

Kashi Vishwanath corridor project

November 15, 2021

In news—The Prime Minister of India will inaugurate the Kashi Vishwanath Temple Corridor(KVTC) project on December 13 in Varanasi.

About the KVTC project

- The Rs. 400 crore project was **launched in 2018 at Varanasi.**
- The idea is to have a **20-25 feet wide corridor from the Lalita Ghat in Varanasi to the Mandir Chowk in the temple premises** to enable at least two lakh people to be present at a given point of time.
- It seeks to **preserve existing heritage structures, provide new facilities in the temple complex in the public-private partnership mode**, ease the traffic and movement of people around the temple.
- The core aim is to ensure easy pedestrian movement for pilgrims with the least wait, travel and walking time, and comfortable holding zones, as well as crowd management and emergency operational procedures and better experiences around the religious rituals.
- The project involves building multiple amenities for pilgrims such as Yatri Suvidha Kendras, guesthouses, hospice, library, and museum.

About Kashi Vishwanath temple—

- It is one of the most famous Hindu temples dedicated to Lord Shiva, located in Vishwanath Gali of Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh.
- The Temple stands on the western bank of the holy river Ganga.
- It is **one of the twelve Jyotirlingas**, the holiest of

Shiva Temples.

- As the city was called Kashi in ancient times, the temple is popularly called Kashi Vishwanath Temple.
- It had been demolished by many Muslim rulers including Qutb-ud-din Aibak (as a commander of Mohammad Ghor), Hussain Shah Aharqi or Sikandar Lodhi.
- Last time it was demolished by Aurangzeb in 1669, the sixth Mughal emperor who constructed the Gyanvapi Mosque on its site.
- The **current structure was built on an adjacent site by the Maratha ruler, Ahilya Bai Holkar (Malhar Rao's daughter-in-law) of Indore in the year 1780.**
- In 1828, Baiza Bai, widow of the Maratha ruler Daulat Rao Scindhia of Gwalior State, built a low-roofed colonnade with over 40 pillars in the GyanVapi precinct.

Architectural features

- It is built in **Nagara style** of architecture.
- The linga of the main deity at the shrine is 60 cm tall and 90 cm in circumference housed in a silver altar.
- The venerable Jyotirlinga is a dark brown coloured stone.
- The main temple is a quadrangle and is surrounded by shrines of other gods.
- There are small temples for Kaalbhairav, Dhandapani, Avimukteshwara, Vishnu, Vinayaka, Sanishwara, Virupaksha and Virupaksh Gauri in the complex.
- There is a small well in the temple called the Jnana Vapi also spelt as Gyaan Vapi (the wisdom well).
- It has Sabha Griha or Congregation Hall leading to the inner Garbha Griha or Sanctum Sanctorum.
- Structure of the Mandir is composed of three parts – the first consists of a spire on the Mandir of Lord Vishwanath or Mahadeva, the second is a gold dome and the third is the gold spire atop Lord Vishwanath carrying a flag and a trident.

