

VIDYA BHAWAN BALIKA VIDYPITH SHAKTI UTTHAN ASHARAM LAKHISARAI

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Ch: BUILDING , PANTING AND BOOKS NOT

The iron pillar on pillar

The iron pillar at Mehrauli, Delhi, shows the outstanding skill of Indian crafts persons. It is made of iron, 7.2. m high, and weighs over 3 tonnes. It was made about 1500 years ago. The date has been inscribed on the pillar mentioning a ruler named Chandra, who probably belonged to the Gupta dynasty. One interesting fact of the pillar is that it has not rusted in all these years.

Buildings in brick and stone

Stupas also reflect the skills of crafts persons that have survived. The word stupa means a mound. Stupas can be of different kinds round and tall, big and small, which will have certain common features. At the centre of the stupa, a small box will be placed, which contained bodily remains (such as teeth, bone or ashes) of the Buddha or his followers, or things they used, as well as precious stones, and coins.

This box, known as a relic casket, was covered with earth. Later, a layer of mud brick or baked brick was added on top. And then, the dome-like structure was sometimes covered with carved stone slabs.

A path, known as the pradakshina patha, was laid around the stupa surrounded with railings. The entrance of the path was through gateways. Devotees walked around the stupa, in a clockwise direction, as a mark of devotion. Both railings and gateways were often decorated with sculpture.

During this period, some of the earliest Hindu temples were also built. Deities such as Vishnu, Shiva, and Durga were worshipped in these shrines. The most important part of the temple was the room known as the garbhagriha, where the image of the chief deity was placed. It was here that priests performed religious rituals, and devotees offered worship to the deity.

Bhitargaon, a tower, known as the shikhara, was built on top of the garbhagriha, to mark this out as a sacred place. Most temples also had a space known as the mandapa a hall where people could.

How were stupas and temples built?

Building stupa and temple went through several stages. Kings or queens wanted to build these stupas or temples, which was an expensive affair. To start building these sculptures, good quality stone had to be found quarried, and transported to the place chosen for the new building. Here, these rough blocks of stone had to be shaped and carved into pillars, and panels for walls, floors and ceilings. After these, it had to be placed in precisely the right position.

To build these splendid structures, kings and queens spent money from their treasury to pay the crafts persons. Besides, when devotees came to visit the temple or the stupa, they often brought gifts, which were used to decorate the buildings.

Others who paid for these decorations were merchants, farmers, garland makers, perfumers, smiths, and hundreds of men and women who are known only by their names, which were inscribed on pillars, railings and walls.

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