher, June3, 2021.

3.19 Suggestions / Recommendations

It is good enough that the government has restored and conserved the Katas Raj group of temples after the visit of Indian politicians Lalu Prasad Yadav and Lal Krishna Advani. Many visitors across the world have often come and visit the place, however, to promote this national asset and to introduce this site to the world, the government of Pakistan can take the following steps: -

Postage Stamps

Annual postage stamps depicting the Satghara group of temples will also be beneficial for the positive promotion of this international level religious tourist site. At Hindu festivals of Navratri, Shivratri, Holi and Deewali, such types of postal stamps can be printed and issued with the collaboration of the Punjab Archaeology Department, Evacuee Trust Property Board and Pakistan Post.

Tourist Bus

District Chakwal has more than a half dozen archaeological places such as Bagh-e-Safa, Katas, Malot, Shiva Ganga Malkana, Takht-e-Babri and the temple of Kallar etc. A cheaper traveling bus service should also be started in collaboration with transporters, Evacuee Trust Property Board and Punjab Archaeology Department in district Chakwal as such type of double-decker tourist buses, around the historical sites of Lahore, travel on daily basis with a minor fare. This sightseeing bus is a positive promotion towards Lahore tourism as several local and foreign tourists use these buses on a daily basis.

Pamphlets

Pamphlets should also be used for seeking public attention towards the tourist attractions in the district Chakwal and also in other cities of Pakistan.

Lectures of Archaeologists and Historians

Evacuee Trust Property Board should organize lectures of historians and archaeologists in schools, colleges and universities in collaboration with provincial archaeological departments and history and archaeology departments of universities should also organize more and more tourist visits of students towards historical and cultural sites e.g. Katas Raj, Malot, Kallar Kahar and Buddhist archaeological sites of Taxila.

Promotions through Radio and Television Programmes

The use of electronic media is also effective in both positive and negative propaganda. National television and radio in Pakistan should work on these historical and cultural sites as Allama Iqbal Open University has already used this medium for her lessons.

Exhibitions in Universities and Embassies

Evacuee Trust Property Board should organize exhibitions regarding historical temples, Gurdwaras and other sacred buildings, within the universities and in embassies of several countries as this act will boost the tourism economy of the country and will rebuild the softer image of Pakistan.

Heritage Award Ceremonies

Organizing heritage award ceremonies for the society members, staff members of the Evacuee Trust Property Board and the provincial archaeological department members for the conservation and furtherance of historical and archaeological sites is a good step. Because of such types of awards and rewards, the staff members and private stakeholders will work more efficiently and honestly.

Field Trips

Evacuee Trust Property Board should organize cheaper cost field trips with the collaboration of transporters in schools and colleges of district Chakwal and other cities of the country also. In this way, students will develop early insight into their heritage and culture.

Historical Commissions

Government should create and establish historical commissions and advocacy groups and drive them toward all communities of the country so that they can boost the public interest and consciousness regarding their heritage, culture and history.

Syllabus

Many scholars and syllabus book publishers think that Temples and Gurudwaras are not a part of our history (history of Pakistan), so they detritus such types of information from the books of history, geography and Pakistan studies from 6th standard to 12th standard. Instead of such types of acts, we should write and publish correct history and include such types of historical sites in the syllabus of school and college books.

Use of social media

Use of social media such as YouTube, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram etc will be beneficial for the furtherance and publicity of such types of archaeological sites in Pakistan as 20.6 percent people are using social media, 54.58 percent people in India are using social media and 56.8 percent people overall in this world are using social media (currently in 2021). So by creating web pages, Facebook pages and YouTube programs, we can captivate the world towards the Katas Raj group of temples.

Use of Print Media

The Provincial Archaeological department and Evacuee Trust Property Board should have a strong bond with the print media photographers and Journalists. Through photography and columns in magazines and newspapers, such types of cultural and historical places should be advertised. 'Explore Punjab Magazine' (Lahore) is already working on this type of religious tourism on a monthly basis.

Soft Visa Policy for Hindus

As Sikhs visit Kartarpur Gurdwara, Punja Sahib Gurdwara Hassan Abdal and Gurdwara Janam Asthan Nankana Sahib on their special festivals and are crossing Kartarpur Corridor on daily basis since 9th November 2019, the Hindu visitors should also be allowed to visit Shri Katas Raj as it is revealed by the regional reports of the Evacuee Trust Property Board Rawalpindi that they (Hindus) visit once in a year, their sacred place Katas Raj. It is the need of

the hour that the visa policy should also be softened for the Hindu pilgrims as it is soft for the Sikh pilgrims.

Tourism Information Desks

Several people in the country want to traverse more and more touristic sites but woefully they have the least information about such types of points. Evacuee Trust Property Board should establish a tourist information desk, on its all divisional campuses. Where they should provide all possible information about the all tourist attractions in that related division. They should provide food and residence on these points, at cheaper charges as they are providing in the form of a 'youth hostel' at Katas Raj.

Heritage Festivities

Heritage festivities play a pivotal role in the furtherance of cultural and historical heritage. Government should assemble such types of heritage festivities interminably at any cultural and historical place in Pakistan.

Heritage Trials

Heritage walks should be conducted to generate consciousness and seize people in the beautifulness of the cultural and historical heritage of the country. Heritage trials enable us to get an understanding of the history, traditions, philosophy, customs and significance etc. It is a better way to teach our upcoming generations and introduce them to their past. It also reminds the public to remember the history and culture of their rich heritage.

International Seminars

British archaeologist Dr. Ruth spoke at a seminar in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa that the heritage of Pakistan is very rich and has much more to offer. She further added that she will make more endeavors to promote the worthy archaeological treasures of Pakistan. She proposed that more seminars should be assembled in all provinces of Pakistan, where international archaeologists can share their experiences and ideas.³¹⁶

Government Efforts for Archaeological and Religious Tourism Promotions

There is a lot of archaeological tourism potential plus religious tourism potential in Pakistan for Sikhs, Jains and Hindus. If the government takes proper steps and efforts to promote and establish archaeological and religious tourism then the new businesses and job opportunities will be created on a large scale in the relative areas. Kartarpur Corridor and Gurdwara Darbar Sahib are fine examples of Prime Minister Imran Khan's government's tourism priority policy.

Prime Minister Imran Khan many times expressed his vision for the promotion of tourism in Pakistan. He addressed a meeting about the proper furtherance of tourism in Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and coastal as well as Northern areas of Pakistan. The PM emphasized completing the tourism vision plan regarding the publicity and marketing of tourism in all provinces including the coastal areas of the country. The marketing plan for the tourist attraction sites of Pakistan would be helpful for foreign investment in the tourism sector of the country.³¹⁷

³¹⁶ "Pakistan's rich cultural heritage should be promoted", Dawn, May 16th, 2016.

³¹⁷ "How to promote tourism in Pakistan", www.globalvillagespace.com

3.20 CONCLUSION

The architectural style and structure of the Satghara group of temples tells itself that it was not built by the Pandava brothers but it is a keepsake of the Hindu Shahiya emperors (850-1026CE). Holy places are meant to create a peaceful and positive environment among nations. Katas Raj as a holy visiting place can help to defuse the hostile environment between India and Pakistan. As Kartarpur corridor is already playing a “peace-corridor” between India and Pakistan. Katas also has that potential to become a harbinger of peace, happiness and reunification.

There is no doubt about it that the Katas Raj temple complex has been well managed and well preserved since 2006. It was under the administration of the Punjab Archaeology Department from 2006 to 2021 but after a case hearing, which was filed by the Hindu community of Pakistan, the Katas Raj group of temples handed over to the Evacuee Trust Property Board on 26th May 2021.

As it was the right decision by the Hindu community because Punjab Archaeology Department is responsible for the construction and restoration of the historical buildings but Evacuee Trust Property Board is responsible for the arrangements of the pilgrimage for the pilgrims and it is divulged by the documents and reports of the Evacuee Trust Property Board that the Hindus visit their holiest place once or twice in a year and one can understand that this ratio is extremely low than the visits of Sikhs at their holy places in Pakistan.

The Hindu community is of the view that there is no need for Punjab Archaeology Department now, the need is to assemblage more and more visits now, of the Hindu pilgrims by the Evacuee Trust Property Board because the construction of the temple has been completed

and there is no need of Punjab Archaeology Department now. But the visits of the Hindu pilgrims are less than average as in 2017 they visited only once from 22nd February to 28th February and in 2019 they visited from 13th December to 19th December (once in a year yet again). However in 2020, they (Hindu pilgrims) visited twice in a year, firstly from 19th February to 25th February and secondly from 23rd December to 29th December, however, this ratio also was not enough or satisfactory.

3.21 Findings

It is the need of the hour that visa policy should be softened for Hindus and Evacuee Trust Property Board should contrive at least more visits to the Pakistani Hindu community, who are living in Sindh, KPK and Balochistan. Secondly, many buildings such as the Mahant mansion, Swami's residence, Bairagi house and Maharaja Sundernath mansions are roofless and the red bricks on the front elevation of the Ramachandra temple are affixed again during the restoration works as they were stolen by some malevolent people as a sign of their iconoclastic nature.

Another sample of the iconoclasm is Malot temples and Shiva Ganga Malkana temples, which are tarnished more than a half, not by the extreme weather but by the humans, even the bricks of the Malot temples are stolen by the foreigners many times. But including the Katas Raj temple complex, there is no policing or guard system exists there, as on weekends, hundreds of people visit this historic temple. So it is indispensable to deploy guards in uniform or the police personnel by the government of Punjab with coordination of the administration of the Evacuee Trust Property Board, inside the Katas Raj group of temples.

Thirdly, it is observed that no priest can stay there at Shiva temple Katas Raj, for more than a few months, on a scarce salary of 18000/- PKR. The current priest 'Pandit Naimat Chand' is also of the view that in this dearness (2021), it is impossible to make both ends meet on this salary plus priests feel insecure in this hilly area also (a densely Muslim populated area without the security guards). So the government of Punjab must provide them and their immediate families, security and increase the pay scales of the priests as the Shiva temple Katas Raj is the only operational temple of the district Chakwal.

Except Kallar Kahar and Katas Raj group of temples, Punjab Archaeology Department and Evacuee Trust Property Board did not occupy any other historical building, as there are several other chronicled points in district Chakwal, such as Shiva Ganga Malkana temple, Kallar temple and especially Malot as this place has a lot of potential. Moreover district Chakwal is rich in its marvelous sceneries, watercourses, lakes, cuisines and historical buildings as Kahun valley was the Center of Hindu Shahi dynasty (850-1026 CE).

The Punjab Archaeology Department should inhabit more buildings and restore them, in this way, not only the religious tourism will flourish in Chakwal but the local tourism of the district will also thrive as these temples are rich in their heritage and architectural design, which is known as Kashmiri/Northern Indian temple architectural design. Moreover, if the government pays attention to this area, these points are best for paragliding, through such types of destinations; we can emerge the softened image of the country and boost our economy through religious tourism.

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