

A BRIEF NOTE ON EXPLORATION CONDUCTED IN JHANJHARPUR AND ANDHARATHADI BLOCK IN MADHUBANI DISTRICT OF BIHAR.

On 2nd and 3rd March 2008, under the guidance of Dr. P. K. Mishra, Superintending Archaeologist, ASI, Patna Circle, the ancient sites located in Jhanjharpur and Andharathadi block in Madhubani district have been explored by a team of archaeologist and other technical personnel. After collecting data/clue by reading topo sheet and local hearsays the team has reached the sites of archaeological potentialities and carried out the survey which may be described as follows.

Bideshwarsthan:- It is located about 5 kms. from the right bank of river Kamla Balan. In this place a temple dedicated to Lord Siva has been noticed. The temple is facing east and it is a living one. The temple is consisting of sanctum (*garbhagriha*) and a *mandapa*. The sanctum is square on plan and is enshrined at its center a Siva linga made of black basalt stone. The *Adhithana* or *Jangha* portion of the sanctum is plain except the decoration of four pilasters at each corner. The sikhara is characterized by a hut type roof which is surmounting full bloomed lotus design in three receding levels. These lotus design are again topped by a finial comprising of four metallic lotus bud resting on a circular disc and a *damaru* and *trisul* at the apex.

The sanctum is fronted by a mandapa having *Dochala* type of sikhara. It is rectangular on plan and there is also evidence of pilasters showing multi- divisions. Inside the mandapa we have noticed the beautifully carved image of Vishnu and Agni, both are made of black basalt stone.

The standing image of Vishnu is shown with four hands, holding Sankha, Chakra, Gada and Padma. He is wearing Vanamala, Kirit mukuta, Upavitta, armlets and necklace. According to the heavy ornamentation and iconographic features of the image it can be dated to 12th -13th century A.D. the image of Agni is represented with two hands, he is seated in lalitasana and shown with beard and there is the depiction of flames emerging out on the stele. It may be dated to 9th – 10th century A.D.

The exterior surface of the temple is paved with glazed tiles and using of cement mortar which has marred the ancient character of the temple.

Lohana (Lat. 26° 14'3"N; Long.86°12'18"E):- A temple dedicated to Goddess Durga has been noticed at this village. Locally this place is known as Durgasthan . The temple is rest on a brick platform of about 1.5 m high. It can be approached through a flight of steps. The temple is built of modern bricks and exterior surface is plastered in lime and surkhi mortar. The temple is consisting of a sanctum (garbhagriha), ardhmandapa and mukha mandapa.

The sanctum is square on plan and it is enshrined with an image of Goddess Durga which is belonging to recent years. The sanctum is also provided with a *pradakshinapatha*. The walls of the Pradakshinapatha are designed with decorated pilasters and cusped arches. There are four small shrines at each corner of the temple. The roof is represented with three number of dome shaped sikhara. It is topped by a lotus finial probably made of lime.

The *ardhamandapa* and *mukhamandapa* are rectangular on plan. The ceiling of pradakshinapath and mandapas are originally treated with paintings, traces of which are still visible.

Apart from this, one beautiful image of Simhavahini Durga has been noticed by the team which is kept at the residence of shri Gangadhar Jha. According to the local people the image was found accidentally in his agricultural land. The image is shown in lalitasana posture on a lion. She is represented by four hands holding sword and shield on upper right and left hands whereas lower hands are shown with varada mudra & holding shankha in right and left hands respectively. She is wearing Saree hanging up to ankle and other ornaments as usual. The stele is exquisitely carved and there is the depiction of vidyadhara holding garland on either side. The top of the stele is conical which may be ascribed to 12th -13th century A.D. The material is black basalt stone. Its length is 52 cm and breadth is 28 cm.

Ancient mound at Lohna

The mound locally called as *Jalpa Dih* is located towards east of the village. During the survey it was observed that the mound is strewn over with red ware pot sherds. The mound is almost circular in shape with a maximum height of about 2 m from the ground level. The diameter of it is measured as 40 mtr. approximately.

Ancient mound at postan (Lat. 26⁰ 24'N; Long.86⁰18'E):-

The village postan is located about 2 km west of Andharathadi, the block headquarters. Here three number of mounds have been came into notice.

Mound-I - The mound has been badly disturbed by the local villagers by cutting of earth and rubbing of bricks. As a result of cutting of earth the remains of brick structure has been exposed in some parts of the mound. The burnt bricks are laid on mud mortar. The size of bricks are (35 x 16 x 6 cm), (26 x 21x 6 cm) and (30 x 21 x 5 cm). Besides few moulded bricks has also been encountered which suggest that it was used in the outer edge of the structure for the decorative mouldings. The dimension of the mound is measured as 50 m in diameter with a height of 06 meter approximately. So far the pottery find is concerned, few red ware sherds are noticed over the mound. The nature of the mound suggests that it was probably a stupa dedicated to Buddhist pantheon.

Mound –II - Locally this mound is known as *Daura Dih*. It is represented by solid brick structure, may be ruins of a stupa. But the crest of the mound is flat and it is so only because of rubbing of the site. Red ware pottery are found over the mound and its diameter is about 25 m . with an approximate height of 05 meter from the ground level.

Mound-III - Local people reckoned this mound as *Chuchnaria*. Brick bats and Red ware pot sherds are scattered over the mound. It is located about ½ km. from the mound I, amidst the agricultural land. The diameter of the mound is 25 mtr. and height is 2.5 mtr. approximately.

Navnagar - This village is situated about 07 kms. North of Andharathadi, the block headquarters. A temple dedicated to Lord Siva has been noticed. The temple is facing east and rest on a brick platform measuring 16x9 mtr. It can be approached by a flight of five steps. The temple exists with its components like sanctum (*garbhagriha*) and *mandapa*. The temple is built of *Lakhauri* bricks.

The interior of sanctum is square on plan and is enshrined with a Siva linga. The interior walls are designed with cusped arches and exterior surface are treated with various mouldings and paintings.

The sikhara is dome shaped which is again supporting a smaller dome and lotus petals. It is further surmounting four circular metal pot (*Kalasa*) intervened by four circular discs separately with zigzag section and the finial is *trisul* at the apex. The measurement of sanctum in its exterior side is 5.5 x 5 m.

The *mandapa* having *Do-chala* sikhara is rectangular on plan having a measurement of 3 x 5 m . The mandapa can be entered through three arched entrance. These are decorated with various mouldings. This temple is an example of typical Mithila style of architecture commonly seen in that region.

Sun Temple at Parsa (Lat26⁰ 25'N; Long.86⁰21'E)

It is located about 12 kms. south-east of Andharathadi and about 2 km from NH no.57. Here it has been noticed an image of Surya beautifully carved in black basalt stone. The image is intact, the stele is also exquisitely designed with the depiction of Kirtimukha at the top centre, flying Vidyadharas holding garland, Vyala with rider on either side.

The main image of the Surya is shown with wearing mukuta, garland, Upavitta and his two hands are holding full bloomed lotus flower. He is standing on a chariot which is drawn by seven horses. The charioteer is also depicted near his feet. On lower part of stele , Usha, Prati Usha, Danda and Pingala are represented.

On its stylistic ground the image may be dated to 10th - 11th Century A. D. The size of the image is 1.22 m in height and 65 cm is breadth.

Kamaladityasthan

Image of Vishnu, fragment of a pedestal and fragments of lower portion of sculptures have been lying in a recently constructed temple. The image of Vishnu is in standing posture. He is depicted with his four hands. The *kirit mukuta* and *Vanamala* has been identified but his *ayudhas* are chipped off. The height of the image of Vishnu is 1.05 m and breadth is 60 cm.. The lower portion of another image is shown with feet portion of two deities and the figure of **Garuda** with his pointed nose and wings is visible in naked eyes. It may be presumed that the parent images were of *Laxmi* and *Narayan*.

In another fragment of pedestal, figure of seven horses have been carved which may be part of chariot of the Sun God. All the three antiquities are made of black basalt stone.

The temple is constructed towards in 1990 over an ancient mound. The diameter of the mound is 20 m and circumference is 65 m and height is 03 mtr. approximately from the ground level. There is the evidence of some architectural members of stone lying over the mound. Hence it may be surmised that these were part of an ancient temple and after getting it collapsed the present temple has been constructed over its debris

Ancient mound at Mohan Badhiyan (Lat. 26⁰ 13'N; Long. 86⁰ 4'E)

The mound is locally called as *Dharhar Dih* which is situated about 1.5 km west of Sakri in Pandaul Block. The mound is strewn over with red ware pottery. In the section of the mound few brick bats and pot sherds have also been noticed. The approximate dimension of the mound is about 50m x 30m with a maximum height of 06 mtr.



Bideshwarsthan



Sculptures of Bideshwarsthan



Lohna Durga temple



Lohna Durga temple



Ancient Mound at Lohna



Ancient Mound at Postan (Mound No.1)



Ancient Mound at Postan (Mound II)

Ancient Mound at Postan (Mound III)



Navanagar Siva Temple



Siva Linga of Navanagar Temple



Sun Temple at Parsa

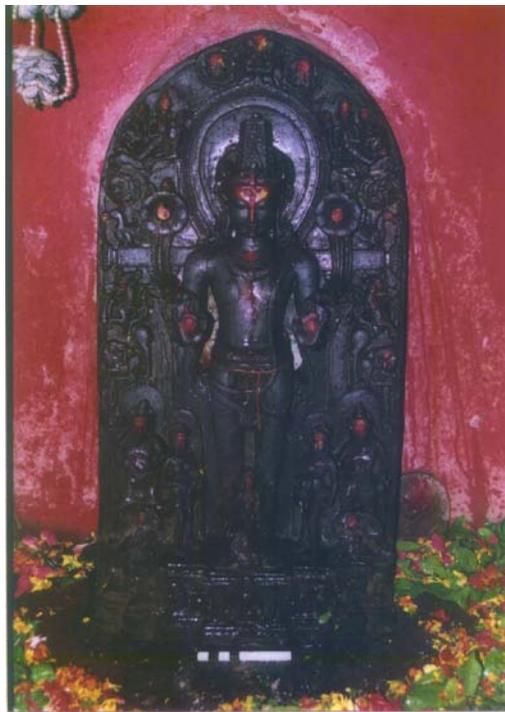


Image of Sun God, Parsa



Kamladityasthan



Ancient Mound at Mohan Badhiyan (Sakri)