

# Maa Kamakhya corridor

April 21, 2023

**In news**— Prime Minister of India appreciated Assam's "landmark" Maa Kamakhya corridor initiative recently.

## **About the corridor-**

- The project has been **initiated by the state government drawing inspiration from the Kashi-Vishwanath Corridor.**
- Once completed, Maa Kamakhya corridor will provide ease of access to our divyang and elderly pilgrims.
- Under the initiative, the temple's surrounding area will expand from 3,000 sq ft to about 100,000 sq ft across three levels.
- The access corridor will widen from about 8-10 ft to about 27-30 ft.
- **Six major temples in the complex, which are currently hidden from the larger public view, would be restored to their original glory.**
- The project includes creating space for 8,000-10,000 pilgrims to ease the crowd during major festivals like Ambubachi Mela.

## **About Kamakhya temple-**

- **Located on the Nilachal Hills** in Guwahati adjoining the southern bank of the Brahmaputra River, the Kamakhya temple is one of the oldest and most revered centres of Tantric practices.
- **The temple is the center of the Kulachara Tantra Marga** and the **site of the Ambubachi Mela**, an annual festival that celebrates the menstruation of the goddess.
- Another annual celebration is the *Manasha Puja*. Durga Puja is also celebrated annually at Kamakhya during Navaratri in the autumn.
- Structurally, the temple is dated to the 8th-9th century

with many subsequent rebuildings—and the final hybrid architecture defines a **local style called Nilachal**.

- It is believed that the ancient demon king, Narakasura had the temple built in honour of Goddess Kamakhya.
- **The temple was rebuilt under the patronage of Naranarayan**, the last ruler of the undivided **Kamata kingdom** that straddled present-day Assam, Bangladesh, and West Bengal.
- It is also one of the oldest of the 51 pithas in the Shakta tradition. An obscure place of worship for much of history it became an important pilgrimage destination, especially for those from Bengal, in the 19th century during colonial rule.
- **Originally an autochthonous place of worship of a local goddess** where the primary worship of the aniconic yoni set in natural stone continues till today.
- The Kamakhya Temple became **identified with the state power when the Mleccha dynasty of Kamarupa patronised it first**, followed by the Palas, the Koch, and the Ahoms.
- **The Kalika Purana, written during the Pala rule, connected Naraka, the legitimizing progenitor of the Kamarupa kings, with the goddess Kamakhya** representing the region and the Kamarupa kingdom.
- It has been suggested that **historically the worship progressed in three phases—yoni under the Mlecchas, yogini under the Palas and the Mahavidyas under the Kochs**.
- The **main temple is surrounded in a complex of individual temples dedicated to the ten Mahavidyas of Saktism**, namely, Kali, Tara, Tripura Sundari, Bhuvaneshwari, Bhairavi, Chhinnamasta, Dhumavati, Bagalamukhi, Matangi and Kamalatmika.
- Among these, **Tripurasundari, Matangi and Kamala reside inside the main temple** whereas the other seven reside in individual temples.
- Temples for individual Mahavidyas together as a group, as found in the complex, is rare and uncommon.

- In July 2015, the Supreme Court of India transferred the administration of the Temple from the Kamakhya Debutter Board to the Bordeuri Samaj.

**Further reading:**  
<https://journalsofindia.com/kashi-vishwanath-corridor-project/>