

Jyotirling in Maharashtra

- Maharashtra is a land of varied faith and religion. Thousands of people worship a million gods every moment, and every single day there is a new celebration of faith.
- There are thousands of temples and pilgrim centres all over Maharashtra. For the devotees of Lord Shiva, there are 12 Jyotirlingas situated in various parts of India.
- The 5 most significant of these 12 Jyotirlingas are located in Maharashtra. It is considered that Lord Shiva disclosed himself to his devotees in the form of light, so these pilgrims are named Jyotirlingas.

List of Jyotirling in Maharashtra

There are 5 jyotirlingas in the Maharashtra. Here is the list:

1. Bhimashankar
2. Trimakeshwar
3. Grishneshwar
4. Nagnath in Aundha
5. Parli Vaijnath

Trimakeshwar Jyotirlinga



Trimakeshwar Temple is located in **Nashik, Maharashtra**. It is an element of the holy Jyotirlinga pilgrimage, and it is also one of the 5 Jyotirlingas in Maharashtra. Trimakeshwar Temple is devoted to **Lord Shiva**, and like all the Jyotirlingas, it is honoured as **Swayambhu**. The temple is also the origin of the holy river **Godavari**.

Significance of Trimakeshwar Temple

- The Linga present here is called **Trimbaka**. It is named so because it contains **3 Lingas** (small thumb-sized) describing Brahma, Vishnu & Mahesh. Some people also acknowledge that it is because Lord Shiva has **three eyes**.
- The Linga of the Trimakeshwar Temple includes three heads covered with silver.
- The Trimakeshwar temple is the singular Jyotirlinga where the genuine Linga is present in **depression**.
- Devotees also assume that the eyes of the three Lingas are representations of **Sun, Moon, and Fire**, each facing in diverse directions. One who worships this linga attains salvation by worshipping all three gods simultaneously.

History of Trimakeshwar Temple

- The history of the Trimbakeshwar temple relates to the legend of **Rishi Gautam**. According to theologies, the land was a Tapobhoomi in the Satya Yuga, when many Rishis & Munis lived here. Gautam Rishi lived at Trimbak with his wife, Ahilya.
- Once, there was a huge drought, and the world was suffering from a lack of water.
- Gautam Rishi offered prayers to God **Varuna**, and God Varuna accepted his prayers and offered him a tank that provided a never-ending water supply.
- The Rishi grew crops like rice, wheat, and other vegetables using this water. Then he fed them to the other Rishis residing there.
- After some time, the jealousy of some other sages increased, and they wanted to stop Gautam sage. So, they prayed to Lord Ganesha, asked him to send a cow to the sage's field, then she died. However, Lord Ganesha warned the sages that this would not be good for them. But still, he sent a cow to the field. Sage Gautam saw it and then threw Darbha grass to scare him. But the cow died in the field.
- Sage Gautam and his wife Ahilya performed penance for Lord Shiva. Pleased with their devotion, Shiva ordered Ganga to come to earth.
- The river Ganga was flowing on the earth from Brahmagiri hill, and the sage Gautama trapped it in the modern-day pool called Kushavarta and bathed in it for purification. The river was the South Ganges and is now known as Godavari and Gauthami.
- Then Gautam Rishi, other gods and Godavari requested Lord Shiva stay here. Lord Shiva accepted them and converted them into lingas to live there.
- Maratha ruler Nana Saheb Peshwa built the present Trimbakeshwar Temple in the 18th century. Later, Shrimant Rao Saheb expanded the Trimbakeshwar temple around Kushavarta Kunda and improved the approach to the tank.

Bhimashankar Jyotirlinga



- Bhimashankar's temple dates back to the 18th century and is one of the twelve Jyotirlingas in India. Bhimashankar can be reached via Manchar at about 128 km from Pune.
- Surrounded by natural beauty, Bhimashankar Temple is perfect for trekkers, bird watchers, and photographers. The Bhimashankar Temple, with its Indo-Aryan and Nagara architecture, was built by Nana Phadnis.

Significance of Bhimashankar Temple

- The linga of Lord Shiva is one of the 12 Jyotirlingas. These Jyotirlingas are self-evident forms of Lord Shiva, different from man's established sexes. It is said that these were Jyotirlingas when Shiva appeared as a pillar of light. Bhimashankar Ling is found at a lower level than the sanctum sanctorum.

- The upper part of the penis is divided into a narrow groove in the penis. Each half of the linga symbolizes Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati. In the Bhimashankar temple, Lord appears as "Ardhanarishvara".
- According to tradition, water has flowed continuously from the penis since ancient times.
- The people consider the river Bhima sacred because it is believed that the river is the sweat of Lord Shiva (Shiva) after defeating the Tripurasura demon.
- The Mokshakund behind the Bhimashankar temple is believed to be where Maharshi Kaushik (also known as Brahmarishi Vishwamitra) performed penance or asceticism to please the gods.
- The temple administration allows pilgrims to anoint and worship Jyotirlinga with marigolds and billowing leaves.

History of Bhimashankar Temple

- The original sanctuary dates back to the 13th century, and the package underwent various renovations over different periods.
- According to legend, Jyotirlinga was discovered by a lumberjack named Bhatirao Lakhdhara in the 13th century when his axe hit a tree and started bleeding from the ground.
- The villagers gathered there and offered milk to the tree to stop the bleeding. The villagers built a small temple on the site and named it Bhimashankar Temple.
- Many notable persons like Chhatrapati Shivaji, Peshwa Balaji Vishwanath and Raghunath Peshwa also visited the temple regularly and performed pooja and renewal. Nana Fadnavis, the Diwan of Peshwa, built the peak of Bhimashankar temple.

Grishneshwar Jyotirlinga



- Grishneshwar Temple is located in the Aurangabad district of Maharashtra. It belongs to the famous list of 12 Jyotirlinga temples of Lord Shiva.
- This temple is about 3000 years old, and the Linga faces east. The sanctum sanctorum consists of Lord Grishneshwar and his wife, Ghrishneshwari.

Significance of Grishneshwar Temple

- Grishneshwar Jyotirlinga is adorned with flowers and sacred beads of Rudraksha.
- The significance of this temple is that the pilgrims believe that if they visit the Ghrishneshwar temple, they can benefit from worshipping all the 12 Jyotirlingas.
- The Ghrishneshwar Temple is an excellent example of pre-historic architectural style and has beautiful carvings on it.

- Devotees can see the wedding scenes of God and his wife in the murals and carvings in the temple. The Grishneshwar temple also has a well with springs of holy water.

History of Grishneshwar Temple

In the history of the Grishneshwar temple, Maloji Bhosale was an ardent devotee and chief of Eluru village. He made the temple in the 16th century after discovering a treasure hidden inside a deer. This temple was renovated in the 17th century by Rani Ahilyabai Holkar, the queen of the Maratha Malwa kingdom.

Aundha Nagnath Jyotirlinga



Aundha Nagnath Temple in Hingoli, Maharashtra, is dedicated to Lord Shiva who is worshipped as Lord Nagnath. Devotees who pray to Lord Nagnath believe that God will guide them on the right path of life, as they did with the demons at Darukavane.

Significance of Aundha Nagnath Temple

- There is a popular belief that Nagesh Ling or Jyotirlinga is the first Jyotirlinga on earth. Devotees believe that praying in this temple can protect themselves from all kinds of poison.
- This form of Shiva is Nagnath, as it has a snake around its neck. The association of snakes has led to the belief that this sex is very powerful and potent in counteracting the harmful effects of all venom. Devotees have often seen snakes with open fangs protecting the linga.

History of Aundha Nagnath Temple

- The history of the Aundha Nagnath temple dates back to the time of Pandavas. Yudhisthira, the eldest of the Pandavas, built this magnificent temple for the first time in his exile. It is also believed that the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb tried to demolish the Aundha Nagnath temple/Jyotirlinga. But it is stated that a swarm of bees attacked his men, and Aurangzeb surrendered and left the temple.
- However, this sacred Jyotirlinga suffered some damage. Later the temple was repaired and renovated by Rani Ahalyabai Holkar of Maratha Malwa kingdom.

Parli Vaijnath Jyotirlinga



Parli Vaidyanath Temple (Jyotirlinga) is located at Parli in Maharashtra and is on the famous list of 12 Jyotirlingas of Shiva. The gender of the Vajjnath temple is also popularly known as Dhanvantari and Amruteshwari. Linga consists of Saligram stone, and its surface is very smooth.

Importance of Parli Vajjnath Temple

- Parli Vajjnath Jyotirlinga (temple) is the last of all Jyotirlingas.
- People believe that since Lord Vishnu has hidden nectar and Dhanvantari in both sexes, anyone who touches that sex can get the power of nectar. Parli is also the meeting place of Harihara, and Hari (Vishnu) and Har (Shiva) are celebrated here.
- Devotees are allowed to touch Parli Vajjnath Linga during the puja, and this helps in healing and reaping various health benefits. The devotees themselves perform the anointing here and use the billowing leaves purchased outside the Parli Vajjnath temple.
- Devotees of all levels, castes, religions are welcome in this holy Parli Vajjnath temple. There is no discrimination at all. According to the Puranas, Lord Vaidyanatha blessed the Markandeya sage, becoming immortal.
- Rani Ahilyabai brought special stones from the Trishul Devi mountain range to restore Parli Vajjnath. A tower outside Parli Vajjnath has special windows.
- When the sun rays pass through the windows, they fall directly on the Shivlinga. At this time, the priests offer special prayers and worship to the Sun God.

History of Parli Vajjnath Temple

- The history of Parli Vajjnath Temple is that it was built in the 1700s. It was restored by Rani Ahilyabai Holkar, the queen of the then Maratha Malwa kingdom. There are two very popular legends associated with this temple. One legend speaks of Amrita, and the other legend speaks of his quest to possess the demon king Ravana and Shiva.